



Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan

December 2018

City of Jefferson
Parks, Recreation and Forestry
Department

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The following Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan for the City of Jefferson was adopted by the City Council on December 18, 2018

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City of Jefferson Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan

Introduction

The City of Jefferson is located at the juncture of the Rock and Crawfish Rivers in the center of Jefferson County. The city is the county seat and had an estimated population of 8,094¹ on July 1, 2016.

Jefferson is bisected by State Highway 26 (north/south) and by U.S. Highway 18 (east/west). Interstate 94 runs east-west about six miles north of downtown Jefferson with an exit at STH 26 in Johnson Creek.

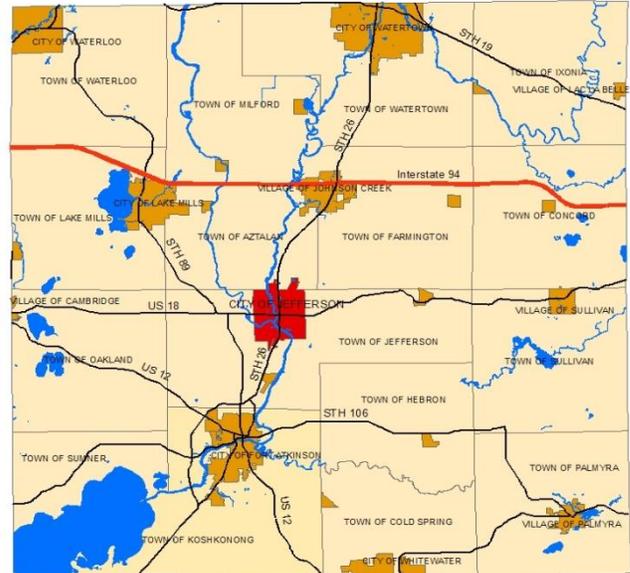
Access from the Interstate to the City is easy on STH 26. A four-lane STH 26 by-pass on the west side of Jefferson has made the traversing of Main Street much easier.

The Rock and Crawfish Rivers have a significant impact on recreation in Jefferson by providing boating and fishing opportunities, aesthetic settings, and snowmobile routes in the winter. Yet, rivers create barriers to pedestrians and bikers and others using non-motorized transportation or small scooters.

Four bridges cross the Rock River and two bridges span the Crawfish River linking neighborhoods and outlying areas to parks, schools, businesses, and work places. Two of the bridges over the Rock River, the Milwaukee Street Bridge and the North Street Bridge are for pedestrian, bicycle and handicapped (wheel chair or scooter) use only.

The topography in Jefferson is relatively flat except for a notable hill in the northeast corner of the city near Oakridge Park and another north of the Crawfish and west of the Rock River near the downtown. Scattered wetlands can be found between the hills, as is common in Jefferson County. The lands surrounding the city are primarily farmland and only 9% of Jefferson County is covered with woodlands.

The City of Jefferson Park System consists of 12 parks, two boat ramps, and two undeveloped Rock River access points, one on Windsor Terrace and the other at the intersection of Lucas Lane and Witte Drive.



The City of Jefferson, in red, is centrally located in Jefferson County on the Rock and Crawfish Rivers.

Mission, Goals and Objectives

City of Jefferson Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Mission Statement:

To provide a park and recreation system that will meet the needs of our current and future generations, preserve and protect the city's open space, water, historical, natural and economic resources; and provide a park and recreation program that is designed to enhance the community's economy and quality of life.

The goals for the 2018 *Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan* build upon and refine the goals of the previous plan. Specific objectives have been listed for each goal.

Goal: *Maintain an adequate amount of active and passive recreational lands to meet current and future recreational needs.*

Objectives:

- Acquire additional lands for passive park use based on current demand, projected demand, and environmental significance as recommended by the Action Plan of the city's *Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan*.
- Acquire appropriate, developable land for active recreation facilities in areas targeted for future park development.

Goal: *Provide adequate facilities at all parks within the city's park system as dictated by park use and type (i.e., neighborhood vs. community park facilities).*

Objectives:

- Develop and approve a site-specific master plan as soon as parkland is designated or acquired.
- Begin to develop park facilities when the proposed park's residential service area begins to be developed.
- Develop park facilities in concert with the growth of the population located within the park service area.

Goal: *Coordinate development efforts and the use and maintenance of recreational facilities among the City of Jefferson, the Jefferson School District, Jefferson County, and public recreation associations.*

Objectives:

- Increase public use of indoor and outdoor school recreation facilities.
- Coordinate city/school/county/association development projects to improve and expand recreation opportunities throughout the community in a cost-effective manner.
- Continue formal use/revenue/maintenance agreements between the city and the school district and develop agreements with public recreation associations to help operate and maintain public recreation facilities in the city.

Goal: *Stress the benefits of larger neighborhood and community parks that provide a wide range of facilities over the development of small playground and mini-park facilities.*

Objectives:

- Analyze the location, size, and function of existing and proposed parks if annexations or zoning changes occur.
- Use park service area criteria to help determine the location of future park sites.

Goal: *Preserve environmentally sensitive and historically significant areas.*

Objectives:

- Identify and incorporate historical entities into the development of city parks.
- Use natural features such as floodplains, wetlands, and woodlands as passive recreation areas.
- Preserve and/or appropriately develop environmental corridors.

Goal: *Provide residents with safe and reliable recreation equipment throughout the city park system.*

Objectives:

- Replace unsafe, old and deteriorating recreation equipment at all city parks and school sites.
- Continually monitor and maintain existing park equipment to ensure its longevity and safety.
- Identify and replace park facilities that do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.
- Identify and replace all playground equipment that does not meet CPSC or ASTM safety guidelines.

Goal: *Use all available sources of funds to further enhance the quality of the city's park system.*

Objectives:

- Pursue funding from state and federal programs, which can aid in the purchase or development of desired park system improvements.
- Solicit donations from other public and private organizations to aid in park system development.
- Update the city's outdoor park and recreation plan every five years to maintain grant eligibility.
- Develop revenue-generating recreational activities, which can aid in the development of new facilities and/or the maintenance of existing facilities.

- Continue to implement a park improvement fee to help develop park facilities to meet future needs.

Goal: *Coordinate subdivision review with all departments responsible for providing or maintaining adequate park facilities.*

Objectives:

- Consult the city’s Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan and incorporate the needs identified before subdivision plats are approved.
- Continually evaluate and update the subdivision ordinance so that it adequately addresses the recreational needs of city residents.

Goal: *Continue a city-wide urban forestry program which would manage the city’s urban forest.*

Objectives:

- Annually review the urban forestry ordinance and management plan that regulates the planting, removal, and management of trees on public lands in the city and make the city eligible for state and federal urban forestry grant-in-aid programs.
- Remove dead and hazardous trees and/or treat diseased trees on public lands within the city.
- Continue a tree planting and maintenance program for public lands in the city.
- Maintain “Tree City USA” status for the City of Jefferson.

Goal: *Adopt an adequate park budget, which can financially address existing park hazards, allow for future parkland acquisition and future park facility development.*

Objectives:

- Use the capital improvements program of the city’s Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan as a guide to establish yearly park budgets.
- Use funds to develop facilities, which will maximize existing park and recreation areas and increase park use.

Chapter 1: Purpose

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the City of Jefferson Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan is to guide municipal decisions regarding outdoor parks, recreation facility development, and land acquisition. It addresses new recreational trends and identifies changes that have occurred since the last plan. This outdoor recreation study is intended to evaluate the current system, look for opportunities to enhance the parks and open spaces, anticipate future needs, and make recommendations towards fulfilling the identified needs.

The five-year update also qualifies the City of Jefferson to receive funding assistance for facility development and land acquisition from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and other federal, state and private funding sources.

1.2 The Planning Process

The prior *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* was completed in 2008. Nine goals were developed during this planning process that represent the city's general philosophy behind providing park and open space opportunities for the community. The 2018 plan builds upon and updates these goals.

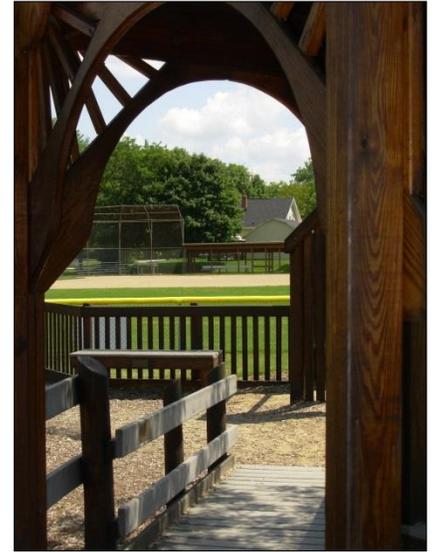
The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission was kept informed of the status of the plan and reviewed the Park Department goals and objectives, the needs assessment, and park improvement recommendations at a meeting on November 19, 2018. The recommendations were refined to reflect their input.

Public Involvement

A public meeting was held on November 19, 2018 at 4:30 pm at City Hall to give residents an opportunity to review the goals of the plan and comment on potential park updates and improvements. Maps of park locations, proposed trails and new parks, and natural elements such as wetlands, high elevations, topography, and woodlands, were on display. Comment sheets with a list of proposed improvements were provided for each park and trail. A slide show of all the parks ran continuously during the meeting. Take-home packets listing the goals and objectives of the plan and describing each park and proposed improvements were also available. No comments were received on the plan. The plan was reviewed by the City Engineer, the Park, Recreation and Forestry Commission; the Planning Commission, and the City Council.

The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission approved the plan on November 19, 2018.

The Jefferson City Council approved the plan on December 18, 2018.



A view of the Playground of Dreams and a ball diamond at Riverfront Park.

1.3 Parkland Definitions and Standards

The following classifications are derived from the 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan– Appendix E, and the Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Guidelines, a project of the National Recreation and Parks Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. They have been modified to fit local conditions

Component	Use	Service Area	Desired Size	Acres/1,000 Population	Desirable site Characteristic
Mini-Park	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as young children or senior citizens	Less than ½ mile radius	1 acre or less	.25 to .5 acres	Within neighborhoods and near housing
Neighborhood Park	Area for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, playground apparatus area, skating	1-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000	5 to 25 acres	1 to 2 acres	Easily accessible to the neighborhood residents, geographically centered with safe walking and bike access
Community Park	May include areas suited for active uses such as athletic complexes or areas of passive uses-such as walking, viewing or picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	2 to 5-mile radius within the city and adjacent neighborhoods outside the city limits	25+ acres	5 to 8 acres	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.
Total Close to Home Space = 6.25-10.5 A/1,000					
Conservancy	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective.	No applicable standard.	Sufficient to protect the resource	Variable	Variable, depending on the resource being protected.

1.4 Planning Context

The Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan incorporates information from past and present park, recreation, and municipal planning efforts in the City of Jefferson, Jefferson County, and the State of Wisconsin. The following section summarizes the plans that impact the Jefferson Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department.

City of Jefferson Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2007

The 2007 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan documents existing city resources, natural resources, and park facilities. Goals and objectives were set for the future regarding outdoor parks, recreation facility development, and land acquisition.



The Milwaukee Street Bridge.

City of Jefferson Municipal Code

Article XIV Fees, Section 300-96 Park Fee requirements of the Municipal Code requires developers to pay a fee in lieu of dedication of land for each institutional and residential housing unit at the time of land division, recording of the final plat or certified survey map, or prior to issuance of any building permit for a development in a mixed use zone. The developer shall also pay a park improvement fee for the acquisition and development of adequate park, playground, recreation and open space to meet the needs created by the development. The developer will pay prior to the issuance of a zoning permit or building permit. Fees collected are placed in a separate account for these purposes.

City of Jefferson Downtown and Riverfront Redevelopment Plan, 2015

The Downtown & Riverfront Redevelopment Plan makes the following policy recommendations:

- Launch Downtown Business District Association to lay groundwork for Main Street Program and/or create a Business Improvement District, as well as lead other marketing, branding and programming efforts for the downtown area
- Strengthen design standards beyond the Façade Improvement Grant Program by requiring high quality design for both façade grant/loan project buildings as well as non-program renovations. This would include a stronger focus on design implementation by design/architectural professionals, whether paid or on a volunteer basis. Uniform city enforcement of design standards would benefit from the establishment of a downtown design review or architectural review committee/board.
- Revisit Façade Improvement Grant and Loan program by engaging downtown property owners and understanding their building improvement needs. A refreshed program may raise the dollar amount allowed to make a larger impact on projects (financed by TID #5), allow interior as well as exterior improvements and incentivize upper story residential development. Necessary structural upgrades to historic commercial buildings, such as plumbing upgrades, roofing, HVAC, etc. – could be added to the list of eligible program costs. While many rehabilitation projects would far exceed the City’s ability to provide large-scale funding, many business owners may view public investment as a means of financing more than bare minimum improvements, thereby raising the profile of downtown as a whole.
- Strengthen the popular downtown Farmers Market program. A dedicated non-profit or other local volunteer organization may be identified to work with city staff to raise operating expenses and raise the Market’s profile within the community.
- Consider specific incentives to help recruit businesses to downtown Jefferson and get them established in Jefferson, partnering with JCEDC and local lenders.
- Explore creation of mural program to boost downtown arts/beautification program, engaging local artists, organizations and residents.



Across the river view of Rotary Park

The plan states that the construction of the STH 26 by-pass around Jefferson allows the downtown to become a pedestrian, bicycle, and residential friendly atmosphere by reducing traffic.

The plan identifies the following Redevelopment Market Opportunities for riverfront recreation:

- Create pedestrian and bicycle routes along both sides of the Rock River through a looped riverwalk system.
- Connect the Rock River riverwalk to the Crawfish River riverwalk by an expanded riverwalk loop.
- Increase public access to the river and river-related recreation activities and public events, including fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and public places for outdoor concerts, picnics, and special events.

In the long-term, the plan suggests riverwalk connections on both sides of the river from Milwaukee Street to North Street and on the east side of the river from North Street to Puerner Street. Additional riverwalk development is suggested on the east side of the Rock River from Rotary Park to the Main Street Bridge and on the west/south side of the Rock and Crawfish Rivers from the Milwaukee Street pedestrian bridge south to Riverfront Park, the Main Street Bridge, and on to Tensfeldt Park.

The former Jefferson County Highway Department Site (approximately 19.2 acres over eight parcels) has been identified as a future redevelopment site to a more central/highway accessible location. Following environmental due diligence, this site could be redeveloped to include commercial development on the corner of Puerner and Main Streets, with a mix of low rise (2-3 story) multifamily residential buildings in different building forms (townhome, apartments, etc.). An extension of Elizabeth Street south of Puerner Street, would connect the development to the existing street grid. Residential buildings should have pitched roofs to compliment adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods, be located along public streets, and when applicable, contain under-building tenant parking and surface lot visitor parking. The Puerner Street/Main Street frontage has higher levels of visibility and traffic and may accommodate mixed-use residential with first floor commercial, as well as other neighborhood service commercial buildings. The creek running through the north end of the site, partially underground, might be uncovered and utilized as a development amenity and be surrounded by green space. Conversations with the Wisconsin DNR also indicate a willingness to explore development of a small public marina on the Rock River with transient docking, boat rentals and sales, ship store, small craft (kayak/canoe) rentals, storage and restroom facilities. This development requires a detailed permit application and review for compatibility with river ecology.

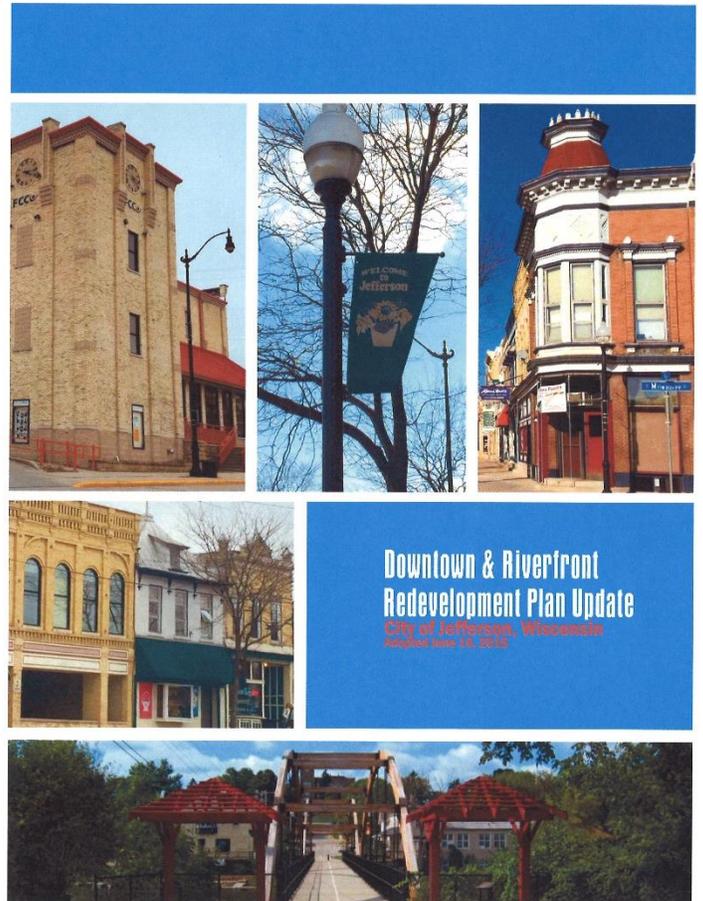
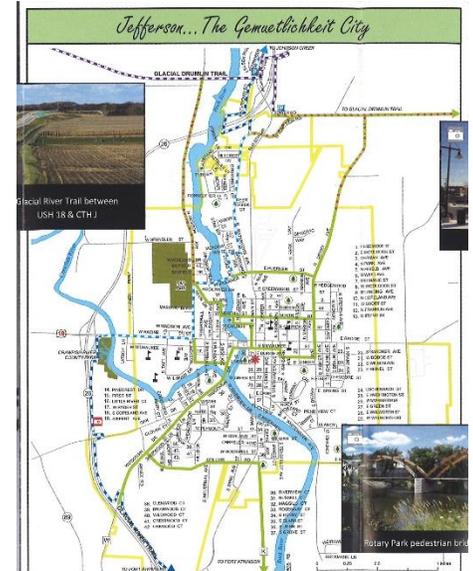


Figure 1



Jefferson County Bikeway/Pedestrianway Plan, 2010

In 2010, Jefferson County updated the Jefferson County Bikeway/Pedestrian way Plan, which focuses on improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the County. It identifies desirable routes through Jefferson County and includes a detailed plan for several cities and villages, including Jefferson. Specific recommendations for the City of Jefferson include the construction of a multi-use trail from North Street to Main Street along the Rock River, paving the shoulders of CTH N, and signing roads as local bike routes.



Glacial Heritage Area

In 2006, the *Wisconsin Land Legacy Report* assessed the State’s protection needs for conservation and recreation lands over the next fifty years. The study focused on identifying what significant “green infrastructures” remain in need of protection.

Over fifty percent of Wisconsin’s population lives within 50 miles of the area bounded by Milwaukee,

Madison, Fond du Lac, and Janesville and development pressure is changing the landscape in this region. Participants in public meetings pertaining to the plan indicate that they would like recreational opportunities near where they live.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board has designated the Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins and Rock River Corridors in western Jefferson County as a priority area for the implementation of the recommendations in this Report. This study area is called the “Glacial Heritage Area” and also involves parts of far eastern Dane County and southwestern Dodge County.

Objectives for this initiative that may involve the City of Jefferson are:

- Identifying opportunities to connect State and County parks to cities and villages and their local park systems by weaving a network of trails and open spaces (strings and pearls).
- Identifying strategic sites for protection that affect water quality in the Crawfish and Rock Rivers

Recreational opportunities in the Glacial Heritage Area could include hiking, biking, wildlife watching, camping, horseback riding, hunting and fishing, boating, canoeing, and kayaking.

2018-2022 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has prepared a new 5-year statewide recreation plan that identifies essential issues that affect the future of outdoor recreation and makes appropriate recommendations. The City of Jefferson is located in the Southern Gateways region for this report,

which includes Dodge, Jefferson, Rock, Green, Dane, Columbia, Sauk, Lafayette, Richland, and Iowa Counties. The essential issues are:

- collect data on Wisconsinites' participation in outdoor recreation;
- conduct initial research on the efficacy and costs of different techniques to gather data on visitors (e.g., numbers, activities pursued, visitation patterns and satisfaction) to public lands;
- update data on the supply of outdoor recreation opportunities, with a focus on properties open to the public for nature-based outdoor recreation; and
- develop priorities for future recreation funding.

Chapter 2 Community Description

2.1 Demographics

The City of Jefferson’s median population age of 39.6 is average compared to nearby communities and the County as a whole. The City’s median age has increased from 36.2 in 2000 to 39.6 in 2010. The current proportion of school-age children residing in the City is slightly less than surrounding communities. The City of Jefferson is looking forward to growth and prosperity. The city’s park system will be an integral part of that growth. Parks, open space, and recreational facilities influence the quality of life in a community and attract businesses and employers. Parks should be planned for in advance of or during the planning phase for new subdivisions and neighborhoods.

Year	Population	Change	Percent Change
1970	5429		
1980	5647	218	4.0%
1990	6078	431	7.6%
2000	7338	1260	20.7%
2010	7973	635	8.7%
2020 **	8405	432	5.4%
2030**	8935	530	6.3%
2040**	9080	145	1.6%

Population Source: State of Wisconsin, DOA, Bureau of Demographic Services
 ** Projected Population

Comparing broad age groups, the greatest percentage increase in population since 2000 was in the over 65-year age group at 18.34 %. The group that makes up the largest percentage of the population in Jefferson is the 20-64-year age group at 58% of the total population. The population group with the lowest percent increases since 2000 is the 0-20-year-old age group at 5.61%.

Young and active people are employed, and they have less free time and more disposable income than the other age categories. With short vacation times, they prefer recreational opportunities that are closer to

home. Recreation patterns may change as baby-boomers reach retirement age. Passive use activities and educational opportunities for a more mature population may become more desirable.

School age children make up 25% of the population. This population is characteristically known for using active recreation space.

Broad Age Group Categories						
City of Jefferson						
Subject	2000	Percent of	2016	Percent of Population	Increase	Percent Increase
		Population			2000-2016	
Total Population	7338	100%	7976	100%	638	8.69%
0-20 years	1889	26%	1995	25%	106	5.61%
20-64 years	4271	58%	4587	58%	316	7.40%
65 years & older	1178	16%	1394	17%	216	18.34%
Median age	36.2		39.6			
Total Households	2816	100%	3132	100%	316	17.70%
Persons per Household	2.41		2.42			

Source: 2010 Census

While population and number of households is increasing and aging, the number of persons per household is stabilizing. In 2010, the average household size was 2.42 persons, up from 2.41 people per household in 2000. Not all residents live in households. Some residents live in group quarters such as nursing homes and assisted living situations, and other types of housing.

2.2 Physical Characteristics

Rivers and Streams

The confluence of the Crawfish and Rock Rivers just west of downtown Jefferson is a dominant physical feature. Factories and businesses originally sprang up along the Rock River, limiting public access. Today the riverfront district has a historic feel and cobblestone streets. The City realizes the importance and attraction of these waterways and is planning for public recreational access to and along both rivers.



Youngsters enjoy the Rock River at Rotary Park.

Jefferson is in the upper Rock River Basin, an area of 1,890 square miles. The Rock River is 285 miles long and flows through south central Wisconsin, arising about 10 miles south of Ripon, flowing through the Horicon Marsh, through the center of Jefferson County, Janesville, and Beloit before entering Illinois. Water in the Rock eventually makes its way, through the Illinois River and the Mississippi River, to the Gulf of Mexico.

The gradient of the river is very flat, though currents can be swift during spring rains and snowmelt. The City of Jefferson can experience periodic flooding. The Crawfish River is about 50 miles long, with its

headwaters in Columbia County and mouth in Jefferson at the Rock River. It can also have a very slow current and becomes quite shallow during dry summer weather.

Several dams on the Rock River were built first to power lumber mills and then later to harness electricity. A dam is located adjacent to Rotary Park in Jefferson. The primary water quality problems in impoundments in the Upper Rock River Basin are caused by agricultural and urban polluted runoff, which contribute thousands of tons of sediment and nutrients to surface waters annually. Water quality problems include excessive growth of algae, reduced dissolved oxygen levels, and poor water clarity (turbidity). Dams also create warm water conditions. A fish passage was built at the Jefferson dam in 2005 to provide uninterrupted fish movement from the Indianford dam at Lake Koshkonong to the lower dam at Watertown and to improve reproduction and recruitment of species such as sauger and walleye.² The Rock and Crawfish Rivers are considered warm water sport fisheries.

Parks can provide not only access to scenic river areas and recreation but can act as stormwater buffers and infiltration areas to reduce the run-off that flows directly into the rivers.

Environmental Corridors, Wetlands, Woodlands, and Topography

The Jefferson County environmental corridor definition includes wetlands, 100-year floodplains, and woodlands greater than 10 acres in size. The environmental corridor in the City of Jefferson is generally located along the Crawfish and Rock Rivers (Figure 2). Wetlands, woodlands, and high points are also identified on this map.

Most of the environmental corridor found along the rivers is in the floodplain. Wetlands are scattered within the City but primarily located north along the Rock River. A few high-quality wetlands are along the stream that flows through Schiferl Park.

Wetlands slow down flood waters and protect shoreline areas from erosion and failure, allowing the water to dissipate gradually. Wetlands are also groundwater discharge areas which provide some of the base flow for rivers and streams, particularly during the drier parts of the year. High quality wetlands have native plant communities that provide diverse wildlife food sources and habitats



Joe Pye weed and boneset bloom along the Rock River in this native wetland at Lubahn Park

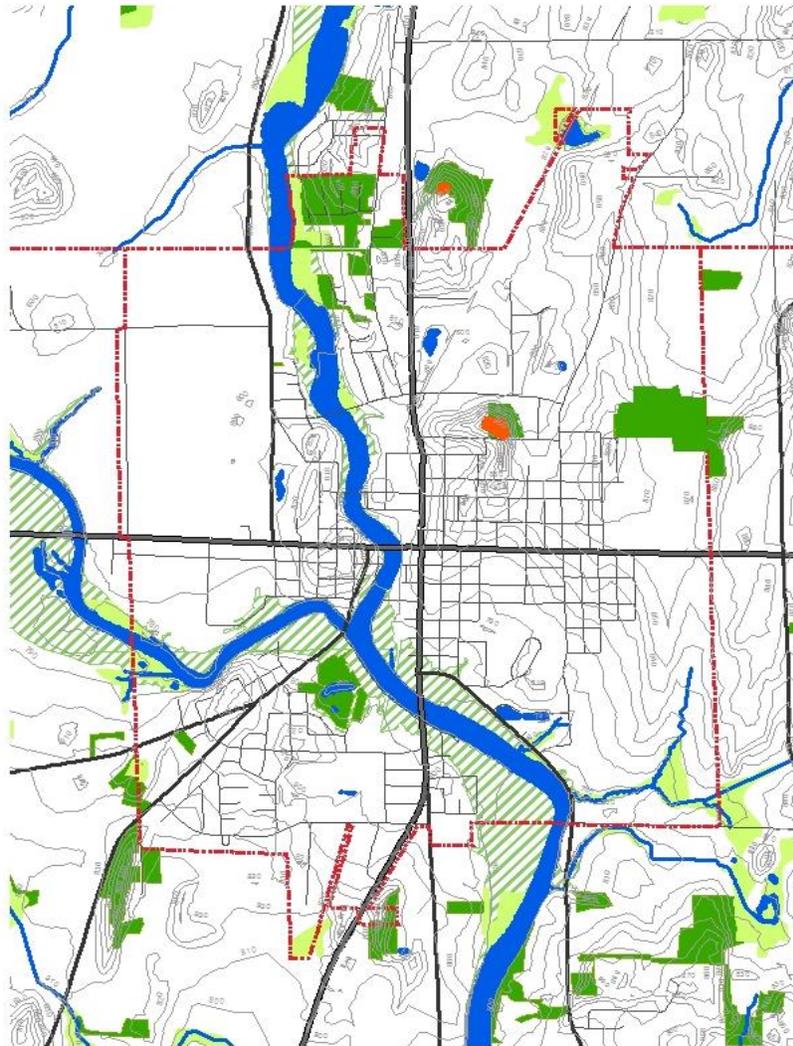
Wetlands are suffering from invasions of reed canary grass and purple loosestrife. These plants create monocultures, out-competing many species of native plants and reducing food sources for wildlife and birds.

Scattered woodlands remain in a few pockets within the City limits such as at Lubahn Park, in Oakridge Park and on the adjacent hill, and between Vogel Lane and CTH Y where a large woodland of about 55 acres is located. The other larger woodlands within the City have been developed for residential housing lots. Large intact woodlands are necessary for native songbirds and provide wildlife habitat and groundwater infiltration areas.

Many woodlands are becoming over-run with buckthorn, honeysuckle and garlic mustard, among other invasive plants. The invasive species have a longer growing season and shade out the native woodland flora. Removing the invasive plants allows sunlight to penetrate to the ground in the early spring, which is necessary for a good floral show.

The highest elevation in the City limits is about 900 feet above sea level adjacent to Oakridge Park, just above the sledding hill. The lowest elevation is about 780 feet on the southeast side along the Rock River. The Rock River falls about 10 feet in elevation from the north to the south side of Jefferson.

Figure 2



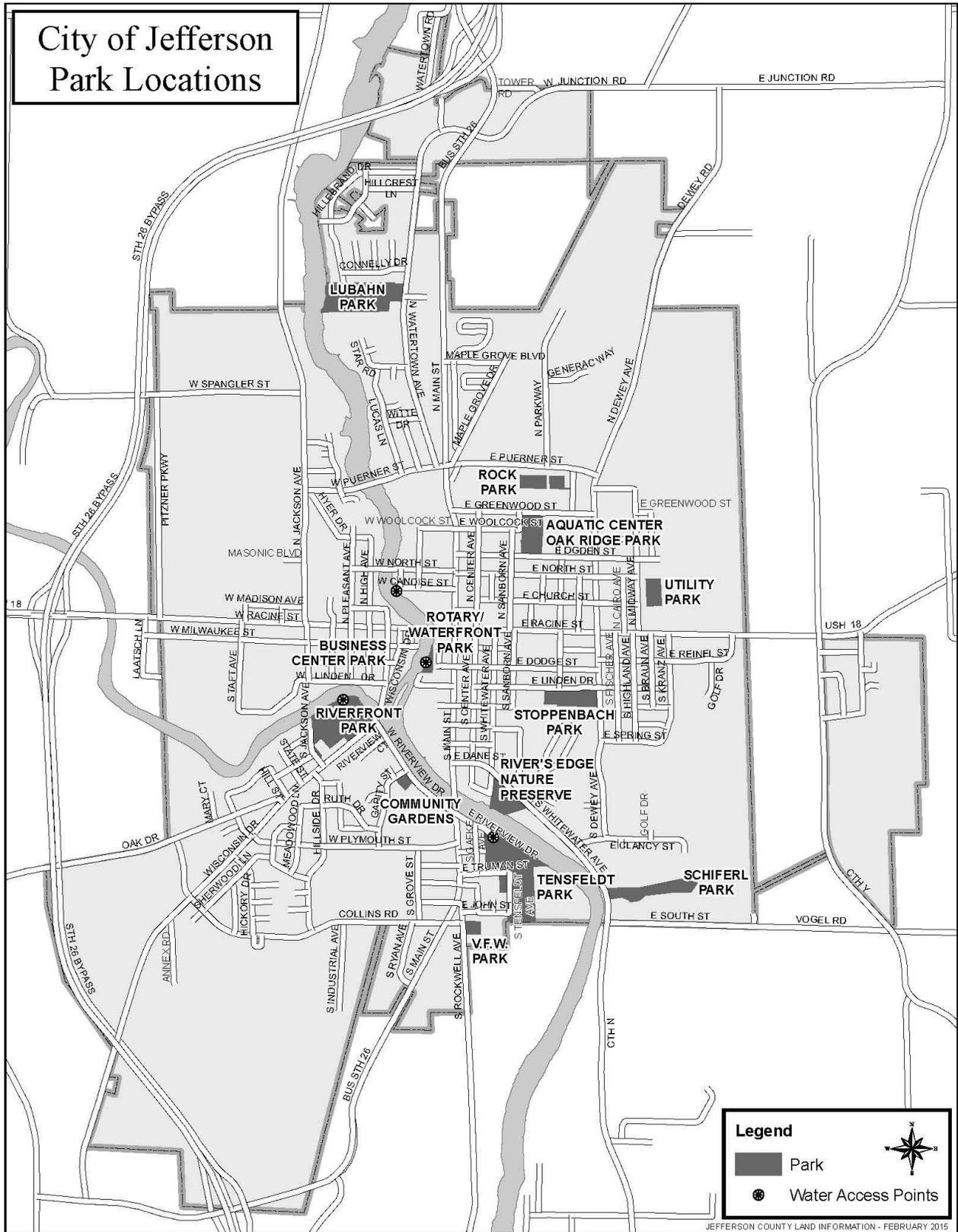
Legend

- Elevation over 900 Feet
- Contour Lines 10 ft. Interval
- Jefferson City Limits
- Rivers, Streams, and Ponds
- Wetland
- Upland Woods
- Environmental Corridor

Draft
**City of Jefferson
 Natural Resources**

LanDesign

Figure 3



Chapter 3 Park and Facilities Needs Assessment

The City of Jefferson provides a variety of park settings and facilities within its park system. The community’s goal has been to provide a wide range of high-quality recreational opportunities for all residents in an economical way. The system includes five active recreation parks, four special purpose parks, and two undeveloped park spaces. In addition, the city leases Fischer Field from the school district for baseball.

The total park system includes 99.5 acres, 76.2 acres of which areas are developed for activities and facilities and 23.3 acres that are undeveloped. Facilities provided within the system range from an aquatic center to athletic fields, passive use picnic areas, river viewing opportunities, and boat launches.

The parks system provides scheduled recreational activities for the entire Jefferson School District area at the resident fee structure. The wide-ranging school district covers nearly the entire center of Jefferson County, including all or parts of the Towns of Jefferson, Oakland, Aztlan, Farmington, Hebron, Concord, and Sullivan; and includes the Village of Sullivan and hamlets of Rome and Helenville.

Parks and park category designations are listed in the table below. The Recreation Facilities Summary table on page 23 lists all the available recreation facilities in City parks and on school grounds within the City of Jefferson. The City park, school ground, County, and private recreational facilities are mapped on Figure 2, the City of Jefferson Parks and Open Space Map.

While the Jefferson School District provides a variety of recreational facilities at its four sites, those facilities are not included in the Recreation Facility Needs Analysis because the City does not have control over these facilities and the school facilities typically serve a different purpose (for example, the school football field is used for inter-scholastic play and is not available for use by the City or residents in general). The City should, however, evaluate the availability of school recreation facilities for use by the public when considering the development of additional recreation facilities.

City of Jefferson Parks

Park	Type	Total Acres
Rotary Waterfront Park	Special Use	1.3
VFW Park	Neighborhood	3
Rock Park	Special Use	4.3
Business Center Park	Mini Park	.2
Lubahn Park	Neighborhood	16
Stoppenbach Park	Neighborhood	6.5
Riverfront Park	Community	19
Candise Street Boat Launch	Special Use	1
Oakridge Park	Community	4.5
Tensfeldt Park	Community	35
Rock River Gardens	Special Use	1.2
Rivers Edge Nature Preserve	Special Use	5.4
Utility Park	Mini Park	2
Schiferl Park	Special Use	4
Tensfeldt Boat Launch	Special Use	1.7
Total Acreage		105.2

City of Jefferson Recreation Facilities Summary

Facility	Park Facility Total	School Recreation Area Total	Community Total
Baseball Diamond	2	2	4
Baseball/Softball Diamond	2	0	2
Basketball Court	2	8	10
Boat Launch	2	0	2
Horseshoe Pits	0	0	0
Picnic Tables	80	0	80
Soccer Fields	3	3	6
Softball Diamond	1	0	1
Tennis Courts	4	8	12
Volleyball Courts	3	0	3
Sledding Hill	1	0	1
Ice Skating Rink	1	0	1
Open Play Area	4	4	8
Swimming Pool	1	1	2
Restrooms	5	0	5
Shelter	6	0	6
Play Equipment	7	4	11
Trail System	2	1	3
Parking Lot	6	8	14
Football field	0	1	1
Skateboard Park	1	0	1

3.1 Recreation Needs Analysis

The number and type of parks and recreation facilities needed within a community depends on the recreation needs and wants of the residents. Identified recreation needs and wants of community residents provide the basis for justifying funding and maintaining existing recreational facilities. Most recreation needs and wants can be identified using the following five methods:

- Comparison of current acreages to acreage standards
- Comparison of current service areas to service area standards
- Comparison of current facilities to facility standards
- Review of existing quantitative studies
- Soliciting public input

It is important to use all five of these methods in determining if there is a need for additional parks and/or recreational facilities in the City of Jefferson. Each method focuses on one specific element of recreation. Taken individually, they do not accurately represent community-wide recreation needs. However, taken as a group, recreation needs and wants can be aggregated and identified, and additional parks and recreation facilities can be justified.

To aid the city in determining impact fees and to assure that adequate acreage is identified for acquisition in the future, standards for park size and acreage by category were developed by the City of Jefferson and listed in the Park Size Standard table on page 8. The standards suggest a minimum size of developable park area for active recreation. The actual park area could be larger with buffers, woodlots, other natural features, and passive use areas.

The City of Jefferson Park Acreage Recommendations table below shows existing park acreage by park type and the total recommended acres for 2017 and 2022, assuming population projections are correct. The sum of this acreage is compared to the existing population of 7,976 people and thus sets a standard for the city to achieve now and follow in the future. The table shows a current need for an additional 1.75 acres of mini parks and 5.3 acres of community park land. By 2022 2.4 acres of mini parks and 15.6 acres of community parkland will be needed if no additional acreage is added to the parks system.

