



CITY OF MERRILL

Parks & Recreation Dept. - Smith Center

1100 Marc Drive - Merrill, WI 54452

Rec. Dept. Telephone (715)536-7313 * Smith Center (715)536-6187

Fax (715)539-2790

FEBRUARY MEETING NOTICE

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission will have a meeting on **Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall**. Phone info: Phone: 406-285-8916

PIN: 799 893 599 #

Voting members of Commission: Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, Kyle Gulke, Joan Tabor, John Vanlieshout, and Dan Novitch

The following items will be included on the agenda:

1. Approve minutes from previous meeting.
2. Approve claims.
3. Public Comment
4. Presentation (by North Central Regional Planning Commission) and discussion on the 2023-2027 Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan
5. Annual discussion on 10-year Capital Project & Equipment Plan
6. Review & potentially approve several Bike & Pedestrian Plan initiatives/objectives (several may need to be included into 2023 Budget Request)
7. Monthly reports.
8. Set date for next meeting.
9. Public comment
10. Adjournment

Submitted by

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dan Novitch".

Dan Novitch, Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Commission

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

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

DECEMBER 1, 2021

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, December 1, 2021 at 4:15 p.m., at Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Kyle Gulke (call in), Joan Tabor, Brian Artac, and Jean Ravn, Dan Novitch

Members Excused Absent: John VanLieshout

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Artac to approve the minutes from the November meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Tabor, seconded by Artac, to approve the claims from November.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve potentially changing policy of only taking shelter reservations beginning first business day after the New Year. Wendorf stated that changing to being able to reserve year round would be nice since we now will be switching to Civic Rec and people are able to reserve online. Wendorf stated that he has not been able to find any ordinance stating why we can only take reservations after the first of the year. Tabor questioned if the Civic Rec program has a calendar with available dates. Wendorf stated it did. Novitch suggested that if this is something we want to move forward with we should begin after the first of year so that we don't upset people who may not be aware of the policy change.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Artac to allow year round shelter reservations starting January 3, 2022.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve potential transfer of Legion Building and property to Parks Department. Wendorf stated that a walk through was done with building inspector Darin Pagel. Wendorf and Pagel both agreed that structurally the building is sound. Wendorf had a slide show that he presented to the Park and Recreation Commission. Wendorf stated that there is potential to utilize the building for an afterschool location, running some programs and summer playground from the building. Wendorf stated that there will have to be some work on the inside but believes it would be a good investment for the Parks Department. City Administrator stated that long term the roof will have to be replaced and also some work on the windows and doors.

***Motion by Tabor, seconded by Ravn to support and recommend the City Council returning the Legion Building to the Park Department for park use.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was an update on the Sumnicht Property. Wendorf stated that when they got into the final budget hearing a council member requested putting the Sumnicht property back on for approval to purchase. Wendorf stated it was a 4/4 tie and the Mayor broke the tie by voting yes. Wendorf stated that the funding source will be coming from the American Rescue plan if the Tourism Grant is unsuccessful. Wendorf stated that they have reached out the family and let them know that the City will be purchasing the land. Wendorf stated that he has met with City Administrative Dave Johnson and City Attorney Hayden to start on the legal paperwork for the land. Wendorf stated that the City Forest will now be over 1,000 acres. The 70 acres will be purchased for \$140,000.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Ravn stated that it is really sad to see that there was more vandalism at Normal Park again. Wendorf stated that some youth just don't have a very good structured life. Ravn questioned if it was fixable. Wendorf stated it was, and new parts have been ordered. Tabor stated that programs do make a difference in kids lives, it may not seem like it, but they do make an impact on a child's life. Wendorf stated that he would like to thank all the part time and full time employees for all the wonderful work they do all year.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall. Novitch stated that if there is nothing to discuss that the meeting might be canceled but will keep commission members updated.

Public Comment:

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Ravn to adjourn at 5:04 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary

DECEMBER

ACE HARDWARE	TRASH BAGS	12/10/2021	19217228124	\$24.99	55200-03-40000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL	11/30/2021	819757	\$57.43	55200-02-15000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL	11/30/2021	8198023	\$78.22	55300-03-41500
ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION	MEMBERSHIP	12/20/2021		\$15.00	55200-03-320000
ATCO INTERNATIONAL	CENTURION	12/7/2021	132383	\$133.00	55400-03-4400
BAJA'S	SWEATSHIRTS	12/7/2021	18166	\$511.50	55300-03-41500
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	11/12/2021	28013	\$8,848.00	55200-02-15000
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	12/7/2021		\$148.00	55400-02-23600
BEECHWOOD SALES	BARLEYFEST	10/8/2021		\$685.30	BARLEYFEST
CINTAS	MOPS/MATS	11/10/2021	410213059	\$187.07	55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	11/18/2021	4102131029	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	11/24/2021	4102285199	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/2/2021	4103448267	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/9/2021	4104123459	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/16/2021	4104802876	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CIVIC PLUS	ANNUAL FEE	1/25/2022	21-818	\$3,000.00	CITY FOREST/TIMBER SALE
DAWN HINTZE	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/6/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
ETCO ELECTRIC SUPPLY	EMERGENCY FIXTURE	11/22/2021	20834	\$400.48	55400-03-50000
FABIANO BROTHERS, INC	BARLEYFEST	10/1/2021	2699385	\$1,084.20	BARLEYFEST
GREEN LAWN	WINTERIZATION SPRINKLER SYSTEM	11/28/2021	21-23813	\$143.92	55200-02-15000
GREEN LAWN	WINTERIZATION SPRINKLER SYSTEM	12/13/2021	21-23956	\$300.00	55200-02-15000
J.WENNING	ZAMONI KNIFE	11/30/2021	101094	\$81.00	55400-03-51500
J.WENNING	ZAMONI KNIFE	12/14/2021	101110	\$42.50	55400-03-51500
JEAN GEURINK	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/21/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
KATIE CAPELLE	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/15/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
LORI KRIEWARD	SECURITY DEPOSIT	11/29/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
MENARDS	SHOVEL	12/14/2021		\$27.07	55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	OUTSIDE LIGHTING	11/20/2021	21192	\$64.93	55400-08-82000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	OUTSIDE LIGHTING	11/20/2021	21199	\$23.77	55400-08-82000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	OUTSIDE LIGHTING	11/20/2021	211200	\$13.99	55400-08-82000

MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	SANDER/SANDDISC	11/15/2021	19274228124	\$180.97	55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	SHOP SUPPLIES	11/11/2021		\$82.37	55200-03-40000
MERRILL FOTO NEWS	THANKSGIVING ADVERTISEMENT	12/6/2021		\$180.00	55400-03-41000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-3	11/22/2021	18112	\$740.00	55200-03-5000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-3	11/22/2021	118111	\$1,645.25	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-3	11/3/2021	18102	\$100.73	55200-03-50000
MERRILL WATER UTILITY	MARC	1/10/2021	1060094000	\$726.76	55400-02-210000
NAPA AUTO PARTS	WIPER BLADE	11/19/2021	933705	\$19.98	55200-03-50000
NAPA AUTO PARTS	PLOW SPRING	11/15/2021	932867	\$49.49	55200-03-50000
NASSCO	PAPERTOWELS	11/22/2021	6087010	\$300.17	55400-03-40000
NIESHA GLOYD	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/6/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
NORTHWOODS	TB SPRAY	11/30/2021	320317	\$226.93	55400-03-40000
PATTY BOYD	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/21/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
PAULA RAASCH	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/1/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
POWER HOUSE	APRON CHAPS	12/2/2021	327753	\$126.99	55200-08-90500
RIVER COUNTY CO-OP	LYNCH PIN	12/2/2021	292596	\$3.99	55200-03-40000
STAINLESS SPECIALISTS, INC	START UP AND TEST CHILLER SYSTEM	12/2/2021	39243	\$1,339.00	55400-02-16250
STAINLESS SPECIALISTS, INC	WATER HEATER	12/3/2021	39263	\$160.50	55400-02-16250
SUNRISE BROADCASTING	ADVERTISEMENT	12/2/2021		\$249.00	55400-03-41000
VICTORY JANITORIAL	BELT AND BRUSH VAC	11/16/2021	121212	\$50.80	55400-03-50000
WALMART	CHRISTMAS SUPPLIES	11/30/2021		\$152.22	55300-03-41500
WALMART	BREAKFAST WITH SANTA	12/9/2021		\$33.64	55300-03-41500
WPRA	MEMBERSHIP DUES/JOE WECKWERTH	12/6/2021	2845	\$150.00	55300-03-41500
WPRA	MEMBERSHIP DUES/JIM YATES	12/6/2021	2844	\$150.00	55300-03-41500
WPRA	MEMBERSHIP DUES/DAN WENDORF	12/6/2021	2842	\$150.00	55300-03-41500
WPRA	MEMBERSHIP DUES/DAWN SMITH	12/6/2021	2843	\$150.00	55300-03-41500
WPRA	MEMBERSHIP DUES/RYAN GOLISCH	12/6/2021	3450	\$150.00	55300-03-41500

		JANUARY			
ACE HARDWARE	FASTENERS	12/10/2021	22380	\$11.96	55400-03-50000
ALL AMERICAN SWIM	LIFEGUARD TUBES	1/19/2022	3000618658	\$170.45	
AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL NOTICE	12/31/2021	8253311	\$80.30	55300-03-41500
AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL NOTICE	12/31/2021	8252863	\$58.82	55200-02-15000
ATCO INTERNATIONAL	QUICKIES TOWELS	12/20/2021	132383	\$115.00	55200-03-40000
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	1/1/2022		\$148.00	55400-02-236600
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/21/2021	4105529381	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/30/2021	4105247422	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/6/2022	41068839349	\$91.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/11/2022	4107514536	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MOPS/MATS	1/13/2022	4107514422	\$187.07	55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/20/2022	4108208967	\$93.21	55200-03-46000
DAVE'S COUNTY MARKET	TOT TIME	1/17/2022		\$11.47	55300-03-41500
DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP	1 YEAR TREEKEEPER SUBSCRIPTION	1/10/2022	916277923	\$1,800.00	55200-08-91000
DOUG WILLIAMS	BREAKFAST WITH SANTA	12/21/2021	VOUCHER	\$175.00	55300-03-41500
ENTRANCE TECHNOLLIGIES	SERVICE AUTOMATIC DOOR	1/25/2022		\$135.00	55400-02-16800
FERGUSON	WATERSENTRY	12/30/2021	6429201	\$254.25	55200-03-40000
GAMETIME	PARTS FOR VANDISLISM AT NORMAL PARK	12/27/2021	38954	\$60.08	55200-03-43000
GENERAL BEVERAGE SALES	BARLEYFEST ALCOHOL	10/31/2022	2001560769	\$198.00	BARLEYFEST
INTEGRITY	INSPECTION OF SUTOMATIC SPRINKLER	12/29/2021	61873	\$369.00	55400-02-16500
KAY SCHENZL	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/18/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
LESLIE HOFFMAN	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/28/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
MARY JO BEYER	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/11/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
MENARDS	SHOVEL, SPINDLES	12/14/2021	30160496	\$27.07	55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	AIR PLUG	1/6/2022	19274228124	\$5.98	55400-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	SNOW PUSHER	1/6/2022	19274226124	\$209.97	55400-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	CLEANER	1/6/2022	19274228124	\$7.98	55400-03-50000
MERRILL FOTO NEWS	ADVERTISING	12/30/2021		\$372.00	55400-03-41000
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	BIRTHDAY PARTIES	1/1/2022		\$149.50	55300-03-41500
OA0B RECOVERY EVENT	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/29/2021	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200



2022 CAPITAL EQUIPMENT & PROJECT REQUESTS

Updated 11/10/21

PROJECT/EQUIPMENT REQUESTED	PRIORITY ORDER	ESTIMATED COST
5 year Outdoor Recreation Plan	1a	\$7,000 (removed to non-lapse)
Purchase 70 acres adjacent to City Forest	1b	\$140,000 (Yes 5-4) ARPA Funding & I am writing Tourism Grant for funding also
Sand/salt spreader for back of truck AND small mower	2a	~\$6,000~(5-4 yes)
Plow blade for New Holland Tractor	2b	~\$10,000~(5-4 yes)
"Tommy/tailgate lift" for pick up truck	3	\$4,000 (5-4 yes)
Replace wood mulch in playgrounds at MARC and Kitchenette (rubber mulch)	4	\$40,000 (5-4 yes)
Replace Ott's & Riverside docks and repair boat launch at Ott's	5	\$40,000 (No)
Replace/repave parking lots at Kitchenette, Lions, and Riverside	6	\$100,000 (No)
Re-do Streeter Square basketball court	7	\$30,000 (No)
Construct shelter at City Forest	8	\$40,000 (No – will try to include in Tourism Grant with land)
Granite for topdressing existing trails	9	\$20,000 (No)
Pit toilets at Prairie Trails	10	\$20,000 (5-4 yes)

**During our portion of capital discussion you will notice vote numbers went from 9 to 8 due to one City Council Person leaving the meeting. Another left right after Parks Capital discussion for the remainder of the day as well.

CHAPTER 4

VISION, MISSION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

The following mission, goals, and objectives were created by the Advisory Group working with NCWRPC.

VISION:

For children and adults to safely bicycle and walk throughout Merrill for daily trips and recreational purposes.

MISSION:

Develop a transportation system that is safe and easily shared by motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, by bringing all streets up to a comfortable level of compatibility.

GOAL 1. MAKE ALL ROADS SAFE TO WALK OR BIKE

All roads in Merrill are available for people to walk and bicycle on. Some roads are dangerous or very uncomfortable to walk or bicycle on, and therefore need alternative routes or the road right-of-way needs some other accommodation to make it safe for all users.

Objective 1.1 – Identify very hazardous road segments for prioritization so that basic bicycling improvements can be scheduled to make those segments safer.

Objective 1.2 – Identify pinch points where walking could be dangerous due to predictable and observable hazards.

Objective 1.3 – Sign and possibly paint pavement markings for bike routes so drivers become aware to share the road with bicyclists.

Objective 1.4 – Create better outdoor recreation wayfinding and trailhead signage.

GOAL 2. PROVIDE BICYCLE PARKING

Everyone who owns a bicycle has a place to securely park it at home, but many destinations do not provide secure bicycle parking.

Objective 2.1 – Provide bicycle parking guidance through fact sheets to all employers.

Objective 2.2 – Provide bicycle parking in downtown commercial areas in the street furniture zone of the sidewalk and in select street parking spots (like at the ends of each block).

Objective 2.3 – Create a bicycle parking ordinance.

GOAL 3. PROVIDE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

This is an opportunity to make walking and bicycling to school safer for children in grades K-8, and to increase the number of families who encourage their children to walk and bike.

Objective 3.1 – Apply for Safe Routes To School assistance for each school.

