



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027



Acknowledgements

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Cover photo: City of Merrill

Adopted: October 2022

2023-2027

Effective January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2027

This plan was prepared under the direction of the City of Merrill Parks and Recreation Department by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

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RESOLUTION 2739

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF MERRILL
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (ORP) 2023-2027**

WHEREAS, the City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin wishes to provide quality park facilities and a variety of recreation opportunities and experiences to meet the needs of the community's residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin has developed an Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) in order to be eligible for various funding programs between 2023-2027 including Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF), Outdoor Recreation Action Program-Local Park Aids (ORAP-LPA), Stewardship, Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP); and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires, that in order to be eligible for funding of needed projects, municipalities to update their ORP every five years; and

WHEREAS, the Parks & Recreation Commission and administrative staff have reviewed the updated ORP in its entirety to reflect community recreation needs into the future; and

WHEREAS, the Parks & Recreation Commission collected local recreational needs information through multiple resources including board and staff member knowledge of current park conditions, reviewing past plans, a Level of Services assessment; and an Outdoor Recreation Survey; and

WHEREAS, the Parks & Recreation Commission voted to recommend the adoption of the Outdoor Recreation Plan by both the City of Merrill Common Council and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the dual purposes of serving as a guide for future park development within the City of Merrill and potential funding considerations within the next five (5) years;

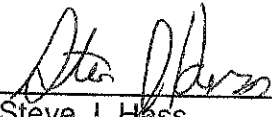
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN, this 11th day of October, 2022 hereby adopts this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that City administrative staff is directed to provide a signed copy of this resolution, along with the Outdoor Recreation Plan to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for their review and consideration.

Recommended by: Parks & Recreation
Commission

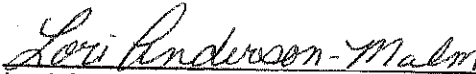
CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN

Moved: (Weix/Blake)



Steve J. Hass
Mayor

Passed: October 11, 2022



Lori Anderson-Malm
City Clerk

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- A. Park Design and Location Criteria
- B. Facility Design Standards
- C. Federal and State Outdoor Recreation Funding Programs
- D. Outdoor Recreation Survey Results
- E. SCORP Identified Outdoor Recreation Needs
- F. Cenotaph Park
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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) was prepared pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §23.30 Outdoor Recreation Program. This section serves "to promote, encourage, coordinate, and implement a comprehensive long-range plan to acquire, maintain, and develop for public use, those areas of the state best adapted to the development of a comprehensive system of state and local outdoor recreation facilities and services..."

Submission of this adopted CORP to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources establishes eligibility for the local unit of government to apply for a variety of Federal and State Aids for outdoor recreation (Chapter NR 50.06(4), Wisconsin administrative code).

1.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of this outdoor recreation plan is to provide continued direction toward meeting the current and future recreation needs of the City of Merrill.

Adoption of this plan by the Merrill City Council and subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will continue the City's eligibility for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF), and State Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program funds.

Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.

1.2 Provisions for Plan Updates

Plan amendments are common and should be considered part of the planning process. They frequently represent good implementation or plan usage and should be acceptable for consideration by local decision makers.

Annual review of the plan recommendations and capital improvement list by the Merrill Board of Park Commissioners will keep this plan current. This review may also occur after a large turn over in elected officials after an election.

Annual Review Process:

1. The Merrill Board of Park Commissioners reviews plan and takes a vote on what changes to make.
2. City Council adopts changes by resolution.
3. Those changes are now part of the original plan. Make sure those changes, the original plan and the approval resolution are available to submit DNR's Community Financial Assistance staff when applying for any financial assistance.

Establishing a **full plan update every five years** will assure that the plan reflects changes in the recreational needs of the City and will extend the community's eligibility for grant programs for another 5 years.

1.3 Reference Plans

Merrill is “The City of Parks,” and has been involved with recreation planning since 1974 when a park plan was compiled and written by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. In 1977 the City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan was prepared by Vandewalle and Associates. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) has prepared the Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan since 2002.

Each plan listed below affects outdoor recreation in the City of Merrill:

City of Merrill Comprehensive Plan 2017

The 2017-2027 Merrill Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2016. This document covers all types of development that may occur throughout Merrill.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies from the 2017 Plan that affect outdoor recreation are listed below:

Housing Goal 3: Eliminate dilapidated and tax delinquent housing units, especially in downtown areas, maximizing property values.

Objective 2: Reduce blighted residential property.

Policy 1: Aggressively market vacant lots for redevelopment or improve them for public benefit with features such as pocket parks or rain gardens to improve nearby property values.

Utilities & Community Facilities Goal: Promote an effective and efficient supply of utilities, facilities and services that meet the needs and expectations of residents

Objective 5: Provide quality and accessible parks and recreational facilities, areas, and services for all residents, including persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Policy 5: Follow the recommendations of the City’s Outdoor Recreation Plan and update that plan to correspond with the recommendations of this Plan.

Transportation Issue – A multi-use trail should connect Prairie River Park to Stange Park.

Transportation Goal 1: Provide an integrated, efficient, balanced, equitable and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including young, elderly, transit-dependent and disabled citizens. This includes providing choices in the mode of transportation (car, transit, bicycle, walking, etc.), easy transfer between modes, and accessible, safe, and convenient opportunities for those without the use of a motor vehicle.

Objective 1: Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to community activity centers such as schools, parks, shopping areas, employment centers, public buildings, medical facilities, and elderly housing.

Objective 2: Utilize river corridors for multi-use trail development.

- Objective 4: Implement recommendations in the Merrill Bike and Pedestrian Plan 2015.
- Objective 5: Provide appropriate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on arterial and collector roads, based on volume and speed of traffic and the connectivity value of the road.
- Objective 7: Evaluate four-lane roads for potential road diets using Federal Highway Administration guidelines, and apply road diets to suitable roads.
- Objective 9: Evaluate areas where speeding is a concern and implement measures, such as traffic calming, to address safety concerns.
- Objective 10: Evaluate areas where bicycling on the sidewalk should be allowed.
- Objective 11: Reduce travel lane widths to 10 feet wherever practical (including minor arterials and principle arterials less than 45mph), to reduce speeding, improve safety, reduce maintenance costs and increase the available space for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and terraces.
- Policy 5: Include appropriate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on all arterial and collector roads when undergoing resurfacing or reconstruction.
- Policy 9: Consider bicycle and pedestrian accessibility when selecting sites for new public facilities such as schools, parks, libraries and community centers.
- Policy 10: Carefully consider and require bicycle and pedestrian access and parking during site plan review.

City of Merrill Downtown Vision Plan, 2015

The Vision Plan aims to renew and re-energize the downtown in order to produce greater benefit for the City of Merrill. The Vision Plan focuses on the entire downtown and addresses blight concerns by outlining necessary investments for four districts within the downtown. The geographical scope of this vision plan is limited to the area along East Main and East First Streets. Recommendations included within the plan consist of varying sized investments which are intended to revitalize Merrill by initially reshaping its landscape and ultimately the downtown economy.

Outdoor recreation recommendations:

- Install custom bike racks in downtown that are created by Merrill High School students.
- Develop 911 E. Main St into a small park (see picture).



Possible downtown park
911 E. Main St

Merrill Westside Renewal Plan, 2015

This document, the Merrill Westside Renewal Plan, is a companion piece to the recently completed downtown Redevelopment Plan and is aimed at making recommendations to create a strong Westside and improve its economic condition. It represents a continued effort of the task force, and includes utilization of city advisors in engineering, architecture and community and economic development, as well as receiving input from local property and business owners.

Outdoor recreation recommendations:

- Install custom bike racks in downtown that are created by Merrill High School students.

City of Merrill Eastside Waterfront Initiative, 2010

The Eastside Waterfront Initiative is a long-term effort to redevelop a critical portion of Merrill's Wisconsin River frontage. Merrill has an opportunity to transform this industrial riverfront into a mixed-use riverfront destination that serves both visitors and residents. This riverfront revitalization plan describes a vision for redevelopment and a strategic plan for achieving that vision.

Outdoor recreation recommendations:

- Extend the River Bend Trail along the whole north side of the riverfront.
- Install 3 boat landings.
- Create a trailhead along the trail at Park Street.
- Two potential recreation bridge locations to cross the Wisconsin River.
- Create a trail along the south side of the Wisconsin River from Center Ave, east to Riverside Park, and continue trail to a green on the Merrill Golf Club.
- See the Concept Plan on pages 28-29 in the Plan for more details.

Merrill Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2015

The Merrill Park & Recreation Commission prepared the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2015. The plan developed strategies for improving bicycle and pedestrian transportation throughout Merrill. Potential policies and infrastructure changes are identified along with a potential improvement time frame and who will initiate the change for each project.

Outdoor Recreation Recommendations:

- **Engineering** – Generally to improve street capacity, and add sidewalks;
 - *Various park improvements;*
 - *Bicycle parking at parks and in commercial areas;*
 - *Continued maintenance of “sharrows” on roads;*
 - *Sidewalk improvements;*
 - *River Bent Trail improvements; and*
 - *Establishing bike routes throughout Merrill (details exist for each route).*

- **Educational & Encouragement** – Generally to provide educational classes for all ages aimed at improving walking and biking;
- **Policy** – Generally to revise municipal codes;
- **Enforcement** – Generally regarding targeted enforcement to improve compliance with laws; and
- **Evaluation** – Generally counting how many people participate in educational programs, but also possibly counting walkers and bikers.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan, 2017

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission created this document to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region at the county level. Potential trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county that trails exist in to facilitate implementation. The plan is intended to strengthen the rural character of the County by connecting natural and cultural resource destinations and by connecting communities, which also will have positive economic development from tourism.

The routes for Merrill are part of the Lincoln scenic bike and auto tour, and Merrill Bike & Pedestrian Plan. The scenic auto tour loop passes through Merrill from the west on STH 107, then continues east through the City on STH 64, leaves Merrill, and the proceeds north on STH 17. The whole City is covered by suggested bike routes (both on and off-street) from the Merrill Bike & Pedestrian Plan.

Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan, 2012-2021

This county plan provides direction for county departments and the County Board over the 2012-2021 period.

Goals and Objectives

Transportation:

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.

Objectives

- Explore and take advantage of feasible revenue programs and grants that will improve different modes of transportation and our ability to link them.
- Plan and promote multiple modes of transportation as part of road repair and construction.
- Create snowmobile connectivity east to west and north to south in Merrill so snowmobilers don't have to cross the Wisconsin River (create similar connectivity in Tomahawk).

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

Objectives

- Explore and take advantage of, when feasible, revenue programs and grants that will improve different modes of transportation and our ability to link them.
- Develop inventory of existing trail systems to determine what is most important and feasible to market.
- Organize and begin discussing with stakeholders how to market tourism on a countywide level.
- Establish a Lincoln County welcome or visitors' center near a county entrance.

Lincoln County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2021-2035

This plan is a management guide for the Lincoln County Forest and is updated every fifteen years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the county. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management and tourism.

A framework for how various trail systems will be maintained and expanded is in Chapter 900.

Lincoln County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2022-2026

Lincoln County has recognized the importance of providing quality recreational opportunities to its residents by developing and updating the Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP).

5-Year Capital Improvement Tables exist in the 2022-2026 Plan for the following County facilities that relate to Merrill:

- a. Jack Pines County Park in Merrill,
- b. Prairie River Dells Scenic Area (next to the Merrill Memorial Forest),
- c. Hay Meadow County Park, and
- d. Lincoln County ATV/UTV Trail System.

Major recommendations in the 2022-2026 County Plan that relate to Merrill are:

1. Establish Wisconsin River Bike Path
 - a. Along STH 107, and
 - b. Between Merrill and Wausau (DNR Segment 18),
2. Establish Scenic Byway Along Wisconsin River and through the Cities of Merrill and Tomahawk.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2019-2023

Every five years, the Wisconsin DNR publishes a SCORP as required by the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. At its core, this SCORP is used to help allocate federal funds equitably among local communities, but the document also transcends many levels of outdoor recreation discussion and policy.

This SCORP lays out five overarching goals for outdoor recreation:

1. Boost participation in outdoor recreation.
 2. Grow partnerships.
 3. Provide high-quality experiences.
 4. Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits.
 5. Enhance funding and financial stability.
- Park design and location criteria from SCORP are described in **Attachment A**.
 - SCORP identified outdoor recreation needs are in **Attachment E**.

State Trails Network Plan

This 2003 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors.

One Segment affects Merrill:

Segment 18 – Tomahawk to Wisconsin Dells

From the end of the Bearskin/Hiawatha Trail in Tomahawk, this corridor would go south to Merrill, and then into the West Central Region terminating in Wisconsin Dells. Part of State Highway 107 has wide shoulders to accommodate bicycles and was identified in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*. When the remaining section of highway is reconstructed, wide shoulders will be included. Going south, this corridor links to Wausau, where it could link up to Mountain Bay Trail from there by road corridors.

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report 2006-2056















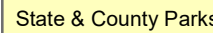
This report is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs for the next fifty years. Some of the questions asked to guide creation of this report were: Which lands and waters remain unprotected that will be critical for conserving our plants and animals and their habitats? What gaps exist now (and will likely emerge in the future) in providing abundant and satisfying outdoor recreation? How can we most effectively build upon the state's existing investment in protected lands to fill conservation and recreation gaps? What special places will our children and grandchildren wish we had protected? The study focused on identifying what of our state or regionally significant green infrastructure remains to be protected. These Land Legacy Areas are shown on MAP 1.

The report recommends protection of these lands by using federal, state, and local funding opportunities; along with possibly creating new kinds of incentives for landowners, working to draft comprehensive plans, or offering different types of technical assistance.

Recreation prioritization of Land Legacy Areas is described in SCORP's Chapter 3. Each Legacy Area near Merrill is summarized below with 5 stars representing the highest level for that category:

PR <u>Prairie River</u>		UW <u>Upper Wisconsin River</u>	
Size	Medium	Size	Large
Protection Initiated	Moderate	Protection Initiated	Moderate
Protection Remaining	Substantial	Protection Remaining	Moderate
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆	Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆	Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆
MW <u>Middle Wisconsin River</u>			
Size	Large		
Protection Initiated	Limited		
Protection Remaining	Substantial		
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆		
Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆☆		

Legend

-  Minor Civil Divisions
 -  US Highway
 -  State Highways
 -  County Highways
 -  Local Roads
 -  Railroad
 -  River Bend Trail
 -  Airport
 -  Canoe Portage
 -  Boat Launch
 -  School
 -  Park
 -  Park Areas
 -  Water
-  State & County Parks

Wisconsin Land Legacy Areas

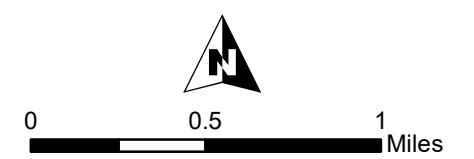
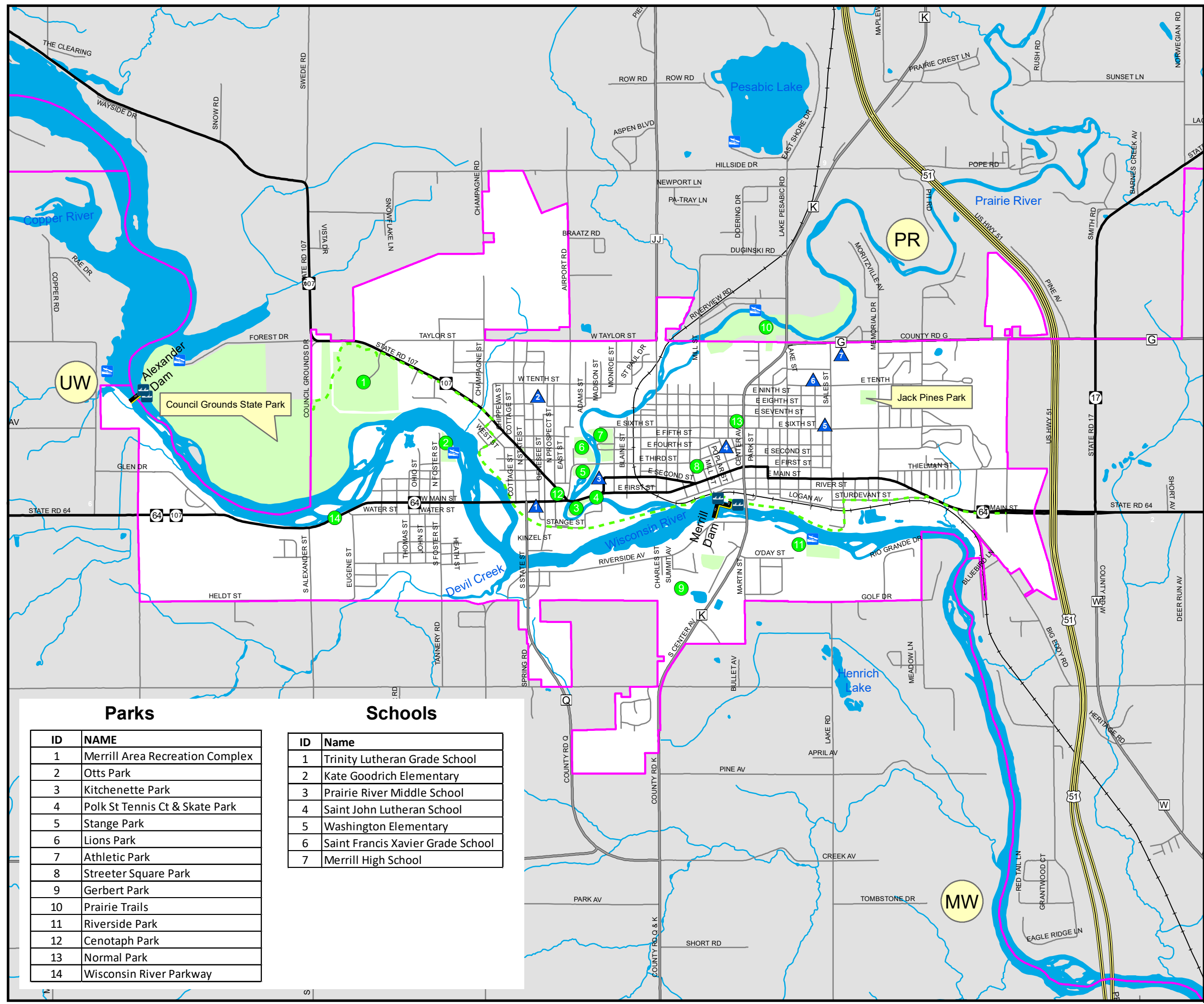
-  Upper Wisconsin River
-  Middle Wisconsin River
-  Prairie River

Parks

ID	NAME
1	Merrill Area Recreation Complex
2	Otts Park
3	Kitchenette Park
4	Polk St Tennis Ct & Skate Park
5	Stange Park
6	Lions Park
7	Athletic Park
8	Streeter Square Park
9	Gerbert Park
10	Prairie Trails
11	Riverside Park
12	Cenotaph Park
13	Normal Park
14	Wisconsin River Parkway

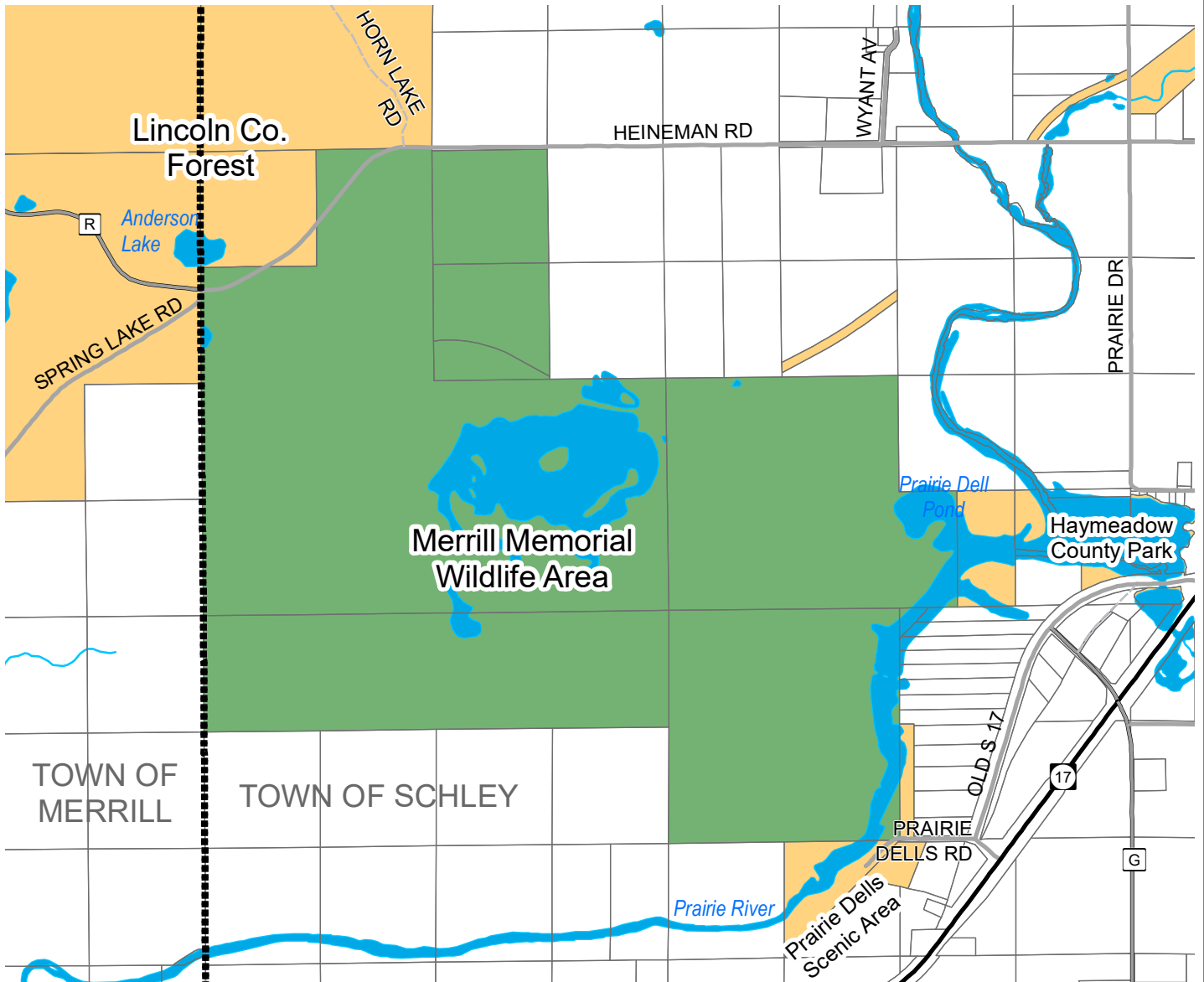
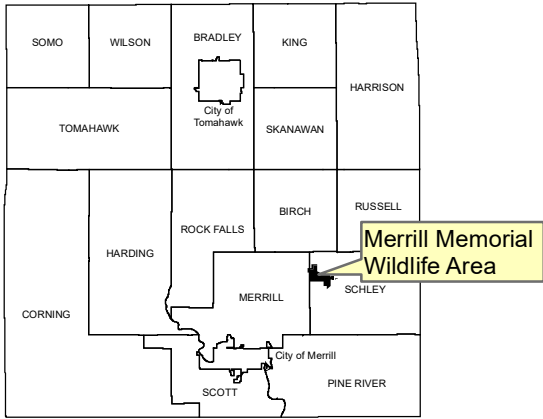
Schools

ID	Name
1	Trinity Lutheran Grade School
2	Kate Goodrich Elementary
3	Prairie River Middle School
4	Saint John Lutheran School
5	Washington Elementary
6	Saint Francis Xavier Grade School
7	Merrill High School



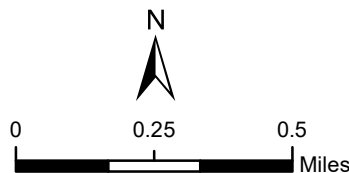
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Merrill Memorial Wildlife Area



Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US & State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private / Other
- ▭ Parcels
- ▭ Water
- ▭ County
- ▭ Merrill Memorial Wildlife Area



Source: WI DNR, Lincoln Co & NCWRPC

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North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Chapter 2:

BACKGROUND OF MERRILL

2.1 Introduction

Potential opportunities and limitations start with understanding an area. This section provides a basic feel for what the City of Merrill looks like physically, demographically, and economically.

The City of Merrill is located in southern Lincoln County and is located at the confluence of the Wisconsin and Prairie Rivers. The rivers divide the city into three distinct areas, one is south of the Wisconsin River, while the other two areas are north of the Wisconsin River, and are east or west of the Prairie River.

Merrill is the county seat and has a 2020 population of 9,347, which is about 33% of the total county population. The city encompasses about 5,000 acres.

Brief History

Native Americans inhabited the Merrill area for thousands of years, but left little permanent record, except for some burial grounds along the rivers. Council Grounds State Park is rumored to be the site where bands of Native Americans gathered for their annual councils and festivals. It is said they traveled down the Wisconsin River by canoe to meet here for several days and nights of celebration each year.

Merrill's modern history began in 1847 when a Scotsman named Andrew Warren came to the area to construct a dam on the Wisconsin River downstream of the Prairie River near what is today known as Mill Street. A small settlement sprang up around the dam and sawmill, which was first named "Jenny Bull Falls," later shortened to "Jenny." In 1881, the City's name was changed to "Merrill", after S.S. Merrill, the general manager of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad, which served the community at the time. The city was incorporated in 1883, and lumberman T.B. Scott was elected the city's first mayor.

As the supply of pine timber depleted, Merrill needed to find ways of diversifying their economy to support the lifestyle that the lumber boom years had given them. A wide variety of new industries were introduced to Merrill in the next several decades.

As Merrill advanced into the twentieth century, industrial diversification continued, as well as commercial and residential development. Merrill has a long history of educational, cultural, recreational, religious, and governmental pride and excellence.

2.2 Land Use

The city is about 7.5 square miles running roughly three miles east to west and about one mile north to south. Commercial development is stretched along State Highway 64 from the U.S. Highway 51 interchange to the west side of the city. There are numerous publicly owned parcels scattered throughout the city for schools, parks, county offices, city hall, library, and other community facilities. Industrial uses are concentrated along the railroad tracks that parallel the Wisconsin River, and the industrial park by the airport on the west side of Merrill. Scattered industrial properties exist among houses throughout the city.

There are about 5,090 acres of land within the city. As of Merrill’s 2017 Comprehensive Plan, about 23% of land was residential; 19.4% was woodlands, which includes some parks; 6% was governmental, which includes schools; 6.4% outdoor recreation, which also includes some parks; 12% was listed as open lands, most of which is in an area on the east side of Merrill that may become industrial and housing.

2.3 Demographics

In 2020, the City of Merrill’s Census population was 9,347 (see Table 1). The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) projects Merrill’s population to increase through 2030, and then decreasing to 8,990 by 2040, see Table 2. These projections were made off of the 2010 Census, and new projections will not be created until 2023 by WDOA.

Table 1: Merrill Population Projections

2020 Census	2025 Projections	2030 Projections	2035 Projections	2040 Projections
9,347	9,625	9,690	9,500	8,990

Source: U.S. Census, & WDOA

Demographic Trends

Table 2 shows a comparison between Merrill’s 2015 and 2020/2019 American Community Survey (U.S. Census) counts. As of 2020, fewer children under 5 years old and under 18 years old live in Merrill, and more people over 65 years old live in Merrill. The amount of high school graduates and residents with bachelor’s degrees have both increased as a percentage of the total population.

Table 2: Merrill's Quick Demographics

	2015 ACS	2020 Census/ACS
Population	9,419	9,347
Persons under 5 years	5.7%	4.6%
Persons under 18 years	22.5%	19.5%
Persons 65 years and over	17.4%	20.9%
Female persons	52.5%	51.6%
White persons (not Hispanic)	96.1%	96.0%
Black persons	0.6%	0.6%
American Indian persons	0.3%	0.1%
Asian persons	0.3%	0.4%
Hispanic or Latino persons	1.3%	0.9%
High school graduates or higher	88.2%	90.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	13.6%	16.3%
Housing units	4,562	4,503
Average household size	2.25	2.15
Median household income [ACS]	\$41,130	\$48,159

Source: U.S. Census & American Community Survey (ACS)

2.4 Economic Development

In 2019, the City of Merrill had a 63.9% labor force participation rate, and about 3.6% unemployment (see **Table 3**).

Of the 4,870 workers who lived in the City of Merrill in 2019, 79.5% drove alone to work, 11.7% carpooled, 0.5% used public transit, 4.2% walked, 1.2% took other means, and 2.8% worked at home. The mean travel time to work was 18.5 minutes.

Table 3: Merrill's Labor Force Indicators

	2015	2019
In Labor Force	4,994	4,870
Employed	4,646	4,695
Unemployed	348	175
Unemployment Rate	6.97%	3.59%
Participation Rate	66.3%	63.9%

Source: 2015 & 2019 ACS, & NCWRPC

Chapter 3:

EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES

The Merrill area park and recreation system consists of approximately 307 total acres within the city. This does not include snowmobile trails, River Bend Trail, or road trails. In addition to parkland within Merrill, the City also owns and maintains an additional 920 acres of wildlife area about 6 miles outside of Merrill, for a total of 1,201 acres. Public and private school playgrounds consist of 23.5 acres. Merrill High School has 12 acres. County owned outdoor recreation consist of the 11-acre Jack Pines County Park. State owned outdoor recreation in the Merrill area consists of the 503 acres of Council Grounds State Park. All parks are shown on Map 1.

Outdoor recreation in the City of Merrill includes trails (linear parks); 14 city parks of different classifications; 8 public and private school facilities that serve local recreation needs; one county park; and one state park.

Maps 1 shows outdoor recreational opportunities within the City.

Linear Parks

***Linear Parks** are trails that may have various lengths. (See Attachment A.)*

River Bend Trail – Merrill has an asphalt paved trail within a former railroad right-of-way that parallels the north side of the Wisconsin River. Total length of this trail is about 5.5 miles long in 2022.

Thrivent Way is a ½-mile woodchip trail loop off of the River Bend Trail, with one end beginning at Polk & Stange Streets.

Water Trails – A water trail is a network of access points, resting places, and attractions for users of water craft on lakes and rivers. Parts of the Wisconsin River and all of the Prairie River are available to canoe on. Portages have been established on the Wisconsin River to get around the Alexander and Merrill dams. All navigable water is available to canoe on. There are several public water access points within the Merrill area and are shown on **Map 1**.

The Wisconsin River Centennial Trail is a water trail that was established in 2007 to commemorate Wisconsin Valley Improvement Corporation's (WVIC) 100th year of coordinating flow on the Wisconsin River. Mile markers are typically located on the right side of the bridges and at portage take out sites.

Now, a new group is organized, with the approval of WVIC, to re-brand the Wisconsin River Centennial Trail to become: "Great Pinery Heritage Waterway." The project consists of re-marking a water trail with signs at landings on the Wisconsin River.

Snowmobile Trails – Lincoln County has approximately 305 miles of designated snowmobile trails that are part of the State snowmobile aid program, along with approximately 100 miles of club trails. About 230 miles of these snowmobile trails are also winter ATV trails. These trails pass through Merrill on non-permanent easements.

ATV/UTV Routes – The City of Merrill has established ATV/UTV routes and a speed limit through the City.

Mini Parks

Mini Parks: *Generally less than 5 acres, these parks are special areas that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. One prominent feature or recreation facility like a playground may be present as the purpose of this park. The **service area** for this park **if a playground exists** generally is a ½ mile radius, and a population of 2,000-3,000 people. (See Attachment A.)*

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. Listings with *italic titles* represent park like facilities at schools that may be available after school hours.

Polk Street Tennis Court & Skatepark: This one acre park is located along the Prairie River just east of Kitchenette Park. The park contains a lighted skatepark in a former tennis court.

The following **public schools** have outdoor recreation facilities that are available to the public outside of school hours:

(Closed) Jefferson Elementary School – A 7-acre open space with playground exists at this former public school, which is located in the southwest part of Merrill.

Washington Elementary School – A 3-acre open space with playground exists at this public school, which is located on the city's east side.

Kate Goodrich Elementary School – A 5-acre open space with playground exists at this public school, which is located on the city's north side.

The following **private schools** have outdoor recreation facilities that may be available to the public outside of school hours:

St. John's Lutheran Elementary School (K-8) – A 0.5-acre play area exists at this private school, which is located in the center of Merrill.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Elementary School (K-8) – A 4-acre playground exists at this private school, which is located in the northeast area of Merrill.

Trinity Lutheran Elementary School (K-8) – A 1.7-acre open space with playground exists at this private school, which is located on the city's west side.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks: Centrally located spaces of 5 to 25 acres that serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood are good neighborhood parks. Active and passive recreational activities in this park classification include field, court, and ball games; skating; crafts; and picnicking. Facilities may also include a playground, wading pool, ball field, multi-activity field, ball diamond, tennis courts, skatepark, and shelter. Trees, open fields, and undeveloped natural areas are also desirable components of neighborhood parks. The service area for this park generally is a 1 mile radius, and a population of 2,000-5,000 people. (See Attachment A.)

Normal Park: This 2 acre park is located north of downtown. It contains an outdoor ice skating rink with warming shelter and restrooms, picnic areas, ADA accessible playground, and the Bauman Family Memorial Gazebo with walkway.

Ott's Park: This 9 acre park is located on the north end of Foster Street along the Wisconsin River. This park has a children's playground, a softball field, boat landing, picnic areas, volleyball courts, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, concession stand with ADA restrooms, picnic shelter with electric and water service.

Riverside Park: This 22 acre park is located at the end of O'Day Street in the southeast portion of the City along the Wisconsin River. This park features a boat landing and boarding dock, picnic areas, sand volleyball court, horseshoes, an ADA accessible playground, ADA restroom facilities, a picnic shelter with water and electric service, 9-hole Eric Schalow Memorial Disc Golf Course, and a 3-hole ADA disc golf course.

Streeter Square Park: Streeter Square is a 2 acre park located to the immediate north of downtown. It contains a playground, smaller-than-youth-regulation basketball court, benches, and softball field.

Community Parks

Community Parks: *Usually more than 25 acres in size, these parks serve entire communities, and are located adjacent to a collector street to provide community-wide vehicular access. The purposes of this park are to meet the recreational needs of several neighborhoods, as well as to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. These parks allow for group activities not feasible at the neighborhood level. All of the facilities of a neighborhood park may exist, along with nature trails and scenic areas. (See Attachment A.)*

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. Listings with *italic titles* represent park like facilities at schools that may be available after school hours.

Lion's Park: Lion's Park is a 13.8 acre park located in the heart of Merrill along the Prairie River. The park consists of 5 little league baseball fields that serve Merrill's Little League program. In the winter months, the park has a sledding hill, and a warming shelter with restrooms.

Stange Park: Stange Park is an 11.6 acre park in the heart of Merrill along the Prairie River. This park includes a basketball court; playground; picnic shelter; a covered open-air shelter with restrooms, electrical outlets, and a concession area; outdoor ice rink; 6-hole disc golf course; sand volleyball courts; and several walking bridges over the Prairie River.

Kitchenette Park: This 6 acre park is located just south of Stange Park along the Prairie River. It contains a kitchen shelter with electricity and water service, ADA accessible restrooms, a playground, horseshoe pits, a 3-hole disc golf course, and a sand volleyball court.

Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC): This complex covers 96 acres and is located on the west side of the City, north of the Wisconsin River on Marc Drive. The MARC includes four youth softball fields, an announcer's booth/score booth, two multi-purpose baseball/softball fields, and one baseball field. All of the ball fields have covered dugouts. Concessions and restrooms exist by the youth and adult soccer fields. The park also includes three soccer fields, outdoor concession stand/restroom, an outdoor hockey rink, and a 2.5 acre off-leash dog park with separate areas for large and small dogs. About 2.5 miles of multi-purpose walking/hiking/biking trails connect to Council Grounds State Park and the River Bend Trail.

Smith Center: This building at the MARC houses an indoor ice skating rink, locker rooms, a weight room, a multi-purpose community room, a 17,000 foot convention area during non-ice months, and a concession kitchen. Indoor walking around the rink is also offered.

Bierman Family Aquatic Center: This outdoor pool facility at the MARC was made possible through City tax revenue and a \$4 million donation from the Bierman Foundation.

Features of this aquatic center include:

- Double slide
- Family slide
- Two diving boards
- Basketball area
- Rock climbing wall
- Floatable play structures
- Recreational swimming
- 6-lane competitive lap swim area
- Shade umbrellas & lounge area
- Zero depth splash pad with playground
- Concession area
- Changing facility with ticketing, changing rooms/rest rooms, and two family changing rooms

Merrill High School has 12 acres of outdoor recreational facilities located in the northeast area of the City. There are 3 soccer fields, one softball field, one baseball field, and a varsity football field and track.

Special Use Areas

Special Use Areas: *A special use park is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreational activity, or special event. A special use park may also be a sports park combined with enterprise activities and administered as a community recreation resource. Various functions include special events, fairs, festivals, expositions, symposiums, sport, community gatherings, and numerous other recreational programs and activities. (See Attachment A.)*

Cenotaph Park: This is a 0.3 acre memorial park is located on the corner of Highway 64 and North Prospect Street. It is a memorial park with a monument dedicated to veterans of our country.

Athletic Park: This historic 5 acre athletic facility, built in 1925 contains a baseball field, announcers booth, concession stand, newly constructed universally accessible restroom facilities, new LED lights, in ground irrigation, new dugouts, and a batting cage. This park has seen a considerable amount of improvements over the years. The park is used solely for baseball games, older youth leagues, through adult league games. The park has been improved to the point where it will begin to host large scale state tournaments.

Jack Pine County Park: This partially wooded 7 acre undeveloped area is adjacent to the Lincoln County Service Center building in Merrill. This site is used in winter for sledding and walking during the other seasons.

Wisconsin River Parkway: This partially wooded vista is between State Highway 64 and the Wisconsin River. Seven benches made out of red granite stones are oriented to allow for viewing the beautiful Wisconsin River or the highway. A picnic table and a parking bump out also exist in this parkway.

Conservancy Areas

Conservancy Areas: *Conservancy areas are managed for the flora & fauna resources that exist at a site. Activities like hiking, wildlife watching, hunting, and fishing may be allowed on these lands that may have labels like state natural areas, forests, or wildlife refuges. Each conservancy area has specific rules of use for public enjoyment. (See Attachment A.)*

Gebert Park: This 15 acre conservation protection area and wildlife habitat includes nature trails and is located south of the Wisconsin River.

Merrill Memorial Forest (Map 2): This 1,000 acre park is off of CTH R about 7 miles north of Merrill. Established after World War II to honor returning veterans, Memorial Forest is a wildlife habitat park with walking trails, wildlife habitat, the 80+ acre Don Manthei Wetland Recreation Area, a restroom, about 7.5 miles of mountain bike trails, additional hybrid bike trails, as well as over 8 miles of existing trails throughout the property, which are connected to Underdown County Forest Area and Prairie Dells County Park. The City of Merrill owns this park.

Prairie Trails: This 99 acre park with the Prairie River running through it is a silent sport recreation area located on the north side of the City. The park features 2.5 miles of multi-purpose hiking/walking/biking trails, picnic areas, picnic shelter, bridge, two canoe landings, overlook, fishing pier, boardwalk, and interpretive signage.

