Community Building Through Park Planning and Parkland Acquisition

May 26, 2022

Introductions

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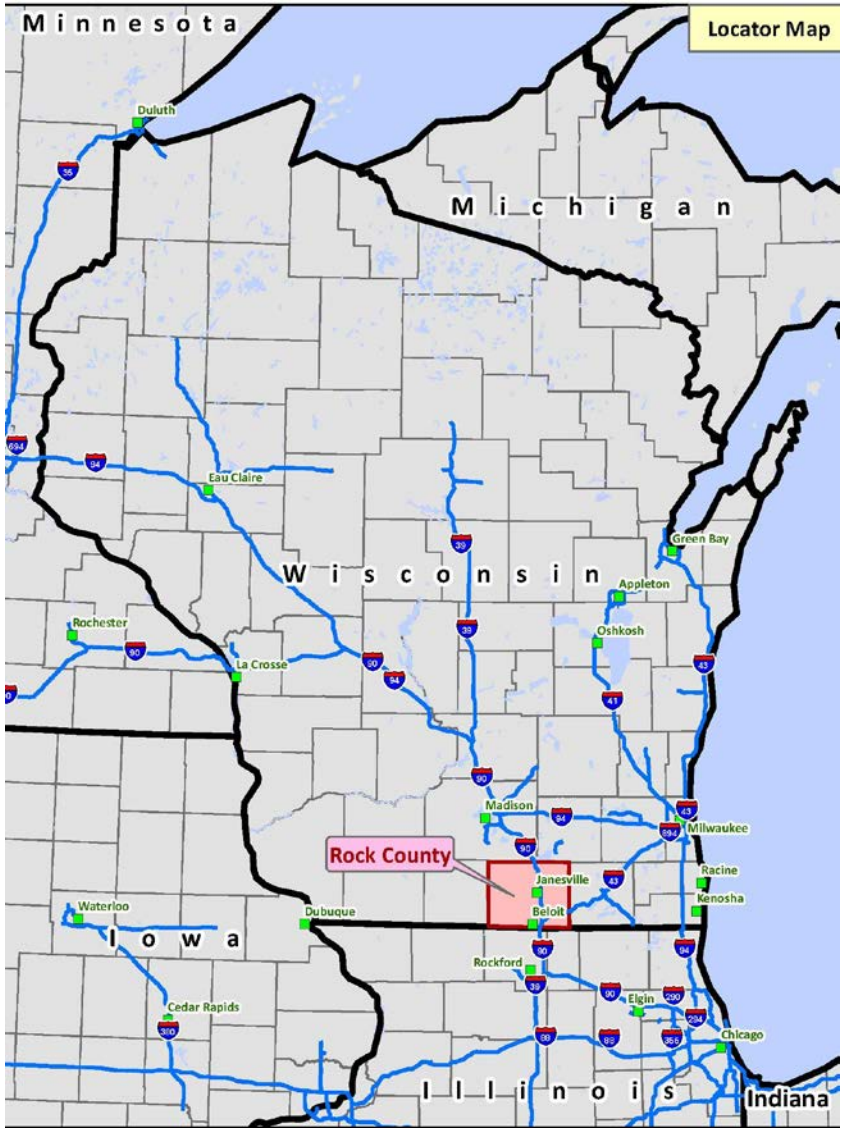
Cover Today

- Existing Situation
- Park Planning
- Camp Indian Trails Opportunity
- Parkland Acquisition
- What’s Next