City of Jefferson Park Acreage Recommendations

Park Type	Desirable acres/1000 population	2017 Current Acres	Total Acres Needed 2017 (pop. 7,976)	Current Acreage Deficiency	Total Acres Needed 2022 (pop. 9,266)	2022 Acreage Deficiency
Special Use	No standard	18.9	Variable		Variable	
Mini Park	0.50 acres	2.2	3.95	-1.75	4.6	-2.4
Neighborhood	2 acres	25.5	15.95	+9.55	18.4	+7.5
Community	8 acres	58.5	63.8	-5.3	74.1	-15.6

Recreational Service Area Requirements

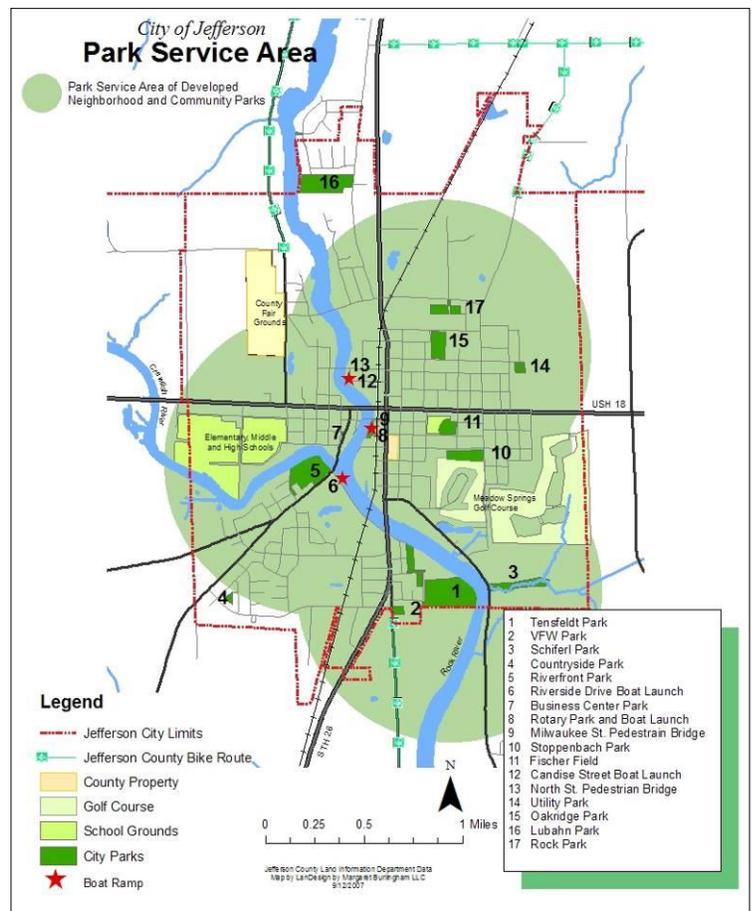
The second method of evaluating a community’s park land needs and adequacy of service is to plot park service areas on a base map and then identify areas that are not being served. At a minimum, residential groupings should be served by either a neighborhood park or community park facility.

Utilizing the park service radius criteria on page 8 established by the NRPA and customized for the City of Jefferson, park service areas were mapped for existing neighborhood and community parks, (Figure 4).

It is apparent that most community residents are served by a community park, neighborhood park, or both; though not all park plans, such as Lubahn Park (number 16 on the map), are fully implemented.

Furthermore, there are mini-parks and special use parks spread throughout the community, and they, too, provide recreational opportunities and facilities. Although individual parks may need additional facilities or upgrading, additional park land is not recommended for incorporated Jefferson at this time.

Figure 4



The undeveloped areas in the community and the future residential growth areas to the north and west of County Fair Park, the far southwest, the far northeast, and potentially the far east are not currently served

by neighborhood or community parks. These areas will need to be served by new parks as new residential development occurs. Construction of the STH 26 by-pass on the west side of Jefferson may bring development to that portion of the City sooner than to other parts of Jefferson.

Recreational Facility Needs

A community requires several different types of parks to serve the various recreational needs of its residents. The third method of determining recreational needs in a community is to compare existing active recreation facilities to accepted standards or guidelines. These standards are recommended by the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) as universal guidelines for communities to follow.

The standards suggest how many users a recreational resource or facility can support each day. These standards are primarily directed toward municipal park systems, such as the City of Jefferson park system, and are listed below. Baseball diamonds are heavily used in the City of Jefferson and the standard has been increased from 1 baseball diamond per 5,000 people to 2 diamonds per 5,000 because of the local demand.

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards

Activity/Facility	Standard
Trails	1 system per region
Baseball Diamonds	2 per 5,000 persons
Softball Diamonds	1 per 5,000 persons
Soccer Fields	1 per 10,000 persons
Playgrounds	1 per neighborhood
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000 persons
Basketball Courts	1 per 5,000 persons
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000 persons
Volleyball Courts	1 per 5,000 persons

In order to project facility deficiencies, Jefferson's existing facilities were compared to the NRPA standards. The City of Jefferson Facility Needs table on page 29 reveals the results of this analysis. Based on current and projected population figures, the City has met most of the active and passive recreational facility needs of its residents.

Deficiencies show up in a few recreation facility categories: soccer fields and baseball/softball diamonds. Two additional baseball diamonds are recommended at this time to serve demand. Neighborhoods on the north side along the Rock River are not served by a playground so one additional playground in that area, preferably at Lubahn Park, is recommended.

Additional facilities should be supplied only on demand (i.e., program attendance, survey results, or public input). However, as previously discussed, standards may not be an accurate measure of local need, since not all communities have the same recreational interests. It is very likely that the City could use all of the active recreation facilities noted in the table on page 18, as well as other facilities identified through public input.

It should be stressed that when a new park development is recommended for a new residential area, typical facilities (as outlined in the park type and definitions section) should be provided, not only the

facilities that the study indicates are deficient. This is because residents in all parts of the city should have equal access to recreational facilities.

City of Jefferson Recreation Facility Needs

Facility	Total Facilities	2017 Minimum Needs (pop. 7,976)	2022 Minimum Needs (pop. 9,266)
Baseball Diamond	2	4	4
Softball Diamond	2	4	4
Basketball Court	2	2	2
Boat Launch	2	No Standard	No Standard
Horseshoe Pits	0	No Standard	No Standard
Picnic Tables	70	No Standard	No Standard
Soccer Fields	3	1	1
Tennis Courts	4	4	5
Volleyball Courts	3	2	2
Sledding Hill	1	No Standard	No Standard
Ice Skating Rink	1	1	1
Open Play Area	4	No Standard	No Standard
Swimming Pool	1	1	1
Restrooms	5	No Standard	No Standard
Shelter	6	No Standard	No Standard
Play Equipment	7	8	8 or more
Trail System	2	1 per region	1 per region
Parking Lot	6	No Standard	No Standard
Football field	0	Provided by schools	Provided by Schools
Skateboard Park	1	No Standard	No Standard

Source: NRPA

Quantitative Studies

Formal quantitative studies were outside the scope of this plan. The City does maintain a data base of registered participants in various outdoor recreational activities. Many other users are not counted, such as those who use the facilities outside of organized activities and those who do not pay fees. Some facilities, such as the baseball diamonds, may be rented to sports groups and usage figures are not tabulated. Use of the athletic fields and aquatic center is higher than the figures listed in the Recreation Program Participants table on page 22. The total number of indoor and outdoor fee program participants for 2017 was 4,735.

2017 Outdoor Recreation Program Participants		
Program	Facility	Number of Fee Participants
Flag Football	Tensfeldt Park	135
Little League	Riverfront Park	14
Major League	Riverfront Park	42
Minor League	VFW Park	37
Blastball	Tensfeldt Park	29
T-Ball	Tensfeldt Park	106
Outdoor Soccer	Tensfeldt Park	240
Swim Lessons – Summer	Aquatic Center – Oakridge Park	150
Total number who paid fees for indoor and outdoor recreational activities in 2017		5299

Public Input

Parks staff regularly receives input at Park, Recreation, and Forestry Commission meetings and at regularly scheduled park activities and special events. These comments were taken into consideration in developing the recommendations in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 Park and Recreation Recommendations

This chapter gives an overview of local public and private parks and recreational facilities. The first part gives an overview of existing facilities and subsequent pages discuss each City of Jefferson park in detail. Recommendations for new bicycle/pedestrian trails and new park locations are also listed.

4.1 Public and Private Recreational Facilities

School District Facilities

The School District provides facilities for baseball, football, soccer, basketball, tennis, swimming, and play. Although the school district and city parks and recreation department have a shared use policy, the school district's land was not considered when evaluating city park acreage needs because it is available on a limited schedule and could be absorbed for school use at any time.

Indoor Pool

The indoor pool is located at the Jefferson High School. Throughout the year, the recreation department offers adult water exercise and fitness classes as well as evening adult lap swims. This facility is maintained by the school district and the recreation department uses it through a facility use agreement.

Private Recreational Facilities And Private Schools

The Jefferson Golf Course is a privately owned 13-hole course on the east side of Jefferson that is open to the public for regular and league play. St. John's Lutheran Church and St. John's the Baptist Catholic Church have small open areas for play but are not typically open to the public.

Nearby State and County Recreational Facilities

In Jefferson County the State of Wisconsin manages Aztalan State Park, which was a Native American village and is a historic and archeological site. The park offers picnicking, hiking, fishing opportunities, and tours of the Indian mounds and pyramids and reconstructed portions of the village.

Just north of the city is the Glacial Drumlin State Trail, a major recreational trail currently linking Waukesha to Cottage Grove and eventually Milwaukee to Madison, the Mississippi River, and Illinois.

The State also manages the Kettle Moraine State Forest southern unit, which provides passive land and water-based recreation opportunities. The Kettle Moraine is located in Waukesha, far southeast Jefferson, and Walworth Counties. The Ice Age National Scenic Trail passes through Jefferson County in the Kettle Moraine.

Jefferson County operates 18 parks, the closest being Bicentennial Park about two miles north on STH 26 and just north of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail. The Jefferson County Dog Park is in Bicentennial Park. The fenced, off-leash dog park is open to all users and a daily or annual fee is required for the dog park portion of Bicentennial Park. There is a paved bicycle/pedestrian trail linking Jefferson to the park and the Glacial Drumlin Trail, and the park entrance is at the intersection of STH 26 and Jefferson Road.

City of Jefferson Rock River Access Points.

Public access to the Rock River is provided on Windsor Terrace and on Lucas Lane at Witte Drive. These access points are maintained by the City of Jefferson and are generally used by nearby residents.



Rock River access at Windsor Terrace



Rock River access at Witte Drive

City of Jefferson Parks and Trails

Each City park is described in the next section and recommendations for maintenance and improvements are listed. See Figure 3 for a map of all the parks, boat landings, river access points, and other recreational facilities.

Jefferson Senior Activity Center

The Jefferson Senior Activity Center on Collins Road is a 7,000 square foot, full-time, multi-purpose indoor activity center for adults age 50 and older. The senior center has one full-time employee and 30 volunteers. The Senior Center was accredited through the Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers in 2016. In 2017, the Senior Center had 11,014 participants (duplicated count) attend activities. There are over 25 continual activities that occur weekly and monthly.



These include health and wellness activities, large and small group activities, educational classes, arts and crafts, intergenerational activities, trips, senior dining, meals on wheels, and volunteering. Countryside Park is immediately behind the Senior Center

The senior center has one fundraiser per year. It also offers five themed parties including a volunteer appreciation luncheon. The Senior Center partners with several other city departments (Police, EMS, Park and Recreation) county entities (Elderly Services, Benefit Specialist, and County Nurse) and other businesses (AARP, Community Action Coalition, Dementia Coalition, Experience Works, and Rainbow Hospice), and various other businesses who donate to programming activities.

Recommendations:

- Add an asphalt fitness trail behind the Senior Center in Countryside Park (see page 34).
- Seniors may like to volunteer to landscape Countryside Park.
- Seniors could have community gardens in Countryside Park.

Rotary/Waterfront Park

This 1.3-acre downtown park lies on the east bank of the Rock River adjacent to the original Jefferson Depot, now a popular restaurant and pub. Gardner Street and Milwaukee Street, adjacent to the park, are still surfaced in cobblestone, lending a historic character to this riverfront area

The park is a beautiful passive recreation destination with fully accessible piers for fishing and boating. There is a river overlook, paved walking path, and park benches. Flower beds and depot-themed trellises add to the ambiance. The park overlooks the Rock River dam and fish passage. The waters below the dam on both sides of the river are popular fishing spots. Snowmobile trail access to the river is provided through the park in the winter.

This park is home to the Milwaukee Street Walk Bridge, which offers a wonderful view of the river. Weekly concerts attract an audience to the park on summer evenings and it is a popular lunching spot for downtown workers. The park is well maintained with help from the Jefferson Master Gardeners. In the winter this park becomes aglow with over 20,000 Christmas lights.

This park has become a popular spot for community celebrations.

Recommendations:

- Continue to maintain the park and flower beds with help from volunteers.
- Retain the historic ambiance when adding new elements or expanding the park.
- Extend the bicycle/pedestrian trail south along the east shore of the Rock River.
- Encourage economic redevelopment of the riverfront area as a destination.



Summer concert goes



Children enjoy watching the fish ladder and dam



Park elements reflect the adjacent historic depot

Stoppenbach Park

Stoppenbach Park is a 6.5-acre neighborhood park located along East Linden Drive and South Dewey Avenue in a shady residential neighborhood.

The park features mature trees and a restroom with unique architectural details. Stoppenbach Park is adjacent to the abandoned Meadow Springs Golf Course.

The park features two shelters that are handicapped accessible from the street and restrooms. Two new playgrounds have been added to the park since 1999 and the sidewalk has been expanded from all shelters to the restrooms.

The east and west shelters both feature electric outlets, dusk to dawn lights, water, grills, and play structures. In addition the park has a baseball backstop, two unlighted tennis courts, and a sand volleyball court.

Recommendations:

- Maintain tree health.
- Maintain play equipment.
- Update the restroom facility to ensure handicapped accessibility.
- Reflect the historic architecture when adding facilities and elements.
- When the drinking fountains need to be replaced, use fountains with a more historic design to match the light poles, restroom building, and neighborhood. Replace with child and handicapped accessible fountains.
- Consider renovating the tennis courts into pickleball courts.



The architectural details of the restroom and planters and the mature trees make this park unique



The lawn, mature trees, and a shelter at Stoppenbach Park



Tennis courts

Riverfront Park

Riverfront Park is Jefferson’s main location for softball and little league programs. It is a 19-acre park along the Crawfish River and can be entered from Wisconsin Drive.

The park features two picnic shelters. The north shelter provides electric outlets, dusk to dawn lights, water, a grill, and restrooms nearby. The south shelter has a large universal play structure (the Playland of Dreams that was built by volunteers), electric outlets, dusk to dawn lights, water, a grill, restrooms, and a storage area. A horse barn from the early 1900’s is used for storage and provides local character.

Active sports facilities include a lighted adult softball diamond, a lighted little league diamond, a lighted softball diamond, and two batting cages with a concession stand. Two lighted tennis courts, two lighted basketball courts, a grass volleyball court, and a skateboard park complete the facilities at the park.

This park is located just west of the confluence of the Crawfish and Rock Rivers. A canoe/kayak launch will be installed in the spring of 2018.

Recommendations:

- Seed the depression by the skateboard area to a wet meadow mix to reduce maintenance in this wet area.
- Pursue funding for the Crawfish River Bridge from Riverfront Park to the school complex.
- Consider shoreline restoration to prevent erosion of the bank and to infiltrate run-off.
- Have an assessment completed for Playland of Dreams.
- Install timed locks for Riverfront South restrooms.
- Expand/update playground equipment.



View of the south shelter from The Playland of Dreams



Softball Diamond



Skateboard Park

Tensfeldt Park & Boat Launch

This Community Park is in the southeast section of the City. It is a large green space utilized for several recreation programs such as soccer and flag football. The 10 acres of sports fields can be reconfigured as needed depending on the sport.

An additional 25 acres bordering the Rock River is available for park development. Some of the land near the river is a wetland and parts of it are prone to flooding in the spring. Currently a farmer rents some of the land.

The 2007 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan suggested adding a basketball court, pet exercise area, and a nature trail with boardwalks through the wetland. Currently the park shelter features soccer fields with goals and bleachers, electric outlets, dusk to dawn lights, water, restrooms, and a concession stand. Parking is available on Tensfeldt Avenue.

Parkland extends to the north on the west side of the adjacent sewage treatment plant. A boat launching facility, restrooms and a parking lot is located on East Riverview Drive. Fishing is a popular activity along the river.

The strip of parkland adjacent to the Treatment Plant could include some trails, picnic areas, and playgrounds.

Recommendations:

- Consider nature trails, a prairie restoration or possibly a pet exercise area on the higher land along the river.
- Connect park areas on the west side of the treatment plant with similar park furnishings and trail materials.
- Strengthen connection between Tensfeldt Park and Riverfront Park with a bike/pedestrian path along Riverview Drive.
- An off-road bicycle connection from CTH K to the Main Street Bridge might be possible through VFW land and Tensfeldt Park.
- Remove invasive tree and plant species and manage to favor native species in natural areas.
- Consider placement of a Parks Maintenance garage in park.



Tensfeldt Park shelter and soccer fields



Boat Launch



Restroom Facility

Oakridge Park

Named for its location on a steep ridge and the large number of oak trees, this park offers a perfect spot to relax and take in a full view of Jefferson. This 4.5-acre park is located in the northeast section of the City.

Jefferson Family Aquatic Center on North Fifield Avenue includes a 12,142 square foot pool that holds 121,868 gallons of water. It includes a 148-foot waterslide, heated water, zero depth area featuring an overhead water raindrop, and floor fountains. The facility includes a bathhouse with coin operated lockers, and concession area. It also offers shaded areas on the pool deck, and wooden sun deck. Angle parking is available on Fifield Avenue and East Greenwood Street. The facility is open seven days a week from early June through the end of August.

An open play field is located south of the Aquatic Center. The public has made a walking trail from East Ogden Street through the woods up the hill toward the water tower.

The park's unique layout and amenities also provide an ice rink and sledding. In the summer the paved ice rink becomes a great spot for basketball.

Recommendations:

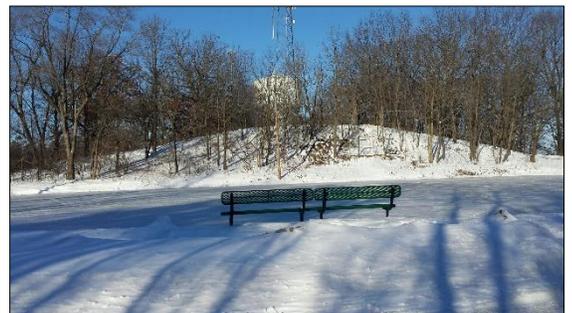
- Replace the slide and tower in the Aquatic Center.
- Remove the unused sand volleyball courts and replace with a splash pad.
- Add wooded trails and address erosion issues on the trail people have made through the woods.
- Add a trail map on East Ogden Street
- Remove invasive species from woods
- Add a miniature golf course.



Jefferson Aquatic Center Pool



Open space south of the Aquatic Center



Skating rink

Lubahn Park

Lubahn Park is located between the east bank of the Rock River and North Watertown Avenue on the north side of the City between two subdivisions.

This park has a walking trail along the retention pond and through the park. There is a parking lot for 11 cars.

Recommendations:

- Add a small shelter and picnic area.
- Add boardwalk system and observation decks along the wetland areas to provide access to the Rock River.
- Add a floating boat dock/kayak launch which can also serve as a fishing pier.
- Add an additional sign and 5 car parking lot at the end of Hillebrand Drive

Schiferl Park

This natural area is 4 acres in size. It features a meandering trail along a natural stream and fen. Many wetland plant species, birds, and butterflies can be seen here. The walking trail along the creek was built and is currently maintained by the past owners. An Eagle Scout built signs to identify plants along the trail.

Currently the park is inaccessible from a public street. It is adjacent to a new development along Jefferson Golf Course to the north. Future plans include a parking area and identified entrance to the park on Constance Lane in a new development. Pedestrian trails from the park could possibly connect through the golf course to county bike routes and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail.

Invasive species are invading the park and wetlands and should be removed. The stream bank is scouring, and adjacent development may increase the volume and velocity of the stream and contribute to erosion. The stream empties into the Rock River on the west side of South Whitewater Avenue across the street from the park.

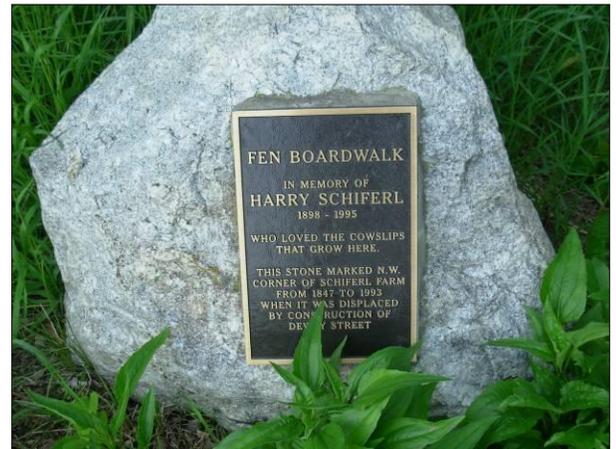
An inscription on a stone along the trail marks the passion that Harry Schiferl had for this lovely natural area.



Lubahn Park looking west



The sedge meadow along the Rock River at Lubahn Park



Memorial Stone

Recommendations:

- Maintain trail, steps, and boardwalks.
- Install a park sign and parking lot on Constance Lane.
- Consider a shoreline restoration of the creek if necessary.
- Connect park trails to the residential areas to the north.
- Conduct a survey of the vegetation and develop a management plan. High school or college biology classes could assist with this.
- Volunteers may be willing to assist in the upkeep of this park.



Native wetland vegetation along the boardwalk.

Rivers Edge Nature Preserve

Due to the Flood of 2008, The City purchased the property from the family of Scott Fischer. With this purchase, the property needed to become a passive nature area. In 2014, The family of Scott Fischer asked the City to provide a nature preserve at the site of the old River’s Edge Meat Market. Since that time, the family has continued to provide amenities along with weekly maintenance at the park. The following amenities have been provided from the family:

- 2 benches (one along the river and one by the butterfly garden)
- A butterfly garden (Monarch Waystation) with plans to expand this year
- Garbage cans, Bike rack and picnic table
- Continued maintenance with mowing at the park

The Kemmeter Family provided two informational signs depicting the history of the property prior to the Fischer’s ownership and provided the park entrance sign and landscaping.

Recommendations:

- Maintain trail and fishing pier.
- Consider a shoreline restoration of the river if necessary.
- Maintain vegetation in conjunction with management plan.
- Volunteers may be willing to assist in the upkeep of this park.



New Sign depicting Nature Preserve



Eagle perched at Nature Preserve

Fischer Field

This baseball field is the home of the Jefferson Blue Devils Home Talent Sunday League baseball team, the Jefferson High School team, the Legion and Junior Legion teams, and the VFW Teener teams. The field is impeccably maintained and features lights, concessions, and two sets of bleachers, dugouts, perimeter fencing, and restrooms.

Fischer Field is owned by the Jefferson School District. During the high school baseball season the City maintains the ball diamond and the School District maintains the rest of the field. During the summer the City takes over all maintenance. The City pays for all of the utilities.

The field is adjacent to East Elementary School and a few blocks from Stoppenbach Park.



Fischer Field and East Elementary School



Concessions and restroom

Utility Park

Utility Park is a 2-acre park for small children in a residential area. It is located on the edge of town in the northeast quadrant of the City. This mini-park is owned by the Jefferson Utility Commission and a well building is also located on the property. The park is accessible from East Church Street and is situated behind a group of homes, not along a street. A new playground with two benches has been added to the park and there is a covered picnic table. A large open space is available for play.

No ball courts or other active recreation areas are recommended here as a courtesy to the adjacent neighbors.



The playground at Utility Park

VFW Rec Center & Park

VFW Park is a 3-acre park in the southeast section of Jefferson located adjacent to County Trunk K. This park is heavily used for the Minor League programs in the summer. It offers a ball diamond, drinking fountain, and playground equipment. Because the park is adjacent to a rapidly developing commercial corridor, its use may be lost at some time in the future. New ball diamonds elsewhere may be needed to replace the ball diamond at that time. The City owns the adjacent building which houses many recreation programs.

Recommendations:

- The park could be a rest area for bikers on the Jefferson County bike route on CTH K.
- A kiosk could provide information to bikers about Jefferson and trail connections.
- An off-road trail could possibly run through the property to Tensfeldt Park and along Riverview Drive to the Main Street (STH 26) bridge or to the Wisconsin Avenue bridge.

Business Center Park

This park is a triangular area between Wisconsin Drive and South Copeland Avenue on the west side of the Rock River. It includes a covered picnic area attached to a utility building.

It is located between the Milwaukee Street pedestrian bridge and confluence of the Rock and Crawfish Rivers. It is near Riverfront Park, and across the river from Rotary Park.

The city is encouraging redevelopment in the surrounding neighborhood. A refurbished business center is located across the street. The Downtown Redevelopment Plan calls for apartment buildings and future condos nearby. This area could become more active in the future.

Recommendations:

- This park could potentially serve as an entrance and information point to downtown for bikers and other users of a river-loop trail or a staging area for small events.
- Add bike racks as the River Corridor Trail gets developed for people exploring the area or working across the street.



The ball diamond



VFW Rec Center



Business Center Park and shelter.



View of the Milwaukee Street bridge and Rock River from the nearby Wisconsin Avenue bridge

Rock Park

Rock Park is 4.3 acres in size and is located in the northeast quadrant of Jefferson. The park is behind houses on Puerner and North Marion Avenue. This passive green space area is half infant prairie and half wooded on the highest hill in Jefferson. Entrance to the park can be gained via an easement off of North Marion Avenue or Puerner Street.

Recommendations:

- This park provides an open green space for play, a prairie, and some trails in the woods.
- A playground constructed of natural elements such as grasses, shrubs, logs, and rocks could create a unique experience for neighborhood children.
- This park could also be developed as a demonstration of native plant communities and invasive species.
- The Park could possibly be connected by trails to Oakridge Park.
- Neighbors are infringing on the park area and dumping grass clippings in the woods and using dirt bikes in the park. They need to be informed of the lot lines



Rock Park looking east over the meadow



The edge of the Rock Park woods (Wild geranium in the inset)

Countryside Park

This one-acre park is located on the far west side of Jefferson and is encircled by the Jefferson Area Senior Center and homes.

Recommendations:

- Involve the senior center members and surrounding homeowners in landscaping this park.
- Seniors could have community gardens in this park.
- Add an asphalt fitness trail that is handicapped accessible for people using the Senior Center and others.
- Add a natural playground using logs, tall grasses planted in the form of a maze, and large rocks. The seniors may enjoy watching and interacting with the neighborhood children.



View toward Senior Center



View toward the surrounding homes

Candise Street Boat Launch

This is a one-acre parcel located at the end of Candise Street. It includes a shaded picnic area as well as a boat launch, which provides access to the Rock River from above the Jefferson dam to Watertown. The River Corridor Trail is expected to pass by this boat ramp.



Candise Street boat ramp

Recommendations:

- Connect the boat launch to the North Avenue pedestrian bridge and the Milwaukee Street pedestrian bridge by the River Corridor Trail.
- Designate boat trailer parking in the area.
- Designate a fishing area. People have made a trail to the riverbank.
- Install a small shelter and benches for river viewing

River Corridor Trail

Several prior plans recommend a river corridor trail on both sides of the Rock River and a connection from Riverfront Park to the High School/Middle School complex by a bridge over the Crawfish River.

Plans include negotiations for acquiring the former Tyson parking lot just south of Rotary Park to expand the park.

Figure 5 depicts the proposed location of the River Corridor Trail. Pedestrian/bicycle bridges are currently located at North Street and Milwaukee Street.



Milwaukee Street Bridge

Recommendations:

- Pursue a 10 foot-wide bituminous or crushed gravel trail.
- Continue to develop the trail on City lands and as new lands or easements become available.
- Protect and enhance the shoreline when developing the trail.
- Create overlooks and seating areas and designated fishing areas.
- To maintain views of the water and improve the natural riverbank, remove invasive species along the trail such as box elder, buckthorn, and honeysuckle. Replace with native grasses, flowers, short shrubs, and appropriate riparian trees.
- Consider landscaping with native plants to improve habitat along the river.
- Install security lighting.
- Work in concert with other city departments to revitalize downtown.
- Continue to apply for grants to implement the River Corridor Trail.

Outer Loop Trail

The east side of Jefferson features a number of parks and open spaces located in traditional neighborhoods. The streets feature sidewalks, mature trees, and homes of various sizes and architectural styles. These neighborhoods are inherently walker friendly. The parks form a ribbon of green along Dewey Avenue and Wilson Avenue from Schiferl Park to Puerner Street.

The proposed Outer Loop Trail, (see Figure 5,) would connect the parks and create a bike route from north to south through Jefferson. The route could start at Schiferl Park and travel by street or through open space through the former Meadow Spring Golf Course past Stoppenbach Park, Fischer Field and Oakridge Park. The trail could then possibly connect to Rock Park through the woods and to Puerner Street, east on Puerner to Dewey Avenue, and on to the Glacial Drumlin State Trail.

The route would be on-street in most places. The City already has bike route signs. Another bike/pedestrian route possibility would connect Rotary Park and the Jefferson County Courthouse Area to Stoppenbach Park through landscaping of the street terrace on Linden Drive. People who work downtown are often seen walking during their lunch hour on this street or at Rotary Park.



The traditional neighborhoods on the east side of Jefferson are lovely places for a stroll

Jefferson County Bike Routes

Jefferson County is upgrading County roads with bike lanes and has bike trail signs on most of the routes connecting all of the cities and villages in Jefferson County. The County has a bike route map that shows routes in the unincorporated areas and within cities and villages.

