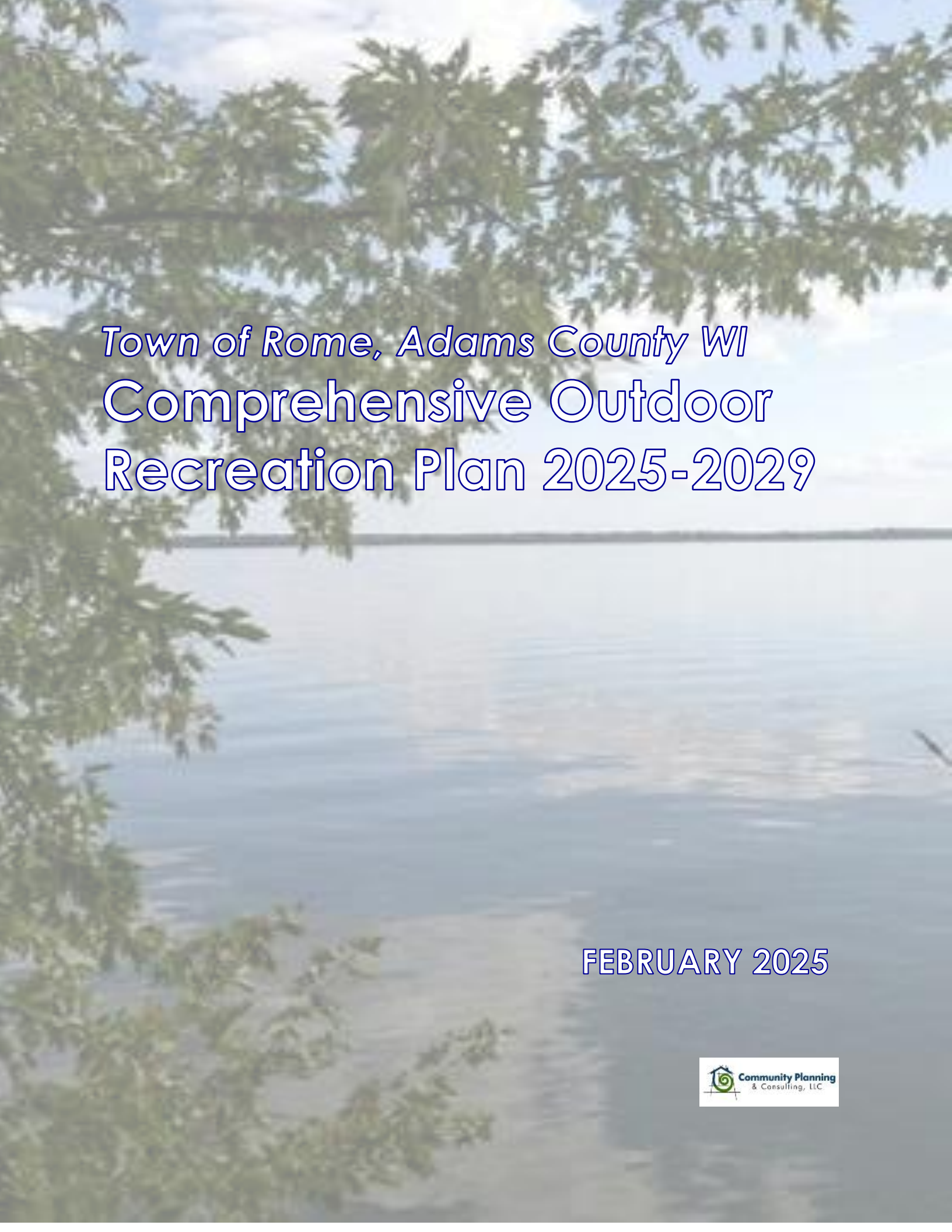




Town of Rome, Adams County WI **Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2025-2029**

FEBRUARY 2025

Community Planning & Consulting, LLC
Appleton, Wisconsin
www.communityplanningandconsulting.com



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TOWN BOARD

Lori J. Djumadi, Chair
Cheryl Evenson
Thomas Gabriel
Jacki Koll
Dan Minter

*Bob Baurhyte, Former Supervisor
Bill Kappel, Former Supervisor*

PARKS and RECREATION COMMITTEE

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Sue Krueger,
Jill Reese,
Cheryl Evenson

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Brad Martinson, Director of Public Works
Taylor Owczynsky, Administrative Assistant Support Specialist

*Melissa Rhodes, Former Clerk / Treasurer
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TOWN BOARD ADOPTION RESOLUTION WILL BE INSERTED HERE



Our Vision

*To forge a prosperous and resilient future
for Rome*

Our Mission

*To support the needs of a vibrant,
growing community*

Our Commitment

*To provide a high-quality system of safe and
accessible parks and recreation facilities
for everyone*

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



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ONE: INTRODUCTION

ROME



Image courtesy Travel Wisconsin.

The Town of Rome is located in central Wisconsin along the eastern bank of the Wisconsin River. With a 2020 population of 3,025 it is the most populous municipality in Adams County. Adjoining communities include the Towns of Big Flats, Colburn, Grant (Portage County), Leola, Monroe, and Saratoga (Wood County). The City of Wisconsin Rapids lies less than 10 miles north on State Highway (STH) 13. Nearby cities include Mauston, Nekoosa, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Dells.

The Town's founders, and those of Adams County, were 'Yankee Settlers' from upstate New York, descended from the English Separatists who settled New England in the 1600s. They were part of a wave of New England farmers who headed west into what was then the wilds of the Northwest Territory during the early 1800s. Most of them arrived as a result of the completion of the Erie Canal and the end of the Black Hawk War. They reached what is now Adams County by sailing up the Wisconsin River from the Mississippi River on small barges which they constructed themselves out of materials obtained from the surrounding woodlands.¹

Established in 1857, the Town of Rome lies at the geographic center of the state, approximately 100 miles north of Madison and 40 miles southwest of Stevens Point. Settlers were drawn to the area by rich agricultural fields, abundant forests, and convenient access to waterways. During the mid-1800s, the Wisconsin River was a highway for the burgeoning logging industry.² At 420 miles in length, it is the state's longest inland waterway, and among the most scenic. The Wisconsin River forms the township's western boundary. Petenwell Lake was formed in the 1940s following construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Wisconsin River near Necedah. The 23,173-acre lake is the second largest in Wisconsin after Lake Winnebago. Lakes Arrowhead, Camelot, and Sherwood were created from impoundments along Fourteen Mile Creek.

¹ Sources: 'The Yankee Exodus: An Account of Migration from New England' by Stewart Hall Holbrook University of Washington Press, 1968; and, 'American Zion: The Old Testament as a Political Text from the Revolution to the Civil War' by Eran Shalev, Yale University Press, Mar 26, 2013 ISBN 9780300186925 page 70-71

² Source: Rome at a Glance.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



The Town last adopted an outdoor recreation plan in December 2018. This document represents an update of the 2018 plan.

COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (CORP) describes current parks, recreation, and open space assets, and presents a strategy for meeting future needs. Its purpose is to guide land acquisition, development, and maintenance activities by identifying the general location, character, and extent of existing and desired parks, trails, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, playgrounds, and special recreation areas. Wisconsin Chapter NR 50, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) establishes procedures for the development of a CORP. The adoption of a CORP is a prerequisite for participation in the state's outdoor recreation grant programs and a required component of federal applications for parks and recreation grant funding. Once adopted, a CORP must be updated every five years.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our neighborhoods, and make our communities more attractive places to live. Studies have shown a link between the built environment and the physical, social, and economic health of a community. Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has been building vehicle-dependent environments that foster obesity, poor health, social isolation, and high infrastructure costs. Planning for parks and recreation facilities can promote active lifestyles, build healthy communities, and lower health care and transportation costs.

Access to outdoor recreation provides a variety of benefits and has proven to be an important component of connected vibrant communities. This is especially relevant for urbanizing areas, as increased development often leads to reduced access to recreational and open space. The benefits provided by access to parks, recreation, and open space include:³

- ❖ **Mental.** Outdoor recreation has psychological benefits, including the prevention or reduction of stress; improved self-esteem, confidence, and creativity; spiritual growth; and an increased sense of exhilaration, adventure, and challenge from life.
- ❖ **Physical.** Getting outside provides physical benefits, such as aerobic, cardiovascular, and muscular fitness, as well as improved functioning of the immune system.
- ❖ **Social.** The great outdoors affords social benefits like bonding with like-minded people who enjoy outdoor activities and feeling an increased pride in your community and nation.
- ❖ **Economic.** People who regularly participate in outdoor recreation tend to be more productive at work. Outdoor recreation creates job opportunities for others, which leads to economic growth. And the preservation of the natural areas needed for outdoor recreation increases property values.

³ Excerpted from: *The Life Habit: Building Blocks of Life*, 2017.



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- ❖ Environmental. Outdoor recreation provides environmental benefits, including increased environmental awareness. Concern that results from outdoor recreation can lead to increased involvement in environmental issues.

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN WISCONSIN

Outdoor recreation influences many aspects of our lives and the larger communities in which we live. For example, people that participate in outdoor recreation, especially from an early age, tend to have stronger connections to nature and conservation ethics. In turn, these connections often lead to stronger support for the protection of natural resources. Thus, participation in nature-based activities is likely to be increasingly important in the public's level of support for protecting air and water quality, open spaces, and wildlife.

Wisconsinites have historically participated in outdoor recreation at higher rates than the national average. This is likely largely attributable to our abundant natural resource base, the quantity and quality of public lands and waters, and cultural traditions that value the outdoors. It is estimated that more than 95% of state residents participated in some form of outdoor recreation in the past year.



Wisconsin Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Image courtesy Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and National Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund.

Future participation levels will be affected by the size of our population and the rates at which residents engage in different activities. The state's population is projected to grow by about 700,000 additional residents by 2040 and as a result most activities will see increases in the number of participants, even if participation rates for many activities decline as our population ages.

Newer forms of recreation provide users with more options for enjoying the outdoors, and in some cases supplement users' recreational experiences. For example, fat-tire bikes can extend biking opportunities into the winter months, kayaking can be another way to fish small streams, UTVs can be a way for groups to get to a favorite hunting spot, and drones can be a new way to photograph nature. As battery technology continues to improve, it is possible that many applications will affect outdoor recreation in the future.⁴

⁴ Source: Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2019-2023, WDNR, March 2019.

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Activities with the largest increases in participation over the last five years at county parks, forests, and trails in Wisconsin include:

- ❖ Bicycling – winter/fat-tire biking
- ❖ Camping – RV/pop-up
- ❖ Bicycling – mountain biking
- ❖ Riding ATV/UTVs
- ❖ Canoeing/kayaking
- ❖ Bicycling – recreational/rail-trail biking
- ❖ Picnic areas/day use/beaches
- ❖ Paddle boarding
- ❖ Dog walking on trails
- ❖ Hiking/walking/running on trails
- ❖ Fishing



TWO: PLANNING CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes recent planning activities which provide a foundation for and understanding of the process of CORP development.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANNING IN ROME

The Town of Rome's most recent outdoor recreation plan, adopted in December 2018, established the following goals for parks and outdoor recreation facilities:

- ❖ Build a healthier, happier, more vibrant community
- ❖ Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities
- ❖ Ensure that parks, recreation facilities, and other public spaces provide access for all residents
- ❖ Ensure that new development projects include adequate park and recreation facilities
- ❖ Develop a year-round park and recreation system embraced by the community
- ❖ Continually evaluate outdoor recreation levels of service

Outdoor recreation recommendations included adding new facilities to Rome Town Center Park and Walden Park, pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the community, partnerships with Adams County and adjoining municipalities, and the establishment of protected greenways, among numerous others.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Implementation of 2018 CORP

The Town of Rome is committed to the implementation of the community's outdoor recreation goals. Since its adoption in 2018, the following actions have been completed in furtherance of the current outdoor recreation plan recommendations:

Parks & Recreation (general)

- ❖ 2019 Removed pine trees and graded the Great Lawn area
- ❖ 2020 Installed well and electric in Rome Town Center Park
- ❖ 2021 Installed sprinkler system and seeded grass for Rome Town Center Great Lawn
- ❖ 2023 Constructed Bandshell/Pavilion w/ seasonal restrooms, food service and fireplace in Rome Town Center
- ❖ 2023 Installed Outdoor Musical Notes donated by Hometown Rome Players
- ❖ 2023 Installed ADA Compliant kayak launch at Walden Park
- ❖ 2023 Developed 20-year lease agreement w/Nekoosa School District for use of 40-acre Chester School Forest site for disc golf park; started initial planning
- ❖ 2024 Received WDNR grant for installation of shoreland protection plants, sand point well, and electric at Walden Park kayak launch area
- ❖ 2024 Received Vibrant Spaces grant; used for the addition of trees and various amenities for completion of Bandshell project and signage

Adams County Park

- ❖ 2022 New Playground Equipment at 15th Avenue Dam

Dyracuse Off-Road Park

- ❖ 2021 0.46-mile Multi-use Challenge Course added

Lake Arrowhead Property Owners

- ❖ 2022 Added six new Pickleball Courts to Chalet area
- ❖ 2022 Improvements for Clubhouse outdoor pool area include new Snack Shack building
- ❖ 2022 Two new tennis courts at Clubhouse

Lake Camelot Property Owners

- ❖ 2019 New Outdoor Pavilion at Lodge
- ❖ 2022 New Playground at Lodge

Sand Valley

- ❖ Ridge Trail
- ❖ Songbird Trail
- ❖ Karner Connection
- ❖ Blazing Star Trail

Visit Rome

- ❖ 2022 Engineering completed and TAP grant submitted for Link the Lakes Trail and tunnel under STH 13



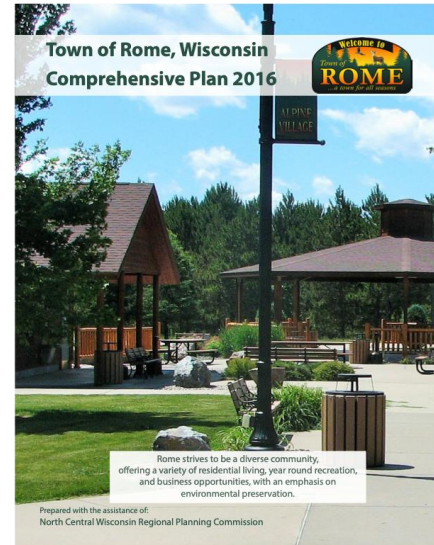
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LAND USE PLANNING IN ROME

The Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan was prepared with the assistance of North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) and adopted by the Town Board in May 2014. Beyond the general land use recommendations typical of such a document, the plan identifies several goals and objectives related to natural resources, parks, and recreation. These include:

Goal: Preserve and enhance the natural resources that make the Town of Rome a desirable place to live, visit, and do business, while encouraging development in suitable areas.

- ❖ Utilize open space, parks, drainage ways, creeks, and natural topography to define and connect neighborhoods.
- ❖ Work with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Adams County, and Tri-Lakes Management District on identifying future options and locations for public access to the Town's surface water resources.
- ❖ Preserve and protect open space corridors, forested lands, wetlands, groundwater, and other natural resources within the Town.
- ❖ Protect and maintain high water quality standards within the Town, especially around the Tri-lakes area.
- ❖ Promote the Town's thousands of acres of public and private forest lands that are available to the public for outdoor recreational activities, such as hunting, fishing, hiking, etc.
- ❖ Strive to protect and enhance habitats for birds throughout the Town.



Goal: Enhance and develop year-round recreational opportunities in the Town.

- ❖ Provide sufficient facilities to meet the outdoor recreation needs of residents and visitors, while minimizing user conflicts.
- ❖ Maximize the opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the natural resources within the Town through development and/or maintenance of parks, trails, and wildlife areas.
- ❖ Encourage development of a regional trail system that includes facilities for hikers, bikers, ATVs, snowmobiles, as well as the disabled and elderly.
- ❖ Consider the development of a Town level Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that tie together attractions, parks, and other natural and cultural resources.
- ❖ Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Adams County, and local motorized and non-motorized recreational groups to develop a multi-use recreation trail along the Highway 13 corridor between Apache Avenue and Alpine Drive.
- ❖ Ensure public access to the Town's surface water resources continues in the future.