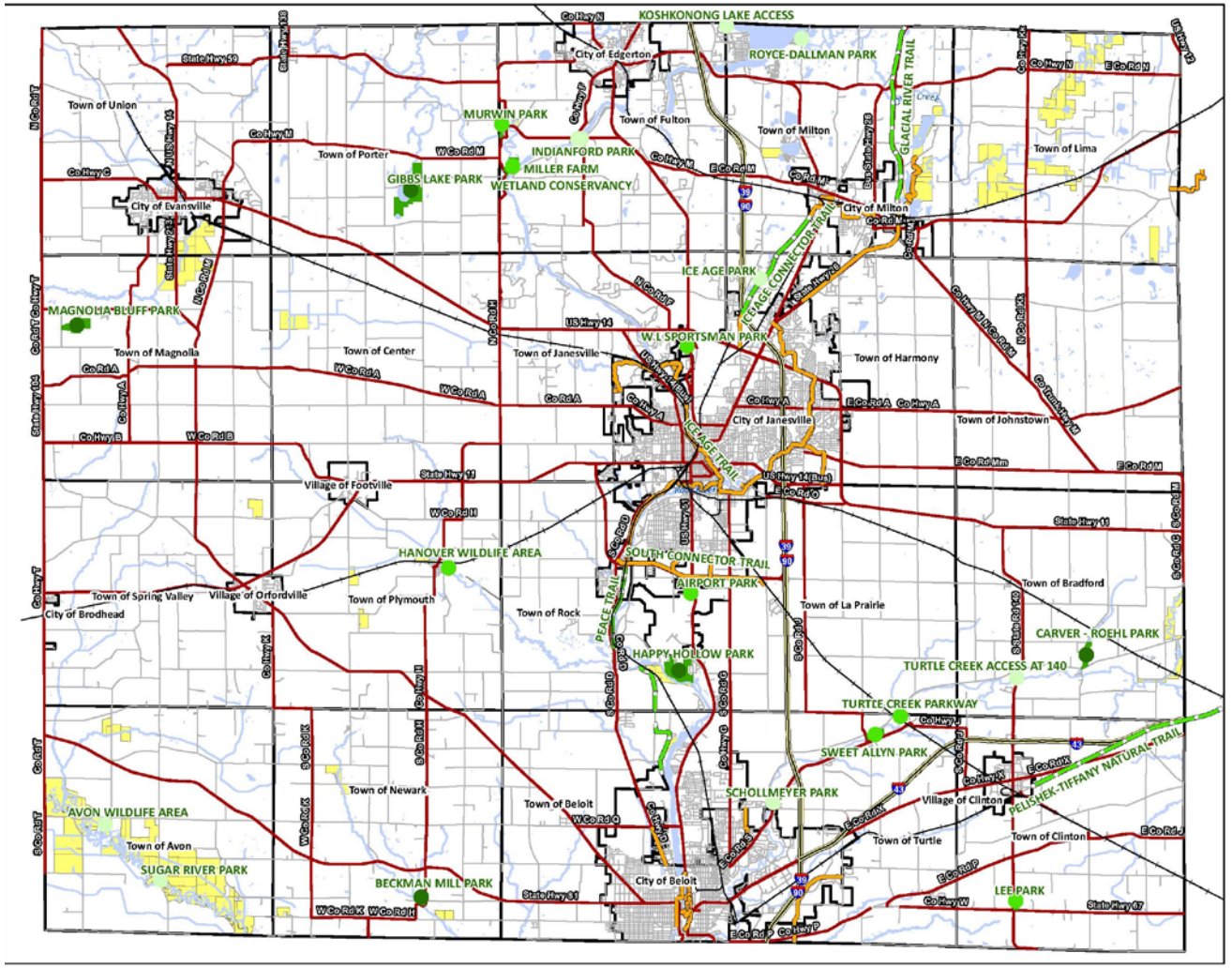
Rock County

- Located in Southern Wisconsin
  - Between Illinois border and Dane County (Madison)
- Total population: 163,687 (2020)
- Largest Cities: Janesville and Beloit



Rock County – Parks Division

- Owns and maintains:
  - 943 acres in 21 parks
  - 18 miles of multi-use trails
- Staffing:
  - 5 full time
  - 1 part time
  - 3 seasonal
- Very limited annual budget:
  - $100,000-$300,000 in capital funding on average each year



Park, Outdoor Recreation, & Open Space Plan

- Updated in 2019-2020
- Developed vision, goals, and prioritized action items
- Service area analysis
- Customized parkland standards
- Park-specific recommendations

Park, Outdoor Recreation, & Open Space Plan

- Innovative tools created
  - New parkland acquisition scoring system
  - Interactive online map
  - Improved online presence
  - Engaged Parks Groups

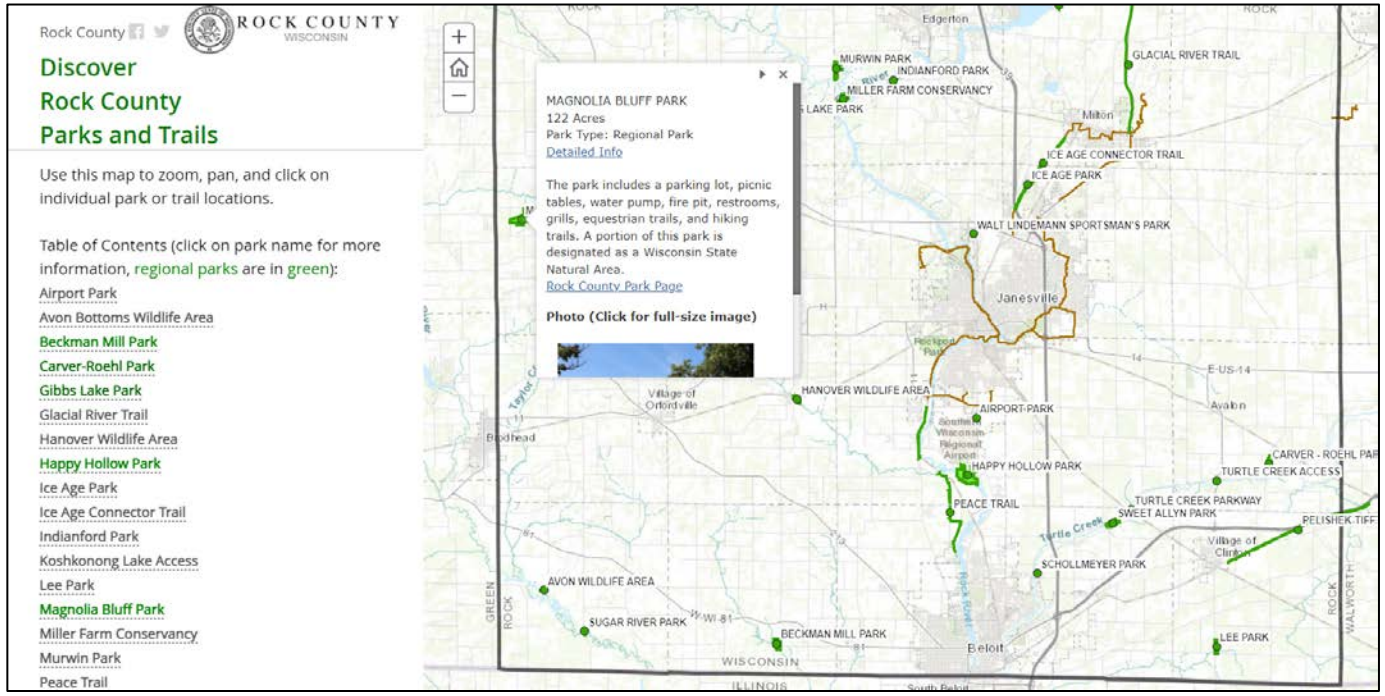
- Tools were very timely
  - Pandemic = increased park attendance in 2020-21
    - State Park numbers increased 25% in 2020
  - Camp Indian Trails opportunity