GOAL 4. BUILD BIKE FACILITIES FOR “INTERESTED BUT CONCERNED” BICYCLISTS

All roads in Merrill are available for people to walk and bicycle on. Some roads are dangerous or very uncomfortable to ride on, so the challenge is making biking appeal to this huge contingent of “interested but concerned” bicyclists.

Objective 4.1 – When a road is 25 MPH, has a painted center line, and is not a truck route, then paint white edge lines (urban shoulder) to make lanes that are not wider than 10-feet. Narrow roads promote slower driving.

Objective 4.2 – On bike routes and paths that are not on the main roads in Merrill, design and install bicyclist oriented wayfinding signage that directs them to common civic, commercial district, and park destinations.

Objective 4.3 – Place 4-lane sections of Center Avenue and STH 64 on road diets to provide bike lanes. Side street traffic will also benefit due to fewer lanes to cross.

GOAL 5. DESIGN WALKING FACILITIES FOR IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

Making it easier for impaired individuals to walk around will also benefit everyone else.

Objective 5.1 – Make intersections predictable for visually impaired users to navigate by pointing curb ramps in the line of travel across a road.

Objective 5.2 – Provide adequate crosswalk lighting for pedestrians using the crosswalk, and for vehicle drivers to see pedestrians in crosswalks in time to stop for pedestrians.

Objective 5.3 – Create sidewalks that are level and have properly sloping ramps at crosswalks. Replace stairs in the sidewalk line of travel with gradually sloping sidewalks, and keep sidewalks level at driveways so that only the driveway apron slopes to meet the road – or lower the whole sidewalk instead of slanting it toward the road.

Objective 5.4 – Where paths are needed, but asphalt or concrete are not desired, provide flat hard packed surfaces that are wide enough to allow wheelchairs to navigate a path during a rain event (at least 5-foot wide). A saturated grass path will be too soft to allow a wheelchair to pass.

Route Wayfinding Signs

Assemble an advisory group to work with the Streets Department or Parks & Recreation Commission on choosing wayfinding sign types, colors, and what the routes should be called, or what locations should be listed on wayfinding signs. Common destinations placed on bicycle wayfinding signs include parks, schools, and other major destinations within the City.

Time frame: Short term.

Review if a designated bicycle route needs upgrades, or has "favorable conditions." Once the upgrades are done, or favorable conditions exist, then install signs. "Favorable conditions" is defined for Merrill as having "good" or "moderate" conditions on Map 1; so a bike route with favorable conditions may be signed (see Map 1 Conditions Described box). If a road is not rated on Map 1 for bicycling conditions, then its rating is "good."

There are two parts to bike route wayfinding:

1. The route name itself, shown on a map, will tell users where they are; and
2. Places with or without mileages may be placed on additional signs.

Always follow MUTCD standards for mounting height and lateral placement from edge of path or roadway. Additional guidance and standards clarification are provided by the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide. Use the WisDOT regional bike and pedestrian coordinator as a resource for planning and designing bike and pedestrian facilities on state and federally funded projects.

Lions Park Dirt Path

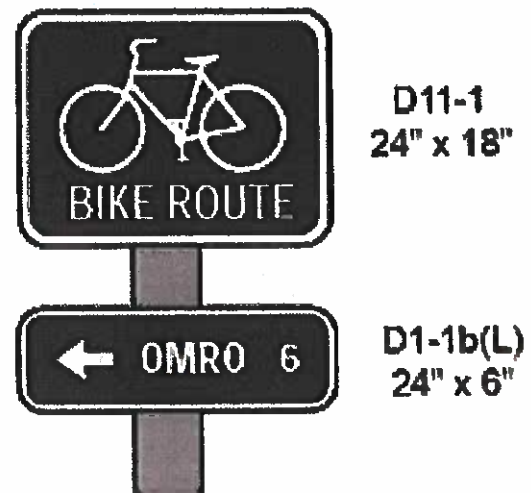
Create a secondary path down this hill that is manageable for more abilities, including wheelchairs.

Time Frame: Intermediate.

The key to an enjoyable average tread grade is to keep it as low as reasonable while fulfilling the objectives of the trail. Designing the average grade to 4-6% may necessitate creating a switchback or serpentine path and adding some near level sections for wheelchairs to pause before continuing down or up the path. Review Trail Design and Construction on AmericanTrails.org for additional guidance.

Mark the original dirt path and the secondary path per a nationally recognized standard like the IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System (e.g. white circle to double black diamond), other useful standards also exist.

FIGURE 15:



Bike route sign (top)

Bike destination sign (bottom)

Source: WisDOT Bicycle Facility Design Handbook



Remove Sidewalk Trip Hazards

Use saw cutting or grinding to eliminate sidewalk tripping hazards when the concrete slab is still in good condition.

Time Frame: Short term.

Sidewalks are reviewed for tripping hazards in Merrill as part of the *annual ward inspection program*. Managing ADA compliance, risk, and budget is the balancing act necessary to provide safe sidewalks in any community.

Four common methods to remove trip hazards include:

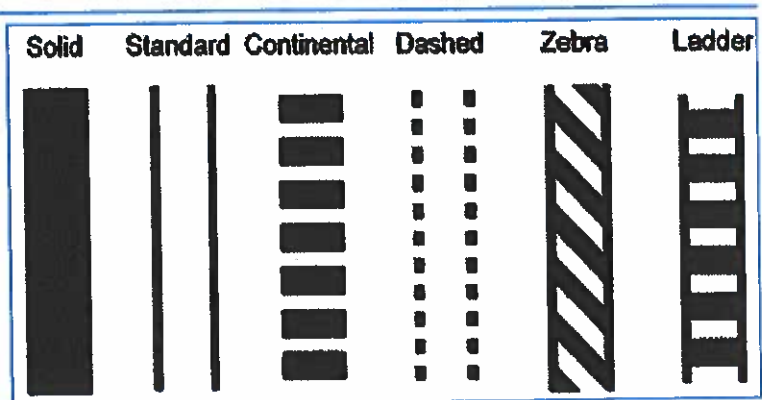
1. Saw cutting (permanent fix);
2. Grinding (permanent fix);
3. Patching and ramping (temporary fix); and
4. Removing and replacing concrete slabs (permanent fix).

Crosswalk Improvements

Increase visibility with new crosswalk marking patterns.

Time Frame: Short term.

Where either the Streets or Police Departments determine that extra visibility is needed for a crosswalk, paint a more visible crosswalk style (e.g. Continental, Zebra, or Ladder) as seen at right:



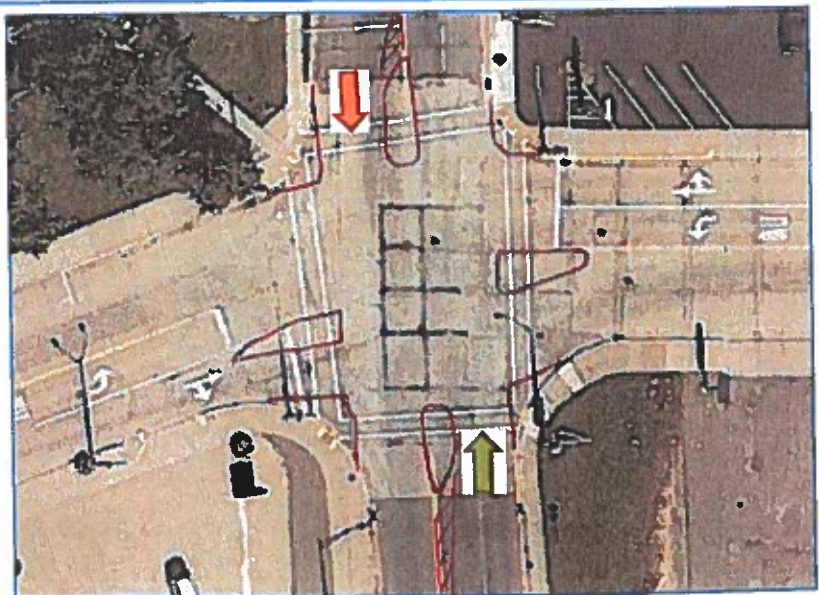
Center Avenue and Main Street

Revise the Center Ave and Main St intersection to improve pedestrian crossings.

