



Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area

Master Plan

Dane County, Wisconsin

May 2011



Acknowledgements

Dane County Park Commission

William Lunney, Chair
Kyle Richmond, County Board Supervisor
Dave Ripp, County Board Supervisor
Christine Haag
Mary Schlaefer
Dan Wisniewski
Tom Thoresen

Token Creek County Park Planning Committee

John Hutchinson, Judith Hutchinson, John Nelson, Dick Black, Mike Ratkowski,
Darren Marsh, Chris James

Token Creek Conservancy Committee

Token Creek Watershed Association

Dane County Sheriff's Department

Town of Windsor

Town of Burke

City of Madison Planning and Engineering Departments

Don Tierney

Scot Stewart, Wisconsin DNR

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Dave Burch, Bonestroo

Village of DeForest

DeForest School District

City of Sun Prairie

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I. Executive Summary

Token Creek County Park and natural resource area encompass approximately 900 acres in northeastern Dane County. Token Creek is the only cold water trout fishery in this region of Dane County, and the 27 square mile watershed provides nearly half of the base flow of water for Lake Mendota. The Wisconsin DNR, Army Corps. of Engineers, Token Creek Watershed Association, Town of Windsor, Trout Unlimited, Natural Heritage Land Trust and Dane County have been actively working on water quality and habitat improvement measures for many years to protect and enhance this resource.

This Master Plan process evaluated existing conditions of the park and natural resource area and incorporated public, stakeholder and staff recommendations to create this updated Master Plan. The planning process included a series of public information, local unit of government and stakeholder meetings from May of 2009 through December of 2010.

Plan recommendations include:

- Expansion of disc golf and camping opportunities
- Enhancement of fishing opportunities
- Relocated southern park entrance to better manage the park
- Park roadway re-alignment and parking lot reconfiguration to offer improved sight distance, visibility, function and consolidation for ease of maintenance
- Increased signage for information, direction and interpretive education
- Improved entrance for dog exercise area.
- Improved trails and access throughout the park and natural resource area, with connections to adjacent neighborhoods and parkland.

Implementation of these recommendations will result in multiple benefits for both the County and park patrons. Relocation of the park entrance in itself is anticipated to greatly reduce County operation and maintenance costs by substantially reducing length of road that requires snowplowing in the winter. Expansion of the disc golf course and campground should result in increased revenues generated from this park. Finally, clustering major recreation activities at the south end of the park will enhance the quality of hiking, fishing, cross country skiing, camping and nature observation throughout the rest of the park by reducing, and even eliminating during winter months, motorized traffic throughout the northern two thirds of the park.

Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area is a unique natural resource and recreation setting amidst a very urban environment. Additional detailed construction drawings and planning will still need to be completed for many of the recommendations found within this plan. As the park and recreation use continue to grow over the next 5-10 years, the plan should be revisited and amended as necessary to reflect current trends and conditions.

II. Introduction and Background

Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area offers a variety of natural experiences and habitats worthy of protection and perpetual management. This unique park and natural area has offered citizens many opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of its year-round scenic beauty for nearly 45 years. The park, originating in 1966 as a 147 acre site, has now been expanded to nearly 420 acres of park, and a total of approximately 900 acres of land in public ownership are included within the Natural Resource Area boundary. Natural resources within the project area include springs, sedge meadows, open lands, woods, and Token Creek, the only stream in northeast Dane County identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to support cold water fish species. Following a dam removal in 2004 by the DNR, the state has been actively working on restorative efforts to improve the land in the headwater areas.

The original Master Plan for the park was completed in 1971, and has helped to guide the County in the acquisition of additional lands, and develop the park in an orderly manner. When the park was originally developed, it was intended to serve as an interstate park that would provide a convenient midpoint stopover for tourists traveling to northern Wisconsin. This original objective is no longer the primary use and the park is in need of upgrades to address current recreation needs and how the park is being used on a daily basis.

Existing park recreation uses are primarily camping, hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, picnicking, special events, off leash dog exercise, and a very popular disc golf course. There is also some daily use of the horse trails and fishing is seasonally popular at the pier near the entrance to the park. Token Creek is becoming a popular water trail for canoe and kayakers that travel from the park to Cherokee Marsh. The entry area to the park also serves as a snowmobile trailhead access.

The park has many opportunities for improvement. This planning process has provided a forum to collectively re-evaluate the park with stakeholders and prepare alternative master plans for public review. The creation of an updated vision and Master Plan for Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area will guide future acquisition and development, and help determine priorities for use and management of this significant parkland.

III. Planning Process and Public Participation Summary

The Master Plan process followed a systematic format for setting goals, listening to stakeholders, understanding the land, formulating options, and creating a Master Plan with a consensus of support to move forward.