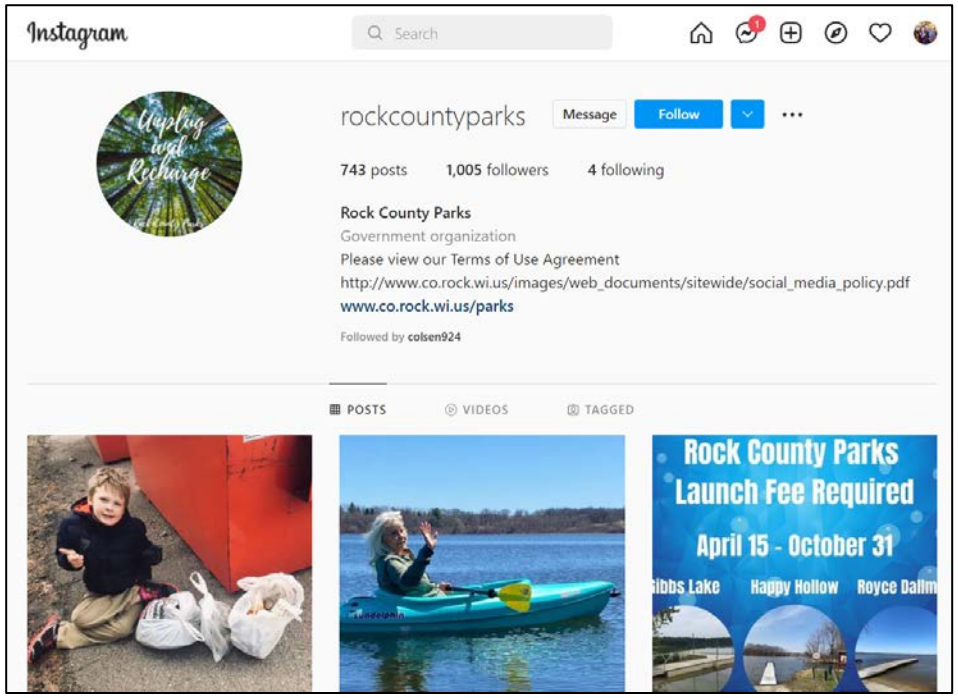
500+ people engaged in the process

Acquisition Evaluation Tool

- Quantitatively scores new parkland prior to acquisition
- 12 criteria used
  - Advances goals/vision
  - Meets service area gaps
  - Short and long-term cost impacts
  - Natural resources preservation
  - Provides new amenity
- Scoring system
  - Land gets scored based on meeting each criteria

Interactive Online Map & Online Prescence





Park Specific Recommendations

Prioritized Action Items & CIP Budgeting

Project Category	Action Item	Potential Partners	Timeframe
Park Development and Land Acquisition			
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Continue to identify funding sources to improve and enhance trail connectivity, park amenities, and to implement the recommendations in Chapter 7 such as grants, foundation gifts, park fee revenue, and the County budget.	County Board and Public Works and Parks Advisory Committee	In Progress
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Maintain maps of the County park and trail system on the County's website.	County IT Department	In Progress
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Evaluate any new proposed land acquisition using the Park and Trail Acquisition Evaluation Matrix in Chapter 7.	Public Works Parks Advisory Committee	In Progress
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Establish new water access wherever possible through creating new boat launches, docks, or piers and enhancing exiting water access sites.	Public Works and Parks Advisory Committee	Medium
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Complete the Ice Age Trail through Rock County connecting it to other area multi-use trails and neighboring County segments of the trail. Partner with other local government agencies to pursue grant monies to complete the trail.	Local and regional governments, Ice Age Trail Alliance, landowners, and WisDNR	Long
Park Development and Land Acquisition	Pursue the acquisition of land for a new park and open space in the northeast section of the County.	County Board and Public Works and Parks Advisory Committee	Long

2022 Proposed Capital Improvements Plan

Proposed Project	Estimated Project Cost
Sweet-Allyn Park	
New Shelter – with the ability host a variety of events	$200,000 - $250,000
2022 Proposed Total for Capital Improvements	**$200,000 - $250,000**

2023 Proposed Capital Improvements Plan

Proposed Project	Estimated Project Cost
Carver-Roehl	
Second (lower) Shelter – with electricity	$100,000
Trail Improvements	
All Parks	
Playground Upgrades, Replacements, and Additions	$100,000
2023 Proposed Total for Capital Improvements	**$200,000**

2024 Proposed Capital Improvements Plan

Proposed Project	Estimated Project Cost
Gibbs Lake	
New Shelter	$100,000
Equestrian Parking Lot Improvements	
2024 Proposed Total for Capital Improvements	**$100,000**