Time Frame: Intermediate.

Add medians that are at least 6-feet wide (WisDOT's minimum width) for pedestrians to rest while crossing each street. Design medians so that trucks can turn onto each street.

Red lines in drawing at right represent new medians and curb extensions with new ADA approved sidewalk ramps pointing in the direction of travel.



- ↓ = Replace 2 travel lanes with 1 travel lane and a bike lane.
↑ = Replace 1 travel lane and a turn lane with 1 travel lane and a bike lane.

Bicycle parking is a key piece of infrastructure that is necessary when people decide to bike to destinations. Schools are traditionally the only places that have enough bike parking for their users. When bicycling becomes a transportation choice vs. a recreational use, then more bike parking will show up at other employers, commercial and civic locations. Locking a bike to any number of objects is not adequate bike parking, although it will show where the immediate need for bike parking exists. A bike owner needs a convenient safe place to secure their bike, which is a similar need to a motor vehicle owner. Basically, well designed bike parking allows a bike to be secured using a U-lock, supports the locked bike so it does not fall down, and is located on a paved surface near the main entrance. See Attachment F for summarized bike parking guidance.

Bicycle wayfinding is also bike route development. Some roads are just too busy for most users to feel comfortable riding on, so alternate routes are needed. Other parallel roads and the River Bend Trail both provide this alternative. While riders are on streets or paths that are not the main roads in Merrill, then they may need some guidance that directs them to common civic, commercial district, and park destinations. There are two common sources for constructing and locating proper wayfinding signage: The Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide.

Map 8, Bike & Pedestrian Pinch Points, shows where there are roads that are difficult to bike on and intersections that are difficult to cross. Walking and biking facility improvements should be a higher priority at these places before addressing other areas in the City.

On-street bicycle facilities in Merrill:

- **Taylor Street bike lanes** (Figure 5) were added with the recent road resurfacing.
- **East 1st Street**, between Polk St. and Scott St. (Figure 5), has no bicycle markings on it. What makes this road bike friendly now are: 1) the City removed parking from both sides, which created two 18-foot wide travel lanes (only 12-foot travel lanes are needed for truck routes), and 2) the 25 mph speed limit was retained, which is a safe speed for sharing the lane (up to 35 mph). The "interested but concerned" bike riders may still not feel confident enough without the white line identifying a "bike lane."

Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Merrill:

- **Lions Park staircase** (Figure 5) is in fair condition, is lit at night, and connects to the neighborhood above. A sign could be installed on East Street that directs people to this publicly available staircase.
- **Lions Park dirt ramp path** (Figure 6) is an informal path with very steep drop off ramp that was made through many bicycle users riding down the hill. See recommendation about how to improve Lions Park Dirt Path.
- **River Bend Trail** (Figures 9 & 10) is the newly developing bikeway along a former railroad right-of-way. See Attachment E for the planned route, Map 10 for the existing route, and Map 7 which shows completed sections.
- **Stange Park** (Figures 11, 12, & 13) has 5 bridges, all of which are in great condition, but all of the pathways to them are in poor condition.
- **Trails at the MARC** (Figure 14) are for recreation and also connect with trails and roads inside of Council Grounds State Park. Some curb ramps and path connections are needed at the MARC to make the trails bicycle friendly.

Bike Route Signs & Road Markings for Merrill

The Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is the required manual to use when determining what sign is needed along a road or on private property that is open to the public. Other guides also exist, some of which use the MUTCD. There is leeway built into MUTCD, because all notations in the manual are not law; standards are law, while guidance and option are built in flexibility. This recommendation uses that flexibility to suggest what may fit best in Merrill.

Section 2A.04 Excessive Use of Signs (From MUTCD 2009)

Guidance:

01 Regulatory and warning signs should be used conservatively because these signs, if used to excess, tend to lose their effectiveness. If used, route signs and directional guide signs should be used frequently because their use promotes efficient operations by keeping road users informed of their location.

NCWRPC Note: Since the green bike route signs (D11-1, and m series) below are guide signs, then frequent use is justified per the above guidance (2A.04). Frequent use is defined below in the NACTO text.

*"...every 2 to 3 blocks along bicycle facilities, unless another type of sign is used (e.g., within 150 ft of a turn or decision sign). Should be placed soon after turns to confirm destination(s). **Pavement markings can also act as confirmation that a bicyclist is on a preferred route.**"*

(From NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide)

MUTCD Figure 9B-4. Guide Signs and Plaques for Bicycle Facilities

For use in Merrill:



See next page for more signs.



Bike Route Signs & Road Markings for Merrill



R4-11



W11-1*



W16-1P*

In situations where there is a need to warn motorists to watch for bicyclists traveling along the highway, the SHARE THE ROAD (W16-1P) plaque (see Figure 9B-3) may be used in conjunction with the W11-1 sign.

On the separate "Section _" diagram pages, this symbol shows where a sign post and sign will face: "T"

Example:



Place this sign assembly (below) on:

- Center Ave (2 assembly, one for each side of the road as traffic leaves eastbound Main St).



Place this sign assembly (below) at the end of the bike route:

This shows that bikes are still allowed on the road, even though the route ended.

- Main St, eastbound toward Center Ave (1 assembly)



Traffic direction.

Mount this sign assembly first.



Bike Route Signs & Road Markings for Merrill

“Sharrows”

Shared Lane Marking

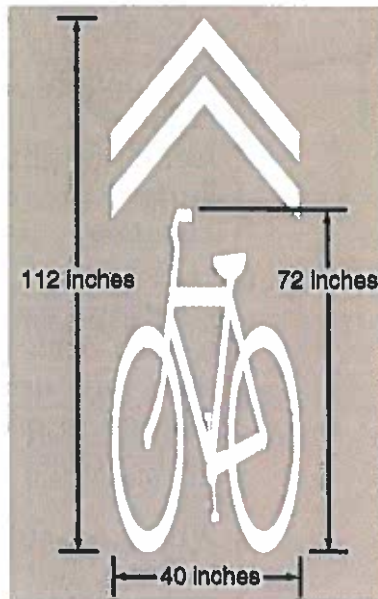


Figure 9C-9. Shared Lane Marking

This symbol is commonly called a “sharrow,” but is officially called a Shared Lane Marking – bicycle with a double chevron symbol.

The chevrons may be painted on a 45-degree angle to point toward a bike route turn, as a reinforcement to bicyclists using a specific route.

Guide Signs and Plaques for Bicycle Facilities

There are many guide signs and plaques that may be helpful with designating bike routes and bicycle wayfinding. See the Recommendation Chapter for bike route sign and wayfinding sign recommendation.