State Park

State Parks: *A state park, by size, program, and location, provides space for outdoor recreation and education about nature and conservation. These parks serve a significant geographic segment of a state or regional population. State parks aim to preserve, protect, interpret and enhance the scenic and cultural resources of the state. (See Attachment A.)*

Council Grounds State Park consists of 508 acres and is located on the west side of Merrill. Facilities include a 52 site campground and a 3-site group campground both with showers and flush toilets, and an RV dump station. Additional features include a swimming beach, picnic areas, restroom and changing building, boat launch onto Lake Alexander, an accessible fishing pier on an accessible trail containing fishing platforms jutting out into the water, enclosed log shelter, and several hiking trails. **Krueger Pines State Natural Area** (21 acres) is located in the southeast corner of Council Grounds State Park.

Chapter 4:

OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Recreational needs within the city were identified by 1) collecting public input, 2) needs driven park planning, and 3) creating a park Level of Service assessment.

4.1 Public Input

1. Informal Public Input

In the regular course of business, the City of Merrill's staff, and Park & Rec. Commission members have received public input about the parks. That input and staff's professional experience will also shape what changes are implemented.

2. Input from Reference Plans

A variety of plan's goals & objectives and recommended projects that affect the City of Merrill are summarized in Chapter 1 under: "Reference Plans."

3. Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

In the winter/spring of 2022, this survey was sent out for customer feedback. Merrill Parks & Recreation Department emailed survey notices to all recreation groups that do business with the City, along with posting the survey link on the City's Facebook page multiple times and the City's homepage. The survey was open for 1-month. The survey was also available via a link on both NCWRPC's website for this ORP and the Merrill Parks Department website.

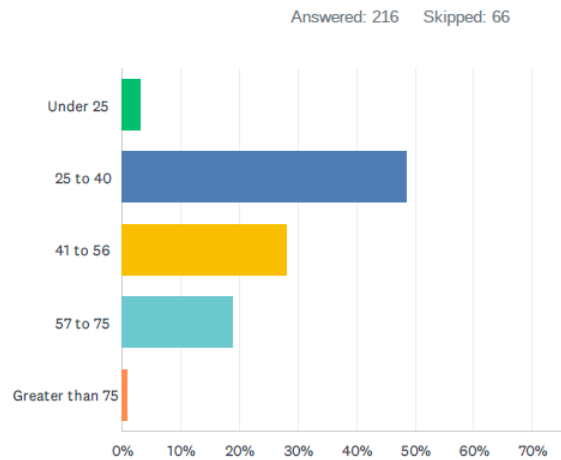
We received **282 responses** to the survey. Although not statistically significant of the whole population, this survey does provide a much deeper understanding of the wants and needs for outdoor recreation than a public hearing, so the results are still very valuable. Respondents were allowed to skip questions, so several questions had smaller response groups.

Due to an error when creating the survey, the first 107 respondents did not have the ability to mark if they lived in Zones 6, 7, or 8, so those areas of Merrill may be under-represented—only 18 respondents skipped the map question after stating that they lived in Merrill. About 58% of respondents live in the City of Merrill. All areas of the City were represented with about 86% of those who live in Merrill marking what area they live in (see **Figure 2** below).

Through an IP address analysis of who took the survey it appears that 26 IP addresses are at least duplicated, which could mean that a husband and wife both took the survey. Twenty-two IP addresses repeated twice, three IP addresses repeated 3 times, and the other IP address repeated 9 times. All of those duplicate IP addresses did not have the same answers, but a few duplicates were of people starting the survey and not finishing or realizing that they already completed the survey and then did not complete it. Either way, it appears that nobody “stuffed the ballot box.”

A majority of the respondents were female (58% female, 42% male). Respondents came from all age groups, with a strong showing of almost 50% in the 25 to 40 age group. See **Figure 1**.

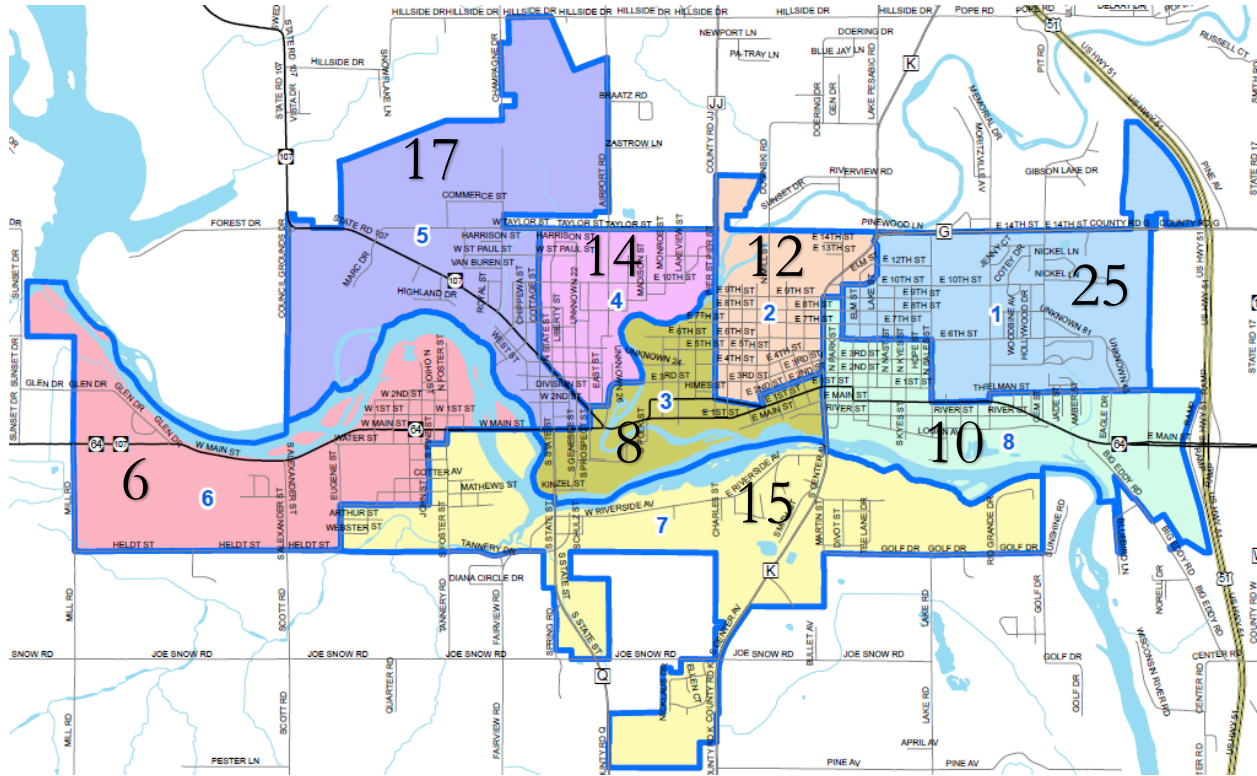
Figure 1 Q26 What is your age?



Where do you live?

- 90 respondents (41.7%) do not live in Merrill.
- 108 respondents (58.3%) noted where they live per **Figure 2**:

Figure 2



Key Findings of the ORP Survey:

Answered: 282 Skipped: 0

- The most frequent outdoor recreational activities respondents participated in:
 1. Walking / Hiking 79% of responses
 2. Events / Festivals / Fairs 72% of responses
 3. Swimming 61% of responses
 4. Fishing 51% of responses
 5. Playground Usage 48% of responses
 6. Boating 45% of responses
 7. Dog walking / Dog park 42% of responses
 8. Canoeing / Kayaking 41% of responses
 9. Bicycling 41% of responses
 10. Gardening 40% of responses

For the full survey results (65 pages) go to Attachment D.

Q2. What potential outdoor recreational opportunities should be developed in Merrill?

Answered: 133 Skipped: 149

1. More bike trails **20** responses
2. More events/festivals/fairs **18** responses
Christmas market, Crazy Daze, battle of the bands,
Maxwell Street Days, Chili/Soup Feeds, Ice sculpting, Riverfest,
Oktoberfest, Food truck night
3. Improve skate park **16** responses
4. Pickleball **14** responses
5. Better park/playground equipment **12** responses
6. More activities for kids (in summer) **12** responses
 - a. Camps for middle schoolers
 - b. Summer swim team for younger swimmers
 - c. Fishing club for kids
7. Specific MARC improvements **12** responses
8. Places to launch kayaks/paddle boards **9** responses
9. Splash pad **9** responses

Q3. How often do you use the following parks or trails?

Answered: 242 Skipped: 40

	I DON'T USE THIS PARK/TRAIL	OCCASIONALLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	TOTAL
Normal Park	20.17% 48	52.52% 125	13.03% 31	14.29% 34	238
Ott's Park	36.97% 88	49.16% 117	8.40% 20	5.46% 13	238
Riverside Park	20.25% 48	55.27% 131	15.61% 37	8.86% 21	237
Streeter Square Park	66.95% 156	25.75% 60	4.72% 11	2.58% 6	233
Lion's Park	44.26% 104	41.70% 98	7.66% 18	6.38% 15	235
Stange Park	22.36% 53	58.23% 138	13.50% 32	5.91% 14	237
Kitchenette Park	29.36% 69	58.30% 137	8.94% 21	3.40% 8	235
MARC ballfields	44.87% 105	25.21% 59	6.84% 16	23.08% 54	234
MARC dog park	66.53% 157	21.61% 51	7.20% 17	4.66% 11	236
MARC trails	35.74% 84	40.43% 95	14.04% 33	9.79% 23	235
Bierman Family Aquatic Center	33.33% 80	33.33% 80	19.58% 47	13.75% 33	240
Cenotaph Park	94.44% 221	5.13% 12	0.43% 1	0.00% 0	234
Athletic Park	73.62% 173	19.57% 46	2.55% 6	4.26% 10	235
Gerbert Park	91.91% 216	5.53% 13	1.28% 3	1.28% 3	235
Prairie Trails	40.93% 97	39.24% 93	11.81% 28	8.02% 19	237
River Bend Trail	8.75% 21	28.33% 68	24.58% 59	38.33% 92	240
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	73.62% 173	22.13% 52	1.70% 4	2.55% 6	235
Merrill Festival Grounds	15.42% 37	72.92% 175	8.75% 21	2.92% 7	240
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	82.91% 194	14.53% 34	2.14% 5	0.43% 1	234
Council Grounds State Park	7.02% 17	49.17% 119	27.27% 66	16.53% 40	242

Q4. Rate your satisfaction with the following parks or trails?

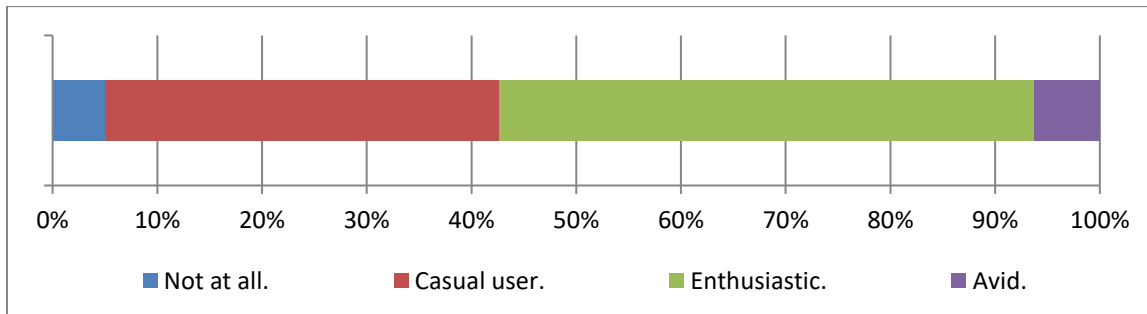
Answered: 242 Skipped: 40

	I DON'T USE THIS PARK/TRAIL	VERY SATISFIED	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	TOTAL
Normal Park	20.50% 49	42.26% 101	31.80% 76	5.44% 13	0.00% 0	239
Ott's Park	29.11% 69	10.13% 24	35.02% 83	20.25% 48	5.49% 13	237
Riverside Park	19.33% 46	26.89% 64	43.70% 104	9.24% 22	0.84% 2	238
Streeter Square Park	56.30% 134	6.30% 15	17.23% 41	10.50% 25	9.66% 23	238
Lion's Park	41.60% 99	11.76% 28	32.77% 78	13.45% 32	0.42% 1	238
Stange Park	18.49% 44	22.69% 54	42.02% 100	13.03% 31	3.78% 9	238
Kitchenette Park	24.89% 59	27.85% 66	38.82% 92	8.02% 19	0.42% 1	237
MARC ballfields	45.80% 109	28.57% 68	21.85% 52	2.94% 7	0.84% 2	238
MARC dog park	61.86% 146	12.71% 30	19.92% 47	5.51% 13	0.00% 0	236
MARC trails	35.86% 85	23.63% 56	35.44% 84	5.06% 12	0.00% 0	237
Biemman Family Aquatic Center	33.47% 80	35.98% 86	25.52% 61	4.18% 10	0.84% 2	239
Cenotaph Park	90.21% 212	2.98% 7	2.55% 6	3.40% 8	0.85% 2	235
Athletic Park	68.94% 162	11.06% 26	17.02% 40	2.98% 7	0.00% 0	235
Gerbert Park	89.36% 210	3.40% 8	2.98% 7	2.13% 5	2.13% 5	235
Prairie Trails	39.66% 94	17.30% 41	32.07% 76	10.55% 25	0.42% 1	237
River Bend Trail	9.21% 22	64.44% 154	25.10% 60	1.26% 3	0.00% 0	239
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	73.82% 172	6.87% 16	12.45% 29	6.01% 14	0.86% 2	233
Merrill Festival Grounds	17.23% 41	22.69% 54	46.22% 110	12.61% 30	1.26% 3	238
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	82.55% 194	3.83% 9	9.79% 23	2.55% 6	1.28% 3	235
Council Grounds State Park	8.30% 20	44.81% 108	39.42% 95	7.05% 17	0.41% 1	241

Q5. Read 64 comments about the parks in Attachment D.

Q6. What type of water enthusiast are you?

Answered: 239 Skipped: 43



Not at all. (I'm not interested in water recreation at all, not even with friends.)

Casual user. (I like to use the water, but only do so occasionally.)

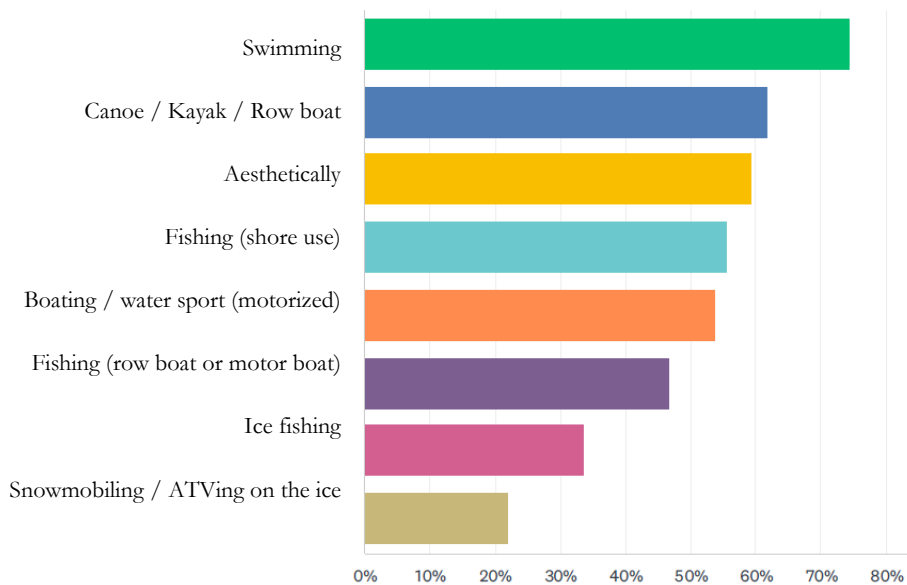
Enthusiastic. (I access or go on the water regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)

Avid. (I am always on the water or ice every chance I get.)

Q7. How do you use the water?

(Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 223 Skipped: 59



Q8. List which water body you use most often. Answered: 189 Skipped: 93

(Word Cloud – The larger the word the more mentions)

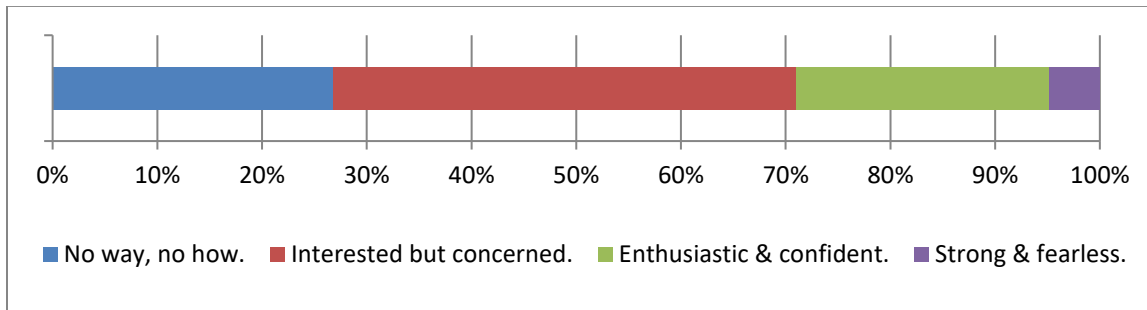
Tug Lake Prairie River Wisconsin Lake Pesobic Alexander
 Lake Alexander Lake Wisconsin River
 Lake Alexander lake Wi river Pesobic Prairie River Council Grounds

Q9. What public boat landings or water access improvements are needed in the City of Merrill. Answered: 83 Skipped: 199

(Word Cloud – The larger the word the more mentions)

use canoe kayak Ott s put Unknown Riverside Park lot
 council grounds kayak launch Better Otts Park
 Riverside Merrill dock need boat landing
 Boat Landing needs Park Lake Pesobic access Ott dam areas
 river Lake Alexander take prairie river kayaks lights portage Otts

Q10. What type of bicyclist are you? Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



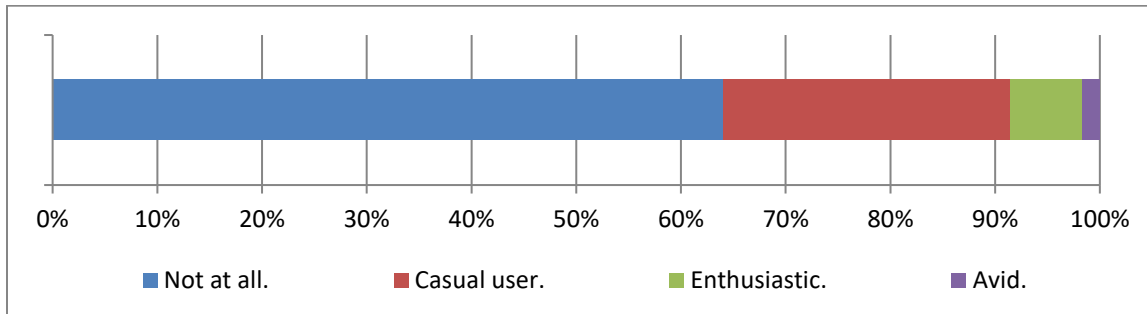
No way, no how. (I’m not interested in biking at all, not even for recreation.)

Interested but concerned. (I like riding, but don’t do it regularly. I’m generally concerned that my route is not safe to ride, so I don’t ride often. I definitely do not ride when the weather is bad.)

Enthusiastic and confident. (I feel comfortable sharing the road with motor vehicles, but I prefer to ride on separate facilities like bike lanes. I may or may not ride in inclement weather.)

Strong and fearless. (I am confident in my abilities and will ride regardless of roadway conditions, amount of traffic, or inclement weather.)

Q11. What type of snowmobile enthusiast are you? Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



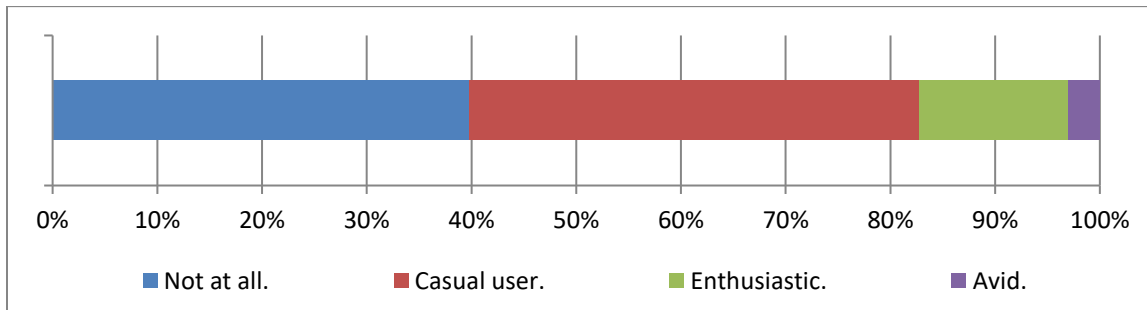
Not at all. (I'm not interested in snowmobiling at all, not even with friends.)

Casual user. (I like snowmobiling for fun, but **only** do so occasionally, **OR only** on my own land.)

Enthusiastic. (I access or go on snowmobile routes and trails regularly.)

Avid. (I am always on a snowmobile every chance I get – all season long.)

Q12. What type of motorized vehicle (ATV/UTV/ Off-Highway Motorcycle) enthusiast are you? Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



Not at all. (I'm not interested in motorized recreation at all, not even for recreation.)

Casual user. (I like using motorized vehicles for fun, but **only** do so occasionally, **OR only** on my own land.)

Enthusiastic. (I access or go on motorized routes and trails regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)

Avid. (I am always on a motorized vehicle every chance I get – all year long.)

Q13. Rate the following statement:

“Promote the Prairie River water trail (see picture) among citizens and visitors, after a canoe take-out is installed somewhere in Kitchenette Park.”

Answered: 224 Skipped: 58

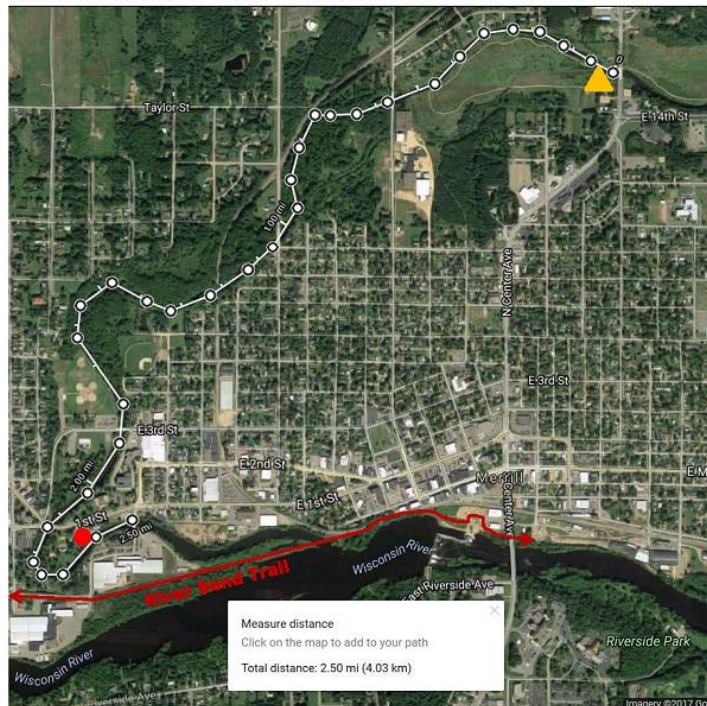
4.3★
average rating



▲ Launch – Prairie Trails Park

● **Potential** canoe take out – Stange Kitchenette Park (or in the nearby vicinity)

Note: This potential trail would connect to the **River Bend Trail**.



Q14. Rate the following statement:

“Develop pedestrian bridge from an E. Main Street property south (over rail line) onto land adjacent to the Wisconsin River.”

Answered: 219 Skipped: 63

3.7★

average rating





Potential pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks



Pedestrian Bridge
From: Merrill Downtown Vision Plan



-  = Potential pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks
-  = Potential ramp connecting bridge to River Bend Trail

Q15. Rate the following statement:

“Continue disc golf initiative.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

2.2★

average rating



Q16. Rate the following statement:

“Complete new fence and replace lights at Otts Park’s ball field.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

2.8★

average rating



Q17. Rate the following statement:

“Extend potable water, and install amenities in dog park at the MARC.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

2.6★

average rating



Q18. Rate the following statement:

“Explore having curling at the MARC (possibly in a building addition).”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

2.7★

average rating



Q19. Rate the following statement:

“Install toilets near MARC baseball field.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

3.5★

average rating



Q20. Rate the following statement:

“Add lights to varsity softball field at the MARC.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

3.3★

average rating



Q21. Rate the following statement:

“Explore installing sculptures, carvings, or murals throughout City.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

2.3★

average rating



Q22. Rate the following statement:

“Work on establishing River Bend Trail as a state trail.”

Answered: 218 Skipped: 64

3.6★

average rating

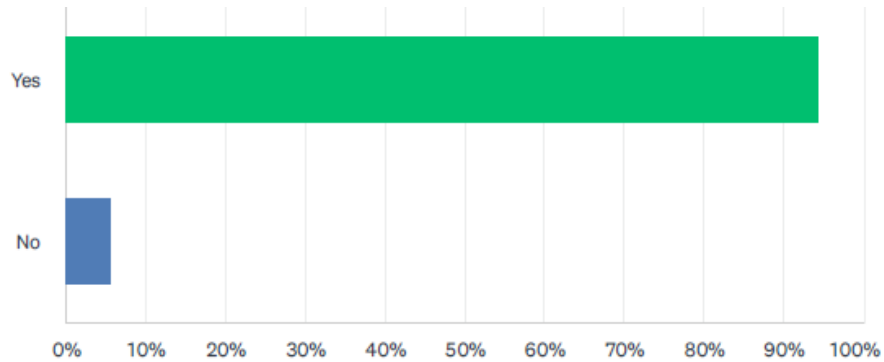


Q23. Is this vision still relevant for the next 5 years?

Answered: 216 Skipped: 66

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.”

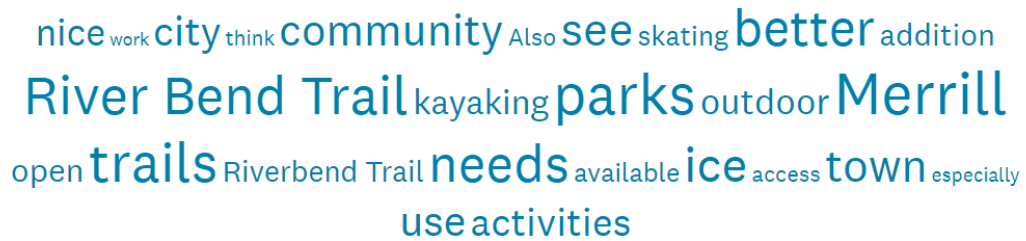


Note: 24 respondents also commented on the vision statement.

Q25. Any other concerns?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 233

(Word Cloud – The larger the word the more mentions)



4.2 Needs Driven Park Planning

Since the 1960's, an accepted practice has been to adopt a uniform national land standard, such as 10 acres per 1,000 population, for park planning. A standard amount of land for parks and recreation nationwide is no longer recognized as universal for a park.

A standard land measure is still used to determine how much land is needed for a specific use like a baseball diamond. Facility standards are used for this purpose (**Attachment B**). The number of baseball diamonds and other facilities are not the same among similar sized communities nationally; therefore a Level of Service needs to be created locally.

Besides creating a Level of Service for each park classification, other measures such as geographic distribution and universal accessibility, are also used to determine the adequacy of a community's parks.

Universal accessibility is making facilities (e.g., tables, drinking fountains, and restrooms) accessible to people with limited mobility. Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards are followed when purchasing or modifying facilities for universal accessibility. Each park and its park facilities are described in Chapter 3. If changes to park facilities are necessary to make them ADA compliant, then suggested improvements will be listed in Chapter 6 under each park.

1. Park Design Criteria

Parks of any size are useful, but when land is set aside in subdivision plats for future parks, then the appropriate size and reason for the park needs to be established. Park design criteria become useful when deciding on a communities' *official map* (§62.23(6) *WI. Stats.*) where future parks should be.

Park design criteria is described in **Attachment A** for the full variety of park types.

Each park classification contains the following:

- Definition,
- Size Objectives;
- Service Area Objectives;
- Location Objectives;
- Space, and Design;
- Orientation; and
- Function.

Park Acreage

The size of a park is determined by two criteria:

1. Physical geography. Does the site have steep hills, woodlands, or wetlands? Such natural features are useful for exploration, conservation, aesthetic buffers, and unprogrammed buffers between uses.
2. Park facilities. *What activities are allowed or will be allowed?* This is determined by physical inventory and by asking for public input.

How much land is needed for each use? This is determined by Facility Development Standards in **Attachment B** for a large variety of activity types.

Park acreage in **Table 4** shows how the City of Merrill’s park system (including school playgrounds) compares with state standards for the size of each park as grouped by classification. Parks are listed by classification in Chapter 3.

Table 4 Park Acreage, 2020		
Classification	SCORP Recommendation	Merrill average park size
Mini	0.5 – 5* acres	1.0
Neighborhood	5 – 25 acres	8.8
Community	25+ acres	31.9

Source: WDNR, & NCWRPC

*SCORP states that a mini park is 0.5-1.5 acres, but a gap from 1.5-5 acres exists, so that gap was added to the mini park size.

Park Design Criteria Conclusions (space within each park) – All of the City of Merrill’s parks appear to meet these criteria for space and facilities within each park, and that is why they fall into specific park categories.

- The average park sizes for the City of Merrill **are in line with** State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recommendations for each classification per Table 7, but many individual parks are not.
- Park acreages for each park in Merrill are appropriate based upon the facilities identified in each park per the descriptions in Chapter 3.
- Among the developed parks in the City of Merrill, features within each park (identified in Chapter 3) have enough space to function properly, are well maintained, and have unprogrammed buffer space between uses.

2. Park Service Areas

Parks must be close to where residents live for people to consider a park useful. Just like schools, park types (mini, neighborhood, and community) are provided for each life cycle, and therefore each park type must cover every resident.

Map 3 illustrates how well City residents are served by the various parks. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides the following guidelines for park placement:

- Mini park service area: ½-mile radius, or a population of 2,000-3,000.
- Neighborhood park service area
Every neighborhood park serves **both** as a mini and a neighborhood park:
½ mile radius, or a population of 2,000-3,000, **and**
1 mile radius, or a population of 2,000-5,000.
- Elementary school grounds service area: same as *neighborhood parks*, because in the City of Merrill many public elementary school grounds have the same level of playgrounds and play areas similar to *neighborhood parks*, so their service areas are the same.

- Community park service area: 2-5 mile radius (shown on Map 3 with a neighborhood service area and a mini park service area, because they serve as neighborhood parks and as whole community parks).
- County and State park service areas are larger than the community they are located within.

Park Service Area Conclusions – Map 3 shows the park service areas. Every neighborhood should be covered with each of three types of parks – *mini*, *neighborhood*, and *community*. Since *community parks* serve the whole community, no radius is identified.

Residential areas that are not served by at least a *mini park*:

Area “A” on Map 3 – About 85 housing units (with room for another 25 units) to the north and south of Thielman Street are about 1-mile walking distance from Washington Elementary.

Recommendation: Pursue development of a mini park (at least a playground and multiuse playfield) on 4-acres of land the City owns just east of the condominiums on Thielman Street.

Area “B” on Map 3 – About 20 houses and a 30-bed elderly housing facility are interspersed with commercial properties along both sides of CTH K from O’Day Street to Joe Snow Road.

Recommendation: No change. These residents enjoy a more rural environment within the City and will just drive to their favorite park. The elderly housing probably has on-site recreation.

Area “C” on Map 3 – About 35 houses (with room for 27 more houses) in the subdivision southwest of Joe Snow Road and CTH K.

Recommendation: A mini park is needed to serve these houses. Consider acquiring at least 5-acres for a *neighborhood level park* in this area for existing and future residential.

Area “D” on Map 3 – About 79 housing units west of Johnson St, between 6th St and 14th Street.

Recommendation: No change. These residents are just outside the 0.5 mile service area of Washington Elementary’s playgrounds.

Area “E” on Map 3 – About 160 apartments on Jackson Street and Willow Bend Court.

Recommendation: No change. These residents are just outside the 0.5 mile service area of the former Jefferson Elementary’s playgrounds. A Jackson St connection between Eugene St and Alexander St would provide a direct route to the playgrounds.

Area “F” on Map 3 – About 40 houses along STH 107, and along Glen Drive area.

Recommendation: No change. These residents enjoy their Wisconsin River views and will drive to their favorite park.

Area “G” on Map 3 – About 190 houses in the 6th Ward of Merrill that are currently served by the playgrounds and play fields at the closed Jefferson Elementary.

Recommendation: See Chapter 6 for the recommendation titled: **Create a park at former Jefferson Elementary.**

3. Level of Service

A Level of Service (LOS) approach is used to identify if enough park land exists for a community’s needs. This revised approach is defined by the community’s needs rather than an arbitrary acreage-per-1000-people standard. The LOS is generated locally for each park classification (e.g., mini, neighborhood, or community). Public input is collected, and the needs for a particular park, or whole park classification, are determined. If the public is content with the existing parks within a park classification, then the LOS is applied to the whole population. If the public determines that individual parks need more facilities in them, then a particular park needing additional land may become reclassified into the next larger classification. When the community grows in population the LOS is used to calculate how many additional parks are needed.

Parks are listed by classification in Chapter 3.

This is the formula used in **Table 5** to create the acres per 1,000 people, which is the Level of Service (LOS):

$$\text{LOS by classification} = \frac{\text{Park acres per classification}}{(\text{City Population} \div 1,000 \text{ population served})}$$

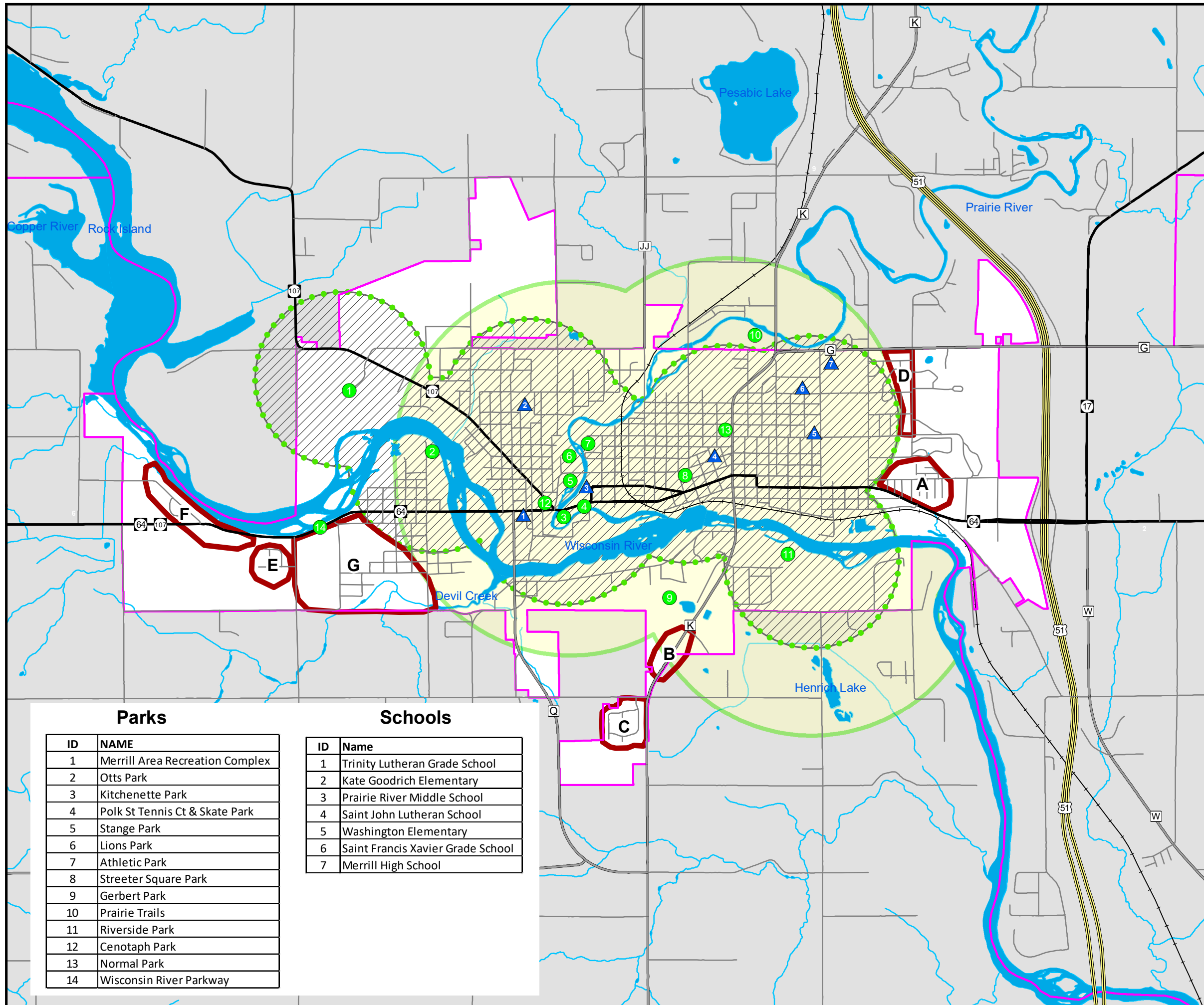
Park Classification	2015		2020	
	Total Acres	Acres per 1,000 people	Total Acres	Acres per 1,000 people
Mini	16	1.7	16	1.7
Neighborhood	35	3.7	35	3.7
Community	139.4	14.8	139.4	14.9
Special Use	41.3	4.4	37.3	4.0
Total	231.7	24.6	227.7	24.4

Source: NCWRPC

Merrill had a 24.6 citywide Level Of Service (LOS) in 2015, which basically remained constant in 2020 (24.4). The 2020 LOS went down due to a slight decrease in population and Jack Pine County Park losing acreage due to construction of the Lincoln County Service Center building.

Level Of Service Results

As Map 3 shows, this Level Of Service includes both parks and public school grounds and covers the vast majority of Merrill residents very well. Other neighborhoods may need parks, which are also identified on Map 3 and described under “Park Service Area Conclusions.”



Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- U.S. Highways
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- School
- Park
- Mini Parks (0.5 Mile)
- Neighborhood Parks (1 Mile)
- Underserved Areas
- B** See pages 35 & 36



0 0.5 1 Miles

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Parks	
ID	NAME
1	Merrill Area Recreation Complex
2	Otts Park
3	Kitchenette Park
4	Polk St Tennis Ct & Skate Park
5	Stange Park
6	Lions Park
7	Athletic Park
8	Streeter Square Park
9	Gerbert Park
10	Prairie Trails
11	Riverside Park
12	Cenotaph Park
13	Normal Park
14	Wisconsin River Parkway

Schools	
ID	Name
1	Trinity Lutheran Grade School
2	Kate Goodrich Elementary
3	Prairie River Middle School
4	Saint John Lutheran School
5	Washington Elementary
6	Saint Francis Xavier Grade School
7	Merrill High School

Chapter 5:

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The development of an efficient outdoor recreation plan depends upon establishing specific recreation and open-space goals and objectives from public participation and Park Commission revision and refinement. These goals and objectives are meant to guide City officials as they work towards providing a recreation system to meet the needs of the City of Merrill’s residents and visitors over the next 5 years.

2022 Outdoor Recreation Survey respondents approve of the following recreation vision:

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.”

Goal 1 – Continue developing Merrill as a walking and bicycling friendly community and destination.

Objectives

1. Continue implementing the Merrill Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.
2. Continue to encourage development of the River Bend Trail.
3. Work on establishing River Bend Trail as a state trail.
4. Continue implementing the Merrill Safe Routes to School Plan.
5. Work on becoming an Ice Age Trail Community.
6. Encourage completion of the Ice Age Trail within Lincoln County.