ADAMS COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Adams County and North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) are in the process of developing the Adams County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028. The draft document is available for review from NCWRPC. As per the NCWRPC website, the primary purpose of the plan is to provide continued direction toward meeting the current and future recreation needs of the county. This will be accomplished through an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, and the establishment of recommendations to meet identified needs.



THREE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This document is an update of the Town of Rome 2018 CORP. The key engagement tool in the development of 2018 planning process was a Visual Preference Survey. The primary engagement activity in 2023 was the distribution of an 18-question Park & Recreation Survey. Each of these efforts are summarized below.

2018 VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

On June 20, 2018, the Town of Rome hosted a Visual Preference Survey (VPS) to gather additional information related to outdoor recreation. A VPS is a planning tool that allows participants to assign ratings to various park and recreational facilities and concepts. Those in attendance were shown a series of 90 digital images representing general design alternatives and development options for consideration within the CORP document. Images were projected for roughly 15 seconds during which participants rated each on a scale of +3 (strongly favorable) to -3 (strongly unfavorable).

Table 1 below presents the 10 highest rated images from the 2018 VPS. For a complete list of all VPS ratings, please refer to the 2018 CORP.

Table 1: Ten Highest Rated VPS Images

Rank	Rating	Image
1	2.68	

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2	2.63	
3†	2.58	
3†	2.58	
5†	2.53	

5†	2.53	 65
7†	2.47	 2
7†	2.47	 78
9†	2.37	 37

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9†	2.37	
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2023 PARK AND RECREATION SURVEY

In July 2023 the Town of Rome CORP update process commenced with the Town of Rome Park and Recreation Survey. The purpose of the survey was to seek input from residents, property owners, and business owners regarding current and potential future recreation facilities including walking and biking trails, community gathering places, and multi-season outdoor activities, among others.

One hundred and fifty-seven individuals completed the survey, the results of which are presented below and on the following pages.

In general, how satisfied are you with the current availability of parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities in the Town?

Very Satisfied or Satisfied
77.8%

Unsatisfied or Very Unsatisfied
20.9%

No Opinion
1.3%

How often do you, personally, visit a Town park, trail, or outdoor recreation facility?

Daily

4.5%

Weekly

33.3%

Once or twice per
month

35.3%

A few times each
year

19.9%

Rarely or never

17.1%

How close is the nearest Town park, trail, or outdoor recreation facility to you?

Within walking or biking
distance
23.7%

Biking, but not walking
distance
25.6%

Driving distance
23.7%

I don't know
3.2%



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Which of the following parks, trails, or outdoor recreation facilities in or near the Town of Rome have you visited during the past year? (check all that apply)

81.9%	Rome Farmers' Market	14.8%	Castle Rock County Park
50.3%	ATV / UTV Trails	12.9%	Chester Creek Boat Launch
49.0%	Town Center park	11.6%	Lake Camelot Pickleball / Tennis Courts
39.4%	Lake Arrowhead GC	11.0%	Devil's Elbow Boat Launch
37.4%	Splash Pad Park and Playground	11.0%	Walden Park / Kayak Launch
33.5%	Lake Camelot Boat Launch	10.3%	Lake Arrowhead Basketball Court at Chalet
31.6%	Room to Roam Dog Park	8.4%	Fourteen Mile Creek Access
31.6%	Sand Valley GC	7.7%	Lake Arrowhead Tennis Courts
30.3%	Rome Town Center Trail	7.1%	Lake Arrowhead Sports Complex at Campground
29.7%	Lake Arrowhead Pool at Clubhouse	7.1%	Sand Valley Restoration Trust
25.2%	Lake Arrowhead Boat Launch	6.5%	Monroe Park
24.5%	Lake Camelot County Park	5.8%	Twin Lakes Park
23.9%	Chalet Pool	5.2%	Leola Marsh State Wildlife Area
23.2%	Sand Valley Recreational Trail	4.5%	Bentley Hills Hiking Trails
22.6%	Songbird Ridge Trail – Sand Valley	4.5%	Petenwell Lake Carry-in
20.0%	Barnum Bay Boat Launch	3.2%	Riverside Park
20.0%	Lake Sherwood Boat Launch	3.2%	Twin Lakes Bridge Access
19.4%	Dyracuse Recreational Park	1.3%	Alt / Bergen Nature Preserve
15.5%	Lake Arrowhead Pickleball Courts at Chalet	1.3%	Burt Morris Land
15.5%	Snowmobile Trails	1.3%	Chester Outdoor Learning Center / Forest
15.5%	WI Trapshooting Homegrounds		

Which of the following reasons prevent you from using parks, trails, or outdoor recreation facilities in the Town? (check all that apply)

43.3%	Nothing prevents me, I use parks
33.3%	Don't know what is offered or available
12.0%	Too busy
10.0%	Not interested
9.3%	Accessibility
9.3%	Facilities or amenities desired are not offered
6.0%	Safety concerns
3.3%	Use facilities in another community
2.0%	Difficulty finding parking

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Which of the following activities and facilities, if available, would you or someone in your family engage in or utilize in the Town of Rome? (check all that apply)

57.9%	Food trucks in parks	19.1%	Card games
51.3%	Community festivals, events	19.1%	Hunting, trapping
48.7%	ATV / UTV trails	19.1%	Public art, street art, murals
48.0%	Fishing	17.8%	Ice skating
48.0%	Nature trails	17.1%	Flower gardening
42.1%	Outdoor movies, music, performances	17.1%	Picnicking
42.1%	Swimming (indoor pool)	15.8%	Community gardens, food forests
41.4%	Mini golf	14.5%	Shuffleboard
40.1%	Winter tubing hill	13.2%	Foraging (berries, mushrooms, etc.)
36.8%	ATV / UTV winter trails	13.2%	Geocaching
36.2%	Bicycling – on-road	13.2%	Woodworking
35.5%	Boating, sailing	12.5%	All abilities park
35.5%	Paddling (canoe, kayak, paddleboard, etc.)	12.5%	Horseback riding on trails
35.5%	Swimming, outdoor pool	12.5%	Operating RC vehicle or drone
32.2%	Hiking, XC skiing, snowshoeing	12.5%	Tennis courts
30.3%	Bird, wildlife watching	11.8%	Bicycling – BMX
30.3%	Visiting a natural area or nature center	11.2%	Camping
29.6%	Adventure (climbing wall, zip line, etc.)	10.5%	Sand volleyball
29.6%	Pickleball	9.2%	Basketball courts
28.3%	Waterpark	9.2%	Dancing
27.0%	Community center	7.2%	Bicycling – snow and ice
27.0%	Disc golf	7.2%	Running, jogging
27.0%	Wellness programs	4.6%	Skateboarding, skate park
26.3%	Sledding	3.9%	Inline skating
26.3%	Splash pad	2.6%	Board sailing, wind surfing
25.0%	Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, martial arts, etc.	2.0%	Roller hockey
24.3%	Bocce ball, croquet, lawn games	1.3%	Soccer, rugby
23.7%	Nature viewing, photography	0.7%	Lacrosse, field hockey
21.1%	Archery	0.7%	Netball, handball, korfbal
21.1%	Bicycling – off-road		



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Which of the following would you like to see added, expanded, or improved at Town parks? (check all that apply)

54.3%	Sidewalks, paths, trails	23.2%	Grills, picnic tables
45.7	Benches, seating	21.0%	Park maintenance
45.7%	Restrooms	18.1%	Accessibility and barrier-free recreation
39.1%	Natural shady areas	18.1%	Safety and security
31.2%	Waste and recycling receptacles	16.7%	Playground equipment
30.4%	Shelters, pavilions, gazebos	13.8%	Lighting
29.0%	Landscaping, incl: trees, native prairie	11.6%	Educational, interpretive signage
24.6%	Parking improvements		

The Town is in the process of adding a basketball court and pickleball courts to our parks. How supportive are you of adding tennis courts as well?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
47.3%	27.5%	23.1%

The Covid-19 pandemic has made you:

More likely to engage in outdoor recreation	No more or less likely to engage in outdoor recreation	Less likely to engage in outdoor recreation	I don't know
35.3%	60.9%	–	3.8%

How supportive are you of the Town creating new parks and recreation areas?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
82.1%	11.5%	6.4%

How supportive are you of the Town acquiring land to provide public access to natural areas and open space?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
80.6%	11.0%	8.4%

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



How supportive are you of developing 'Link the Lakes', a Town-wide system of interconnected walking and bicycling paths providing access to and from neighborhoods, parks, regional trails, and other key destinations?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
79.5%	17.6%	5.8%

If appropriate facilities, amenities, and opportunities were available, how willing would you be to use Town parks and outdoor recreation areas during winter months?

Very Willing / Willing	Unwilling / Very Unwilling	No Opinion
77.4%	11.0%	11.6%

Where should the Town prioritize future parks and recreation funding?

	High Priority or Priority
Preserving natural resources	86.6%
Developing new paths and trails	68.8%
Upgrading existing facilities	61.1%
Providing indoor recreation facilities	51.0%
Expanding programs and services	50.3%
Developing new parks	46.5%

Compared to other Town priorities, how important do you think it is to develop and maintain parks, trails, open space, recreation facilities, and services?

Very Important / Important	Unimportant / Very Unimportant	No Opinion
87.1%	7.6%	6.4%



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

How supportive are you of the Town partnering with nearby municipalities and Adam County to create new trails and other outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
80.6%	11.0%	8.4%

How supportive are you of the Town partnering with local businesses, organizations, and community groups to create new outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities?

Very Supportive / Supportive	Unsupportive / Very Unsupportive	No Opinion
81.5%	10.8%	7.6%

Table 2: Most Desired Outdoor Recreation Activities

1	Food truck in parks	11	Bicycling – on-road
2	Community festivals, events	12	Boating, sailing
3	ATV / UTV trails	13	Paddling (canoe, kayak, paddleboard)
4	Fishing	14	Swimming – outdoor pool
5	Nature trails	15	Hiking, XC skiing, snowshoeing
6	Outdoor movies, music, performances	16	Bird, wildlife watching
7	Swimming – indoor pool	17	Visiting a natural area or nature center
8	Mini golf	18	Adventure (climbing wall, zip line, etc.)
9	Winter tubing hill	19	Pickleball
10	ATV / UTV winter trails	20	Water park

ENGAGEMENT SESSION

The Town of Rome Parks and Recreation Committee hosted a Community Engagement Session on August 22, 2023, at the Town Hall. The purpose of the session was to inform participants of the CORP process, describe existing parks and recreation assets in the community, and present Town, County, and statewide) demographic and recreation trends, and summarize the results of the park and recreation survey, in preparation for preparing the first draft CORP.



FIRST DRAFT WORKING SESSION

A virtual working session was held with the Parks and Recreation Committee on December 14, 2023. The purpose of the session was to review a rough first draft of the CORP in preparation for its presentation to the public.

FIRST DRAFT PRESENTATION

The first draft of the Town of Rome Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan was presented to the public on November 18, 2024, at Town Hall.



FOUR: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The goals and objectives presented in this section were developed based upon the results of the public engagement efforts described in the previous section of this report, state trends identified in the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2019-23 (SCORP), and recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Committee and Town staff.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Ensure parks, recreation facilities, and other public spaces provide access for all residents

- ❖ Identify underserved groups and engage their representatives in park and recreation facility planning
- ❖ Develop all future parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces to accommodate the special needs of elderly and disabled users, compliant with ADA Title II and Title III.
- ❖ Identify opportunities to update and expand existing facilities and services to increase accessibility.
- ❖ Apply safe design principles to make parks and recreation facilities safer and more user friendly.
- ❖ Bring equity to parks and recreation planning by making facilities available to all user groups.
- ❖ Identify and remove structural and cultural barriers impeding outdoor recreation opportunity.
- ❖ Develop informational piece advising of outdoor recreational opportunities in the town.
 - Provide inventory of sport courts, hiking/biking trails, boat launches, etc.

Build a healthier, happier, more resilient community

- ❖ Expand walking, biking, running opportunities with additional trails, paths, and bikeways.
- ❖ Anticipate the needs of a growing and changing community, and structure programs and facilities accordingly.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for community gathering by allowing mobile food establishments in Town parks.
- ❖ Encourage volunteerism.
- ❖ Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably.
- ❖ Enhance health and wellness through innovative and diversified parks, arts, recreation, and cultural opportunities.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for relaxation, learning and socialization to promote personal growth and wellbeing.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



- ❖ Encourage family participation.
- ❖ Provide quiet outdoor spaces for rest and reflection.

Preserve, enhance, and make accessible natural resources and open spaces

- ❖ Encourage the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas and provide habitat for at risk species.
- ❖ Acquire and preserve important natural areas and open spaces.
- ❖ Focus future acquisition efforts on the development of passive parks and recreation facilities.
- ❖ Incorporate native plants into landscaping and stormwater plans for all outdoor recreation facilities.
- ❖ Work with willing landowners to preserve significant natural resources located on private property through the use of conservation easements or other land preservation tools.

Develop a year-round park and recreation system embraced by the community

- ❖ Identify locations for seasonally specific activities such as tree planting, ice-skating, and cross-country skiing, among others.
- ❖ Utilize the park system to host seasonal festivals, farmers' markets, mobile food establishments, monthly events, and other such gatherings.
- ❖ Provide park and recreation programs for families, kids, seniors, etc.
- ❖ Effectively promote and publicize area recreational programs and events.
- ❖ Work with Adams County and Monroe Prairie ATV Club to identify trails that can be safely used in the winter.

Diversify the transportation system by expanding multi-modal opportunities.

- ❖ Identify opportunities to increase multi-modal connectivity between neighborhoods, existing parks and trails, schools, and other key destination nodes within the Town.
- ❖ Work with Adams County and NCRPC to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities into County highway repair and reconstruction projects.
- ❖ Identify appropriate streets as designated bicycle routes.
- ❖ Utilize wayfinding tools to assist residents and visitors in navigating to and from parks and recreation facilities and other Town destinations.
- ❖ Implement 'Link the Lakes' plan, including park and wayfinding signage

Continually evaluate outdoor recreation levels of service

- ❖ Identify opportunities to build small, mini (pocket) parks in areas underserved by parks and playgrounds.
- ❖ Provide a park system that creates opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy and benefit from recreation facilities, and public open space.
- ❖ Offer a diversity of parks and recreation facilities including pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, natural areas, and conservancies.
- ❖ Ensure that each neighborhood has access to appropriate recreational facilities.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

- ❖ Ensure that future parks and recreation facilities are sited and designed to enhance neighborhood cohesion and provide common areas for neighborhood gatherings.
- ❖ Engage the public in the design and development of future parks and recreation facilities.
- ❖ Update the Rome Town Center Master Park Plan
 - Landscaping
 - Provide additional amenities
- ❖ Provide disc golf course
- ❖ Meet recreational needs with maximum effectiveness and with minimum expense.
- ❖ Work with Adams County, NCWRPC, and nearby communities to identify opportunities for shared facilities and services.
- ❖ Pursue state and federal grants to acquire and develop desired parks and recreation facilities.
- ❖ Pursue public-private partnerships to aid in acquiring, developing, and maintaining parks and outdoor recreation facilities.
- ❖ Consider pursuing revenue generating recreational facilities and events to supplement parks and recreation budget.
- ❖ Update the CORP at least once every five years.



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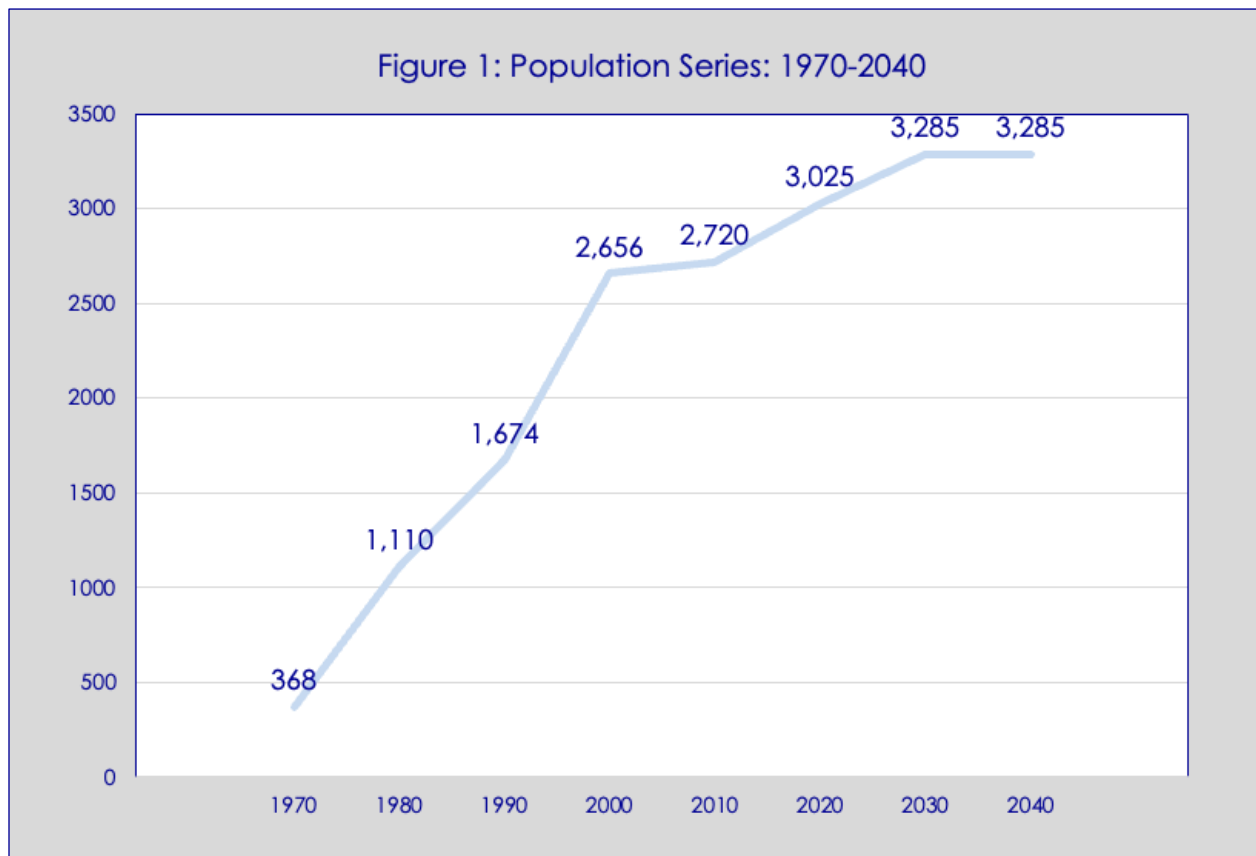


FIVE: COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Community Profile is to describe the Town via the past, present, and future demographic factors which aid in identifying potential outdoor recreation needs.

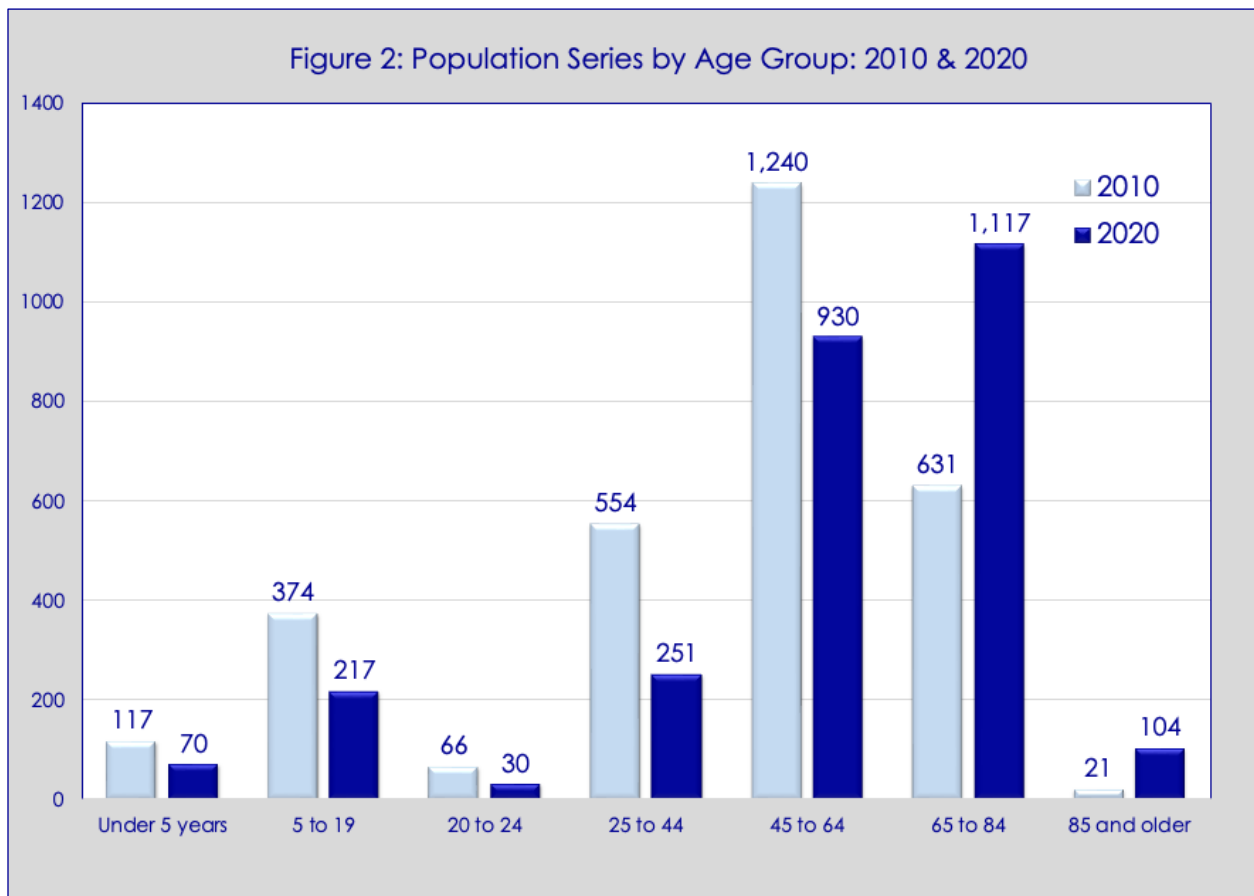
POPULATION PROFILE



The Town of Rome had a population of 3,025 as of the 2020 U.S. Census, representing a 11.2% increase from 2010. Continued growth is projected during the next two decades. Figure 1 shows the actual and projected population for the Town, from 1970 through 2040. Figure 2 compares the population of the Town within select age groups for the years 2010 and 2020. These groups are

important for planning purposes since each represents a differing set of needs with respect to outdoor recreation, transportation, housing, and the like. Neither Figure 1 or Figure 2 account for the estimated increase in population of 10,000 to 15,000 persons during summer months, holidays, and weekends throughout the year.

Table 3 describes each group, its general characteristics, and examples of potential park and recreation needs.



On average, 60% of people aged 6-17 regularly participate in outdoor recreation. By the age of 45, that number has fallen to 37%. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, one out of five Americans was engaged in sports and exercise each day, on average 30 minutes per day. Running, jogging, and trail running activities were the most popular outdoor activities amongst people in the United States in 2020 aged six years and older, accounting for almost 64 million participants. The second most popular outdoor activity in the North American country was hiking with approximately 58 million participants during the same year.⁵

⁵ Source: Share of People Participating in Outdoor Recreation in the United States by Age Group, Statista website, 2022.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Table 3: Characteristics and Needs of Select Age Groups

Age Group	Description	Characteristics	Types of Park & Recreation Needs
Under 5	Infants, toddlers, pre-school, and kindergarten	Entirely dependent upon others	Playgrounds; splash pads; summer park programs; neighborhood parks; gymnastics and tumbling.
5 to 19	School aged children and young adults	Dependent upon others for lodging, food, education, and most other needs	Athletic facilities; multi-purpose sports fields; BMX/skate parks; disc golf; RC/drone areas; adventure facilities (climbing walls, ropes course, etc.); ice rinks; summer park programs; youth baseball/ soccer; neighborhood parks; teen center; youth fitness & wellness programs; after school programs.
20 to 24	Post high school; job and career training (college, trades, military, etc.)	Somewhat dependent upon others for certain needs	Ice rinks; music in the park; disc golf; RC/drone areas; adventure facility (climbing walls, ropes course, etc.); martial arts, sports fields/courts.
25 to 44	Established adults	Increasing earning and spending potential; traditional child-raising years	Outdoor fitness stations; public art; water features (fountains, reflecting pools); camping; community gardens; yoga/tai chi in the park; softball/volleyball leagues; meeting space for rental.
45 to 64	Mature adults	Prime earning years, often 'empty nesters'	Community gardens; outdoor fitness stations; yoga/tai chi in the park; pickleball; meeting space for rental.
65 to 84	Retirement-age	Decreased earning, sustained activity level, increasing healthcare costs	Hiking/biking trails, equipment rentals (kayaks, XC skis, etc.), community gardens; senior exercise stations; yoga/tai chi in the park; dancing; pickleball; meeting space for rental.
85 and older	Post retirement	Decreased earning, spending, and activity level	Community gardens; senior exercise stations; yoga/tai chi in the park; dancing.
All ages	n/a	n/a	Multi-use trails; pedestrian & bicycle facilities; passive parks; fishing areas; swimming pools; music/movies in the park; public art; water features (fountains, reflecting pools); nature center/nature trails; equestrian trails; picnic areas; dog parks/exercise areas; performing arts facility; multi-generational community center; programs for people with disabilities; community festivals & special events; arts & crafts.

Note: The information presented in this table is intended to reflect examples of the types of park and recreation facilities that may be desired by the given population group. It should not be considered an exhaustive list.

General Population Characteristics



Gather by the Gazebo. Image courtesy Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce.

The demographic information presented below and on the following page was collected from the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing statistical survey by the U.S. Census Bureau sent to approximately 250,000 addresses monthly. It gathers information previously contained in the long form of the decennial census. Italicized figures represent Adams County and the State of Wisconsin, respectively).

- ❖ Median Age: 63.4 years (*Adams County, 56.1; Wisconsin, 40.4*).
- ❖ Gender: Female (50.5%); Male (49.5%)
- ❖ Population under the age of 18: 7.5% (*14.6%; 21.1%*).
- ❖ Population 65 and over: 44.4% (*29.6%; 18.7%*).
- ❖ Population by One Race:
 - White: 98.1%
 - American Indian / Alaska Native: 0.5%



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- Asian: 0.4%
- Black or African American: 0.2%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: <0.1%
- Some other race: 0.9%
- ❖ Population by Two or More Races:
 - White and some other race: 1.4%
 - White and American Indian / Alaska Native: 1.0%
 - White and Black or African American: 0.4%
 - White and Asian: 0.1%
 - Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native: 0.1%
 - American Indian / Alaska Native and Some other race: 0.1%
- ❖ Hispanic / Latino: 1.7% (under Census Bureau policy, the terms 'Hispanic' and 'Latino' are considered an ethnic or cultural identifier, not a race).
- ❖ Educational Attainment (25 years and older):
 - No HS Diploma: 5.9% (12.1%; 6.5%).
 - HS Diploma: 25.4% (41.2%; 29.6%).
 - Some college or Associate's degree: 34.2% (31.6%; 30.7%).
 - Bachelor's degree or higher: 34.4% (15.1%; 33.2%).
- ❖ Median Household Income: \$80,442 (\$51,878; \$64,168).
- ❖ Median Monthly Income vs. Median Housing Costs: \$6,703.50 / \$922.00
- ❖ Poverty Status:
 - Female (6.9%); Male (3.9%)
 - Under 18 years: 11.7%
 - 65 years and over: 6.0%
 - Families: 3.4%
 - Families with children: 14.9%
- ❖ People with Disabilities:
 - Population: 15.1%
 - Female: 12.5%
 - Male: 17.7%
 - Children: 20.0%
- ❖ By Disability: Hearing (1.5%); Vision (1.9%); Cognitive (4.6%); Ambulatory (6.7%)

LANDSCAPE PROFILE

Rome's natural landscape provides a foundation for outdoor recreation planning. This section includes brief descriptions of aquatic and terrestrial resources along with a list of those endangered and threatened species known or believed to exist in Adams County.

Physiography & Topography⁶

The Town of Rome covers about 39,500 acres of land. Its topography varies, from generally flat, to gently rolling and some hilly areas. Elevation ranges from about 930 feet above sea level along Lake Petenwell and the Wisconsin River, to about 1,250 feet above sea level in the southeast corner of

⁶ Excerpted from Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC).

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



the Town. Some steep slope areas are scattered throughout the community. The Town lies in the mid-latitude continental climatic zone, which is characterized by long, snowy winters and short, warm summers. Spring and fall are often short with rapid changes from summer to winter and winter to summer. Annual precipitation, throughout the area, averages about 32 inches. About one-half to two-thirds of the annual precipitation falls between May and September. Snowfalls range between 45 and 80 inches annually, with a continuous snow cover from November to early April. Rome rests on a large sand plain covering much of central Wisconsin. This area is characterized by highly permeable sandy soils and a shallow water table. For the most part, the Town's sandstone bedrock is covered in 50 - 100 feet of sand and the water table is 20 - 50 feet below the surface.

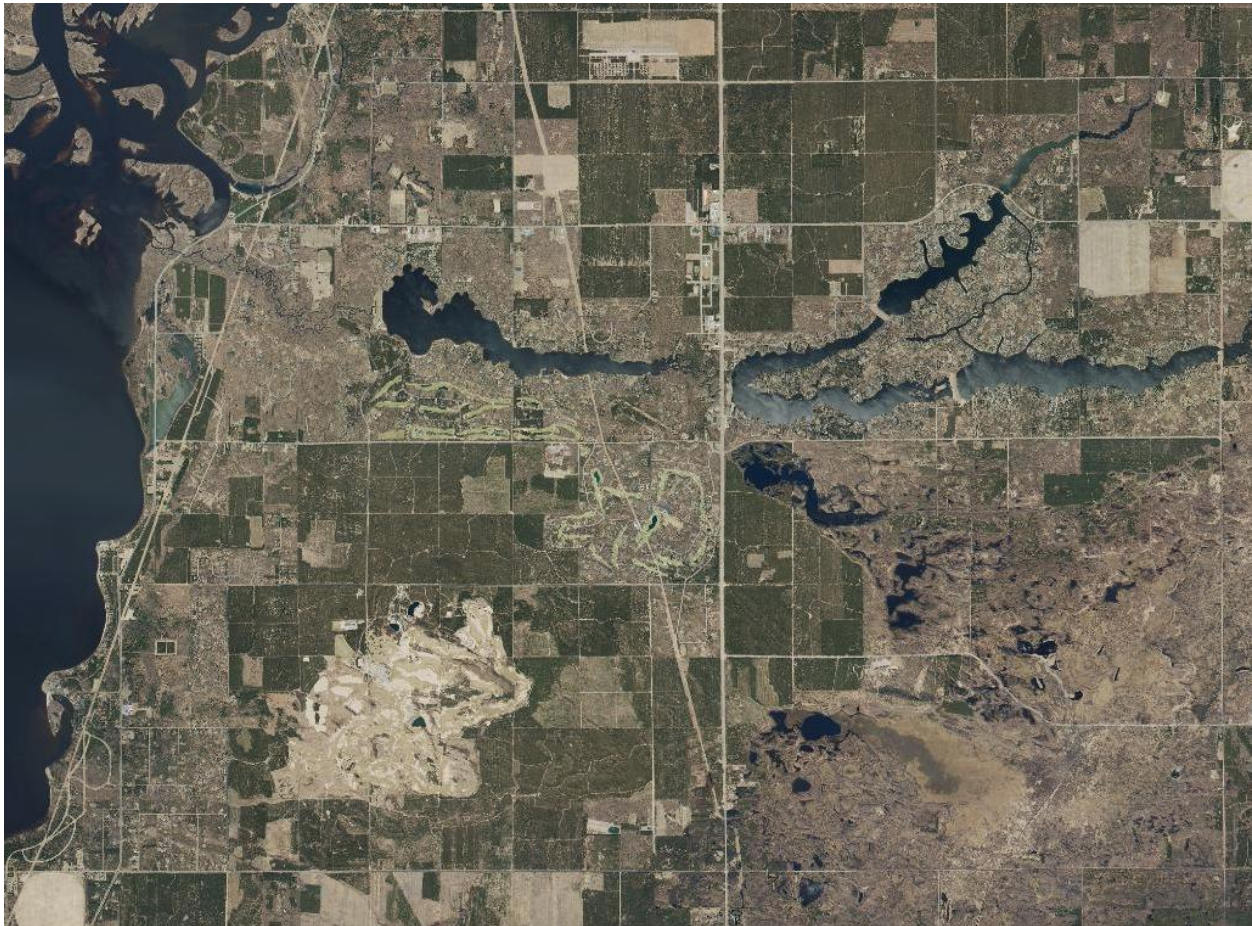


Image courtesy Adams County Land Information Department.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Geology⁷

Sandstone bedrock, generally defined as the “Dresbach Group undifferentiated”, lies under Adams County. Overlying this bedrock are outwash and glaciolacustrine (glacial lake) deposits associated with the terminal moraine that lies in the southeastern part of the county and near the County’s northeastern border. The Dresbach Group is comprised of sedimentary sandstone of late (Upper) Cambrian Age that overlies crystalline basement rocks of Precambrian Age. Both the crystalline rock surface and the sandstones decline gently toward the south and the sandstones thicken in the direction of the decline from less than 100 feet in the northern part to nearly 400 feet in the southern part of the county. In places, the sandstones project up through overlying materials to create the scenic sandstone mounds and castle rocks of Adams County. The flat tops of these buttes and mesas are capped by resistant sandstone layers, which are better cemented than average. These sandstones range from fine to coarse in grain and are relatively permeable. The precipitous cliffs, irregular crags, and towers result from a breakdown in the sandstone along vertical joints caused by rain and wind erosion. These rocks fall to pieces and are blown or washed away, slowly making mesas into buttes, and buttes into conical towers. There is one small “pocket” of Precambrian Quartzite bedrock to the southeast of Rome near Lake Camelot.

The extensive outwash plains extend southward along the terminal moraine and covers nearly 400 square miles of the Driftless Area. These plains consist largely of glacial sand and gravel with some silt and clay cover. Outwash deposits also occur east of the terminal moraine. Average thickness of these deposits is about 100 feet but may be as much as 200 feet deep in some places. Generally, outwash deposits are very permeable. The rest of Adams County is covered by glacial lake deposits, consisting of sand, silt, and clay covered with a fine to coarse grain. The lake deposits are less permeable and are generally twenty-five feet or less in thickness. In the northern half of the county, lake deposits lie on top of outwash. Unlike areas near the Mississippi River, there are no thick loess deposits adjacent to the outwash deposits in Adams County. This may have been due to local climate, preglacial weathering, topography, or the composition of the glaciers, but the exact reason for this absence is not definitively known.

Soils⁸

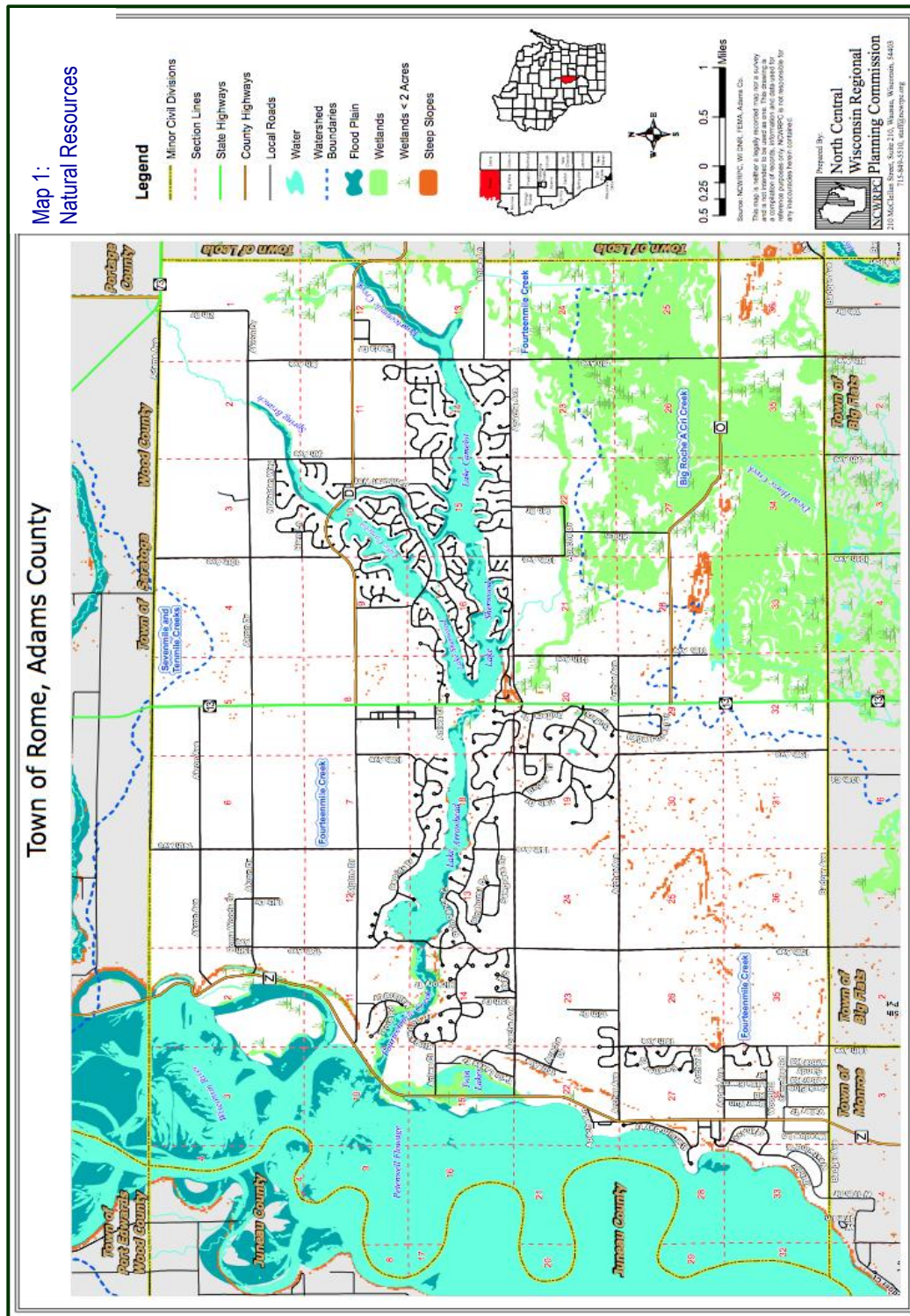
Most of the soils in Adams County result from glacial sandstone deposits, while southeast Adams County has glacial till. The soil erosion problem areas in Adams County contain annually cultivated glacial sandstone soils that are prone to wind erosion or annually cultivated glacial till soils located on slopes that are prone to water erosion. Soils are classified based upon physical characteristics between the soils and the topography of the area. The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has grouped Adams County soils into ten associations.

- ❖ **Briggsville-Kewaunee-Poygan.** This association occurs in the southeast corner of the County on undulating relief. Soils in this group developed in sandy to clay material and range from well to poorly drained and are susceptible to water erosion. The clay soils in this group have slow permeability and have high shrink-swell potential.

⁷ Excerpted from Adams County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2016-2025, NCWRPC.

⁸ Excerpted from Adams County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2016-2025, NCWRPC.

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Courtesy Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, NCWRPC.



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- ❖ Delton-Wyeville-Plainfield. These soils occur on nearly level slopes bordering on the Wisconsin River and its major tributaries. This association is comprised of well-drained, sandy soils developed in old glacial lake deposits and are susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ Dickinson-Dakota-Billett. These soils occur on nearly level relief in the south-central region of Adams County. They are comprised of well drained, loamy, and sandy soils developed over glacial outwash and are susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ Fordum-Sturgeon-Dunnville. This association occurs on nearly level to undulating relief. This loamy sand may be found in areas adjacent to the Wisconsin River and is comprised of poorly drained sandy soils susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ LaFarge-Urne-Norden. This association is found on rolling relief in the southwestern part of the County along the Wisconsin River. Soils in this association are loess and loamy deposits over sandstone susceptible to wind erosion, well drained, and closely associated with sandstone bedrock.
- ❖ Newson-Meehan-Friendship. This association is found on nearly level relief and is comprised of sandy soils with high water tables and organic soils in depressional areas. These soils are primarily found in the northeast portion of the County and in areas south of the Adams-Friendship community. The soils are susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ Plainbo-Boone-Eleva. This association is found on rolling relief in the southern part of the County. Soils in this association are sandy-to-sandy loam, well drained, and closely associated with sandstone bedrock. Soils are susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ Plainfield-Friendship-Meehan. This association occurs on nearly level to undulating relief. It is primarily found in the western part of the County and is comprised of well-drained sandy soils (with inclusions of organic soil) and sandy soils with high water tables. Groundwater contamination and wind erosion can be a hazard on these soils.
- ❖ Plainfield-Richford-Friendship. These soils occur on nearly level relief and are confined mainly to the eastern portion of the County. They are comprised of well-drained, loamy, and sandy soils susceptible to wind erosion.
- ❖ Plainfield-Wyocena-Okee. These soils are found on undulating to rolling relief in the southeastern part of the County. Soils in this association are sandy to sandy-loam, well drained and stony in places. Because of their sloping relief and sandy nature, these soils are susceptible to water and wind erosion.

Surface Water Resources⁹

Surface waters and wetlands comprise approximately 5,200 acres, or roughly 13% of Rome's geographical area. The most significant water feature is Lake Petenwell (an impoundment of the Wisconsin River), which forms the western boundary of the Town. Fourteen Mile Creek, which flows into Lake Petenwell, was dammed in the 1960's to create Lake Sherwood and in the 1970s to create Lake Camelot and Lake Arrowhead. Most of the land located along Fourteen Mile Creek is within a designated floodplain and/or wetland. Chester Creek, a small tributary of the Wisconsin River, is also located in the Town.

⁹ Excerpted from Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, NCWRPC.



The Tri-Lakes (as Lakes Arrowhead, Camelot, and Sherwood are locally known) have a combined surface area of approximately 1,000 acres. They were originally created to attract development and recreational homes. Additional surface water features include Dorro Couche Lake and Dead Horse Creek, each located in the southeast of the Town near Dyracuse Park.

Large areas of wetlands are concentrated in the Town's southeastern quadrant. Additional wetlands are found along Fourteen Mile Creek from Lake Petenwell to Lake Arrowhead and along areas east of Lake Camelot. Wetlands are also found adjacent to Lake Petenwell and Chester Creek in the west central and northwest portions of the Town.

Groundwater¹⁰

Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water and irrigation water in Adams County. Nearly 14 billion gallons of groundwater are used for irrigation annually, while all other groundwater use equals less than 1 billion gallons annually. Groundwater quality is generally good in Adams County. Most soils in Adams County are highly susceptible to groundwater contamination.

The supply of groundwater comes from unconsolidated glacial deposits and underlying sandstone aquifers. Generally, unconsolidated outwash deposits cover the northern half and the southeastern part of the county. Wells located in these areas yield 500 to 1,000 gallons of water per minute. Unconsolidated deposits become thinner and siltier in the southeast portion of the county and wells tend to yield less. Depth of groundwater generally ranges from 0 to 20 feet in the outwash glacial lake deposits, 50 to 100 feet in the pitted outwash, and up to 170 feet in the end moraines. Regional groundwater flow is generally from the northeast to the southwest towards the Wisconsin River. A groundwater divide exists in the eastern portion of the county, causing the groundwater to flow southeast toward the Fox River.

Wetlands¹¹

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season. Water saturation (hydrology) largely determines how the soil develops and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils.

Wetlands vary widely because of regional and local differences in soils, topography, climate, hydrology, water chemistry, vegetation, and other factors, including human disturbance. Inland/non-tidal wetlands, like those found in Rome, are most common on floodplains along rivers and streams (i.e., riparian wetlands), in isolated depressions surrounded by dry land (e.g., playas, basins and potholes), along the margins of lakes and ponds, and in other low-lying areas where the groundwater intercepts the soil surface or where precipitation sufficiently saturates the soil (e.g., vernal pools and bogs). Inland wetlands include marshes and wet meadows dominated by herbaceous plants, swamps dominated by shrubs, and wooded swamps dominated by trees. Many are seasonal. The

¹⁰ Excerpted from Adams County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2016-2025, NCWRPC.

¹¹ Source: What is a Wetland, United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2021.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

quantity of water present and the timing of its presence in part determine the functions of a wetland and its role in the environment.

Woodlands¹²

Woodlands are the predominant land cover in the community covering nearly 24,000 acres, or approximately 60% of the land base. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic commodity (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses. Meteor Timber LLC owns and manages a substantial amount of land in the Town. Although most of their land is currently dedicated to the growth of trees for pulp production, all of it is for sale. Conversion of these areas to uses other than woodlands is both an opportunity and challenge for the Town in the future. See Map 2 on the following page for the location of key natural resources in the township.

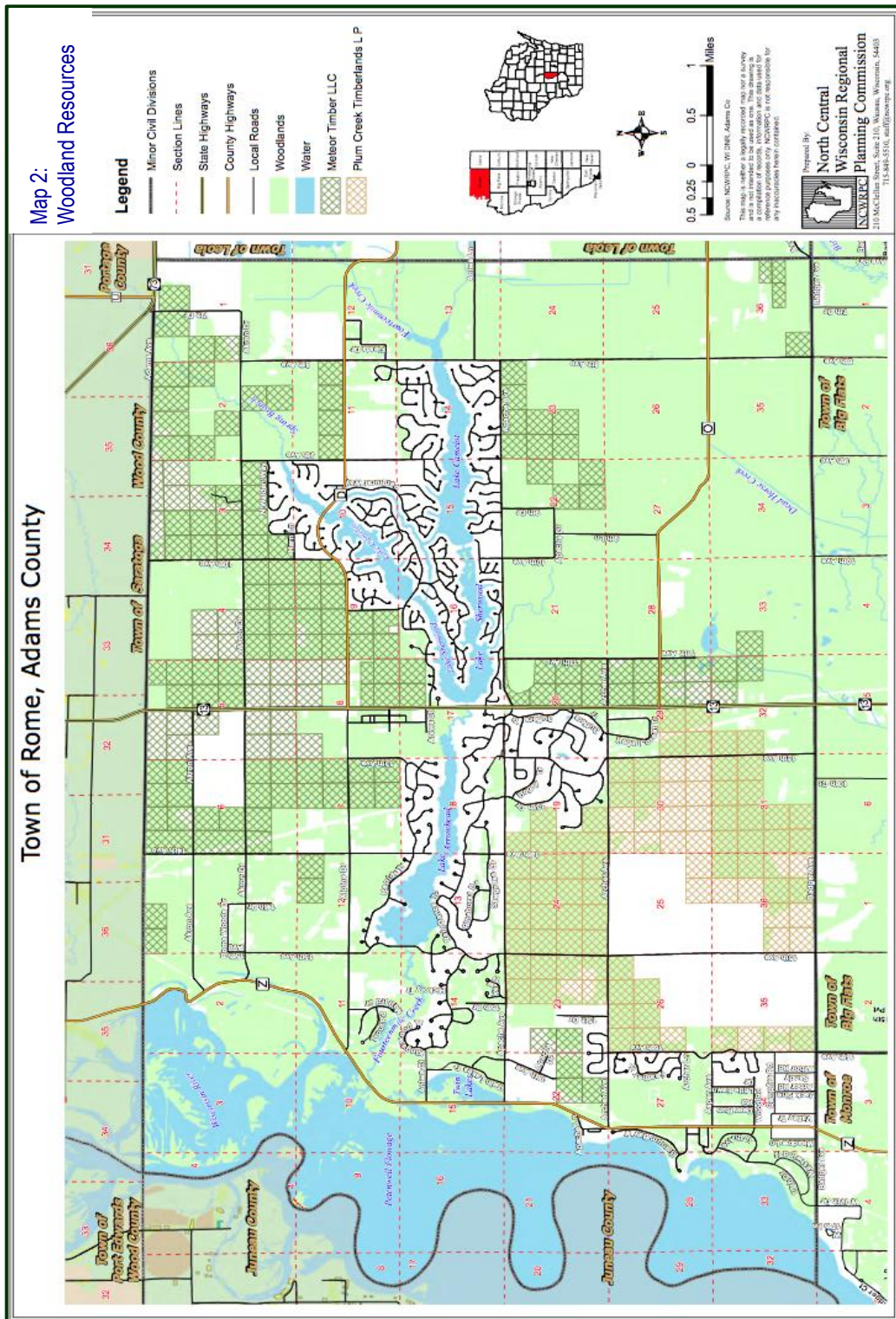
Environmental Corridors¹³

The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) map provides generalized information about endangered resources (rare, or endangered species and high - quality natural communities) to the section level. The Karner Blue butterfly (KBB) (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*) and slender glass lizard (*Ophisaurus attenuatus*) have been listed as endangered species and have been documented to populate sections within the Town of Rome.

¹² Excerpted from Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, NCWRPC.

¹³ Excerpted from Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, NCWRPC.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Courtesy Town of Rome, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016, NCWRPC



SIX: INVENTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Rome hosts an array of publicly- and privately-owned recreation facilities and open space resources including parks, trails, golf courses, motorized terrain parks, campgrounds, and conservation areas, among others.

TOWN PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Rome Town Center Park and Splash Pad



Rome Town Center Park and Splash Pad. Image courtesy MSA.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Rome Town Center Park and Splash Pad is located in the 250-acre 'Rome Town Center' development south of Rome Municipal Complex on STH 13. The facility currently hosts a large splash pad. Additional amenities and facilities are planned.

- ❖ Classification: Community Park
- ❖ Size: 4.77 acres
- ❖ Current Facilities: bandshell/pavilion, splash pad, play apparatus, great lawn, Musical Notes Rhapsody Park
- ❖ Proposed Facilities: picnic shelter and tables, athletic courts, native plant restoration, benches, shade structures and amenities (see proposed park plan on following page)

Gazebo Activity Area



Gazebo Activity Area.

Also located in Rome Town Center north of Rome Town Center Park and Splash Pad, the one-acre Gazebo Activity Area hosts a large gazebo, park pavilion, and lawn bifurcated by walking paths. The park is a popular location for Town events, the Farmers Market, outdoor music, and other such community gatherings.

- ❖ Classification: Community Park
- ❖ Size: 0.97 acres
- ❖ Facilities: gazebo, shelter, trail, benches, open space

Lester Public Library of Rome Garden Path

An interactive/educational garden and walking path that includes a community vegetable and herb garden, butterfly plantings and more. It is centrally located, close to Hwy 13 and would be within sight of the Link the Lakes project tunnel.

- ❖ Classification: Special Use Area
- ❖ Size: 0.75 acres
- ❖ Current Facilities: walking path, community garden, patio
- ❖ Proposed Facilities: solar charging on the patio, story walk trail, programming space and playground



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Room to Roam Dog Park

Room to Roam Dog Park is open 24 hours a day year-around. Nearly 10 acres in size, the facility provides opportunities for dogs to exercise and play off-leash in a controlled environment under the supervision of their owners. One of the two enclosures is reserved for use by dogs who are shy, senior, or small in size.

- ❖ Classification: Special Purpose Park
- ❖ Size: 9.8 acres
- ❖ Facilities: benches, picnic shelter, picnic tables, dog agility equipment, chairs, open space



Room to Roam Dog Park. Image courtesy Michele Neukirchen.

TRAILS

Rome Town Center Trail

The 2.79 trail weaves through the Rome Town Center with plans for additional trail miles connecting AV to the greater community.

Songbird, Ridge, Blazing Star, and Karner Connection Trails – Sand Valley

These trails are part of the Sand Valley Recreational Trail Development. Please see page 44 for detailed descriptions of each trail.

WRPCO Trail(s)

NORTH; Trailhead Location: Apache Ave/16th Lane Intersection; Length: 1.63 Miles

SOUTH; Trailhead Location: Badger Ave/17th Drive Intersection; Length: 2 Miles

Twin Lakes Trail

Trailhead Location: Apache Ave, right before the intersection w/ County Rd Z; Length: 0.55 Miles (one-way)

Dunes Loop

Trailhead Location: Lake Arrowhead Clubhouse; Length: 8.6 Miles.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Shermalot Loop

Trailhead Location: Camelot on the Lake or Camelot Boat Landing; Length: 4.3 Miles.

BOAT LAUNCHES

Barnum Bay

The Barnum Bay boat launch is in southwest Rome. Its paved launch provides access to Lake Petenwell via Barnum Bay. The facility is designated as a small boat access.

Devil's Elbow

The Devil's Elbow launch is located off CTH Z near the Town of Rome's border with the Town of Saratoga, in Wood County. It offers a gravel-to-concrete planks launch accessible for small boats.

Walden Park Kayak Area

- ❖ Classification: Special Purpose Park
- ❖ Size: 1.58 acres
- ❖ Facilities: kayak and S.U.P. rentals and launch, shoreline restoration, parking

Chester Creek¹⁴

Chester Creek Boat Launch is located just South of Devil's Elbow and North of Twin Lake on CTH Z in the Town of Rome. It is on the northern end of Lake Petenwell just off the main channel by the old Wisconsin Riverbed. Features include: a public boat launch with public dock, Chester creek, Chester creek pond, a large parking lot, wooded area, portal restroom and excellent fishing. The facility is designated as a small boat access.

Lake Arrowhead

Located at 324 15th Avenue, the launch provides public access to the 300-acre Lake Arrowhead.

Lake Camelot

This concrete-plank launch provides access to 445-acre Lake Camelot from a location on 10th Avenue approximately ¼ mile north of Apache Drive.



¹⁴ Excerpted from Lake-Petenwell.com, 2018.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Lake Sherwood

The Lake Sherwood boat launch provides concrete-plank access to Lake Sherwood, the smallest of the Tri-Lakes, from a location off STH 13 and W. Queens Way.

Carry Access Landings

- ❖ Petenwell Lake Carry-in. Petenwell Lake Carry-in is located near the intersection of Alpine Drive and CTH Z. It offers a launch for canoes, kayaks, and other small watercraft.
- ❖ Fourteen Mile Creek Access. This facility provides access to Lake Petenwell for canoes, kayaks, and other small watercraft from a location on CTH Z between the Petenwell Lake Carry-in and Chester Creek Boat Launch.

ADAMS COUNTY FACILITIES

Lake Arrowhead County Park

Lake Arrowhead County Park is five acres in size and is located at 355 15th Avenue on the shores of Lake Arrowhead. The park boasts amenities including a beach, picnic tables, playground equipment, a public boat landing, restrooms, and a public shelter house.



- ❖ Classification: Community Park
- ❖ Size: 5 acres
- ❖ Facilities: swimming beach, shelter w/restrooms, play apparatus, picnic tables, public boat launch

Lake Camelot County Park

This county park straddles the Lake Camelot impoundment north of Apache Drive in the town of Rome.

- ❖ Classification: Community Park
- ❖ Size: 65+ acres
- ❖ Facilities: swimming beach, parking, public boat launch



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Adams County Forest

Adams County Forest is located in the Town of Rome and provides more than 400 acres of land for public use.

ATV / UTV Trails¹⁵

Adams County, along with the townships, maintains an extensive network of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and utility terrain vehicle (UTV) trails and possesses one of the largest ATV routing and trail systems in the state. The system encompasses nearly one-fifth of the County with most trails located in the northwest. Approximately 18 miles of trails connecting the Adams/Wood County border south to Dellwood, with an additional 16 miles extending from Castle Rock Lake and Lake Petenwell to just shy of the Waushara County border. The system is comprised of off-road trails and sand, gravel, and paved roads, with new sections and routes opening regularly. Routes are open year-round, however trails have seasonal availability for ATV/UTVs and snowmobiles. ATVs and UTVs are not permitted on snowmobile trails during winter.

Snowmobile Trails

Adams County maintains more than 200 miles of well groomed, well-marked snowmobile trails. These include state corridor trails, state funded trails, county-sponsored trails, club trails, and road routes. Many are located on private property with access granted by individual landowners. Many Adams County businesses and restaurants have snowmobile parking and loading areas.

The Rome Sno-Bandits formed in the 1960s and are dedicated to providing the finest trails for recreational family snowmobiling. The club maintains more than 35 miles of trails in northern Adams County and southern Wood County. The Sno-Bandits are a membership-based organization meeting monthly between September and June.



NEKOOSA SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES

Chester School Forest¹⁶

The Chester School Forest is a forested parcel in the Town of Rome owned by the Nekoosa School District. School district representatives, students, and teachers, UWSP LEAF Coordinators, DNR Representatives, Town Officials and staff have been working since March of 2015 to restore the school forest located on Alpine Dr. Plans for the 40-acre parcel, which includes a Disc Golf course

¹⁵ Courtesy Adams County.

¹⁶ Excerpted from Nekoosa School District website, 2018.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



development, results from a cooperative effort between the Nekoosa School District and the Town of Rome.

- ❖ Classification: Natural Resource Area
- ❖ Size: 40 acres
- ❖ Facilities: open space

NON-PROFIT FACILITIES

Twin Lakes Park¹⁷

Located between Apache Avenue and Aniwa Court on Highway Z in the Town of Rome. The park is managed by the Town in partnership with the Central Wisconsin Nature Foundation (CWNF). CWNF was founded in 2007 in the Town of Rome with a mission to provide natural resources environmental education to the public in a hands-on interactive environment. The preserve is comprised of 45 acres of woods and wetlands located on the eastern shore of Lake Petenwell.



Courtesy Adams County

- ❖ Classification: Natural Resource Area
- ❖ Size: 45 acres
- ❖ Facilities: swimming beach, primitive nature trail, picnic area, Little Free Library

PRIVATELY OWNED FACILITIES

Dyracuse Recreational Park¹⁸

Located at 1047 CTH O in the Town of Rome, this 500-acre motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle park is open from early April until the last weekend in October. Dyracuse opened in 1982 and is jointly operated by the Town of Rome and Rapid Angels Motorcycle Club. The park is named after Dyracuse Mound, a prominent landmark in Adams County.



¹⁷ Excerpted from Central Wisconsin Nature Foundation website, 2018.

¹⁸ Excerpted from Travel Wisconsin and Dyracuse Recreation Area, 2018.



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- ❖ Classification: Special Use
- ❖ Size: 857 acres
- ❖ Facilities: four-acre Sand Bowl, 11.78 miles of ATV/UTV trails, motocross track, multi-use challenge course, supercross track, pee wee/ beginner track with viewing area, motorcycle single track loops, and mud bog play area.

Sand Valley Recreational Trails¹⁹

The following trails have been developed in and around the Sand Valley Golf Resort:

- ❖ [The Ridge Trail \(Sand Valley\)](#). This advanced three-mile trail traverses along the V ridge on the Mammoth Dunes golf course. The trail features expansive sand blowouts, red pine plantations, and a majestic oak savannah. Hikers will enjoy spectacular views of the Mammoth Dunes golf course, including vistas on sand ridges as high as 80 feet above the course. The trail begins and ends at the Sand Valley clubhouse.
- ❖ [The Songbird Trail \(Sand Valley\)](#). This path takes you through a sampling of the restoration and remnant areas as well as past golf landscapes and an intact red pine plantation. It is approximately 1.2 miles long and starts near Craig's Porch on Sand Valley Golf Course. Take notice of the birdboxes located along the trail – the lifecycle of songbirds monitored by volunteers throughout the summer.
- ❖ [Blazing Star Trail](#). Located across the street from Sand Valley Golf Course, this three-mile-long trail offers riders a moderate- to high-difficulty fat tire/off-road biking experience.
- ❖ [Karner Connection Trail](#). Connecting the Ridge Trail to the Songbird Trail, the Karner Connection is perfect for hikers looking for extra miles or a new route. This trail features Sand Valleys' Karner Blue Butterfly habitat, various aged red pine plantations and view of Lake Leopold.



Bottom photo: Blazing Star Trail.
Courtesy Visit Rome Wisconsin.

Sand Valley Tennis Center.

Since introducing its grass tennis courts in 2018, Sand Valley has become a mecca for racquet sport enthusiasts. Soon those tennis players will have a place to call home: the 13,000-square-foot Sand Valley Tennis Center. The Tennis Center, adjacent to the resort's 16 grass tennis courts, will feature outdoor seating overlooking the grass courts and the 18th hole on Sedge Valley. Inside, guests can relax and recover with food and drink at The Gallery,

¹⁹ Excerpted from Sand Valley website, 2024.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Sand Valley's newest Italian-themed restaurant which overlooks an unexpected example of the rich history of tennis: just the eleventh Court Tennis court in the United States.



Grass tennis court. Courtesy Sand Valley.

Wisconsin Trapshooting Association

The Wisconsin Trapshooting Association (WTA) was founded in 1899 to hold the Wisconsin State Shoot and support the sport of trapshooting. The State Shoot was held at various shooting clubs throughout the state for the first 49 years. In 1948, it moved to the Waukesha Gun Club where it remained for 64 years until the WTA Homegrounds Shooting Complex opened in 2013. The facility sits on 280 acres of forested land located at 1312 Akron Drive in the Town of Rome. Thirty trap fields offer a variety of trapshooting experiences, including American-style trapshooting and an Olympic bunker for international-style trapshooting.



Image courtesy Visit Rome.

WTA Campground

The WTA Campground is located at 1312 Akron Drive offers and 104 full electric, water and sewer hook-up 45 x 80 pull-through deluxe sites. Homegrounds is situated in a well-established recreation area offering a variety of activities for the outdoor enthusiast. WTA Campground is wholly owned by the Wisconsin Trapshooting Association and is directly adjacent to the World-Class Shooting Facility, Learning and Training Center. There is on site laundry, indoor bathroom facility with private showers, RV sewer dump site. Our mission is to provide guests with a beautiful, clean, safe and well-kept vacation place to camp and relax.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Tri-Norse Winter Park

Established in 1928, the Tri-Norse Winter Park hosts many activities each year. Along with ski-jumping, the club has an ice-skating rink, snowshoe trails and fat tire bike trails! There are also candlelight trail walks several times a year, Colorama, where you can see the fall colors of 4 counties from on top of their 55-meter ski jump, and a late summer Mini-Mudder.



WTA Campground. Courtesy WTA.

GOLF COURSES

Lake Arrowhead²⁰

Lake Arrowhead is comprised of two courses: The Pines and The Lakes. Defined by sandy soil, plentiful pine forests and scrubby oaks, the Lakes and the Pines are the heart of the 2,500-acre, member-owned development. Each course winds through mature oaks and Norway pines in a one-of-a-kind, lakeland setting. The courses feature bent grass fairways, tees and greens, sculpted bunkers, natural sand waste areas, breathtaking water hazards, and large, contoured, undulating greens.

Golf Digest has given each course 4½ stars in their 'Places to Play' rankings. In 2013, the Golf Course Owners of Wisconsin named Lake Arrowhead as its course of the year, beating out both Whistling Straits and Horseshoe Bay in Egg Harbor. The courses are open to the public and offer golfers of every skill level plenty of challenges and enjoyment.

The Pines was the first of the two public courses and is the centerpiece of the Lake Arrowhead Recreation Community. Opened in 1982, it is tucked among tall pines and lush woodlands, providing the ultimate golf experience for players of all skill levels. The Pines is ranked among the top 75 public courses in America and is listed among the top courses in Wisconsin.



Image courtesy Lake Arrowhead.

²⁰ Excerpted from Lake Arrowhead website, 2023.

The Lakes features water hazards on seven of its eighteen holes, undulating roughs, and fast greens that challenge even the most experienced players. A mix of scenic beauty and well-bunkered features, the course has a reputation as an appealing challenge. It was nominated for Golf Digest's Best New Public Course in America in 1998.

Sand Valley Golf Resort²¹



Image courtesy Sand Valley Golf Course.

Sand Valley Golf Resort encompasses five courses: Sand Valley, Mammoth Dunes, The Sandbox (par 3), The Lido, and Sedge Valley. Located at 1697 Leopold Way in the Town of Rome, Sand Valley sits in the tumbling prehistoric sand dunes of Central Wisconsin. Sand Valley was designed by Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw and opened in May 2017. Golf Magazine and Golf Digest each lauded it as the best new course of 2017. Bill Coore describes the course as: "Made of sand, the perfect sculpting medium for the creation of natural looking, interesting features for golf, the terrain at Sand Valley is a collection of meandering ridges and valleys over which and through which the course has been routed."

Mammoth Dunes opened in 2018 and is "already regarded as the nation's top new course" of the year. Designed by David Kidd, architect of Bandon Dunes (2016's 7th best public course), Mammoth Dunes is intended to be both a state-of-the-art golf course and a family friendly destination, with fat tire bike riding, ponds stocked for fishing, tennis courts.²²

²¹ Excerpted from Sand Valley Golf Resort website, 2018.

²² Excerpted from Inside Mammoth Dunes: Breaking Down the Buzziest New Course of 2018, GOLF.



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The Sandbox is a 17-hole short course at Sand Valley, providing an intimate connection to the sand county landscape of central Wisconsin. Located 50 yards from the Sand Valley Clubhouse and just outside the Dunes Lodge, The Sandbox plays through a restored sand prairie that sits within the same V-shaped sand ridge that frames Mammoth Dunes. With holes ranging from 40 to 140 yards, the short course features the most unique green complexes on the property, including a biarriz, double plateau, lion's mouth, and a redan.

Sedge Valley blends an intimate piece of Sand Valleys' property, rich with sandy soil, native groundcover and a prominent rock outcropping. The regulation 18-hole course of irregular length will be slightly more than 6,000 yards long with a par of 68.



The Lido at Sand Valley Golf Resort is a faithful recreation of a long-gone layout once celebrated as the best in the world. The original version was built on New York's Long Island in the early 1900s by renowned architects C.B. Macdonald and Seth Raynor but demolished by the U.S. Navy during World War II as the land was used to support the war effort. While the course was lost, its mystique grew over the years.

The Lido at Sand Valley. Courtesy Sand Valley.

NEARBY PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

- ❖ Alt/Bergen Nature Preserve. The Alt/Bergen Nature Preserve, 930 Buttercup, in Big Flats, was established by a land donation of 75 acres, on May 31, 2018, to the Central Wisconsin Nature Foundation, from Ardis Bergen, in honor of her late Husband. The land is dedicated to conservation and hands-on natural resource education. It is free, and open to the public for non-motorized recreational use.
- ❖ Leola Marsh State Wildlife Area. The 1,860-acre Leola Marsh Wildlife Area is located 15 miles southeast of Wisconsin Rapids. It can be accessed from county highways D and W. Formerly a marshland that was drained in the early 1900s, the area is now predominately non-native cool season grassland.
- ❖ Sand Valley Restoration Trust. This property consists of approximately 8,000 acres in Adams County, Town of Monroe, and Big Flats. The objective for the land owned by the Trust is to restore native plant communities that existed prior to European contact. The restoration of native plant communities will help recover several rare species such as the Kirtland's Warbler, Karner Blue Butterfly, and Slender Glass Lizard.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



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SEVEN: WISCONSIN SCORP 2019-2023

INTRODUCTION

States are required to complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years to be eligible to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program. SCORPs are intended to evaluate outdoor recreation trends and issues of statewide importance and set forth ideas about recreation's future role in the state. There are several required elements for SCORPs, including identifying priorities for use of LWCF grants. Of the many important issues related to outdoor recreation in Wisconsin, the SCORP highlights the areas of greatest need, thus providing a framework for evaluating LWCF grants.

Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, school districts, and other state political subdivisions are eligible to apply for LWCF grants for acquisition or development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. These government entities best understand their citizens' needs, as well as the opportunities to leverage their local resources and assets. As such, the focus of the SCORP is on providing a range of information, at the county level where possible, to help the public and their elected officials place local conditions, needs, and opportunities into a broader framework.

Table 4: Nature-Based Activities for SCORP 2019-2023

- ❖ Bicycling – rail-trails, mt. biking, fat-tire/snow biking
- ❖ Bird/wildlife watching - at home and away from home
- ❖ Camping – tent, RV/pop-up
- ❖ Canoeing/kayaking
- ❖ Cross-country skiing
- ❖ Downhill skiing/snowboarding
- ❖ Driving 4-WD vehicles on trails/routes
- ❖ Fishing – lake, stream, river
- ❖ Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.
- ❖ Geocaching
- ❖ Hiking/walking/running on trails
- ❖ Horseback riding on trails
- ❖ Hunting – big and small game, turkey, migratory bird
- ❖ Ice skating
- ❖ Motor boating
- ❖ Nature photography
- ❖ Personal watercraft riding
- ❖ Picnicking/tailgating/cookout
- ❖ Riding ATVs/UTVs on trails/routes
- ❖ Riding motorcycles on trails/routes
- ❖ Sailing
- ❖ Snowmobiling
- ❖ Snowshoeing
- ❖ Stand-up paddle boarding
- ❖ Swimming – lakes/rivers/ponds
- ❖ Target shooting – firearms, archery
- ❖ Trapping
- ❖ Visiting a nature center
- ❖ Visiting a beach/beach walking
- ❖ Visiting a dog park
- ❖ Walking/running dogs on trails
- ❖ Waterskiing/tubing/wakeboarding

Source: SCORP 2019-2023, WDNR.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



2019-2023 SCORP Objectives

- ❖ Provide an analysis of outdoor recreation supply and demand.
- ❖ Provide information and context that is useful to counties, local units of government, organizations, Native American Nations, and others as they develop plans and policies for recreation opportunities in their communities.
- ❖ Ensure Wisconsin's continued eligibility for National Park Service LWCF state-side grants.
- ❖ Establish priorities for LWCF grants and guidance for other applicable state and federal funds.

TOP PRIORITIES

- ❖ Focus on natural resources and habitat
- ❖ Provide more places near urban centers to support nature-based recreation
- ❖ Meet increasing demand for trails (nonmotorized and motorized)
- ❖ Increase shore access for fishing, boating, swimming
- ❖ Support local recreation efforts

SCORP GOALS

- ❖ Boost participation in outdoor recreation
- ❖ Grow partnerships
- ❖ Provide high-quality experiences
- ❖ Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits
- ❖ Enhance funding and financial stability

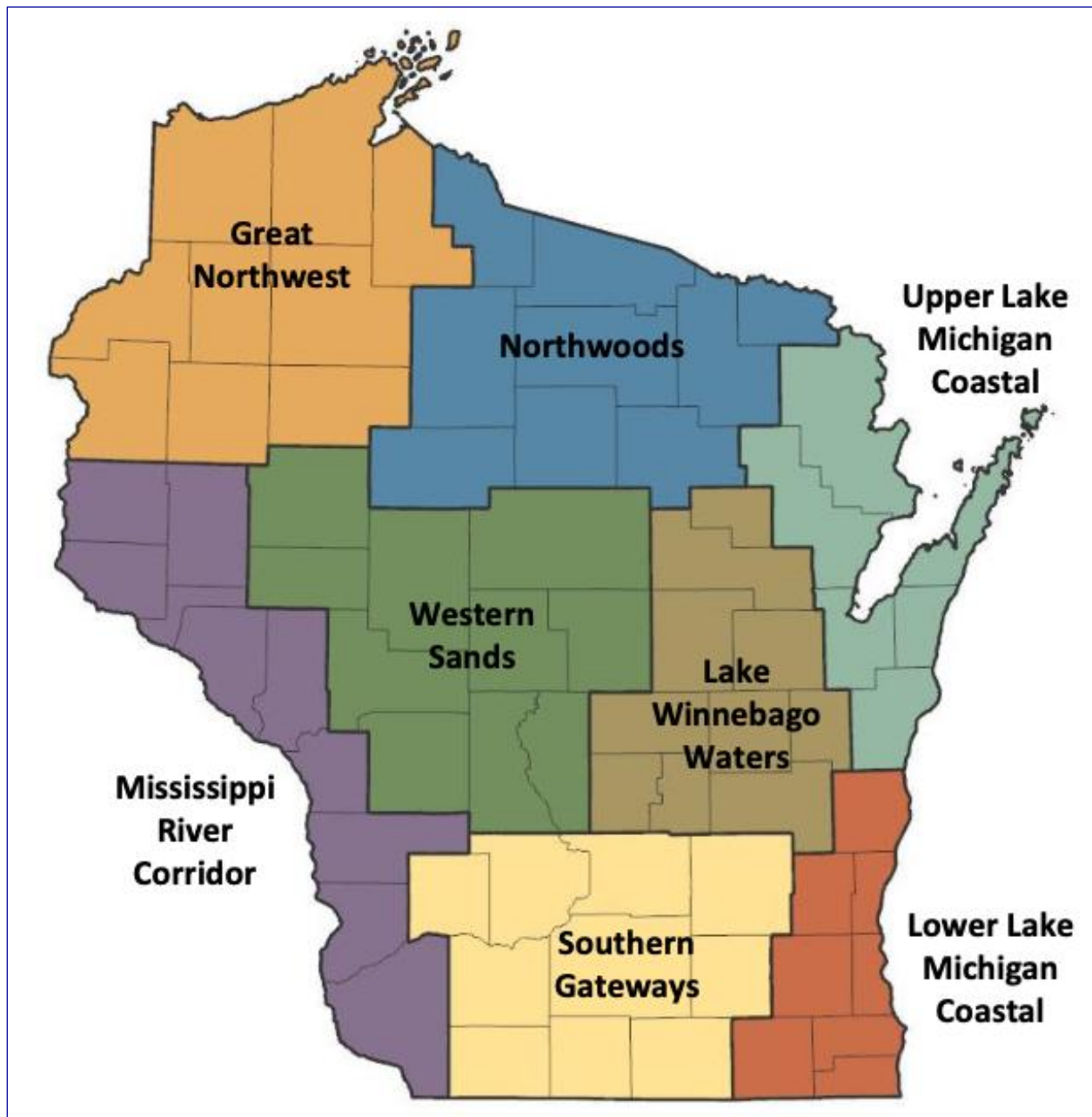
WESTERN SANDS REGION

Introduction²³

The SCORP is divided into eight regions: Great Northwest, Northwoods, Mississippi River Corridor, Western Sands, Lake Winnebago Waters, Southern Gateways, Upper Lake Michigan Coastal, and Lower Lake Michigan Coastal (see map on following page). Adams County and the Town of Rome lie within the Western Sands Region.

The Western Sands Region has an abundance of public lands that draw visitors from Milwaukee, Chicago, and the Twin Cities. From camping to ATV riding and hunting to bird watching, the county and state forests and the expansive wildlife areas here support a wide diversity of recreation. Although largely rural, easy highway access and relatively inexpensive land prices within the region have increasingly made it a popular location for seasonal home development.

²³ Excerpted from SCORP 2019-2023.



SCORP Recreation Regions of Wisconsin

Landscape Setting²⁴



Glacial Lake Wisconsin. Image courtesy Aldo Leopold Foundation.

The Western Sands Region is in the west-central part of the state and encompasses Adams, Chippewa, Clark, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, Marathon, Monroe, Portage and Wood counties. Outside of northern Wisconsin's abundant wilderness and water resources, the Western Sands Region has the third largest number of public lands and water in the state. These areas include the Black River State Forest, several County Forests, Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, and the Wisconsin, Chippewa, and Black Rivers. Although the region remains largely rural, it is influenced by outside tourism demands from the Chicago and Twin Cities metropolitan areas. Easy highway access and relatively cheap land prices within the region have made it a popular location for seasonal home development. The region's Non-Metro Recreation Counties, Adams and Juneau, have experienced especially high housing growth, particularly along river flowages.

In the middle of this region is the vast, remarkably flat, sandy plain that was once the bed of Glacial Lake Wisconsin. This lake, ringed by the Driftless Area to the southwest and the glacier to the north and east, was 70 to 150 feet deep and covered over 1,800 square miles. Streams and rivers draining from the glacier into the lake carried enormous loads of sand, silt, and clay that settled onto the lake

bottom. The lake is believed to have drained catastrophically when the ice dam along its southern end failed. This flush of water out of the lake carved the spectacular narrow, deep-sided gorges at Wisconsin Dells. Additional striking features across the region include castellated mounds scattered across the south-central portion of this landscape. These irregular bluffs are remnants of a sandstone escarpment and the result of the steady erosional forces of wind and water slowly wearing away the softer sandstone surrounding them. There are no large, naturally occurring lakes, although several hydroelectric dams on the Wisconsin River create large impoundments. The sandy plain is also characterized by sandy soils, dry forests, pine and oak barrens, large wetland complexes and significant tracts of public land. The center of the region has large concentrations of county forest, as well as state and federal lands. Combined with low population density, few roads, and a high percentage of forested cover, this provides for a different set of recreational opportunities.

²⁴ Excerpted from SCORP 2019-2023, Appendix 8.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The north tier of this region, the productive soils and moderate climate makes this the northern extent of predominantly agricultural land use. Remaining forests here tend to occur as fragments and are often quite small. Small kettle lakes are common on the moraines. These lakes are readily accessible to population centers in the Chippewa Valley and are experiencing increasingly intensive development pressure. In Clark and western Marathon counties, very few lakes exist, and the land takes on a more rolling nature. Many small creeks and rivers flow across this area, creating a dendritic drainage system. Soils are diverse and range from sandy loam to loam and shallow silt loam. In contrast, the southwest area is highly eroded and unglaciated.

Regional Economy²⁵

The major land use in the Western Sands Region is forest, followed by agriculture. Much of the existing forest in the central and southern portions of the region is comprised of oak, aspen and pine. Timber management is focused on pulp production, giving rise to an abundance of pine plantations. Agricultural activities in the central sands are dominated by extensive commercial cranberry and crop production using center-pivot irrigation on drained soils. Due to the abundance of bogs, the region is also a hotspot for the commercial harvest of sphagnum moss. Along with the extensive dairy operations in the northern part of the region, there is ginseng production centered around Wausau. Towards the western side of the Western Sands Region, agricultural activities, namely dairy and beef production, are available on valley floors and ridge tops.

Top employment sectors of the regional economy include trade, transportation and utilities, manufacturing, education and health services, government, professional and business services and leisure and hospitality.

Recreation Uses and Participation²⁶

The Western Sands Region receives substantial public use for a variety of recreation activities, due largely to the amount of public land in the central forested area. The region boasts over 430,000 acres of county forest. Public forests offer opportunities for hiking and bird watching, which comprise a large portion of the recreational demand from local and out-of-town visitors. The eastern portion of the region is less densely populated than its surrounding areas and thus used heavily for hunting and fishing.

The northern part of the region has historically provided only limited public recreation opportunities. But, with the growth of the Fox Valley and several western and central Wisconsin cities, this area is under increasing pressure to meet growing recreation demands. Given the gentle topography and silt-loam soils, this landscape has great potential to provide off road biking, cross-country skiing, nature study, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities. Access to the major rivers for boating and canoeing is in high demand. In the center of the region, an ample supply of trails helps foster other popular activities such as the use of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles. Clark and Jackson counties are especially well known for their motorized recreation opportunities.

²⁵ Excerpted from SCORP 2019-2023, Appendix 8.

²⁶ Excerpted from SCORP 2019-2023, Appendix 8.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Many shallow-water areas within large public properties offer fishing, canoeing, kayaking, waterfowl observation, and hunting opportunities. The Black River is a popular canoeing destination. Coldwater streams found throughout the region also support high quality trout fisheries and receive substantial use by anglers.

Public Outdoor Recreation Supply²⁷

The Western Sands Region has approximately 750,000 acres of public land available for outdoor recreation. The central forested areas and large river systems accommodate a variety of recreational activities. See map at right for public lands in Adams County.

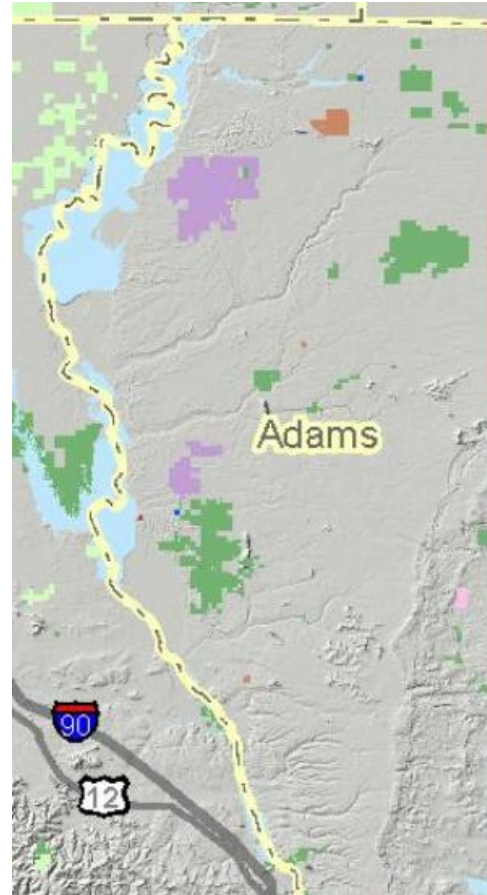
Federal

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages just nearly 97,000 acres in the Western Sands Region. The properties are largely used for waterfowl production, forest production, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, water quality and fisheries habitat.

State

The Department of Natural Resources owns just over 221,000 acres and holds public access easements on approximately 13,000 acres in the Western Sands Region. State properties in the region span the range of intended recreational settings and development levels. At one end of the spectrum, properties such as Hartman Creek and Buckhorn State Parks provide well developed recreation settings with developed campgrounds, miles of trails, picnic areas, swim areas and boat launches. In addition, properties like the Black River State Forest also contribute to the extensive trail network for hiking, biking, ATV/UTV riding and other activities.

At the other end are properties like Quincy Bluff and Wetlands State Natural Area, which boast a unique mosaic landscape of wet-mesic forest, sedge meadow, pine barrens, shrub-carr and sand prairie. These types of properties can provide some limited recreation opportunities for low-impact activities such as hunting, bird watching and nature study, but their primary purpose is not necessarily to provide recreation opportunities requiring development or infrastructure.



State & Federal Land in Adams County:

Dark green – WDNR Fee Title
Purple – WDNR Easement
Light brown – Voluntary Public Access Land
Dark blue – Board of Commissioners Public Land
Pink – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

²⁷ Excerpted from SCORP 2019-2023, Appendix 8.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The State Board of Commissioners of Public Land (BCPL) owns over 400 acres in the region. These lands are scattered throughout the region in tracts typically several hundred acres or smaller in size. The BCPL manages its lands primarily for forest products. Many of the BCPL lands are isolated or contain wetlands and generally have limited recreation potential.

Trends in Western Sands Region

Strong Increase

- ❖ Bicycling – winter, fat tire
- ❖ Camping – RV / pop-up
- ❖ Bicycling – mountain biking
- ❖ ATVs / UTVs

Moderate Increase

- ❖ Canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding
- ❖ Bicycling – recreational, rail-trail
- ❖ Picnic area, day use areas, beach areas
- ❖ Hiking, walking, running on trails
- ❖ Paddle boarding
- ❖ Dog walking on trails
- ❖ Target firearm shooting at designated ranges

Slight Increase

- ❖ Fishing
- ❖ Motor boating
- ❖ Snowshoeing
- ❖ Cross country skiing – groomed trails
- ❖ Driving 4WD vehicles
- ❖ Horseback riding



Fat tire biking in northern Wisconsin and paddling Petenwell Lake. Images courtesy (from top): American Birkebeiner, Wisconsin River Trips.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



Stable

- ❖ Target archery at designated ranges
- ❖ Bird, wildlife watching
- ❖ Nature photography
- ❖ Swimming in lakes, ponds, rivers
- ❖ Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.
- ❖ Hunting – turkey
- ❖ Hunting – small game
- ❖ Hunting – big game
- ❖ Cross country skiing – ungroomed trails
- ❖ Trapping



Image courtesy Morels Adams County.

Slight Decrease

- ❖ Camping – tent
- ❖ Riding dual-sport motorcycles

Moderate Decrease

- ❖ Snowmobiling

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. The need to provide opportunities for residents to visit places after work or for a couple of hours on a weekend is a priority. 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 down- towns of our cities and Towns, 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.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

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 Wi-Fi while others wanting neither – recreation providers will need to collaborate and coordinate on providing the camping experiences best suited to different public lands.

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.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



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EIGHT: PARK AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

Standards provide a means by which to assess existing facilities to determine whether current and future needs are met. These standards provide context but are not intended to be a determinant of need.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Most local governments rely upon needs analyses to determine a desired level of service. The purpose of such an assessment is to ensure that adequate park and recreation facilities are available for residents and user groups. These analyses may be based on established national standards, current local needs, existing natural and cultural resources, or some combination thereof. Public opinion is a key component of the needs assessment process.

Standards-Based Needs

The most widely adopted standards are based on early National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Guidelines. First issued in 1934, they reflected the experience and recommendations of a group of outdoor recreation professionals rather than systematic research of local needs and desires. As a result, communities across the U.S. possess nearly identical standards though geography and population vary greatly.

- ❖ Recommendation of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons.
- ❖ A classification system for parks, which vary in size, amenities, and service area.
- ❖ Facility Development standards as a guideline for the number of facilities needed per capita.

Although widely accepted, there is increased recognition that national-based standards may not be providing communities what they really want. A growing school of park and recreation planners argue uniform standards:

- ❖ Emphasize how much, rather than how good.
- ❖ Reflect past desires and expectations rather than today's needs.
- ❖ Do not recognize the unique conditions, resources, and needs of different communities and cultural groups.
- ❖ Are often unrealistic and difficult to implement.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



The main critique of uniform standards is that they may contribute to underachievement in more ambitious communities. Demand-based standards go a step further and may better address the specific needs of Rome.

Demand-Based Needs

Demand-based needs assessments are closely tied to the results of public input, participation rates, and current usage data. The results of the demand-based assessment will refine land acquisition and programming needs and identify facility provision priorities.

Resource-based Needs

Finally, resource-based needs are those constructed upon the physical and environmental resources that provide the underlying foundation upon which the parks and recreation system rests. These include creeks and streams; woodlands, wetlands, and remnant grasslands; historic and cultural landscapes; the Wisconsin River, and Rome's numerous lakes.

Table 5: Parks and Open Space Classifications

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria / Service Area	Size Criteria
Mini-Park (also Pocket Park)	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Less than 1/4-mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size.
Neighborhood Park	The basic unit of the park system and the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	1/4-to-1/2-mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum. 5-10 acres optimal.
School Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of park, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex, and special use.	Determined by location and size of school district property.	Variable, depends on function.
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open space.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2-to-3-mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
Special Purpose Park	A park or recreation area that meets a specific need or serves a particular purpose.	Entire community.	Varies with the size of the area and land available.
Large Urban Park	Large urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually	Minimum necessary to of accommodate desired uses, with



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	neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community- based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open space.	serves the entire community.	50 acres being typical minimum.
Natural Resource Area	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Greenway	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40-80 acres optimal.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose visit.	Variable- dependent on specific use.	Variable.
Private Park / Recreation Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable- dependent on specific use.	Variable.
Source: National Recreation and Park Association.			

ASSESSING PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS AND DEMAND

NRPA regularly develops outdoor recreation standards based upon national surveying. Such standards can be effective as a guide to determining whether existing facilities and services are sufficient to meet existing (and future) needs. Within communities of similar size, the determination of adequacy may be influenced by several variables, including:

- ❖ The culture of the community.
- ❖ The percentage of the population represented by seniors, youth, motorized and silent sports enthusiasts, etc.
- ❖ The availability of natural assets such as lakes, forests, grasslands, and the like.
- ❖ Proximity to state and county parks and recreation facilities.
- ❖ Seasonal fluctuations in non-resident population.

NRPA's 2021 Field Report recommends municipalities provide one park for every 2,277 residents served and 9.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.²⁸ The report was drawn from the results of surveys submitted by nearly 1,000 agencies (i.e., municipalities) across the U.S. The data was used to establish typical population-based benchmarks for parks and recreation facilities. The best

²⁸ Source: NRPA Agency Performance Review, National Recreation and Park Association, 2021.



standards are those deemed adequate by residents. Regardless of how they are developed, standards must:²⁹

- ❖ Reflect the needs and lifestyles of current residents and the area being served.
- ❖ Provide a basis for measuring achievement of community objectives, both quantitative and qualitative.
- ❖ Be attainable within a reasonable time frame and with available or reasonably anticipated funding sources.
- ❖ Be based on sound principles, information, and a credible development process, and flexible enough to handle unanticipated situations and rapidly changing needs.

ACCESSIBILITY

Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II³⁰

Title II prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services of public entities. It applies to all state and local governments, their departments and agencies, and any other instrumentalities or special purpose districts of state or local governments. It clarifies the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, for public transportation systems that receive federal financial assistance, and extends coverage to all public entities that provide public transportation, if they receive federal financial assistance.

This title outlines the administrative processes to be followed, including requirements for self-evaluation and planning; requirements for making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination; architectural barriers to be identified; and the need for effective communication with people with hearing, vision and speech disabilities. This title is regulated and enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice.

²⁹ Source: Criteria for Developing Outdoor Recreation Standards, Seymour Gold.

³⁰ Source: United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2022.



NINE: PARKS AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the CORP is to guide the Town in the acquisition, development, and enhancement of the recreational resources necessary to meet current and future needs. The recommendations presented in this section are based upon a number of public participation and community engagement activities, a review of state and national recreation standards, and an inventory of local and regional parks and recreation facilities. The recommendations are also guided by the goals and objectives presented in Chapter Three: Community Engagement. The timing of park acquisition and development and improvements to existing facilities will coincide with the demand for recreational facilities and be based upon the availability of funding.

POLICY-BASED PARK AND RECREATION PLANNING

Consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan, it is the policy of the Town of Rome to provide *accessible, equitable, and sustainable* parks and recreation facilities. A fourth category, General, applies to all other improvements and additions to the Town's park and recreation system.



Accessibility

Parks, trails, and recreation facilities accessible to people of all abilities.



Equity

Parks, trails, and recreation facilities free from cultural, locational, economic, and other barriers that preclude participation and enjoyment by all residents.



Sustainability

Parks, trails, and recreation facilities designed and maintained to preserve, enhance, or restore water quality, wildlife habitat, and natural landscapes.



General

General recommendations for parks, trails, and recreation facilities.



Equity in Access

Equality and equity are not synonyms. Equity in access is achieved when a park system provides just and fair quantity, proximity, and connections to quality parks, green spaces and recreation facilities, as well as programming that are safe, inclusive, culturally relevant and welcoming to everyone.

Source: NRPA, 2021

Table 6: Policy-Based Recommendations

Policy Area	Recommendation
	Conduct system-wide audit for compliance with ADA requirements.
	Transition all non-compliant playground equipment and recreation facilities to ADA-compliance.
	Ensure universal access to parks, trails, boat launches, and other outdoor recreation facilities.
	Provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities connecting neighborhoods to community destination nodes.
	Utilize parks for community gatherings, cultural events, and local festivals.
	Incorporate natural landscaping and functional habitat into all parks. Grow, not mow.
	Consider transitioning to Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management systems when existing systems require repair and replacement.
	Identify opportunities for installation of solar and wind energy systems to reduce utility costs.
	Transition to LED lighting fixtures.
	Incorporate community gardens and 'food forests' into existing and proposed parks.
	Plant trees and prairie plants...lots of trees and prairie plants.



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GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 7: General Park and Recreation Recommendations

Policy Areas	Recommendations
	Ensure all parks are regularly maintained, welcoming, and safe.
	Provide restrooms and drinking water facilities at all developed parks.
	Install bicycle racks at all park locations.
	Provide pedestrian and bicycle access from all parks to the Route of the Badger Trail, via sidewalks, trails, and on-road bicycle lanes.
	Provide sufficient trash and recycling receptacles at all parks.
	Regularly communicate with user groups regarding facilities
	Provide sufficient resources in support of parks, trails, recreation facilities, and recreational programs.
	Make parks available for use by community groups.
	Encourage local entrepreneurs to use park system for yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, art, music, and similar classes.
	Develop Town of Rome Parks & Recreation Wayfinding System and park signage.
	Hold and promote a summer-long 'Movie in the Park' program rotating between select parks.
	Partner with School District and local businesses to create a multi-cultural, system-wide park and recreation beautification and public art program.
	Establish Food Truck events.
	Have each park host at least community one event per year.
	Establish free Wi-Fi hot spots in parks and other Town-owned properties.
	Allow leashed pets in parks.



Accessible Playgrounds

Playing at the playground is an essential part of childhood. It helps kids get the physical exercise they need to stay healthy and develop critical cognitive, emotional, and social skills. Every kid deserves the chance to learn, have fun and create joyful memories on the playground. An accessible playground is one that offers a range of play experiences to children of varying abilities. There must be:

- ❖ An accessible path from the building or parking lot to the edge of the play area.
- ❖ An accessible path from the edge of the play area to the play equipment.
- ❖ Surfacing that complies with ASTM 1951 (Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment).

Once a child is in the play area, they must be able to access the play equipment by either moving out of their mobility device onto the playground structure (such as a transfer station) or by direct play structure access in their mobility device (such as a ramp).

Source: 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, 2021



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ADDITIONS AND ENHANCEMENTS TO CURRENT PARKS

The recommendations below are in addition to those presented as Policy-Based and General Park & Recreation Recommendations.

Table 8: Park Additions and Enhancements

Park	Recommendation	Policy Areas			
Rome Town Center Park	Implement Town Center Master Plan (see page 38 of this report)				
	Purchase equipment necessary to host movies in the park on the Great Lawn				
	Implement Food Truck events				
	Host monthly community events (movies, music, festivals, etc.)				
Gazebo Activity Area	Consider transitioning lawn to native, 'no mow' grass.				
Walden Park	Improve accessibility.				

FUTURE OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

The following outdoor recreation facilities would provide potentially welcomed additions to the Town's outdoor recreation system.

All-Abilities Park

An inclusive park, or all-abilities park, is a universally designed, sensory-rich environment that enables children to develop physically, socially, and emotionally.³¹ With inclusive playgrounds, the objective is to include everyone. They are thoughtfully designed to provide a safe place where children of all abilities can play together and are developmentally appropriate for children with and without disabilities.

³¹ Excerpted from: Inclusive Playgrounds: How to Plan, Design, and Build Inclusive Playgrounds, General Recreation Inc., 2021.



K.A.S.H. Park, Stevens Point, WI. Image courtesy Nicole Hardy.

An inclusive playground takes away the barriers to exclusion, both physical and social, providing a sensory rich experience for all. An inclusive playground focuses on the following components to ensure a positive, engaging experience for all children:³²

Core Elements of Inclusive Playgrounds

- ❖ Physical Accommodations. Accommodating physical disabilities is one component of an inclusive playground. This includes meeting ADA requirements by providing a wheelchair accessible route and ramps/transfer points. Customized equipment such as special swings allow all kids to enjoy the playground as it is meant to be enjoyed.
- ❖ Engaging. Inclusive playgrounds provide multiple differing opportunities for children to explore. They integrate all the senses and encourages social play. There is a little something for everyone including those that like to climb, run, spin, slide, swing and more.

³² Excerpted from: What is an Inclusive Playground, May Recreation, 2021.



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- ❖ Integrated. A true inclusive playground doesn't mean that there is special equipment in a separate area off to the side, but rather a space designed as a cohesive community where play opportunities are integrated throughout. This is important for social development.
- ❖ Promote Inclusion. Just as the name suggests, inclusive playgrounds have another mission that goes beyond the physical accommodations and specialized equipment. These playgrounds do so much for the community. They educate and bring families and people together. They stress the importance of inclusion in everyday activities, no matter the ability level. They prove that kids of all abilities enjoy exploring, learning, interacting and having fun together. They stress compassion and, well, inclusion of those that are different from you. That's a lesson that benefits us all.

Size & Location

The ideal site for an all-abilities park will be 5-7 acres in size, easily accessible by bicycle, and with full access to required utilities.

Motorized Trail Systems

- ❖ Continue to support Sno-Bandits and Monroe Prairie ATV/UTV clubs with the maintenance of snowmobile and ATV trails.
- ❖ Work with Adams County and Monroe Prairie ATV Club to identify trails that can be safely used in the winter.
- ❖ Identify key tracts of Meteor Timber land for purchase to provide permanent snowmobile trail easement rights.
- ❖ Provide well-marked ATV/UTV on-road access from Rome Town Center to key destination nodes including Dyracuse, the golf courses, and WTA Homegrounds, among others.



Image courtesy Rome Sno-Bandits.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

- ❖ Establish 'Link the Lakes', a Town-wide system of interconnected walking and bicycling paths providing access to and from neighborhoods, parks, regional trails, and other key destinations.
- ❖ Establish on-street bike paths: on Akron Drive, between CTH Z and 10th Avenue; on 14th Avenue, between lake Arrowhead and Akron Drive; on 10th Avenue between CTH D and border with Town of Saratoga; on Archer Avenue, between CTH Z and 11th Avenue; on 11th Avenue, between CTH O and Apache Drive; on CTH O between 11th Avenue and 8th Avenue; and, on 8th Avenue, from CTH O to Apache Avenue.
- ❖ Establish a pedestrian/bicycle tunnel under STH 13 at Apache Avenue consistent with Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan.



General Recommendations

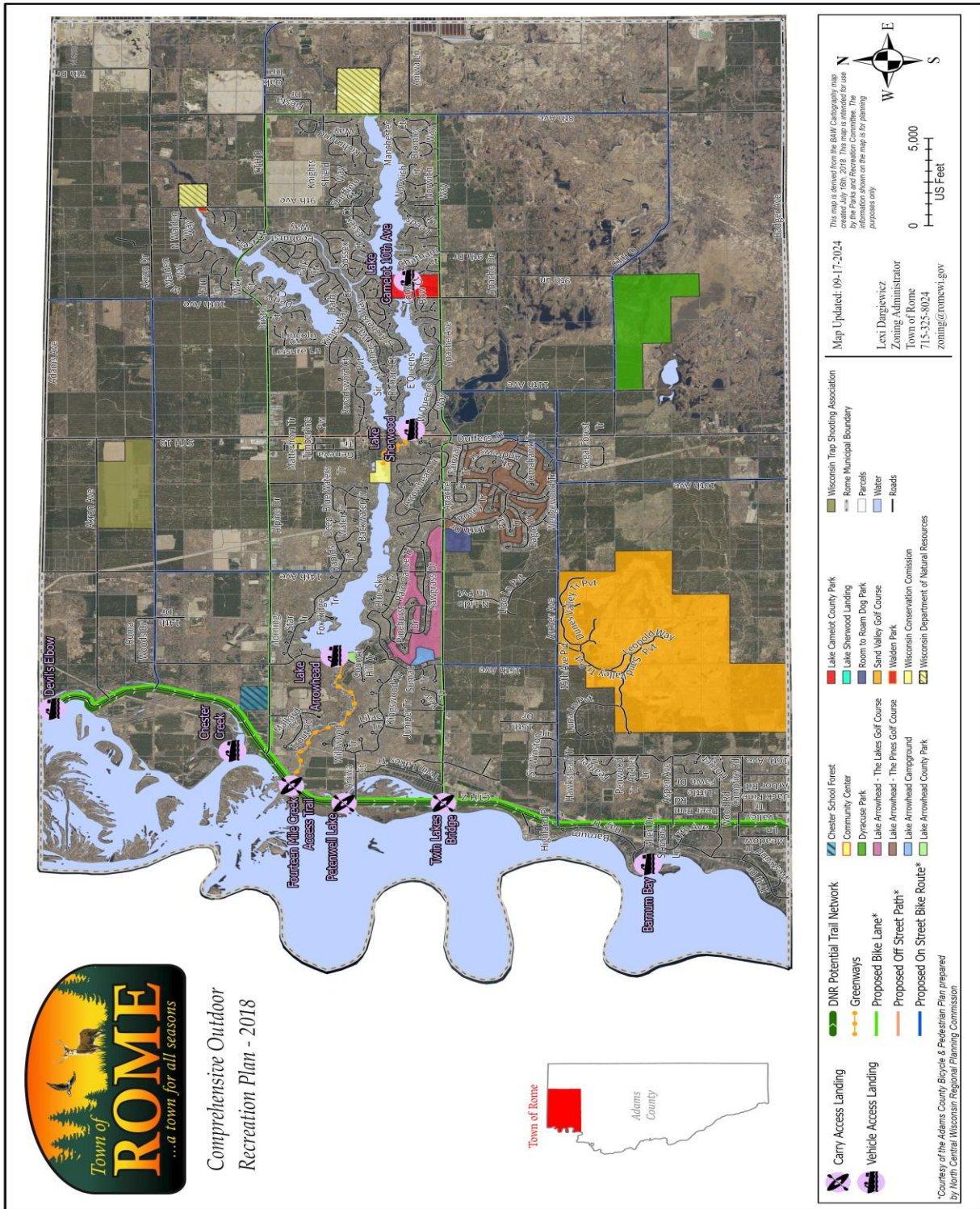
- ❖ Develop passive recreation areas on Town-owned parcels.
- ❖ Develop Town of Rome Water Trail for Tri-Lakes, Fourteen Mile Creek, and eastern shore of Lake Petenwell.
- ❖ Explore opportunities to acquire small (1-3 acre) parcels in close proximity to nearby existing and proposed residential areas for development as neighborhood parks.
- ❖ Identify locations for less than one-acre, single purpose placemaking spaces; adventure/exploration parks; community gardens; and picnic areas, among others.
- ❖ Create outdoor recreation wayfinding system.

Intergovernmental

- ❖ Establish bike lanes on appropriate roads, when allowable, to provide opportunities for safe and efficient bicycle transportation and recreation opportunities.
- ❖ Work with neighboring municipalities, Adams County, and WDNR to establish Adams County extension of Wisconsin River Water Trail.
- ❖ Work with Adams County to add accessible canoe/kayak launches and bicycle racks at Lake Arrowhead and Lake Camelot County Parks, and canoe/kayak portage at the Lake Camelot impoundment.
- ❖ Work with WDNR and Adams County to establish proposed Wisconsin River Scenic Byway.
- ❖ Work with Tri-Lakes Management to continue to improve the water quality in the area.



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TEN: FUNDING OPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

A variety of funding sources are available for outdoor recreation and trail projects. These range from payments or land dedication by property developers, federal and state grants and loans, and direct expenditures from the general fund. Private sector fund raising is also a viable option, particularly when recognition is offered in return for investment (naming rights, signage, engraved brick pavers, etc.).

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES

General Fund

The primary sources of all public park and recreation funding in the U.S. is the municipal general fund, primarily via capital improvements planning. A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) provides the means of planning for major project costs by creating a multiyear schedule for physical public improvements. The schedule is based on the projection of fiscal resources and prioritization of improvements five to six years into the future. Capital improvements include new or expanded physical facilities that are relatively large in size, expensive, and permanent. A park and recreation-oriented CIP lays out a community's capital needs and purchase plans, including:

- ❖ Street improvements (e.g., widening, crosswalks, signalization, corridor studies, etc.)
- ❖ Park acquisition and improvements
- ❖ Pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Capital items are generally defined as those costing \$5,000 or more and anticipated to last at least five years. The CIP process helps to ensure that improvements are made in a logical order and do not surprise local officials or taxpayers. It allows a community to focus on needs and goals and establish rational priorities.

Park Impact Fees³³

Wis. Stat. §§ 236.45 and 66.0617 provide for the collection of impact fees allowing Wisconsin municipalities to pay for anticipated capital costs associated with new development. Capital costs refer to the one-time cost of constructing, expanding, or improving physical, public facilities such as highways, sewage treatment systems, and outdoor recreation, among others. Prior to developing or

³³ Source: Planning Implementation Tools: Impact Fees, UW Stevens Point Center for Land Use Education, 2008.



imposing an impact fee, a municipality must conduct a detailed needs assessment to determine the portion of facility costs necessitated by the new development.

The impact fee may not be used to pay for inadequacies in the current system. Rather than distributing costs associated with new development among existing property owners (generally in the form of increased property taxes), impact fees are collected from the developer or property owner at the time of building permit. They also do not cover operational or maintenance costs, which can be significant over the lifetime of a facility. Once established, impact fees are typically incorporated within a Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance.

User Fees

Local government may impose user fees to offset the costs of park improvements, recreation programs, and maintenance. These fees are discretionary and are typically established by the elected body. User fees are more common with certain recreation facilities than others. Examples include RV campgrounds, indoor skate parks, and RC fields, among numerous others.

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Programs

The Wisconsin Legislature created the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program (KNSP) in 1989 to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries, and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation. The conservation and recreation goals of the Stewardship Program are achieved through the acquisition of land and easements, development of recreational facilities, and restoration of wildlife habitat.

Funding for KNSP comes from state general obligation bonds. The State sells bonds to investors to raise funding, then repays the debt over subsequent years. The application deadline is May 1 of each year. Applications should be submitted to the local WDNR Regional Office. KNSP subprograms include:

- ❖ [Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks](#). KNSP sets aside 50% of the funds in the Local Assistance Program for projects that improve community recreation areas and acquire land for public outdoor recreation. Funds are allocated on a regional basis with 70% distributed on the basis of each county's proportionate share of the state population and 30% distributed equally to each county. Applicants compete against other applicants from their region. Funds may be used for both land acquisition projects and development projects for nature-based outdoor recreation. Nonprofit conservation organizations may only apply for funds for land acquisition. They are not eligible for funds for development projects.
- ❖ [Acquisition of Development Rights](#). The purpose of the Acquisition of Development Rights Program is to protect natural, agricultural or forest lands that enhance and/or provide nature-based outdoor recreation. 'Development Rights' are the rights of a landowner to develop their property to the greatest extent allowed under state and local laws.



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Recreational Trails Program

Municipal governments and incorporated organizations are eligible to receive reimbursement for 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.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a National Park Service program administered in all states providing matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Funds received by the WDNR for this program are split between WDNR projects and grants to local governments for outdoor recreation activities. Grants cover 50% of eligible project costs. Eligible projects include:

- ❖ Land acquisition or development projects that will provide opportunities for public outdoor recreation.
- ❖ Property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries, and reservoirs that will provide water-based outdoor recreation.
- ❖ Property that provides special recreation opportunities, such as floodplains, wetlands, and areas adjacent to scenic highways.
- ❖ Natural areas and outstanding scenic areas, where the objective is to preserve the scenic or natural values, including wildlife areas and areas of physical or biological importance. These areas shall be open to the public for outdoor recreation use to the extent that the natural attributes of the areas will not be seriously impaired or lost.
- ❖ Land or development within urban areas for day use picnic areas.
- ❖ Land or development of nature-based recreation trails.
- ❖ Development of basic outdoor recreation facilities.
- ❖ Renovation of existing outdoor recreation facilities which are in danger of being lost for public use.

ATV / UTV Programs

- ❖ [ATV Enhancement](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Annual funding to a non-profit organization that promotes the safe and wise use of ATVs and UTVs, ATV/UTV riding and ATV/UTV education.
- ❖ [ATV Patrols](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Issued to Wisconsin county sheriff departments that participate in ATV enforcement efforts.
- ❖ [ATV Trails](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Issued to counties, towns, cities, villages, and tribes to acquire, insure, develop, and maintain ATV trails, areas, and routes.
- ❖ [Motorized Stewardship Grants](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Counties, towns, cities, villages, and WI tribes are eligible to request funding for new bridges on existing funded trails, major bridge reconstruction/rehabilitation & rehabilitation of funded trails.

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Boating

- ❖ [Boat Patrol Grants](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Issued to Wisconsin counties and municipalities that participate in boating enforcement efforts.
- ❖ [Boating Infrastructure Grant Program](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Tier 1 for smaller projects that add transient boating infrastructure to the area. Tier 2 for larger projects and are competitively judged at the national level.
- ❖ [Clean Vessel Act](#). Eligibility & Purpose: A nationwide competitive federal grant program that provides funding to states as part of an effort to clean up the nation's waterways. The CVA encourages states to subcontract with private marinas/businesses as well as local units of government to construct projects.
- ❖ [Recreational Boating Facilities](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Counties, towns, cities, villages, WI tribes, sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts and qualified lake associations for recreational boating facility projects.

Habitat and Hunting

- ❖ [Habitat Area](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Protects and restores important wildlife habitat in Wisconsin to expand opportunities for wildlife-based recreation such as hunting, trapping, hiking, bird watching, fishing, nature appreciation and wildlife viewing. This grant program is part of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.
- ❖ [Hunter Recruitment, Development, Training and Education Grant Program](#). Eligibility & purpose: The primary purpose of the Hunter Recruitment, Development, Training and Education grant program is to provide cost sharing grants to local clubs, organizations, communities, governments, Wisconsin Tribes, colleges, universities, and technical schools to ensure the education, training and development of safe and ethical hunters and mentors.
- ❖ [Shooting Range Grant Program](#). Eligibility & purpose: 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.

Snowmobile Trails

- ❖ [Snowmobile Patrols](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Wisconsin county sheriff departments that participate in snowmobile enforcement efforts.
- ❖ [Snowmobile Trail Aids](#). Eligibility & Purpose: Counties and WI tribes may apply for funding to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails for public use and enjoyment.



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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) 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 was authorized in 2012 by federal transportation legislation, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP- 21). TAP combines three previously separate programs: Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancements, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program. Eligible projects include:

- ❖ Trail facilities for non-motorized transport.
- ❖ Constructing safe routes for non-drivers.
- ❖ Converting abandoned railroad corridors for non-motorized transportation.
- ❖ Constructing turnouts, scenic overlooks and viewing areas.
- ❖ Community improvement activities.
- ❖ Any environmental mitigation activity.
- ❖ The Recreational Trails Program.
- ❖ The Safe Routes to School Program.
- ❖ Projects in the right of way of former interstate system routes or other divided highways.

All TAP projects are funded 80% federally with a 20% local match. Projects must be completed within approximately six years or will risk loss of funding.

WISCONSIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Community Development Investment Grant

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is administered by the Community Development Investment Grant. It supports urban, small city, and rural community redevelopment efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community-driven efforts. Grant recipients must demonstrate significant, measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values, and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners. The grant is available on a continual basis without specific application deadlines.



PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS

PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program

The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride. Funds may be used for projects such as:

- ❖ Bike paths, lanes, trails, and bridges.
- ❖ Mountain bike facilities.
- ❖ Bike parks and pump tracks.
- ❖ BMX facilities.
- ❖ End-of-trip facilities such as bike racks, bike parking, and bike storage.
- ❖ Bike facility engineering and design work.
- ❖ Bike facility construction costs including materials, labor, and equipment rental.

Grant requests may be made for amounts up to \$10,000, but funding may not exceed 50% of the project budget. Grant cycles are held one to two times per year.

Kodak American Greenways Program

The American Greenways Program is the nation's longest running community-based grant program that expands and enhances our nation's network of greenways, blueways, trails and natural areas. The program is a partnership between Eastman Kodak Company, the National Geographic Society, and The Conservation Fund.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Other sources of funding involve more work and dedication but can contribute to making a project reality. Examples of local fund raising include:

- ❖ Buy-a-Foot (or Yard)-of-Trail campaigns.
- ❖ Local excise tax on bicycles or outdoor equipment.
- ❖ Matching funds from local retailers.
- ❖ Fund raising event - - outdoor concert, festival, etc. - - targeted to the project in question.