M1-8



M1-8a



D1-3c

Sample bike route signs

Sample bike wayfinding



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

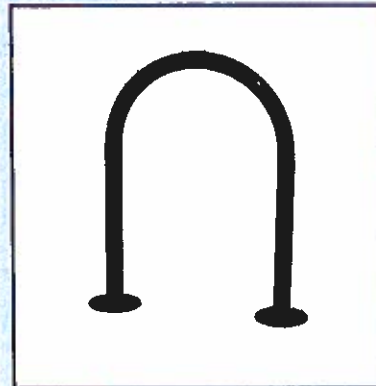


Wave or Ribbon Style Racks

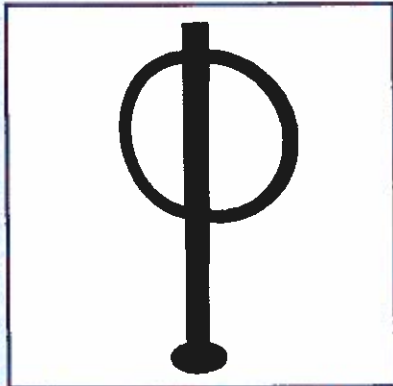


These bicycle racks DO meet the design guidelines:

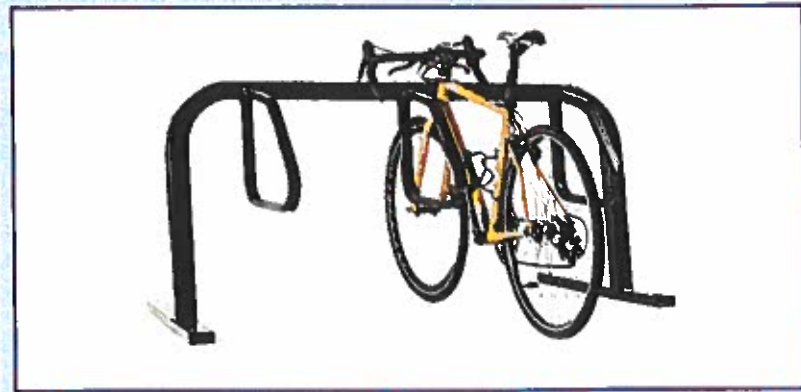
Inverted-U Style Racks



Post Hitch 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.

GREEN=FUNDED/RED=NOT FUNDED/PURPLE=OTHER FUNDING SOURCE(S)/Blue=added after Jan. 2021 meeting

Park/Project	Priority	#	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Zero turn mower replace <i>Done</i>		1	#								
Replace infield drag <i>** (engine only) Engine</i>		2	#								
Smith Center Flooring & office improvements <i>Done</i>		1	#								
Replace dock at Ott's <i>No</i>		2	#								
Tree Planting <i>Done/Yes</i>		2	#								
Smith Center interior LED lights (non arena) <i>No</i>		1	#								
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		2	#								
Park 1-ton dump truck replacement <i>Done</i>		2	#								
Replace large field mower <i>Future</i>		2	#								
Re-pave Lion's Park Parking lot <i>*crack seal only No</i>		2	#	not done							
Re-pave Kitchenette Park Parking lot <i>*crack seal No</i>		2	#	not done							
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		1		\$150,000?							
Construct trail from Prairie Trails to RBT <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$100,000	\$50,000						
City Forest main road & parking lot reconstruct <i>No</i>		2		\$75,000							
Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing & replace riverside dock <i>No</i>		1		\$30,000							
Replace water supply line to Kitchenette Restrooms <i>Done</i>		2		\$20,000							
Concrete aprons around Park Shelters <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$12,000							
Zero Turn mower <i>Done</i>		2		\$15,000							
Pit Toilets at City Forest <i>Done</i>		1		\$25,000							
Construct open air shelter at City Forest <i>No</i>		2		\$45,000							
Granite for topdressing existing trails <i>No</i>		2		\$10,000							
Rain gutters over Smith Center entrances <i>Done</i>		2		\$20,000							
				2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		1		\$150,000							
Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing & replace riverside dock <i>No</i>				\$35,000							
Construct open air shelter at City Forest <i>No</i>		2		\$40,000							
Granite for topdressing existing trails <i>No</i>		2		\$15,000							
Sander/Plow Blade/tommy lift <i>In Progress</i>		1		\$20,000							
Purchase 70 acres adjacent to City Forest <i>In Progress</i>		1		\$140,000							
Pit toilets at Prairie Trails <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$20,000							

Park/Project	Priority	#	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Zero turn mower replace <i>Done</i>		1	#								
Replace infield drag <i>** (engine only) Engine</i>		2	#								
Smith Center Flooring & office improvements <i>Done</i>		1	#								
Replace dock at Ott's <i>No</i>		2	#								
Tree Planting <i>Done/Yes</i>		2	#								
Smith Center interior LED lights (non arena) <i>No</i>		1	#								
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		2	#								
Park 1-ton dump truck replacement <i>Done</i>		2	#								
Replace large field mower <i>Future</i>		2	#								
Re-pave Lion's Park Parking lot <i>*crack seal only No</i>		2	#	not done							
Re-pave Kitchenette Park Parking lot <i>*crack seal No</i>		2	#	not done							
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		1		\$150,000?							
Construct trail from Prairie Trails to RBT <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$100,000	\$50,000						
City Forest main road & parking lot reconstruct <i>No</i>		2		\$75,000							
Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing & replace riverside dock <i>No</i>		1		\$30,000							
Replace water supply line to Kitchenette Restrooms <i>Done</i>		2		\$20,000							
Concrete aprons around Park Shelters <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$12,000							
Zero Turn mower <i>Done</i>		2		\$15,000							
Pit Toilets at City Forest <i>Done</i>		1		\$25,000							
Construct open air shelter at City Forest <i>No</i>		2		\$45,000							
Granite for topdressing existing trails <i>No</i>		2		\$10,000							
Rain gutters over Smith Center entrances <i>Done</i>		2		\$20,000							
				2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Solar panel installation - Smith Center <i>No</i>		1		\$150,000							
Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing & replace riverside dock <i>No</i>				\$35,000							
Construct open air shelter at City Forest <i>No</i>		2		\$40,000							
Granite for topdressing existing trails <i>No</i>		2		\$15,000							
Sander/Plow Blade/tommy lift <i>In Progress</i>		1		\$20,000							
Purchase 70 acres adjacent to City Forest <i>In Progress</i>		1		\$140,000							
Pit toilets at Prairie Trails <i>In Progress</i>		2		\$20,000							

Replace/repave parking lots (Kitch/Lions/Riverside) <i>No</i>	1		\$100,000							
5 year Outdoor Recreation Plan <i>In Progress</i>	1		\$10,000							
Re-do basketball courts at Streeter Square <i>No</i>	2		\$35,000							
Replace mulch @ Kitchenette/MARC Playgrounds <i>In Progress</i>	2		\$40,000							
				2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
MARC ballfield improvements	2		\$15,000							
Solar panel installation - Smith Center	1		\$150,000							
Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing & replace riverside dock			\$35,000							
Construct open air shelter at City Forest	2		\$40,000							
Re-do basketball courts at Streeter Square	2		\$35,000							
Replace/repave parking lots (Kitch/Lions/Riverside)	1		\$100,000							
Stange Park playground resurface & border	2		\$40,000							
Smith Center HVAC (replace chiller system)	1		\$175,000							
Lions Park eliminate stairs-construct path	2		\$45,000							
MARC Parking lot sealing	1		\$35,000							
Ott's Park re-fence ballfield	2		\$40,000							
Replace existing park lights with LED (self owned)	3		\$75,000							
Water lateral to dog park	3		\$10,000							
Ott's Park tennis court fe-fencing	2		\$20,000							
					2024					
Replace Park 1/2 ton pickup truck	2				\$40,000					
Replace large field mower	1				\$115,000					
Construct Skate Park at M.A.R.C.	1				Fundraise					
Lights on MARC varsity softball field	3				\$175,000					
Disc Golf course at MARC	2				\$25,000					
Replace Athletic Park safety netting	1				\$25,000					
Replace UTV	2				\$25,000					
Replace park entrance signs	3				\$35,000					
Install trail lights along MARC Trail	3				\$50,000					
						2025				
Replace 1/2 ton pick up (flower water)	2					\$30,000				
Park 1-ton dump truck replacement	2					\$60,000				
Riverside Park playground resurfacing	2					\$35,000				

[illegible]

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

210 McClellan Street, Suite 210, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403
Telephone: 715-849-5510 Fax: 715-849-5110
Web Page: www.ncwrpc.org Email: staff@ncwrpc.org



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

MEMORANDUM:

To: Merrill Park & Recreation Commission
From: Fred Heider, AICP
Re: Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) – Plan Introduction
Date: For February 2022

Please review the enclosed documents. I will be at the February meeting of the Park & Recreation Commission to:

- Overview the ORP creation process; and
- Discuss questions for the citywide survey.