Goal 2 – Improve water access within Merrill.

Objectives

1. Increase boat, shore, and canoe/kayak access to the Prairie and Wisconsin Rivers.
2. Promote water touring routes.

Goal 3 – Continue improving Merrill’s outdoor recreation facilities.

Objectives

1. Maintain and improve existing recreational facilities as outlined in the Chapter 6 Capital Improvement lists.
2. Continue planning and upgrading recreational facilities to accommodate the elderly and handicapped.
3. As projects are added, so should the staffing levels to accommodate the additional workload.

Chapter 6:

RECOMMENDATIONS & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendations & Capital Improvements are ways for satisfying issues identified during the planning process, which included citizen input, Park & Recreation Commission member ideas, and staff analysis throughout all the preceding chapters. 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 as the opportunity or need arises.

There are a variety of strategies available for implementing this plan. Chapter 7 provides a wide variety of implementation techniques to use. By using the following recommendations, and implementation techniques in Chapter 7, the City of Merrill can improve and preserve outdoor recreation for current residents and future generations.

This chapter is divided into the following sections:

6.1 General Recommendations – Citywide strategies and policies.

6.2 Individual Park Capital Improvements – Physical construction projects.

6.1 General Recommendations

Several issues came to light through the results of the community survey, staff analysis, and Commission meetings.

Each recommendation has a suggested timeframe:

- **Short-term (6 months-2 years)** – Projects that can be implemented without the need for specific grant funds or large coordinative efforts.
- **Medium-term (2-3 years)** – Projects that may require some planning to include in the City’s CIP or would be eligible for upcoming grant cycles.
- **Long-term (possibly longer than 5 years)** – Projects that require a more coordinated effort, design time, or are beyond the current budget of a community.

Establish New Parks

Needs Driven Park Planning on pages 35 & 36 identified where deficiencies in the park system exist.

Area “A” on Map 3 – About 85 housing units (with room for another 25 units) to the north and south of Thielman Street are about 1-mile walking distance from Washington Elementary.

Recommendation (Medium-term): Pursue development of a mini park (at least a playground and multiuse playfield) on 4-acres of land the City owns just east of the condominiums on Thielman Street.

Area “B” on Map 3 – No change.

Area “C” on Map 3 – About 35 houses (with room for 27 more houses) in the subdivision southwest of Joe Snow Road and CTH K.

Recommendation (Long-term): A mini park is needed to serve these houses. Consider acquiring at least 5-acres for a *neighborhood level park* in this area for existing and future residential.

Area “D” on Map 3 – No change.

Area “E” on Map 3 – No change.

Area “F” on Map 3 – No change.

Area “G” on Map 3 – About 190 houses in the 6th Ward of Merrill that are currently served by the playgrounds and play fields at the closed Jefferson Elementary.

Recommendation (Medium-term): See next page for the recommendation titled: **Create a park at former Jefferson Elementary.**

Merrill Bike & Pedestrian Plan

Survey results in 2017 and in 2022 both show a strong desire for more walking & bike trails. The City adopted the Merrill Bike & Pedestrian Plan in 2015. Within the Plan are recommendations for improving walking and biking in Merrill.

Recommendation (Short- to Long-term): Continue to implement the 2015 Merrill Bike & Pedestrian Plan.

Create a park at former Jefferson Elementary

With the recent closure of Jefferson Elementary School, it cannot be guaranteed that the school playgrounds will be available to the community if the school is sold.




Recommendation 1 (Medium-term): Consider acquiring at least 4 acres (see **Figure 3**) of school land west of the school building for a mini park to provide a playground, parking, and a multi-activity field. Acquiring the whole property for outdoor recreation would create a *neighborhood level* park that would provide additional park coverage for the projected housing expansion of Merrill's 6th Ward.

Recommendation 2 (Medium-term): Consider acquiring a 60-foot wide strip of land for a road extension right-of-way from Matthews St, south to Jackson Street.

Figure 3



Source: Lincoln County GIS Map Viewer

-  = Potential park at least 4 acres in size.
-  = Potential land buffer.
-  = Potential road right-of-way.

Great Pinery Heritage Waterway Water Trail

The Wisconsin River Centennial Trail is a water trail that was established in 2007 to commemorate Wisconsin Valley Improvement Corporation's (WVIC) 100th year of coordinating flow on the Wisconsin River. The primary purpose of the trail is to provide Wisconsin River users with information and visual representation of all the portages on the Wisconsin River along with descriptions of amenities along the river important to canoeists and kayakers.

Now, a new group is organized, with the approval of WVIC, to re-brand the Wisconsin River Centennial Trail to become: "Great Pinery Heritage Waterway."

This is a local multi-county effort to increase tourism in central Wisconsin to become a destination for paddlers and hopefully attract some of them to become residents. Historical signage at landings along the trail will tell the story of the river's heritage and its people. A website will also be created that not only highlights the water trails but all the outdoor recreational opportunities in Central Wisconsin, which will offer tourists a one-stop experience to "come for a weekend and stay for a lifetime."

Recommendation (Medium-term): Continue cooperating with the Great Pinery Heritage Waterway group to install Wisconsin River signage and promote parks and destinations within Merrill.

Bicycle Repair Station

Public bicycle repair stations provide an area for cyclists to re-inflate tires, tune bikes, and make repairs while away from home. Installing these stations along popular routes bolsters support of cycling as a mode of transport or recreational activity. Cyclists can be confident that if they have a minor problem on the road, that facilities are nearby for the necessary repairs.

Recommendation 1 (Short-term): Consider locating a bicycle repair station with air pump at a park that has the potential for high visibility to bike users.

Possible locations:

- 1a.** Cenotaph Park is a good choice because Grand Avenue has bike lanes. Install bike repair signs & arrow signs on Grand Avenue to direct riders to the location of the repair station (see **Attachment F**).
- 1b.** Agra Pavilion trailhead on the River Bend Trail.
- 1c.** MARC walking & biking path trailhead.

Recommendation 2 (Long-term): Consider where additional bicycle repair stations with air pumps could be located as the need arises. A bicycle repair station could be at a gas station, apartment building, park, bicycle trailhead, school, or a business.

Establish Walking & Biking Paths

The 2022 Merrill ORP survey shows that respondent's most frequent outdoor recreational activities include **walking/hiking** (79%), and **bicycling** (41%). The 2022 survey also showed that by far the #1 opportunity that should be developed in Merrill are **more bike trails**.

Lincoln County has had a casual un-marked scenic automobile & bicycle circle route in the county for decades. Only those in-the-know realize the great scenic beauty that residents have known for years. This tour route includes STH 107, STH 17, highways through both Merrill and Tomahawk, and a few county highways. The most scenic leg of this circle route is STH 107 along the Wisconsin River. Full reconstruction of STH 107 is not scheduled yet, but that would be the time to install an off-road walking and bicycling path parallel to the highway. The following recommendation is also in the Lincoln County ORP 2022-2026:

Wisconsin River Recommendation (Long-term): When WisDOT is in the initial design phase for upgrading STH 107, then inform them of the need for a paved or compacted gravel off-road walking & bicycling path alongside the highway. A compacted gravel surface could become a snowmobile trail in winter.

In Chapter 1 of this Merrill ORP is a reference to off-road trail potential between Tomahawk and Wisconsin Dells (Segment 18).

Segment 18 Recommendation (Long-term): Consider pursuing off-road bike & pedestrian trail development between Merrill and Wausau per Segment 18 reference.

Within the 2015 City of Merrill Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is the recommendation for a variety of on-road bike routes, including one that connects the City to the Merrill Memorial Forest.

Prairie River to Memorial Forest Recommendation (Medium-term): Establish a bike route on roads connecting Prairie River Trails with the Merrill Memorial Forest.

Ice Age Trail (IAT) Community

The 2022 Merrill ORP survey shows that respondent's most frequent outdoor recreational activities include **walking/hiking** (79%), and **bicycling** (41%). The 2022 survey also showed that by far the #1 opportunity that should be developed in Merrill are **more bike trails**.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance's Trail Communities program is designed as a symbiotic relationship between the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA) and communities near the Trail which enhances awareness of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (IANST) and improves the quality of life in communities throughout Wisconsin. The Northwoods Chapter is the local IAT chapter that serves Lincoln County.

Recommendation 1 (Short-term): Pursue official Ice Age Trail community designation for Merrill.

Recommendation 2 (Short-term): Cooperate with Northwoods Chapter of IAT to host volunteer-based events annually (e.g., Mobile Skills Crew events, local chapter hikes, and trail-wide events).

By hosting IAT events in Merrill, residents will be exposed to what the organization is all about, and encourage more Merrill residents to volunteer with the Northwoods Chapter of the Ice Age Trail to help complete the IAT and enjoy what currently exists.

Recommendation 3 (Short-term): Encourage businesses and the whole community to promote the Ice Age Trail.

Maybe local restaurants would have a special breakfast, lunch, or dinner that has an Ice Age Trail theme. **Maybe** a local beer, coffee, or dessert is named for an ice age feature. **Maybe** Ice Age Trail maps and brochures are part of tourism literature racks and chamber websites. **Maybe** local schools create outings or build information related to the Wisconsin Glaciation into their lesson plans.

Bicyclist Friendly Parking

For bikes to be used more often for transportation, everyday destinations like work, school, stores, offices, government buildings, and restaurants must have places to park a bicycle securely. Many Merrill destinations are within biking distance of many residents, but many destinations don't have bike racks.

Installing bike racks in each park, especially near spectator sports, would provide secure parking for residents and visitors.

Installing bike racks by each employer, or conveniently located in a commercial district, would provide secure parking for residents and visitors alike.

Employers that want to provide secure long term bike parking for their employees may choose to use a closet or create a covered, fenced in bicycle parking area conveniently located on their property for employees to store their bikes.

Some considerations for employers providing secure employee bike parking:

- Will the bicycle be secure in the storage area? Does the space allow every bike to be locked?
- Will the bicycle be protected from inclement weather?
- Will anyone with a bicycle in the storage area be able to get their bike out without tipping over the remaining bicycles in the area?
- Is an employee using a bicycle that is different from a 2-wheel bike that is about 70-inches long? If so, then make sure there is enough space to park that bike and others like it.
- Is there a shower facility available for bicyclists to clean up in? A shower is not required, but some riders may need it to maintain their professional appearance to customers.
- Does an employee have another need for bike parking? Ask, and work with your facility manager about how to accommodate it.

A summary of bicycle parking recommendations from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) is included in **Attachment G**. The amount of space needed for a bike rack, and how to determine good bike rack designs are included in those guidelines.

Recommendation 1 (Short-term): Use the *Bike Parking Guidelines* in **Attachment G** when purchasing a bike rack, so that it allows a bicyclist to use a U-lock to secure their front tire and bike frame to a rack and keeps the bike upright by two points of contact while locked.

Recommendation 2 (Short- to Long-term): Provide the bicycle parking guidance on this page to all employers that want to become more bicycle friendly. Encourage employers to explore the Bicycle Friendly Business program requirements from the League of American Bicyclists to determine how to provide good employee bike parking and bike support.

Recommendation 3 (Short-term): Consider installing bicycle parking (**Attachment G**) at every city building and every park, especially near spectator sports areas.

Recommendation 4 (Short-term): In business districts where visitor parking is provided on-street, work with the local businesses to identify space for bike racks within the road & sidewalk right-of-way (see **Attachment G**).

Recommendation 5 (Short-term): Consider replacing all Crime Stoppers bike racks with new ones per **Attachment G** that allow a bicycle frame to be supported by two points and allow a front wheel and frame to be locked using a U-lock.

Lighting Within Parks

Seeking out constellations in the night sky is a vacation ritual for big city dwellers. Merrill residents are fortunate to have access in their parks to darker skies than many residents in Wausau and other large cities.

As lighting improvements are made in Merrill's parks, balancing the need for additional lighting with keeping the sky dark now has some guidance that can be used:

In 2020 the Federal Highway Administration created: Research Report: Street Lighting for Pedestrian Safety (FHWA-SA-20-062). From that report, the recommended lighting levels are a minimum 2 lux vertical illuminance in areas where pedestrian volumes are low (0-100 pedestrians per hour). Higher pedestrian areas (>100 pedestrians per hour) are recommended to be 10 lux semi-cylindrical. The luminance recommendations for low volume pedestrian zones is 1 cd/m² in urban areas. For high volume urban areas, 2 cd/m² is recommended and rural areas are recommended to maintain 1 cd/m². The color temperature of the light source should be 3000 or 4000 K (see last sentence about "environmental sensitivity"). Pedestrian crosswalks should have a minimum of 20 lux vertical as current guidelines suggest. For pedestrian scale lighting (6.5m in height or lower) an additional 2 lux vertical and 0.5 cd/m² are required to be added to the criteria to overcome the glare from the lower mounting height. Along with these design recommendations, other roadway lighting criteria must also be met, such as consideration of glare, surround ratio, light trespass, and environmental concerns (3000 K is the minimum for pedestrian visibility, and the maximum in "areas of environmental sensitivity," or prevent light trespass from light fixture in such "areas").

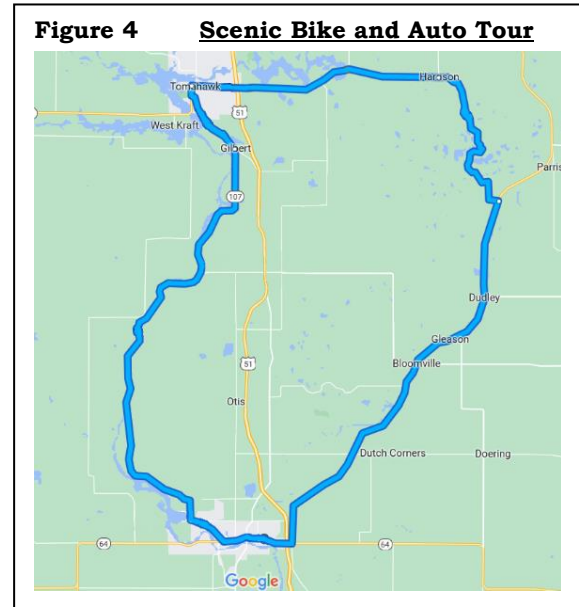
Recommendation 1 (Short- to Long-term): City to consider appropriate level of lighting per FHWA-SA-20-062 (above paragraph) when choosing light fixtures for parks and trails to balance the need for illumination with the ability to also keep the night sky relatively dark.

Recommendation 2 (Short- to Long-term): City to consider if it would be appropriate to turn off (or dim) various lighting after a certain time at night (11:00 p.m. or later through sunrise) to keep the night sky relatively dark. Also, consider using security cameras that operate in low and no light.

Scenic Byway Designation

The Scenic Byways program is a cooperative effort between local communities and WisDOT to identify and promote state and local highway corridors with scenic and/or historical attributes that provide travelers an enjoyable visual, educational, and recreational experience.

A scenic byway is a non-interstate highway route, at least 30 miles long, that offers travelers numerous scenic and/or historical attributes whose promotion can serve to boost a region's attractiveness as a tourist destination.



Recommendation (Short-term):

Responsible parties for this Recommendation: Cities (Merrill & Tomahawk), County Highway, Chambers of Commerce.

Consider establishing the “Scenic Bike and Auto Tour” (**Figure 4**) as a scenic byway either through official WisDOT designation, or by simply posting Lincoln County created scenic signage that identifies the route.

NOTE: If this is signed a “bike” route, then some segments of county and state highways may need 5-foot paved shoulders before signing the route. Wherever the Wisconsin Bicycle Map for Lincoln County shows a road as having “undesirable” conditions for bicycling, then at least 5-foot wide paved shoulders should be installed. An alternative to paving most shoulders would be to direct bicyclists north from CTH D towards Tomahawk onto CTH H to CTH A toward Tomahawk, and then directing bicyclists onto Cash Road to Mohawk Drive in Tomahawk.

6.2 Capital Improvements, 2023-2027

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 City's operations budget.

Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC)

Staff Assessment:

The Merrill Area Recreation Complex is a high use Recreation Complex consisting of 96 acres, 6 softball fields, 1 baseball field, soccer fields, pedestrian trails, a playground, dog park, the Bierman Family Aquatic Center, and the Smith Center. The MARC has seen increased usage over the past 10 years with the addition of the Aquatic Center and Dog Park, as well as baseball, softball, cross country, flag football, and soccer games/tournaments. Increased usage has taken its toll on our parking lot and has shown a demand for an additional restroom by the north fields, along with the need for consistent upkeep of the ballfields and athletic fields to ensure proper safety and playing conditions.

MARC 5-year Capital Improvements:

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Repave parking lot closest to Smith Center	High	\$80,000
Add restrooms near three north ballfields	Medium	\$100,000
Add lights to varsity softball field	Medium	\$150,000
Add lights to main soccer field	Low	\$150,000
Build skate park	Medium	\$300,000
Pave existing trails & add bollard lights	Medium	\$175,000

Cenotaph Park, Gebert Park, Wisconsin River Parkway

Staff Assessment:

These park spaces are specialty areas that will not require specific capital improvement requests.

Stange Park

Staff Assessment:

Stange Park is a historic park located in the center of the City featuring a series of lagoons created by the Prairie River with walking bridges, two shelters, pedestrian bridges, a basketball court, sand volleyball court, a playground. The park was fortunate to see significant upgrades in 2019 and has since seen increased usage. The playground there is 25 years old and in need of replacement and the pedestrian bridges are still in good condition but do need some upkeep to protect their viability.

Stange Park 5-year Capital Improvements:

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Sandblast and repaint 3 pedestrian bridges	Medium	\$20,000
Replace playground	Medium	\$75,000
Continued maintenance on 2-arch bridge	Medium	\$25,000
Security Cameras	High	\$15,000

Kitchenette Park

Staff Assessment:

Kitchenette Park is a historic park in the center of the City that features a shelter, restrooms, sand volleyball, a playground, and a 3 hold disc golf course. This is still one of our most heavily reserved shelters and continues with increased usage year after year.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Re-pave existing parking lot & Legion Lot	Medium	\$100,000
Security Cameras	High	\$15,000

Streeter Square

Staff Assessment:

Streeter Square is a small park located immediately north of the downtown area that features greenspace, a basketball court, small playground, a sitting area, and old ball field that is no longer used. This park sees very consistent use and serves a tremendous purpose as an extension of many people's backyards as well as a nice place to relax before/during/after work from downtown.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Re-pave basketball court – full size	High	\$30,000
Replace playground	Medium	\$50,000

Ott's Park

Staff Assessment:

Ott's Park is located on the west side of town along the Wisconsin River. This park has seen some improvements over the past 10+ years that have helped bump usage a little but is in need of some investments moving forward. It features a lighted ball field, two lit tennis courts, restrooms, a shelter, boat landing, a playground, and volleyball courts. This park is used very consistently by citizens in the surrounding neighborhoods and plays host so a few larger gatherings and events.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Replace Playground	Medium	\$75,000
Re-do boat launch/dock	High	\$40,000
Replace ballfield lights	Medium	\$150,000
Re-surface tennis courts	Medium	\$10,000
Construct Pickleball courts	Medium	\$125,000
Re-fence ballfield	Medium	\$75,000

Lion's Park

Staff Assessment:

Lion's Park is home to 5 Little League baseball fields. It gets used very frequently from spring through middle/end of summer and is also used heavily by PRMS for phys-ed classes and football practices. Lion's received Bierman Funding a number of years ago to help with a lot of much needed improvements (concession area, paved path, leveling of D1, bleachers, scoreboards, in-ground irrigation, and backstops/fencing). Lion's also plays host to the youth baseball tournament and has hosted regional Little League all-star tournaments as well. It is also used in the winter for ice skating and sledding.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Re-pave both parking lots	Medium	\$80,000
Construct pedestrian path up Wilson Hill	Low	\$50,000
Construct pedestrian bridge to Athletic Park	Low	\$300,000
Tow rope for sledding hill	Low	\$50,000
Lights for sledding hill	Low	\$10,000
Purchase homes and add property to the park	Low	\$200,000

Athletic Park

Staff Assessment:

Athletic Park is our most historic ballfield and one of our most historic parks. It plays host to a very wide array of baseball games/leagues/tournaments (Babe Ruth, High School, Legion, Jr. Legion, Rangers, etc.) Athletic has seen a great deal of improvements that were mostly funded through donations in the early 2000's including: new dugouts, restrooms, scoreboard, batting cage, announcers booth/concession, observation deck, irrigation, and lights. Athletic has hosted 3 Legion State Tournaments in the past 12 years and consistently draws in thousands of visitors each year.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Replace overhead netting & backstop	Medium	\$20,000
New bleachers behind backstop	Low	\$75,000

Skate Park

Staff Assessment:

The current skate park has served a tremendous purpose for almost 20 years. The steel ramps are still in good condition and do need to be repainted every few years. There has been renewed interest over the past several years in constructing a new skate park at the MARC. The current location sees low average usage. A committee was created to discuss these details. The MARC would be a better location for a skate park due to the amount of activity there and number of potential users who could potentially use it.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Build new concrete skate park at MARC	Medium	\$350,000

City Forest

Staff Assessment:

The City Forest is a 1000 acre property located approximately 7 miles north of the City. This property has seen tremendous growth in usage with the addition of 4 season bike and pedestrian trails that were funded through grants. In 2021 concrete vault toilets were added and in 2022 the City purchased a 70 acre parcel of property immediately adjacent to the forest through a no match grant. The City Forest also provides outdoor enthusiasts the opportunity to hike and hunt. This property is the perfect investment in silent sports and only continues to attract more events and users.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Extend trails into new 70 acres	Medium	\$50,000
Pave entrance road and parking lot	Medium	\$100,000
Replace existing entrance sign	High	\$15,000
Wayfinding Kiosk	High	\$10,000
Construct open air shelter	Medium	\$50,000

River Bend Trail

Staff Assessment:

The River Bend Trail has become one of our most popular parks. It features close to 7 miles of trail, a reservable pavilion, scenic vistas, overlook, fishing pier, lights, pergola, and several trailheads to name a few. This four-season linear park (in addition to the Agra Pavilion) was a joint venture of public-private partnership that has exceeded expectations. A majority of the funding was made possible by the River District Development Foundation. The Trail has seen three extensions after the original trail was completed and now runs complete from one end of the City limits to the other (East to West). With the additional miles of trail and corresponding amenities, it has stretched park staff to meet the needs/demands.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Construct Playground by Agra Pavilion	Medium	\$30,000
Replace decking on Nicklaus Bridge with spancrete	Medium	\$50,000

Prairie Trails

Staff Assessment:

Prairie Trails was constructed 20 years ago after the Ward Mill Pond was drained. The park features 2.5 miles of granite pedestrian trails, a boardwalk, shelter, fishing pier, overlook, and pedestrian bridge over the Prairie River. Prairie Trails is a very popular location for a quiet walk or some fishing right on the outskirts of the city limits. Vault toilets were added to the parking lot area in July of 2022.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Add granite trail loop on Northeast section	Low	\$50,000
Create canals/lagoons on Northeast section	Low	\$50,000
Add lights to parking lot	Medium	\$15,000

Normal Park

Staff Assessment:

Normal Park has undergone a significant amount of transformation over the past 10 years beginning with the donation of the Bauman Gazebo. After the gazebo came new restrooms/kitchen area, new parking lot, and the Optimist Playground. Normal also has an outdoor ice rink and is home to the Farmer's Market. Although the Farmer's Market makes this park their home, the park and parking lot are too small and it should be moved to a different location. Since these amenities were added, Normal Park has become a very popular park.

<u>Improvement:</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Est. Cost:</u>
Paved/Lighted trails to connect each park corner	Medium	\$50,000
In ground irrigation	Medium	\$20,000
Security Cameras	High	\$15,000

Riverside Park

Staff Assessment:

Riverside Park is beautiful 22 acre park along the Wisconsin River. It features a boat launch, reservable shelter, sand volleyball court, restrooms, playground, 9 hole Eric Schalow Memorial Disc Golf Course, 3 hole ADA disc golf course, walking and hiking paths. Through a series of grants the restrooms and a number of amenities were reconstructed to be more accommodating. Since renovations were completed, and with the addition of the playground, park usage has increased. This park has a unique feel of tranquility and beauty while still being located in the city limits.

Improvement:

Replace dock and repair landing
Add additional 9 goal disc golf
Continued trail improvements
New pedestrian bridge to disc golf island
New pedestrian bridge to River Bend Trail
Security Cameras

Priority:

High
Low
Medium
Medium/High
Low
Medium/High

Est. Cost:

\$30,000
\$20,000
\$15,000
\$30,000
\$1,000,000
\$10,000

Chapter 7:

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

There are a variety of strategies available for implementing this plan. These strategies include using land use tools and government programs to realize attainment of this plan's goals and objectives.

Shoreland Zoning

Wisconsin's 59.692 Statute establishes statewide standards for shoreland development. Counties are required to adopt and administer shoreland zoning ordinances that meet these requirements. The City of Merrill administers the zoning within Merrill.

Public Access to Waterways

State regulations for subdivisions require dedication of public access when the land along waterways is platted.

LAKE AND STREAM SHORE PLATS [236.16(3) WISCONSIN STATUTES]

- (a) All subdivisions abutting on a navigable lake or stream shall provide public access at least 60 feet wide providing access to the low watermark so that there will be public access, which is connected to existing public roads, at not more than one-half mile intervals as measured along the lake or stream shore except where greater intervals and wider access is agreed upon by the department of natural resources and the department, and excluding shore areas where public parks or open-space streets or roads on either side of a stream are provided.

NR 1.93 Access in platted subdivisions. Under s.236.16 (3), Wis. Stats., the DNR has authority to recommend wider access at less frequent intervals than are prescribed in the statutes. The DNR shall consider waiver of the 60-foot access requirement only where the DNR determines:

- (1) It will be advantageous to public interests in navigable water;
- (2) Adequate space for access users and adequate buffering for private property is assured by access wider than 60 feet where possible; and
- (3) The access that would result provides an equal or greater opportunity for public access than would be provided by dedication at statutorily prescribed intervals and the 60-foot width.

Park Dedication

Subdivision regulations can be used to require residential land subdividers to dedicate a portion of subdivided land for permanent park and open space use. Neighborhood parks may be acquired in this manner in newly developing residential areas. Local landowners should also be encouraged to dedicate land to their communities for recreational uses. Numerous small town memorial parks have been acquired through the generosity of local citizens. If citizens are made aware of community needs, this form of private action may continue to enrich the public resources of some communities.

Conservation Subdivisions

Conservation subdivisions are characterized by common open space and clustered compact lots. A variety of housing types or the same type of housing may be allowed. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland or natural resource open spaces while allowing for the maximum number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations. In some cases a greater density (density bonus) may be offered in the local ordinance to encourage this approach. Generally, this tool is used for parcels 40 acres and larger, or where the community maps natural resource corridors or natural features that they want to preserve. A conservation subdivision maintains the same level of overall density as a conventional subdivision, but individual lot sizes are smaller, and the community receives open space.

Use of Easements

Open space and public recreation use of private land may be acquired by easement. With an easement, certain rights are granted to the public for a specific period of time and the private owner is compensated for that public use. In purchasing an easement, the public body acquires a right either to use the land in a specific manner or to restrict the use to which an owner may put their land. For example, the rights to establish public hiking or fishing access to a waterway may be purchased through an easement.

Leases

Leases may be used as measures to use or protect land until more permanent measures may be found. By leasing parcels of land, the land remains on the community's tax rolls and can be renegotiated or non-renewed by the property owner if the monetary prospects for another use proves overpowering.

Another leasing method involves outright purchase of land by the community. The community then leases the land to a private party or organization with use restrictions placed on the land. Under this method, the community receives some monetary return on its investment and retains control over the use of the land.

Program Costs

A community should carefully watch operations and maintenance costs when setting up a parks program. A too ambitious acquisition and/or development program can easily lead to annual costs larger than the community can afford to meet. Recreation facilities like golf courses and swimming pools, for example, require large annual maintenance investments to continue.

Capital Improvements

Community officials should develop five year capital improvements programs for recreation that reflect implementation of proposals made in their plans and the priorities they place on them. To be functional, the program must be flexible and be subjected to annual review.

In developing a recreation program, care should be taken that the annual cost of maintenance does not exceed an amount the community can afford to pay. Too often, an ambitious program can lose community support as a result of prohibitive maintenance costs.

Monetary Aid Programs

State and federal financial and technical aid programs are designed to assist communities with meeting recreational needs. A list of these programs exists in **Attachment C**.

The Stewardship Fund is a state provided comprehensive aid program for the promotion of resource conservation and outdoor recreation opportunities. It consists of several state and federal aid programs such as Local Park Aids and LAWCON, combined with new programs, such as the Urban Rivers Program. **Attachment C** gives an explanation of the Stewardship Program. For additional information go online to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A requirement for application to the Stewardship Fund is for the local community to have a DNR approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan. The Outdoor Recreation Plan is designed to meet that requirement. For additional information contact:

Community Services Specialist
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
107 Sutliff Ave
Rhineland, WI 54501

Besides state and federal aid programs, there are other sources of funding such as private foundations, trust funds, and civic and recreation organizations.

Lifetime Activities

Community and school officials responsible for recreation should place greater emphasis on land areas and facilities that can support "lifetime" recreational activities. Falling into this category are activities like golf, tennis, all target sports, horseshoes, cross country skiing, skating, running, volleyball, handball, badminton, back packing, and canoeing. Many schools have programs aimed at teaching recreational activities that people can participate in for a lifetime.

Winter Activities

All communities should provide winter outdoor recreation facilities. Skating and sliding sports (sledding, tobogganing, and skiing) can generally be provided without large investments. Skating, for example, can be as involved as providing rinks for ice hockey or as simple as flooding a small area of a school playground. Likewise, merely blocking off a lightly traveled street with a suitable slope can frequently provide a sliding area.

Specialized Facilities

Encourage development of specialized facilities by the private sector. Specialized facilities such as golf clubs, intensive use ATV areas, and ski resorts can be an important adjunct to public recreational facilities. Quality and availability for public use should be emphasized.

Municipal and School District Cooperation

Promote cooperation between municipalities and school districts in meeting recreational needs. With good planning, cooperation may take the form of joint land acquisition and/or facilities development cost sharing. Increased municipal use of existing school facilities during non-school hours should also be encouraged.

Senior Citizen Involvement

Involve senior citizens in community park development and beautification, and provide recreational facilities for their use. Although senior citizens often compose a significant proportion of the total community's population, they are often neglected in recreational planning. Benches placed near neighborhood parks and play areas and non-intensive sports facilities such as horseshoe pits located in community parks help to provide a place for the senior citizens. Small, passive use parks and gardens located near nursing and retirement homes should also be encouraged. In addition, senior citizens can provide invaluable assistance in beautifying parks and open spaces and can thereby become more involved in community group life.

Service Group Involvement

Involve organized service groups in park and recreation development, including development of competitive sports areas and neighborhood parks. Traditionally, service groups and recreation organizations, such as Lions Club, V.F.W., softball leagues, and snowmobile clubs have played an active role in the development of such facilities. Continued volunteerism of this type should be encouraged. In addition, service groups could help to meet the need for neighborhood facilities by supplementing municipal financial resources by providing organization and volunteer labor.

Community Beautification

All communities should recognize that community appearance is an important component of a recreation program. Maintained streets and sidewalks, attractive trees and shrubs, well cared for homes and commercial buildings, and neatly landscaped home lawns, public open space, and parks are principal contributors to community beautification. Such a program is most rewarding to persons engaged in passive recreation.

Adopt-A-Park Program

A program which encourages local groups to adopt-a-park or segment of trail or stream could be organized similar to the very successful *Adopt a Highway* program. The groups could volunteer their time to maintain and beautify the county's recreational system, allowing more county funds to provide major improvements.

ATTACHMENT A

Park Design and Location Criteria

From:

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2011-2016

Park Design and Location Criteria

This section is presented in the interest of assisting park and recreation agencies in the development of a system of parks and recreation areas. A recreation system is composed of many different components, the combination of which provide facilities and landscapes for outdoor recreation. Many entities are involved in the development and management of recreational areas and facilities for a community or region. Facilities provided by these entities should be complementary and serve a particular geographic area or recreational need. For this plan, parks and recreation areas have been classified on the basis of their service areas. They are described as the following:

▪ Mini Park	▪ School Park
▪ Neighborhood Park	▪ County Park
▪ Community Park	▪ State Park
▪ Special Use Park	▪ State Forest

Mini Park

1. Definition Summary:

A play lot or playground provides space for parental supervised recreation of toddlers and young children within a neighborhood, or as part of a larger neighborhood or community park and urban center, including retail shopping areas.

2. Size Objectives:

0.5 to 1.5 acres.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally within a neighborhood of a half mile radius or population of 2,000-3,000. Mini parks may be included in parks that serve a larger population or service area.

4. Location Objectives:

Located in protected areas with separation from street traffic and high visibility; serving local neighborhoods and adjoining schools, libraries, or police and fire facilities.

- Population Ratio to Acreage: 0.25 to 0.5 acre per 1,000 population to achieve a park unit size that serves 2,000 to 3,000 people.

5. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The size of a play lot or playground may range from as small as 2,500 sq. ft. to 1.5 acres.* Amenities offered by these facilities generally include sand play areas, play apparatus, play equipment, and other special child-oriented features. The service radius for these parks in

terms of distance from population served is limited to less than a quarter mile, or within a super block space, unless the playground is incorporated into a larger park. (*Stand-alone play lots require more land area than play lots incorporated into larger parks.)

6. Orientation:

Small geographic areas, sub-neighborhoods, or neighborhoods, when combined with a larger park unit, serves youth ranging in age from toddler to 12 years, with adult supervision. Playgrounds also serve important needs in city business districts and inner city areas where a mix of commercial and recreation activity is desired.

7. Function:

Provides outdoor play experiences for youth under parental supervision. Generates neighborhood communication and provides diversion from work and domestic chores. Promotes neighborhood solidarity.

Neighborhood Park

1. Definition Summary:

A neighborhood park, by size, program, and location, provides space and recreation activities for the immediate neighborhood in which it is located. It is considered an extension of neighborhood residents' "out-of-yard" and outdoor use area.

2. Size Objectives:

5 to 25 acres.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally a one mile radius, but actually defined by collector street patterns which form the limits of a neighborhood or recreation service area. Population served may range from 2,000 up to 5,000.

4. Location Objectives:

Centrally located for equitable pedestrian access within a definable neighborhood service area. Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary school, middle school, high school, fire station, or library, if possible.

5. Program Objectives:

Compatible with the neighborhood setting and park site constraints. Generally includes the following facilities, which are determined with public input as to use and activities:

- a. Parking for 10 to 20 vehicles.
 - 1) On-street parking is acceptable if negative impact to residential units can be mitigated. On-site parking is preferable as a planning objective.
 - 2) Bike racks with Class II trail connections where possible.
- b. Restrooms
 - 1) Men's restroom with 2 water closets, 2 urinals, 2 lavatories.
 - 2) Women's restroom with 3 water closets and 2 lavatories.
 - 3) Utility and minimum park janitorial storage space.
- c. Tot lot/children's play area
- d. Family event/group picnic facility
- e. Informal family picnic area with benches and tables
- f. Unstructured turf grass play area/play or practice field for children, young adults, and families.
- g. Sport facilities—compatible with neighborhood setting and park site constraints.
 - 1) Basketball—half court, full court, or tri-court configuration
 - 2) Volleyball area
 - 3) Softball field/soccer practice or game overlay
 - 4) Other features as needs or site conditions allow

6. Orientation:

Serves all age groups, with an emphasis on youth and families in neighborhood settings.

7. Function:

To provide a combination of active recreation and passive activities, both outdoor and indoor facilities and special features as required or needed.

8. Space, Design and Service Area:

A minimum size of 5 to 25 acres with amenities including sports facilities, picnic areas, swim facilities, cultural activities, arts, crafts, and individual passive activities. The park should primarily serve a defined neighborhood area population of 2,000-5,000. Distance from this neighborhood will vary depending on urban development pattern, zoning, and densities in the respective neighborhoods being served. Efforts should be made to allow easy pedestrian access to the park.

Community Park

1. Definition Summary:

A community park, by size, program, and location, provides space and recreation activities for a defined service area, the entire city, or significant geographic segment of the city's population.

2. Size Objectives:

Usually more than 25 acres.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally a 2 to 5 mile radius within the city and adjacent neighborhoods outside of city limits.

4. Location Objectives:

Centrally located if planned to serve a particular geographic segment of the city. Located adjoining or immediately adjacent to a collector street providing community-wide vehicular access, thereby reducing neighborhood traffic impacts. Connected with Class II on-street and/or off-street community trail and bike lane system. Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary, middle, or high school if possible.

5. Program Objectives

Elements that fulfill the service area, park facilities and recreation program demands. The following facilities may be compatible with community setting and park site constraints:

- a. Off-street parking calculated to satisfy demand of park and recreation activities provided. Includes bike racks and a public transit station at the site as well as both on-site and street parking.
- b. Restrooms designed to accommodate the level of park and recreation activities provided and the number of people served. Restrooms should be located within a reasonable walking distance from children's play equipment and other high-use areas.
- c. Community recreation center
- d. Park maintenance and equipment storage building
- e. Tot lot/children's play area
- f. Group picnic shelters
- g. Family picnic facilities
- h. Sport/recreation facility fulfilling the overall city demand

Appropriate program elements include:

- 1) Community pool/water feature
- 2) Soccer fields
- 3) Softball, little league baseball, junior pony league baseball
- 4) Football
- 5) Roller hockey/skateboard area
- 6) Tennis courts
- 7) Basketball courts
- 8) Amphitheater/performing arts center
- 9) Volleyball (indoor and outdoor)
- 10) Jogging trails
- 11) Other facilities as desired and as permitted under park site plan
- 12) Concessions (food and beverage)

6. Orientation:

Multi-purpose service area or community-wide recreation resource serving most or all of the population.

7. Function:

Provides opportunities for a diverse mix of indoor and outdoor recreation, including walking and bicycling, outdoor performances, various programmed and non-programmed field sports, swimming, and special events.

8) Space, Design, and Service Area:

The minimum space for a community park is 15 acres. Facilities typically provide for some sports activities, though emphasis is on passive cultural and community centers with recreational programming and organized activities. The community park may serve populations within a 2 to 5 mile radius, a scope that would allow residents of other communities to use the park as well.

Special Use Park

1. Definition Summary:

A special use park is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreational activity, or special event. A special use park may also be a sports park combined with enterprise activities and administered as a community recreation resource.

2. Size Objective:

The actual size of a special use park is determined by land availability and facility/market demand for special uses or recreation programs.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Community or area-wide and determined by the type of recreation program, special events or use activities.

4. Location Objectives:

Determined by the property opportunity, service area and size objectives.

5. Program Objectives:

Special use parks require facility programming that is user- or market-driven and based on community needs or economic and service principles for public and private partnerships. The magnitude and type of special use facilities may include:

- a. Water play park
- b. Amphitheater
- c. Festival/swap meet/farmers market
- d. League/individual sports complex
- e. Fitness/entertainment center
- f. Skateboard/in-line hockey park
- g. Recreation programs and classes

6. Orientation:

Provides recreation programming, sports and special event attractions and activities for all age groups.

7. Function:

Special events, fairs, festivals, expositions, symposiums, sports, community gatherings, ethnic/cultural celebrations, plays and numerous other recreational programs and activities.

8. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The minimum size for special parks varies depending on intended use and programming.