Multiple stakeholders were involved in the process. These groups included:

- Dane County Parks Commission
- Dane County Sheriff's Department
- Towns of Windsor and Burke
- Village of DeForest
- DeForest School District
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- City of Sun Prairie Parks
- City of Madison Engineering and Planning Departments
- Wisconsin DNR Fishery Staff
- Token Creek Conservancy Committee
- Token Creek Watershed Association
- Park Staff and Users
- Snowmobilers

A public information meeting to kick off the planning project was held in May of 2009. Some of the reoccurring hopes/concerns/comments heard included:

- Increase awareness/education of Token Creek natural resources through better signage
- Improving trail connectivity throughout the park and natural resource area and to surrounding communities/trails.
- Anticipated positive and negative effects of relocating entrance of the park off of Hwy 51
- Expanding conservation partnership opportunities and maintaining ongoing and current communications with the townships.
- Try to maintain a more natural character of the campground environment.
- Consider monitoring entrances or implementing a park entry pass system to address illegal activity in park issues.

A second public information meeting was held in March of 2010 to review two draft alternative master plans for the park and one alternative for the natural resource area. Hopes/comments/concerns on the draft alternative park master plans were primarily related to:

- Traffic concerns on local roadways associated with the proposed relocated entrance.
- Impacts to the dog park from the proposed relocated entrance.
- Park user safety, EMS access.

Of note, one alternative draft master plan for the park proposed relocating the entrance off Portage Road and the other proposed relocating the entrance off of Anderson Road. Support and opposition for the proposed Portage Road entrance was nearly equal. There were four comments in support of relocating the entrance to Anderson road, and 3 comments to leave the entrance as is. In response to the level of interest shown related to relocation of the park entrance and park safety concerns, Dane County Parks planning staff gathered additional input from the City of Madison Planning and Engineering Departments, the Town of Burke, the Dane County Sheriff's Department and the Wisconsin Department

of Transportation. Further analysis of the proposed park entrance relocation and safety concerns are covered within the *Park Inventory and Analysis* and *Master Plan Recommendations* components of this plan.

Hopes/comments/concerns recorded for the draft natural resource area master plan were primarily related to:

- Alignment of the proposed regional bicycle/pedestrian trail and proximity to the Big Hill Conservancy Area.
- Concerns regarding maintaining snowmobile trailhead access at the park and north within the USH 51 corridor.

In response to the level of interest shown related to snowmobile trails and the location of the proposed regional bicycle pedestrian trail, Dane County Parks planning staff attended additional meetings and solicited additional input from the Token Creek Conservancy Committee, the Village of Deforest, Town of Windsor, area snowmobile clubs and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Further discussion of the proposed natural resource area proposed trails is covered within the *Park Inventory and Analysis* and *Master Plan Recommendations* components of this plan.

The preferred alternative master report was distributed to local units of government and stakeholders in January of 2011 for review and comment. A final public information meeting to present the preferred alternative master plan was held on June 9th, 2011 at the Windsor Town Hall.

IV. Park Inventory and Analysis

Site inventory and analysis is another planning consideration for preparing a park master plan that supplements staff and stakeholder ideas and input. Opportunities and constraints often materialize from the suitability analysis that can be the determining factors for which recommendations are included within a master plan. The following site inventory and analysis criteria were considered for the park and natural resource area during the planning process.

SLOPE AND VIEWSHEDS

The topography of Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area consists primarily of gently rolling hills north and south of the creek and associated springs/wetlands. There is one prominent land feature in the project area known as the “Big Hill” that is visible from most of the planning area. Most of the Big Hill property is owned by the Town of Windsor and DeForest School District. There is another area of significant topographic relief between Portage Road and Token Creek just northeast of the park.

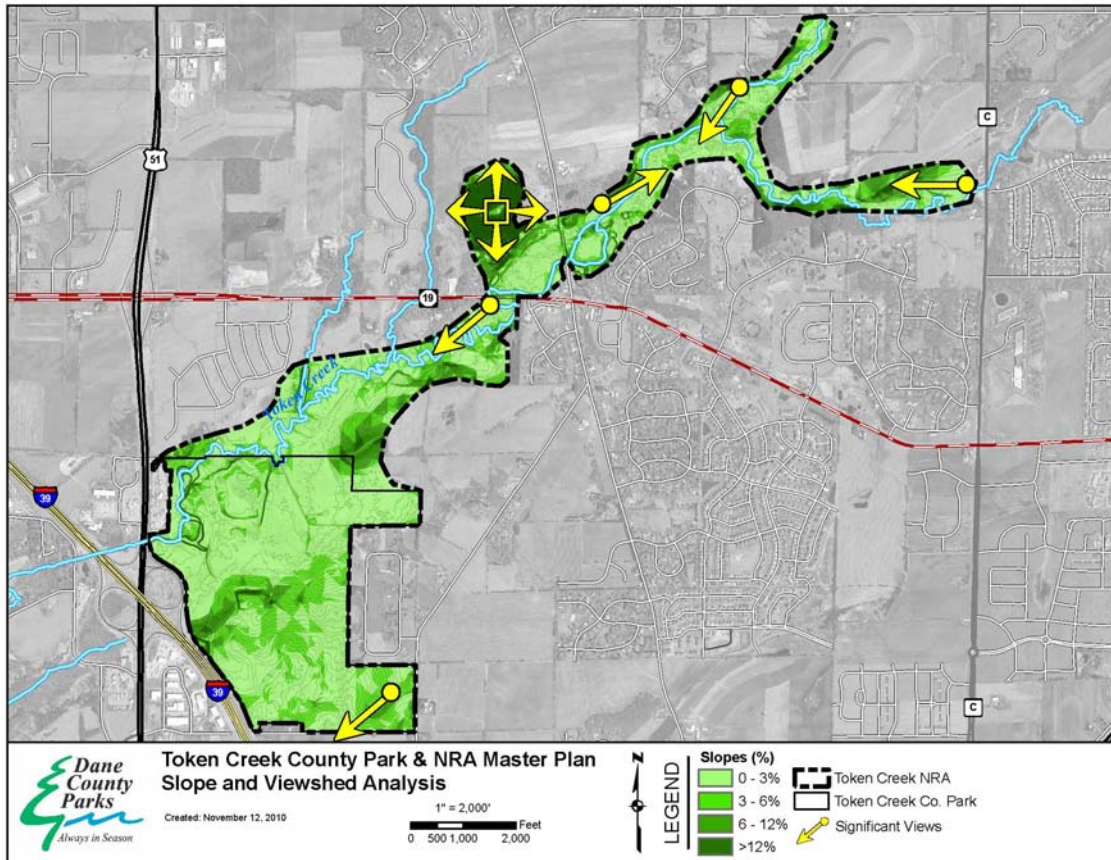
Opportunities

- The overall gentle rolling topography facilitates consideration of multiple off road trail alignments.

- The high point of the dog exercise areas offers views of the capitol.
- The Big Hill affords excellent views from hiking trails.
- Multiple opportunities for vistas and overlook areas of the creek from natural surface trails throughout natural resource area.

Constraints

- Steep slopes on the north bank of the former mill pond are prohibitive for considering regional trails within the natural resource area.



HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE

Token Creek is one of the most significant natural resources in northeastern Dane County. As previously mentioned, it provides approximately 50 percent of base flow water for the Yahara River and Lake Mendota. Token Creek is classified as a cold water community by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is significant for its ability to support cold water species such as trout. The watershed is also classified as a thermally sensitive area by the Dane County Land Conservation division. These are watersheds that drain to cold water communities such as Token Creek and have special stormwater management regulations in place to prevent adversely impacting the temperature of the stream.

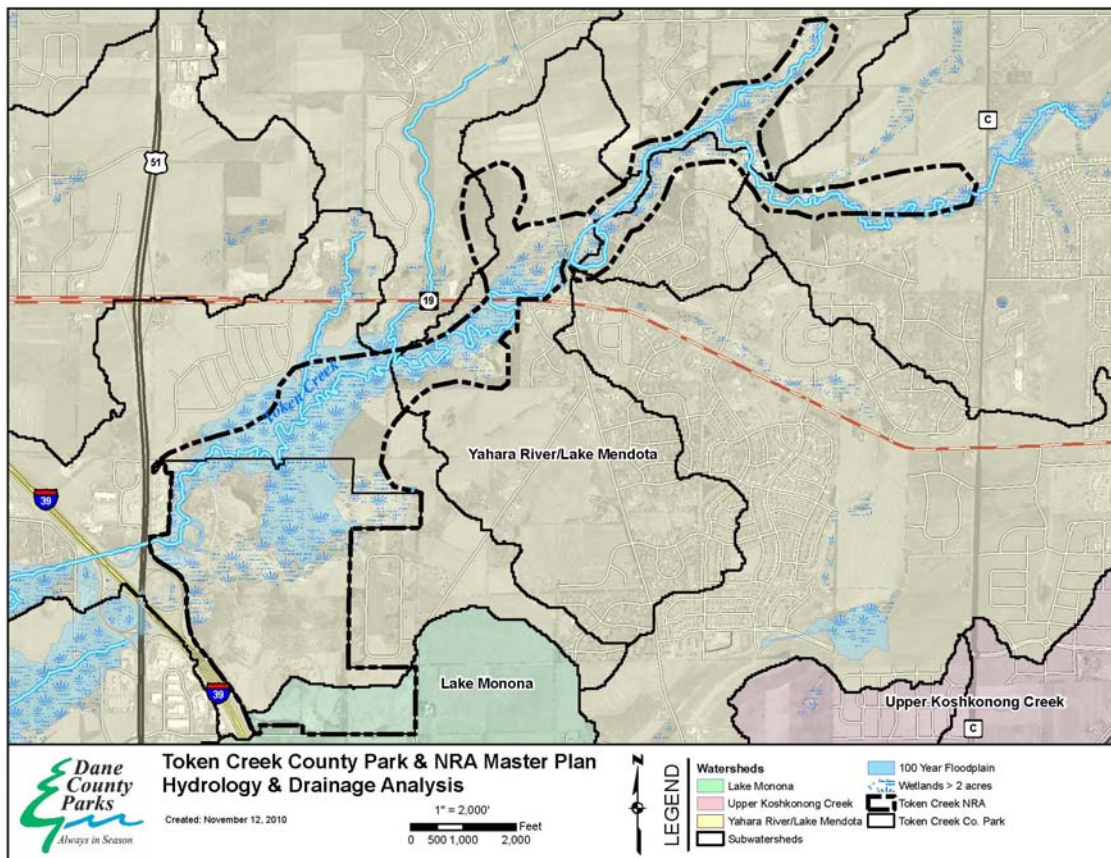
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Dane County, Token Creek Watershed Association and Conservancy have been undertaking many stream improvement projects for several years. Restoration projects have included removal of the mill pond dam, bank stabilization, invasive species removal and adding fish habitat structures. Token Creek supports a reproducing brown trout population and the Wisconsin DNR has also been stocking brook trout. It is the only stream in northeastern Dane County that is classified by the Department as a trout fishery.

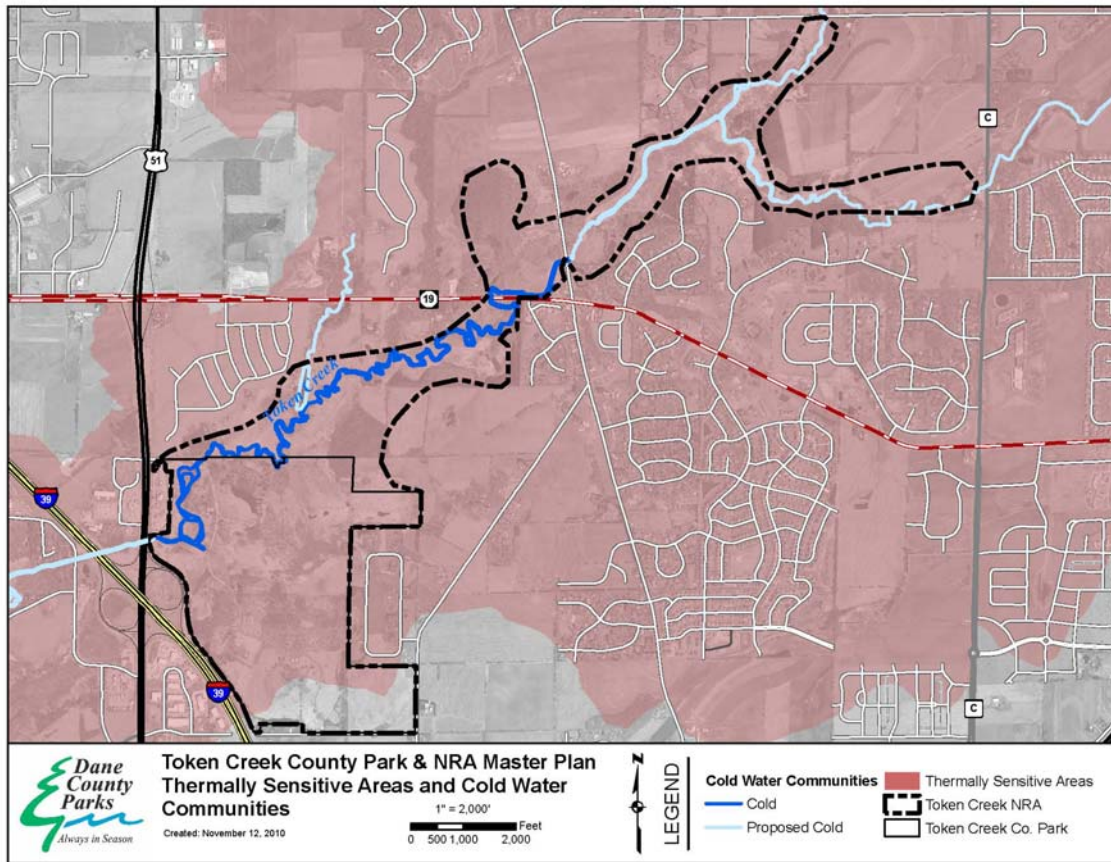
Opportunities

- Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area could become a trout fishing destination in northeastern Dane County.
- Provide educational signage for park users at access points regarding the significance of cold water communities and thermally sensitive areas.
- Remove dredge ponds and narrow stream near entrance.

Constraints

- Increasing popularity of the stream as a fishing destination may result in an increase in litter and volunteer trails along the bank.





SOILS

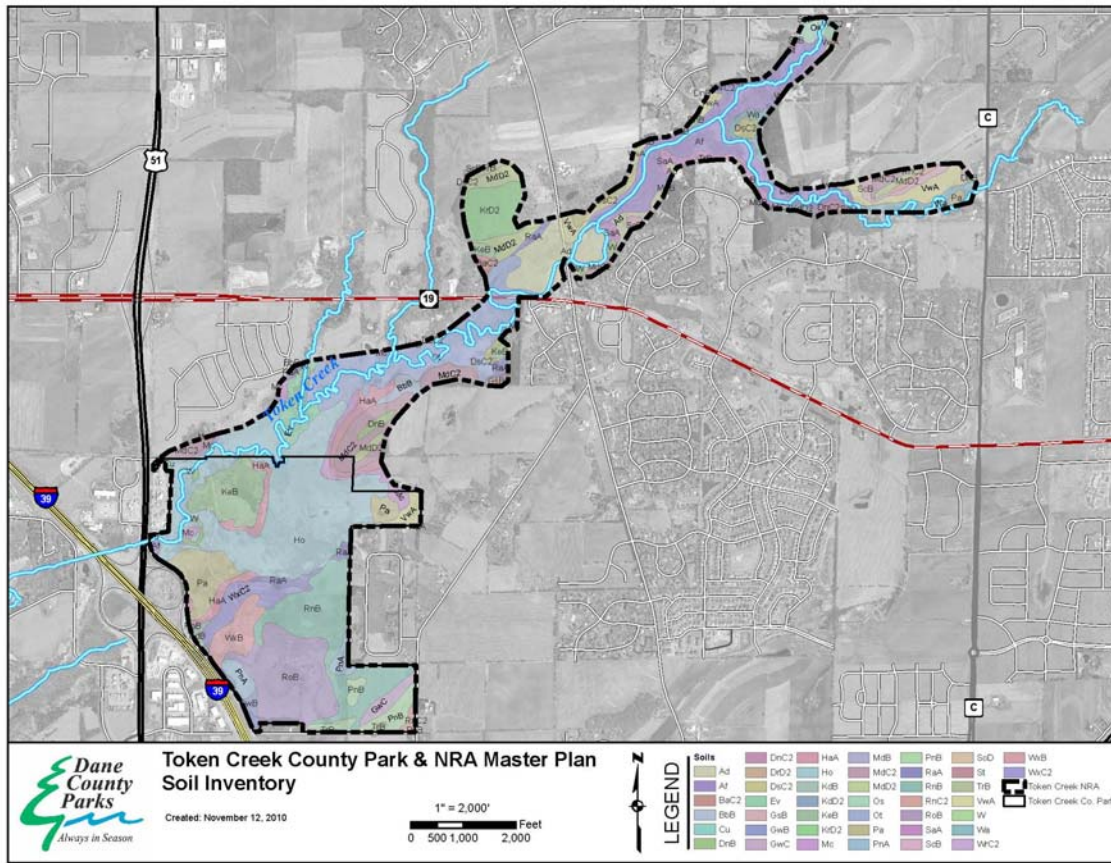
Based on the Dane County Soil Survey, upland areas throughout the project area consist primarily of Plano, Dodge, Ringwood, and St. Charles series; all of which generally have moderate limitations for development of campgrounds, playgrounds, paths and trails and slight limitations for golf fairways and picnic areas. Lower areas near the creek, wetlands and ditches are primarily within the Houghton and Otter soil series, both of which have severe limitations for all park development projects.

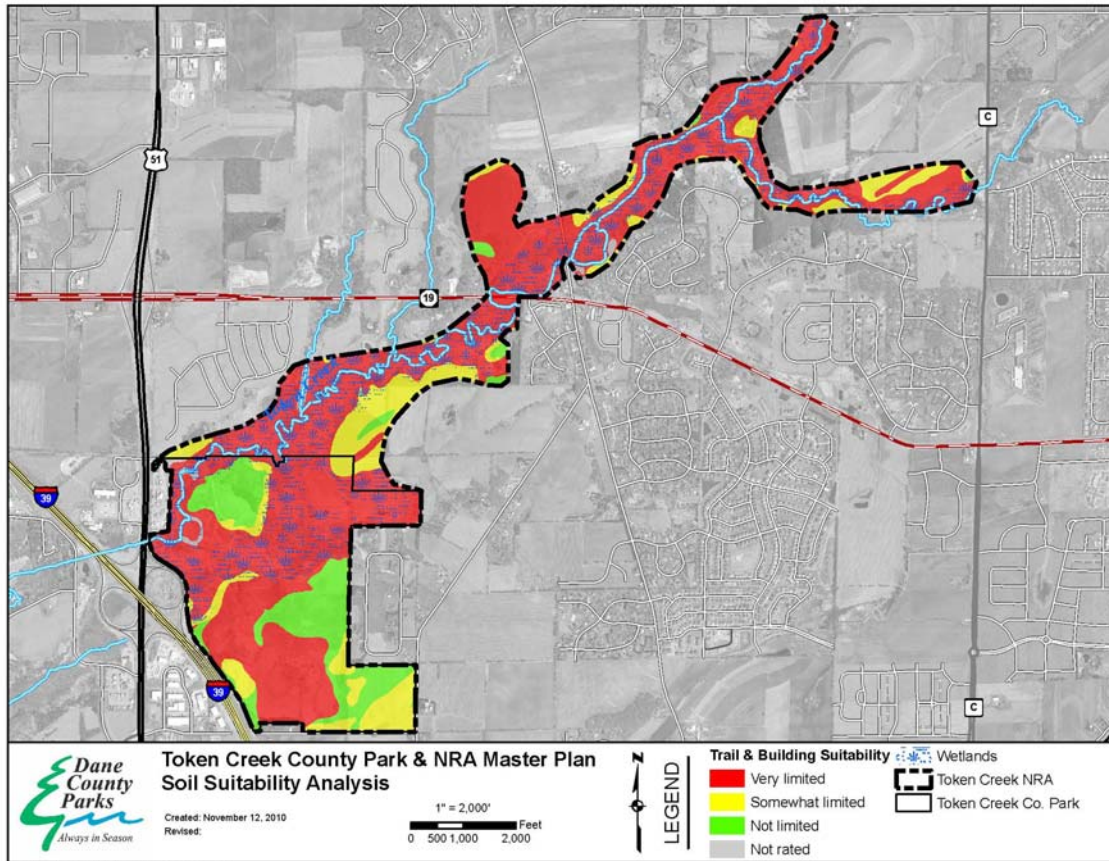
Opportunities

- Soils should not be a limiting factor for development of proposed park improvements.

Constraints

- Houghton and Otter soil series may prevent development of proposed future regional trails within natural and scenic zones of the project area.





VEGETATION

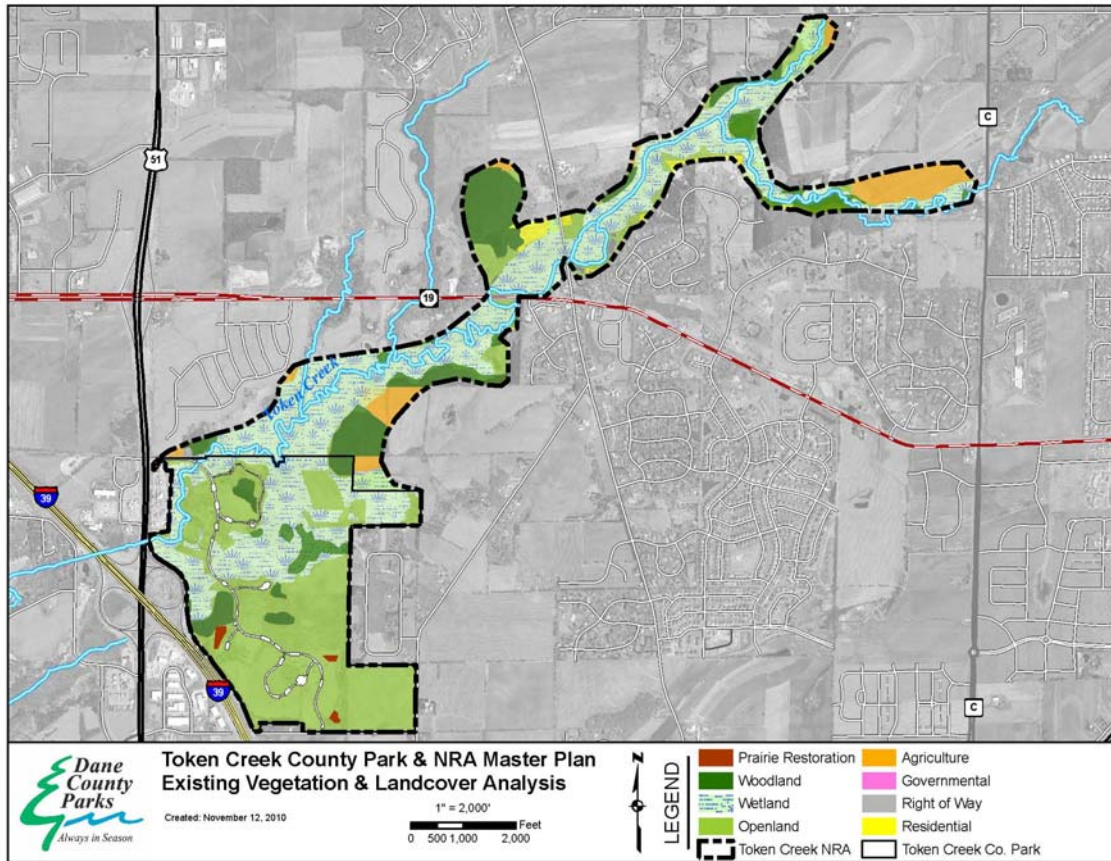
Token Creek County park is generally divided into four types of plant communities: wetland, prairie restoration, woodlands and developed parkland. Wetlands of varying quality that are associated with the creek extend across the northern half of the park. The remainder of the park consists of a mix of prairie restorations, mown park use areas, and scattered woodlots. In June of 2010, the consulting firm of Bonestroo prepared a master plan for Token Creek Conservancy lands that will continue to be primarily operated and managed by the Token Creek Conservancy Committee and their volunteers.

Opportunities

- Woodlots and trees provide visual screening from adjacent roadways and urban uses.
- Wetland boardwalk provides opportunities to educate park users/public about function and benefits of wetland communities.

Constraints

- Dense vegetation can limit surveillance of parking and use areas.



CULTURAL, HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL

As with many areas throughout Dane County, most Native American and original European settlement occurred around perennial sources of water. The Dane County Historical Society recognized the Token Creek area as historically significant in 1984 and placed a sign with the following information near the creek:

“Attracted by abundant water, early Indian inhabitants erected effigy mounds in the area. George Spaulding was the first white settler in 1841. The Town of Windsor’s first election was held in 1847 at Charles Lawrence’s Prairie House Inn. A post office was established in that year but discontinued in 1902. The name Token was derived from Tokaunee, a minor Indian chief. Completed in 1844, the Fort Winnebago Road from Madison passed through Token Creek. Guided by the landmark Big Hill, homesteaders and lumberman journeyed through on their way to northern pinerias. Token Creek had a school, Congregational church, two mills and an early fish hatchery. Veterans of five wars, including the Revolutionary War, rest in the cemetery. Until destroyed by fire in 1881, the Token Creek Tavern was the area’s social center. Under the glow of tallow candles, couples danced to the fiddle music of Marcus Wheeler, father of poetess Ella Wheeler Wilcox. Token Creek declined after the railroads bypassed it.”

Opportunities

- Additional research/study to create interpretive information regarding the history of settlement within the Token Creek watershed and how the Big Hill, stream and springs influenced settlement.

Constraints

- None considered

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES.

The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working List available through the WDNR contains species known or suspected to be rare in the state and natural communities native to Wisconsin. It includes aquatic and terrestrial species legally designated as "Endangered" or "Threatened" as well as species in the advisory "Special Concern". The generalized map and County occurrences list that is typically used for master planning purposes indicates several plant, bird, butterfly, moth, mammal and community occurrences within the Token Creek Natural Resource Area townships. (T8N R10E and T9N R10E) Specific location information is not provided in order to protect the identified species. More detailed site specific planning would need to be conducted for any major construction projects on lands that have not already been disturbed. To see the list of species included within the inventory go to:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/nhi/CountyData/>

Opportunities

- Unknown without further analysis.

Constraints

- Unknown without further analysis.

EXISTING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Land use planning considerations for Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area include the municipalities of the Cities of Madison and Sun Prairie, Towns of Burke, Bristol and Windsor, and the Village of DeForest.

Most of the listed communities have been actively planning for regional trail systems that include interconnectivity to other municipal bike trails, schools, neighborhoods and Token Creek County Park. The topic of where to locate the proposed bicycle pedestrian trail throughout the natural resource area generated strong interest from the Token Creek Conservancy Committee. Because of the extensive wetlands, a paved trail would not be possible and the amount of boardwalk required would be cost prohibitive. Instead, a trail that is proposed to be aligned north of the natural resource area with spur trails to nodes such as the Big Hill and Culver Springs area is envisioned.