Enclosed are some documents for your review:

1. "Outdoor Recreation Plan Description & Planning Process;"
2. "SCORP identified Outdoor Rec Needs" and
3. "Merrill_2022-DRAFT-survey-questions."

Merrill ORP website is available here:

<https://www.ncwrpc.org/lincoln/merrill/orp/>



Outdoor Recreation Plan Description & Planning Process

Outdoor Recreation Plans (ORPs), also called: **comprehensive outdoor recreation plans – CORPs**) are 5-year plans created for counties, cities, villages, or towns to coordinate local efforts for building outdoor recreation facilities, and to establish DNR eligibility to apply for nature based capital improvement grants. Maintenance activities are sometimes included in ORPs to assist with local budgeting, but are not capable of receiving grants.

Submission of an adopted ORP to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources establishes eligibility for each local government unit that adopts it by resolution to apply for a variety of Federal and State Aids. This requirement can be found in Chapter NR 50, Wisconsin administrative code for the following programs: Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF), Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP), Urban Green Space Program (UGS), and Urban Rivers Grant Program (URGP).

The Merrill ORP process:

1. An overall description of the City's demographics. **(Winter 2021-2022)**
2. An assessment of the existing recreation system. **(Winter 2021-2022)**
 - NCWRPC updates assessment & requests assistance from County staff.
3. Outdoor recreation needs established based upon public input. **(Winter/Spring 2022)**
 - Parks & Recreation Commission decides how to gather public input with NCWRPC staff consultation.

Possible ways to receive public input:

 1. Informal survey of staff observations;
 2. Survey the broad public and outdoor recreation groups;
 3. Public meetings.
4. Park & Recreation Commission creates goals and objectives based upon public input to be used as guidelines in formulating the outdoor recreation plan projects.
(Late Spring 2022)
 - Committee creates goals & objectives (facilitated by NCWRPC).
5. Create recommendations for improving the recreation system over the next five years.
 - NCWRPC & Merrill staff create initial project list. **(Summer 2022)**
 - Park & Recreation Commission revises and approves project list.
6. Park & Recreation Commission approves plan for City Council adoption by resolution.

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

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

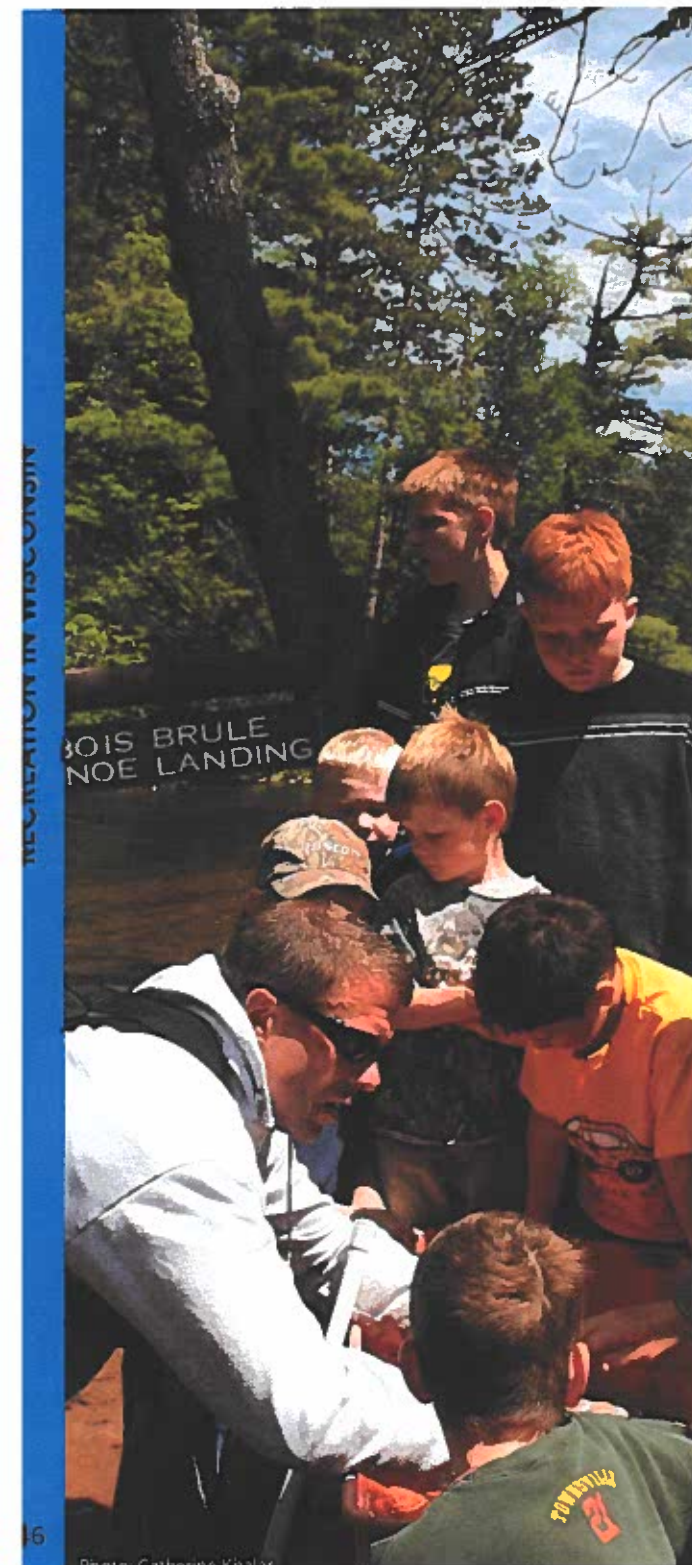
By nearly every measure, the largest need throughout the state is for more trails that enable people to experience natural settings, visit the vibrant downtowns of our cities and villages, commute to work, and access favorite sites. All types of trails are in demand – hiking, bicycling, horseback riding,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

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.

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.

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



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

Help plan outdoor recreation in the City of Merrill!

Merrill is updating the City's Outdoor Recreation Plan, which sets the City's recreational direction for the next 5 years.

Last day to fill out the following survey is **March 27, 2022.**

Survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

* 1. Which recreational activities did you participate in during 2021?