School Park

1. Definition Summary:

By combining the resources of two public agencies, the school park classification allows for expanding the recreational, social, and educational opportunities available to the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Depending on the circumstances, school park sites often complement other community recreation or open lands. As an example, an elementary/middle school site could also serve as a neighborhood park. Likewise, middle or high school sports facilities could do double duty as a community park or as youth athletic fields. Depending on its size, one school park site may serve in a number of capacities, such as a neighborhood park, youth athletic fields, and a location for recreation classes. Given the inherent variability of type, size and location, determining how a school park site is integrated into a larger park system will depend on case-by-case circumstances. The important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that both the school district and park system benefit from shared use of facilities and land area.

2. Size Objective

The optimum size of a school park site depends on its intended use. The size criteria established for neighborhood park and community park classifications may apply.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Neighborhood park and community park classifications criteria should be used to determine school park functions and area served. For planning purposes, the degree to which school lands, including building or facilities, meet community needs depends on the specific inter-local agreements formed.

4. Location Objectives:

The location of a school park site will be determined by the school district based on district policy. Coordinated city and school district planning allows for siting, acquisition, and facility development to be responsive to community needs. Service areas for school park sites will depend on the type of use and facilities provided.

5. Program Objectives:

The criteria established for neighborhood parks and community parks should be used to determine how a school park site is developed and programmed. If athletic fields are developed at a school park site, they should, where feasible, be oriented toward youth rather than adult programs. Establishing a clearly defined joint-use agreement between involved agencies is critical to making school park relationships workable. This is particularly important with respect to acquisition, development, maintenance, liability, use, and programming of facility issues.

The orientation of school park projects is typically for neighborhood and community recreation services. The functions may include sports, recreation classes, passive recreation activities, and other recreation programs suitable to an elementary or secondary education school.

County Park

1. Definition Summary:

A county park provides sufficient park and recreation area to meet the needs of county residents. County parks consist of land that is specifically set aside for active and passive recreation uses, and that accommodates large gatherings, special events, and individual users. County parks offer a wide variety of compatible outdoor recreation activities, and

may provide areas that do not primarily serve a recreational purpose such as protected natural areas, historic areas, and special use areas.

2. Size Objectives:

The size of recreation parks varies greatly from park to park, but with the exception of those parks that serve a special use or are trail corridors, a recreation park should consist of a minimum of 100 acres of land. Each park should be of sufficient size to accommodate the estimated use and to allow for the operation and maintenance of planned recreational facilities.

3. Service Area Objectives:

County parks provide for a regional user group and serve primarily county residents. Special facilities like camping and trails are also used by tourists and visitors to the county.

4. Location Objectives:

The land should have high recreational potential and be able to withstand intensive and extensive recreational activities. Land should have potential to accommodate large groups of people. Land for corridors should be located so as to connect to communities, parks, and open spaces. The potential for future land acquisition should be taken into account.

5. Program Objectives:

Development should be appropriate for intended use and should accommodate moderate to high use. Development and planning should consider the physical condition and characteristics of the land and recognize potential environmental or structural limitations that might require intensive maintenance. County parks may include the following facilities:

- a. Camping/group camping
- b. Picnic areas
- c. Recreational trails (hiking, bicycling, mountain biking, equestrian, cross-country ski, snowmobile, etc.)
- d. Play areas
- e. Swimming beaches
- f. Water access
- g. Fishing access
- h. Shelters
- i. Restrooms

- j. Shower facilities
- k. Sport fields (basketball, volleyball, softball, etc.)
- l. Pet exercise area

6. Orientation:

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a county or multi-county population.

7. Function:

To provide sufficient parks and recreation areas to meet the needs of the people of the county.

8. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The size of a county park should be a minimum of 100 acres. Facilities vary by park. Some parks offer active recreation (camping, recreational trails, etc.), while others provide passive recreation (scenic lookouts, picnic areas, beaches, etc.). Most parks provide both active and passive recreation. County parks provide for a regional user group and serve primarily county residents, through special facilities also serve tourists and visitors to the county.

State Forest

1. Definition Summary:

A state forest consists of well blocked areas of state owned lands that are managed to benefit present and future generations of residents, recognizing that forests contribute to local and statewide economics and to a healthy natural environment. State forests practice sustainable forestry. The management of state forests is consistent with the ecological capability of state forest land and with the long-term goal of maintaining sustainable forest communities and ecosystems. Benefits of maintaining these ecosystems include soil protection, public hunting, protection of water quality, production of recurring forest products, outdoor recreation, native biological diversity, aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, and aesthetic value. The range of benefits provided in each state forest reflect its unique character and position in the regional landscape.

2. Size Objectives:

Typically between 1,000 and 250,000 acres, but can be larger or smaller.

3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally a 100 mile radius. State forests typically provide close-to-home recreational area. Day users typically travel approximately 50 miles one-way to reach state forests, while overnight users tend to travel further, approximately 100-150 miles one-way. Travel to state forests can, however, exceed 160 miles for longer vacation stays and travel to "destination areas."

4. Location Objectives:

Areas with large blocks of land.

5. Program Objectives:

State forests must meet ecological, economic, social, and cultural needs. Elements are compatible with the natural resource setting and park site constraints. Facilities may include the following:

Current Level of Supply:

Hiking trails	1,256 acres per linear mile of trail
Cross-country ski trails	2,551 acres per linear mile of trail
Snowmobile trails	639 acres per linear mile of trail
Equestrian trails	559 acres per linear mile of trail
ATV trails	1,795 acres per linear mile of trail
Camping sites	1 campsite per 265 acres

6. Orientation:

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a state or regional population.

7. Function:

To provide for nature conservation, provide income to forest owners, supply raw materials to the wood processing industry, and provide public recreation.

8. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The size of a state forest is determined by the extent of the area's natural resources and recreation capabilities. There is no minimum or maximum size for a state forest. Facilities are not universal and vary by forest. The geographic location of the forest and the natural resources present dictate recreation available at the site. State forests serve large geographic areas of a state or region.

State Park

1. Definition Summary:

A state park, by size, program, and location, provides space for outdoor recreation and education about nature and conservation. These parks serve a significant geographic segment of a state or regional population. State parks aim to preserve, protect, interpret and enhance the scenic and cultural resources of the state.

2. Size Objectives:

Parks must be large enough to accommodate a reasonable mix of outdoor recreational activities. Typically, parks are between 500 and 3000 acres, but can be smaller (<20 acres) or larger (>10,000 acres).

3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally a 100-mile radius. State parks typically provide close-to-home recreational areas. Day users generally travel approximately 50 miles one-way to reach state parks, while overnight users tend to travel further, approximately 100-150 miles one-way. Travel distances to state parks can often exceed 160 miles for longer vacation stays and trips to "destination areas."

4. Location Objectives:

Siting of Wisconsin State Parks is typically based on five criteria developed by John Nolen. These criteria are: 1) large size to serve a large number of citizens, 2) accessibility to major population areas, 3) a healthful, natural setting, 4) reasonable cost for land acquisition, 5) land possessing "decidedly uncommon charm and beauty." All, or a combination of these criteria are used to determine where to site a state park.

5. Program Objectives:

Elements that fulfill the service area, park facilities and recreation program demands. Elements are compatible with the natural resource setting and park site constraints. Developments may include the following facilities:

Current Level of Supply:

Hiking trails	196 acres per linear mile of trail
Surfaced bicycle trails	860 acres per linear mile of trail
Mountain bike trails	549 acres per linear mile of trail
Nature trails	1,871 acres per liner mile of trail
Cross-country ski trails	430 acres per linear mile of trail
Snowmobile trails	426 acres per linear mile of trail
Equestrian trails	400 acres per linear mile of trail
Picnic sites	0.05 acres per picnic table
Camping sites	1 campsite per 29 acres
Parking stalls	Year-Round = 1 stall for every three visitors
Swimming beaches	17 linear feet per 1,000 users

5. Orientation:

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a state or regional population.

6. Function:

To provide for public recreation and education of conservation and nature study. To preserve, protect, interpret and enhance the scenic and cultural resources of the state.

7. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The size of a state park is determined by the extent of the area's natural resources and recreation capabilities. There is no minimum or maximum size for a state park. Facilities are not universal and vary by park. Some parks offer active recreation (camping, boating, mountain biking trails, hunting etc.), while others offer passive recreation (scenic lookouts, picnic areas, beaches, etc.). Most provide both active and passive recreation. The geographic area and the natural resources present dictate recreation uses and facilities present in the park. State parks serve large geographic areas of a state or region.

ATTACHMENT B

Facility Design Standards

From: National Recreation and Park Association

SUGGESTED OUTDOOR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Activity Format	Recommended Size and Dimensions	Recommended Space Requirements	Recommended Orientation	Service Radius and Location Notes
Badminton	Singles--17' x 44' Doubles-20' x 44' with 5' unobstructed area on both sides	1622 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Usually in school recreation center or church facility. Safe walking or biking or biking access.
Basketball 1. Youth 2. High School 3. Collegiate	46' - 50' x 84' 50' x 84' 50' x 94' with 5' unobstructed space all sides.	2400-3036 sq. ft. 5040-7280 sq. ft. 5600-7980 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Same as badminton. Outdoor courts in neighborhood/community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
Handball (3-4 wall)	20' x 40' with a minimum of 10' to rear of 3-wall court. Minimum 20' overhead clearance.	800 sq. ft. for 4-wall, 1000 sq. ft. for 3-wall.	Long axis is north - south. Front wall at north end.	15 - 30 min. travel time, 4-wall usually indoor as part of multi-purpose building. 3-2 all usually in park or school setting.
Ice Hockey	Rink 85' x 200' (Min. 85' x 185') Additional 5000 22,000 sq. ft. including support area.	22,000 sq. ft. including support area.	Long axis is north - south if outdoors.	½ - 1 hour travel time. Climate important consideration affecting no. of units. Best as part of multipurpose facility.
Tennis	36' x 78'. 12 ft. clearance on both ends.	Min. of 7,200 sq. ft. single court area (2 acres per complex)	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Best in batteries of 2 - 4. Located in neighborhood/community park or near school site.
Volleyball	30' x 60'. Minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 4,000 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	½ - 1 mile.
Baseball 1. Official 2. Little League	Baselines - 90' Pitching distance-60.5' Foul lines - min. 320' Center field - 400'+ Baselines - 60' Pitching distance - 46' Foul lines - 200' Center field - 200' - 250'	3.0 - 3.85 A min. 1.2 A min.	Locate home plate so pitcher is not throwing across sun, and batter not facing it. Line from home plate through pitchers mound to run east-northeast.	¼ - ½ mile. Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of community complex.
Field Hockey	180' x 300' with a minimum of 10' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 1.5 A	Fall season - Long axis northwest or southeast. For longer periods, north/south	15 - 30 minute travel time. Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.
Football	160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 1.5 A	Same as field hockey.	15 - 30 min. travel time. Same as field hockey.
Soccer	195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with 10' minimum clearance on all sides.	1.7 - 2.1 A	Same as field hockey.	1 - 2 miles. Number of units depends on popularity. Youth popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to fields or neighborhood parks.
Golf - Driving Range	900' x 690' wide. Add 12' width each additional tee.	13.5 A for min. of 25 tees.	Long axis is southwest - northeast with golfer driving northeast.	30 minute travel time. Park of golf course complex. As separate unit may be privately operated.

Source: National Recreation and Park Association

SUGGESTED OUTDOOR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS *(continued)*

Activity Format	Recommended Size and Dimensions	Recommended Space Requirements	Recommended Orientation	Service Radius and Location Notes
¼ mile running track	Over-all width - 276' length - 600'. Track width for 8 - 4 lanes is 32'.	4.3 A	Long axis in sector from north to south to northwest - southeast, with finish line at north end.	15 - 30 minute travel time. Usually part of a high school or community park complex in combination with football, soccer, etc.
Softball	Baselines - 60' pitching distance - 45' men. 40' women Fast pitch field radius from plate - 225' Slow pitch - 275' (men) 250' (women)	1.5 - 2.0 A	Same as baseball. indimensions for 16".	¼ - ½ mile. Slight difference. May also be used for youth baseball.
Multiple use court (basketball, tennis, etc.)	120' x 80'	9,840 sq. ft.	Long axis of court with primary use north and south.	1 - 2 miles, in neighborhood or community parks.
Archery range	300' length x minimum 10' between targets. Roped, clear area on side of range minimum 30', clear space behind targets minimum of 90' x 45' with bunker.	Minimum 0.65 A	Archer facing north + or - 45 degrees.	30 minutes travel time. Part of a regional/metro complex.
Golf 1. Par 3 (18 hole) 2. 9-hole standard 3. 18-hole standard	Average length varies -600 - 2700 yards. Average length 2250 yards Average length 6500 yards.	50 - 60 A Minimum of 50 A Minimum 110 yards	Majority of holes on north/south axis	½ - 1 hour travel time 9-hole course can accommodate 350 people/day 500 - 550 people/day. Course may be located in community, district or regional/metro park.
Swimming pools	Teaching - min. 25 yards x 45' even depth of 3-4 ft. Competitive - min. 25 m x 16 m. Min. of 25 sq. ft. water surface per swimmer. Ration of 2 to 1 deck to water.	Varies on size of pool and amenities. Usually 1 - 2 A sites.	None, but care must be taken in siting life stations in relation to afternoon sun.	15 to 30 minutes travel time. Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching competitive and recreational purposes with enough to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in community park or school site.
Beach areas	Beach area should have 50 sq. ft. of land and 50 sa. ft. of water per user. Turnover rate is 3. There should be a 3-4 A supporting area per A of beach.	N/A	N/A	½ to 1 hour travel time. Should have a sand bottom with a maximum slope of 5%. Boating areas completely segregated from swimming areas. In regional/metro parks.

Source: National Recreation and Park Association

ATTACHMENT C

Federal & State Outdoor Recreation Funding Programs

Compiled by: NCWRPC

Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs

DNR Community Services Specialist
Rhineland Office
107 Sutliff Ave
Rhineland WI 54501

Note: Various program application periods may exist. Check online for each program's requirements and deadlines.

Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP) Grants [Stewardship]

ADLP grants are awarded to improve community recreation areas and acquire land for public outdoor recreation. Priority is given to land acquisition where a need for additional recreational land is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.

Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR) [Stewardship]

The purpose of the acquisition of development rights (ADR) subprogram is to protect natural, agricultural or forest lands that enhance and/or provide nature-based outdoor recreation. ADR grants can only fund conservation easement purchases.

ATV/UTV Enhancement

This funding is issued bi-annually to non-profit organizations that promote the safe and wise use of all terrain vehicles (ATVs)/utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs), ATV/UTV riding and ATV/UTV education.

ATV/UTV Patrols

This grant is issued to Wisconsin sheriff departments that participate in ATV enforcement efforts. The DNR can provide up to 100% of county net costs for the enforcement of ATV regulations. Actual funding received is based on total allotted funds split between participating agencies.

Patrol requirements are contained in NR 50.125, Wis. Adm. Code.

ATV/UTV Trails

Counties, towns, cities, villages and tribes can apply for funds to acquire, insure, develop and maintain ATV/UTV trails, areas and routes.

Specific changes to NR 64 created Hybrid Trails ("Troutes") or all-terrain vehicle trail and route combinations.

Boat Enforcement Patrol

Eligibility & Purpose: This grant is issued to Wisconsin counties or municipalities that participate in boating enforcement efforts. Eligible agencies may receive law enforcement aids for up to 75% of their net costs.

Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program

The purpose of BIG is to construct, renovate, and maintain boating infrastructure facilities for transient recreational vessels at least 26 feet long.

Tier 1 - State

Provides up to \$200,000 per year to each state. Projects are competitively ranked within the state.

Tier 2 - National

Provides up to \$1,500,000 per project. Projects are competitively ranked at the national level.

Natural Areas [Stewardship – Only available to nonprofits]

Stewardship natural area grants complement the State Natural Areas (SNA) Program, dedicated to the preservation of Wisconsin's native natural communities and habitat for rare plant and animal species.

Land purchased with natural area grants must be open to the public for low-impact nature-based recreation and scientific study. Natural areas are not intended for intensive recreational use such as mountain biking, motorized vehicle use, horseback riding or camping.

Habitat Areas [Stewardship – Only available to nonprofits]

Habitat area grants are awarded to conserve wildlife habitat in Wisconsin in order to expand opportunities for wildlife-based recreation such as hunting, trapping, hiking, bird watching, fishing, nature appreciation and wildlife viewing.

Land purchased with habitat area grants must be open to the public for low-impact nature-based recreation. Habitat areas are not intended for intensive recreational use such as mountain biking, motorized vehicle use, horseback riding or camping.

Stream Bank protection [Stewardship – Only available to nonprofits]

Streambank protection grants are awarded to protect water quality and fish habitat.

Priority is given to land or easement purchases along designated Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Waters, projects that connect sections of protected stream corridor, and projects that will mitigate the impact of agricultural runoff.

State trails [Stewardship – Only available to nonprofits]

State trail grants are awarded to purchase lands or easements identified as part of the State Trail system including designated State Water Trails. Priority is given to lands along nationally designated Ice Age and North Country trail corridors and to lands that connect established trail systems.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – State Program

This is a federal program administered in all states that encourages the creation and interpretation of high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Funds received by the DNR for this program are split between DNR projects and grants to local governments for outdoor recreation activities. Grants cover 50% of eligible project costs.

Motorized Stewardship Grants [Stewardship]

ATV/UTV grants are available to counties, towns, cities, villages and tribes to apply for funds to acquire, insure, develop and maintain ATV/UTV trails, areas and routes.

Snowmobile trail grants are available to counties and tribes to apply for funding to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails for public use and enjoyment.

Match Requirement: 20 percent

Recreational Boating Facilities Grants [Stewardship]

These grants may be used by counties, towns, cities, villages, tribes, sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts and qualified lake associations for recreational boating facility projects.

Past projects have included ramps and service docks to gain access to the water, purchase of aquatic weed harvesting equipment, navigation aids and dredging waterway channels.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

This is a federal program administered in all states. Municipal governments and incorporated organizations are eligible to receive reimbursement for the development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses.

Eligible sponsors may be reimbursed for up to 50% of eligible project costs. Funds from this program may be used in conjunction with funds from the state snowmobile or ATV grant programs and Knowles-Nelson Stewardship development projects.

Shooting Range Grant Program

Counties, cities, villages, townships, other governmental agencies or units, clubs or organizations, businesses or corporations and educational institutions can apply for assistance in outdoor shooting range construction, including backstops and berms, target holders, shooting benches, baffles, protective fencing, signs, trenches, gun racks, platforms, restrooms and other items considered essential for the project by the department. Indoor ranges may be eligible as well, including classroom, storage and restroom facilities.

Snowmobile Patrols

This grant is issued to Wisconsin sheriff departments that participate in snowmobile enforcement efforts. The DNR can provide up to 100% of county net cost for the enforcement of snowmobile regulations. Actual funding received is based on total allotted funds split between participating agencies.

Snowmobile Trail Aids

These grants are used to reimburse the over 600 snowmobile clubs in Wisconsin for some of their expenses.

Snowmobile trail aids are entirely funded by snowmobilers. The money awarded in grants to Wisconsin counties comes from snowmobile registrations, trail pass revenue and gas tax from some of the gas used in snowmobiles.

Sport Fish Restoration (SFR)

These grants may be used to construct fishing piers and motorboat access projects. Eligible components include boat ramp construction and renovation, along with related amenities such as parking lots, accessible paths, lighting, and restroom facilities. Funding for this program comes from federal excise taxes on fishing equipment and a portion of the federal gas tax.

Surface Water Grants

[Formerly: Lake Management Planning and Lake Classification and Lake Protection Grants.]

The surface water grant program provides cost-sharing grants for surface water protection and restoration. Funding is available for education, ecological assessments, planning, implementation, and aquatic invasive species prevention and control. With many different projects eligible for grant funding, you can support surface water management at any stage: from organization capacity development to project implementation.

Urban Green Space [Stewardship]

The intent of the Urban Green Space Program (UGS) is to provide open natural space within or in proximity to urban areas; to protect from development areas within or in proximity to urban areas that have scenic, ecological or other natural value; and to provide land for non-commercial gardening for the residents of an urbanized area.

Urban Rivers [Stewardship]

The urban rivers subprogram program aims to restore or preserve the character of urban riverways through the acquisition or development of land adjacent to rivers. Purposes of the program include supporting economic revitalization through the restoration or preservation of urban riverfronts and improving outdoor recreational opportunities by increasing access to urban rivers.

Wisconsin DOT Administered Programs

Bike & Ped Coordinator
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
1681 Second Avenue South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Purpose: The Transportation Alternatives Program allocates federal funds to transportation improvement projects that “expand travel choice, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment.”

TAP is a legislative program authorized by Congress through the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act signed into law in 2015. Safe Routes to School Programs, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities programs, and transportation enhancements are all TAP-eligible projects, including this plan. WisDOT facilitates TAP program and funding management

Construction projects eligible for TAP must have a total projected expense of \$300,000 or more, while non-construction projects must have a total projected expense in excess of \$50,000.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

[A Transportation Alternatives Program]

Purpose: Safe Routes to School programs encourage children in grades K-8 to walk and bike to school by creating safer walking and biking routes. Projects must be within 2 miles of a school that has a SRTS plan, and funding requires a 20% match.

Local Transportation Enhancements (TE)

[A Transportation Alternatives Program]

Purpose: Funds projects to increase multi-modal transportation alternatives and enhance communities and the environment. Projects include bicycle or pedestrian facilities, landscaping or streetscaping, and the preservation of historic transportation structures.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program (BFPF)

[A Transportation Alternatives Program]

Purpose: Funds projects that construct or plan for bicycle or bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

While HSIP does not pertain to bicycle and pedestrian transportation, this WisDOT program can help improve safety measures on problematic stretches of highway where crashes have occurred in the past, thereby creating a safer and more hospitable transportation network. HSIP improvements generally require a ten percent match of

state or local funds. The program generally funds low-cost options that can be implemented quickly.

Federal Assistance Programs

All other federal programs are listed under Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs.

Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP) – National Park Service

Purpose: The Challenge Cost Share Program supports local projects that promote conservation and recreation, environmental stewardship, education and engaging diverse youth participants. Local project partners work with National Park Service parks and programs to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. NPS administered parks and programs are eligible such as National Trails, Heritage Areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.,

One-third of the CCSP pot is earmarked for National Trails System Projects. Thus supporting work under the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241-51), such as: National Scenic and Historic trails, National Scenic and Historic Trails in parks, National Recreation Trails, and rail-trail projects.

For additional information about this program and the application process, please contact the CCSP Program Coordinators for Wisconsin:

National Park Service
700 Rayovac Dr., Suite 100
Madison, WI 53711
608-441-5610

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program – National Park Service

Purpose: The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. The national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals partner with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, conserve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create recreation opportunities.

ATTACHMENT D

Merrill's 2022 Outdoor Recreation Online Survey Results

Compiled by: NCWRPC

City of Merrill, 2022 ORP Survey

Response Summary

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

Insights

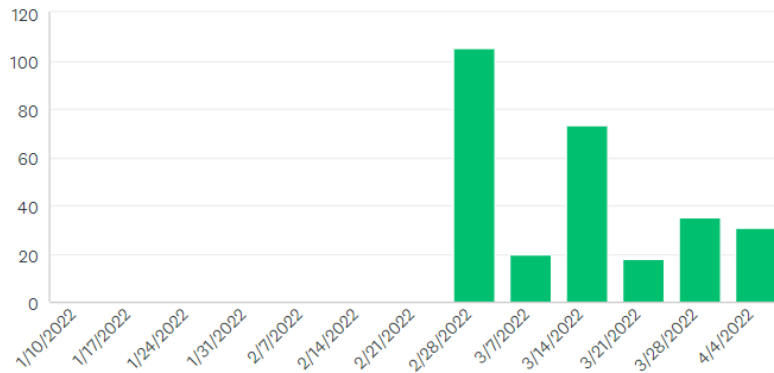
TOTAL RESPONSES 282	COMPLETION RATE ? 70%	TYPICAL TIME SPENT ? 9m:9s
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Trends

Responses (by week)

Chart Type ▼ Trend by... ▼

First: 3/3/2022 Zoom: 1/10/2022 to 4/4/2022

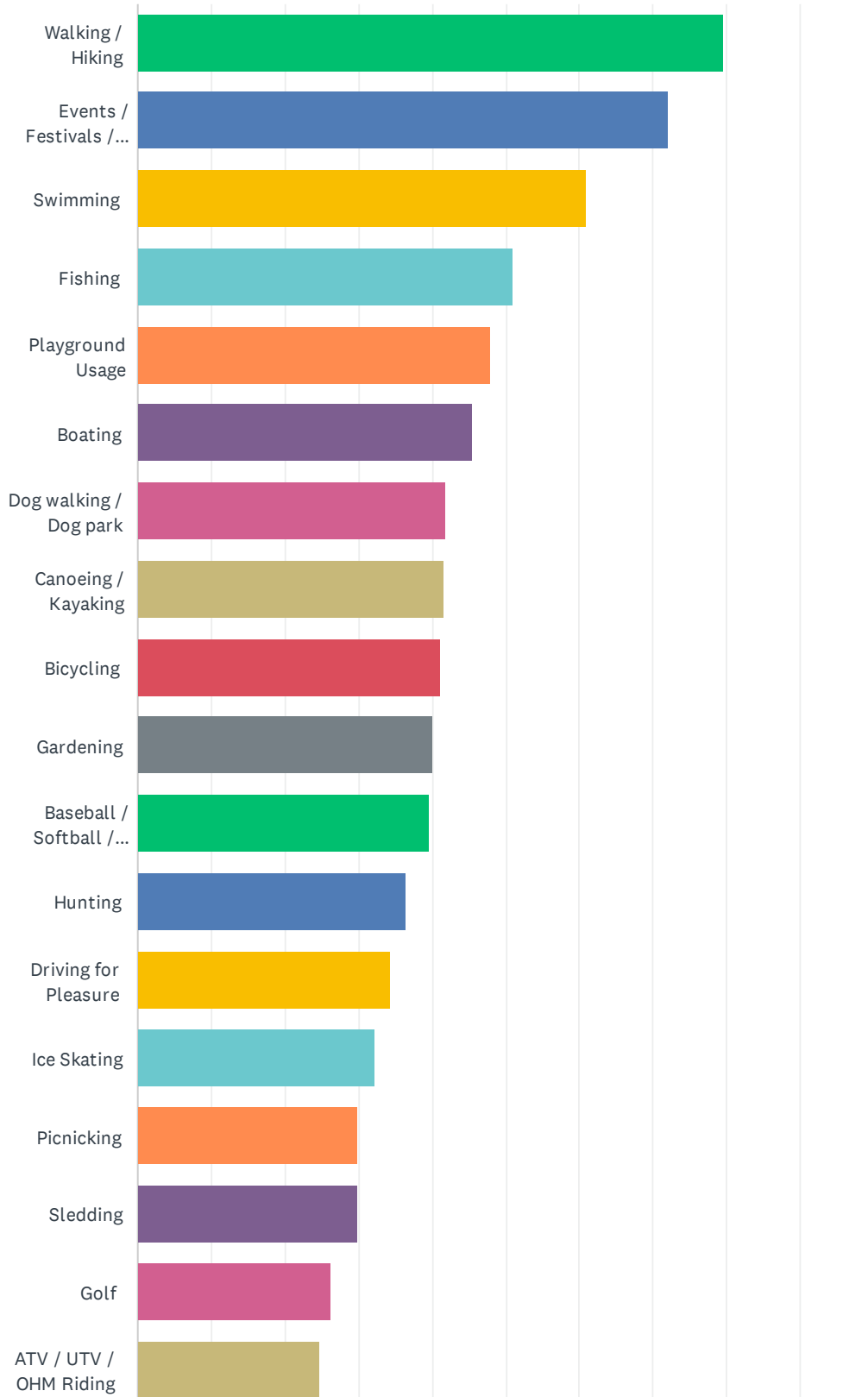


Weekly (Starting on the date)

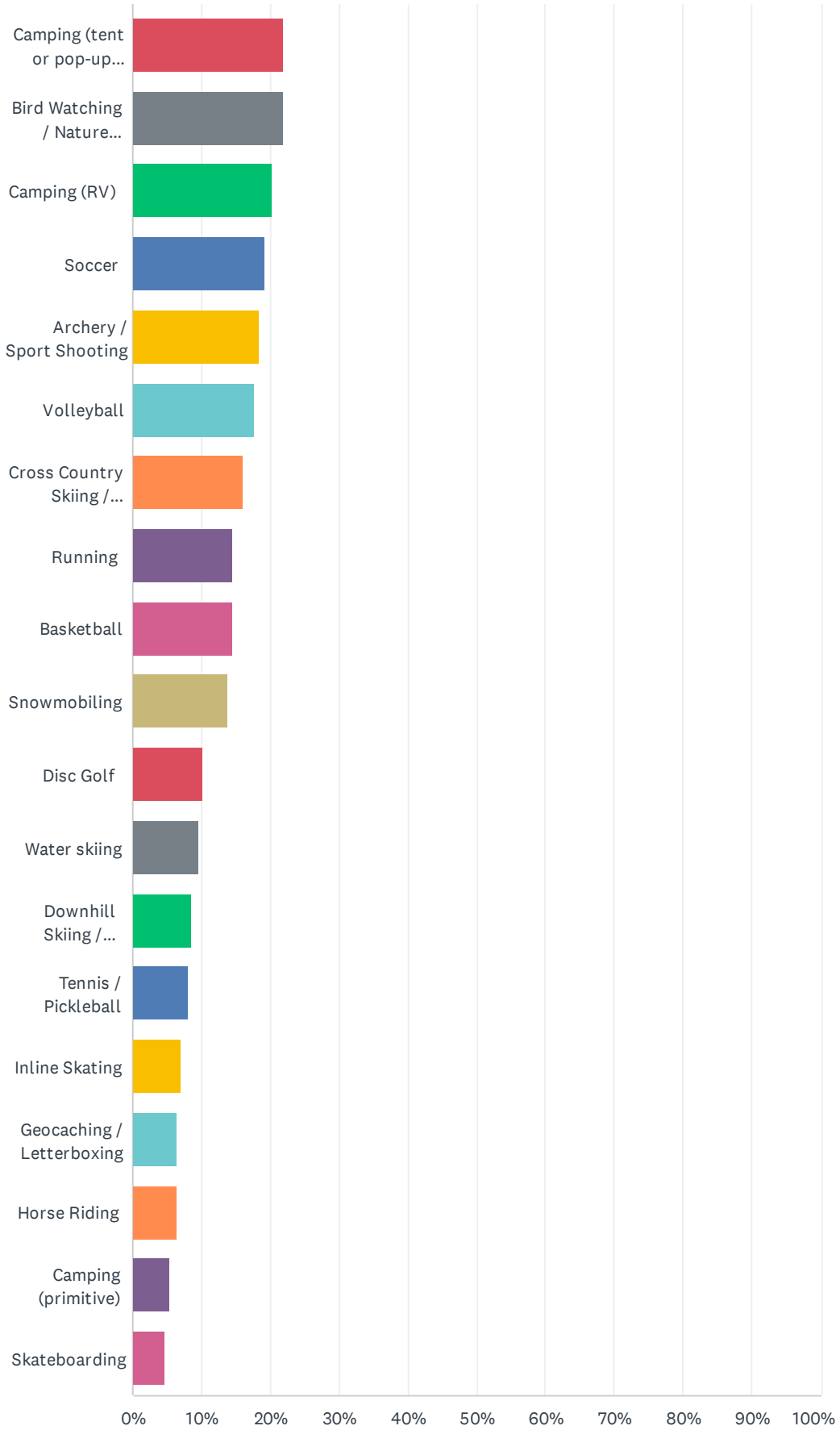


Q1 Which recreational activities did you participate in during 2021? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 282 Skipped: 0



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking / Hiking	79.43%	224
Events / Festivals / Fairs	71.99%	203
Swimming	60.99%	172
Fishing	51.06%	144
Playground Usage	47.87%	135
Boating	45.39%	128
Dog walking / Dog park	41.84%	118
Canoeing / Kayaking	41.49%	117
Bicycling	41.13%	116
Gardening	40.07%	113
Baseball / Softball / T-ball	39.72%	112
Hunting	36.52%	103
Driving for Pleasure	34.40%	97
Ice Skating	32.27%	91
Picnicking	29.79%	84
Sledding	29.79%	84
Golf	26.24%	74
ATV / UTV / OHM Riding	24.82%	70
Camping (tent or pop-up camper)	21.99%	62
Bird Watching / Nature Viewing	21.99%	62
Camping (RV)	20.21%	57
Soccer	19.15%	54
Archery / Sport Shooting	18.44%	52
Volleyball	17.73%	50
Cross Country Skiing / Snowshoeing	15.96%	45
Running	14.54%	41
Basketball	14.54%	41
Snowmobiling	13.83%	39
Disc Golf	10.28%	29
Water skiing	9.57%	27
Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding	8.51%	24
Tennis / Pickleball	8.16%	23
Inline Skating	7.09%	20

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

Geocaching / Letterboxing	6.38%	18
Horse Riding	6.38%	18
Camping (primitive)	5.32%	15
Skateboarding	4.61%	13
Total Respondents: 282		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Ice Hockey	4/5/2022 8:59 PM
2	Tubing	3/31/2022 11:29 PM
3	Ice Hockey	3/30/2022 11:59 AM
4	I also got into league trap shooting 3 years ago. I think more hunting/fishing type events would be popular in the Merrill area.	3/7/2022 7:24 PM
5	Aquatic Center, Mini Golf, Adventure tours visiting sites, sports training camps, swim lessons, beach time.	3/4/2022 4:29 PM
6	Ice Hockey	3/3/2022 10:29 PM
7	Scuba diving	3/3/2022 9:53 PM
8	Hockey	3/3/2022 7:34 PM

Q2 What potential outdoor recreational opportunities should be developed in the City of Merrill?

Answered: 133 Skipped: 149

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1.	100.00%	133
2.	65.41%	87
3.	35.34%	47

#	1.	DATE
1	Pickleball	4/9/2022 8:51 AM
2	Splash pad	4/8/2022 9:07 AM
3	Areas to launch kayaks and paddle boards in town like at the Parks (easier river access)	4/7/2022 9:06 PM
4	Some Non-sand Volleyball courts	4/7/2022 3:39 PM
5	Rope tow Wilson Hill sledding	4/7/2022 3:31 PM
6	Better skateboard park near downtown	4/7/2022 2:08 PM
7	A small playground near the Agra building for kids	4/7/2022 10:07 AM
8	tai chi	4/6/2022 6:55 PM
9	Return of the warming house at Lions Park for fun winter filled days.	4/6/2022 7:24 AM
10	Camps for middle schoolers	4/5/2022 8:59 PM
11	Pickleball	4/4/2022 10:31 PM
12	Tennis	4/4/2022 9:19 PM
13	More central activities for kids in the summer	4/4/2022 8:41 PM
14	More Atv Routes through the city	4/4/2022 4:19 PM
15	Pump track	4/3/2022 7:20 AM
16	Pump track	4/3/2022 7:17 AM
17	Sledding hill like sylvan hill	4/2/2022 7:56 AM
18	Football	3/31/2022 11:54 PM
19	Use existing parks, gardens and trails for outdoor activities such as trail hikes, walking clubs, guided nature walks led by a naturalist, outdoor boot camps, hiking groups, stretching classes, running groups, beach volleyball, swimming at a local lake and summer camps at a nature playground or local park	3/31/2022 11:29 PM
20	Events, festivals and fairs	3/31/2022 8:06 AM
21	More trails fot walking/ biking	3/31/2022 5:33 AM
22	More tennis courts	3/30/2022 8:37 PM
23	Outdoor exercise equipment	3/30/2022 7:15 PM
24	A Christmas market	3/30/2022 7:13 PM
25	Expansion of the river trail (and easier/better parking for access)	3/30/2022 6:59 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

26	Cross country skiing trails	3/30/2022 3:05 PM
27	Street Fairs/Crazy Daze/Community Appreciation eventsetc	3/30/2022 1:18 PM
28	Splash pad/free water feature at parks	3/30/2022 12:10 PM
29	Summer inline skate hockey league	3/30/2022 11:59 AM
30	ATV/UTV trails besides harrison hills	3/30/2022 11:43 AM
31	Update some of our park equipment.	3/30/2022 9:19 AM
32	Larger skate park	3/29/2022 6:30 AM
33	A splash pad area for toddlers at the Aquatic Center	3/28/2022 10:04 PM
34	A nice park and parking space in the open lot by river street and Tyler's park. There's no parks on that part of town.	3/28/2022 8:46 PM
35	Festivals geared towards children	3/28/2022 8:07 PM
36	Geocaching	3/28/2022 7:18 PM
37	Splash Pad	3/28/2022 10:56 AM
38	Shooting range	3/27/2022 11:14 AM
39	Family events	3/24/2022 3:28 PM
40	Pickleball	3/23/2022 7:14 PM
41	Archery	3/21/2022 9:18 PM
42	Bike paths	3/21/2022 8:38 PM
43	Gardening	3/21/2022 6:03 PM
44	Pickle ball courts	3/21/2022 4:34 PM
45	Outdoor hockey rink	3/21/2022 3:54 PM
46	Skate Park	3/21/2022 3:54 PM
47	disc golf	3/20/2022 10:39 AM
48	Outdoor climbing structure for kids	3/18/2022 8:46 PM
49	Snowshoeing	3/15/2022 8:38 PM
50	A meeting place for young teenagers with an Arcade	3/15/2022 6:18 PM
51	skateboarding	3/15/2022 5:44 PM
52	Canoe/kayak launch and landing spots with ease of use	3/15/2022 5:43 PM
53	Canoe/kayak landings made for ease of use	3/15/2022 5:36 PM
54	Outdoor pickleball courts	3/15/2022 11:03 AM
55	bigger playground areas	3/15/2022 10:29 AM
56	Tennis courts	3/14/2022 7:37 PM
57	Indoor sports facilities for winter	3/14/2022 7:07 PM
58	Bathrooms by the last softball diamonds at MARC	3/14/2022 6:14 PM
59	Skateboarding	3/14/2022 4:52 PM
60	Outdoor archery range	3/14/2022 4:07 PM
61	In line skating	3/14/2022 3:20 PM
62	More walking trails	3/14/2022 2:22 PM
63	Sports camp	3/14/2022 12:19 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

64	lights at MARC on the softball diamonds	3/14/2022 12:07 PM
65	Outdoor inline skating rink and/or trials	3/14/2022 12:06 PM
66	Softball fields	3/14/2022 11:38 AM
67	Lights at the Marc	3/14/2022 8:45 AM
68	Lights on the softball fields at the MARC	3/14/2022 8:30 AM
69	Splash Pad	3/10/2022 3:51 PM
70	Pickleball courts	3/9/2022 8:18 PM
71	Mountain Biking Trails	3/9/2022 11:44 AM
72	Maintain and repair the boat landings	3/8/2022 7:43 AM
73	ATV/UTV oriented events and trail access.	3/7/2022 7:24 PM
74	Improve the boat landings	3/7/2022 3:16 PM
75	Weekly Music Venue to include battle of bands	3/7/2022 8:45 AM
76	Better use of the festival grounds. More events	3/6/2022 6:34 PM
77	Pickle ball courts	3/6/2022 5:09 PM
78	Bow shooting range	3/6/2022 5:01 PM
79	City Campground	3/4/2022 11:09 PM
80	Bike, canoe and kayak rentals available	3/4/2022 9:59 PM
81	A nice skateboard park for the kids	3/4/2022 9:07 PM
82	Lights at the MARC	3/4/2022 7:24 PM
83	Splash pad for really little kids	3/4/2022 7:11 PM
84	More paved trails for biking/walking with kids (away from traffic)	3/4/2022 6:49 PM
85	Beaches	3/4/2022 5:51 PM
86	Swimming beaches	3/4/2022 5:31 PM
87	Open more streets to UTV	3/4/2022 5:08 PM
88	Rollerskating rink would be nice! (Use the MARC center when ice is not in.)	3/4/2022 5:01 PM
89	Improve walking trail with concessions	3/4/2022 5:01 PM
90	Snow shoeing	3/4/2022 4:57 PM
91	Additional splash pad in one of inner parks	3/4/2022 4:56 PM
92	Water recreation	3/4/2022 4:53 PM
93	Rentals of canoe's/Kayaks	3/4/2022 4:52 PM
94	More ski trails	3/4/2022 4:51 PM
95	Ice skating during Spring, Summer and Fall(year round ice at MARC)	3/4/2022 4:29 PM
96	Pickleball	3/4/2022 1:08 PM
97	Outdoor exercise kiosk for adults	3/4/2022 12:31 PM
98	horse shows (beyone gymkhanas)	3/4/2022 12:14 PM
99	pickle ball	3/4/2022 11:29 AM
100	Add amenities to Pocket Park to give reason for people to go there	3/4/2022 10:22 AM
101	More benches in the parks not the picnic tables like by the water in the park by the library we like to sit and watch the water.	3/4/2022 8:58 AM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

102	Dog Park	3/4/2022 7:41 AM
103	Hiking Trails	3/4/2022 7:14 AM
104	Maxwell Street Days	3/4/2022 6:39 AM
105	A very nice mini golf course	3/3/2022 11:05 PM
106	Mountain Bike Trails	3/3/2022 10:29 PM
107	Fat tire bike path	3/3/2022 10:17 PM
108	Competitive sport events for adults	3/3/2022 8:47 PM
109	Bicycle trails	3/3/2022 8:34 PM
110	Expand Riverbend Trail	3/3/2022 8:27 PM
111	Hiking	3/3/2022 8:06 PM
112	Paved bike trails	3/3/2022 8:01 PM
113	Summer festivals	3/3/2022 7:52 PM
114	A	3/3/2022 7:44 PM
115	Water source at or near dog park	3/3/2022 7:42 PM
116	Fishing Club for Kids	3/3/2022 7:28 PM
117	Tennis	3/3/2022 7:01 PM
118	Youth sports	3/3/2022 6:43 PM
119	Biking paths	3/3/2022 6:19 PM
120	Skate board park	3/3/2022 5:45 PM
121	Organize activities for kids	3/3/2022 5:40 PM
122	2nd dog park at the Prairie Trail	3/3/2022 5:34 PM
123	More up dated playground equipment	3/3/2022 5:26 PM
124	Better skate park	3/3/2022 5:16 PM
125	Yoga	3/3/2022 5:06 PM
126	I wish some of the out door rinks had lights during the winter.	3/3/2022 4:53 PM
127	Maxwell Street Days	3/3/2022 4:46 PM
128	Outdoor street hockey rink (like get boards from Sport Resource Group)	3/3/2022 4:25 PM
129	Areas to fish	3/3/2022 4:05 PM
130	Pickle ball	3/3/2022 3:58 PM
131	Kayak routes/maps posted with put in/take out points	3/3/2022 3:38 PM
132	Pickle ball court	3/3/2022 3:34 PM
133	Pickleball	3/3/2022 3:18 PM
#	2.	DATE
1	Skateboard	4/9/2022 8:51 AM
2	Skate park	4/8/2022 9:07 AM
3	Larger skatepark for kids	4/7/2022 9:06 PM
4	More basketball courts	4/7/2022 3:39 PM
5	More bike trails	4/7/2022 3:31 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

6	More bike trails	4/7/2022 2:08 PM
7	Connecting to other trails, kayak and canoe launches with a destination in mind and promote	4/7/2022 10:07 AM
8	Activities that happen in town not just at the MARC	4/6/2022 7:24 AM
9	Ropes course	4/5/2022 8:59 PM
10	Lacrosse	4/4/2022 9:19 PM
11	More hands on activities	4/4/2022 8:41 PM
12	Selling the city forest to use for in city projects	4/4/2022 4:19 PM
13	Evening swim lessons	4/2/2022 7:56 AM
14	Splash pad for families to cool off, run through sprinklers	3/31/2022 11:29 PM
15	Enhance playgrounds	3/31/2022 5:33 AM
16	Farmer's market	3/30/2022 7:15 PM
17	Pickle ball courts	3/30/2022 7:13 PM
18	Summer swim team for younger swimmers	3/30/2022 3:05 PM
19	Downtown Fall/Winter activities Chili/Soup Feeds/Ice sculpting	3/30/2022 1:18 PM
20	Dino dig/large sandbox	3/30/2022 12:10 PM
21	Developmental sport camps	3/30/2022 11:59 AM
22	More RV camping	3/30/2022 11:43 AM
23	Update skate park. I see a good amount of kids there when weather permitting. Good place to keep older kids busy.	3/30/2022 9:19 AM
24	Better park/playground equipment	3/29/2022 6:30 AM
25	Dock for fishing	3/28/2022 10:04 PM
26	Improve Tyler's park	3/28/2022 8:46 PM
27	Inner city swimming pool	3/28/2022 8:07 PM
28	Update parks	3/28/2022 7:18 PM
29	More hiking trails	3/27/2022 11:14 AM
30	Ski trails	3/24/2022 3:28 PM
31	Snowmobile	3/21/2022 9:18 PM
32	Out door playgrounds	3/21/2022 8:38 PM
33	Skate park	3/21/2022 3:54 PM
34	Dog park on east side of town	3/21/2022 3:54 PM
35	fishing	3/20/2022 10:39 AM
36	Trampoline park	3/18/2022 8:46 PM
37	Kayaking	3/15/2022 8:38 PM
38	Birdwatching	3/15/2022 5:44 PM
39	more fishing access off the River end trail	3/15/2022 5:36 PM
40	or another playground area	3/15/2022 10:29 AM
41	Pavilion by the last softball diamonds at the MARC	3/14/2022 6:14 PM
42	Outdoor festivals	3/14/2022 3:20 PM
43	Nature arts activities	3/14/2022 12:19 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

44	New concession stands at the MARC	3/14/2022 12:07 PM
45	Lights for the ball fields	3/14/2022 12:06 PM
46	Water ways in and Pull outs	3/14/2022 8:45 AM
47	Lions sledding hill	3/14/2022 8:30 AM
48	Skydiving	3/9/2022 11:44 AM
49	Fishing opportunities, docks/water access along river.	3/7/2022 7:24 PM
50	Trim brush around banks of parks	3/7/2022 3:16 PM
51	Water park	3/7/2022 8:45 AM
52	Small festivals, like Riverfest.	3/6/2022 6:34 PM
53	More hiking and biking in less populated areas	3/6/2022 5:01 PM
54	Disc Golf	3/4/2022 11:09 PM
55	River Tubing with drop off/pick up	3/4/2022 9:59 PM
56	More fishing places on the rivers in town	3/4/2022 9:07 PM
57	Additional concessions near fields 5, 6, & 7	3/4/2022 7:24 PM
58	Updated playground equipment.	3/4/2022 6:49 PM
59	Year round ice at the MARC	3/4/2022 5:08 PM
60	Cross country skiing	3/4/2022 4:57 PM
61	Efficient sporting/practice facility	3/4/2022 4:56 PM
62	Biking	3/4/2022 4:53 PM
63	Rentals of Bikes	3/4/2022 4:52 PM
64	More outdoor activities for kids	3/4/2022 4:51 PM
65	Adventure Mini Golfing with water features and fun theme	3/4/2022 4:29 PM
66	Organized family-oriented activities at various parks	3/4/2022 12:31 PM
67	More disc golf	3/4/2022 10:22 AM
68	Better access to river for fishing - 1 pier is not enough	3/4/2022 7:41 AM
69	Candlelight Walks	3/4/2022 7:14 AM
70	Community night out	3/4/2022 6:39 AM
71	Swimming beach at Ott's park again	3/3/2022 11:05 PM
72	Bike trails	3/3/2022 10:29 PM
73	Add dog agility equipment to dog park	3/3/2022 10:17 PM
74	Pickle Ball Courts	3/3/2022 8:34 PM
75	Disc Golf	3/3/2022 8:06 PM
76	Mountain bike trails	3/3/2022 8:01 PM
77	Oktoberfest	3/3/2022 7:52 PM
78	Fitness Camp for Kids	3/3/2022 7:28 PM
79	Snow shoeing	3/3/2022 7:01 PM
80	Youth sports	3/3/2022 6:43 PM
81	Family driven events	3/3/2022 5:40 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

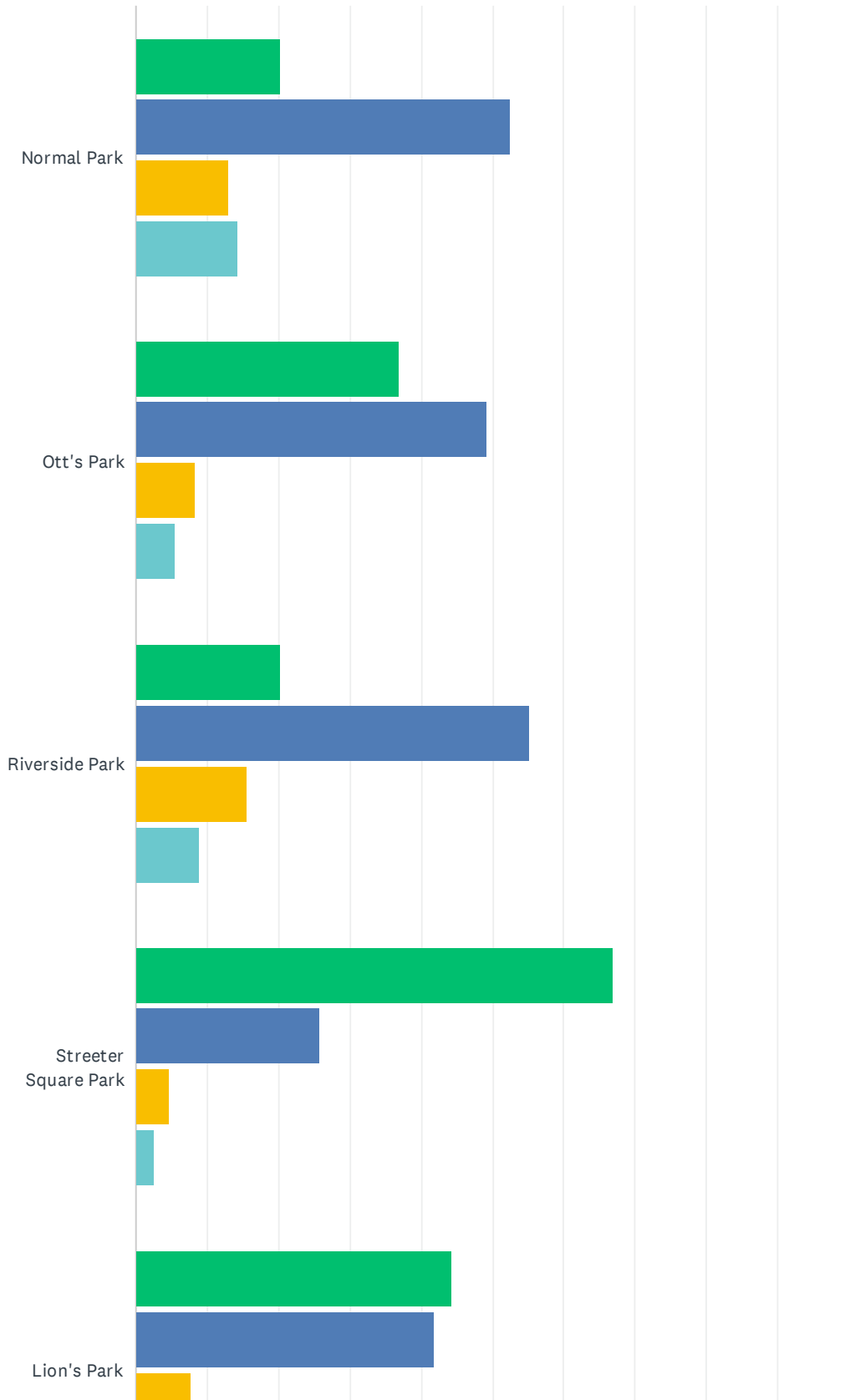
82	Move skate park	3/3/2022 5:26 PM
83	Zumba	3/3/2022 5:06 PM
84	It would be nice to see a park develop by the agra pavilion with playground equipment and a possible volleyball court	3/3/2022 4:53 PM
85	Food trucks nights	3/3/2022 4:46 PM
86	Easy in/out kayak launch dock	3/3/2022 4:25 PM
87	Further enhancement of the river bend trail, including a park attached.	3/3/2022 3:38 PM
#	3.	DATE
1	Anything kid focused- we need more activities for kiddos we go out of town a lot, but would love to stay here	4/8/2022 9:07 AM
2	Splash pad for toddlers	4/7/2022 9:06 PM
3	Adolescent playground	4/7/2022 3:31 PM
4	Outdoor fitness stations someplace	4/7/2022 10:07 AM
5	Swimming beach off the river	4/6/2022 7:24 AM
6	Rent a bike.	4/4/2022 9:19 PM
7	Adult volleyball league not at bar	4/2/2022 7:56 AM
8	Start community tree planting program	3/31/2022 11:29 PM
9	Use bankers square for events	3/30/2022 7:13 PM
10	Walking or running clubs	3/30/2022 3:05 PM
11	Community night that highlight local business	3/30/2022 11:59 AM
12	Wausau has the sawmill jump park something like that would be nice .	3/30/2022 9:19 AM
13	Kids activities like painting in the park	3/28/2022 8:07 PM
14	Disk golf	3/28/2022 7:18 PM
15	Skiing	3/21/2022 9:18 PM
16	Out door entertainment	3/21/2022 8:38 PM
17	More camping sites	3/21/2022 3:54 PM
18	skateboarding park for kids	3/20/2022 10:39 AM
19	Shooting Sports	3/15/2022 8:38 PM
20	Gardening	3/15/2022 5:44 PM
21	Stuff to do in winter for kids, free	3/15/2022 10:29 AM
22	Swimming events	3/14/2022 3:20 PM
23	Day camp	3/14/2022 12:19 PM
24	More Softball fields in general at the MARC	3/14/2022 12:07 PM
25	Otts park lights need updating	3/14/2022 12:06 PM
26	Kayaking	3/14/2022 8:30 AM
27	Indoor Soccer	3/9/2022 11:44 AM
28	Biking opportunities/events	3/7/2022 7:24 PM
29	Block parties	3/6/2022 6:34 PM
30	Indoor golf range	3/6/2022 5:01 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

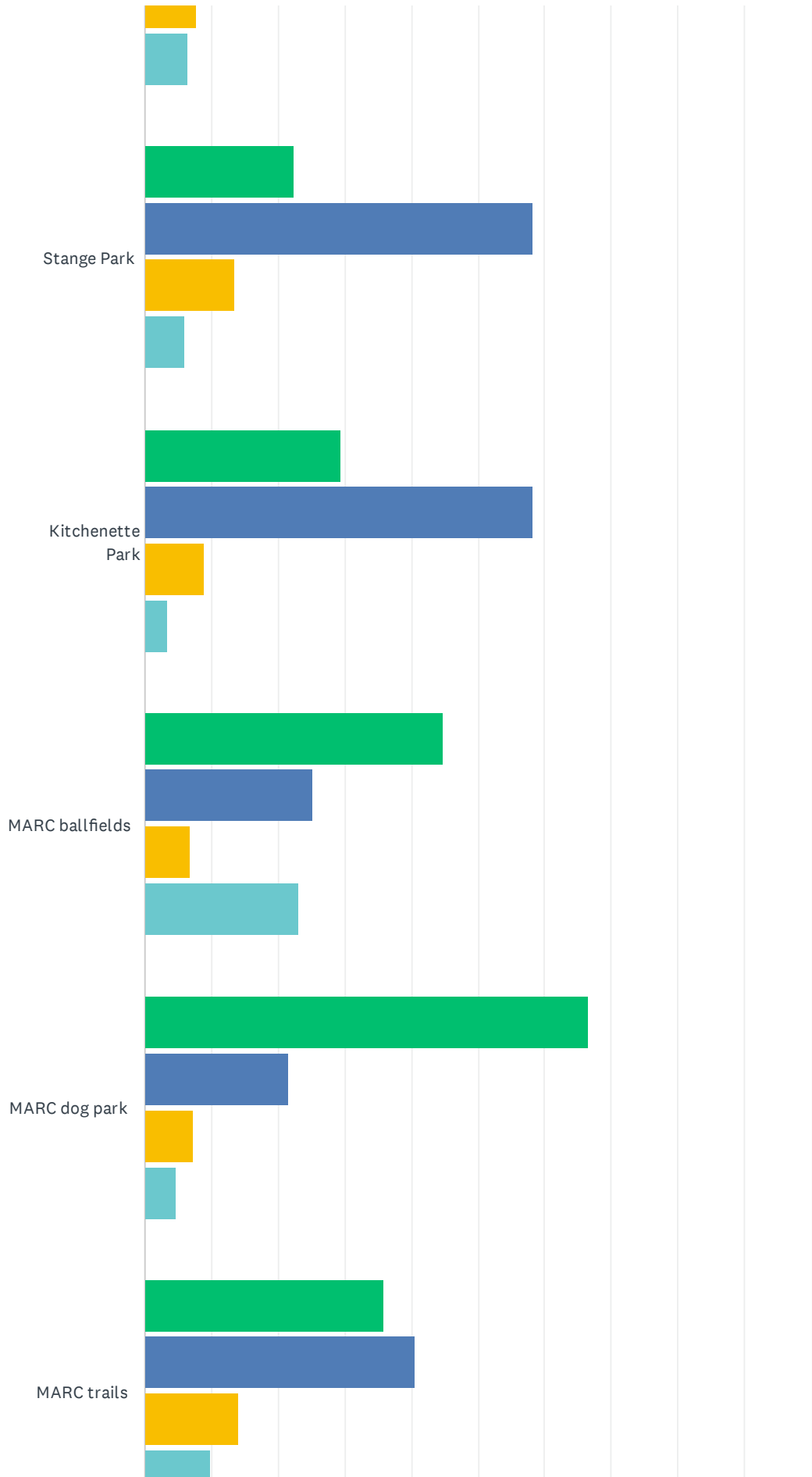
31	Skate Park	3/4/2022 11:09 PM
32	Kayak/canoe rentals along our river district	3/4/2022 4:56 PM
33	Rentals of snowshoeing equipment	3/4/2022 4:52 PM
34	Outdoor movie nights for familys	3/4/2022 4:51 PM
35	Waterfront eateries and organized tube launching to use river areas	3/4/2022 4:29 PM
36	Picnic tables along the River Bend Trail	3/4/2022 12:31 PM
37	Add amenities to Festival Grounds so it is used year-round	3/4/2022 10:22 AM
38	Food truck nights	3/4/2022 6:39 AM
39	Bicycling	3/3/2022 8:06 PM
40	Walking Challenge	3/3/2022 7:28 PM
41	Outdoor recreation	3/3/2022 6:43 PM
42	Indoor activists for winter time	3/3/2022 5:40 PM
43	More children based activities	3/3/2022 5:26 PM
44	Kickball	3/3/2022 5:06 PM
45	An upgraded state park would be nice. Additional length to bike trail.	3/3/2022 4:53 PM
46	Community picnic days	3/3/2022 4:46 PM
47	Treating local parks for mosquitos so people can enjoy them more.	3/3/2022 3:38 PM

Q3 How often do you use the following parks or trails?

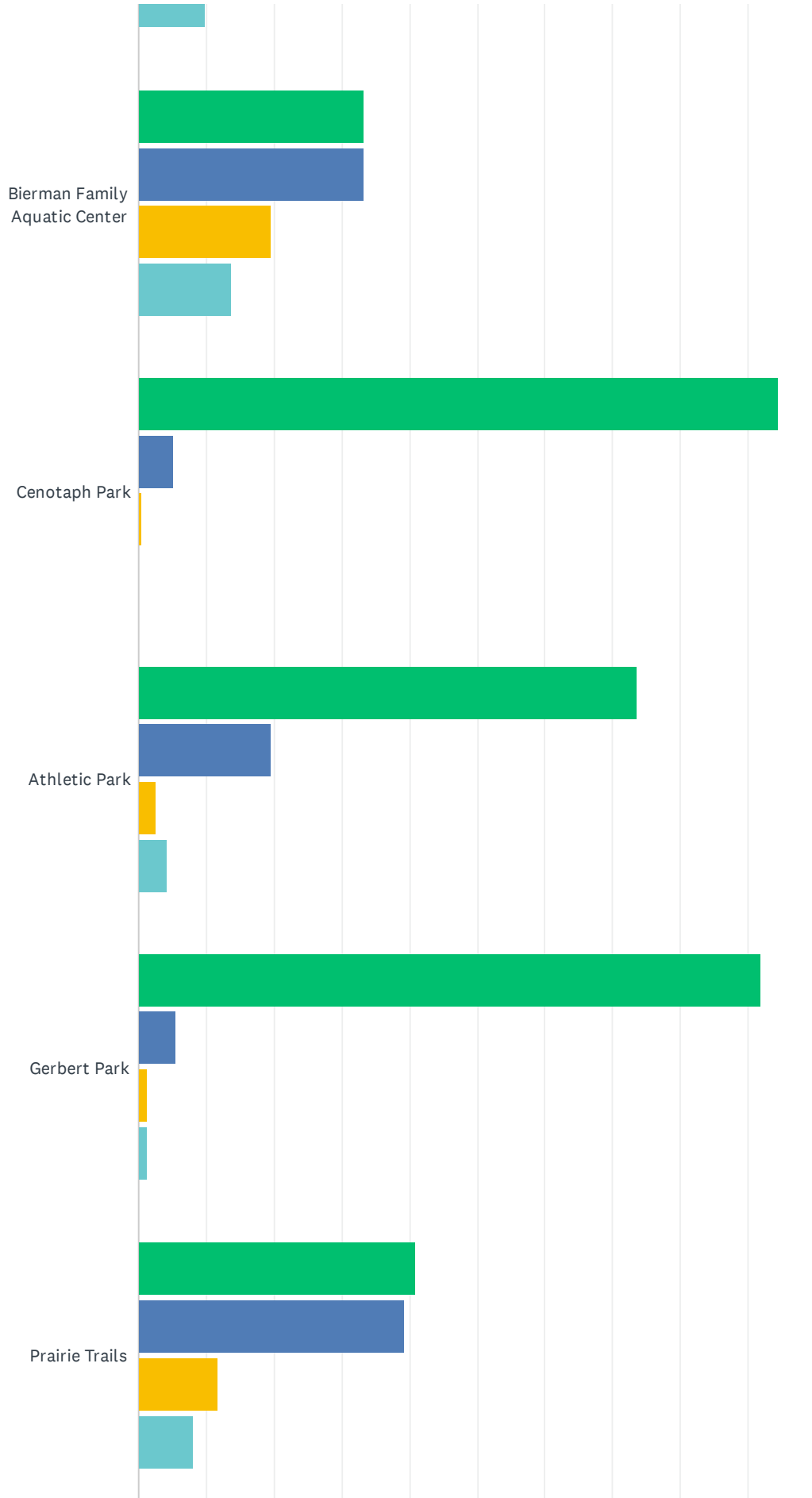
Answered: 242 Skipped: 40



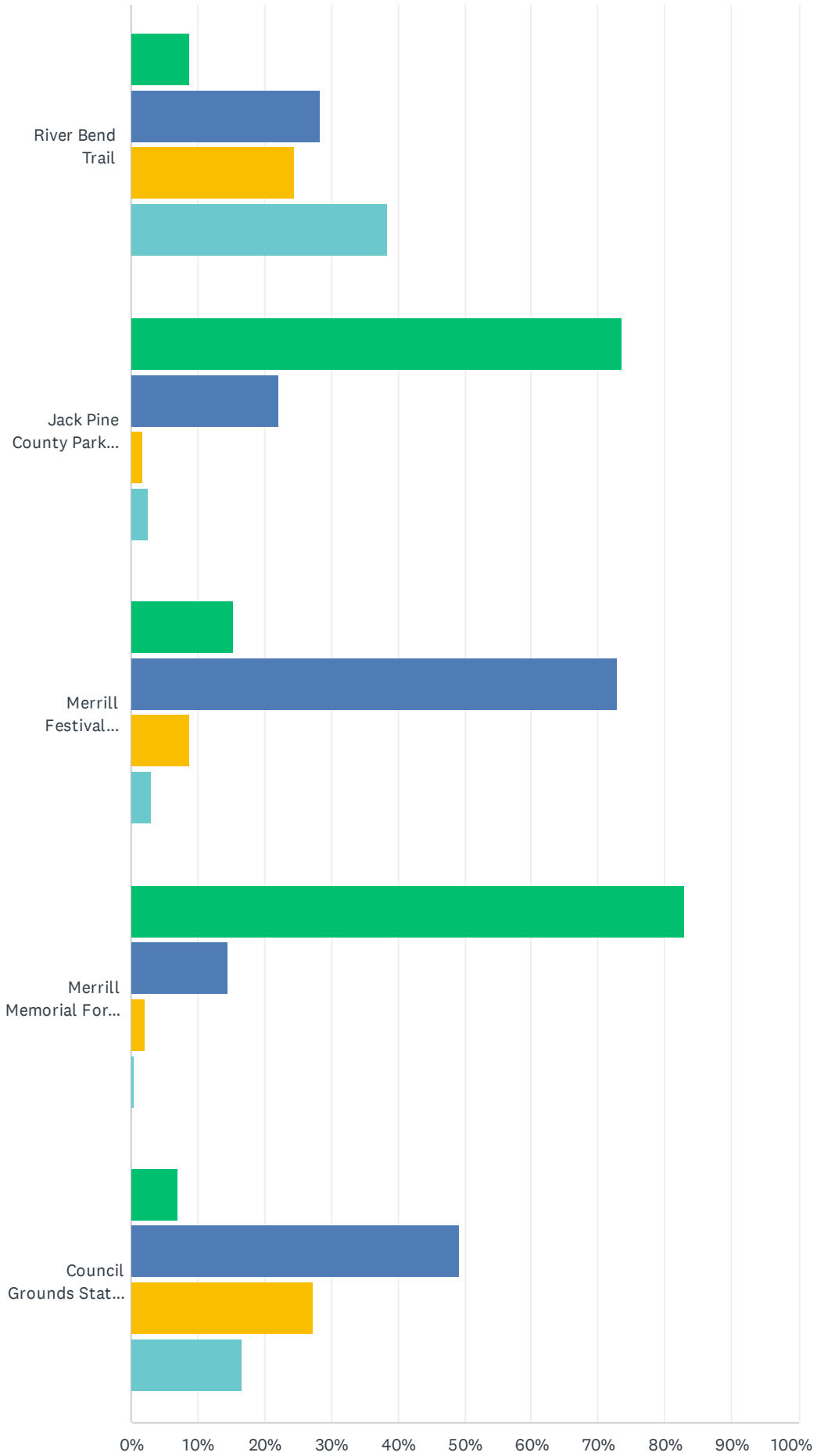
City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



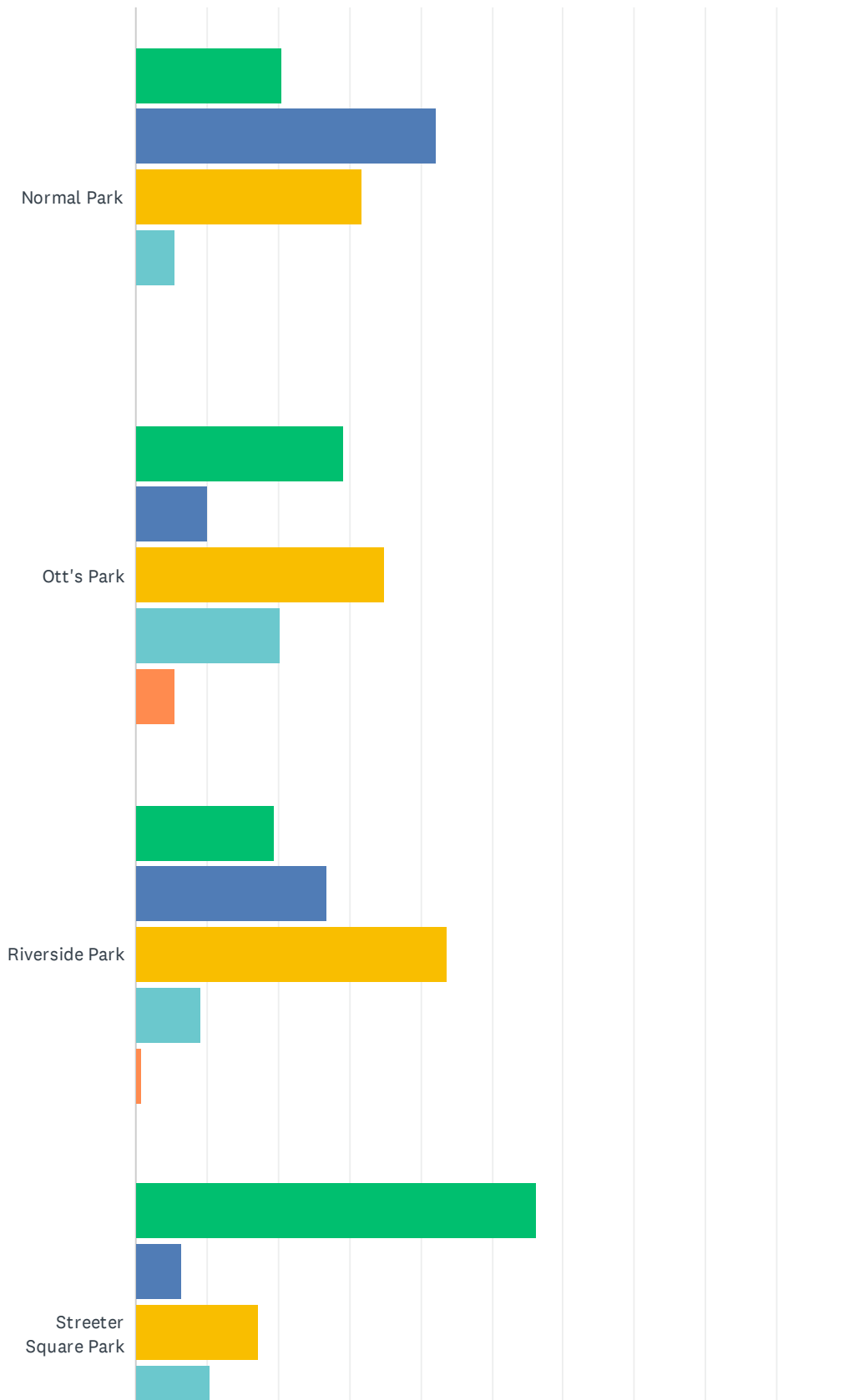
City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

■ I don't use t...
 ■ Occasionally
 ■ Monthly
 ■ Weekly

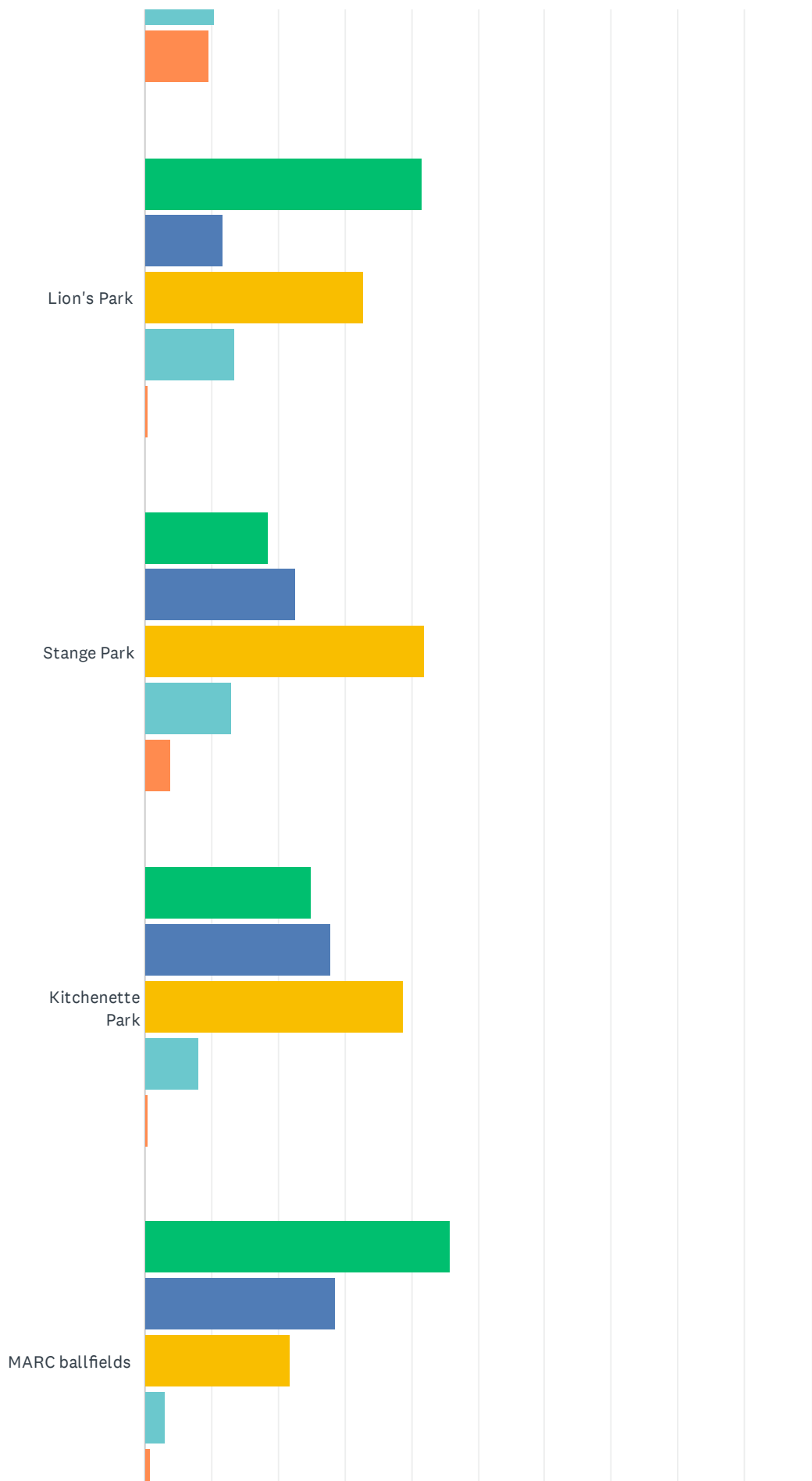
	I DON'T USE THIS PARK/TRAIL	OCCASIONALLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	TOTAL
Normal Park	20.17% 48	52.52% 125	13.03% 31	14.29% 34	238
Ott's Park	36.97% 88	49.16% 117	8.40% 20	5.46% 13	238
Riverside Park	20.25% 48	55.27% 131	15.61% 37	8.86% 21	237
Streeter Square Park	66.95% 156	25.75% 60	4.72% 11	2.58% 6	233
Lion's Park	44.26% 104	41.70% 98	7.66% 18	6.38% 15	235
Stange Park	22.36% 53	58.23% 138	13.50% 32	5.91% 14	237
Kitchenette Park	29.36% 69	58.30% 137	8.94% 21	3.40% 8	235
MARC ballfields	44.87% 105	25.21% 59	6.84% 16	23.08% 54	234
MARC dog park	66.53% 157	21.61% 51	7.20% 17	4.66% 11	236
MARC trails	35.74% 84	40.43% 95	14.04% 33	9.79% 23	235
Bierman Family Aquatic Center	33.33% 80	33.33% 80	19.58% 47	13.75% 33	240
Cenotaph Park	94.44% 221	5.13% 12	0.43% 1	0.00% 0	234
Athletic Park	73.62% 173	19.57% 46	2.55% 6	4.26% 10	235
Gerbert Park	91.91% 216	5.53% 13	1.28% 3	1.28% 3	235
Prairie Trails	40.93% 97	39.24% 93	11.81% 28	8.02% 19	237
River Bend Trail	8.75% 21	28.33% 68	24.58% 59	38.33% 92	240
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	73.62% 173	22.13% 52	1.70% 4	2.55% 6	235
Merrill Festival Grounds	15.42% 37	72.92% 175	8.75% 21	2.92% 7	240
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	82.91% 194	14.53% 34	2.14% 5	0.43% 1	234
Council Grounds State Park	7.02% 17	49.17% 119	27.27% 66	16.53% 40	242

Q4 Please rate your satisfaction with the following parks or trails:

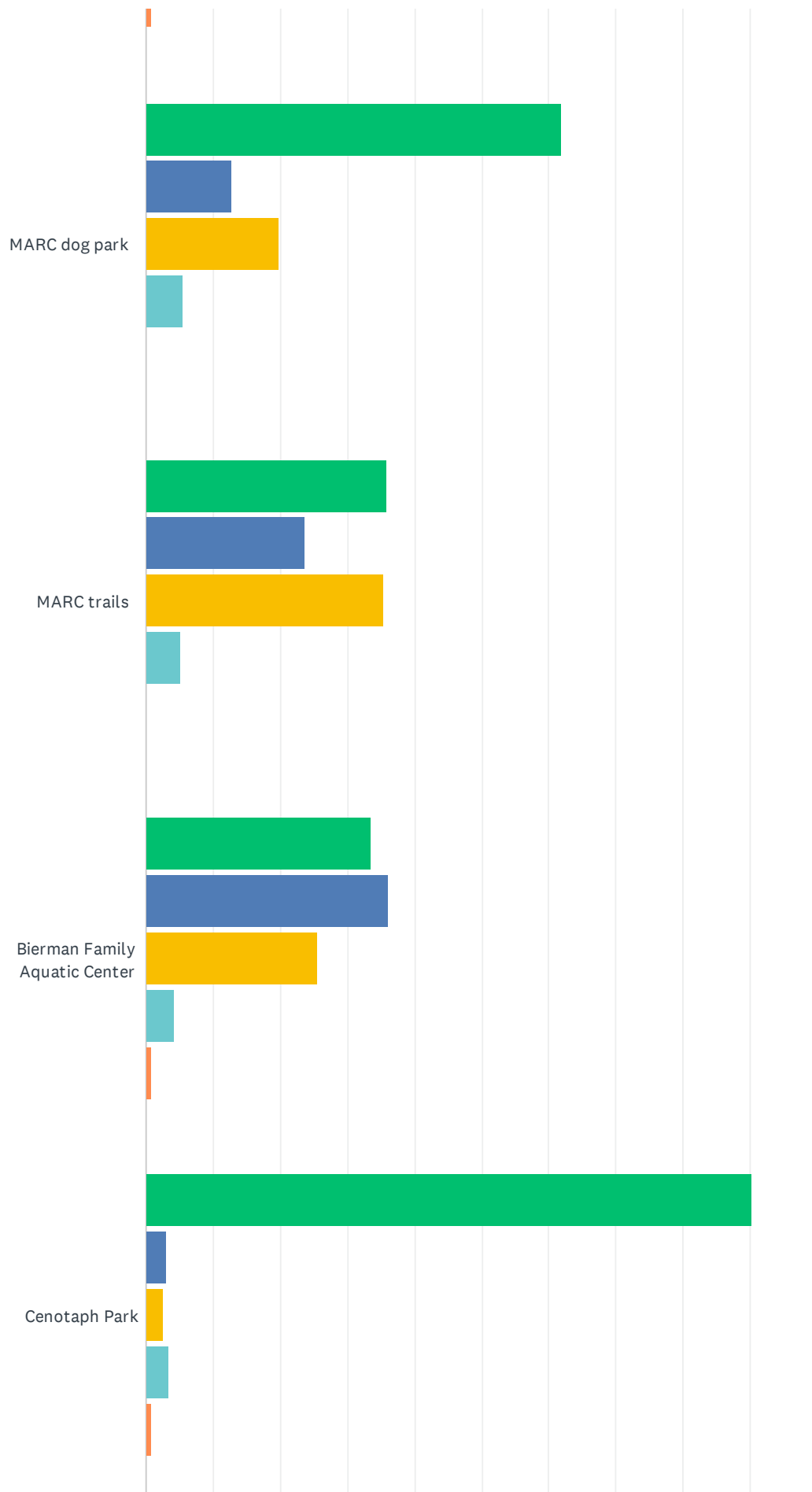
Answered: 242 Skipped: 40



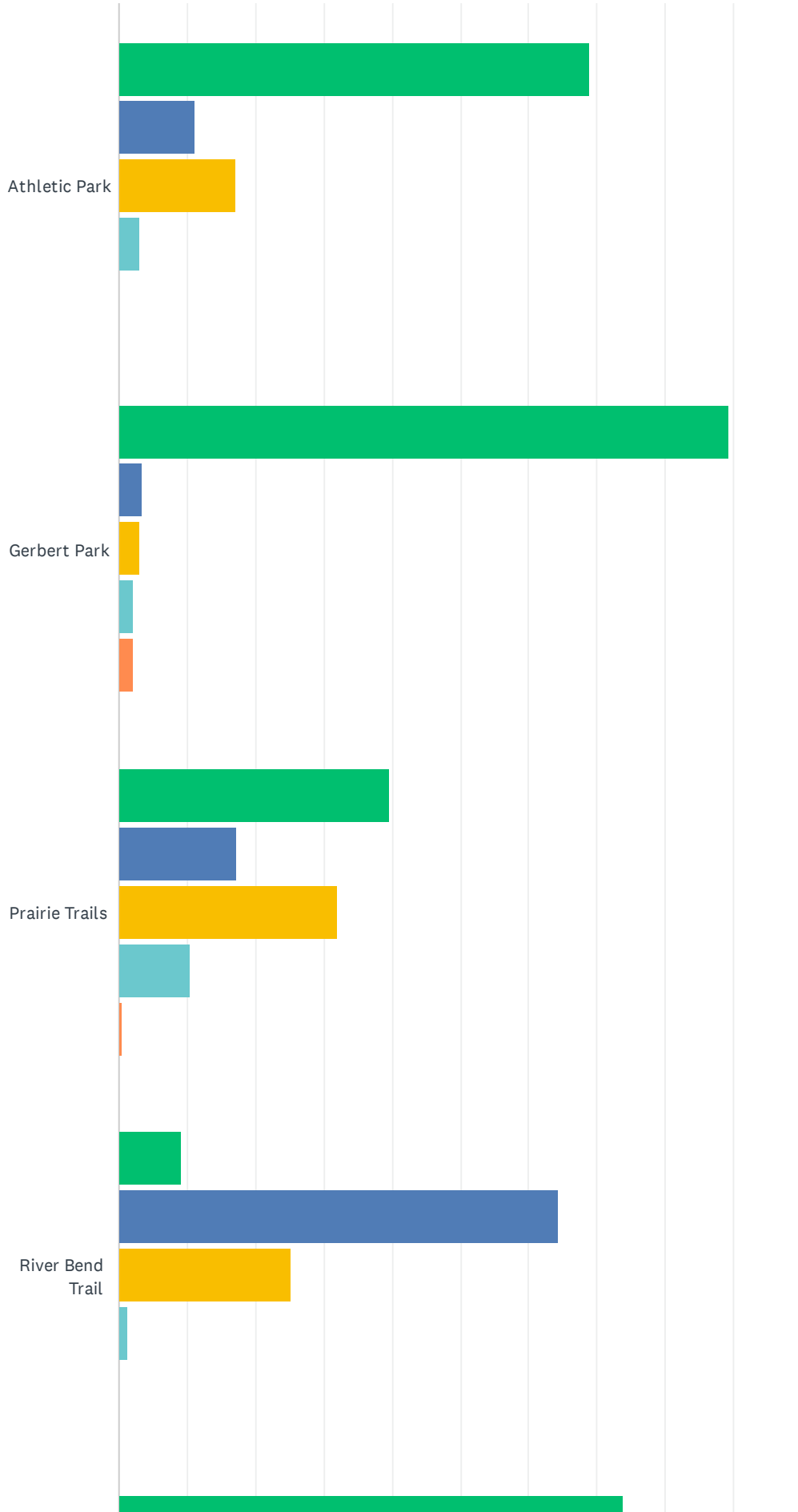
City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



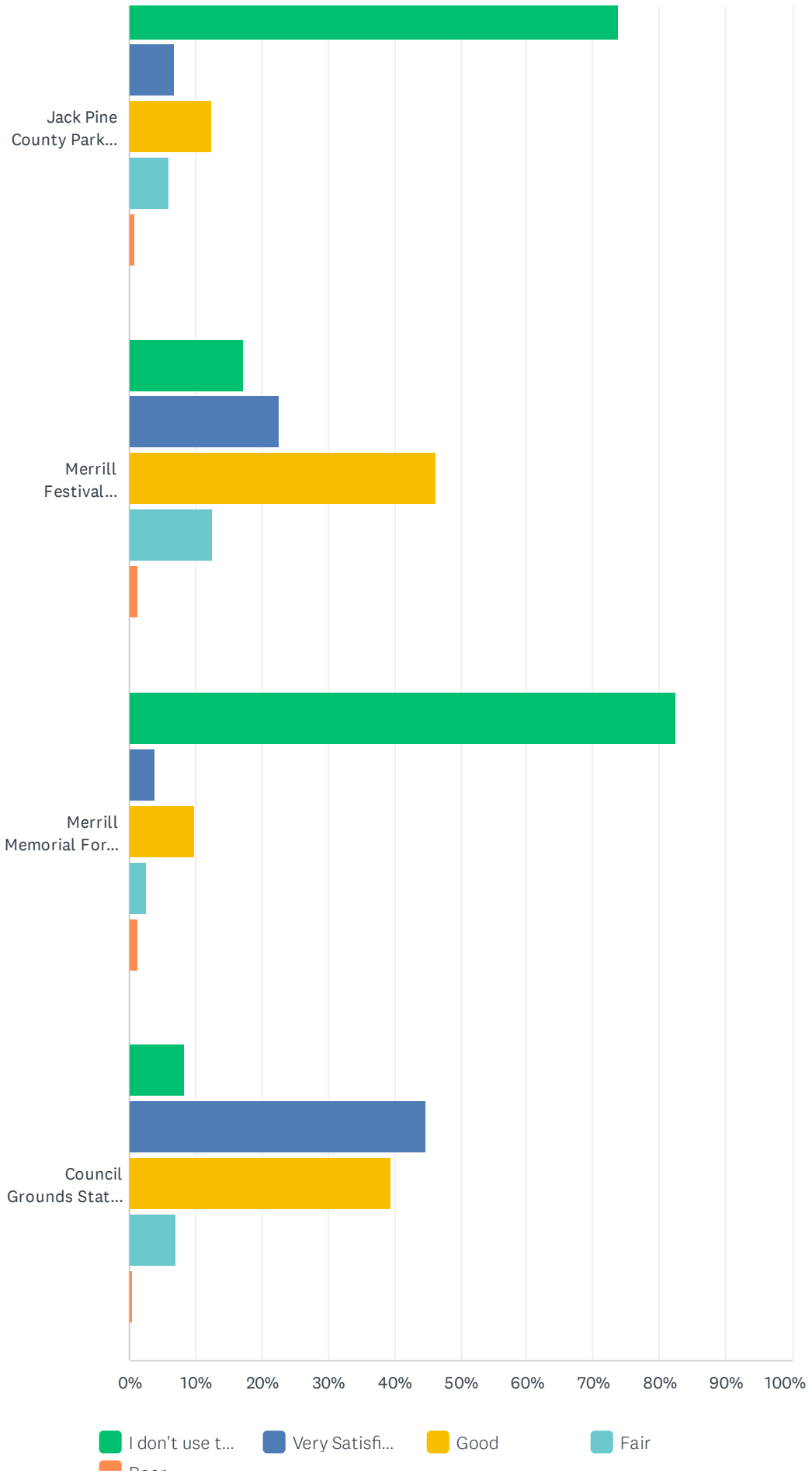
City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

 POOR

	I DON'T USE THIS PARK/TRAIL	VERY SATISFIED	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	TOTAL
Normal Park	20.50% 49	42.26% 101	31.80% 76	5.44% 13	0.00% 0	239
Ott's Park	29.11% 69	10.13% 24	35.02% 83	20.25% 48	5.49% 13	237
Riverside Park	19.33% 46	26.89% 64	43.70% 104	9.24% 22	0.84% 2	238
Streeter Square Park	56.30% 134	6.30% 15	17.23% 41	10.50% 25	9.66% 23	238
Lion's Park	41.60% 99	11.76% 28	32.77% 78	13.45% 32	0.42% 1	238
Stange Park	18.49% 44	22.69% 54	42.02% 100	13.03% 31	3.78% 9	238
Kitchenette Park	24.89% 59	27.85% 66	38.82% 92	8.02% 19	0.42% 1	237
MARC ballfields	45.80% 109	28.57% 68	21.85% 52	2.94% 7	0.84% 2	238
MARC dog park	61.86% 146	12.71% 30	19.92% 47	5.51% 13	0.00% 0	236
MARC trails	35.86% 85	23.63% 56	35.44% 84	5.06% 12	0.00% 0	237
Bierman Family Aquatic Center	33.47% 80	35.98% 86	25.52% 61	4.18% 10	0.84% 2	239
Cenotaph Park	90.21% 212	2.98% 7	2.55% 6	3.40% 8	0.85% 2	235
Athletic Park	68.94% 162	11.06% 26	17.02% 40	2.98% 7	0.00% 0	235
Gerbert Park	89.36% 210	3.40% 8	2.98% 7	2.13% 5	2.13% 5	235
Prairie Trails	39.66% 94	17.30% 41	32.07% 76	10.55% 25	0.42% 1	237
River Bend Trail	9.21% 22	64.44% 154	25.10% 60	1.26% 3	0.00% 0	239
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	73.82% 172	6.87% 16	12.45% 29	6.01% 14	0.86% 2	233
Merrill Festival Grounds	17.23% 41	22.69% 54	46.22% 110	12.61% 30	1.26% 3	238
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	82.55% 194	3.83% 9	9.79% 23	2.55% 6	1.28% 3	235
Council Grounds State Park	8.30% 20	44.81% 108	39.42% 95	7.05% 17	0.41% 1	241

Q5 (Optional) Any comments about the above parks or trails?

Answered: 64 Skipped: 218

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	mosquitos are bad at some parks, so we do not go often to those. Some are not safe with no fence line or just under developed does not keep kids interest	4/8/2022 9:12 AM
2	Clean up the river and bridges in Stange park, bring back old splash pad at stange park Love all our parks	4/7/2022 9:09 PM
3	Recommend open restrooms at all parks that are used a lot.	4/7/2022 4:23 PM
4	The gravel used at MARC Trails is too coarse to bike on and painful to walk and run on. A finer crushed granite or limestone would be much better.	4/7/2022 2:12 PM
5	Gravel trail by Marc could be a harder surface for bikes.	4/7/2022 10:11 AM
6	Jack Pine is excellent in winter. Lions Hill was always amazing but now there is simply no care so it's barely usable in winter. Street square is a nice little kid park. Stanges was in need of yard work last year but this has always been a great park.	4/6/2022 7:29 AM
7	Cover on the grand stands at Fair Grounds.	4/5/2022 9:03 PM
8	People need to clean up after their animals	4/5/2022 1:21 PM
9	♥♥♥♥	4/4/2022 7:57 PM
10	SELL CITY FOREST	4/4/2022 4:21 PM
11	No dock at otts?	4/3/2022 7:26 AM
12	Graffiti and destruction to playgrounds deters us from going. Maintenance to parks also makes us rethink where we go.	4/2/2022 6:30 PM
13	None	3/31/2022 11:31 PM
14	None	3/31/2022 10:55 PM
15	Riverside floods so often. Some parks are overrun with misquote we don't want to use like Rivverside, kitchenette, council grounds. Square Park is too close to road- my kids are runners.	3/31/2022 5:41 AM
16	I have tried to use Gerbert Park. I know where it is on a map, but I have circled the area and never figured out where to park or how to enter.	3/30/2022 7:03 PM
17	We have used the Biermann Aquatic Center very infrequently because the small children swimming area is hard to use. The water is turned up so high that our kids don't like to use the splash pad/playground area.	3/30/2022 3:09 PM
18	Consider making prairie trails more stroller friendly. Hard to push through the rocks	3/30/2022 12:13 PM
19	Streeter square has unsafe metal things sticking out of ground from toys that were removed. Also the playground could use up dating exposed metal on playground. Stages park broken equipment should be updated. Maybe put a fence around playground to keep ducks out. Lot of bird poop around there. Marc playground could use updating as well. Very out of date. With soccer and baseball fields there would be nice to have bigger playground. A playground beside Tyler's playground would be nice on the Riverbend trail. Counsel ground playground could use an update as well. Marathon park in wausau just update its playground. Something like that would be awesome. It can be for older and younger kids to play. Some of wausau parks have water sand play areas and kids love to get messy. If you have been to Jo Jo's jungle something like that would be nice for all ages of kids. I know this is all funding permit but we frequent parks alot merrill and wausau area so updated equipment would be great all around. One thing I will say isn't safe with Normal park is the blue ramp thing that connects the lower	3/30/2022 9:39 AM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

slide part from the higher slides part. Little kids have a hard time climbing it. I fear child will fall off it or an older child with broke something jumping off it.

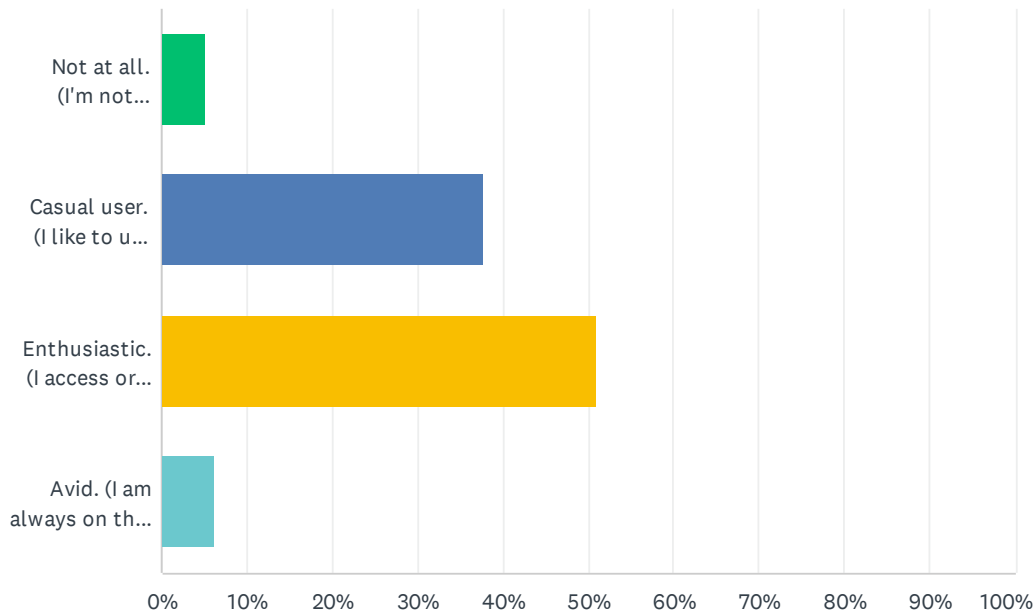
20	Keep weeds/ vines more cleaned by Tyler's park (yellow building & rock wall)	3/28/2022 8:54 PM
21	Please remove the metal pipe sticking out of the ground at streeter square. Please fix the bridge so children don't fall off of it at riverside park.	3/28/2022 7:21 PM
22	Open up parks when river opens up and put docks in	3/23/2022 12:52 PM
23	We need dog parks at other parks also	3/21/2022 8:41 PM
24	Please put the dock in at riverside park.	3/21/2022 4:42 PM
25	More support for long hockey season even by a month or two, summer programs, Skate board park for the kids	3/21/2022 3:57 PM
26	more fishing docks with more then 2 inches of water in front of dock	3/20/2022 10:44 AM
27	I have never been able to find Gerbert Park or even a map of it to be able to know where to park or where the trails are.	3/15/2022 5:46 PM
28	How do you find Gender Park? I have never been able to find it or even a good map to show where it is and where the trails arse	3/15/2022 5:39 PM
29	It would be nice to see something at Gebert Park. Even a very small play area for those who live in that area. I don't believe there is so much as a picnic table or anything at all therep	3/14/2022 4:13 PM
30	The softball fields could use some major attention.	3/14/2022 12:22 PM
31	continue to improve Athletic Park , the MARC, and Otts.....all bring many people and a lot of \$\$\$ to the City of Merrill	3/14/2022 12:05 PM
32	I think the fields at the MARC could be better taken care of as much as they are used. I also think there should be another concession stand and bathroom by fields 5, 6 and the baseball field.	3/14/2022 11:42 AM
33	More Picnic tables at Normal Park needed.	3/14/2022 2:42 AM
34	Council Grounds beach area needs the retaining replaced, I would consider it dangerous. Normal Park could benefit from equipment or sandbox geared towards smaller children. More seating would be nice.	3/10/2022 3:58 PM
35	Some of the parks could use a cleaning/pressure wash.	3/8/2022 12:19 PM
36	I think most parks in Merrill are in fairly decent condition. I think updates and improvements, things like trees, benches, small shelters, little things to make them more attractive are always welcome. The trail systems work, but improvements like more scenic spots, photo opportunity locations, things that attract people to town are also always a good thing.	3/7/2022 7:36 PM
37	Council grounds needs to increase their camping capacity so that more sites are available	3/7/2022 6:50 PM
38	So many parks with the same set up and opportunities.	3/7/2022 8:46 AM
39	Disc golf course at stanges and kitchenette needs concrete to secure the baskets and some landscaping done.	3/4/2022 11:17 PM
40	Lion's-ball field in fair condition, could improve this. MARC ball fields-would benefit for lights.	3/4/2022 7:27 PM
41	Really need a swimming/play area at the aquatic center for 1-4 year olds. The current area with the buckets and spraying water playground area was way too violent/rough for my 3 yr old son. He was so upset we left right away. I've gone back to swim, but he's too afraid.	3/4/2022 7:17 PM
42	I would use the various parks more often if they had updated play equipment.	3/4/2022 6:53 PM
43	I think some of the parks should be better policed. I don't necessarily always feel safe visiting some parks on my own with kids; particularly the more remote ones such as Riverside or Ott's.	3/4/2022 5:06 PM
44	Streeter's Square and Stange's Park need updated playground equipment—very poor condition.	3/4/2022 4:33 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

45	How in the devil does one get to access Gebert Park and what is there? It seems like a park that is not very welcoming being in an upscale neighborhood and it seems as though people living there may not like people using it. Just a guess .	3/4/2022 1:15 PM
46	MARC Trails need to be made usable with either a more packable gravel or paved. Same goes for the trails at Prairie Trails. Don't feel money invested at Merrill Memorial Forest benefits Merrill citizens.	3/4/2022 12:38 PM
47	need more maintenance in Gebert Park, trails are so untended it is hard to find them to stay on them	3/4/2022 12:18 PM
48	None	3/4/2022 9:01 AM
49	MARC soccer fields aren't even mentioned. These are in poor condition and need to be maintained just like the MARC ball diamonds.	3/3/2022 10:31 PM
50	Great mountain bike trails	3/3/2022 8:03 PM
51	I would like to see more done with the ice rink at the MARC. It is underutilized for its purpose which is hockey and ice skating.	3/3/2022 7:38 PM
52	Merrill parks needs to replace the tennis courts they removed from the Stange/Kitchenette area. Ott's is black top and not a good alternative.	3/3/2022 7:06 PM
53	There should be lights at Marc. This would bring more out of town tens in and bring revenue into the city	3/3/2022 6:46 PM
54	Many areas could use updating.	3/3/2022 6:27 PM
55	Every time i have ever found a discarded syringe has been at otts park. It is so dumpy and run down and the location is terrible.	3/3/2022 6:25 PM
56	A better playground would be nice at Streeter square. I appreciate the plowed area for walking dogs in the winter at the MARC. I wish we could add garbage areas for dog owners to pick up their dogs mess.	3/3/2022 6:23 PM
57	2nd dog park at Prairie trail enclose east loop from hwy and private property yet open to river	3/3/2022 5:39 PM
58	To many benches at normal, make stangd more family friendly (updated playground), fix dog park fence, fence in streeter square and update play equipment or get rid of it.	3/3/2022 5:34 PM
59	I think the MARC should have another concession stand along with actual bathrooms by fields 5,6 and the boys baseball field.	3/3/2022 4:47 PM
60	Council Grounds is not well kept. I've been there to picnic on multiple occasions and the grass is not cut. It needs a lot of TLC and it's disappointing it's not we'll maintained.	3/3/2022 4:08 PM
61	Would like paved walking trails at Prairie & Marc	3/3/2022 3:55 PM
62	Paved trails at Prairie Trails and the MARC would me more accessible. The bathrooms at council grounds need serious updating.	3/3/2022 3:42 PM
63	Parking at Marc doesn't work Well for soccer games	3/3/2022 3:30 PM
64	City Forest needs more development.	3/3/2022 3:22 PM

Q6 What type of water enthusiast are you?(Choose one.)

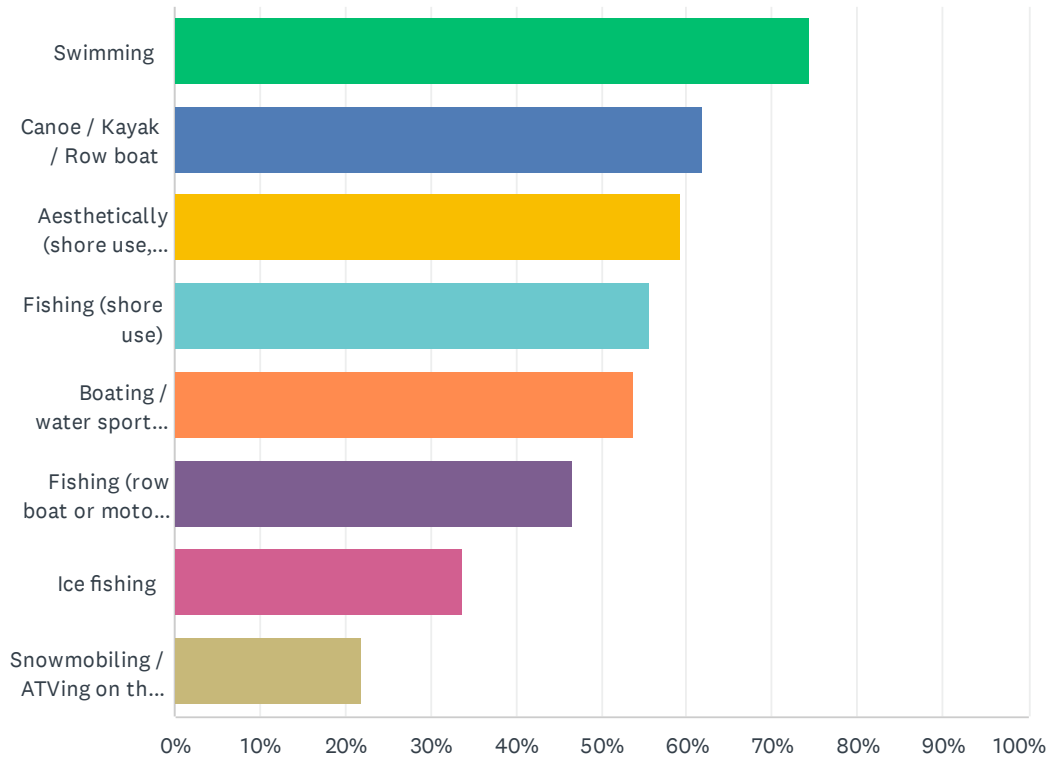
Answered: 239 Skipped: 43



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all. (I'm not interested in water recreation at all, not even with friends.) [SKIP to non-water questions.]	5.02% 12
Casual user. (I like to use the water, but only do so occasionally.)	37.66% 90
Enthusiastic. (I access or go on the water regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)	51.05% 122
Avid. (I am always on the water or ice every chance I get.)	6.28% 15
TOTAL	239

Q7 How do you use the water? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 223 Skipped: 59



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Swimming	74.44% 166
Canoe / Kayak / Row boat	61.88% 138
Aesthetically (shore use, walking or sitting along the water)	59.19% 132
Fishing (shore use)	55.61% 124
Boating / water sport (motorized)	53.81% 120
Fishing (row boat or motor boat)	46.64% 104
Ice fishing	33.63% 75
Snowmobiling / ATVing on the ice	21.97% 49
Total Respondents: 223	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Paddle boarding	4/7/2022 3:36 PM
2	Merrill Ice Drags	3/14/2022 4:55 PM
3	River Floating	3/6/2022 5:04 PM
4	River floating	3/4/2022 6:43 AM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

5	Scuba	3/3/2022 9:58 PM
6	Trapping	3/3/2022 6:24 PM

Q8 Please list which water body you use most often.(e.g., Prairie River, Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander, Tug Lake, Lake Pesobic, etc.)

Answered: 189 Skipped: 93

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Lake Pesobic and Lake Alexander	4/8/2022 1:12 PM
2	Council grounds, prairie river trails, stange park	4/8/2022 9:13 AM
3	Wisconsin river and lake Alexander	4/7/2022 9:09 PM
4	Prairie River, Wisconsin, Lake Alexander	4/7/2022 4:24 PM
5	Pickrel Lake in Harrison, Prairie River, Wisconsin River	4/7/2022 3:36 PM
6	WI river	4/7/2022 2:13 PM
7	Lake Pesobic or the WI River	4/7/2022 11:04 AM
8	WI river	4/7/2022 10:14 AM
9	Lake Alexander	4/6/2022 8:34 PM
10	WI River	4/6/2022 6:57 PM
11	Prairie River, Lake Pesobic, WI River	4/6/2022 7:30 AM
12	Wisconsin River	4/5/2022 9:04 PM
13	Lake Alexander	4/4/2022 11:25 PM
14	Alexander	4/4/2022 10:34 PM
15	Aquatic center	4/4/2022 9:24 PM
16	Wisconsin River	4/4/2022 9:11 PM
17	Pine river	4/4/2022 8:46 PM
18	Lake Alexander and Wisconsin River	4/4/2022 8:19 PM
19	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander	4/4/2022 8:13 PM
20	Wisconsin River	4/4/2022 7:58 PM
21	River	4/4/2022 7:52 PM
22	Wisconsin River	4/4/2022 7:29 PM
23	Lake pesobic	4/4/2022 4:22 PM
24	WI river	4/3/2022 7:27 AM
25	Lake alexander	4/2/2022 6:31 PM
26	Alexander	3/31/2022 11:56 PM
27	Prairie river Lake Alexander	3/31/2022 11:33 PM
28	Lake Alexander, Wisconsin River	3/31/2022 10:56 PM
29	Lake Alexander in Merrill, more often go to tomahawk cabin	3/31/2022 10:02 PM
30	Lake Alexander	3/31/2022 7:18 PM
31	Wisconsin River	3/31/2022 8:09 AM

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32	Council grounds, grandmother falls Ice age trails	3/31/2022 5:44 AM
33	Lake pesobic. Lake alexander	3/30/2022 8:39 PM
34	Wisconsin River along the river trail and in Council Grounds.	3/30/2022 7:04 PM
35	Lake Alexander	3/30/2022 3:09 PM
36	Wisconsin River	3/30/2022 1:23 PM
37	Wisconsin River	3/30/2022 12:14 PM
38	Post Lake	3/30/2022 12:08 PM
39	Wisconsin River	3/30/2022 11:47 AM
40	Wisconsin river, lake Alexander, lake posobic.	3/30/2022 11:34 AM
41	Counsel grounds. Tug lake	3/30/2022 9:40 AM
42	Wisconsin river	3/29/2022 5:58 PM
43	All of them equally	3/29/2022 6:32 AM
44	Alexander	3/28/2022 10:07 PM
45	Wisconsin River	3/28/2022 8:58 PM
46	Wisconsin river	3/28/2022 8:55 PM
47	Wi river, lake pesobic	3/28/2022 8:12 PM
48	Wisconsin River	3/28/2022 8:00 PM
49	Wisconsin river tug lake	3/28/2022 7:22 PM
50	Wisconsin River	3/28/2022 11:00 AM
51	Wisconsin river	3/27/2022 11:18 AM
52	Tug lake	3/27/2022 7:43 AM
53	All of the ones listed	3/26/2022 7:52 PM
54	Lake Alexander and other neighboring lakes	3/23/2022 10:17 PM
55	Wisconsin River, Lake Pesobic, Lake Alexander	3/23/2022 7:18 PM
56	Wi river	3/23/2022 12:53 PM
57	Wisconsin river	3/22/2022 12:01 PM
58	Lake Alexander	3/21/2022 9:21 PM
59	Lake Alexander	3/21/2022 8:43 PM
60	Lake Alexander	3/21/2022 8:19 PM
61	Wisconsin river	3/21/2022 6:08 PM
62	Wisconsin river, lake Alexander	3/21/2022 4:45 PM
63	Tug lake	3/21/2022 4:38 PM
64	Lake Alexander, Wisconsin river for fishing	3/21/2022 3:58 PM
65	Lake Alexander and echo lake	3/21/2022 3:56 PM
66	wisconsin river	3/20/2022 10:46 AM
67	Lake pesobic	3/17/2022 8:17 PM
68	Lake Alexander	3/17/2022 3:24 PM
69	Wisconsin River and Prairie River	3/17/2022 7:26 AM

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70	Wisconsin river	3/16/2022 12:45 PM
71	Prairie River.	3/15/2022 8:45 PM
72	Wisconsin River, Lake Pesobic	3/15/2022 8:25 PM
73	WI River	3/15/2022 6:27 PM
74	Lake Alexander	3/15/2022 5:53 PM
75	Wisconsin River and Harrison Hills Lakes	3/15/2022 5:48 PM
76	Wisconsin River	3/15/2022 5:04 PM
77	Wisconsin	3/15/2022 2:56 PM
78	Tug Lake	3/15/2022 11:05 AM
79	Wisconsin River no	3/14/2022 7:45 PM
80	Wisconsin River and Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 7:12 PM
81	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 6:17 PM
82	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 6:01 PM
83	Lake Alexander, Wisconsin River	3/14/2022 4:55 PM
84	Wisconsin River	3/14/2022 4:14 PM
85	Wi river. Pesobic, Alexander	3/14/2022 3:24 PM
86	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 2:48 PM
87	Wisconsin River	3/14/2022 2:26 PM
88	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 1:22 PM
89	Lake Alexander, lake Pesobic	3/14/2022 1:16 PM
90	Wisconsin river	3/14/2022 12:38 PM
91	Wisconsin River	3/14/2022 12:33 PM
92	Variety.	3/14/2022 12:22 PM
93	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 12:12 PM
94	Council Grounds	3/14/2022 12:08 PM
95	Lake Alexander lake pesobic	3/14/2022 12:08 PM
96	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:54 AM
97	Prairie river and Wisconsin river	3/14/2022 11:46 AM
98	All	3/14/2022 11:44 AM
99	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:42 AM
100	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:39 AM
101	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:38 AM
102	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:37 AM
103	Lake Alexander, Wisconsin River	3/14/2022 10:50 AM
104	Lake Alexander and Wisconsin river	3/14/2022 8:35 AM
105	Wisconsin River, Prairie River	3/11/2022 11:01 AM
106	Prairie River	3/11/2022 8:50 AM
107	Lake Alexander	3/10/2022 7:56 PM

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108	Council Grounds Beach	3/10/2022 7:01 PM
109	Wisconsin River	3/9/2022 8:22 PM
110	Wisconsin River	3/9/2022 11:52 AM
111	Wisconsin River Prairie River	3/8/2022 2:45 PM
112	Wisconsin river	3/7/2022 6:51 PM
113	Wisconsin River and prairie River	3/7/2022 3:23 PM
114	Lake George Rhinelander. Lake Alexander	3/7/2022 1:51 PM
115	Lake Tomahawk, Minocqua, Wis River	3/7/2022 8:47 AM
116	Alexander	3/6/2022 6:36 PM
117	Lake Alexander/Wisconsin River	3/6/2022 5:04 PM
118	Lake Alexander	3/5/2022 12:51 PM
119	Wisconsin River and Prairie River	3/4/2022 11:22 PM
120	Lake Alexander, Lake Pesobic, Tug Lake	3/4/2022 10:09 PM
121	Lake Alexander, Tug lake	3/4/2022 9:42 PM
122	None in Lincoln County.	3/4/2022 7:28 PM
123	Lake Alexander.	3/4/2022 7:19 PM
124	Wisconsin River and Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 6:54 PM
125	Prairie River, WI River, Lake Pesobic.	3/4/2022 5:59 PM
126	Lake Pesobic	3/4/2022 5:56 PM
127	Pesobic	3/4/2022 5:36 PM
128	Lake alexander	3/4/2022 5:09 PM
129	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 5:07 PM
130	Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 5:01 PM
131	Alexander	3/4/2022 5:00 PM
132	Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 4:56 PM
133	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 4:55 PM
134	Lake Pesobic	3/4/2022 4:55 PM
135	Tug Lake	3/4/2022 4:34 PM
136	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 1:18 PM
137	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 12:39 PM
138	Tug Lake (have a cottage on the lake) and Council Grounds beachfront daily in summer	3/4/2022 12:20 PM
139	Wisconsin river	3/4/2022 11:31 AM
140	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 10:27 AM
141	Council grounds	3/4/2022 9:02 AM
142	Alexander and pesobic	3/4/2022 8:02 AM
143	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 7:45 AM
144	Alexander pesobic	3/4/2022 7:35 AM
145	Clear Lake - Tomahawk Prairie River - Merrill	3/4/2022 7:18 AM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

146	Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 7:16 AM
147	Wisconsin River	3/4/2022 6:43 AM
148	Tug Lake	3/3/2022 11:23 PM
149	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 11:10 PM
150	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 10:54 PM
151	Lake Alexander, Prairie River	3/3/2022 10:32 PM
152	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 10:23 PM
153	Lake Alexander,	3/3/2022 9:58 PM
154	Wisconsin river	3/3/2022 9:02 PM
155	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 8:40 PM
156	Wis. River	3/3/2022 8:15 PM
157	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 8:12 PM
158	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 8:03 PM
159	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 7:55 PM
160	Wisconsin River, Tug Lake	3/3/2022 7:55 PM
161	Lake pesobic, Harrison area, Otter Lake	3/3/2022 7:39 PM
162	All	3/3/2022 7:31 PM
163	Wisconsin and Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 7:09 PM
164	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander, Prairie River	3/3/2022 6:51 PM
165	Several all over depending on season	3/3/2022 6:47 PM
166	Wisconsin River, Lake Alexander, Tug Lake	3/3/2022 6:29 PM
167	Lake alexander	3/3/2022 6:26 PM
168	Alexander	3/3/2022 6:24 PM
169	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 6:23 PM
170	Lake Alexander, WI river	3/3/2022 6:03 PM
171	WI River-Council grounds	3/3/2022 5:50 PM
172	Lake alexander	3/3/2022 5:44 PM
173	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 5:35 PM
174	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 5:34 PM
175	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 5:26 PM
176	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 5:20 PM
177	Wi river	3/3/2022 5:10 PM
178	Wis River	3/3/2022 5:03 PM
179	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 4:57 PM
180	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 4:48 PM
181	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 4:10 PM
182	Lake Alexander, Tug Lake, and the Wisconsin river.	3/3/2022 4:09 PM
183	Wisconsin River and Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 4:05 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

184	Eagle River lakes	3/3/2022 4:01 PM
185	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 3:56 PM
186	Lake Alexander	3/3/2022 3:45 PM
187	Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 3:38 PM
188	Wisconsin river	3/3/2022 3:32 PM
189	Lake Alexander, Prairie River, Wisconsin River	3/3/2022 3:24 PM

Q9 What public boat landings or water access improvements are needed in the City of Merrill?

Answered: 83 Skipped: 199

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	unknown	4/8/2022 9:13 AM
2	Not sure	4/7/2022 3:36 PM
3	Something along RBT	4/7/2022 2:13 PM
4	Just kayak launch maybe right near Agra and promote a place or trip to pick up down river so there is a designated place to go. Maybe from up river to Merrill also. Promote it. Don't need a boat landing as one at Riverside is fine. Maybe one from upstream on prairie river also	4/7/2022 10:14 AM
5	Better lights at Lake Pesobic boat landing	4/4/2022 9:24 PM
6	Otts and Riverside boat landings	4/4/2022 9:11 PM
7	lights at the boat landings	4/4/2022 7:58 PM
8	Lighting at the boat landings	4/4/2022 7:29 PM
9	Many need new concrete	4/4/2022 4:22 PM
10	Docks put in	4/3/2022 7:27 AM
11	Docking spaces and parking	4/2/2022 6:31 PM
12	More drop in / take out areas for tubing, kayaking - and information on where they are and how to use them	3/31/2022 11:33 PM
13	Tug lake	3/31/2022 10:56 PM
14	Not sure where would use much in merrill	3/31/2022 10:02 PM
15	Enhance beach kids play access (Otts, council, riverside, etc)	3/31/2022 5:44 AM
16	Lake pesobic. Has vacant lot by it could it be bought to make a parking lot? Have garbage can at boat landing.	3/30/2022 8:39 PM
17	N/A	3/30/2022 1:23 PM
18	More public docks	3/30/2022 12:14 PM
19	Better access for Prairie River North of town	3/30/2022 11:47 AM
20	Lake Pesobic	3/28/2022 8:58 PM
21	Otts Park boat landing	3/26/2022 7:52 PM
22	Docks	3/23/2022 12:53 PM
23	Dock and riverside and otts	3/22/2022 12:01 PM
24	Portages and marked systems need better sign - the river is very dangerous- with the dam	3/21/2022 8:43 PM
25	Riverside	3/21/2022 6:08 PM
26	It would be nice if you guys put the dock back in at riverside.	3/21/2022 4:45 PM
27	Otts park, riverside park with fishing piers,	3/21/2022 3:58 PM
28	the more access the better then council grounds wouldnt be filled all the tjme around any holiday	3/20/2022 10:46 AM
29	Ott's Park Boat Landing needs the most work, the access is very poor, the concrete pads are	3/17/2022 7:26 AM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

eroded away, and no dock. Riverside Park launch pads are nice but could use a dock.

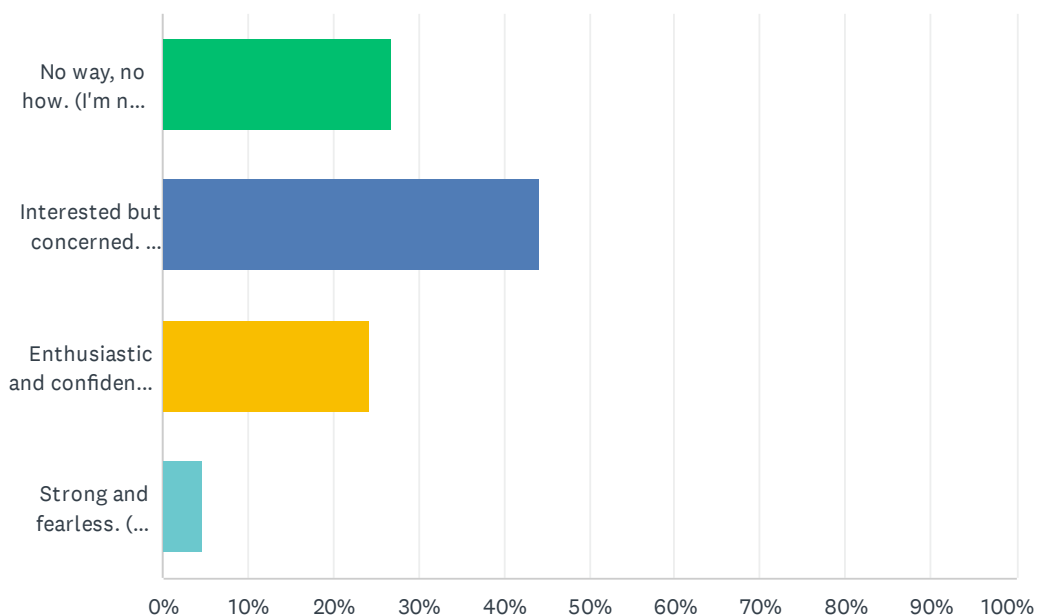
30	Maps	3/16/2022 12:45 PM
31	Riverside Park, Prairie Trails Park.	3/15/2022 8:45 PM
32	I mostly fish smaller lakes in the area or WI river	3/15/2022 6:27 PM
33	More access for kayaks in town	3/15/2022 5:53 PM
34	canoe /kayak takeout by Merrill Dam is greatly in need of improvement.	3/15/2022 5:48 PM
35	More kayak access	3/14/2022 7:12 PM
36	Riverside Park	3/14/2022 6:17 PM
37	Riverside, council grounds	3/14/2022 4:55 PM
38	Ott's	3/14/2022 2:48 PM
39	Docks at Ott's and Riverside	3/14/2022 1:22 PM
40	Na	3/14/2022 12:33 PM
41	Lake Alexander	3/14/2022 11:42 AM
42	Boat landings need an overhaul so they are more even	3/14/2022 11:39 AM
43	Praire River in/take outs and by the city dam	3/14/2022 8:35 AM
44	Ott's park boat landing	3/11/2022 11:01 AM
45	Otts, council grounds	3/11/2022 8:50 AM
46	Tug lake needs more boat/trailer parking	3/10/2022 7:56 PM
47	Ott's Park is in terrible shape, the boat landing needs a lot of work and it gets used a lot. Riverside needs work too but not nearly as bad.	3/7/2022 3:23 PM
48	Unknown	3/7/2022 8:47 AM
49	Otts park boat landing, Wisconsin River canoe/kayak take out and put in near Merrill Dam	3/4/2022 11:22 PM
50	N/a	3/4/2022 7:28 PM
51	More	3/4/2022 5:36 PM
52	Public service boat landing	3/4/2022 5:09 PM
53	Council grounds	3/4/2022 5:01 PM
54	N/a	3/4/2022 5:00 PM
55	Canoe/kayak/SUP ACCESS TO WI AND PRAIRIE RIVERS	3/4/2022 4:55 PM
56	Ott's Park	3/4/2022 4:55 PM
57	Unknown	3/4/2022 4:34 PM
58	Portages on the west and east side of the dam in Merrill are in poor shape especially the west end portage. Very steep and not at all user friendly.	3/4/2022 1:18 PM
59	Ott's Park	3/4/2022 12:20 PM
60	Make a better portage around the dam. Something similar to what is outside of Wausau on the Water	3/4/2022 10:27 AM
61	None	3/4/2022 9:02 AM
62	Having a dock at riverside would be great	3/4/2022 8:02 AM
63	all, they need a clean up besides the Council Grounds access to Lake Alexander	3/4/2022 7:45 AM
64	Otts.	3/4/2022 7:35 AM
65	Better access at Riverside Park. The place behind the City garage is not good for taking	3/3/2022 11:10 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

	kayaks out of the water.	
66	More areas for boat landings	3/3/2022 10:54 PM
67	Better kayak launch spot at Council Grounds.	3/3/2022 10:23 PM
68	Uncertain	3/3/2022 9:58 PM
69	Kayak access	3/3/2022 8:40 PM
70	Improvements could be made to the canoe portage by the dam.	3/3/2022 8:12 PM
71	None	3/3/2022 8:03 PM
72	A safer take out for canoe / kayak area by the dam down town.	3/3/2022 7:09 PM
73	Otts Park Lake Alexander Lake Pesobic	3/3/2022 6:29 PM
74	Kayak take out behind downtown by the dam	3/3/2022 6:03 PM
75	Better parking layout at Riverside.	3/3/2022 5:34 PM
76	Unknown	3/3/2022 5:10 PM
77	More Kayak Launches.	3/3/2022 4:57 PM
78	It would be nice to have more public piers along the river.	3/3/2022 4:09 PM
79	Riverside Park. Would be great to update the boat landing and install a dock for canoes and such.	3/3/2022 4:05 PM
80	Riverbed trail	3/3/2022 3:56 PM
81	All boat landings need a dock put in, some years there are parks that don't have them put in. A Kayak launch would be great at Riverside and Council grounds. Adding fishing piers at the parks would be beneficial also, because docks at the landings are often too busy to fish from, if they are put in at all.	3/3/2022 3:45 PM
82	Lokmoen boat landing could use a repave. The holes are getting bad.	3/3/2022 3:38 PM
83	Better and more canoe/kayak access points	3/3/2022 3:24 PM

Q10 What type of bicyclist are you? (Choose one.)

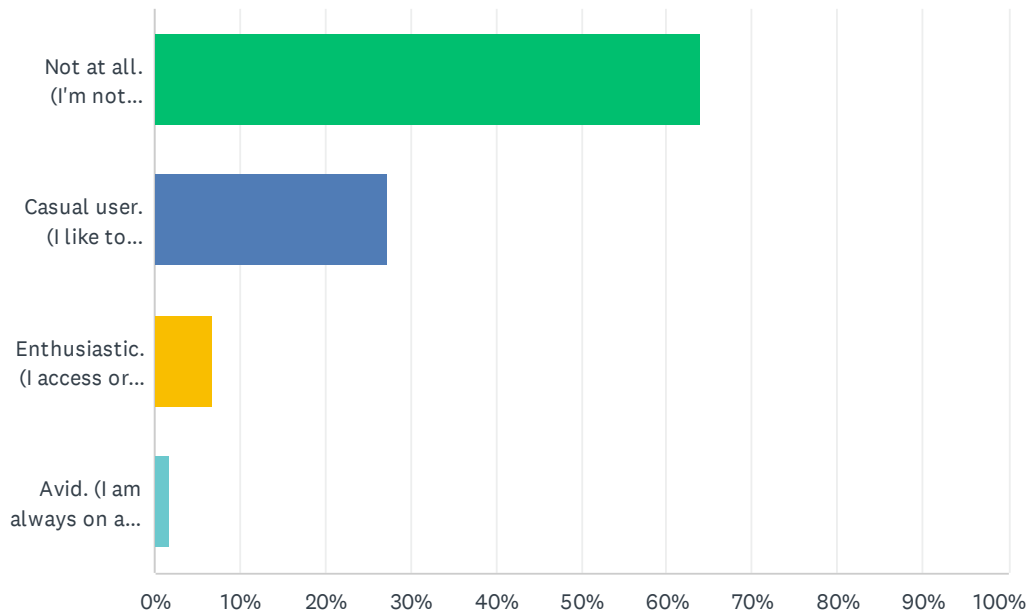
Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No way, no how. (I'm not interested in biking at all, not even for recreation.)	26.84%	62
Interested but concerned. (I like riding, but don't do it regularly. I'm generally concerned that my route is not safe to ride, so I don't ride often. I definitely do not ride when the weather is bad.)	44.16%	102
Enthusiastic and confident. (I feel comfortable sharing the road with motor vehicles, but I prefer to ride on separate facilities like bike lanes. I may or may not ride in inclement weather.)	24.24%	56
Strong and fearless. (I am confident in my abilities and will ride regardless of roadway conditions, amount of traffic, or inclement weather.)	4.76%	11
TOTAL		231

Q11 What type of snowmobile enthusiast are you? (Choose one.)

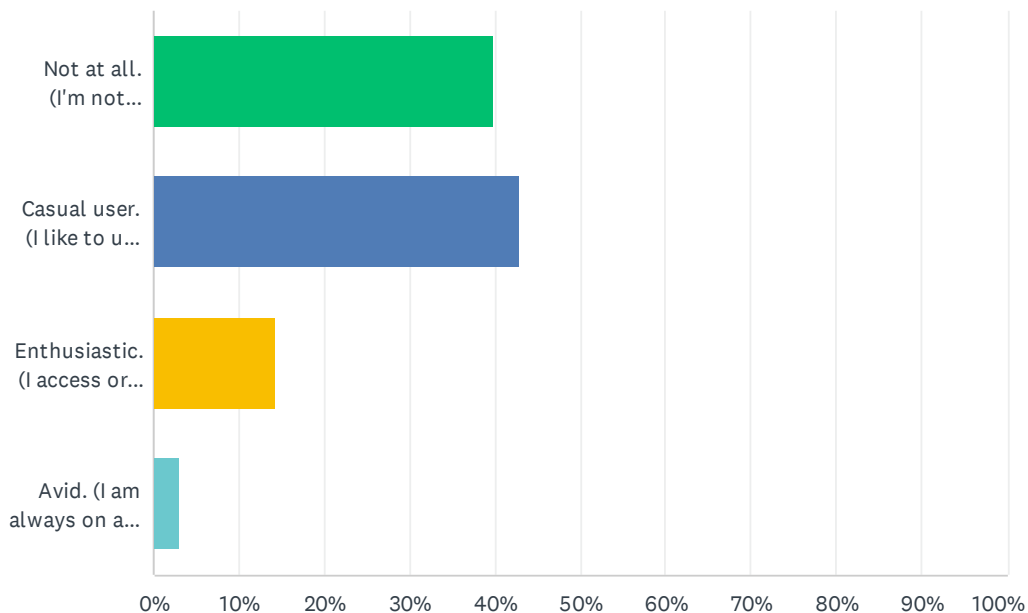
Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all. (I'm not interested in snowmobiling at all, not even with friends.)	64.07%	148
Casual user. (I like to snowmobile for fun, but only do so occasionally, OR only on my own land.)	27.27%	63
Enthusiastic. (I access or go on snowmobile routes regularly.)	6.93%	16
Avid. (I am always on a snowmobile every chance I get - all winter long.)	1.73%	4
TOTAL		231

Q12 What type of motorized vehicle (ATV / UTV / Off-Highway Motorcycle) enthusiast are you? (Choose one.)

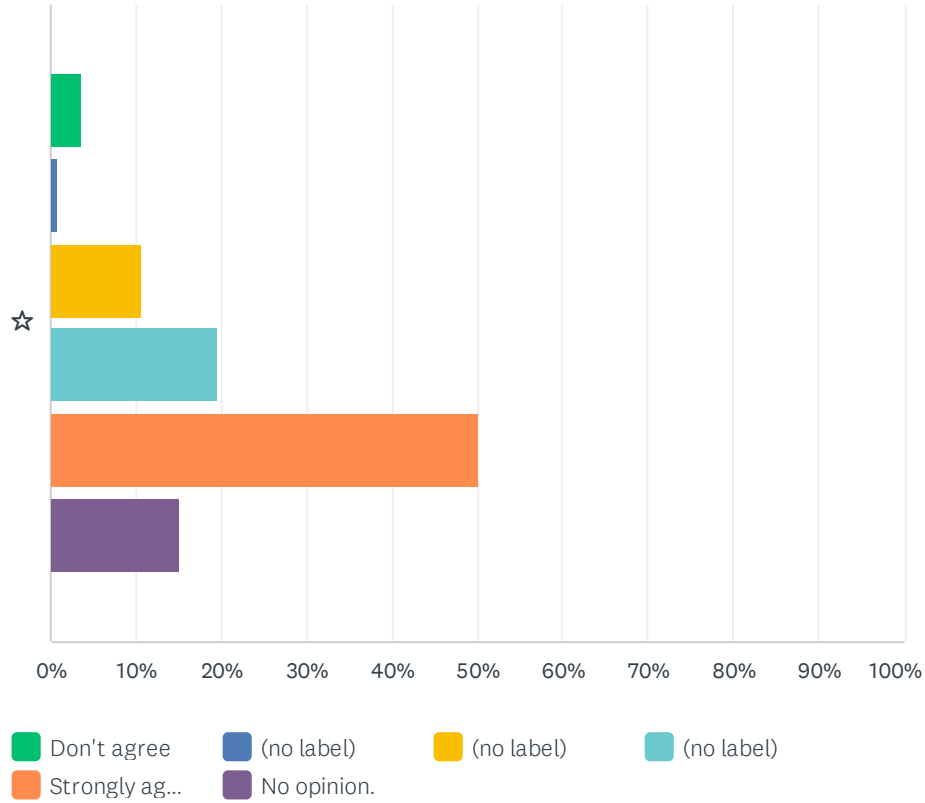
Answered: 231 Skipped: 51



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all. (I'm not interested in motorized recreation at all, not even with friends.)	39.83%	92
Casual user. (I like to use motorized vehicles for fun, but only do so occasionally, OR only on my own land.)	42.86%	99
Enthusiastic. (I access or go on motorized routes and trails regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)	14.29%	33
Avid. (I am always on a motorized vehicle every chance I get - all year long.)	3.03%	7
TOTAL		231

Q13 Rate the following statement: "Promote the Prairie River water trail (see picture) among citizens and visitors, after a canoe take-out is installed somewhere in Kitchenette Park."

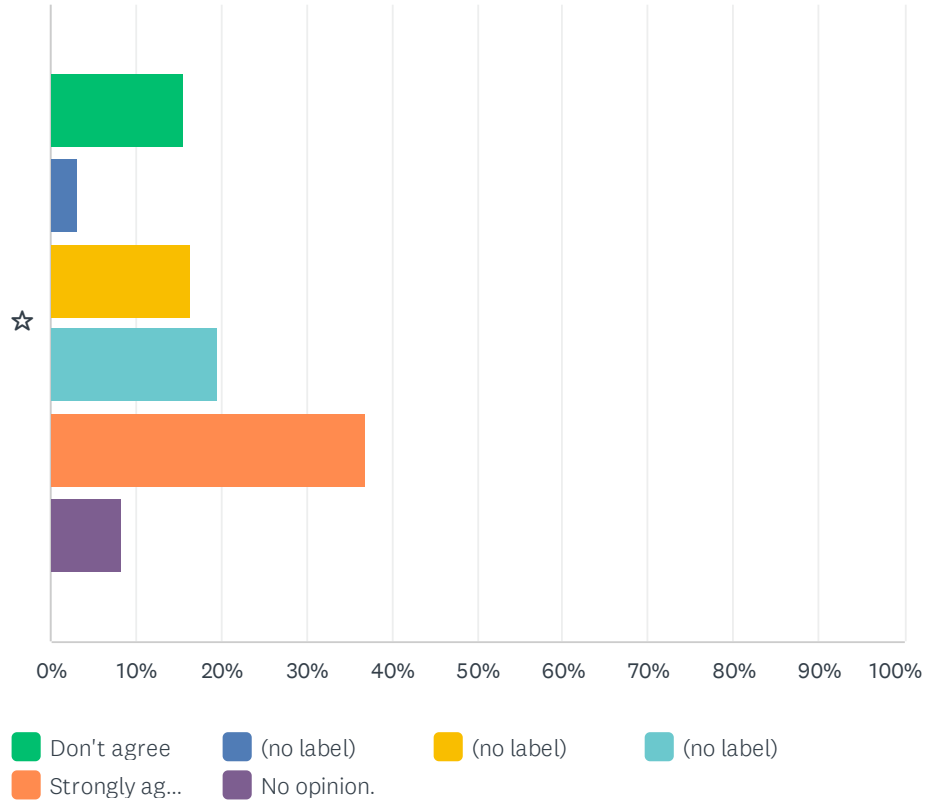
Answered: 224 Skipped: 58



	DON'T AGREE	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	STRONGLY AGREE	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	3.57% 8	0.89% 2	10.71% 24	19.64% 44	50.00% 112	15.18% 34	224	4.32

Q14 Rate the following statement:(see above picture for reference)"Develop a pedestrian bridge from an E. Main Street property south (over the rail line) onto land adjacent to the Wisconsin River."

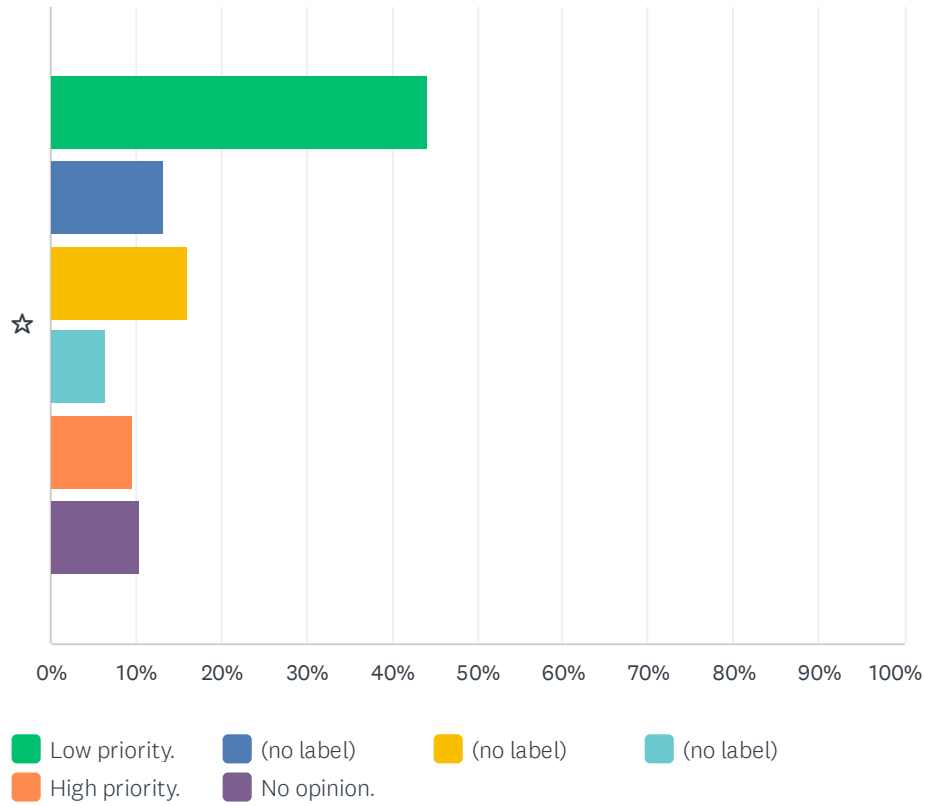
Answered: 219 Skipped: 63



	DON'T AGREE	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	STRONGLY AGREE	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	15.53%	3.20%	16.44%	19.63%	36.99%	8.22%	219	3.65
	34	7	36	43	81	18		

Q15 Continue disc golf initiative.

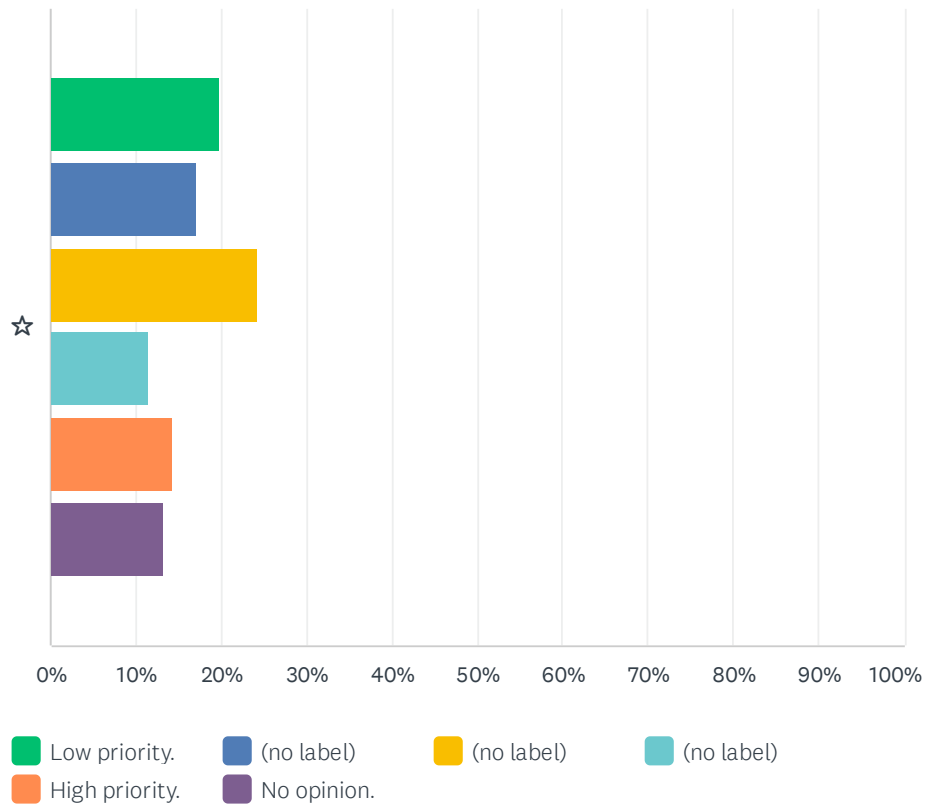
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	44.04% 96	13.30% 29	16.06% 35	6.42% 14	9.63% 21	10.55% 23	218	2.15

Q16 Complete new fence and replace lights at Otts Park's ball field.

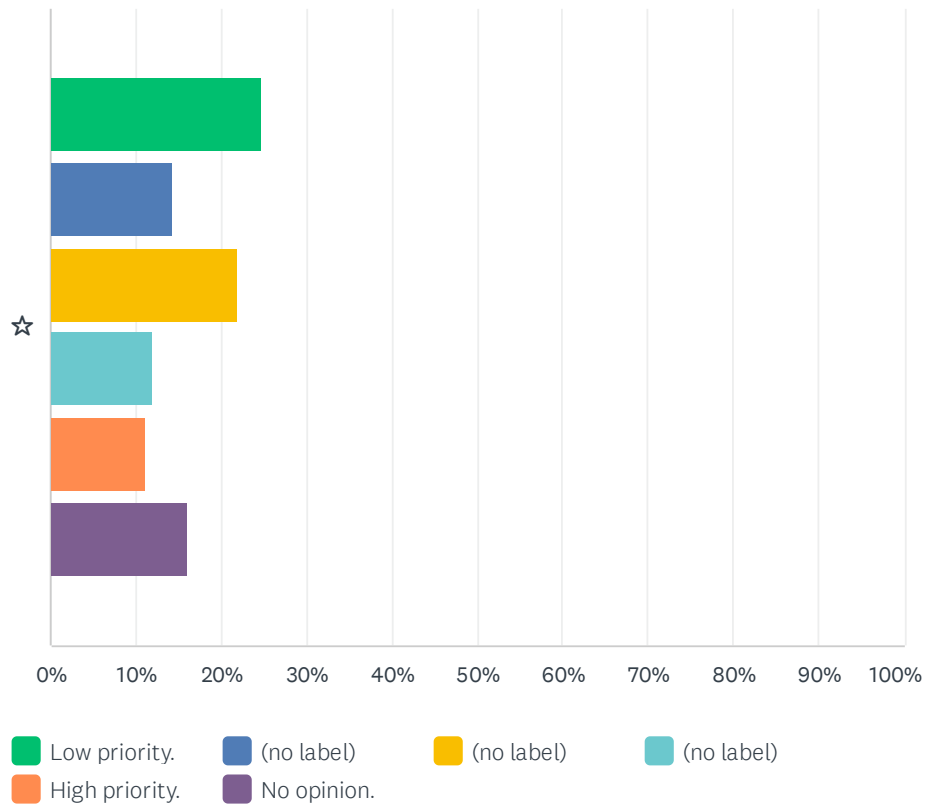
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	19.72% 43	16.97% 37	24.31% 53	11.47% 25	14.22% 31	13.30% 29	218	2.81

Q17 Extend potable water, and install amenities in dog park at the MARC.

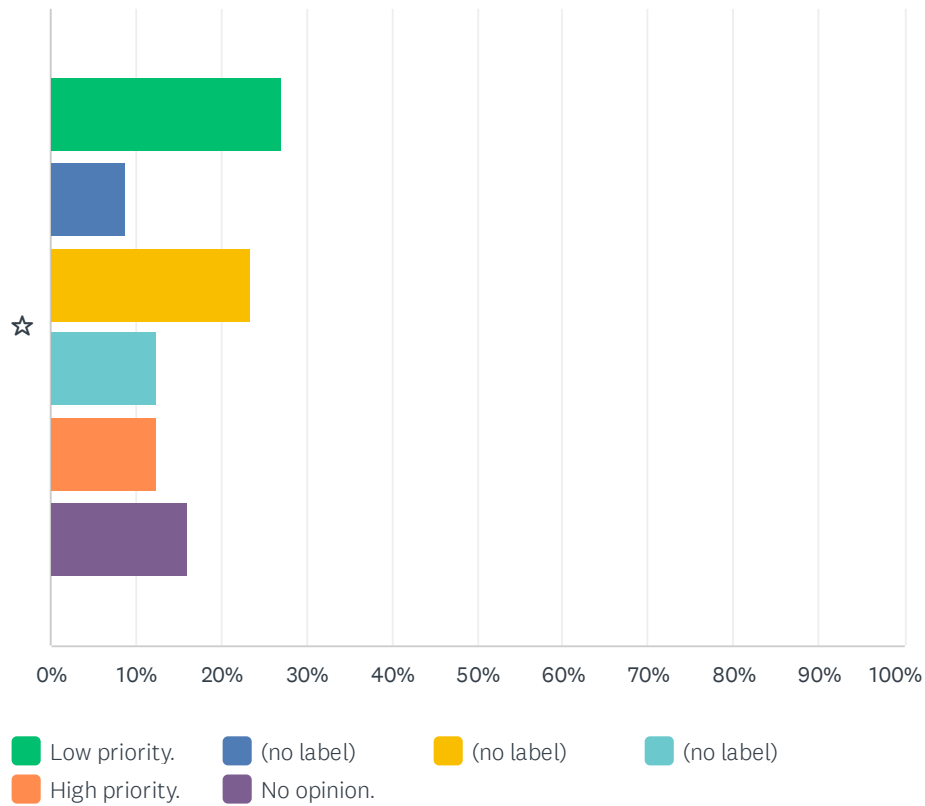
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	24.77% 54	14.22% 31	22.02% 48	11.93% 26	11.01% 24	16.06% 35	218	2.64

Q18 Explore having curling at the MARC (possibly in a building addition).

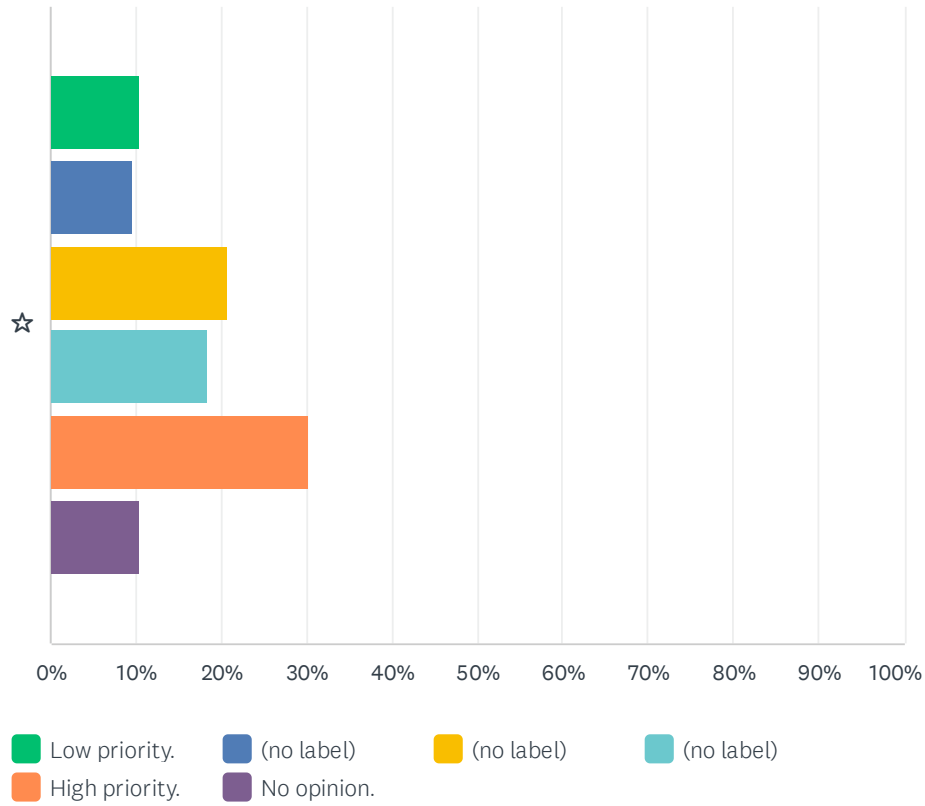
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	27.06% 59	8.72% 19	23.39% 51	12.39% 27	12.39% 27	16.06% 35	218	2.69

Q19 Install toilets near MARC baseball field.

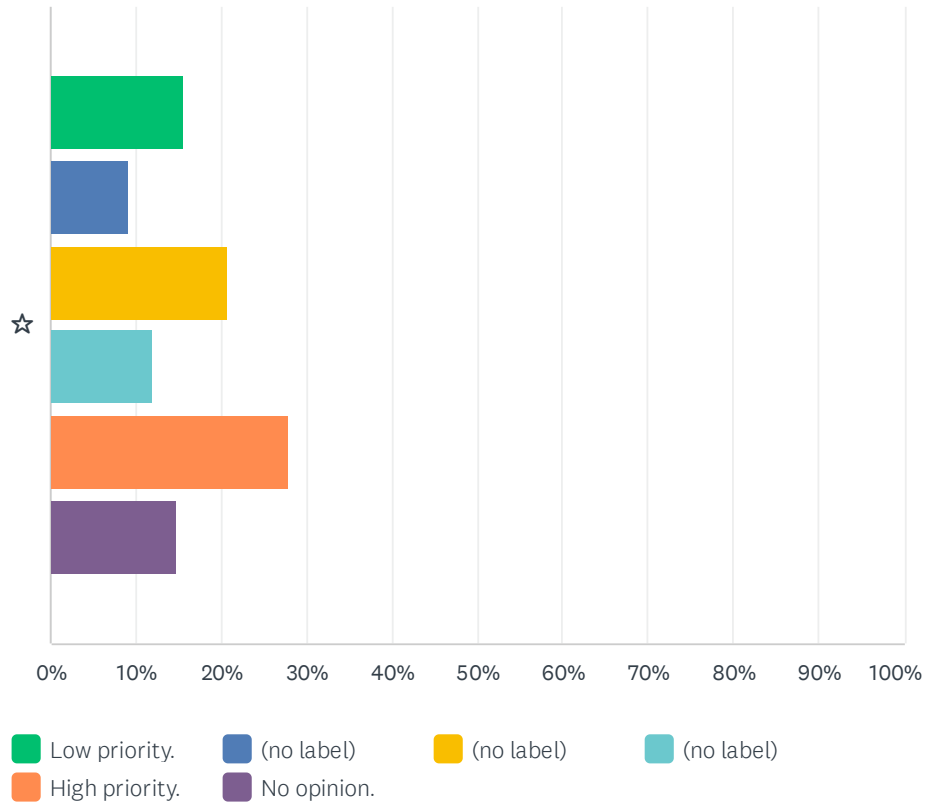
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	10.55% 23	9.63% 21	20.64% 45	18.35% 40	30.28% 66	10.55% 23	218	3.54

Q20 Add lights to varsity softball field at the MARC.

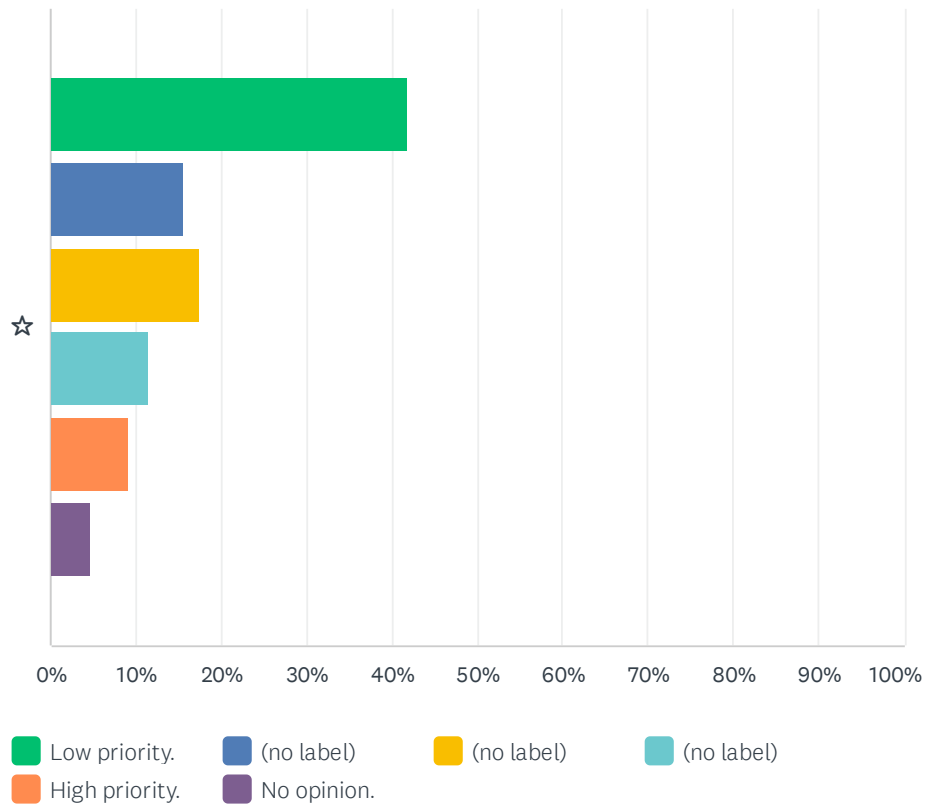
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	15.60% 34	9.17% 20	20.64% 45	11.93% 26	27.98% 61	14.68% 32	218	3.32

Q21 Explore installing sculptures, carvings, or murals throughout City.

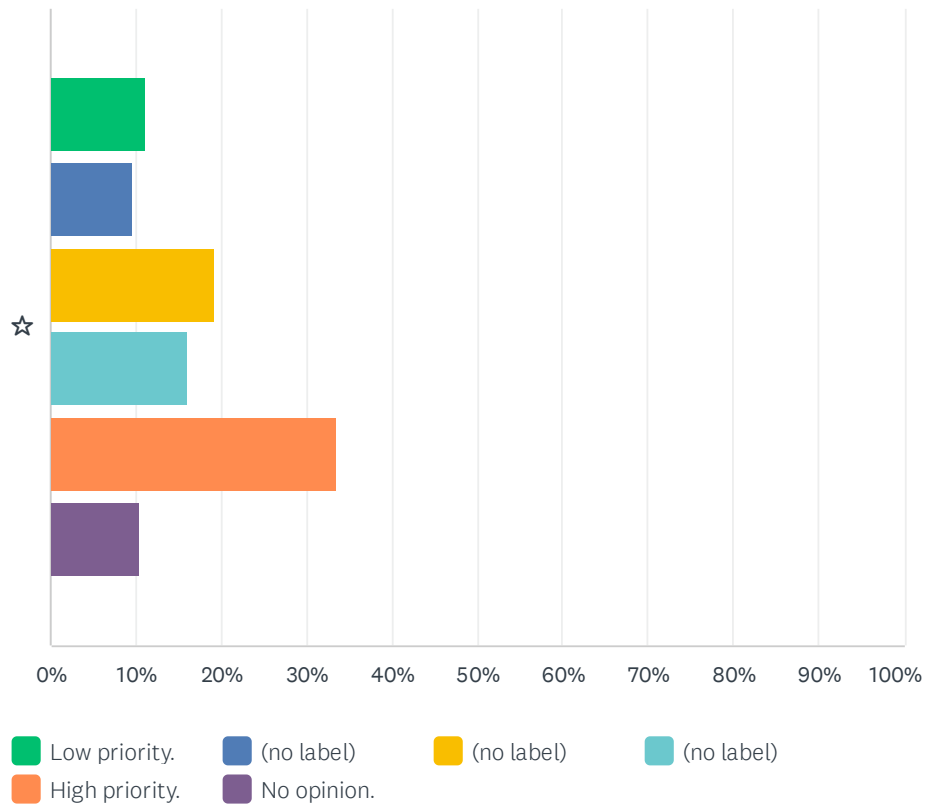
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	41.74% 91	15.60% 34	17.43% 38	11.47% 25	9.17% 20	4.59% 10	218	2.27

Q22 Work on establishing River Bend Trail as a state trail.

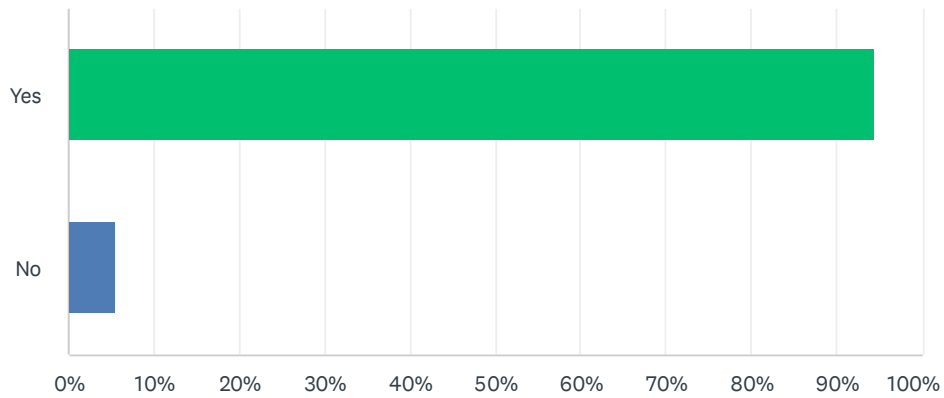
Answered: 218 Skipped: 64



	LOW PRIORITY.	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	HIGH PRIORITY.	NO OPINION.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	11.01% 24	9.63% 21	19.27% 42	16.06% 35	33.49% 73	10.55% 23	218	3.57

Q23 Is this vision still relevant for the next 5 years? (Choose one.)

Answered: 216 Skipped: 66



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.44%	204
No	5.56%	12
TOTAL		216

Q24 (Optional) Comment on the above vision statement:

Answered: 24 Skipped: 258

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Could be worded more simply.	4/7/2022 2:16 PM
2	Pedestrian bridge would be great maybe Bierman? There has been a bike death crossing the tracks there.	4/7/2022 10:19 AM
3	I think it's great	4/3/2022 7:31 AM
4	Sounds fine, but I'm not sure what is meant by celebrating heritage? I guess I just don't see that when I'm out and about.	4/2/2022 2:02 PM
5	We have so many opportunities to use our parks and rivers for recreation- we need to keep maintaining as well as growing. Activities that involve all generations	3/31/2022 11:36 PM
6	Vision doesn't say how they will accomplish this goal	3/30/2022 7:19 PM
7	Need to develop and build to attract employers and residents as well	3/30/2022 12:14 PM
8	To bad it's a place where kids and drug dealing go on afraid to have my kids go on the trail alone It's	3/21/2022 8:47 PM
9	in last 29 years havnt seen alot of development or growth in this city beside riverbend trail whch is wonderful and well used so i be shocked if you would get one done in five years covering up the mistake of not saving ward paper mill dam doesnt count you had to build something so the city didnt change the name to merrill mudflats so any pronet or development would be nice to see	3/20/2022 11:02 AM
10	More inclusivity to different recreational opportunity not just outdoor/on specific bodies of water.	3/17/2022 3:29 PM
11	Yes it is still relevant I just think it needs to actually happen.	3/17/2022 7:29 AM
12	There are enough parks, city needs to focus on bringing businesses to the city	3/11/2022 8:53 AM
13	Go all out. It will take time but all will be appreciated over time. Developing our River fronts are very important in my opinion	3/4/2022 9:14 PM
14	Stop spending money on things that don't bring in revenue.	3/4/2022 5:13 PM
15	Good vision, now do something about it!	3/4/2022 1:22 PM
16	The nature opportunities are one of, if not THE FORE MOST, attraction(s) in Merrill	3/4/2022 12:23 PM
17	Remove the "celebrating its heritage" and add words like "inclusive," "health," "wellness," and maybe even "economy." Something like: "Merrill, City of Parks, recognizes all Americans relationship to land and aims to provide inclusive and engaging opportunities for citizens to interact with our shared living space in pursuit of health, wellness, and recreation, ultimately, for our shared economic prosperity."	3/4/2022 10:40 AM
18	People need more outdoor spaces that are local and have access to drinking water and restrooms. We have a great environmental education potential for future generations to learn and appreciate what this state has to offer.	3/4/2022 7:50 AM
19	Yes, Merrill needs to update the City and draw more visitors, travelers, and businesses to make our city grow and prosper.	3/3/2022 11:15 PM
20	I feel focusing on promoting the outdoor attributes Merrill has to offer more than just spirts would benefit a broader demographic of the community and in turn promote support.	3/3/2022 7:35 PM
21	Need lights and water to ball fields at Marc. This will bring in money to the community	3/3/2022 6:50 PM
22	I think maybe specifying or elaborate a little on the opportunities could be beneficial in taking	3/3/2022 3:41 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

the statement up a notch

23	Parks are not being maintained as far as tree conservation	3/3/2022 3:35 PM
24	Most people like to live near and recreate on water so river access is impotant.	3/3/2022 3:28 PM

Q25 (Optional) Do you have any other concerns or comments?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 233

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Looking for more adventures for kids in all weather, indoor and outdoor, that are working families friendly. Many activities offered at parks n rec during summer happen during working times, my littles cannot attend. We often find ourselves going to other cities to entertain our children, but would love to stay here if there were more opportunities. What's here we use, but need more variety. Having children input is a good idea- child centered thoughts. Families are in this community, and I believe that is the town we are focused of supporting. Support parents and their children needs.	4/8/2022 9:19 AM
2	It would be really nice to have some non sand volleyball courts and more basketball courts. (Outdoors)	4/7/2022 3:45 PM
3	We come from Wausau because we enjoy the recreation opportunities in Merrill and like the change in pace from Wausau's opportunities - our kids especially like the aquatic center	4/6/2022 7:00 PM
4	It would be wonderful to see Merrill's pocket parks get the addition of trees and flowers. Perhaps even fruit baring forestation since our community does struggle with poverty. Perhaps the addition of pollinator gardens in the vacate yards owned by the city. In my opinion there is a lot we can do to enhance the community by the simple addition of true green spaces. Not just another patch of grass and a bench. Perhaps work with eager youth groups for some of the planting initiative. Love the idea of adding art and sculptures to the downtown. But I think instead of spending a lot of money on the purchase of this art. Why don't we have reach out to the community and see if any local artist or the school would donate or create projects? We could incorporate it into the chalk festival or the return of crazy days. And really celebrate Merrill Artist.	4/6/2022 7:40 AM
5	I think you all do a great job:)	4/3/2022 7:31 AM
6	Merrill parks and trails have a lot to offer - regular maintenance is important and time consuming- doing a great job!	3/31/2022 11:00 PM
7	More community activities are needed. And better advertising of those events. Street Fairs, Food Truck Fest, Sip and Crawl, Live Music, Heritage/Community Walks, Ice Fest, River Walk, Bird/Flower walk	3/31/2022 8:24 AM
8	Make use of the ice arena by leaving ice in all year and hosting ice related camps, sports tournaments and other activities. Activities held there currently that do not need ice can make use of the new buildings at the fairgrounds creating additional uses for all.	3/30/2022 12:18 PM
9	It seems like a lot of the outdoor initiative revolves around the MARC and the River Bend trail. Why not spread the love throughout the community, like into the country, like better access to Prairie River, more UTV/ATV trails as it is becoming increasingly popular, more nature trails in the country.	3/30/2022 11:53 AM
10	I think trying to have the buildings open year round for renting space other than the Agra pavilion, would be great. Also adding a "toddler area" splash pad type thing at the aquatic center. My 2 year old could barely do anything last summer there.	3/28/2022 10:12 PM
11	All of the work that is being done to the cities parks and river bend trail is greatly appreciated and noticed. Thanks for all of your efforts into helping our city.	3/28/2022 9:01 PM
12	I would like to see a granite path to the dog park	3/26/2022 7:57 PM
13	The River Bend Trail is my preferred route when walking to get from one side of town to the other. Although the option of a pedestrian bridge to connect downtown to the River Bend Trail is nice, a simple path over the tracks near the Cosmo (one of three locations that I usually enter/exit the trail) would be acceptable. An additional access point to the trail would be nice at the west end of Main Street. The far west side of Merrill (the area around Jefferson Elementary) is not well connected to the River Bend Trail; the addition of a bridge over the	3/26/2022 6:21 PM

City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey

Wisconsin River would help immensely, and I would prefer this over the pedestrian bridge near the Cosmo.

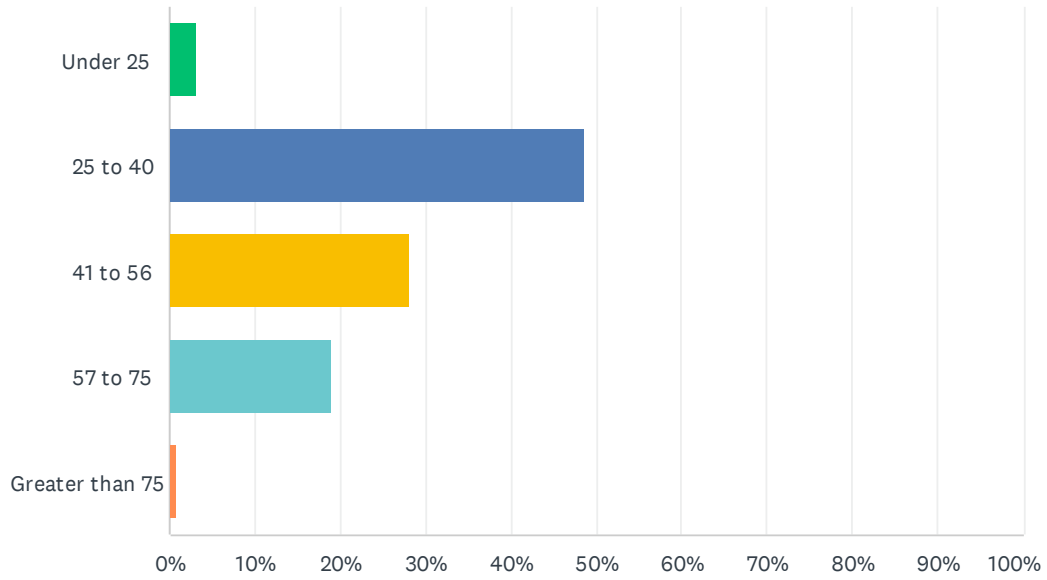
14	Public Food stands along the river bend trail, maybe for fundraising groups to sell things ?	3/21/2022 8:48 PM
15	There are many roads that are significantly deteriorating that should be fixed	3/21/2022 4:02 PM
16	really dont think you need canoe portage in kitchenette when there a boat access where you can take lawn clippings and leaves	3/20/2022 11:04 AM
17	Try to clean up the lakes. A lot of weeds seem to be growing more rampant the past few years, and its choking out the fish.	3/17/2022 8:21 PM
18	It would be neat if there could be more adult team sport recreational opportunity like indoor volleyball leagues, etc.	3/17/2022 3:30 PM
19	I am a lifelong resident and as a kid I remember the shore lines of Stanges Park and Kitchenette park where cleared so we could explore by the water. Kayaking last year there was some brush cut and purposely left a long the shore in the water. There isn't much of an opening to kayak under the River Bend Trail bridge the way it is and to leave brush there on purpose to wash down is negligent. Cleaning out brush under the bridges for kayaking would be nice too, especially if there is a portage added like in the plan previously shown.	3/17/2022 7:32 AM
20	Please build some pickleball courts in Merrill	3/15/2022 11:07 AM
21	I think our parks are top-notch! I am extremely impressed with the Riverbend Trail development	3/14/2022 4:31 PM
22	I would like to see water for field use at the MARC.	3/14/2022 11:46 AM
23	Merrill has a lot of great things that could attract people from out of town to enjoy. I feel strongly that Merrill could use some better marketing for those who wish to know about the opportunities available in town for locals and travelers.	3/10/2022 7:09 PM
24	We can put work towards the initiative but I encourage the team to map out the advertising of the options available in the city, and grow the head count in the city through viable initiatives, such as affordable before and after school child care. This will bring in more business and with that more employable people.	3/7/2022 8:52 AM
25	Priority needs to be given to bringing business and industry to Merrill to help pay for all the things mentioned above!	3/5/2022 1:12 PM
26	Disc golf at city forest, planting more native trees, a grove of wild plum trees	3/4/2022 11:37 PM
27	Please continue to take excellent care of the parks, etc that we have. Should the umbrella covers at the MARC be removed for the winter?	3/4/2022 9:19 PM
28	It would be nice if the Riverbend trail extended into town to connect more areas. Maybe run it along the prairie river where there is less traffic?	3/4/2022 7:22 PM
29	Suggest creating a paved trail that runs along the prairie river, connecting to the riverbend trail.	3/4/2022 7:00 PM
30	Focus efforts on projects that offer better financial returns.	3/4/2022 5:14 PM
31	Merrill needs to make more enhancements and add amenities to our current attractions such as our water access. We need to make Merrill a tourist designation by adding more family friendly attractions such as new Adventure Mini Golf Course, Go Carts, organized/rental for tubes and or kayaks with launch locations and pick up accommodations, waterfront outdoor access eateries(farm to table similar to what Wausau has: ie: Thrive, Red Eye Brewery and Tine & Cellar)	3/4/2022 4:46 PM
32	If the Prairie River is to be used more, a channel should be formed through the rapids at the pedestrian bridge in Stanges park. It can be a little traitorous kayaking or canoeing through the large rocks in that rapids. maybe a channel could be negotiated on one side or the other.	3/4/2022 1:27 PM
33	Forgot to suggest that pickle ball courts would be a very nice addition to activities available in Merrill. Also, especially with the new apartment complex on the Foxpoint site, the East side of Merrill needs an accessible park on the East side of Center Avenue. The most densely populated part of town has NO park.	3/4/2022 12:46 PM
34	We're doing good. We can do BETTER!! (at upkeep and improvement) Kyle Gulke is the right	3/4/2022 12:24 PM

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	person to head these efforts	
35	the number for where I live doesn't work... I live in 7	3/4/2022 11:35 AM
36	Please commit to a solid 18 hole disc golf course. This can be done cheaply and easily and will have outsized impact versus other investments. Either Memorial Forest, Jack Pines County Park, or Prairie Trails due to their position nearer to the interstate. Also, Festival Grounds is very underutilized and the RV parking proposal should be seriously considered for a new income stream. An anchor activity in the downtown is crucial to Merrill's identity and future prosperity and it is so important to figure out how to leverage the Pocket Park to get people out into public spaces together again.	3/4/2022 10:46 AM
37	Year round ice at the MARC would open opportunities for more open skating, figure skating and hockey camps. Great activity for the public when it's to hot outside.	3/4/2022 8:08 AM
38	Merrill is a beautiful safe community.We have beautiful trails to walk awesome boating fishing canoe kayaking.	3/4/2022 7:41 AM
39	I am very impressed with the current management of Merrill's Park and Rec Department. We are fortunate to have Dan's leadership!	3/3/2022 11:27 PM
40	Outdoor eating facilities or food trucks should be on the River Bend Trail.	3/3/2022 11:18 PM
41	The Varsity soccer team would start playing games at the MARC again with the addition of lights. This should be considered along with the softball diamonds as the football turf is constantly busy/over crowded.	3/3/2022 10:36 PM
42	Potential for outdoor rink to have boards put up at Normal park for hockey/ broom ball rink. Split the ice and leave half of the space for just skating. Or use a different outdoor rink.	3/3/2022 8:20 PM
43	Consider expanding trails and more lighting on trails for winter use, like the solar posts in Stanges.	3/3/2022 7:13 PM
44	Stop spending money where it will not generate money.	3/3/2022 6:51 PM
45	More restroom availability! This is needed in most parks & trails.	3/3/2022 5:39 PM
46	This is a good outdoor plan, but more needs to be done to promote our indoor hockey facility and a permanent soccer set up	3/3/2022 5:01 PM
47	Would like to see paved trail at Marc to Council Grounds before going onto another project	3/3/2022 4:03 PM
48	I would love to see fundraiser or donations to be collected to add sculptures/murals around the area. There is so much talent hidden in the walls of the high-school that visitors/passers by's do not get to see.	3/3/2022 4:02 PM
49	Additional trails in this town would be wonderful. Also, a pedestrian bridge connecting the river bend trail to riverside would be ideal for truly making our parks Accessible.	3/3/2022 3:49 PM

Q26 What is your age?

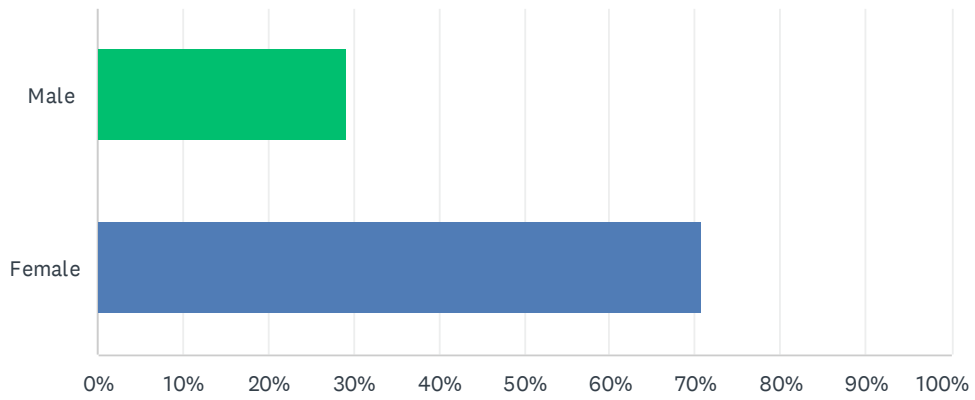
Answered: 216 Skipped: 66



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25	3.24%	7
25 to 40	48.61%	105
41 to 56	28.24%	61
57 to 75	18.98%	41
Greater than 75	0.93%	2
TOTAL		216

Q27 What is your gender?

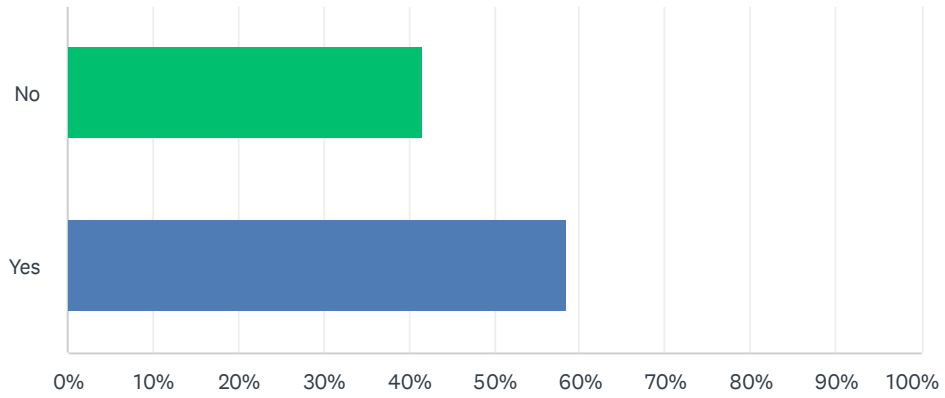
Answered: 212 Skipped: 70



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	29.25%	62
Female	70.75%	150
TOTAL		212

Q28 Do you live in the City of Merrill?

Answered: 216 Skipped: 66



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	41.67%	90
Yes	58.33%	126
TOTAL		216

Q29 Please list the number from the map below in the zone where you live:

Answered: 108 Skipped: 174

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	6	4/9/2022 11:15 PM
2	1	4/9/2022 8:57 AM
3	4	4/8/2022 1:15 PM
4	8	4/8/2022 9:20 AM
5	8	4/7/2022 9:13 PM
6	7	4/7/2022 3:45 PM
7	Zone 1	4/7/2022 3:40 PM
8	3	4/7/2022 2:17 PM
9	2	4/7/2022 10:20 AM
10	7	4/6/2022 8:40 PM
11	3	4/6/2022 7:41 AM
12	5	4/4/2022 9:27 PM
13	5	4/4/2022 9:14 PM
14	2	4/4/2022 4:28 PM
15	G	4/3/2022 7:32 AM
16	7	4/2/2022 6:33 PM
17	2	4/1/2022 12:00 AM
18	1	3/31/2022 11:36 PM
19	1	3/31/2022 11:00 PM
20	3	3/31/2022 7:21 PM
21	5	3/31/2022 8:24 AM
22	7	3/31/2022 5:49 AM
23	5	3/30/2022 8:44 PM
24	5	3/30/2022 7:10 PM
25	5	3/30/2022 1:26 PM
26	2	3/30/2022 11:38 AM
27	8	3/30/2022 9:46 AM
28	4	3/29/2022 6:01 PM
29	6	3/29/2022 6:34 AM
30	Between 1 & 8. North side of river street.	3/28/2022 9:02 PM
31	8	3/28/2022 8:18 PM

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32	1	3/28/2022 7:25 PM
33	1	3/28/2022 11:05 AM
34	3	3/27/2022 11:23 AM
35	4	3/27/2022 8:00 AM
36	One	3/26/2022 7:57 PM
37	8	3/26/2022 6:21 PM
38	7	3/23/2022 10:21 PM
39	8	3/21/2022 6:11 PM
40	1	3/21/2022 4:02 PM
41	6	3/21/2022 4:01 PM
42	west street section 5	3/20/2022 11:07 AM
43	5	3/18/2022 8:56 PM
44	3	3/17/2022 8:21 PM
45	5.	3/17/2022 3:33 PM
46	7	3/17/2022 7:33 AM
47	4	3/16/2022 12:48 PM
48	5	3/15/2022 8:29 PM
49	4	3/15/2022 6:34 PM
50	3	3/15/2022 6:02 PM
51	7	3/15/2022 5:51 PM
52	6	3/15/2022 5:07 PM
53	7	3/15/2022 11:07 AM
54	7	3/14/2022 6:20 PM
55	7	3/14/2022 6:10 PM
56	7	3/14/2022 6:04 PM
57	4	3/14/2022 4:31 PM
58	1	3/14/2022 12:36 PM
59	8	3/14/2022 12:36 PM
60	4	3/14/2022 12:24 PM
61	2	3/14/2022 12:15 PM
62	2	3/14/2022 12:13 PM
63	7	3/14/2022 12:10 PM
64	7	3/14/2022 11:52 AM
65	6	3/14/2022 11:38 AM
66	6	3/14/2022 8:38 AM
67	4	3/14/2022 2:53 AM
68	3	3/11/2022 8:54 AM
69	8	3/10/2022 8:00 PM

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70	2	3/10/2022 7:10 PM
71	1	3/9/2022 8:28 PM
72	8	3/9/2022 1:19 PM
73	3	3/9/2022 11:55 AM
74	7	3/8/2022 12:24 PM
75	1	3/8/2022 3:26 AM
76	7	3/7/2022 6:53 PM
77	5	3/7/2022 3:18 PM
78	5	3/6/2022 5:08 PM
79	5	3/4/2022 11:38 PM
80	4	3/4/2022 7:22 PM
81	4	3/4/2022 7:01 PM
82	1	3/4/2022 6:29 PM
83	2	3/4/2022 5:59 PM
84	2	3/4/2022 5:50 PM
85	1	3/4/2022 5:15 PM
86	1	3/4/2022 4:57 PM
87	1	3/4/2022 1:27 PM
88	1	3/4/2022 12:46 PM
89	1	3/4/2022 8:10 AM
90	1	3/4/2022 6:48 AM
91	2	3/3/2022 11:27 PM
92	1	3/3/2022 10:56 PM
93	5	3/3/2022 10:37 PM
94	4	3/3/2022 10:29 PM
95	1	3/3/2022 8:06 PM
96	1	3/3/2022 6:53 PM
97	4	3/3/2022 6:44 PM
98	5	3/3/2022 5:54 PM
99	4	3/3/2022 5:48 PM
100	1	3/3/2022 5:47 PM
101	1	3/3/2022 5:15 PM
102	5	3/3/2022 4:49 PM
103	2	3/3/2022 4:43 PM
104	4	3/3/2022 4:37 PM
105	1	3/3/2022 4:10 PM
106	5	3/3/2022 3:49 PM
107	2	3/3/2022 3:35 PM

ATTACHMENT E

SCORP Identified Outdoor Recreation Needs

Compiled by:
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
in their 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan (SCORP)

GAPS AND NEEDS IN OUR EXISTING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

In developing the following statewide needs and gaps in our recreation opportunities, the department incorporated information from:

- The SCORP recreation participation survey question regarding needed recreation opportunities in residents' home county (Appendix 6).
- Recreation Opportunities Analysis, which identified recreation needs for each of the eight regions of the state (Appendix 8).
- The SCORP survey of county park directors, which asked about needs at the county level (Appendix 4).
- The SCORP Advisory Team and department staff.

Statewide Recreation Needs:

Places near population centers

Because of the inverse distribution of our population and public lands as well as the limited amount of time people have to participate, there is a very large need to provide more places for people to participate in outdoor recreation near where they live. In particular is the need to provide opportunities for residents to visit places after work or for a couple of hours on a weekend. Places that provide opportunities for hiking, all types of bicycle riding, dog walking, picnicking, and different water-related activities such as fishing, canoeing and kayaking are likely to be heavily used.

Trails

By nearly every measure, the largest need throughout the state is for more trails that enable people to experience natural settings, visit the vibrant downtowns of our cities and villages, commute to work, and access favorite sites. All types of trails are in demand – hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, snowmobiling, ATV/UTV and motorcycle riding, and 4WD vehicle trails.

Water access – shoreline and boat launches

Lakes, streams and rivers are a defining feature of Wisconsin. From the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River, from the thousands of inland lakes and the tens of thousands of miles of flowing water, residents and visitors have been drawn to the water's edge to fish, hunt, launch any manner of watercraft, bird watch and beach walk. Access to water remains a universal need throughout the state.

Camping opportunities

With a large cohort of retirees travelling in RVs combined with an adventurous younger generation, demand for camping has grown in recent years and is likely to remain popular for years to come. Given the divergence in desired experiences – some campers wanting access to hot showers and WiFi while others wanting neither – recreation providers will need to collaborate and coordinate on providing the camping experiences best suited to different public lands.



Statewide Recreation Needs: (cont.)

Dog parks and exercise areas

Taking care of a dog has many benefits, not the least of which is the exercise people get in walking their pets. With the steady rise in dog ownership (75% of people in their thirties own a dog) and an urbanizing population has come an increasing demand for places to walk, play with, socialize and train our canine friends. Many municipal and county dog parks are among their most visited properties.

Target shooting ranges

Many hunters and shooting sports participants live in rural areas or belong to gun clubs and practice their craft on their or the club's property. However, as our population continues to urbanize there is a growing need for places where people can practice gun and archery marksmanship and safety. By their nature, firearm ranges generate considerable sounds and siting new ranges has been a challenge in more populated areas of the state.

Statewide Policy Needs:

Better understand place-based recreation and associated outcomes

The survey conducted for this SCORP on recreation participation generated considerable data on which outdoor activities residents pursue and how often (see Appendix 6). What is not well known is where these "participation days" actually take place – that is, where, when, and why they occur at different places. Questions for which more detailed, property-specific, place-based data are needed include:

- How many people visit the place or property?
- When and what are the patterns of visitation?
- What recreation activities do they pursue?
- How far do visitors travel to reach the property and why did they visit the particular property (as opposed to other options)?
- What would improve their satisfaction?
- What are the economic, health, and social benefits associated with their visit?

With a more complete understanding of property use and the features and attributes that draw people, agencies can make more informed decisions about what types of recreation facilities to build and maintain at different places. And the public can better understand their "return on investment."

Expand collaborations among recreation providers

Each recreation provider has unique capabilities and their lands offer different types of experiences, features, facilities, and opportunities. There would be substantial benefit in continuing and expanding collaborations among federal, county and local governments. Focus should be placed on identifying ways to coordinate recreation experiences in each region of the state, minimizing duplicative efforts, and maximizing the benefits of recreation investments.

Together, providing well-planned, safe and enjoyable recreation opportunities that visitor's value will increase support for local communities and businesses, strengthen tourism, respond to evolving demographic and visitor needs, reduce user conflicts and improve natural settings.

Better understand the nature-based recreation preferences of our diversifying population

Data are needed on the recreation preferences of our changing population. For a range of reasons, people of varying ages, residential settings, incomes, and social, racial, ethnic and cultural identities participate in different types of outdoor activities in different places. More information is needed on the types of activities and settings sought by the diversity of Wisconsin residents. In addition, data on how and where to most effectively provide quality experiences for people with varying backgrounds and cultures are needed.

Enhance and stabilize funding for outdoor recreation

Funding for conservation and recreation is derived from many sources and the overall total has fluctuated considerably from year to year. This has complicated efforts to plan, develop, and maintain recreation facilities. Some states have implemented funding sources that provide a more stable source of money for conservation and recreation projects. In addition to more consistent funding, there is a need to broaden the network of people and sources that help pay for the management of public lands in the state.

Regional Recreation Needs (high needs identified in the Recreation Opportunities Analysis – see Appendix 8)

Great Northwest Region

- ATV/UTV riding
- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Fishing
- Four-wheel vehicle driving
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Hunting - big game
- Motor boating (inc. waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
- Off-highway motorcycle riding
- Swimming in lakes and rivers

Western Sands Region

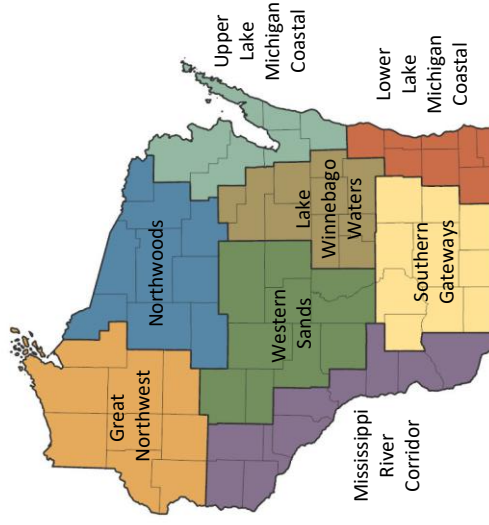
- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Cross country skiing
- Dog walking
- Fishing
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting - big game
- Picnicking
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming in lakes and rivers

Mississippi River Corridor Region

- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Cross country skiing
- Dog walking
- Fishing
- Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Hunting - big game
- Nature photography
- Participating in nature-based education programs
- Picnicking
- Snowshoeing
- Visiting a beach, beach walking

Northwoods Region

- ATV/UTV riding
- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Fishing
- Four-wheel vehicle driving
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Hunting - big game
- Off-highway motorcycle riding
- Participating in nature-based education programs
- Snowmobiling



Southern Gateways Region

- ATV/UTV riding
- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Fishing
- Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Motor boating (inc. waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
- Picnicking
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming in lakes and rivers

Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region

- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Fishing - all types
- Hiking, walking, trail running or backpacking
- Horseback riding
- Motor boating (inc. waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
- Visiting a beach, beach walking

Lake Winnebago Waters Region

- Bicycling - bicycling touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - developed and primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Cross country skiing
- Dog walking
- Fishing
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Hunting - big game
- Motor boating (inc. waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
- Nature photography
- Participating in nature-based education programs
- Picnicking
- Swimming in lakes and rivers
- Visiting a beach, beach walking

Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region

- Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
- Bird or wildlife watching
- Camping - primitive
- Canoeing or kayaking
- Cross country skiing
- Fishing
- Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
- Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
- Motor boating (inc. waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
- Nature photography
- Picnicking
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming in lakes and rivers

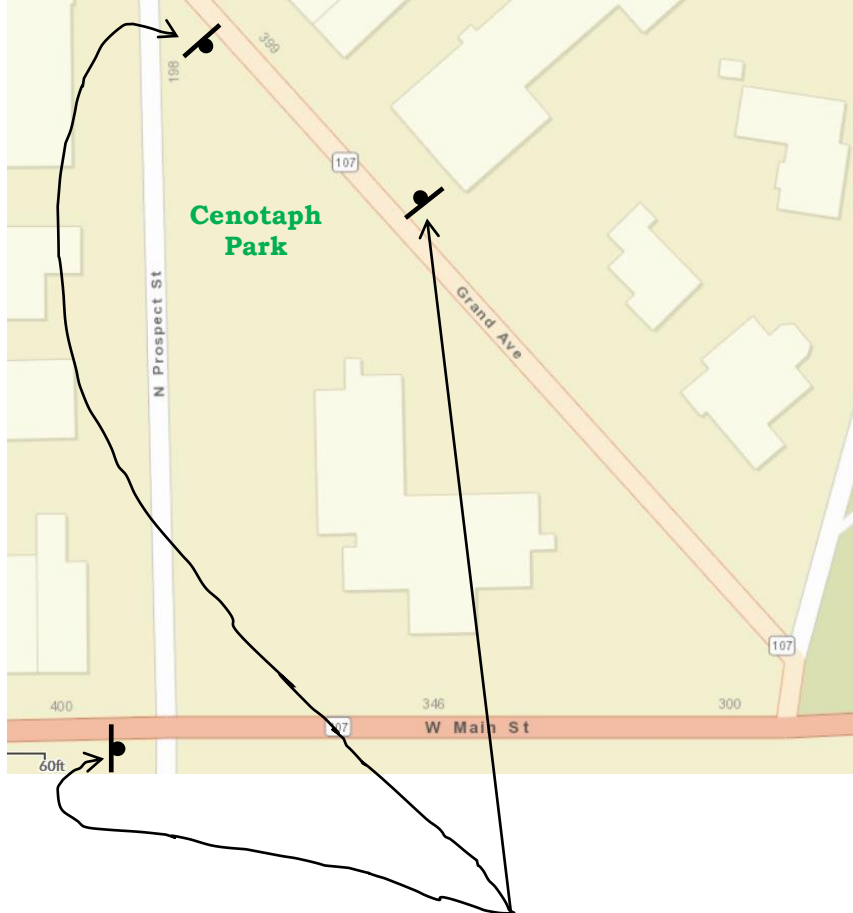
ATTACHMENT F

Cenotaph Park Bike Repair Station wayfinding

Compiled by: NCWRPC

Cenotaph Park

Possible Bike Repair Sign Locations



Source: Lincoln County GIS Map Viewer

Add this sign assembly to Grand Ave and Main Street to remind bicyclists that this repair station exists.

Sign source: Jami Stinson on Pinterest



ATTACHMENT G

Bicycle Parking Guidelines

From: Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
One page summary sheet.

And from City of Baltimore

Bicycle Parking Guidelines

A summary of recommendations from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

Bicycle Parking Design

- Required spaces shall be at least 2 feet by 6 feet.
- An access aisle of at least 5 feet shall be provided in each facility.
- Racks shall be situated to allow a minimum of 2 feet between adjacent bike parking stalls.
- Spaces shall have a vertical clearance of at least 80 inches.

Bicycle Rack Design

Structures that require a user-supplied locking device:

- must accommodate U-shaped locking devices;
- support the bike frame at two points;
- be securely anchored to the ground or the building structure; and
- be designed and maintained to be mud and dust free.

Bicycle Rack Location

- Racks should be located in a clearly designated safe and convenient location.
- Racks should be designed and located to be harmonious with the surrounding environment.
- Racks should be at least as convenient as the majority of auto parking spaces provided.

To learn more about bicycle parking guidelines, visit the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals at: www.apbp.org.

These bicycle racks do NOT meet the design guidelines:

Grid or Fence Style Racks



Wave or Ribbon Style Racks



These bicycle racks DO meet the design guidelines:

Inverted-U Style Racks



Angled Wave Style Racks



Freestanding Style Racks



The above images are examples only. NCWRPC does not endorse any particular bicycle rack manufacturers.

If you have questions about whether a particular bicycle parking rack you are considering using meets these requirements, please contact NCWRPC planner **Fred Heider**, AICP at fheider@ncwrpc.org.

PLACEMENT OF BICYCLE PARKING RACKS

RACK PLACEMENT

RULES:

5' from:

Fire hydrant
Crosswalk

4' from:

Loading zone
Bus stop
Bus shelter
Bus bench

Min. 2', Rec. 3' from:

Curb

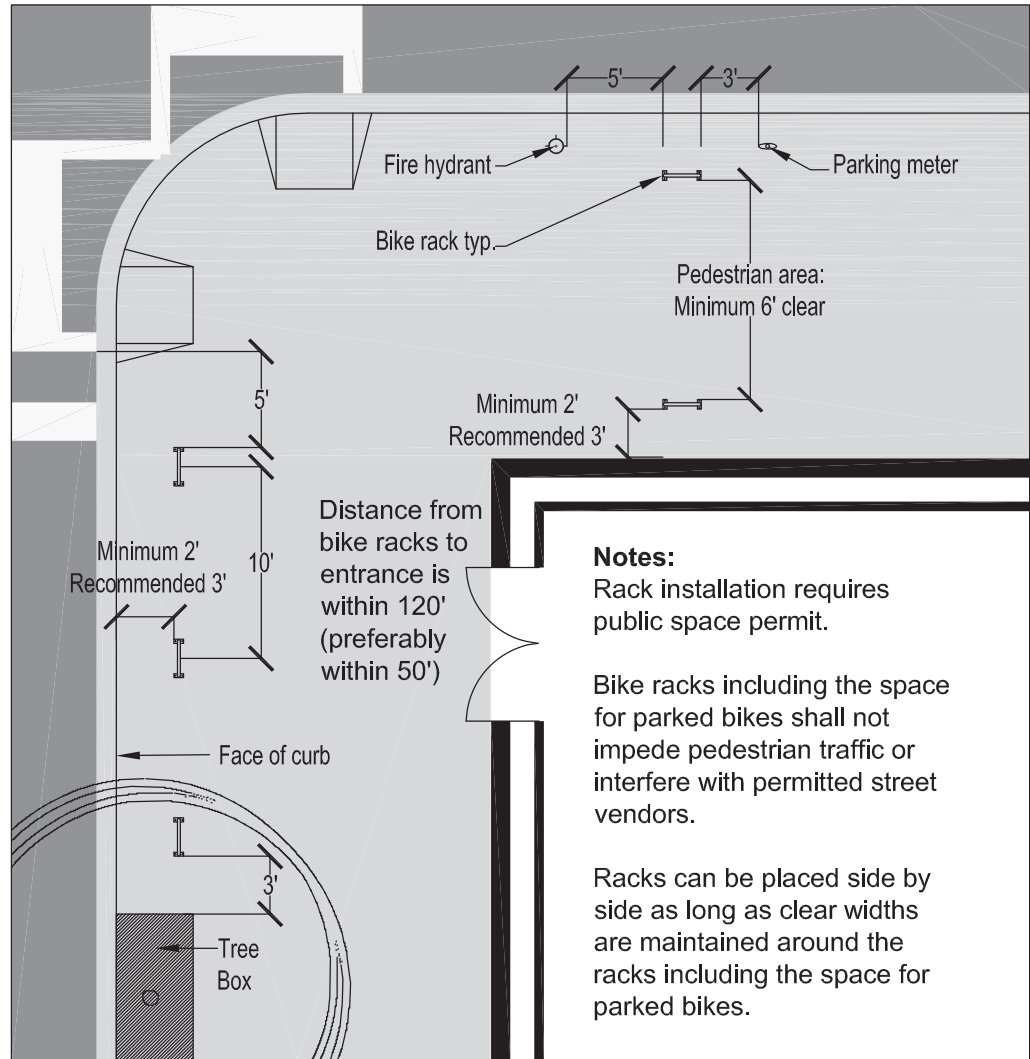
3' from:

Parking meter
Newspaper rack
US mailbox
Light pole
Sign pole
Driveway
Tree space
Trash can
Other street furniture
Other sidewalk obstructions

WALL SETBACKS

For racks set parallel to a wall:
Min. 24", Rec. 36"

For racks set perpendicular to a wall:
Min. 28", Rec. 36"



Notes:

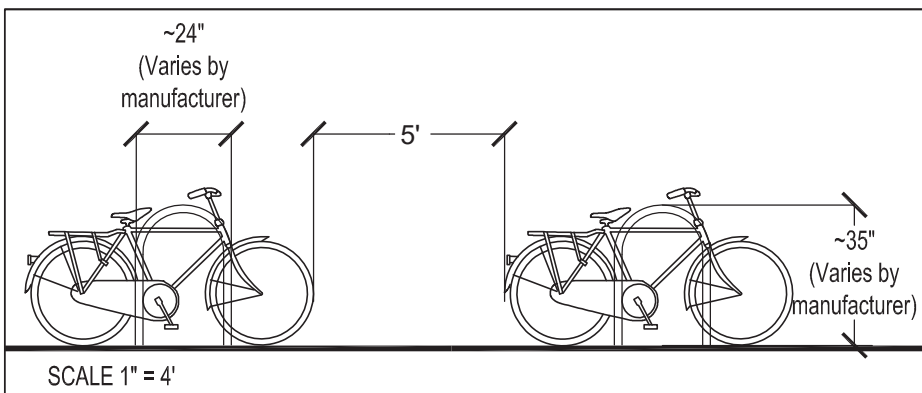
Rack installation requires public space permit.

Bike racks including the space for parked bikes shall not impede pedestrian traffic or interfere with permitted street vendors.

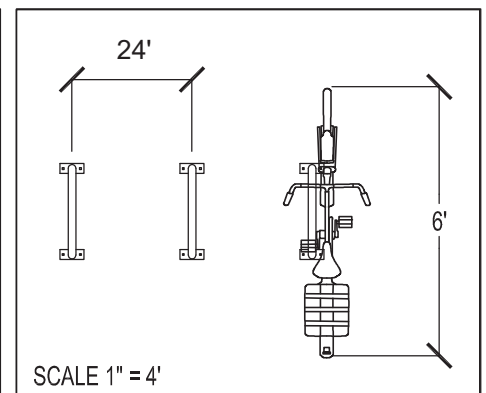
Racks can be placed side by side as long as clear widths are maintained around the racks including the space for parked bikes.

SCALE 1" = 10'

SIDE VIEW



SIDE BY SIDE RACKS:



City of Baltimore
Department of Transportation
Bicycle Facility Design Guide

REVISED:
Aug. 2005
SCALE:
AS NOTED

4