Recommendations:

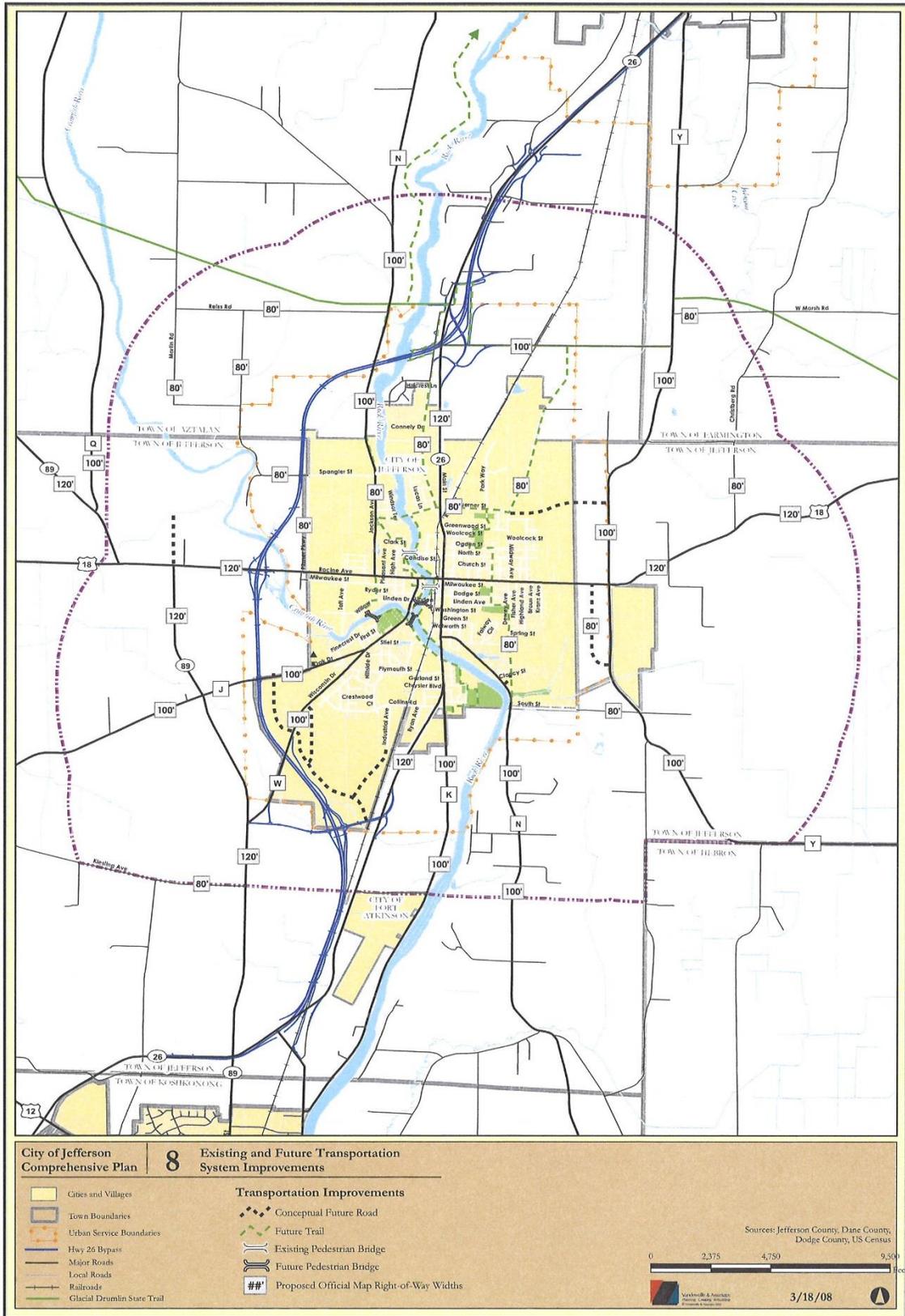
- Designate bike routes in the City of Jefferson.
- Continue to work with Jefferson County on their preparation of a new bicycle/pedestrian plan.

Water Trails

Jefferson County has developed maps for canoeing and kayaking that give directions for a route and show put-in and take-out locations on the major rivers and streams. The maps show landings at Candise Street, Rotary Park, Riverfront Park, and Riverview Drive. There are canoe/kayak launches at both Riverfront & Rotary Parks. Other locations that could be potential canoe/kayak landings are Lubahn Park when it is developed, the school complex on the Crawfish River, and the two Rock River access points at Windsor Terrace and near the intersection of Lucas Lane and Witte Drive, along with Rock River Landing Park.

Figure 5

Jefferson Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails



4.2 Potential Location for a New Park

The STH 26 by-pass on the west side of Jefferson may spur development and create the need for a park to serve that quadrant of the City. This area along the river is in the Jefferson County environmental corridor designation and frequently floods when river levels are high. Riparian wetlands may also be found in this area.

This plan recommends considering the land north of USH 18 and west of the Crawfish River as a potential future park area, see Figure 6.

Figure 6



4.3 Rock River Landing Park

The City of Jefferson is advancing a new 5.7-acre urban, riverfront park development in collaboration with Jefferson County. To move this park from concept to reality the City of Jefferson is requesting a Parkland Development Grant which will enable the community to leverage City and County resources to create a new waterfront park with boat and kayak launch access, trails, and passive and active recreation opportunities.

Rock River Landing will return a vacant former industrial site to public access and use for the first time in more than a century. As proposed in the Downtown Plan, the new Rock River Landing Development project will capitalize on the tremendous natural attributes and riverfront setting to provide water access and regional trail connections via a boat launch, kayak launch, pier system and multi-use paths, priming the site for future investment by the public and private sectors.



Chapter 5 Capital Improvement Implementation Plan

Implementation of the park improvement recommendations, bike and pedestrian trail corridor plans, and future park plans depend on community support and desires, budgeting, and grant availability.

At the writing of this plan, most communities are facing budget shortfalls and budget caps. The City of Jefferson is no different. Few park funding opportunities exist in the City budget.

As compared to the 2008 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, this new plan takes a more realistic approach to budgeting for capital improvements and new initiatives based on actual funding for park improvements over the last ten years.

The capital improvement plan lists expected improvements in five year increments of 2019 through 2023. Some improvement tasks can be done by parks personnel within the annual budget, such as removing invasive species, upgrading nature trails, and providing better erosion control. These items were listed as “in house” in the capital improvement plan and will be undertaken as time allows.

Some improvements have been initiated by volunteer groups and community organizations, such as the Playground of Dreams at Riverfront Park. Eagle Scout projects also improve the parks, such as interpretive signs for Schiferl Park. Activities and improvements that could be accomplished by volunteers are listed as such in the capital improvement plan. Partnering with community organizations has been a positive and welcome experience and is expected to continue.

The City of Jefferson Redevelopment Authority has been doing extensive planning for the downtown area including the River Corridor Trail. Funding for the trail and expansion of through Rotary Park will likely come through the budget process for the Redevelopment Authority, rather than the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission. The River Corridor Trail may be incorporated into Rotary Park, Riverfront Park, Business Center Park, and the Candise Street Boat Ramp. The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department will work with the other City departments and the Redevelopment Authority to implement the trail and park improvements.

A bridge over the Crawfish River from Riverfront Park to the high school, middle school, and elementary school complex has been desired for some time. This bridge would connect a variety of neighborhoods and make walking or biking to school a real possibility for scores of students. Two large recreation and open space areas would also be connected for pedestrian and bicycle travel between them. The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department has applied for grants to build this bridge in the past and will continue to do so.

Capital Improvement Plan			
Parks and Facilities	2018-2022	2022 and beyond	Cost
Rotary Park (part of Downtown Redevelopment Plan)			
Extend bicycle/pedestrian trail	X		\$25,000
Trade or purchase land	X		TBD
Stoppenbach Park			
New drinking fountains		X	TBD
Redo bathrooms		X	\$80,000
Roof at Stoppenbach West	X		\$15,000
Resurface tennis courts/Pickleball	X		\$50,000
Riverfront Park			
Shoreline restoration	X		\$30,000
Crawfish River Bridge When grant money becomes available			\$850,000
Change Tennis courts to Pickleball	X		\$50,000
Tensfeldt Park			
Nature Trails		X	TBD
Bike/Ped Trail through Park		X	TBD
Prairie Restoration		X	Volunteer
Oakridge Park			
New slide and Tower	X		\$50,000
Splash Pad		X	TBD
Upgrade trails in woods		X	In house
Trail map on Ogden St.		X	Volunteer
Replace roof on Bathhouse		X	\$30,000
Lubahn Park			
Playground – grading, grass, and equipment	X		\$30,000
Path through park		X	\$40,000
Phase II, boardwalk, shelter		X	TBD
Phase III, boardwalk, restoration, pier		X	TBD
Phase IV, restroom, electric		X	TBD
Utility Park			
Upgrade play equipment		X	\$15,000
Schiferl Park			
Upgrade trails and steps		X	In house
Parking lot		X	\$45,000
Interpretive signs & /Entrance Sign		X	Volunteer
Vegetation survey		X	Volunteer

Capital Improvement Plan			
Parks and Facilities	2018-2022	2022 and beyond	Cost
VFW Park & Rec Center			
Kiosk for biking information	X		\$2,000
Upgrade playground equipment		X	\$15,000
Off-road trail to Tensfeldt Park		X	TBD
Kitchen Improvements		X	\$20,000
Business Center Park (Part of Downtown Redevelopment Plan)			
Kiosk		X	\$2,000
Bike Racks		X	\$1000
Rock Park			
Natural playground and landscaping		X	TBD
Countryside Park/Sr. Center			
Landscaping		X	\$4,000
Asphalt fitness trail		X	TBD
Natural playground		X	TBD
Replace carpeting/flooring	X		\$10,000
Candise Street Boat Launch (Part of Downtown Redevelopment Plan)			
Small shelter and benches		X	TBD
Trailer parking		X	TBD
Connecting Riverwalk from Bridge to Candise Street		X	TBD
Parks Facility			
Parks Garage	X		\$250,000
River Corridor Trail (Part of Downtown Redevelopment Plan)			
Outer Loop Trail			
Install Signs	X		In House
Landscaping		X	TBD
Rock River Landing Park			
Develop Park	X		\$1,200,000

¹ Wisconsin Department of Administration. January 1, 2006 Final Population Estimates. <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docview.asp?locid=9&docid=5068>

² Wisconsin Department of Nature Resources. Jefferson Dam Fish Passage Project. <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/success/2005/jefferson.htm>