(Choose all that apply.)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ☐ Events / Festivals / Fairs | ☐ Camping (RV) | ☐ Dog walking / Dog park |
| ☐ Boating | ☐ Camping (primitive) | ☐ Cross Country Skiing / Snowshoeing |
| ☐ Water skiing | ☐ Hunting | ☐ Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding |
| ☐ Canoeing / Kayaking | ☐ Archery / Sport Shooting | ☐ Ice Skating |
| ☐ Swimming | ☐ Fishing | ☐ Sledding |
| ☐ Gardening | ☐ Tennis / Pickleball | ☐ Disc Golf |
| ☐ Picnicking | ☐ Basketball | ☐ Golf |
| ☐ Walking / Hiking | ☐ Volleyball | ☐ Horse Riding |
| ☐ Running | ☐ Soccer | ☐ ATV / UTV / OHM Riding |
| ☐ Playground Usage | ☐ Baseball / Softball / T-ball | ☐ Snowmobiling |
| ☐ Inline Skating | ☐ Bird Watching / Nature Viewing | ☐ Bicycling |
| ☐ Skateboarding | ☐ Geocaching / Letterboxing | |
| ☐ Camping (tent or pop-up camper) | ☐ Driving for Pleasure | |

Other (please specify)

2. What potential outdoor recreational opportunities should be developed in the **City of Merrill**?

1.

2.

3.



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

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

	I don't use this park/trail	Occasionally	Monthly	Weekly
Normal Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ott's Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Riverside Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Streeter Square Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lion's Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stange Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kitchenette Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC ballfields	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC dog park	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC trails	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bierman Family Aquatic Center	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cenotaph Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Athletic Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gerbert Park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prairie Trails	☐	☐	☐	☐
River Bend Trail	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Merrill Festival Grounds	☐	☐	☐	☐
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Council Grounds State Park	☐	☐	☐	☐

*** 4. Please rate your satisfaction with the following parks or trails:**

	I don't use this park/trail	Very Satisfied	Good	Fair	Poor
Normal Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ott's Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Riverside Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Streeter Square Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lion's Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stange Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kitchenette Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC ballfields	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC dog park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARC trails	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bierman Family Aquatic Center	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cenotaph Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Athletic Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gerbert Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prairie Trails	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
River Bend Trail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jack Pine County Park (next to Annex building)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Merrill Festival Grounds	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Merrill Memorial Forest (on CTH R northeast of Merrill)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Council Grounds State Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

* 6. What type of **water enthusiast** are you?

(Choose one.)

- ☐ **Not at all.** *(I'm not interested in water recreation at all, not even with friends.)* **[SKIP to non-water questions.]**
- ☐ **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.)*



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

7. How do you use the water?

(Choose all that apply.)

- ☐ Canoe / Kayak / Row boat
- ☐ Boating / water sport (motorized)
- ☐ Swimming
- ☐ Fishing (shore use)
- ☐ Fishing (row boat or motor boat)
- ☐ Aesthetically (shore use, walking or sitting along the water)
- ☐ Ice fishing
- ☐ Snowmobiling / ATVing on the ice

Other (please specify)

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



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

* 9. What type of **bicyclist** are you?

(Choose one.)

- ☐ **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.)

* 10. What type of **snowmobile** enthusiast are you?

(Choose one.)

- ☐ **Not at all.** (I'm not interested in snowmobiling at all, not even with friends.)
- ☐ **Casual user.** (I like to snowmobile for fun, but **only** do so occasionally, **OR only** on my own land.)
- ☐ **Enthusiastic.**
(I access or go on snowmobile routes regularly.)
- ☐ **Avid.** (I am always on a snowmobile every chance I get - all winter long.)

* 11. What type of **motorized vehicle** (ATV / UTV / Off-Highway Motorcycle) enthusiast are you?

(Choose one.)

- ☐ **Not at all.** (I'm not interested in motorized recreation at all, not even with friends.)
- ☐ **Casual user.** (I like to use 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.)



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

Use the picture to answer the following question.



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.



*** 12. 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."

Don't agree

Strongly agree

No opinion.

A horizontal bar with a light gray background. It contains five white stars of equal size, spaced evenly across the bar. To the right of the stars is a small white circle, also of the same size as the stars. This bar likely represents a rating scale where the stars indicate the level of agreement and the circle indicates the level of opinion.



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

* 13. Continue disc golf initiative.

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

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

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

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

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

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

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

* 17. Install toilets near MARC baseball field.

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

* 18. Add lights to varsity softball field at the MARC.

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

* 19. Explore installing sculptures, carvings, or murals throughout City.

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.

Five stars and a radio button for "No opinion." The radio button is selected.

* 20. Work on establishing River Bend Trail as a state trail.

Low priority.

High priority.

No opinion.





City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

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."

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

(Choose one.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

22. (Optional) Comment on the above vision statement:



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

Demographics

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

Demographic information will be used by Merrill's Park and Recreation Commission to compile a picture of respondents and will NOT be used to identify you in any way. Respondents will be kept anonymous.

24. What is your age?

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 25 to 40
- ☐ 41 to 56
- ☐ 57 to 75
- ☐ Greater than 75

25. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

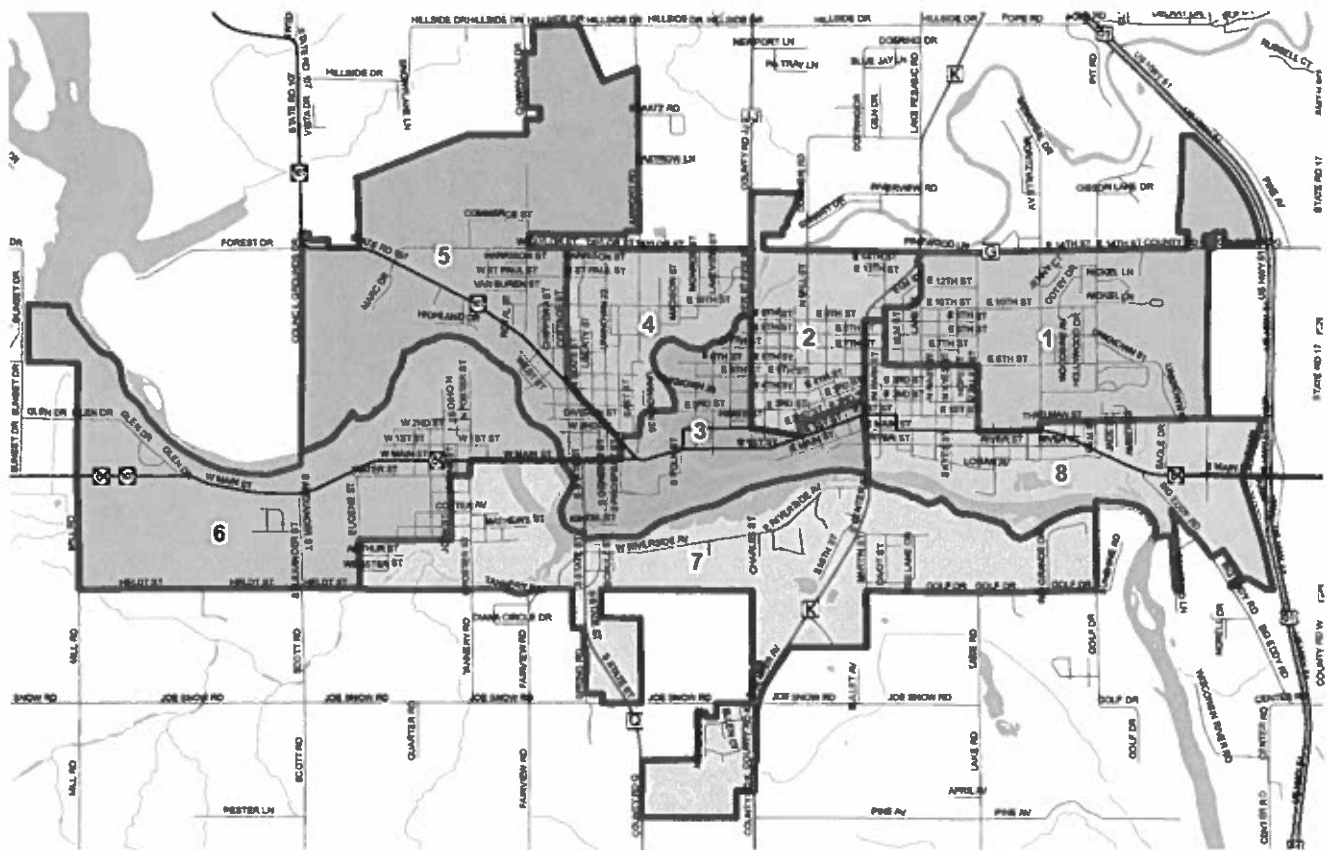
* 26. Do you live in the City of Merrill?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes



City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Survey, 2022

* 27. Please list the number from the map below in the zone where you live:





February 2022 Parks & Recreation Director's Report

Parks: Well we are several months into our winter season and things have been going pretty good overall. It has been absolutely wonderful to have our third guy for snow removal, ice rink building and maintenance, and all of our winter tasks. Thanks to favorable weather conditions we were able to get our ice rinks up and operational by Christmas this year and we have been seeing really good usage at all of them thus far in the season. As always, we will see how much more time we can get out of them from here on out because that sun angle on 25+ degree days will start to do some work on them. The crew has been working in the shop on picnic table repairs and other projects on the days we are not removing snow and getting things ready for the spring/summer season when it arrives. As with most years, spring will be here before we know it and we don't have any time at all to do these things once that happens so we need to be as prepared as we can be. We did have some trees and branches down after the freak windstorm in December, but overall we were fairly lucky to only have a few down and didn't have any damage to facilities or amenities (besides a powerline in Stange – but that was WPS's responsibility). I began the process of working on all of our approved capital items for this year already and have most things taken care of. Our 5-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan is in the works and will begin the process at the meeting. I have been working with our City Attorney on the purchase of the Sumnitch Land (which I still haven't heard back from the State yet on Tourism Grant results). We ordered a sand/salt spreader for our small John Deere sidewalk snow remover, and plow blade for big tractor. I ordered all of the rubber mulch for the Kitchenette and MARC playgrounds, and it will arrive in 2,000 pound bags in June when we have help. I ordered the pit toilet for Prairie Trails that will arrive in September. And I already met with our City Engineer to get things moving on our connector trail from Prairie Trails to the River Bend Trail. I have also been working with the Street Department to try and get a few things done that we ran out of time on last year (concrete aprons for our park shelters, removal of the old tennis court by the skate park), and I spoke with the mason who was doing the tuck pointing at Athletic Park to return and finish that project that was supposed to be finished last year. They are going to return in April supposedly to finish things up. We have a very busy year ahead of us to say the least but it is always great to continuously improve our parks and amenities for the community, and we are always ready to meet whatever challenges we face. I also met with the organizer of the Black Squirrel Scurry triathlon to get plans in motion for his event again this year. The Badger State Games Fat Tire Bike Race is returning to the City Forest on February 19th and we are very excited to host it once again this year and bring people into our community. I have been working with both the Baseball and Softball Associations to help prepare for their 2022 tournaments and leagues. The softball tournament is already full with 54 teams coming to town for a full weekend in July and baseball is almost full for their weekend in June. Our CivicRec Online system for reservations and registrations has been off and running now for a month and has been working pretty well for the most part. Early on we had some glitches that we had to work out but I think for the most part, people are finding it very convenient and appreciate it. We

have had to spend some time guiding some people through it and have had some people come in initially to reserve in person but that is alright and expected. I believe that as time goes by, this is a huge win for us and for our citizens by going online. Lastly, we are potentially going to have some challenges for seasonal staffing this year. We started very early reaching out to our seasonals from last year to see who is returning and as with every year, some are and some aren't. Our biggest challenge is going to be the Aquatic Center. We are already down quite a few lifeguards from our responses we received back thus far and we can't open the pool if we don't have enough. We are setting up a booth on Jan. 28th at the Chamber Job Fair in hopes to attract some workers and have been and will continue to recruit as hard as we can for the next 3-4 months to hopefully attract what we need to in order to function. We are not the only ones in this situation and unfortunately, I believe this is how things are going to be heading into the future.

Forestry: I was able to finish our 2021 Urban Forestry Grant reimbursement before the end of the year and just received the check so we're all good there. I also finished and submitted our 2021 Tree City USA application on time and as always we exceeded our qualifications for another year of Tree City USA. I applied for a tree grant from Canadian National and was unsuccessful (competition for that grant has grown exponentially over the years) but I will keep applying though because it is a great opportunity if/when we get another one. I attended our Urban Foresters Networking meeting in December and had an opportunity to meet our new Urban Forestry Coordinator for our region, Patricia Lindquist, who has officially taken over after the retirement of long-time Coordinator Don Kissinger. I'm looking forward to working with her and I think she will do a great job for all of us. From this point forward, I really start hoping that we can simply see average weather conditions for tree health. February, March, and early April are always a bit dicey in this region for weather and tree health. So here's to hoping for gradual warming and snow melt for water retention and nutrient uptake. As the snowbanks begin to recede, I will start getting out to inspect trees for spring pruning's and removals.

Recreation: We've started laying out and prepping for our 2022 spring & summer recreation seasons. Some of these programs are already on our online registration program but we'll finish planning and get the remainder of them ready for print so we can get them into people's hands early this spring. Our Little Dribblers basketball program that got underway in early January has been going very well. Our numbers were decent (it would always be nice to have more but these are not typical times we are dealing with) and those who are participating are having a great time. At the very least, it is great to see a good number of people venture out and participate in programs; hopefully our current situation changes and people have enough confidence to get out and be a part of things again. I feel very strongly that families need to be active and be involved in things for physical and mental health. That is where our department comes in; we will continue to offer as much as we can so we are there for those who want to participate. We will simply adjust accordingly for participation levels in each program that we offer during all seasons.

Smith Center: Always amazes me how fast our ice season goes by. We have about a month and a half remaining on our current season and things have been going pretty good to date. Our ice times have been about average for the most part and we have remained very busy for public skate times, including our afternoon skates and several adult hockey times. These are good trends to see and hopefully trends that we can continue into the future. We even hosted a few other cities for a neutral site varsity hockey game. The East-Merrill United hockey tournament was held a few weeks ago and was very successful drawing people from well outside of our area for the entire weekend. We will be hosting the Ice Reflections Figure Skating Show on February 12-13th in the Smith Center again this year and are looking forward to a great crowd for that weekend. We have also been seeing the return of class fieldtrips out

to the Smith Center to skate which is always great to get some of those kids who have never had the opportunity to skate be able to try it for the first time. Hopefully they enjoy it and make it something that they continue to do in the future. Things have been running fairly smooth as well, we did have to replace a fan motor in our Community Room heater but otherwise everything else has been pretty good. We are planning to turn the floor off and begin removing ice around March 12th. That gives us a few weeks to get everything out and cleaned up and ready for dry floor season. We are off to a strong start on dry floor events and rentals already for 2022 season and hopefully we recruit even more events over the next several months. One of the nice things about the Smith Center is that we have so much more that we can do with our facility than any other facilities in our area. And we are seeing people come to us more now because of that.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Wendorf
Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill