SHEBOYGAN

COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

APRIL 2023

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Thank you to everyone in the public, the elected officials, City staff, and the steering committee that contributed to this plan throughout the engagement process of this project. Without your valuable input this plan would not be possible.
Cheers to Sheboygan Parks!

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INTRODUCTION

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SHEBOYGAN PARKS TODAY

The goal of this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) is to provide a vision, framework, and resource for the City of Sheboygan to guide parks, recreation, and open spaces over a five-year time horizon.

City parks can increase property values, add to community beautification, support the local economy, and help promote a healthy, active lifestyle. Parks are a platform for expression, play, and fun for residents and visitors of all ages, from sparkling seasonal holiday celebrations to competitive displays of passion, skill, and practice. This Plan was created in close partnership with the Staff, elected officials, residents, and visitors of Sheboygan to understand the community's challenges and reflect the community's priorities. The feedback from this robust engagement process was combined with a review of peer communities to provide comparisons and benchmarks.

This Plan can be used to guide park management and recreational programming for the next five-year period. In addition, this adopted Plan makes the City eligible to receive grant funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Stewardship Program for park development projects, the preservation of land and water-based natural assets, and recreational boating and access projects on Lake Michigan.

▲ Sheboygan is known as the "Spirit on The Lake."

Welcome to

SHEBOYGAN PARKS!

Sheboygan's first city parks were acquired over a hundred years ago in 1917. First, Vollrath Park was deeded to the City, and next, the City purchased Cole Woods, soon renamed as Evergreen Park, both of which still stand proudly today. In a little over a century, the City of Sheboygan has nourished a thriving and popular system of parks.

The City's previous Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP), adopted in 2016, has facilitated a park system that brings enjoyment of both land and water to residents and visitors. This Plan (2023) serves as an update to unify the community's vision for the park and recreation system and outline challenges and opportunities for the next five years.

What began as land identified as "Sheboygan," a Chippewa Indian word translating roughly to "passageway or waterway between the lakes," has now grown to encompass over 700 acres of City parks.

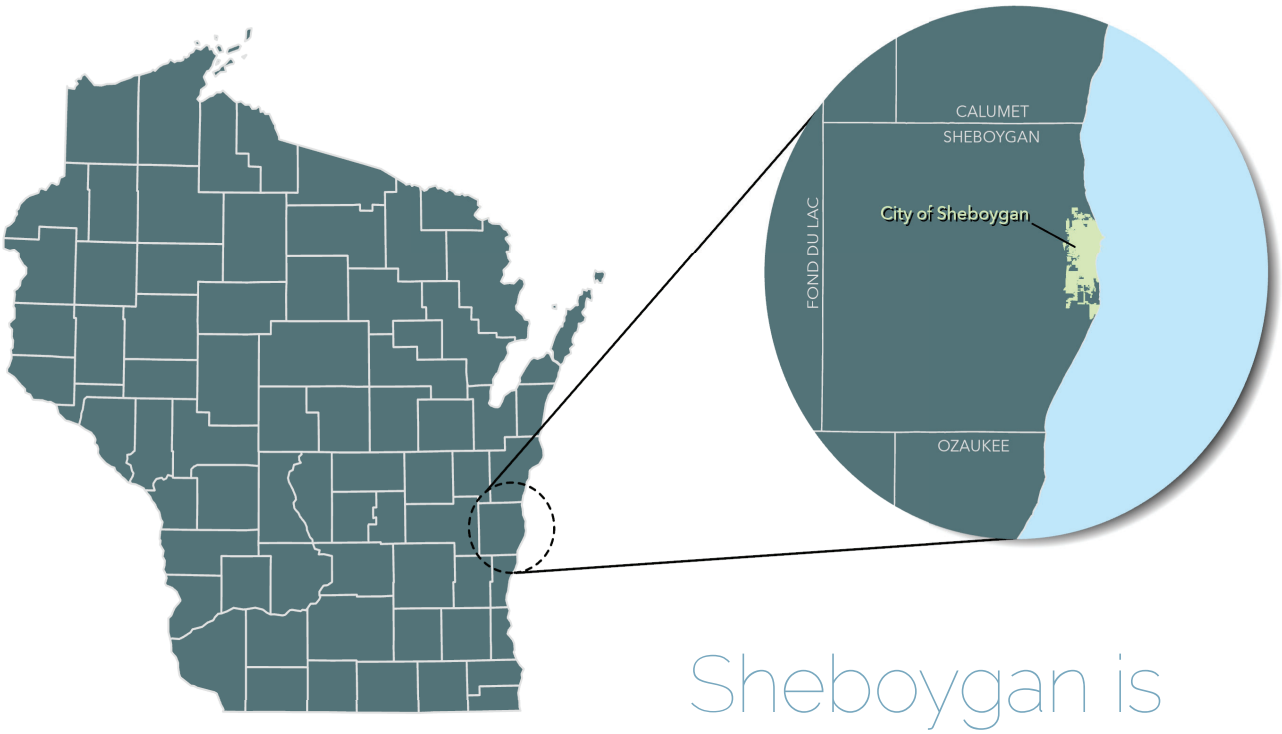
▼ Pigeon River Estuary.

▲ Fountain Park.

▲ Shelter with picnic tables at Cleveland Park.

▲ Jaycee Quarry Park water inflatables.

Loving the Lakeside



Sheboygan is known as the "Malibu of the Midwest!"

The City of Sheboygan boasts two miles of public beaches along the Lake Michigan waterfront. The City's sandy beaches are prime for kite-flying and enjoying the view from shore. Watersports like surfing and stand-up paddle boarding are popular. In fact, surfing here is so popular, the crowd has dubbed Sheboygan the "Malibu of the Midwest!" Surf and sand share visitors' attraction with the Lottie Cooper, an 1800's shipwreck preserved and displayed near the waterfront, and the picturesque lighthouse. Sheboygan's lakeside parks are a draw for both residents and visitors throughout the year, offering rich recreational opportunities.

▶ Peaceful bench to enjoy views of lake Michigan at North Point Park.

▲ Lottie Cooper Shipwreck at Deland Park.

Convergence of History & Modern Amenities

SHEBOYGAN'S PARKS ARE A TRIBUTE TO THE CITY'S RICH TALES OF THE PAST AND DIVERSITY OF INTERESTS OF ITS RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

▲ Sign welcoming visitors to Indian Mound Park.

▲ Sheboygan Dog Park welcomes furry friends

Kiwanis Park showcases the original Fieldhouse with its familiar wood-paneled walls and towering stone fireplace. Simultaneously, wheels are always welcome at the neighboring Kiwanis Skate Park, which welcomed its first skateboarders, bike riders, and scooter owners in 2018. Seating rings built by the Works Progress Administration of the 1930's "New Deal" offer a spot to take a break in Evergreen Park, while in the winter season, technology shines through with the City's annual "Making Spirits Bright" Christmas lights show in the same park. The interactive splash pad at Worker's Water Street Park keeps smiles blooming for the whole family, the hike/bike/ski trails at Jaycee Quarry Park keeps hearts pumping, and the Sheboygan Dog Park keeps tails wagging.

Sheboygan Parks Management

It takes a team to operate and maintain the City's park system.

The City of Sheboygan Parks and Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works oversees the ongoing maintenance and management of the parks, grounds and green spaces, buildings, and shelters across the City. The Parks and Forestry Division is overseen by the Superintendent of Parks and Forestry. Meanwhile, recreational facilities on school property including soccer, baseball, and softball fields are maintained by the Community Recreation Department of the Sheboygan Area School District (SASD). Recreation programs offered throughout the City are planned, managed, and staffed by the SASD. These programs include everything from youth sports, adult recreational leagues, adult enrichment, and childcare for school-aged children.

The Department consists of a staff of ten members including the Director, three supervisors, three secretaries, one childcare coordinator, one aquatic coordinator, and one maintenance staffer. The Community Recreation Department's mission is as follows: The City of Sheboygan also offers an "Adopt a Park or Trail Program" to provide volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups to take an active role that contributes to the beautification of local parks and trails." These combined efforts from City and School District departments and community volunteers are instrumental in creating vibrant opportunities for residents and visitors to recreate and enjoy all the amenities Sheboygan has to offer.

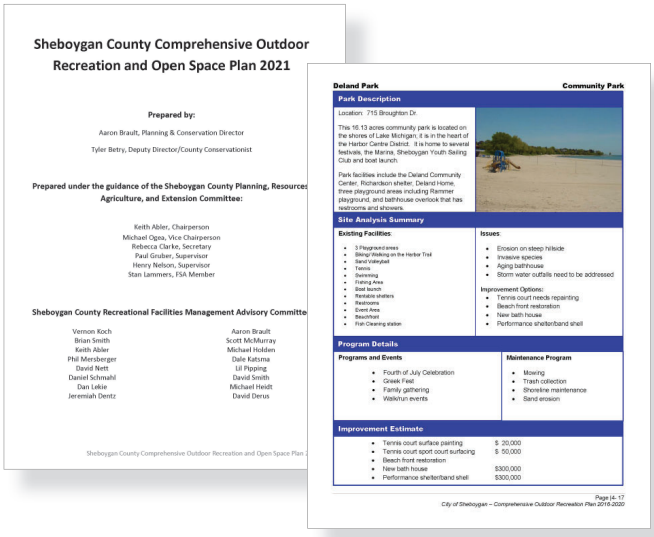
"In the interest of life-long enrichment, the Sheboygan Area School District-Community Recreation Department serves and supports the community through development, initiation, coordination, and support of a variety of recreational activities and facilities for people of all ages."

▲ General King Park

Planning Context & Process

The 2023 City of Sheboygan Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan incorporates relevant past and ongoing planning efforts at the City and County level to ensure priorities, goals, and action items are aligned where possible. Some of the plans, studies, and reports that were consulted and referenced for inclusion in this Plan include:

- City of Sheboygan Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2016-2020)
- City of Sheboygan Capital Improvement Plan (2022-2026)
- Sheboygan County Park and Open Space Plan (2021)
- Wisconsin Statewide CORP (SCORP, 2019-2023)

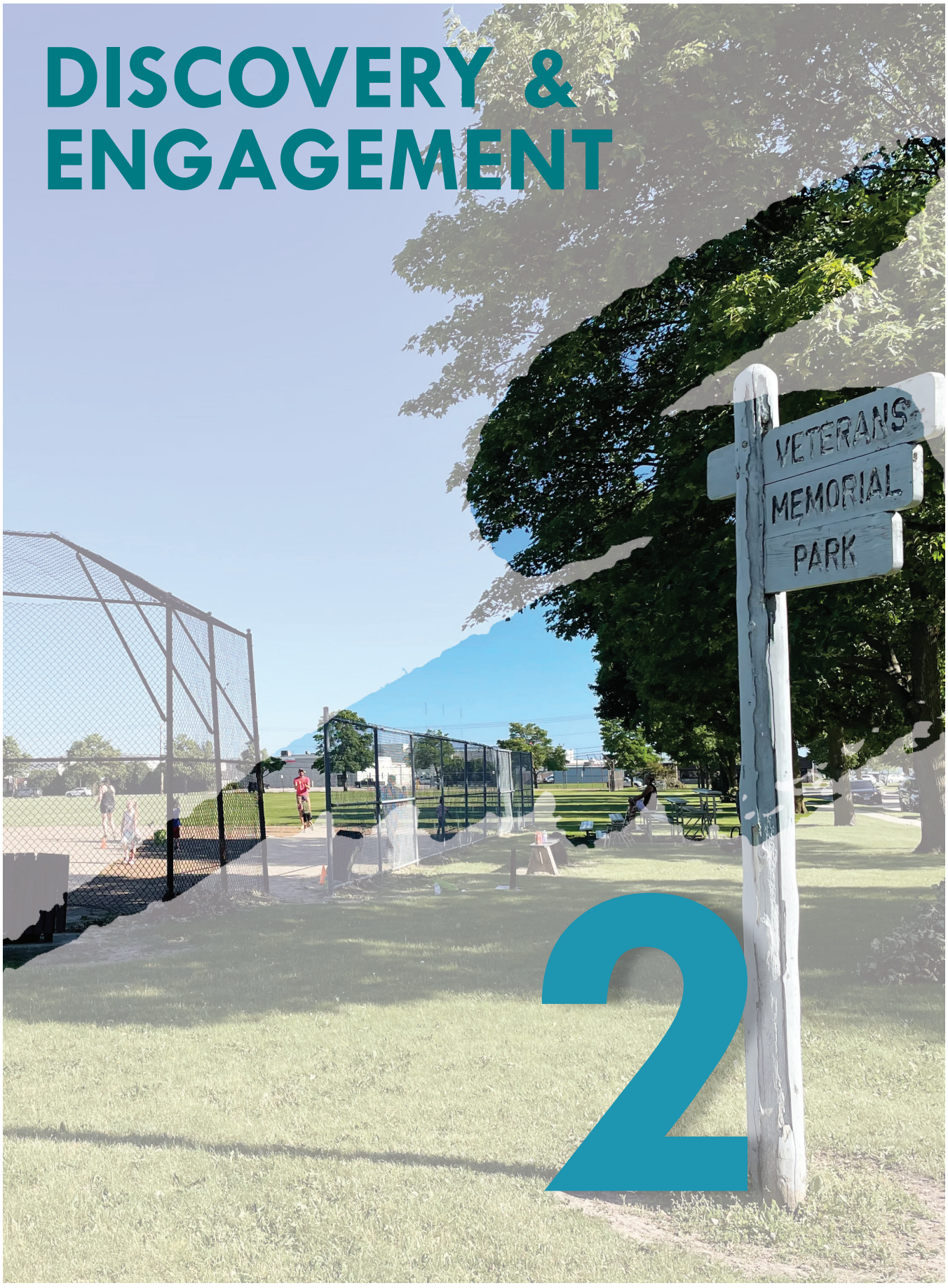


This Plan builds upon previously established goals, objectives, and recommendations with the inclusion of new considerations and updated application of updated national best practices for parks and recreation planning. Some past goals may be familiar and have been reaffirmed, while new ones have been identified. In order to maintain eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Stewardship Funds, a community must have a current Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that has been adopted within the past five years. This is the City of Sheboygan's second CORP. The planning process for this Plan began in November of 2021 and continued through its adoption in 2023. The Plan was adopted [ADOPTED DATE.]

The planning process centered community engagement to understand the needs and priorities of park users and stakeholders in the City of Sheboygan. Feedback was solicited via a project website, online survey, and focus groups from residents, visitors, public officials, and City Staff. In order to reach stakeholders in a variety of ways, a combination of virtual (online) and in-person activities enabled respondents ample opportunities to respond in a manner that worked with their schedule and made them feel safe and valued. The planning team, consisting of City Staff and the planning consultant GRAEF, analyzed all feedback according to what is working well, what needs improvement, and where there are opportunities. The community engagement process is further described in the next chapter of this Plan.

This CORP was designed to be updated in five years, as designated by DNR requirements. The update process should begin with a review of the Implementation Plan to identify the status of each action item. Action items that have been accomplished should be noted and success celebrated! Action items in progress or those that have yet to be undertaken should be reviewed for relevance and incorporated into the CORP update.

DISCOVERY & ENGAGEMENT



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COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

"Spirit on the Lake"

Spirit of the Lake: Sheboygan's History, Population, & Location

The City of Sheboygan, proudly known as "Spirit on the Lake," is a community home to 49,929 people as of the 2020 U.S. Census.

Residents have been attracted to the coastal community on the water's edge for centuries, beginning with a Pottawatomie Village at the mouth of the Sheboygan River, followed by the establishment of the first fur trading post in 1818. Nearly twenty years later in 1836, Sheboygan's first hotel and post office were built. Due to the growing population, Sheboygan County was officially established, splitting from Brown County. As stores and ships began to crop up, Sheboygan incorporated into a Village in 1846. The City was officially founded and chartered seven years later in 1853.

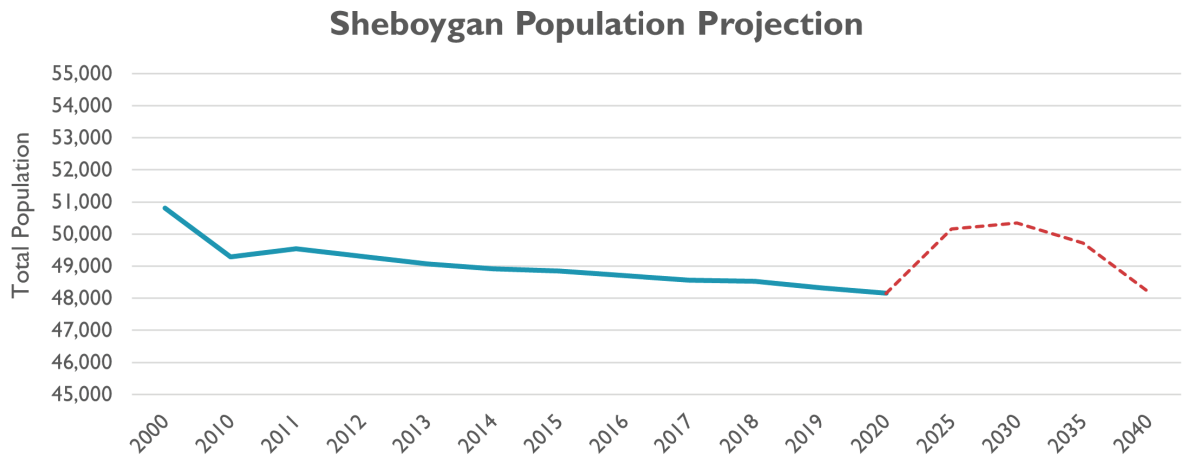
Primely located along the western shore of Lake Michigan and at the mouth of the Sheboygan River, the City has a rich culture that celebrates its connections to the coast. Now serving as the County Seat of the aptly named Sheboygan County, the City has a land area of 15.38 square miles of land area, or approximately 9,800 acres. The City is bordered by the Town of Sheboygan to the north, the Village of Kohler to the west, and the Town of Wilson to the South. Interstate 43 forms the western boundary of the City and serves as the primary north-south transportation route into Sheboygan. Highway 23 serves as the main western route into the City. Sheboygan is located approximately 1 hour north of Milwaukee and 1 hour south of Green Bay, Wisconsin's first and third largest cities, respectively, representing a catchment of potential visitors for outdoor recreation.

Lake Michigan encompasses the entire eastern border of the City of Sheboygan. Sheboygan's Harbor Center Marina was named one of the Marinas.com "Boaters' Choice Elite Fleet" recipient in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021. The City also ranked in the Top 10 of the Chicago Tribune's "Best of the Midwest: 10 Places to Go in 2020" and #2 in the TripSavvy.com "20 Awesome Spring Break Getaways with Kids" ranking. These accolades showcase the City's popularity among residents and visitors alike.

▼ Sheboygan Marina on the shore of Lake Michigan.

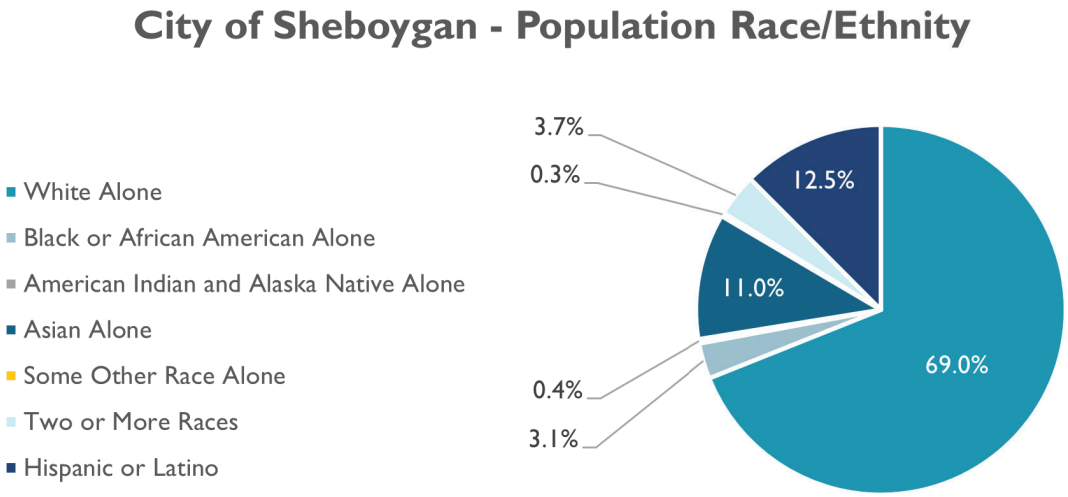
▲ Children play near the water feature at Fountain Park in downtown on N. 8th Street.

Social Characteristics

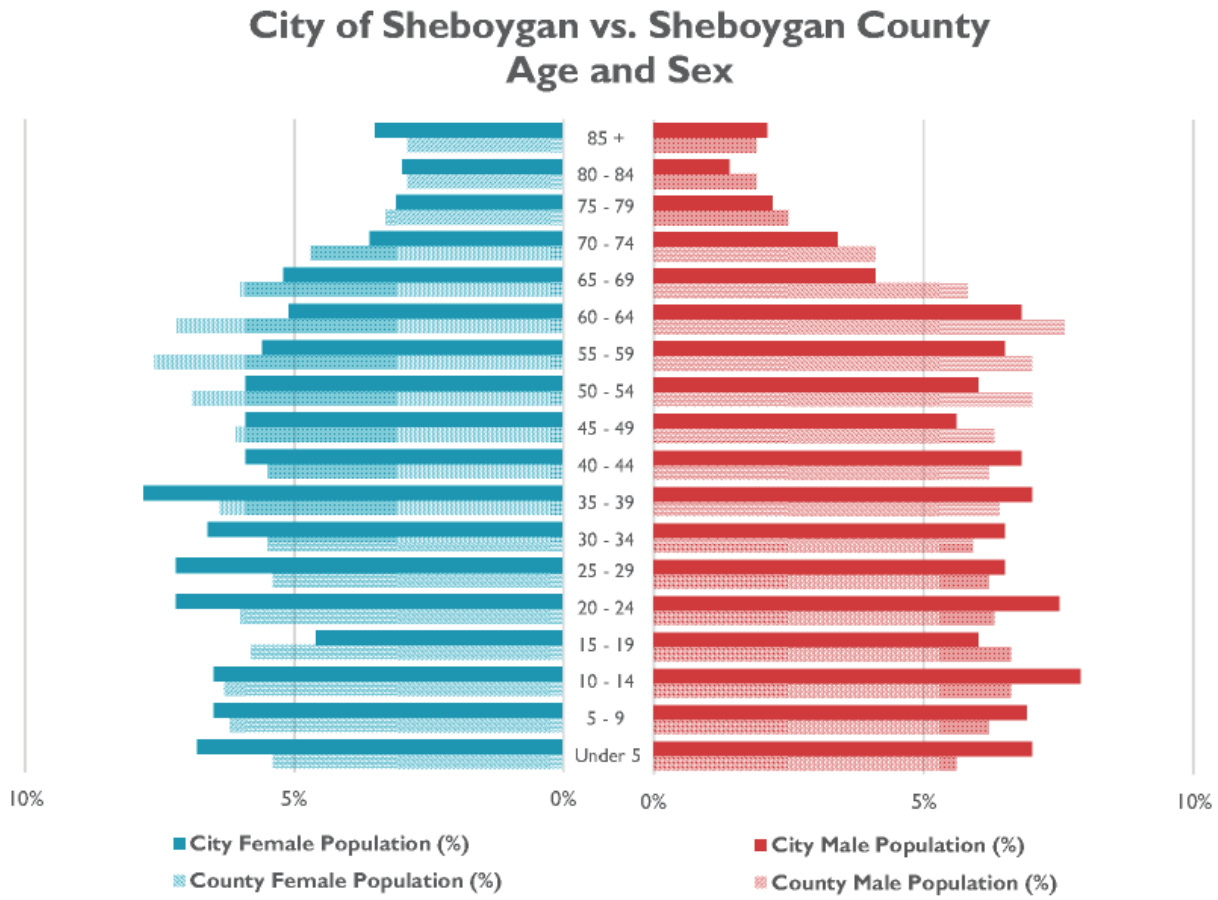


▲ Sheboygan's population is projected to remain relatively steady. Note that projections from the DOW are calculated in 2013 and do not account for 2014-2022 population counts. Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The City of Sheboygan's population has remained relatively steady over the past twenty years, hovering around 50,000 residents. Just shy of half of the total population of Sheboygan County lives within the City. The City's population is not predicted to dramatically increase or decrease over the next twenty years according to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), signaling the importance of a focus on improving and maintaining existing parks rather than expanding to meet new demand.



▲ The City's residents are predominantly White (69%). Asian residents represent 11% of the City's population and Black or African American residents compose 3.7%. Source: US Census Bureau - 2020 Decennial Census Counts



The division of male and female residents is relatively even within the City, with males representing approximately 53% of the population and females 47%. US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Compared to the County, Sheboygan has a higher proportion of males and females under the age of five and a higher proportion of males aged 10-14. Approximately one quarter of Sheboygan's total population is under 18 years of age. However, the City has less of a concentration of males and females aged 15-19 than witnessed in the County as a whole.

The largest population clusters within the City are adults aged 35-44. It is likely that a significant portion of these residents are parents with young and teenage children. This demographic is likely to utilize a variety of park-based amenities such as playgrounds and splash pads for younger children and competitive sports-based fields and spaces for teenage children. However, not all children and teens play sports, so a variety of other engaging amenities should be provided such as nature walks, cycling trails, or skate parks, to name a few. The City has a smaller population currently in retirement age (65+) than the County, with the exception of adults aged 85+. This age group likely favors more passive park amenities, such as walking or wildlife watching.

It is important to consider the different ages of children and teens within the community to understand age-based needs for parks and recreation services. Over the next five years, children aged 5-9 and 15-19 are likely to remain a significant proportion of the City's overall population, signaling a need to ensure park amenities are available and attractive to their needs. Similarly, the proportion of adults aged 25-44 is predicted to form the largest population sector within Sheboygan over the time horizon of this Plan. This population may utilize parks in three ways: first, by engaging with their children in active recreation activities; second, by engaging individually in hobby or athletic activities such as bird-watching or bicycling; and third, by engaging with small or larger groups of friends or acquaintances in organized activities such as disc-golf, pickleball, tennis, or similar sports-based activities. Ensuring adequate capacity for these varied uses over the next five years is an important goal for this CORP.

Members of the 25-44 age demographic are also likely to own pets such as dogs. Dog ownership has increased across the country since the COVID-19 pandemic first struck in 2020. An ASPCA survey revealed 1 in 5 households across the nation acquired a dog or cat during the pandemic. The desire to bring a pet along for companionship or exercise has also grown, and the City should pay special attention to opportunities for pet access and amenities in parks. To date, the City has been active in recognizing the needs of dog owners: in 2021, Sheboygan was the first City in Wisconsin to receive a "Pet Friendly Certification" from Better Cities for Pets, recognizing the programs and policies that enable pets and pet owners to live a healthy, happy life together.

▲ A dog plays in the grass at the Sheboygan Dog Park.

"We are excited to be a pet-friendly community. Making our community more accessible to pets and pet owners helps improve the quality of life for our city. We are so lucky to have many community partners that we are working with to make this happen. So many residents across Sheboygan include their pets in their families."

– Mayor Ryan Sorenson

The median household income in the City of Sheboygan has increased steadily over the past five years to $52,088. However, this median household income still remains over $10,000 less than the median household income in Sheboygan County of $62,101, and less than the State of Wisconsin's median household income of $63,293. The sector employing the most in Sheboygan is manufacturing, followed by educational services, healthcare and social assistance, and retail trade. As of January 2022, 2.6% of the City's population in the labor force was unemployed. This is similar to the County unemployment rate of 2.5%.

Residents' income can affect the amount they are able and willing to spend on recreational activities. For example, a lower degree of disposable income may cause residents to rely more heavily on free amenities open to the general public rather than acquiring a private gym membership for exercise. Residents may also look for low-cost amenities to cool off in the summer at the City's parks near the water to reduce the cost of personal air conditioning. Residents with lower incomes may also choose to walk or ride a bicycle to parks instead of driving to reduce transportation costs, making safe access and secure bicycle parking and storage important.

View from South Side Municipal Beach.

Median Household Income

$52,088
median income in
City of Sheboygan

$62,101
median income in
Sheboygan County

$63,293
median income in
State of WI

Top 4 Employment Sectors in City of Sheboygan

Manufacturing

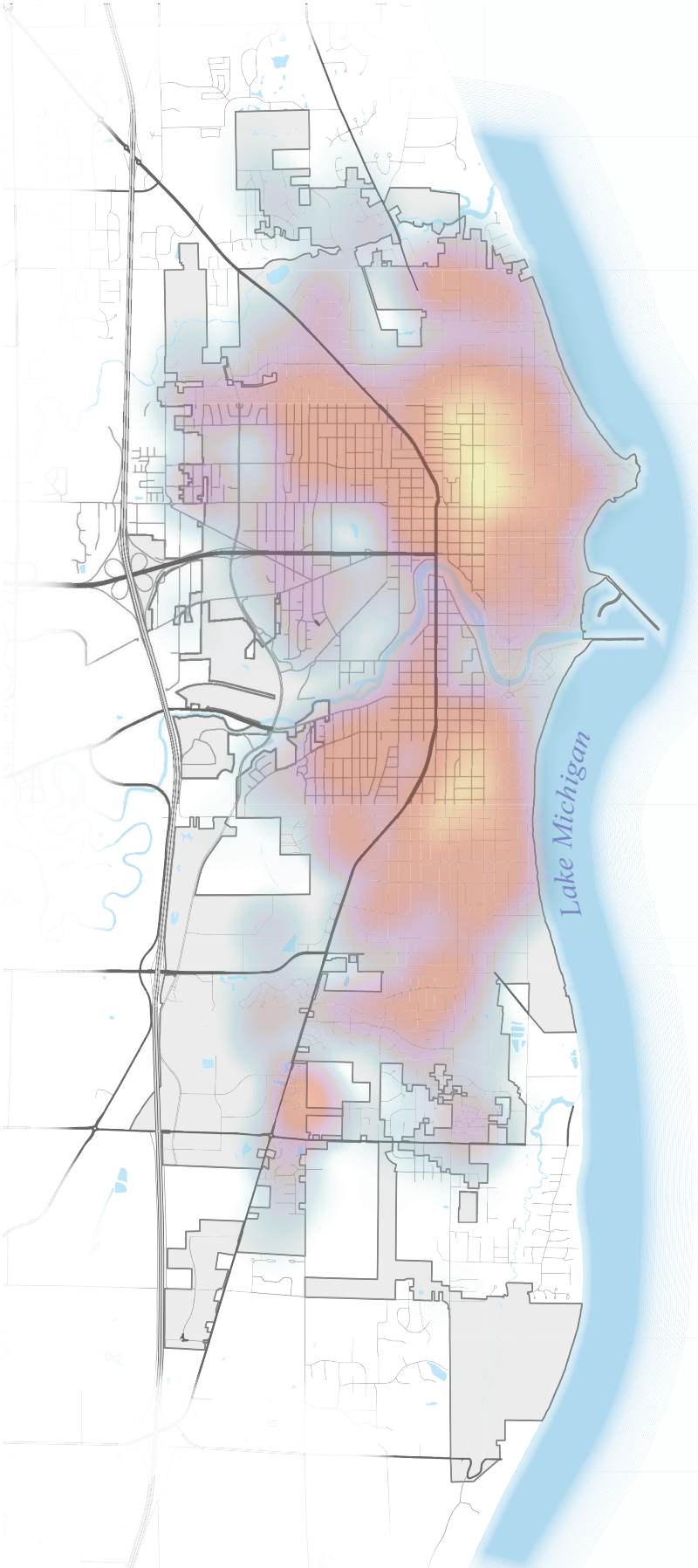
Educational Services

Healthcare & Social Assistance

Retail Trade

Population Density

City of Sheboygan



There are an estimated 22,605 housing units (consisting of houses, apartments, mobile homes, groups of rooms, or single rooms identified as separate living quarters) in the City of Sheboygan, representing an increase of approximately 300 units from 2010-2020. The average household size has decreased very slightly from 2010-2020, from 2.38 to 2.34

Areas of high density population may need increased park amenities and greater connectivity within the neighborhood to access parks. Access to parks is assessed in the section "How We Compare" in this chapter.

Population Density

Sparse Population Density

Dense Population Density

INVENTORY

Overview of Existing Outdoor Recreation Areas

Sheboygan's parks serve different uses depending on their size, location, and amenities. Ideally, a community will provide a system of parks that are well-distributed in terms of size, location, and appeal to residents and visitors alike.

Deland Park

Mini-Parks or "Pocket Parks"

The smallest of the City's park types are Mini-Parks, also known as "pocket parks." These are typically very small in size and tend to be focused on serving a small population. Sheboygan has one Mini- Park: Grace Park, which offers playground equipment and picnic tables.


Grace Park


Cole Park

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks generally serve small service areas within ¼ mile and are often accessed by walking and biking from home to the park. Sheboygan has 9 parks classified as Neighborhood Parks that range in size from 1-7 acres. Sheboygan's Neighborhood Parks include amenities such as playgrounds, picnic tables and small shelters, portable restroom facilities, full or half-court basketball, tennis courts, greenspace, and softball/ baseball diamonds. Neighborhood Parks may or may not offer on-site parking. These parks are key to the overall fabric of a neighborhood and serve as important gathering spaces for families and friends to enjoy the outdoors together.

Community Parks

Community Parks are slightly larger than neighborhood parks and generally serve users from a geographic area that exceeds the neighborhood level. Community Parks serve to meet broader, community-level recreational needs rather than purely neighborhood level needs. Sheboygan has 11 parks classified as Community Parks. Sheboygan's Community Parks include rentable park shelters, gazebos, picnic areas, tennis, volleyball, and basketball courts, baseball and soccer fields, disc-golf course, restrooms, splash pad, playground equipment, beaches, as well as the only dog-friendly beach in the City. Many Community Parks offer on-site parking, as residents may need to travel further from home to access these amenities.


General King Park

Collectively, Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks are classified in this CORP as "Local/Close-to-Home Parks." These park areas generally serve residents from within Sheboygan.

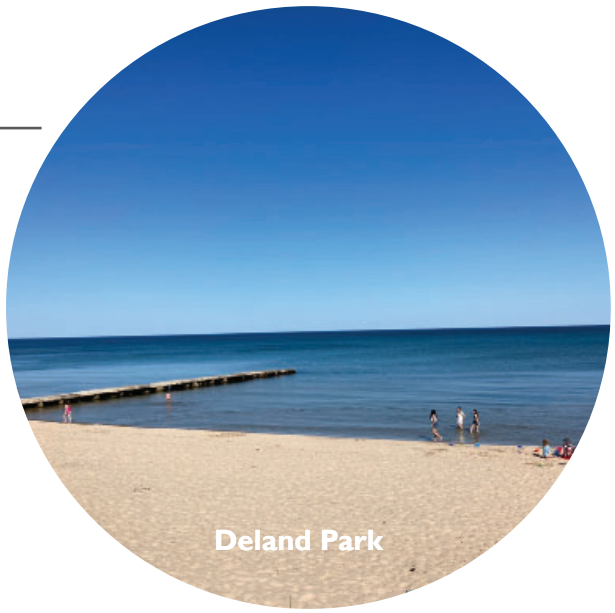
Indian Mound Park

Conservancy & Special Use Parks

Sheboygan boasts some park areas that are designated in this CORP as "Conservancy" and "Special Use." There are 8 parks designated as Conservancy including Indian Mound Park. This site contains an effigy burial grounds, unique in the world. The park's Open Mound Exhibit consists of a walking path for free self-guided tours of the artifacts and replica skeletal material. The park also features a nature-centric boardwalk trail through the wetlands. The City also has 4 dog parks/ dog runs, a fish cleaning station, and boat landing classified as "Special Use."

Metropolitan Parks

The City also hosts parks classified as "Metropolitan." These parks serve residents from across the city and certain parks, such as the parks on Lake Michigan, may attract visitors about an hour's drive away. The City has 7 parks designated as Metropolitan Parks. These include Deland Park in the heart of the Harbor Center District, popular for its beach access, marina, and several festivals; Fountain Park, which draws crowds for the fresh produce at the farmer's market and weekly musical performances in the summer; riverfront Kiwanis Park, home of the summertime Brat Days festival; and Jaycee Park Quarry, known for its swimming area, 18-hole disc golf course, and mountain biking trails.



Deland Park

Maywood Park

Regional Park Preserves

There are also 5 parks designated under this CORP as "Regional Park Preserves." These areas are classified as such due to their environmental significance and/or natural features, and their uses focus on more passive-based recreation such as nature walks and bird-watching. These parks also serve residents as well as attract visitors from out of town. Arguably the most well-known of these parks is the Ellwood H May Environmental Park along the Pigeon Riverfront referred to as Maywood Park.

The land now known as Maywood was gifted to the City of Sheboygan in 1973 after previously being used for cattle raising throughout the 1950's. In 1983, that park became the Ellwood H. May Environmental Park. Throughout the following decades, the land and habitats were restored and native species introduced. Today, Maywood is 135 acres of forests, wetlands, prairie, and ponds and welcomes school groups from around the region, hosts summer camps, and special events.

City of Sheboygan Parks

Local / Close-to-Home Parks

Mini-Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park
Grace Park	Worker's Water Street Park (Sheboygan riverfro	Lakeview Park
	Charles Voigt Park	Vollrath Park
	Cole Park	Riverside Park (Sheboygan riverfront)
	Franklin Park	Rotary Riverview Park (Sheboygan riverfront)
	Moose Park	Butzen Athletic Campus
	New Unnamed Park (Map #41, Stahl Rd, south sid	End Park
	Peace Park	Optimist Park
	Sheridan Park	Wildwood Hardball Complex
	Veterans Memorial Park	Wildwood Softball Complex
		Cleveland Park
		Roosevelt Park

Conservancy	Special Use
North Point Park	Camelot Dog Run
Northeast Park	Humane Society Dog Park
Southshore Park	New Dog Park (Map #40, N. 9th Street, downtown)
South Side Beach	Sheboygan Dog Park
Unknown Park 2 (Map #67, north side)	
Julson Park (Sheboygan riverfront)	
Indian Mound Park	
Arrowhead Park	
Stonebrook Crossing	
Creekside Park	

City of Sheboygan Parks

Regional or Metropolitan Parks

Metropolitan Park	Regional Park Preserve
Deland Park	Ellwood H May Environmental Park (Pigeon riverfront)
General King Park	Evergreen Park (Pigeon riverfront)
South Pier Park (Sheboygan riverfront & lakefront)	Pigeon River Estuary (Pigeon riverfront)
Kiwanis Park (Sheboygan riverfront)	Unknown Park (Map #66, Pigeon riverfront)
Jaycee Quarry Park (Pigeon riverfront)	Manor Heights (Map #38, Pigeon riverfront)
Fountain Park	
City Green	

Special Use
8th Street Boat Landing (Sheboygan riverfront)
South Pier Fish Cleaning Station (Sheboygan riverfront)

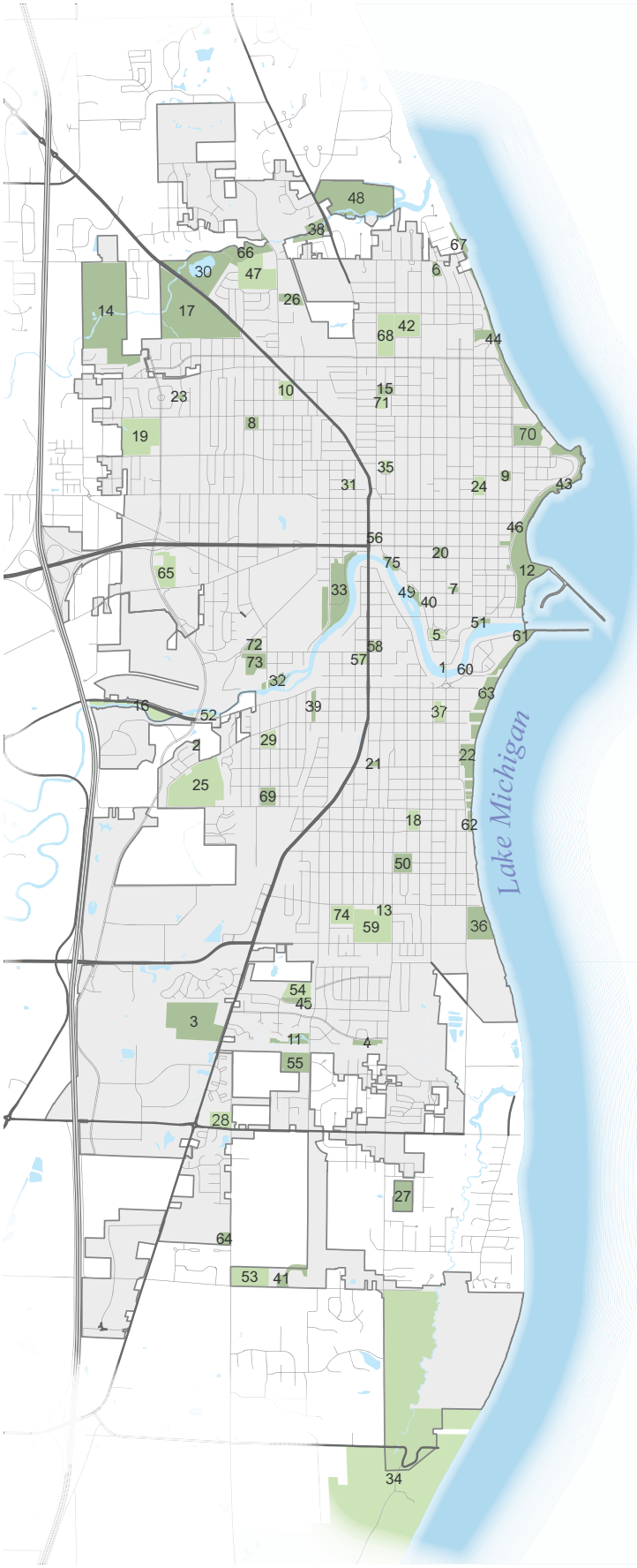
Key:

- Lakefront Park
- Riverfront Park
- No Waterfront

Cleveland Park

Park Facilities

City of Sheboygan CORP Plan



Parks

- County, State & School
- Municipal

1. 8th Street Boat Launch
2. Arrowhead Park
3. Butzen Athletic Campus
4. Camelot Dog Run
5. Central High
6. Charles Voigt Park
7. City Green
8. Cleveland Park
9. Cole Park
10. Cooper Elementary School
11. Creekside Park
12. Deland Park
13. Early Learning Center
14. Ellwood H May Environmental Park
15. End Park
16. Esslingen Park
17. Evergreen Park
18. Farnsworth Middle School
19. Field of Dreams North
20. Fountain Park
21. Franklin Park
22. General King Park
23. Grace Park
24. Grant Elementary School
25. Horace Mann Middle School
26. Humane Society Dog Park
27. Indian Mound Park
28. Jackson Elementary School
29. James Madison Elementary School
30. Jaycee Quarry Park
31. Jefferson Elementary School
32. Julson Park
33. Kiwanis Park
34. Kohler Andrae State Park
35. Kuehne Court Playground
36. Lakeview Park
37. Longfellow Elementary School
38. Manor Heights
39. Moose Park
40. New Dog Park
41. New Unnamed Park
42. North High School
43. North Point Park
44. Northeast Park
45. Optimist Park
46. Peace Park
47. Pigeon River Elementary School
48. Pigeon River Estuary
49. Riverside Park
50. Roosevelt Park
51. Rotary Riverview Park
52. Roy Sebald Park Sheboyga River Natural Area
53. SASD Administrative Services Building
54. SASD Hmong Community Gardens
55. Sheboygan Dog Park
56. Sheboygan Leadership Academy
57. Sheridan Elementary Scho
58. Sheridan Park
59. South High School
60. South Pier Fish Cleaning Station
61. South Pier Park
62. Southshore Park
63. Southside Beach
64. Stonebrook Crossing
65. Taylor Park
66. Unknown Park
67. Unknown Park 2
68. Urban Middle School
69. Veterans Memorial Park
70. Vollrath Park
71. Washington Playground
72. Wildwood Hardball Comple
73. Wildwood Softball Complex
74. Wilson Elementary School
75. Workers Water Street Park

Programming at City Parks

The Sheboygan Area School District provides programming at City parks and facilities, and generally City staff does not plan or facilitate activities and programs. City staff is involved in park-related activities for:

Uptown Social. Uptown Social is a community center located just north of downtown, and provides activities and programming for active adults. Primarily geared to adults 55 and older, Uptown Social welcomes all ages. Uptown Social programming is staffed from the City Senior Services Group. The Senior Services Department is separate from the Parks & Forestry Division of the Public Works Department, and has its own staff and annual budget.

City Green. City Green is a special use area in the heart of downtown. Featuring a large grassy area and stage, it is used primarily for outdoor concerts and outdoor events. City Green programming is staffed from the City Public Works Department, Administration Division.

City Staffing

The Parks & Forestry Division is within the Department of Public Works and is headed by a Superintendent, responsible for the operations of the division. The City Forester is also a part of this Division. Additional staff for maintenance of facilities is staffed from the Department of Public Works.

County Park Facilities

Sheboygan County maintains park areas located within the City of Sheboygan. These areas are managed by the County but are accessible to residents and visitors of Sheboygan. The County manages Taylor Park, featuring a rentable park pavilion, playground, and gazebo, and Esslingen Park and Roy Sebald Sheboygan River Natural Area, both of which feature a canoe launch and fishing access along the Sheboygan River.

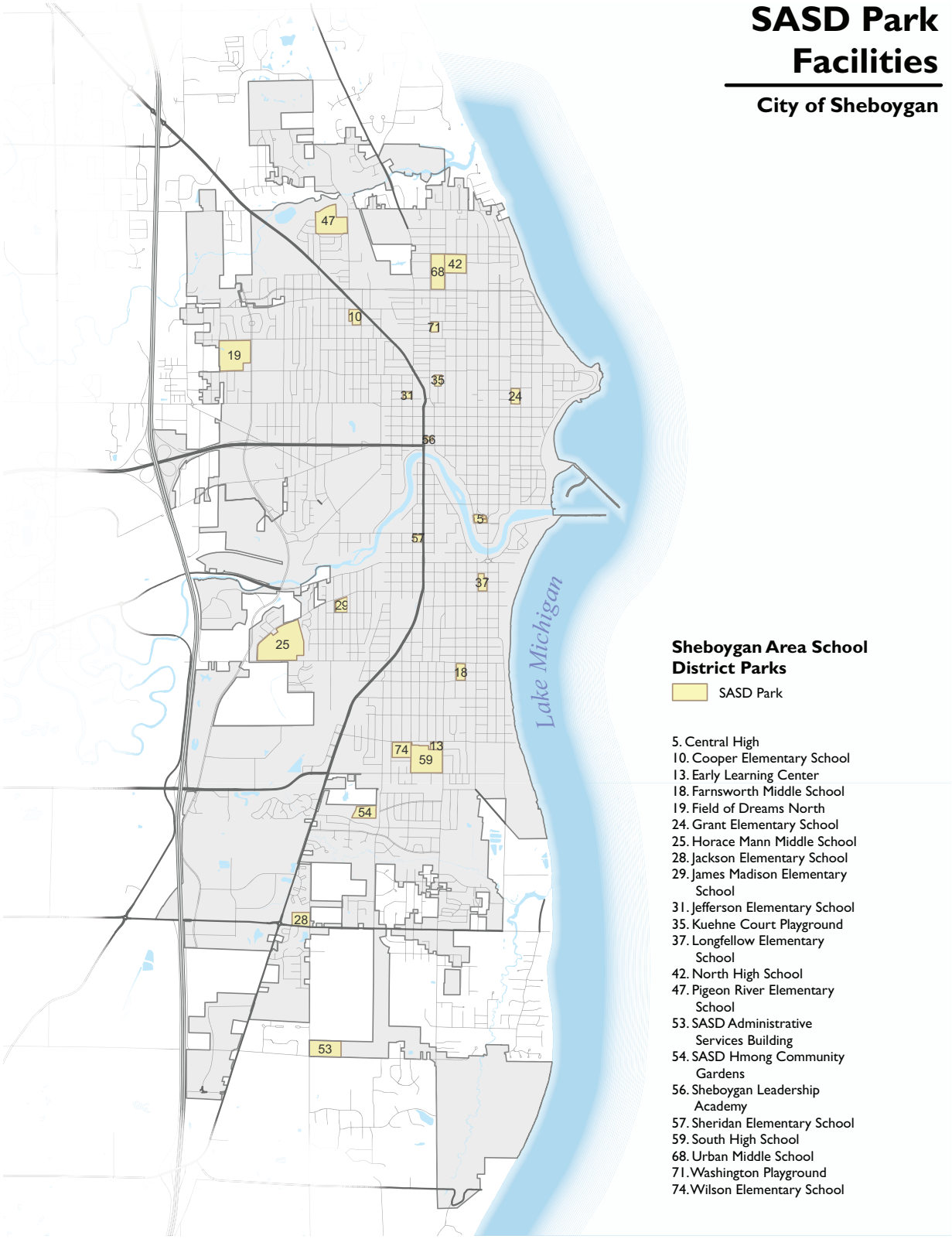
State Park Facilities

There are no state parks wholly within the City limits, but Kohler-Andrae State Park is located at the City's southern boundary along the shores of Lake Michigan. Approximately 218 acres of the state park fall within the City. This park is owned and operated by the State of Wisconsin. A paid state park pass is required to visit this park.

Privately Owned Recreation Facilities

There are several privately-owned recreational facilities within the City of Sheboygan. The Sheboygan YMCA Lakeview Center is a non-profit, membership-based facility offering a full fitness center, indoor pool, and recreational programming for adults and children. The Above and Beyond Children's Center offers three floors of fun and summer camp programming for children. Sheboygan's Lakeshore United FC runs and maintains the indoor soccer KCU Fit Center, and the Lakers Hockey runs and maintains the Sheboygan Lakers Ice Center, which offers public skating and hockey leagues. The Riverdale Country Club, located just outside the City limits across South 12th Street from Indian Mound Park, is a privately-owned facility that offers a picturesque and challenging 18-hole golf course, a full practice facility, and a casual restaurant.

▲ Kohler-Andrae State Park is a county-maintained facility.



Public School Facilities

The Sheboygan Area School District (SASD) owns and manages a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities at 22 school facilities across the City. These facilities are utilized by the SASD Community Recreation Department for programming. The Department supports the community by providing recreation for people of all ages. In addition to the programming provided, some of the SASD facilities are open to the public for public use at certain times.

North Point Park.

A stroll along the Riverwalk.

COMMUNITY VOICES

Sheboygan Says!

I love the walking path along North Point and the beach, and so appreciate that it facilitates public access to the lake.

Grateful for the people who put time and effort into Peace Park.

The City should purchase or obtain a conservation easement along the entire Pigeon River corridor to protect the river and provide a corridor for wildlife and recreation.

Any development to this land once the power plant is shut down should include park land and Lake Michigan access. A park with a clean energy theme (utilizing clean energy practices) would be great for an old coal fired plant site.

This area would protect the Pigeon River corridor and provide excellent recreation possibilities.

A canoe and kayak launch is needed on this side of the river (at Riverside Park).

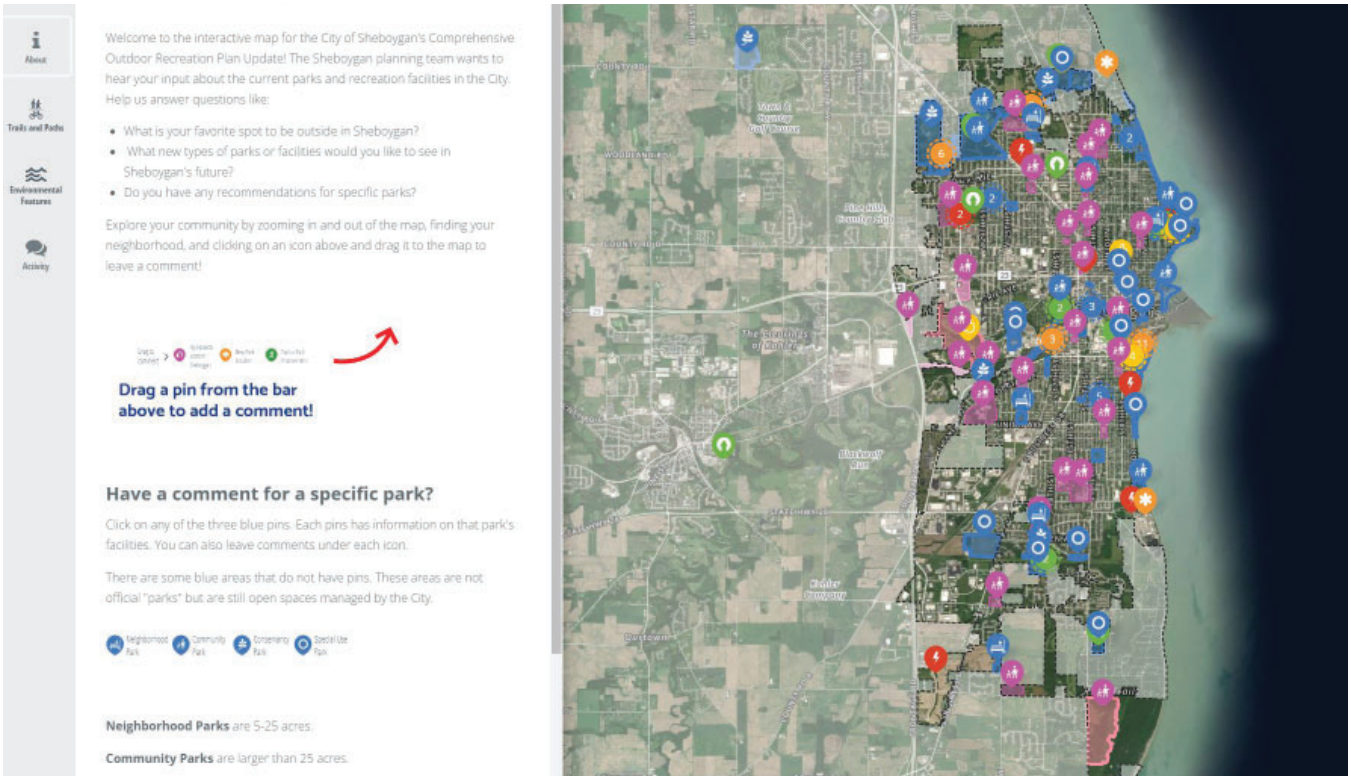
It would be cool if there were more bike racks at Vollrath. With food truck nights and the disc golf course parking is usually at a premium, would be great if there was somewhere to lock up bikes while playing or waiting in line

LOVE the new pickleball courts!

This planning process included an online engagement platform via an interactive project website.

The website allowed participants to give feedback about the Plan process from any device on their own schedules. Data was captured over the length of the online engagement process from January 26, 2022, to March 1st, 2022 (approximately 4 weeks). The website featured an interactive comment map where users could leave comments for specific park and recreation facilities, as well as a parks and recreation survey.

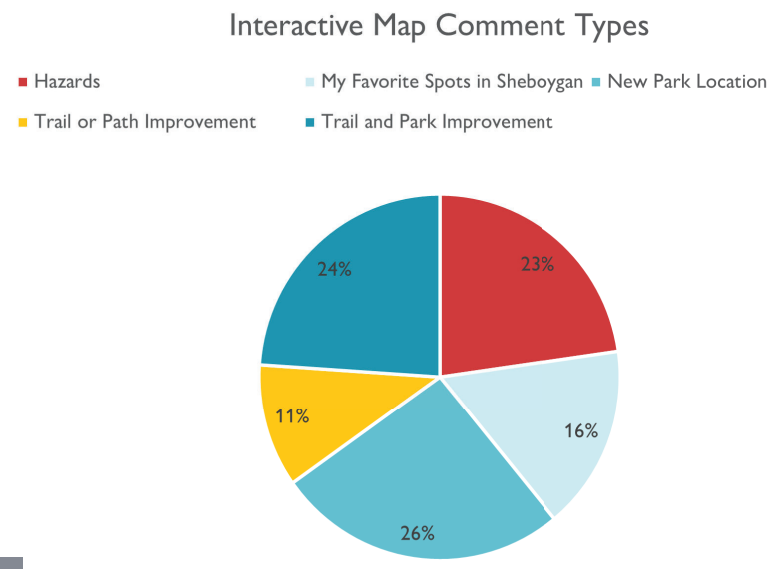
The website received 1,445 unique visitors and most responses occurred in early February. This engagement is likely due to the City promoting the Social Pinpoint website alongside the Strategic Plan survey in the city-wide February newsletter and the posters included in 6,000 water billings. The City also promoted the website via the City website and social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nextdoor), Sheboygan County EDC newsletter, Visit Sheboygan Facebook page, and the Harbor Center BID newsletter and Facebook page, and the Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce. A press release and poster advertising the website was sent to 32 churches and places of worship across the City. 25 posters were displayed in the Shoreline Metro fleet buses and digital displays were showcased at the Fountain Park and Lakefront Digital Reader Boards.



The comment map enabled website visitors to place icons around Sheboygan.

Interactive Map Comments

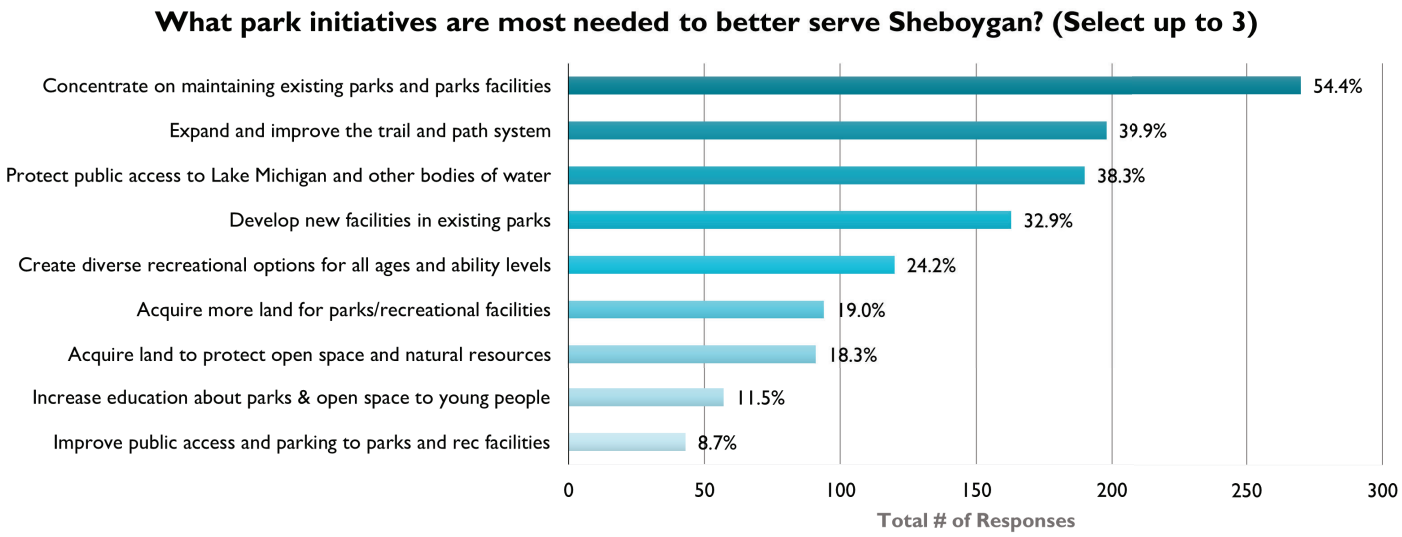
The interactive map on the website allowed residents to place comments on a virtual map to relate comments to specific locations. The map included the locations of all the park lands in the City of Sheboygan as well as roads, trails, and neighborhoods. Comment types were split relatively evenly across the five comment types with the exception of "Trail or Path Improvement" (10.9%) and "My Favorite Spots in Sheboygan" (22.8%).



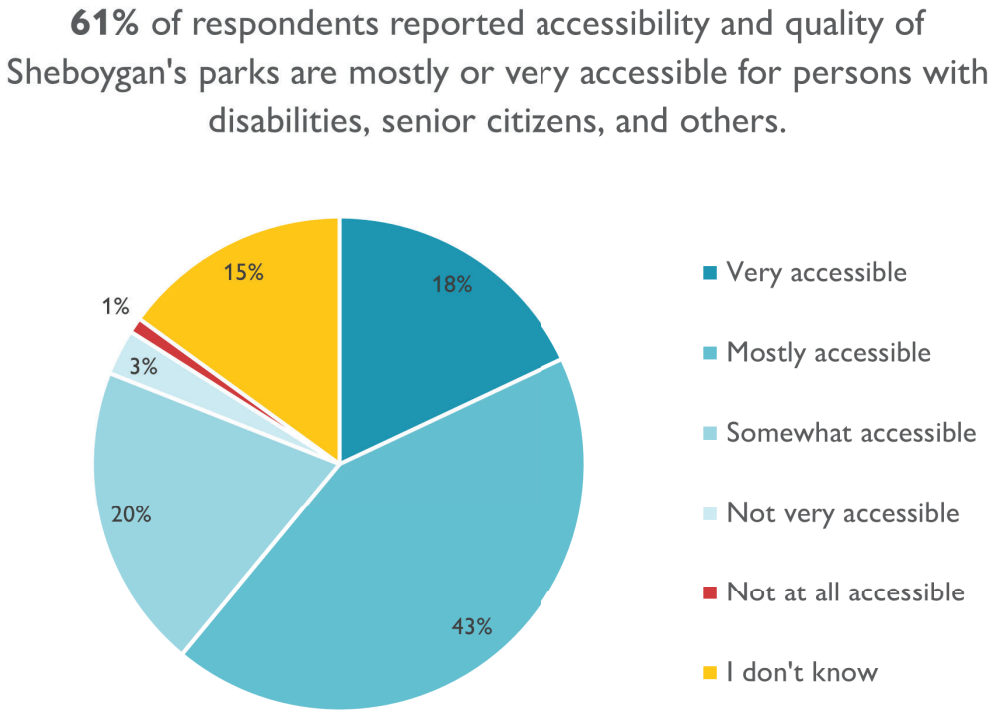
The most popular comments in South Side Municipal Beach promoted green space conservation and recommend this area near the beach for a new park location. The most popular comments in Vollrath Park pertained to the grass spraying and insecticides.

▲ Survey respondents identified living in a variety of neighborhoods, given the neighborhood map shared on the survey. Approximately 100 respondents did not indicate where they live or lived outside Sheboygan.

▲ Friends and family gather for a celebration at Vollrath Park.

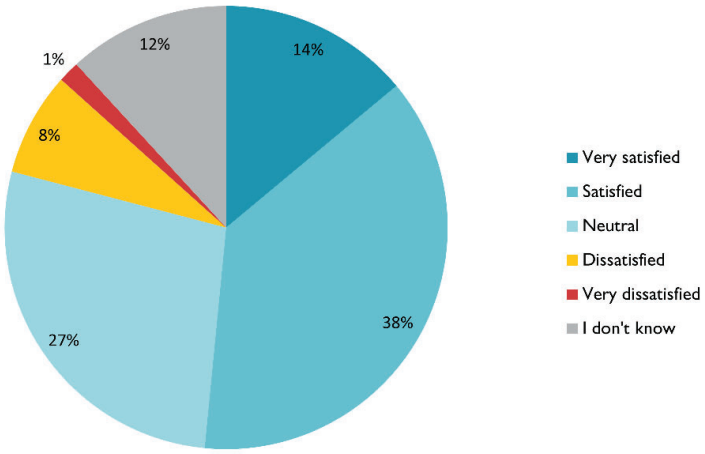


As depicted in the diagram above, most participants were interested in linear parks along natural corridors with smaller neighborhood parks being a second priority. 54% of participants believed that concentrating on maintaining existing parks and park facilities is needed to better serve Sheboygan. 40% believed that Sheboygan should concentrate on expanding and improving the trail and path system. The third priority was identified as protecting public access to Lake Michigan at 38%. Finally, acquiring land for either parks/recreational facilities or open space/ natural resources were the sixth and seventh priorities, respectively.



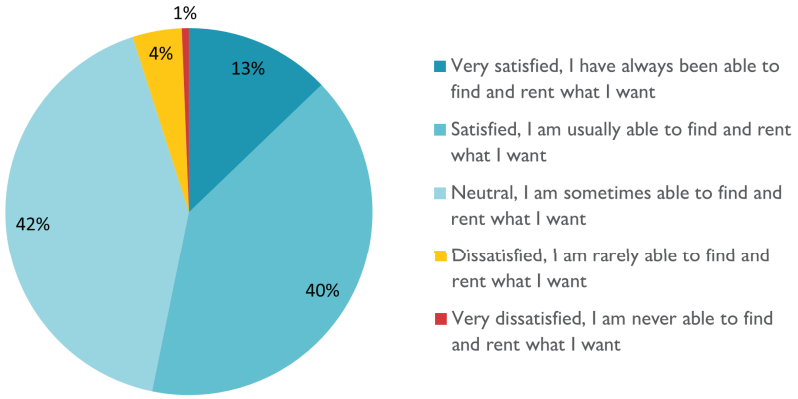
The Community Parks Survey showcased age-based priorities for active recreation, defined as leisure time and physical activity undertaken outside of structured, competitive sports. Ice skating facilities were identified as a consistent need across age categories. For participants ages 14-35, ice skating, sledding hills, playground equipment, and outdoor fitness equipment were identified as priorities. Participants aged 26-66+ agreed with ice skating facilities and outdoor fitness equipment as top needs, in addition to pickleball courts and sledding hills.

52% of respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of sports facilities.



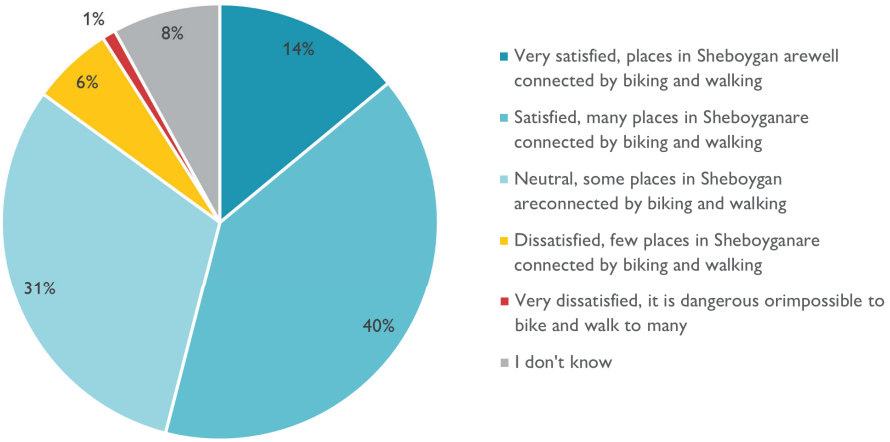
The Survey also showcased age-based priorities for passive recreation, defined as lower impact, non-consumptive uses such as wildlife observation, walking, and canoeing. Most participants prioritized trails for hiking, walking, and biking. For participants ages 14-35, hiking/nature trails, trails between parks for walking/biking, restrooms, and kayaking/canoeing access points were priorities. Participants aged 26-65 agreed but also stressed the importance of shade trees and landscaping, while participants aged 66+ also prioritized the need for seating areas and benches.

53% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of shelter and pavilion rental facilities.



Participants had differing opinions when it came to biking and walking as seen in the diagram to the right.

54% of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the connections between parks and places of interest in Sheboygan.



- » "Senior center is phenomenal"
- » "Would like parks to have more room for dogs"
- » "A trail along the river is more fun"
- » "Slow down drivers at parks"

Public Open House

Three Public Open House events were hosted on September 14, September 15, and September 22, 2022 at Kiwanis Park, King Park, and the City Council Chambers, respectively. These meetings followed a traditional open house format where attendees could drop in and stay as long as they were available. The Open Houses were structured to provide an opportunity for the public to review and provide feedback on the draft recommendations for the CORP and help identify additional ideas for planning and implementation to be included in the Plan.

Park users at the Open House provided helpful feedback for the Plan. An increased trail and path network can also ensure that an even larger majority of park users find the park locations accessible.

Park users highlighted the importance of maintaining public access to beaches and the lakefront. Ideas relating to lakefront parks included adding more benches facing out towards the lake and preserving green space and natural areas with native vegetation.

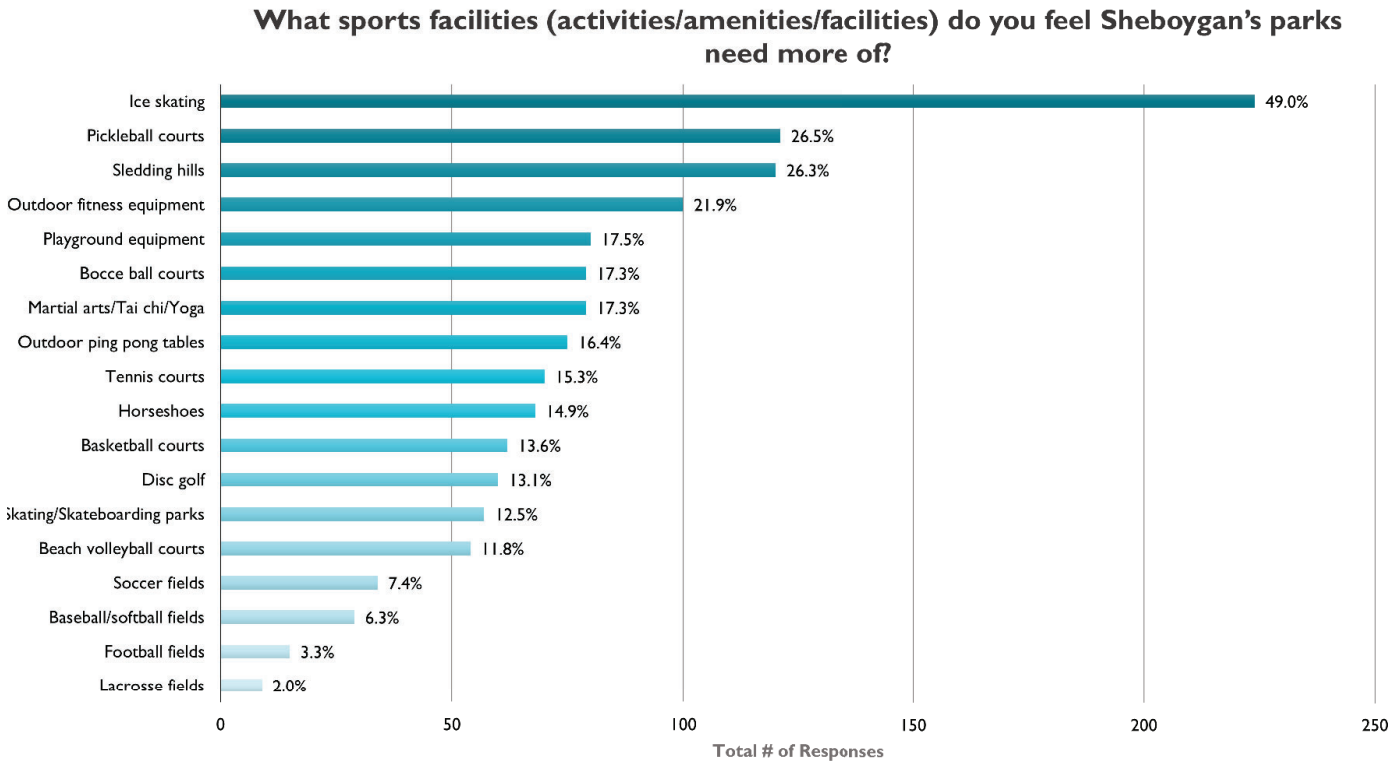
Multiple park users expressed concern about the use of pesticides/chemical in the Vollrath Park area. The City's grant with the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program could support research into health and environmental impacts of this activity as well as alternatives. Community garden spaces were also identified as a need.

One user emphasized the usefulness of the online map for showing trails and paths. Adding these digital files to the City's website can not only show current routes, but also where future routes are planned.

Overall, users stated they were glad that the City was making an effort to become more bike friendly.

Users called for a more robust trail and path network and recommended trail and path improvements all across the City.

A trail leading to the water at Northeast Park.



ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS, THERE WAS A CONSENSUS THAT THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SHEBOYGAN TO MANAGE MORE WINTER ACTIVITIES (I.E., ICE SKATING AND SLEDDING).

While maintaining an ice rink can be expensive and both activities are weather-dependent, the City can begin to explore alternative options to meet this expressed need. Special thought should be given to the risk of higher average winter temperatures and lower annual snowfall due to the impacts of climate change.

THE VISION

To best support the community, this plan is driven by public input and dedication to the values and goals of the community. The vision for this plan is derived from information gathered in the community profile, demographic trends, and community growth patterns, combined with the public engagement and feedback from City leaders, staff and the residents. This vision drives the goals for the next five years of the park system in Sheboygan.

Each section below contains information that takes the concepts uncovered during the first phase of the project and creates a framework for development into a series of implementation items.

The following sections are meant to inspire and provide direction for the future of Sheboygan's parks.

▲ Steps lead down a trail at Indian Mound Park.

Trails, Sidewalks, & Connections

All Season Amenities

Inclusivity & Community

Facilities, Maintenance, & Management

A cyclist rides by Evergreen Park.

Trails, Sidewalks, & Connections

Trails, sidewalks, and connections provide important links between places of residence and commerce and spaces for recreation. This aspect of the Vision focuses on strengthening these methods of connection so that everyone has equitable access to park spaces and healthy recreation, regardless of their means of mobility. Bike trails, road safety, and trail conditions were identified as priorities to expand and maintain by community members.

A runner takes a route along the sidewalk by the lake in Deland Park.

Community members enjoying a swing set.

Inclusivity & Community

This aspect of the Vision focuses on providing space and amenities that reflect the needs of the community and diverse interests. Opportunities should be provided for a diversity of ages and ability levels. These opportunities should also be equitable and accessible to all members of the community. This aspect also emphasizes the importance of creating park spaces that provide for social interaction as well as physical exercise and mental enrichment.

Disc golf station.

Community gathering space in Deland Park.

Life jackets ready for beachgoers at Jaycee Quarry Park.

Tennis courts can be open spring, summer, and fall.

Community members playing in the splash pad.

Sledding and tubing are popular during the winter.

All Season Amenities

The "All Season Amenities" aspect of the Vision focuses on ensuring the parks and recreation offerings are available for residents to enjoy the outdoors year-round. Sheboygan residents particularly emphasized a desire for more winter recreation opportunities, given the area's cold climate during the winter months. Consideration should also be given to amenities during spring and fall, particularly those that might pair well with nature and environmental activities.

Facilities, Maintenance, & Management

As the majority of Sheboygan's park facilities are well-established, this aspect of the Vision focuses on maintaining the quality of existing facilities as well as identifying opportunities for enhancements. Partnerships between the different organizations that have a hand in parks and recreation offerings will be crucial to the parks system. Philanthropy and volunteering opportunities also provide a way for the public to invest in the community's park system.

THE CITY OF SHEBOYGAN OFFERS NUMEROUS PARK SHELTERS AND ENCLOSED BUILDINGS FOR RESIDENTS TO RENT.

End Park facility with benches.

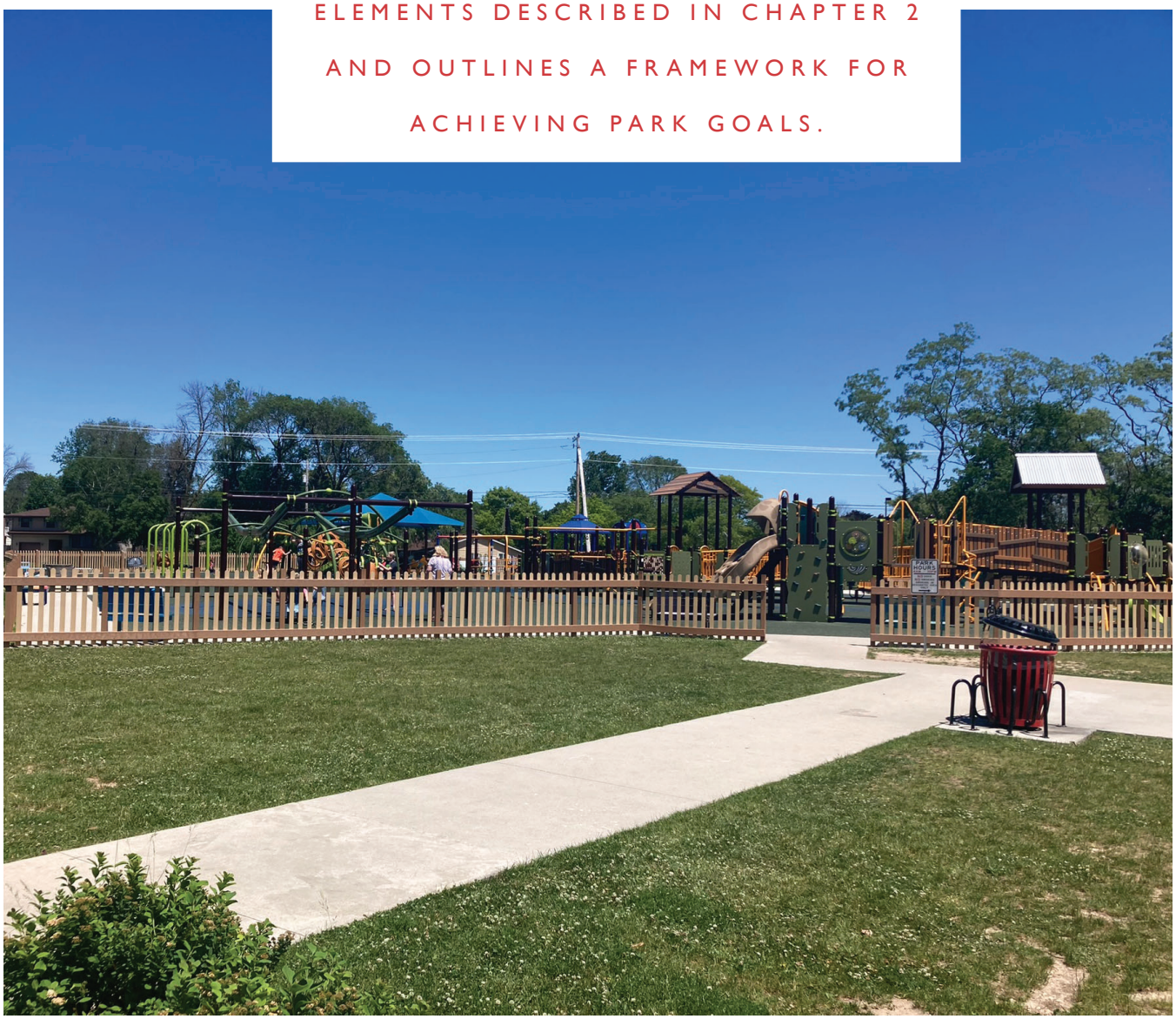
Kiwanis Park Field House.

Jaycee Quarry Park main entrance.

PARKS OPPORTUNITIES

3

THIS CHAPTER TAKES THE VISION ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN CHAPTER 2 AND OUTLINES A FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING PARK GOALS.



▲ Playground facility.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES

Implementation of Goals & Objectives

The parks system consists of a wide range of facilities. Parks and public places represent the larger areas where recreation occurs. The maintenance, quality, and accessibility of these parks and places is paramount to supporting community needs. Below is a list of Goals and Objectives aimed to supporting the park system's facilities.

FACILITIES, AMENITIES, MAINTENANCE, & MANAGEMENT

1. Continue to maintain high-quality, well-maintained, safe park spaces geographically located and accessible to all residents.

a. Assess residential density changes in neighborhoods where redevelopment occurs, reviewing the demographic makeup of the neighborhood for park and recreation updates needed to serve shifts in demographics related to lifestyle, age, family structure. Integrate trails or sidewalks with redevelopment projects where needed.

b. Focus on maintenance of current facilities by maximizing the value of existing parks.

c. Comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act within existing parks and park facilities. Achieve compliance with accessibility requirements in existing facilities by 2023.

d. Provide for barrier-free access in all new park facility construction and play areas. Identify opportunities to include "Universal Design" recommendations during the development of new facilities.

2. Maintain an adequate amount of active and passive recreational lands to meet current and future recreational needs as subdivisions are developed and lands are annexed for residential uses.

a. Coordinate subdivision review and regulations with all departments responsible for providing or maintaining adequate park facilities.

b. Evaluate land dedicated for parks to differentiate between land appropriate for active park use, land appropriate for open space only, and land requiring protection from development. Land requiring protection form development should be protected via the zoning ordinance.

c. Ensure everyone in the community has access to parks and recreational areas designed for both free play activity and structured programming.

ACCESS

As our communities change, our neighbors grow, and our needs evolve, so too must the park system.

This plan identifies whether aging park and recreation facilities just need to be maintained or whether they need to be modernized.

Part of this evolution is about building bigger tables so our neighbors from different backgrounds can be a part of building community.

Playground equipment at Charles Voigt Park.

QUALITY

"Quality over quantity" was the attitude expressed in the engagement survey. Rather than focusing on growth, this plan targets the enhancement and continued development of the existing parks system.

Gazebo at Lakeview Park.

FIT

Like any community, Sheboygan is unique. Weather, geography, demographics, and culture all drive the plan for the park system.

It is important to ensure the system meets the needs of our residents by understanding who they are. Further, it is important that the park system gives people a chance to express themselves and feel included.

Family members ready for swimming at Deland Park.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES

Continued...

> DELAND PARK IS SUCH A WONDERFUL PLACE FOR ME TO GO AND TAKE WALKS ALONG THE LAKE.
>
> Resident feedback.

FACILITIES, AMENITIES, MAINTENANCE, & MANAGEMENT

3. Explore all available funding resources to further enhance the quality of the City's park system.

a. Continually pursue state and federal funding programs, which can aid in the purchase and/or development of desired park system improvements.

b. Nurture the existing positive relationships with public and private organizations for donations and volunteer help to aid in park system development.

c. Update the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan every 5 years to maintain grant eligibility.

d. Pursue the development of revenue generating recreational facilities and activities, which can aid in the development of new facilities and/or the maintenance of existing facilities.

e. Use the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan's Capital Improvements Program as a guide to establish yearly park budgets.

f. Invest funds for the development of facilities that will maximize existing park and recreation areas and provide exciting recreational programs, with the intention of increasing park use.

4. Coordinate actions and collaborate with area health-related organizations (such as schools, health care organizations, and non-profits) to promote physical and mental wellness through park district offerings.

a. Continue cooperative City/School/Sport Association development projects to help improve and expand recreational opportunities throughout the community in a cost-effective manner.

b. Develop formal use/revenue/maintenance agreements between the City, school district, and public recreation associations to help operate and maintain public recreation facilities in the City.

SUPPORT

The resources for maintaining the park system come from a variety of places. Federal, state, and other grant funding sources are essential.

Community members, institutions, businesses, and foundations have always played a foundational role in supporting our parks.

▲ Rocky lakeshore at North Point Park.

PLAN

Effective use of resources requires careful planning. It is important to make sure park plans stay up to date and reflect the most critical needs of the community.

Planning is how we represent our values. Opportunities are always coming and going, and good planning ensures that our values influence decision making on a day-to-day basis.

▲ Resident at the garden in Optimist Park.

INVEST

Treat spending like an investment that provides more value than it costs. Investments in the park system should be targeted to increasing its use and making more effective use of what already exists.

Investing in parks is also an investment in the health, well being, and social vitality of our community.

▶ Ecology Center at Maywood Environmental Park.

TRAILS & CONNECTIONS

Sheboygan Riverwalk.

Trail runner exercising.

Trail connection parallel to the road.

TRAILS & CONNECTIONS

5. Continue to expand multi-modal opportunities where feasible and connect recreation amenities with trails or sidewalks. Strive to be an all-ages bicycle-friendly city.

a. Develop a city-wide park and trail map that illustrates in-park trails and trails within the city. Coordinate with the County to illustrate both County and City trails. Provide information for both walking and biking.

b. Create active transportation by creating connected networks of sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes and other infrastructure and policy supports that allow users to travel safely between destinations. Example programs include Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, Recreational Trails Act, and Transportation Enhancement.

c. Continue to acquire land to provide trails and greenway connections throughout Sheboygan.

d. Prioritize high-quality infrastructure to reach park and recreation destinations in the community via foot, bike, wheelchair and /or transit.

ALL-SEASON AMENITIES

Child sledding down a hill.

Holiday lights are popular during the winter season.

A fat-tire biker enjoys a trail in the winter.

Park space to enjoy the snow.

ALL-SEASON AMENITIES

6. Promote healthy, social, and active lifestyles among residents all year.

a. Develop all-season facilities and amenities, with a focus on developing a range of new winter recreation opportunities.

b. Identify opportunities for the location and operation of an ice-skating rink.

c. Promote and publicize the locations of safe sledding, fat tire bike trails, and cross country ski trails.

d. Identify multi-use trails suitable for fat tire biking and cross country skiing during winter months, either groomed or ungroomed.

e. Identify and expand the winter recreation offerings from Making Spirits Bright throughout the winter season. Collaborate with area organizations for enhanced winter programming.

INCLUSIVITY & COMMUNITY

Part of increasing the use of our park system includes ensuring that the system is inclusive of all residents. Age, race, ethnicity, disability, and socio-economic background should not prohibit Sheboygan community members from accessing and using the facilities and amenities in the system.

This plan assesses the geographic distribution of the park system, the changing age makeup of the community, the racial and ethnic diversity of the community, and input from residents via community engagement. Additionally, this plan explores opportunities for more recreational assets which are accessible to people with disabilities, such as "Universal Design" in playgrounds. Increasingly, the needs for these types of facilities is identified in park planning and represents an exciting way we can continue to strengthen our community and build social ties with one another.

Increasing recreation opportunities for older adults and designing parks with offerings for all ages can help ensure that families and households from all backgrounds are welcome. Ensuring that park communications are available in multiple languages in addition to English such as Spanish and Hmong, among others, will further increase park access.

Integrating even more culture into parks, such as through public art, programming, and events that represent different cultural backgrounds is another exciting opportunity to enhance our parks as public places. Cultural expression of our diverse community will hopefully lead to increased civic pride and stewardship of our shared places.

INCLUSIVITY & COMMUNITY

7. Have the park system reflect the diversity and identity of the city.

a. Enhance existing parks with inclusive amenities, considering all ages and abilities.

b. Expand placement of culturally and locally significant art into parks across the city.

c. Encourage participation of residents from diverse backgrounds at park and recreational meetings and in recreational programs, especially seniors, disabled, and those who identify as a racial minority.

d. Focus on development of active and passive recreation opportunities.

ENVIRONMENTAL & WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Wildlife at North Point Park.

Critically, the park system represents the majority of vegetation and therefore biodiversity of land and water. Parks can act as critical habitats for local wildlife and plant life, but it is important to protect and steward these places to ensure their quality. With intensive human development, vegetated areas are fragmented and require careful maintenance to ensure their protection from invasive, harmful species and degradation. Additionally, the quality of our environment contributes to the quality of the water we drink and the air we breathe. Although not for recreation purposes, environmental management activities are a crucial element of this CORP to ensure the park system supports the natural environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL & WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

8. Improve environmental quality using best management practices to improve water quality, promote biodiversity, and strengthen local ecosystems for the benefit of Sheboygan residents and the health of Lake Michigan and local watersheds.

a. Maintain Sheboygan's status as a TREE CITY USA.

b. Follow the City's tree and EAB Management Plan to provide a healthy urban forest.

c. Focus maintenance efforts on invasive species such as phragmites (Common Reed Grass) as well as promoting the use of native plant species in city-owned facilities.

d. Work with Public Works to have the parks serve as storm water management tools (i.e., green infrastructure) while not compromising the recreational opportunities offered by the parks.

e. Practice excellent erosion prevention along the river and lake shorelines to protect the park land and serve as demonstrations for other shoreland owners.


City of Sheboygan
maywood
ellwood h. may environmental park

4

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS & THE SHEBOYGAN WATERFRONT

▲ PICTURED: SOUTHSIDE PARK BEACH ON A SUMMER DAY IN 2022, WITH BLUE HARBOR RESORT IN THE DISTANCE.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Sheboygan's Geography and Natural Features

TOPOGRAPHY

The City of Sheboygan's topography generally consists of a gently rolling landscape interjected with a few areas of steep slope. The areas of steep slope are especially concentrated in the northern portion of the City bordering the Pigeon River and in the central-western portion of the City, bordering the Sheboygan River.

Lakeview Park

WATER RESOURCES

The City of Sheboygan is situated along Lake Michigan's western coastline. Lake Michigan is the second largest Great Lake by volume. The Milwaukee River Basin and Sheboygan River Basins flow through Sheboygan and drain into Lake Michigan. In addition, Lake Michigan provides an important source of fresh drinking water, cooling for industry, and water for agriculture. Of particular significance to this Plan , the Lake is a treasured setting for active and passive recreation both on and off the water. As the climate changes, more frequent and intense storms could cause higher waves and flooding to the coastal parks bordering Lake Michigan.

The Sheboygan River, flowing through the heart of the City, was cleaned up in 2012 and 2013 with the removal of PCB-contaminated sediment from the lower river and harbor. The cleanup has led to a reduction of pollution in the food chain, and it is hoped that, over time, to lessen restrictions on fish consumption. The river now acts as a thoroughfare for recreational boaters to access Lake Michigan without worry of boat damage from contaminated sediment deposits. Although perceptions of pollution are slow to change, the City is working to promote the river as a recreational asset to residents and visitors.

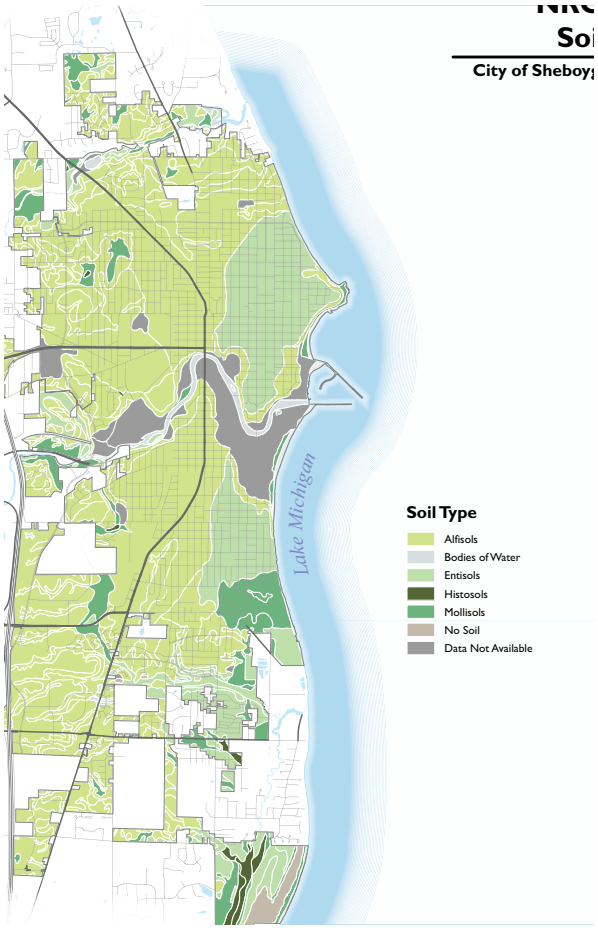
CLIMATE

Sheboygan's climate is generally continental, characterized by warm to cool summers and cold winters. The City's climate is impacted by its proximity to Lake Michigan. When warm, the lake water can delay autumn frosts and extend the enjoyment of water-based recreation and outdoor activities without winter coats and boots. In addition, the proximity to water helps keep summers mild by mitigating daily temperature extremes.

Over the past five years, precipitation has been increasing in Sheboygan County. Climate change points to warming trends and more frequent and intense precipitation events in the near future. Shaded park areas and water-based recreation like splash pads and pools can provide an important source of escape from extreme heat, especially if residents have limited access to indoor air conditioning, which can be cost prohibitive. If temperatures continue to increase, park-goers face risks such as heat stroke during unshaded outdoor activities. If extreme precipitation events continue to increase in frequency and severity, parks may be threatened by flooding.

SOILS

Soil qualities can affect the use of different parks. Areas with poorly drained soil are restricted in their ability to host different park structures such as restrooms and gathering spaces. Poorly drained soils are also not conducive to hosting sports fields due to the likelihood they will maintain standing water, resulting in puddles and mud. On the opposite spectrum, climate change can also cause more severe periods of droughts, which can cause grass and plants in parks to die, resulting in a reduced landscape. The City is not anticipated to create any new parks in the next five years, so soils at existing park sites should be evaluated for any modifications or improvements.



FLORA AND FAUNA

The coastal ecosystem in Sheboygan supports sand dunes, coastal marshes, and tallgrass prairie plant and animal species. As the climate changes, it is likely that the City's plants and animals will be affected by the changes in extreme heat, drought, and precipitation. Invasive species also present a threat. Invasive species already present, such as Phragmites and Japanese knotweed, may become more prevalent and difficult to control. New invasive species may appear and create new threats to local ecosystems. Over the next five years, the City should carefully consider the threats climate change poses to the local flora and fauna and how park system maintenance or special projects could help protect or mitigate harm, especially to the Lake Michigan ecosystem. Already, invasive species such as dreissenid mussels have covered the lake bottom in some communities in southeastern Wisconsin, resulting in clearer water which in turn has led to algae growth.

▲ The Hummingbird Garden in Maywood Park

SHEBOYGAN

WATERFRONT PARKS

▲ The Waterfront Parks section of this document refers to parks located on a navigable waterway.

23 Total Waterfront Parks

13 Riverfront Parks

10 Lakefront Parks

Sheboygan's waterfront parks are an integral part of the beauty and experience of life in the city. Known by many as the "freshwater surf capital" of the world, Sheboygan's coastline is an important recreational and environmental resource for swimming, boating and many other water activities. The rivers and streams that flow through Sheboygan's parks provide places to kayak, fish, or simply enjoy a drink with friends next to the water on a pleasant evening.

Parks also serve important function in public health and engineering to mitigate impacts from overburdened urban infrastructure. Waterfront parks are a place to absorb and clean rain water and protect the city from excess flooding and pollution. Vegetation and the diverse ecological systems along the waterfront clean the air we breath and serve to moderate temperature and humidity within the city. This includes offsetting the urban heat island effect associated with negative public health impacts during the summer months.

As a lifeline of water that threads its way through the city, the river and lake side parks connect Sheboygan and improve the quality of life for residents. At the same time, these parks bolster the health of ecological communities within the city and maintain important natural resources.

Waterfront parks often bear the brunt of damage during extreme weather events such as storms. The increases of such events, along with greater volatility in storms and cyclical water level change, mean that these parks require special attention to protect and maintain. Designing for resilient waterfront parks will ensure a high quality park experience both today and in the future.

The recommendations in this section address the following goals:

» IMPROVE ACCESS

Create and expand opportunities for enjoyment and recreation next to the water. Allow public use to coexist with ecological function and quality.

» ADAPT WATER EDGES FOR FLUCTUATION

Develop waterfront areas to accommodate both seasonal and long term changes in water level. Program areas to allow use across a range of acceptable conditions. Design with plant communities that are well suited to varying microclimates.

» CONTRIBUTE TO COASTAL RESILIENCY

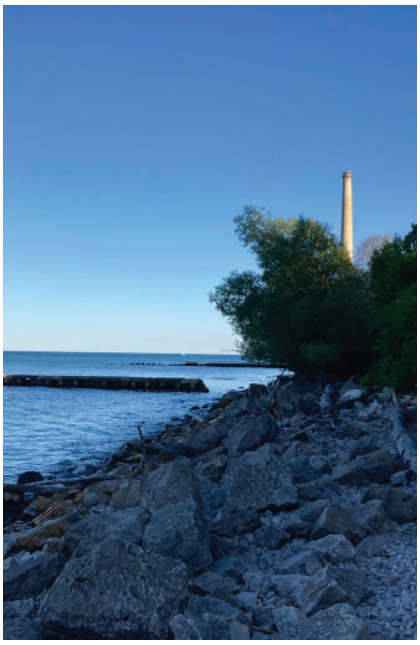
Protect coastal areas from hydrologic change and foster resilient land use practices.

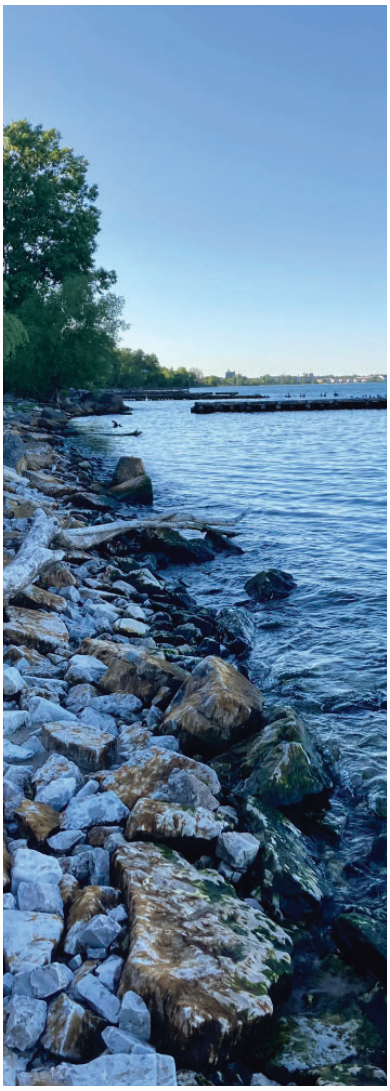
» PROTECT WATER QUALITY

Design parks to filter and clean contaminants from runoff before entering the lake and stream system to improve water quality for drinking and recreation.

» ENHANCE URBAN ECOSYSTEMS

Maintain and create healthy, functional and connected natural systems throughout the city.

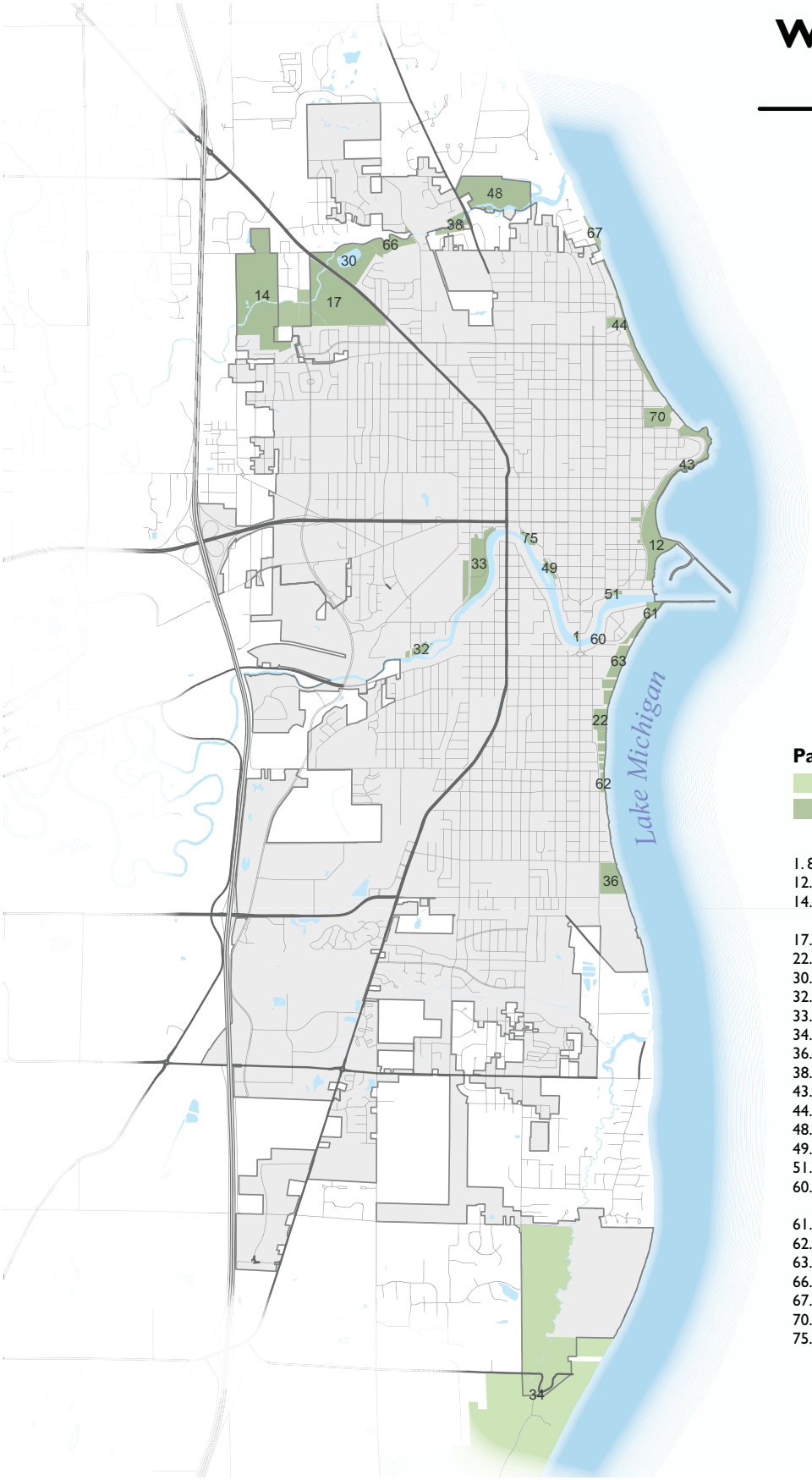




▲ So much to discover in Lakeview Park

Waterfront Park Facilities

City of Sheboygan

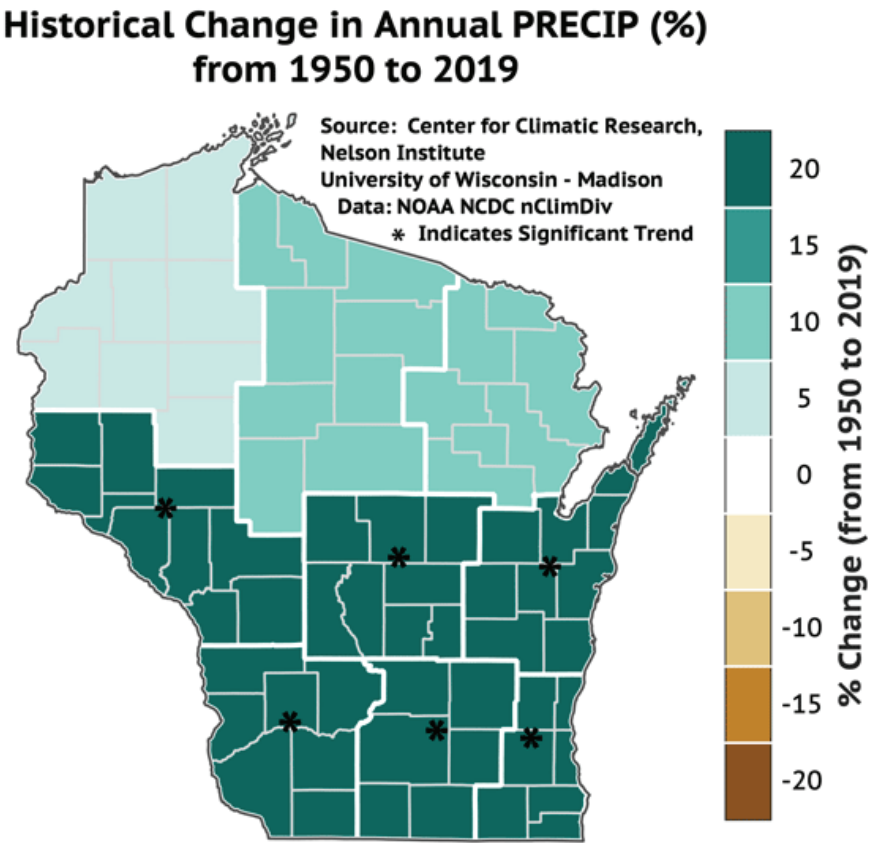


Parks

- County, State & School
- Municipal

1. 8th Street Boat Launch
12. Deland Park
14. Ellwood H May Environmental Park
17. Evergreen Park
22. General King Park
30. Jaycee Quarry Park
32. Julson Park
33. Kiwanis Park
34. Kohler Andrae State Park
36. Lakeview Park
38. Manor Heights
43. North Point Park
44. Northeast Park
48. Pigeon River Estuary
49. Riverside Park
51. Rotary Riverview Park
60. South Pier Fish Cleaning Station
61. South Pier Park
62. Southshore Park
63. Southside Beach
66. Unnamed Park
67. Unnamed Park 2
70. Vollrath Park
75. Workers Water Street Park

FLOOD ZONES



The 100 year flood zone will likely change

Flood Zones are areas defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) according to varying levels of flood risk. While the term flood zone is related to the term floodplain, they apply to different geographic boundaries. A floodplain is a low lying area of land next to a water body that is subject to flooding. Floodplains are defined by geology and ongoing fluvial process over time, such as erosion and deposition. Waterfront parks in Sheboygan, both riverside and coastal, are contained within the floodplain. Flood Zones, however, while they contain parts of the floodplain, take into consideration other factors which contribute to flooding, such as a future storm's projected severity and its probability of occurring during a certain time frame.

Flood zones are categorized as the 10-year flood zone, 50-year flood zone, 100-year flood zone, and 500-year flood zone. The geographic extent of the 10-year flood zone is smaller than that of the 100-year flood zone, and it is anticipated that it will flood with greater frequency. The 100-year flood zone is typically the zone used for planning and design purposes in the Midwest region. A 100-year flood is one that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. FEMA uses the 100-year flood event (also called 1 percent annual flood, or base flood) as their benchmark when identifying flood-prone locations. The area susceptible to flooding during the base flood is called the Special Flood Hazard Area, or floodplain. The elevation of the water for a flood event of a given probability is determined by engineers studying rainfall intensities, stream and river cross-sections, and topography. The 100-year flood zone affects new construction building codes, flood insurance needs, and land use restrictions.

▲ At Kiwanis Park, most facilities are located above the 100 year flood zone. However, one of the picnic shelters and the beer garden would be inundated during a 100 year flood event.

Since the 100-year flood level is statistically computed using past and existing data, as more data comes in, the level of the 100-year flood will change. As rainfall rates in Wisconsin have increased in recent years, so too has the frequency of flood events (see precipitation map on page 43). Therefore the correlating Flood Zone designations will likely change to reflect this. It's important to recognize that even though a 100-year flood was originally calculated to have only a 1% chance of occurring in a given year, these storms can, and do, occur far more frequently than once every 100 years. It is not uncommon for 100-year floods to occur in several consecutive years.

The 100-year flood event is important to consider when planning and designing parks. These parks will experience flooding more frequently, increasing the risk of harm to their facilities. Flood Zones, particularly the 100 year and 10 year designations, are important to consider when choosing where to site facilities and determining material choices and programming. FEMA released updated future mapping of flood zones along the Lake Michigan shoreline in 2021. FEMA has created a website to help communities and residents understand the flood zone mapping and its impact, more information is available here:

www.greatlakescoast.org

Mallard ducks waddle their way through flooded parts of Kiwanis Park

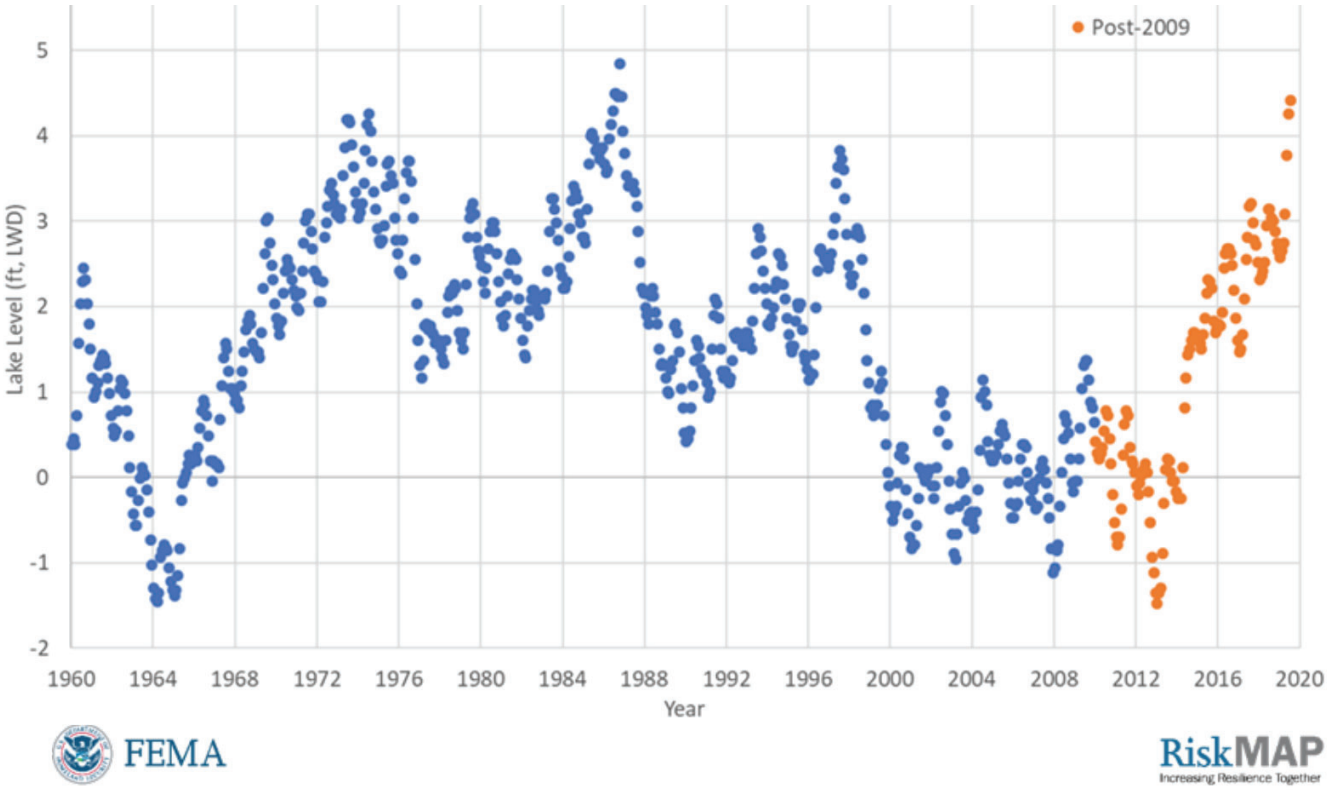
Flooded area near recreation spot at Kiwanis Park

LAKEFRONT PARKS

Like other coastal Great Lakes cities, Sheboygan has experienced rapid lake level change and unprecedented high water levels in recent years. Sheboygan can expect the pattern of cyclical lake level fluctuation to continue and should adjust shoreline management practices accordingly. The greatest erosion and damage to infrastructure occurs during the high water periods. Therefore planning and management should focus on the needs of high water conditions.

The Great Lakes have a large surface area and are strongly impacted by evaporation, even a slight warming trend can increase the rate of evaporation and cause levels to decline. Less ice cover during winter can also increase evaporation. At the same time, heavier precipitation in recent years and associated runoff, has caused lake levels to rise. Weather patterns such as La Nina and the polar vortex that bring colder, wetter weather, can also contribute to higher lake levels.

The Great Lakes have seen extensive periods of high water, record highs, flooding, and coastline erosion in recent years. This started in 2014, a year marked by an outbreak of cold air, chilly conditions, thick ice covers, and significant rates of precipitation (see FEMA chart of Lake Michigan water levels below). Water levels are still above average today as a result of these rises, which persisted over the subsequent several years on all five lakes.

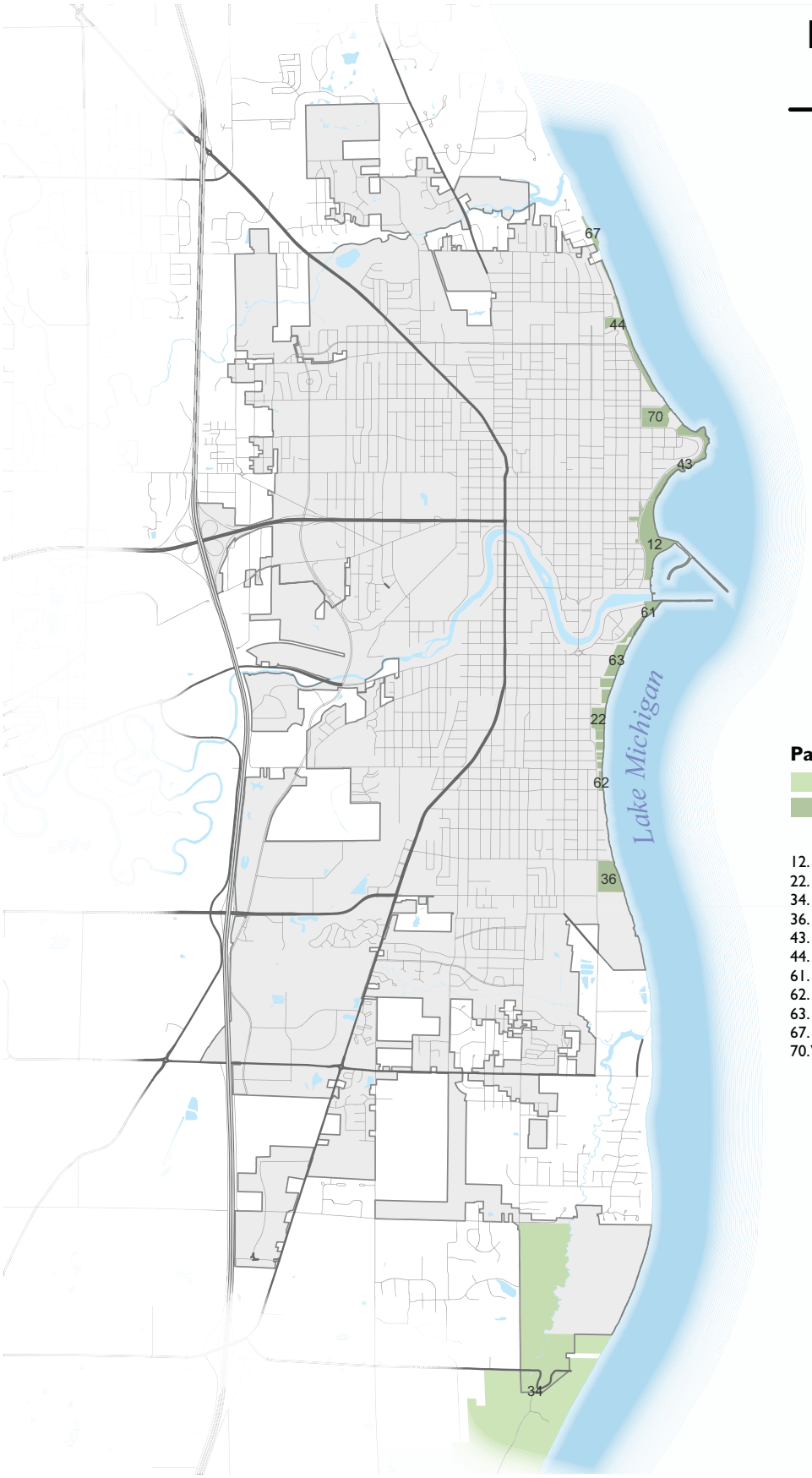


▲ The Great Lakes have seen extensive periods of high water since 2014, a year marked by an outbreak of cold air, chilly conditions, thick ice covers, and significant rates of precipitation.

For more information see: Gronewold, D., J. Bruxer, D. Durnford, J. Smith, A. Clites, F. Seglenieks, S. Quian, T. Hunter, V. Fortin, 2016: Hydrological drivers of record-setting water level rise on Earth's largest lake system. Water Resources Research, 52(5), 4026-4042. doi: 10.1002/2015WR018209) https://glisa.umich.edu/resources-tools/leading-by-example/

Lakefront Park Facilities

City of Sheboygan



Parks

- County, State & School
- Municipal

12. Deland Park
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62. Southshore Park
63. Southside Beach
67. Unnamed Park 2
70. Vollrath Park

COASTAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

RESILIENT PRACTICES IN COASTAL PARK MANAGEMENT WILL HELP SHEBOYGAN PREPARE FOR A RANGE OF POSSIBLE CONDITIONS IN THE FUTURE.

Maintaining development and infrastructure at a distance that accommodates the highest expected water levels will protect priority investments and cultural spaces. Dune grasses and other natural erosion control measures act as a buffer to reduce deterioration of beaches and lakefront amenities. Programming and future planning can consider how lakefront activities can be enjoyed during both high and low lake levels.

Design for Fluctuation

Site constructed features to withstand high water levels. The particular park features' resilience to flooding depends significantly on the elevation. Even a small degree of elevation can determine whether a feature is washed away or damaged.

Choose resilient materials and ensure subsurface construction is adequate. The type and finish of materials should be chosen for durability. The subsurface footings and base materials should offer adequate support to survive the impacts of erosion and scour during storm events, it should be designed and built with the right materials, depth, and reinforcement.

View of Lake Michigan from Vollrath Park on the City's north side. A user-made narrow pathway extends from the end of Vollrath Boulevard along the bluff and down to the lake.

Natural Systems Based Strategies

Coastal habitats are adaptable and can provide protection against erosion and storm damage. Established coastal ecosystems can withstand a storm or, if they are harmed, regrow and self-heal. Maintaining coastal ecosystems including dune grasses, estuaries, coastal wetlands and other conservation areas, not only protects the immediate area, but provides a buffer and to nearby development. Long-term, affordable, robust, and sustainable coastal preservation will be made possible by preserving and creating new ecosystems that are adapted for coastal areas.

- Beach nourishment and dunes
- Wetlands
- Living shorelines
- Connections with nursery habitat and estuaries

Southside Park Beach

▲ Recreational diving provides one way to explore the shipwrecks and offshore habitat of Lake Michigan. Pictured is the Alger Underwater Preserve off the Michigan coastline of Lake Superior.

OFFSHORE HABITAT:

Sheboygan is an ecologically important area for fish and smallmouth bass in particular. UWM faculty members Kim Beckmann and John Janssen have mapped fish populations in the Milwaukee harbor and expanded research to include Sheboygan and other regions on coastal Lake Michigan. Sheboygan Harbor demonstrated the highest numbers of Smallmouth bass in the study area of Southeast Wisconsin, which suggests that protecting and expanding subsurface and offshore habitat could be an area of interest for Sheboygan in the future . Offshore habitat and spawning reefs are one way for Sheboygan to support local fish populations and enhance favorable breeding conditions.

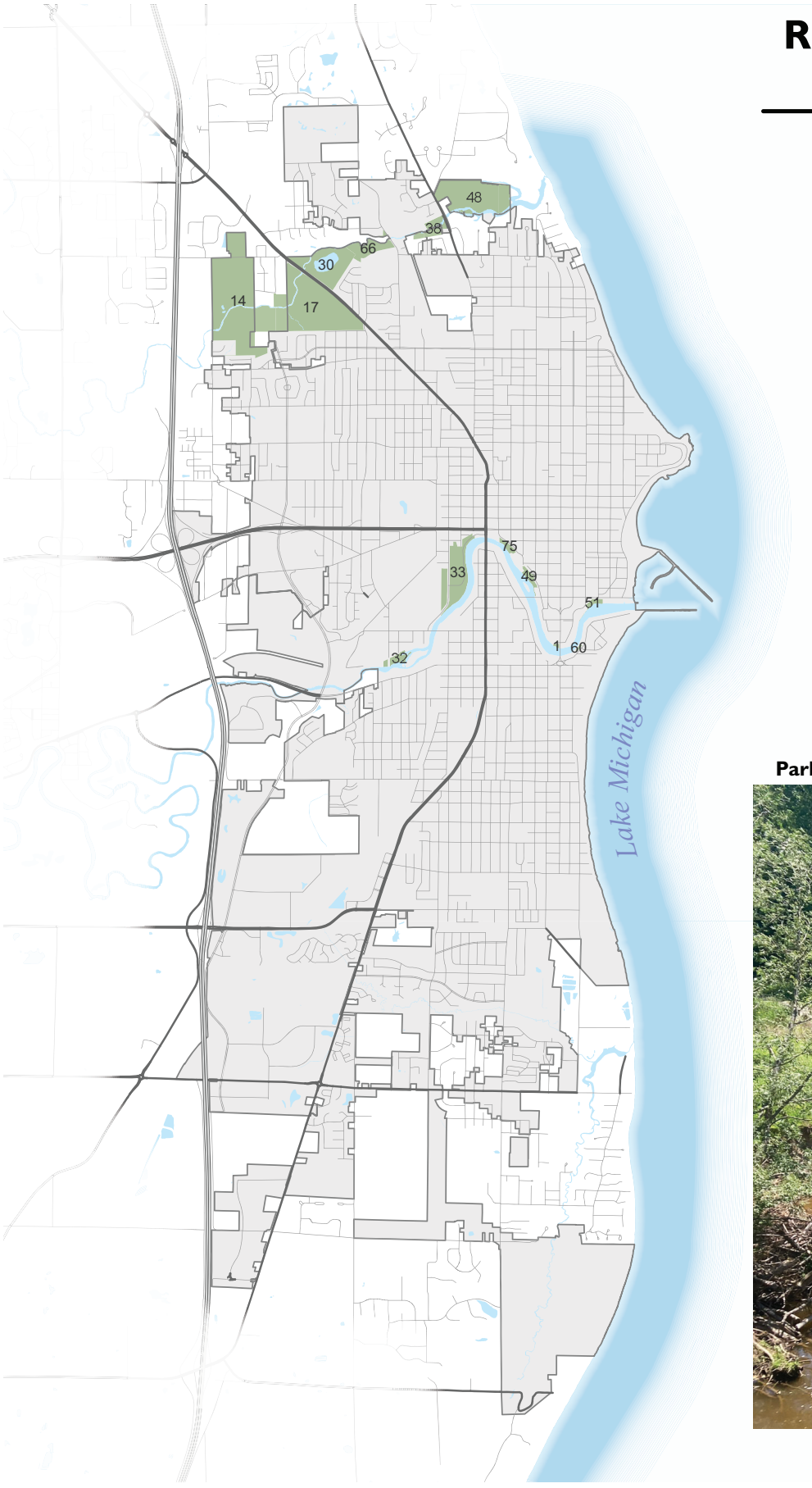
For more information about constructing artificial reefs in the Great Lakes see: Gannon, J. E. (ed.). 1990. International position statement and evaluation guidelines for artificial reefs in the Great Lakes. Great Lakes Fishery Commission Special Publication 90-2.

uwm.edu/harbormaps/future-maps

www.glfc.org/pubs/SpecialPubs/Sp90_2.pdf

Riverfront Park Facilities

City of Sheboygan



Parks

STREAMS AND RIVERS

Recreation next to water reduces stress and improves heath. In urban environments, waterfront parks and open spaces are especially important to provide much needed access to the water. Streams and rivers are shaped by urban development in consistent ways, with negative impacts on flood management and water quality. The approach to streamside park planning can respond to these known conditions to offset and alleviate the associated negative impact on stream quality.

Urban development has a direct impact on stream structure and shape. As vegetated ground is replaced with impervious cover, such as parking lots and roofs, more water is directed into small stream and tributaries as runoff and at high velocities during storms. This causes an increase in erosion and a scouring out of the stream bed from sediment carried by faster moving water during large rains. The effect of increased development and corresponding runoff on stream morphology is a stream channel that is straighter and wider, with a smoother riverbed.

Urban streams become straighter, smoother and wider as a result of erosion and scour from increased runoff.

▲ Pigeon River as it flows through Unknown Park, #66.

Erosion can be observed in many small streams in Sheboygan's parks. As Sheboygan continues to expand, development will have an impact on streams and rivers. Development patterns that reduce impervious cover such as directing runoff into vegetated areas are the best way to protect Sheboygan's streams and overall water quality. Within the Park system there are many measures which can help to protect and sustains Sheboygan's beautiful streamside parks.

The future will bring greater variability and more extreme variations in precipitation and water levels. Rivers are always in motion – and river parks are subject to constant transformation due to natural process. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for spaces alongside the river to reflect the ongoing process that shape them. Riverfront parks are opportunities to intersect ecology, flood protection, water quality protection and social amenity. When designed to accommodate multiple states, riverside parks can bring ongoing enjoyment throughout the year.

Wastewaster restriction as well, for example, limited excavation and filling required for walkways built on pilings in wetland areas are not subject to a Shoreland Zoning Permit by Sheboygan County. Boardwalks withstand wet environments better, with typically less maintenance and upkeep once completed. Crossing may be constructed without railing if there is little danger of falling, particularly if there is only a few inches of water and less than a foot drop from the deck to the wetland.

Boardwalk in Indian Mound Park

Signage and Accessibility

A key element to include in a trails network is a signing system for marking the trail and points of interest. This should include map at the trailhead and explanatory materials. Pigeon River Estuary is a wide and diverse park full of opportunities for wildlife observation. Winding and rustic trails would facilitate this kind of immersive experience and clearly marked trails would ensure that users are comfortable and can easily navigate and make informed decisions about their time in the park.

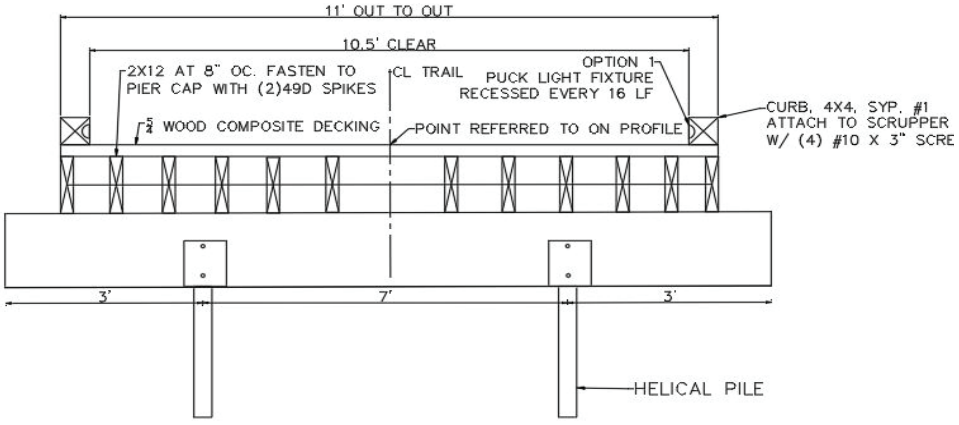
Another consideration is ADA accessibility, it may be of interest to create a hierarchy of trails that includes a shorter, accessible trail along with longer trails that extend into harder to navigate terrain. Boardwalks are a means of creating accessibility within wetland areas. An ADA accessible trail might include a boardwalk that parallels the river with lookout points and resting areas. A secondary network of trails might encourage exploration in the back areas of the estuary further from the main course of the Pigeon River. As restoration continues, signage and trails can reflect the diversity of plant communities visitors can experience, such as sedge meadow communities or scrub communities that exist within the estuary.

Construction

Construction in muddy, hard to access areas can be difficult. Floating materials on the river may be preferable for areas that cannot accommodate a vehicle. Additionally, sections of decking can be assembled on site and carried or floated to the location. Frozen conditions can make it easier to move materials in wet areas, but accessibility needs to be weighed against the colder working conditions for staff.

- Wetland trail crossing in Pigeon River Estuary

- A low profile boardwalk is a means to cross wetlands and small streams while maintaining a hydrologic connection to the Pigeon River. No railing is required and it could be used in conjunction with crush gravel or woodchip trails. An edge curb provides additional safety for strollers or wheelchairs. Depending on the water depth, a raised boardwalk may be desired as an alternative in some locations.



PARK HIGHLIGHT: PIGEON RIVER ESTUARY

They are unique, chemically distinct systems containing a mix of lake and river water. Water fluctuations in the system are regulated by storm surges and seiches (vertical oscillations in lake water caused by atmospheric pressure including wind and storms). The warmer, more protected water of the river and the chilly, occasionally severe conditions of the lake overlap as a result of this mixing and create valuable ecosystems. Both river and lake locations can be used by many types of plants and animals for various aspects of life, creating the perfect environment for a wide variety of plants and animals to flourish.

The Pigeon River Estuary is a remnant wetland ecosystem that is critical habitat for migratory shorebirds, hawks, waterfowl and songbirds. It supports a warm water fishery with seasonal runs of salmon and trout. However, invasive species and over a century of human impacts have degraded the ecosystem. Recently the wetlands area has been part of the Pigeon River Estuary Restoration Project in conjunction with Lakeshore Natural Resources Partnership. The project included removal of invasive phragmites (reeds) and planting of native trees and shrubs.

To establish a beneficial system for wildlife throughout cyclical changes in water levels, periodic connections between the estuary wetland and river should be maintained in trail development.

Freshwater estuaries are an important coastal habitat that connect inland water systems with the Great Lakes.

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

In keeping with the objective to improve trails and public access in Pigeon River Estuary, developing trails is a priority. The main trail in Pigeon River Estuary runs along the north bank of the Pigeon River. The trail is mostly dry, however there are many points where wetland connections to the river cross the trail. It is important to maintain the hydrologic connection between inland estuary wetlands and river. The seiche effect influence and seasonal flooding create ongoing, cyclical fluctuation which benefit the lifecycle of wildlife and sustain this valuable ecosystem.

RIVERFRONT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The riverfront management strategies discussed in this document emphasize enhancing ecological quality and expanding public access to fully utilize the many benefits that rivers provide for urban living.

ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL QUALITY

Install and maintain a vegetated riparian buffer at least 35' along all stream banks. Exceptions may be made for public access points and high pedestrian traffic areas. Develop water edges with vegetation to absorb and slow runoff and withstand flooding.

Prioritize green engineering by using erosion control measures that rely on vegetated and hybrid techniques instead of hard engineering methods to avoid exacerbating downstream erosion. Employ practices to restore channel roughness lost through erosion to slow further erosion and enhance riparian habitat.

Locate facilities and active uses above 100 year floodplain, retain 100 year floodplain for uses that are floodable.

Retain frequently flooded areas for naturalized plantings and habitat.

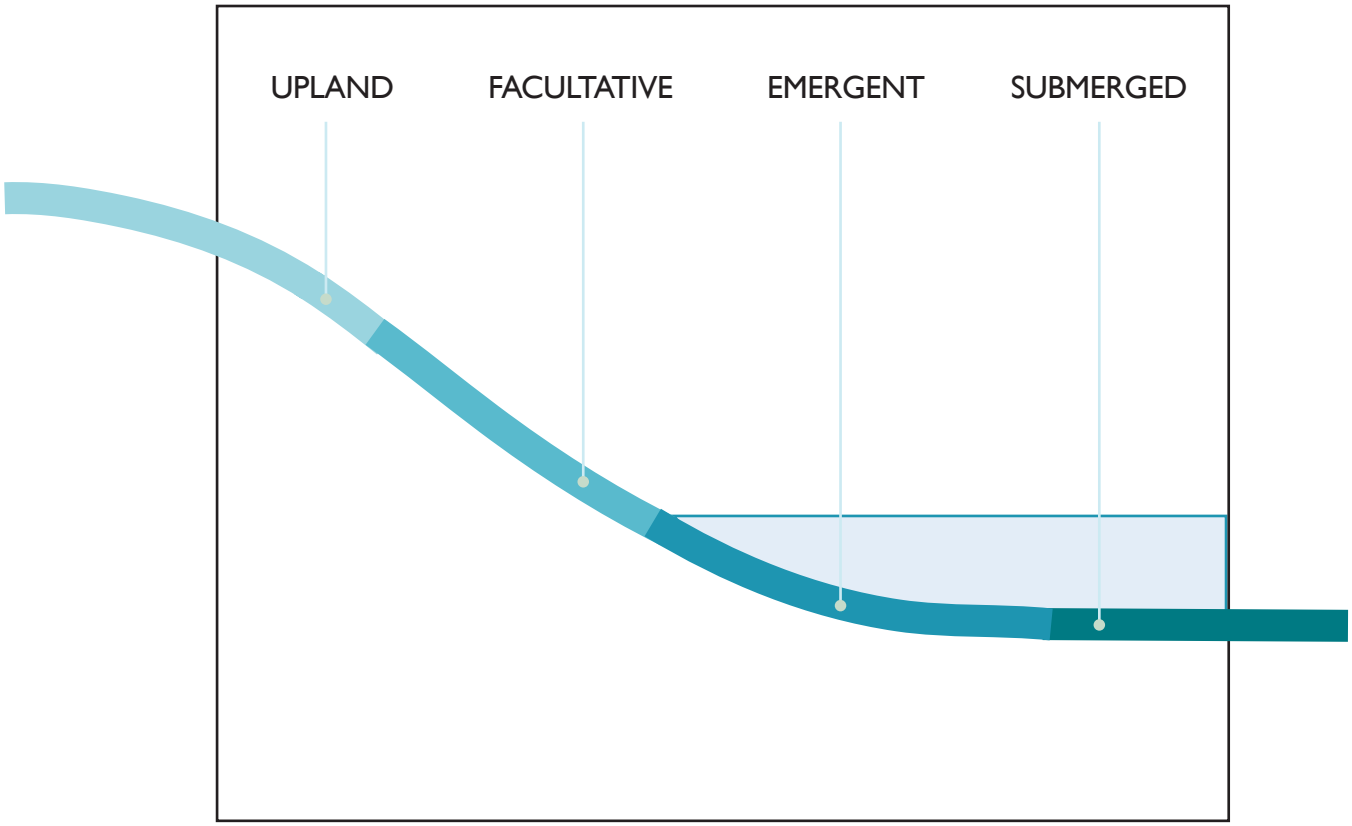
Prioritize wildlife by creating and expanding habitat with a focus on enhancing the riparian and emergent landscapes. Create dog amenities away from habitat areas.

Connect people with nature by coordinating cultural and recreational programming that leverages ecological resources. Provide opportunities for immersive experiences in nature that facilitate the regenerative and educational benefits of natural areas.

Encourage surfacing of urban hydrology by daylighting streams and creeks and managing stormwater on site. Allow water systems to exist alongside cultural uses and programming so that water dynamics are visible to park users.

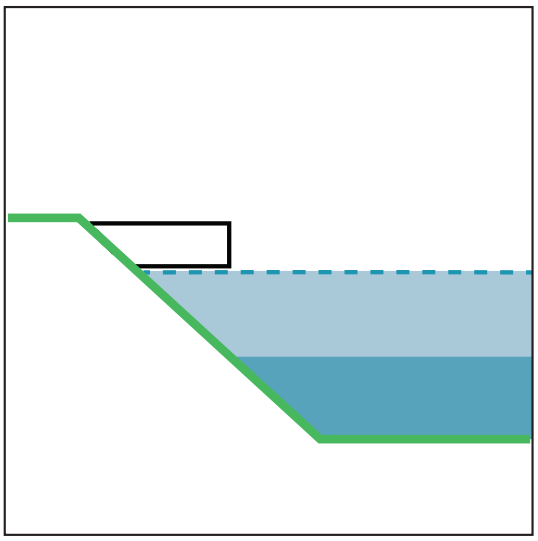
A sloped bank protects against hydrologic change and provides varying conditions that are good for habitat. Where possible, pull back shoreline with shallow grading to create diverse habitat and deter erosion.

Habitat Zones

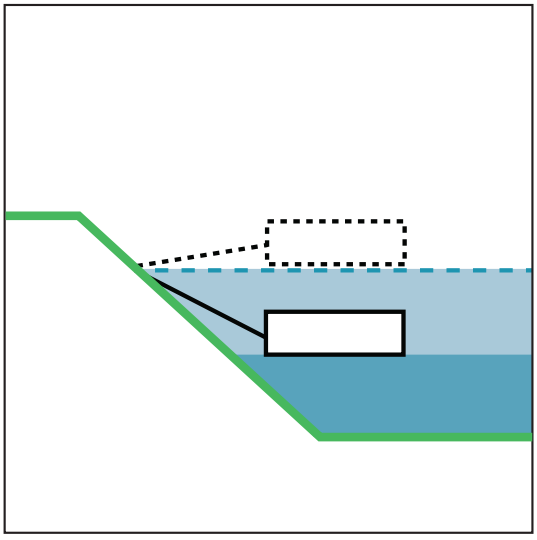


- UPLAND (self seeding annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs)
- FACULTATIVE (tolerate both wet and dry conditions, suitable for river edge and periodic flooding)
- EMERGENT (roots in water, leaves above)
- SUBMERGED (aquatic plants, underwater)

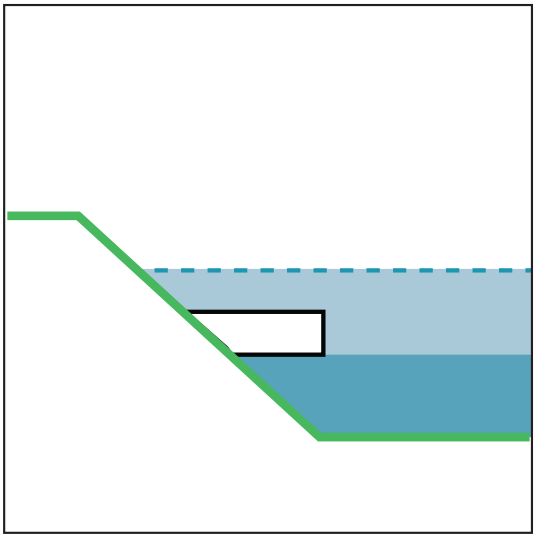
Adapting social spaces to fluctuating water levels



Elevated Space



Floating Space



Flood Tolerant Space

Expand Public Access

Sheboygan's waterfront parks provide an amazing resource for residents to access quality landscapes close to their home. Enjoyment of natural areas are not only beneficial for the health and wellness of residents, they also provide opportunities to gain appreciation and knowledge of local flora and fauna and the rich natural legacy of the area.

Within riverfront parks, providing safe opportunities to get close to the water is one way to increase enjoyment of these parks. A view of a river from a distance is beautiful, but getting close to the water is often where you'll find the most interesting experience. It is close to the water that allows seeing and hearing the movement of water or observing birds, fish and other wildlife.

Social spaces that adapt to fluctuating water levels might take the form of an elevated space, a floating space or a flood tolerance space. The following section provides options for developing access points close to the water, while still maintaining ecological and hydrological flexibility.

Design for continuity between waterfront parks

Waterways are perfect locations for recreational paths. The linear nature of streams means that they are already useful corridors for navigating the city and provide a wealth of amenities for people and wildlife alike. Continuous paths for hiking, biking strolling and recreation are a highly desired feature for Sheboygan residents. Riverfront parks can also help wildlife navigate through inhospitable urban terrain and find the resources they need to thrive.

The proposed pedestrian bridge across the Sheboygan River is a substantial step toward improving connectivity along Sheboygan's waterfront. Connectivity will increase use of the waterfront and related businesses in the downtown area. Activity from the lakefront can move into the neighborhood via the Sheboygan River and open up waterfront access to greater portion of the population. The bridge supports connection between south and northside beaches and lakefront amenities with enhanced connection into the communities.

▲ Views from the Kiwanis Park Biergarten on the Sheboygan River, looking south. Access to water is restricted, turf runs all the way to the water's edge and the gravel surface would be washed away in a flood.

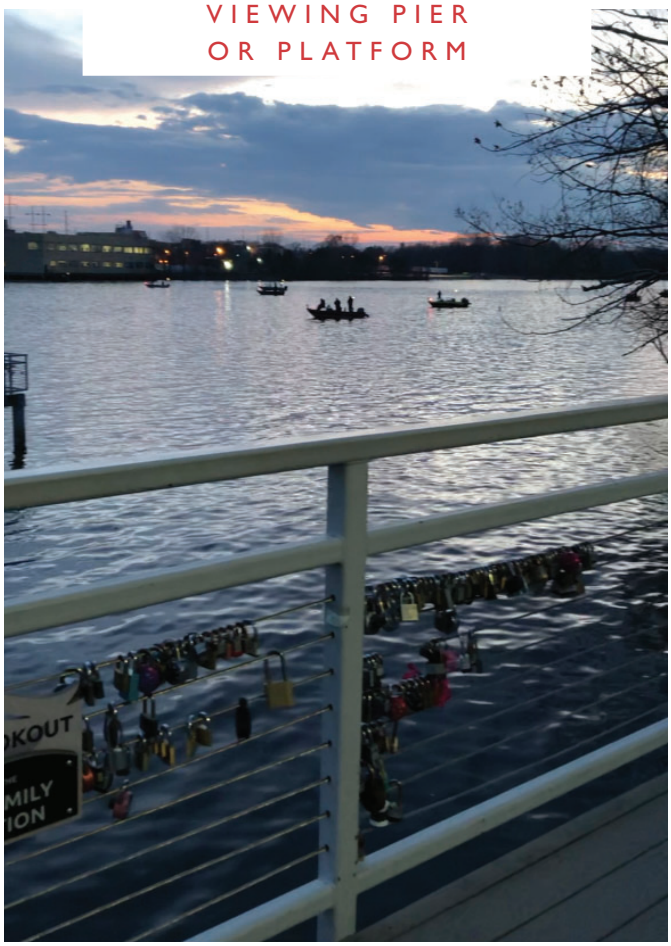
▲ Views from the Kiwanis Park Biergarten on the Sheboygan River looking north.

Strategies for access:

- » Improve and create additional access points.
- » Integrate access inclusive of all Sheboygan residents and for a range of ages and abilities, including ADA accessible points of access.
- » Maximize water dependent recreation such as kayaking, stand up paddle boarding (SUP) and fishing.
- » Create tiered access for both flood and drought conditions.
- » Consider all seasons use by providing a variety of spaces open to the public year-round.

Create selective access points that are flood adapted.

VIEWING PIER OR PLATFORM



SEATING STEPS, UNDERWATER STEPS AND FORESHORES

FLOATING BOARDWALK OR PLATFORM

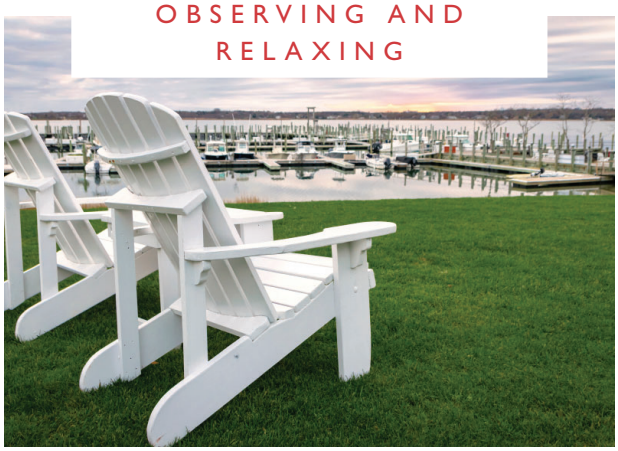
INTEGRATED FLOOD PROTECTION (LIKE SEATING WALLS)

OVERLOOK, BALCONY OR SUSPENDED WALKWAY

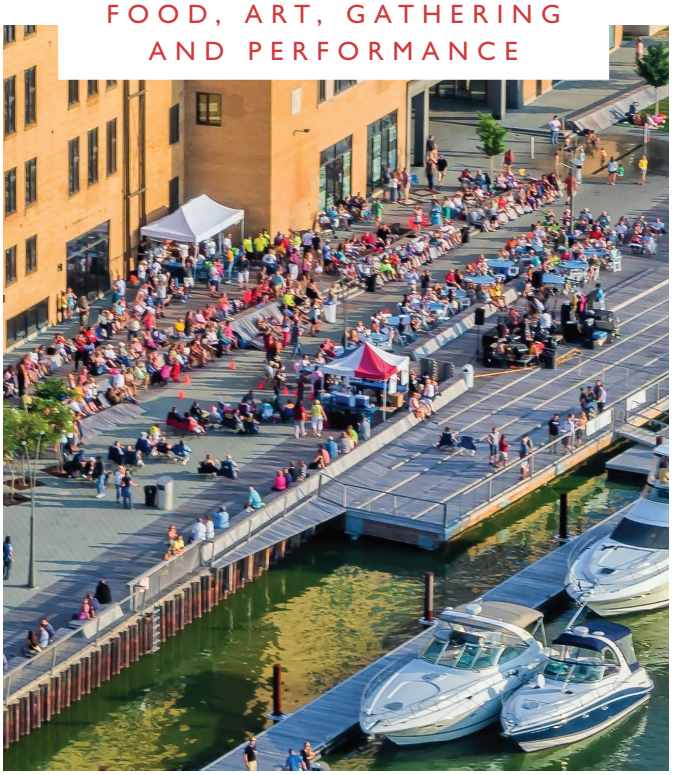
Provide spaces for a variety of activities types.

WINTER USES

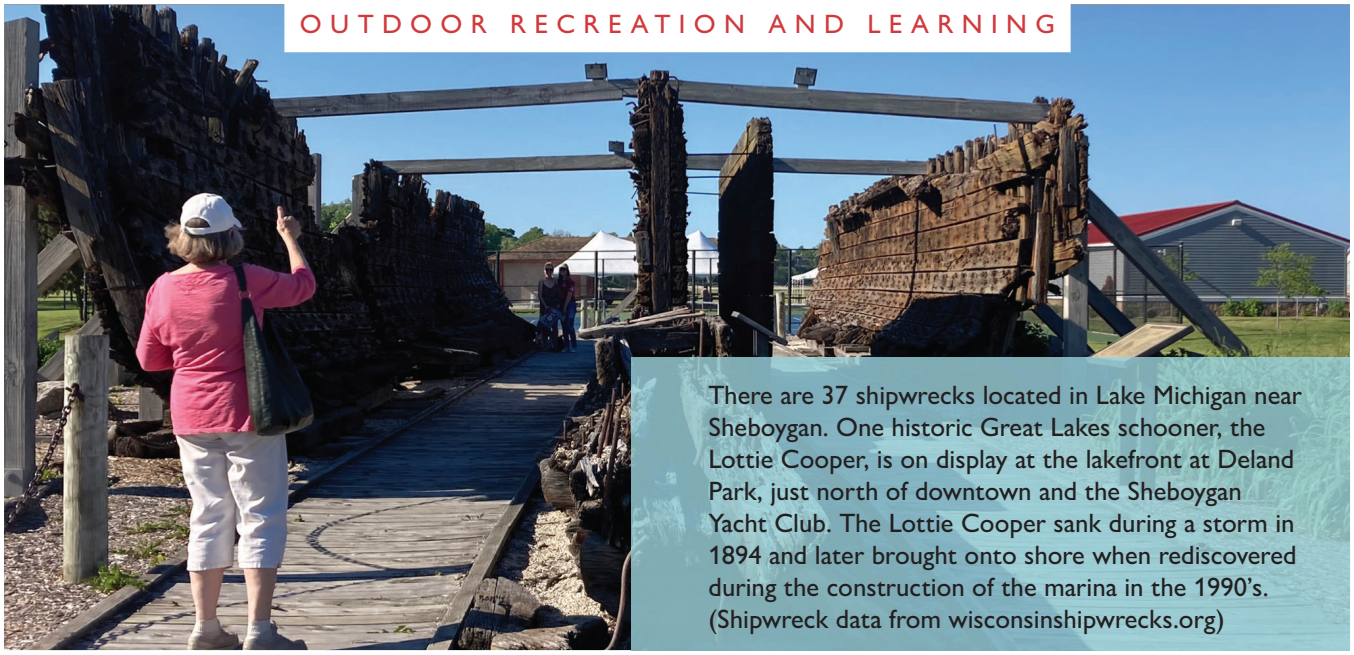
OBSERVING AND RELAXING



FOOD, ART, GATHERING AND PERFORMANCE



OUTDOOR RECREATION AND LEARNING



There are 37 shipwrecks located in Lake Michigan near Sheboygan. One historic Great Lakes schooner, the Lottie Cooper, is on display at the lakefront at Deland Park, just north of downtown and the Sheboygan Yacht Club. The Lottie Cooper sank during a storm in 1894 and later brought onto shore when rediscovered during the construction of the marina in the 1990's. (Shipwreck data from wisconsinshipwrecks.org)

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

All stormwater management systems are designed to convey stormwater away from critical infrastructure, such as homes and business. Systems that rely solely on non-vegetated or "gray" infrastructure methods, such as pipes and concrete detention basins, can manage water volumes, but do nothing for water quality or ecosystem health. Green infrastructure benefits range from environmental benefits to quality of life benefits and more.

Additionally, green infrastructure has a wide variety of types or "best management practices" (BMPs) that can be used in many different scenarios. Small, distributed uses of green infrastructure can present more flexibility and customization than gray infrastructure as they are able to be installed in small amounts across a variety of locations. As a supplement to "gray" systems, green infrastructure can improve existing systems without undergoing massive capital investments and construction projects.

Green infrastructure includes a wide range of added benefits not provided by "gray" infrastructure.

How Green Infrastructure Works

Water is constantly in motion as it travels through the hydrologic cycle. Once rainwater falls to the earth as precipitation it can either be absorbed into the ground or flow along the surface until it gets collected in streams and rivers. Water that infiltrates into the ground still moves below the earth's surface. Subsurface flow of ground water is important for maintaining aquifers and baseline flow of surface water like rivers, streams and lakes.

When rainwater falls on a vegetated surface, it flows over plants and soil toward the discharge point. Along the way much of that water is absorbed by plant roots or soaks into the ground. This means that far less precipitation leaves the site as runoff and water is slowed as it enters streams following a typical rain event.

When rainwater falls on pavement or rooftops, it travels very quickly to the discharge point and enters the stream system at high volumes, which can lead to flooding and damaging velocities. In addition, water traveling over pavement picks up contaminants, such as oils and residue from cars, and washes it into the streams. Water traveling over treated lawns and agricultural land can also wash pesticides and fertilizers into the water system leading to degradation of aquatic environments and lower water quality.

When water is allowed to soak into the ground through green infrastructure, the water is naturally cleansed of pollution through filtration and biodegradation of organic contaminants. This means that water flowing through green infrastructure enters the stream system cleaner, recharges aquifers and maintains stream base flow.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

Landscape standards for Sheboygan Parks are focused on infiltrating stormwater where it falls, or as close as to the source as possible. This focus on infiltration improves water quality in Lake Michigan by reducing harmful contaminants entering the lake or stream system through runoff. Most precipitation happens during small rainfalls of under 1". Even during larger rainfalls most of the contaminants on a surface will be washed off during the first 1" of rainfall, sometimes referred to as the "first flush." Stormwater management practices should focus on managing water from small rain events and the "first flush" which contain most surface pollution. Runoff from hard surfaces such as streets, parking lots, pathways and rooftops should be directed to landscaped areas whenever possible.

» Use rain gardens and bioretention

Rain gardens and bioretention should be installed to infiltrate runoff from parking lots, roads, plazas and other impervious surfaces. Rain gardens are shallow planted areas that retain stormwater and allow infiltration and uptake by plant roots. They are not meant to hold large amounts of water, soils should have an infiltration rate of at least 0.5 inches per hour or more to ensure adequate drainage of the system. A typical soil mix for well drained rain garden is 50% sand, 20-30% topsoil, and 20-30% compost. An optional gravel bed of 6" – 10" underneath the topsoil will allow additional storage capacity. An underdrain system may also be used to take overflow to the stormwater system already in place or to another BMP. A typical area for rain gardens follows a 5:1 ration of drainage area to rain garden area. Plant with a mix of upland and facultative plants that can withstand both wet and dry conditions.

Rain gardens near buildings should be located 10' from the building and may be designed alongside rain harvesting or storage systems.

» Improve soil porosity and infiltration rates of existing planting beds

Test percolation rates and amend with compost to improve water retention and drainage. Mulch beds as needed. Use vertical mulch and stakes to restore compacted soil without as much disturbance of existing plants. Select deep rooted plants to increase water retention. Native plant perennial landscapes should replace turf grass where possible and be very diverse. They should be placed lower than walkways, not mounded up.

▲ Rain garden with educational signage

For more information see:

https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stormwater/documents/RainGardenManual.pdf, https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/stormwater/documents/1009RainGarden.pdf

» Install stormwater tree islands in parking areas

Allow tree islands in parking area to be depressed rather than mounded in order allow infiltration. Allow ribbon and slotted curb types to facilitate the movement of runoff from the parking surface into tree islands and vegetated areas. Parking should be designed with regularly spaced tree islands to provide shading and reduce the urban heat island effect. Maintain target goal of 30% tree canopy cover in parking lots. Trees should be planted below the grade of the sidewalk and the street in structural cells with enough root space. Optimal minimum coverage for the bioretention areas is five percent of the entire paved surface (IL ext).

» Use native and adapted plants instead of turf

Maximize performance of recreational and high use areas landscapes by planting native vegetation around programed areas instead of turf. Enhance dune restoration using dune adapted plant communities. Use native and adapted planting in areas that are inhospitable to turf such as low lying, wet, sandy or clayey areas.

» Preserve and protect existing healthy vegetation

Protect ecological areas and habitat which provide infiltration buffers for surface and ground water. Design for riparian corridors with minimum 35' vegetated riparian buffers. Match planting to preservation goals, ie: woodland, wildlife, etc. Connect depressions to manage excess runoff during heavy rains.

» Disconnect downspouts from existing buildings

Disconnected downspouts should not discharge onto sidewalks or impervious area as this could lead to icy conditions in winter. In new buildings, design with site in mind and consider opportunities for rainwater storage

» Use subsurface infiltration

Consider opportunities for infiltration under recreation fields and under pavement. In built up areas a dry well or "seep away" can provide additional stormwater management for building or paved surface runoff.

» Use permeable or porous paving in parking and other low traffic areas

Where vegetative solutions are not feasible, porous concrete or porous asphalt should be specified for sidewalks, parking lots, parking lanes, plazas and access roads to infiltrate stormwater.

» Maintenance

Make sure new plantings are cared for during the establishment period, which includes regular watering and weeding.

Confirm standing water soaks into the ground within two days.

Confirm overflow piping is not clogged.

Remove debris and weeds from rain gardens as needed and debris after large rain events.

Mulch planting beds.

Develop a management plan that leaves leaf litter in place or adds organic matter on an annual basis to maintain high organic content.

Use water retaining maintenance on turf (mow higher, leave cuttings, reduce fertilizer)

WATERFRONT LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

The following 5 topic suggestions are imperative to achieving sustainable parks now and into the future!

1 Hard Surfaces:

- Reduce surface temperature by using high albedo and permeable paving.
- Use environmentally benign, non-toxic materials.
- Use porous paving and design to reduce sediment deposition onto porous surfaces.
- Design on existing contours to avoid erosion.
- Pave less. Reduce impervious parking and driving lane widths and opt for porous paving and vegetated surfaces where possible.

2 Planning and Design:

- Preserve and restore natural hydrology (flow paths). Natural topography can be mapped or simply observed during rain events by noticing where small streams develop. Consult with maintenance staff to identify natural flow paths.
- Decrease compaction and uniform grading.
- Identify recharge areas. Protect recharge areas and incorporate into plans and maintenance.
- Identify sensitive areas (steep slopes, mature or valuable vegetation, wetlands, springs, etc.).

Natural landscapes should be preserved and protected because they protect the city's water quality, absorb and clean runoff and recharge groundwater. Vegetation moderates temperatures and humidity levels and reduces the urban heat island effect.

Small headwater streams and drainage areas are extremely important to the health of larger streams and coastal ecosystems, therefore special attention should be paid to these areas during planning and design.

▲ General King Park

3 Plantings:

- Designate consistent tree planting along sidewalks and parking areas. ie: every 30 feet.
- Actively replace trees that are lost due to disease or damage.
- Increase tree diversity.
- Provide adequate soil volume to allow trees to reach maturity. A growing tree requires adequate soil to provide nutrition and water. Soil provides structural support which prevents trees from being damaged or falling in high winds. Soil must be uncompacted to allow root growth. Soil volumes may be provided beneath paving if methods are used to prevent compaction. These can include structural soil, soil cells and root paths. Most of a tree's root mass exists in the top 12" of soil and soil depth should be at least this deep. Soil does not need to be more than 3 feet deep for most trees.

Maintain tree canopy coverage

For more information see: Urban, James. Up By Roots: Health Soil and Trees in the Built Environment (2008). International Society of Arboriculture Books, Champaign, IL.

Use an ecological approach to planting

- Specify native plants, adapted to local conditions.
- Provide a diversity of plants.
- Provide a diversity of landscape types ie: meadow, forest, marsh, butterfly garden, fragrance garden, shade garden.

Plant water efficient landscapes

- Plant according to micro climates to maintain full vegetation cover.
- Place naturalized vegetation in low use areas, using drought tolerant plants and limit turf to those areas that require for active use.
- Reduce turf and use alternative turfgrass species, such as low mow and drought tolerant grasses.
- Use water retaining maintenance on turf (mow higher, leave cuttings, reduce fertilizer).
- Use cover crops and nurse crops during installation of planted areas to suppress weeds.
- Emphasis seasonal beauty by including plants that provide aesthetic and environmental benefits in winter and fall in addition to spring and summer.
- Understand existing microclimates and create new microclimates to extend use into colder seasons.

4 Active Use Areas:

- Incorporate nature into active use areas by using trees and vegetated buffers around playing fields, playgrounds and other active use areas.
- Decrease compaction and uniform grading.
- Incorporate opportunities for free play, nature play and science based play using landscape features that highlight natural functions such as wind, water, sound and light.
- Provide multigenerational amenities in all locations that can be enjoyed by a wide range of ages.

▲ Residents of all ages enjoying time in General King Park

5

Water and Drainage:

- Look for opportunities to remove pipes and daylight small streams. Replace pipes with vegetated swales.
- Look for opportunities to dissipate concentrated discharge such as spreaders, check dams and vegetation.
- Use culverts at crossings to allow passage of water and aquatic organisms.
- Intercept discharge from the storm sewer before it enters the stream system or lake using green infrastructure.
- Use buffers around high use areas to filter and absorbs runoff.
- Apply measures upstream to reduce flow velocities and erosion.
- Identify areas where water naturally pools during wet periods and consider planting these areas.

Use visible stormwater management and signage to increase awareness

Because green infrastructure is a distributive type of management, it works better the more it is practiced. Visibility and awareness of green infrastructure applications, such as rain gardens, show people how such practices could be applied on their own property or elseware in the city. As more green infrastructure is added to private property, its efficacy increases overall. Visibility also heightens awareness of natural cycles and fluctuations, heightening a sense place and connection to local conditions. For children, such interventions can create small moments for learning, exploration and wonder in the everyday landscape.

Children study water flowing through a vegetated swale at a park in Portland, OR

▲ Highly visible green infrastructure at General King Park.

IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING

5

Projects envisioned in this CORP can be funded in several ways:

- General Fund Allocations
- Park Impact Fees
- Tax Incremental District (TID) Funding, if eligible
- Fundraising
- Grant Funding, with or without matching or contributing local funds
- Fund for Lake Michigan

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

General Fund

General fund dollars are allocated annually during the village budgeting process. To date, maintenance projects are completed by City Department of Public Works staff. General Fund allocations are described in more detail in the Capital Improvement Fund section of this CORP.

Park Impact Fees

Over the past several years, Sheboygan has been experiencing increased interest from residential developers. When more development occurs, demand for public facilities such as parks can increase. Park Impact Fees can be used to fund park development to help the City meet this increased demand, without increasing costs for current residents. At the time of development, several fees are collected from a developer, including park impact fees. These fees are held in reserve until needed for design and construction of the park. Sheboygan has used Park Impact Fees in the past to help fund capital costs for a recreational trail.

TID

The Village currently has eleven active Tax Incremental Districts (TID). A municipality can fund public infrastructure and other eligible costs for projects within a TID so long as the costs are eligible and included with the TID project plan.

Fundraising

Working with local community organizations or businesses, particularly ones with a mission related to youth, parks, recreation, or environment/sustainability are great partners for advancing Sheboygan's CORP. Capital campaigns can be organized and structured to complement an organization's established events within park spaces to raise money for small or large structures or amenities. Another strategy would be for the City to actively request donations to help improve or expand amenities within parks. Donations could be organized for:

- New infrastructure such as benches, picnic tables, fire pits, etc.
- Trees and native plantings
- Community gardens and/or pollinator gardens
- Trail signage and branding
- Ice rink set-up/takedown
- Beach clean-ups

Grants

The Wisconsin DNR administers four Stewardship grant programs with applications currently due annually on May 1. Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Grant programs support nature-based outdoor recreation activities and include the following focus areas:

- Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)
- Urban Green Space (UGS) grants
- Urban Rivers (UR) grants
- Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)

Additionally, Wisconsin DNR administers two federal programs:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants support land acquisition and development of high-quality outdoor recreation amenities in local communities
- Recreation Trails Program (RTP) funds are used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses.

Lastly, WisDOT administers the Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ). CMAQ encourages transportation alternatives in non-attainment and maintenance counties in Wisconsin that improve air quality. Transportation alternatives include public transit enhancements, bicycle/ pedestrian facilities, ride sharing programs and facilities, and technologies that improve traffic flow and decrease vehicle emissions. Sheboygan is eligible to apply for the CMAQ Program. Applications are solicited every other year.

Fund for Lake Michigan

The Fund for Lake Michigan is a non-profit organization that supports projects that have near-term, direct and quantifiable impacts on water quality in the Lake Michigan watershed. Eligible projects include wetland restoration, stormwater management, stream bank repair, and general water quality improvements.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

YEAR	2023
Maintenance/Retrofits	
Walkway accessibility improvements (various parks)	
Cole Park walkway resurfacing	
Deland Park bathhouse replacement, refurbishment	
Rammer playground accessibility improvement	
Maywood driveway resurfacing	
End Park walkway resurfacing	
Evergreen Park shelter/restroom refurbishment	
Evergreen Park roadway pedestrian safety improvements	
Fountain Park turf restoration	
Fountain Park performance shelter and restroom refurbishment	
Franklin Park fence repair, replacement	
Franklin Park backstop relocation	
General King Park entrance and flagpole restoration	
Indian Park trail restoration/debris removal	
Veteran's Park tennis court resurfacing, repairs	
Vollrath Park lighting repairs, replacement	
Vollrath Park shelter/restroom repairs	
Vollrach Park retaining wall repair, rebuild	
Urban Forestry Management Plan	$60,000

	2024	2025	2026	2027
	$250,000		$250,000	
	$150,000			
	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

YEAR	2023
Environmental & Water Quality Management	
Sheboygan riverbank restoration, stabilization	
Lake Michigan shoreline stabilization/erosion protection	
Creekside Park creek restoration	
Deland Park invasive species removal	
Maywood invasive species removal	
End Park drain tile	
Evergreen Park trail erosion prevention	
Jaycee Quarry Park riverbank erosion prevention	
General King Park stormwater outfall improvements	
Lakeview Park stormwater drainage improvements	
Northeast Park invasive species removal	
Northeast Park stormwater outfall improvements	
Vollrath Park trail erosion prevention	
Waterfront Improvements	
8th Street Boat Launch Dock Improvements	
Creekside park trails	
Deland Park beachfront restoration	
Deland Park cordwalk and mobimat	
General King Park cordwalk and Mobimat	

	2024	2025	2026	2027

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

YEAR	2023
Kiwanis Park launch accessibility improvements	
Pigeon River Estuary trail additions, waterfront access	
Parking	
Cleveland Park off-street parking lot	
Cole Park off-street parking lot	
Deland Park parking lot resurfacing	
End Park off-street parking lot	
General King Park off-street parking lot	
Northeast Park off-street parking lot	
Optimist Park off-street parking lot	
Roosevelt Park off-street parking lot	
Veteran's Park off-street parking expansion	
Vollrath Park off-street parking lot	
Wildwood Athletic Campus new parking area	
Facilities & Amenities	
Butzen Sports Complex	
Cleveland Park grass volleyball courts	

2024	2025	2026	2027
$20,000			
		$50,000	
	$50,000		
$75,000	$100,000	$250,000	$100,000

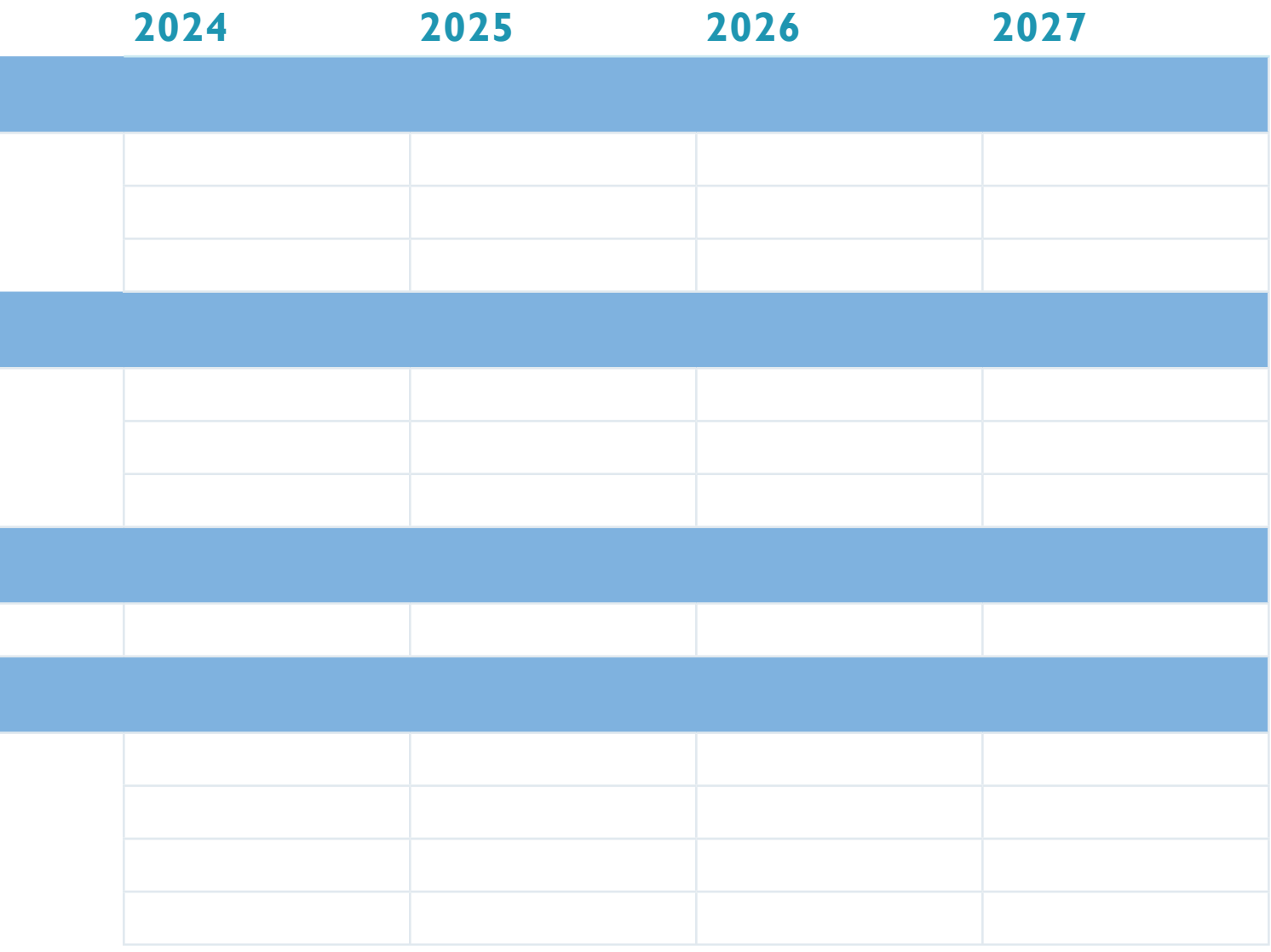
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

YEAR	2023
Cleveland Park splash pad	$300,000
Cole Park grills and picnic tables	
Deland Park concessions facility	
Deland Park performance shelter, bandshell	
Deland Field playground	
Rammer Playground restrooms	
End Park swingset replacement	
End Park playground fall area	
Evergreen Park walking/mountain bike trail additions	
Jaycee Quarry Park rentable park building with restrooms	
Jaycee Quarry Park storage building	
Julson Park trail additions	
Kiwannis Park playground	
Lakeview Park shelter addition/relocation	
Manor Heights trail additions	
Optimist Park basketball court	$25,000
Northeast Park picnic areas	
Stonebrook Crossing playground	
Veteran's Park basketball court	
Veteran's Park tennis court resurfacing	
Worker's Water Street Park playground equipment	

2024	2025	2026	2027
			$50,000
	$50,000		
			$50,000
$50,000	$50,000		$50,000
	$50,000		

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

YEAR	2023
Security	
Cole Park playground border, fencing	
Evergreen Park lighting	
Fountain Park lighting	
Signage/Branding	
Cole Park signage	
Indian Mound Park signage	
Northeast Park signage	
Land Acquisition	
Maywood land acquisition	
Landscaping	
Grace Park landscape buffers	
General King Park landscaping	
Indian Mound Park landscaping	
Peace Park landscaping and art additions	


2024
2025
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