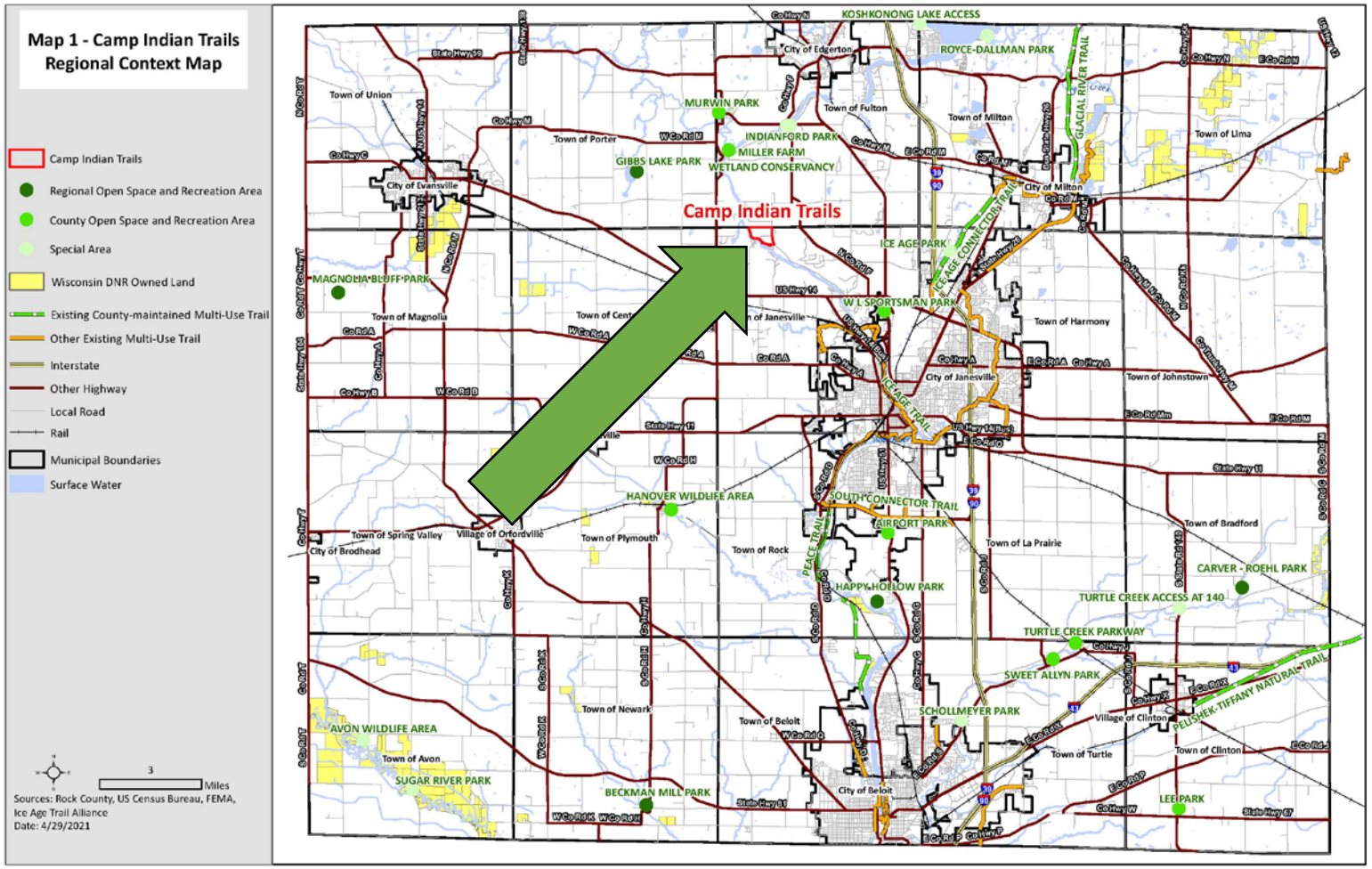
2025 Proposed Capital Improvements Plan

Proposed Project	Estimated Project Cost
Peace Trail	
Pave the Trail	$200,000-$250,000
2025 Proposed Total for Capital Improvements	**$200,000-$250,000**

Camp Indian Trails Opportunity

Camp Indian Trails Opportunity

- 180 acres along the Rock River, just northwest of Janesville
- Boy Scout Camp established in 1946



CAMP INDIAN TRAILS

W.D. BOYCE TRAIL

SCOUT SHOP
RIFLE RANGE
ARCHERY
CLARK LODGE
FOX'S DEN
DANIEL BOONE
SEVERSON LODGE
JAMES WEST
CAMPMASTER
HOLT LODGE
BRACE LODGE
ALLEN DINING HALL

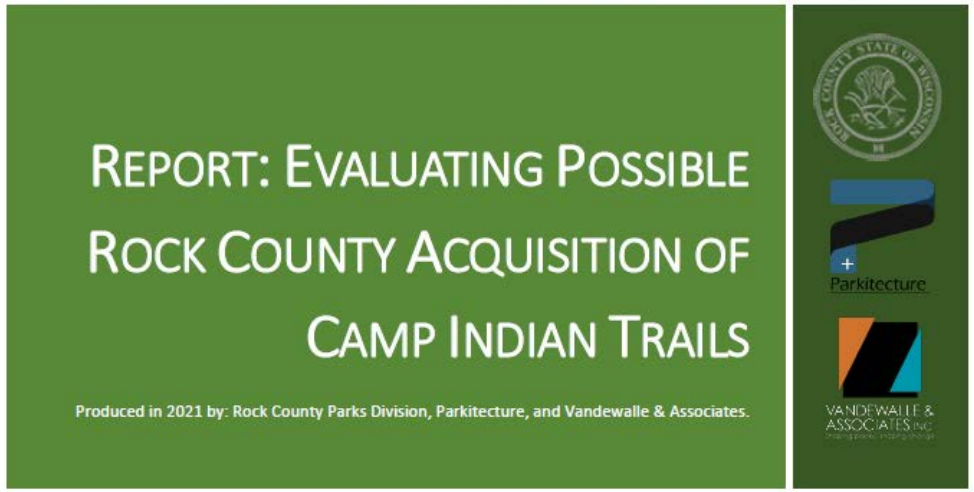
Camp Indian Trails Opportunity

- Listed for sale in March 2021
  - Community members expressed interest in Rock County acquisition
  - Timing issue = only a few months to react
- Rock County staff, Vandewalle & Associates, and Parkitecture
  - Developed an opportunity analysis
  - Report was produced in a month
  - Gave elected officials an understanding of the situation and ability to make an informed decision

Camp Indian Trails

<u>Report Purpose</u>

- Existing conditions
- Future opportunities for the property
- Estimated costs associated with site
- Explored possible benefits



Camp Indian Trails

Background

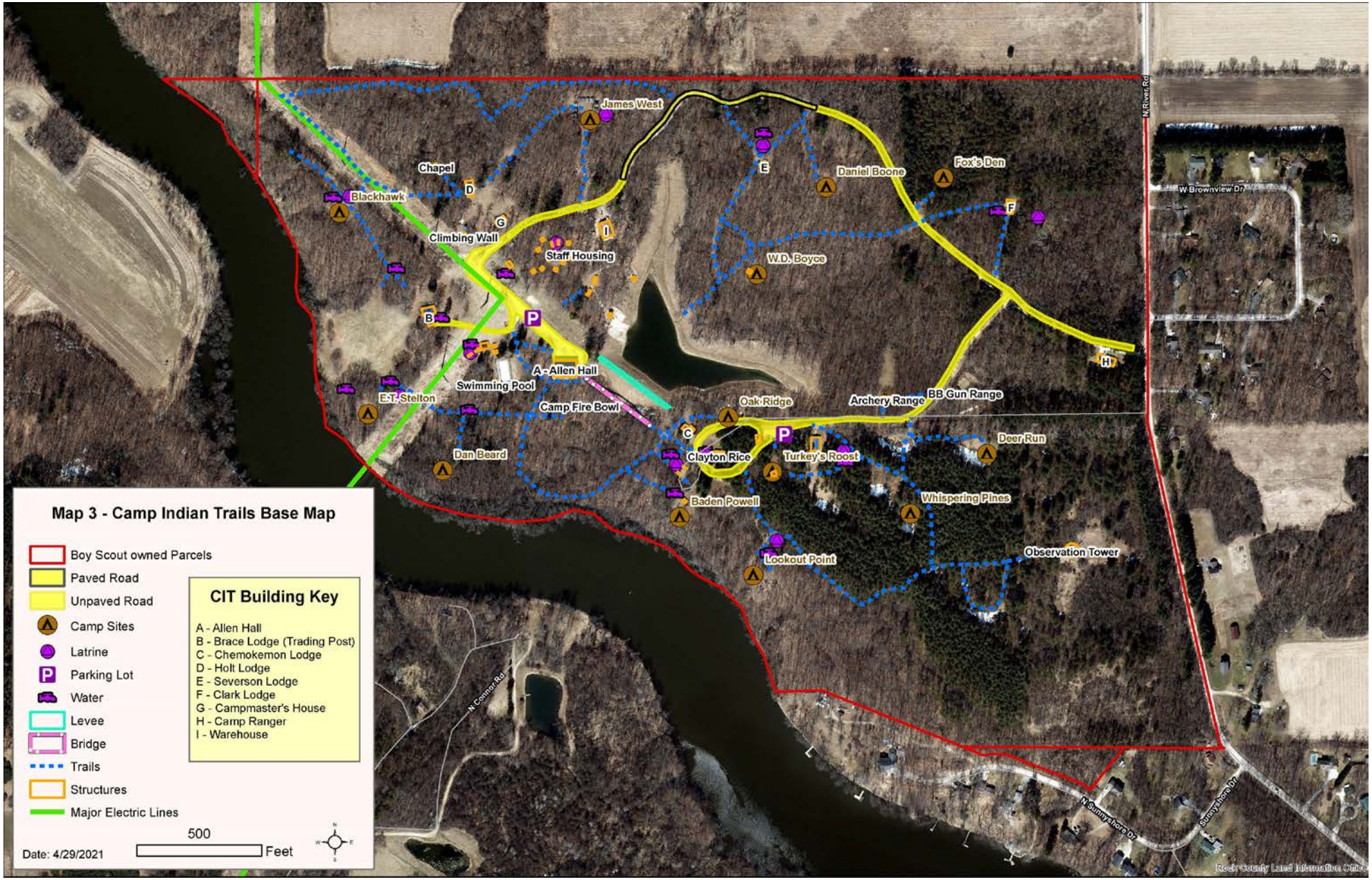
- 1830s - Site of Chief Blackhawk's camp during the Blackhawk Wars
- 1946 - Established as a Boy Scout Camp
  - Over 4,300 guests in 38 different events (2019)

Boy Scout's Situation:

Participation rates declined +

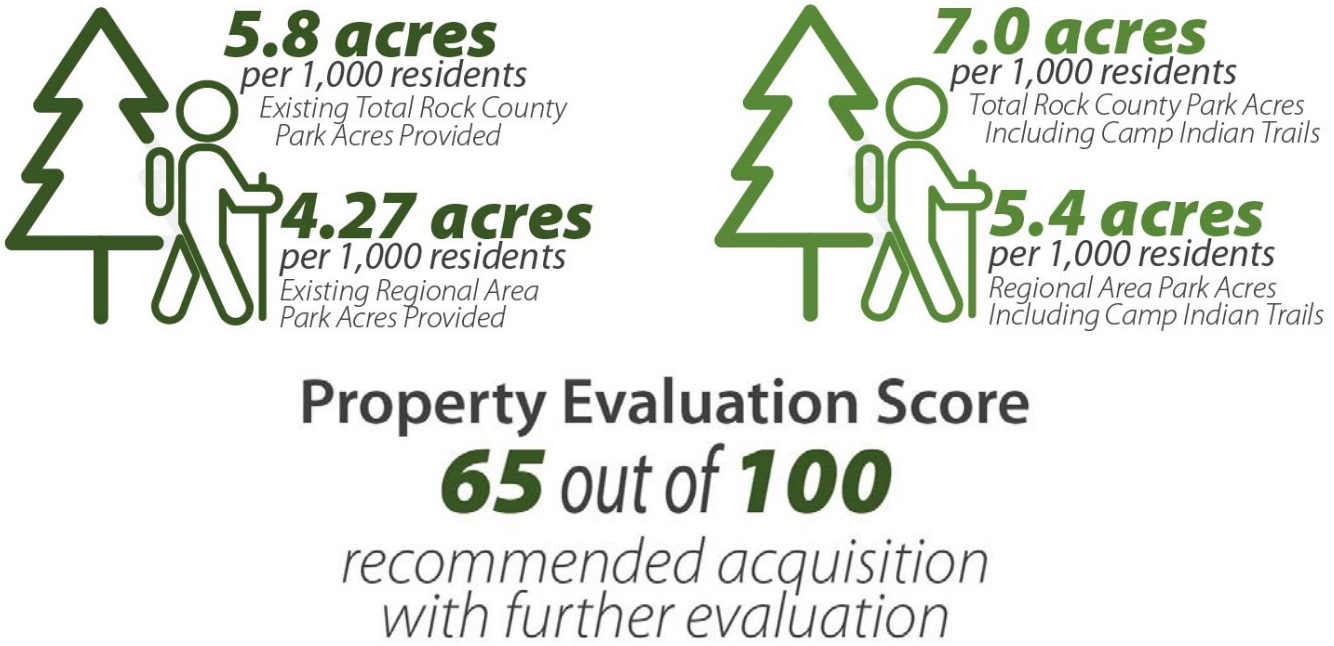
Maintenance and personnel costs increased =

Camp ran an annual deficit over the past 5 years ($72,000-$115,000)


Map 3 - Camp Indian Trails Base Map
Boy Scout owned Parcels
Paved Road
Unpaved Road
Camp Sites
Latrine
Parking Lot
Water
Levee
Bridge
Trails
Structures
Major Electric Lines
CIT Building Key
A - Allen Hall
B - Brace Lodge (Trading Post)
C - Chemokemon Lodge
D - Holt Lodge
E - Severson Lodge
F - Clark Lodge
G - Campmaster's House
H - Camp Ranger
I - Warehouse
500
Feet
Date: 4/29/2021
James West
Chapel
Blackhawk
Climbing Wall
Staff Housing
Daniel Boone
Fox's Den
W.D. Boyce
A - Allen Hall
Swimming Pool
E-T. Stelton
Camp Fire Bowl
Dan Beard
Oak Ridge
Archery Range
BB Gun Range
Clayton Rice
Turkey's Roost
Deer Run
Baden Powell
Whispering Pines
Lookout Point
Observation Tower
W Brownview Dr
N River Rd
N Connor Rd
N Sunnyshore Dr
Sunnyshore Dr

Camp Indian Trails

- Evaluated site issues and opportunities
- Used acquisition evaluation matrix and alignment with plans to justify purchase
- Explored recreational opportunities and revenue generating possibilities



Camp Indian Trails

Required Action and Costs:

Cost of Purchase

- Site appraised at $750,000-$1,200,000 (anecdotal)
- BSA has received private party offers higher than the appraised value
- Estimated competitive Rock County offer (pending final appraisal) = **$1,200,000-$1,600,000** ($6,600-$8,900 per acre)

Cost of Upgrades

- Removing some structures, improving road/parking area, Park Master Plan, improving building efficiency, upgrading trails/signage/water access
- Total estimated upgrade costs between **$425,000-$700,000**

Cost of Maintenance

- 1 new FTE and 2 new part-time seasonal employee needed for estimated additional 60 hours per week
- Total estimated annual maintenance costs between **$150,000-$250,000**

Camp Indian Trails

- Developed possible shared use agreement for Boy Scouts
- Documented case studies
- Illustrated community-wide benefit

County Examples

- Shaginappi Park, Fond du Lac County, WI
- Hawthorne Hills County Park, Ozaukee County, WI
- El Rancho Cima, Hays County, TX

State Examples

- Chippewa Moraine State Recreational Area, Chippewa County, WI
- Governor Thompson State Park, Marinette County, WI
- Kettle Moraine State Forest, Sheboygan County, WI
- Beechwood State Park, Sodus, NY

Non-Profit Examples

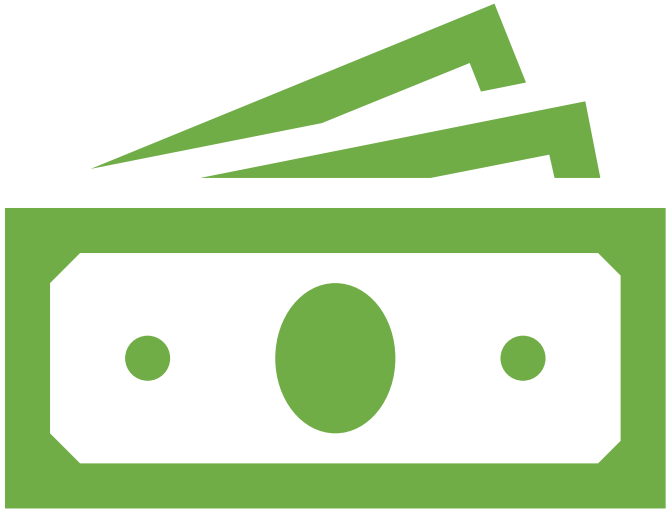
- Upper Manistee Headwaters, Kalkaska County, MI

Partnerships and Momentum

- POROS Plan engaged Public Works Committee and Parks Groups
  - Together, these groups drove:
    - Pursuit of Camp Indian Trails
    - Funding the opportunity analysis
  - Attended the decision-making meeting and participated in support
    - Process required 3 Committees + County Board Approval

Acquisition of Camp Indian Trails

- Property was purchased in February 2022
- Land Purchase – **$3.4 million**
  - Source: ARPA Funds
- Operating Budget – **$650,000**
  - Source: County Sales Tax



What's Happened Since?

- Contractor work underway
  - Utility repairs, land survey, and demo
- County staff work underway
  - Site clean-up, facility maintenance, driveway repair, and demo
- Ever-changing and evolving challenges

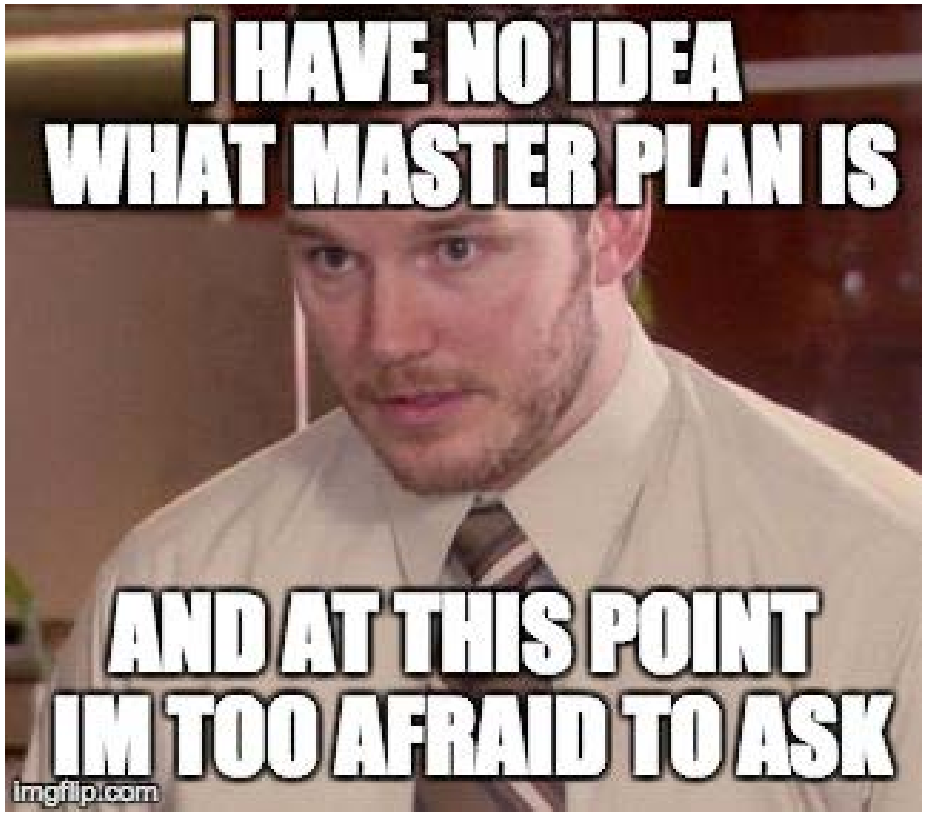
<u>Projected opening – Fall 2022</u>

What's Happened Since?

- Boy Scouts, community, and volunteer groups hopeful to remain involved and plan to patriciate in future phases
- Still identifying future programming and revenue opportunities
- Planned projects for 2022:
  - Playground upgrades
  - Lake improvements
  - Raising funds for new pavilion
- Park Master Plan – fund raising underway

Next Steps

- Develop a Park Master Plan
- Evaluate staffing needs
- “Grow” into the new public amenity
- Launch campaign to generate awareness of programming and rental opportunities

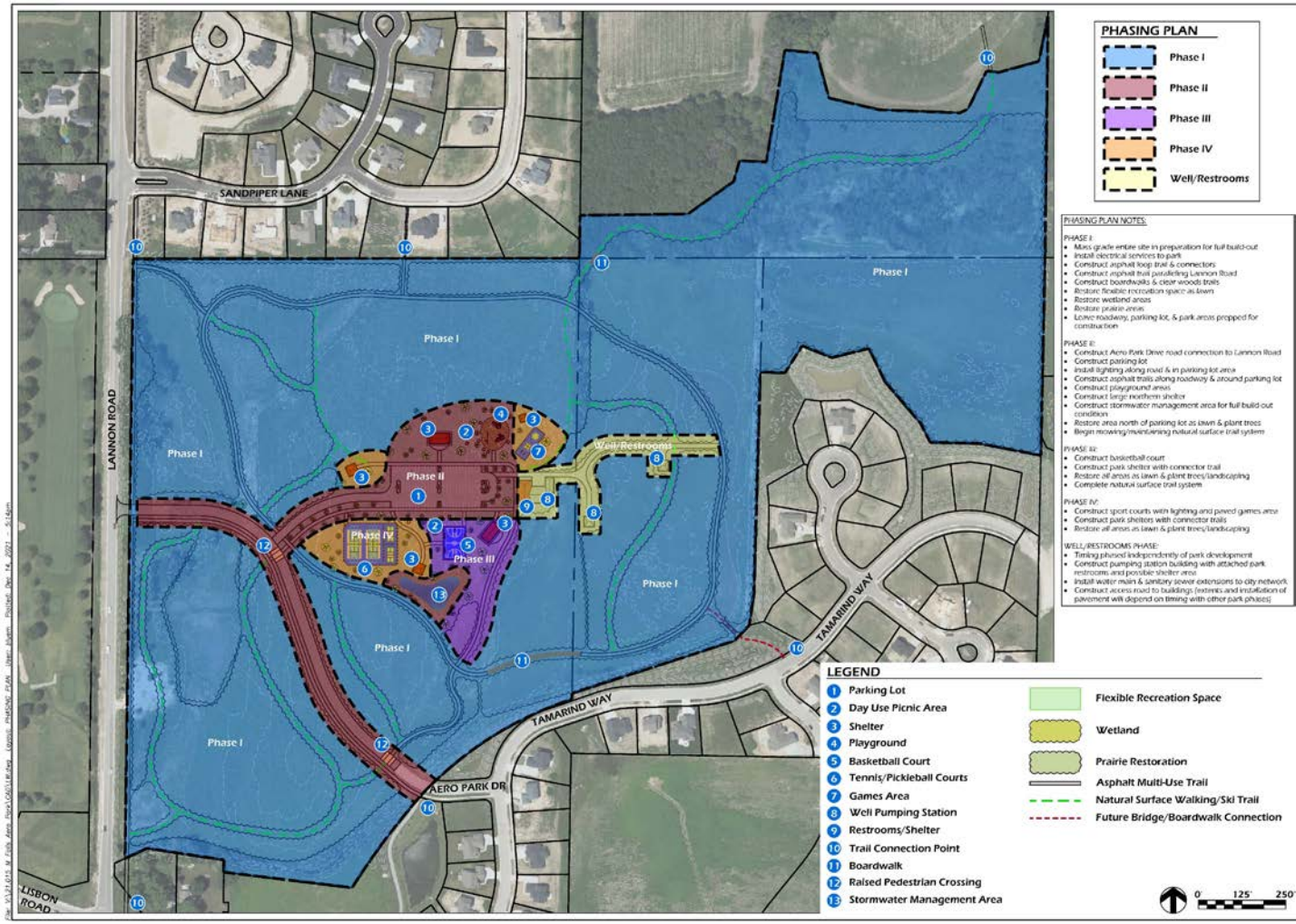


Park Master Plan

Timing

- Year 1: Budget
- Year 2: Planning
- Year 3: Construction

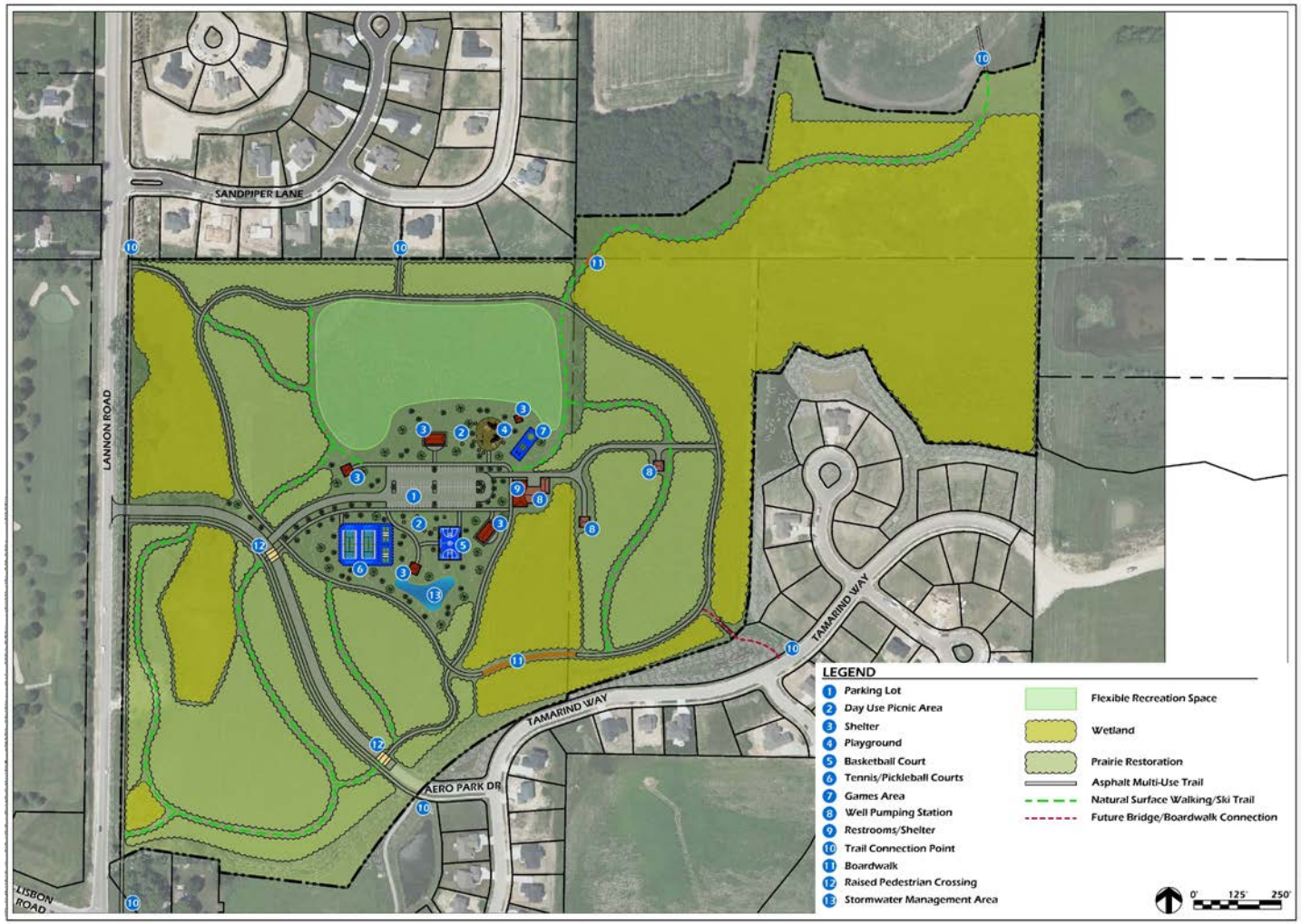
Long process = keep the momentum going



Park Master Plan

Elements

- Site understanding, context, and analysis
- Public input
- Design
- Programming
- Document production
- Adoption



Lessons Learned

Planning + Implementation = Community Benefit

- A prepared community can best leverage opportunity (quickly)
- Build partnerships and momentum through planning = drives implementation
- Maximize all available resources (county, state, federal, etc.)
- Use tools to communicate need, opportunity, and impact decision making

Questions?