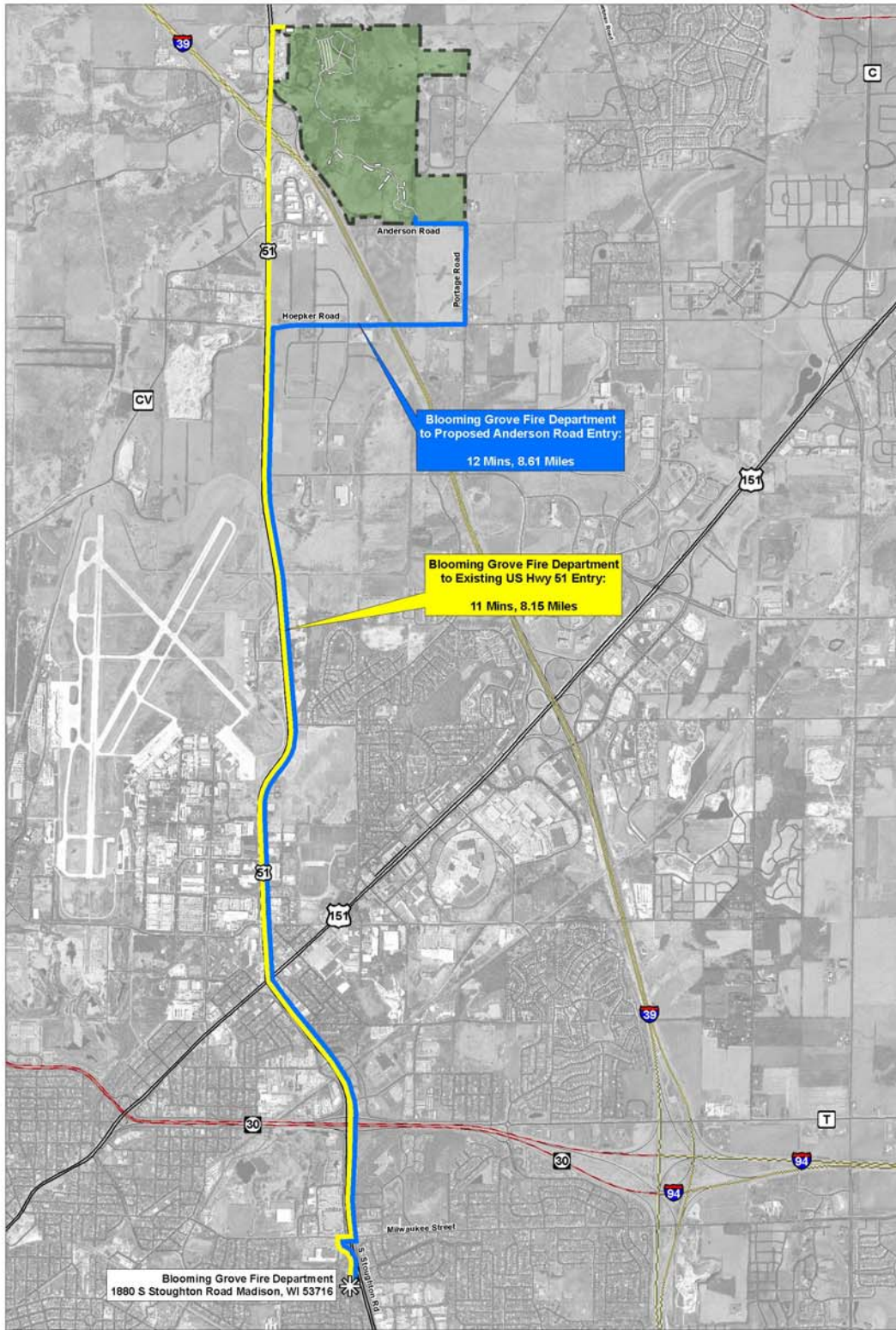
Snowmobile trails were also considered as there currently is trail access at the entrance to Token Creek Park. Dane County Parks met with local snowmobile

club representatives, the WDOT, and Village of Deforest to discuss how the trail system could continue to coexist within the US 51 corridor in the future. It will be the responsibility of these snowmobile clubs to continue and further discussions with the Village of DeForest and WDOT to determine how to maintain this trail segment. Dane County Parks will continue to facilitate communications and host meetings as necessary.

There are also a number of proposed development projects adjacent to the park and natural resource area that have affected recommendations found within this master plan. The City of Madison approved the Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood plan in 2010 that proposes a mixed use development south and east of Token Creek County Park. County and City planning staff met throughout the generation of this neighborhood plan to collaborate on ideas that were compatible for the future neighborhood, park, trail and transportation systems. The Village of DeForest has plans for future development projects immediately north of the park entrance and north of STH 19. Dane County Parks planning staff met with the Village, WDOT and local developers to discuss mutual interests and trail connectivity ideas.

Relocation of the park entrance was a primary planning consideration during development of this master plan. Long range plans by the WDOT are anticipated to eventually propose eliminating the park access on USH 51 as part of a future conversion to interstate status. Relocation of the entrance to the south end of the park and clustering activity areas will greatly reduce winter snowplowing maintenance costs. It will also eliminate the need for traffic to travel through the entire park to reach the disc golf and dog exercise areas.

Travel distance for both parks operation staff and Blooming Grove EMS would increase by about ½ mile. It should be noted that because the internal park road is more than 1 mile in the length, the added ½ mile is negligible. Dane County will continue to coordinate with the WDOT, Town of Burke and City of Madison on the proposed entry relocation project. The following maps represent affects of entry relocation on Dane County Parks Operation Staff and EMS service that is currently provided by the Town of Blooming Grove.



Blooming Grove Fire Department
1880 S Stoughton Road Madison, WI 53716



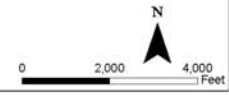
Token Creek Park

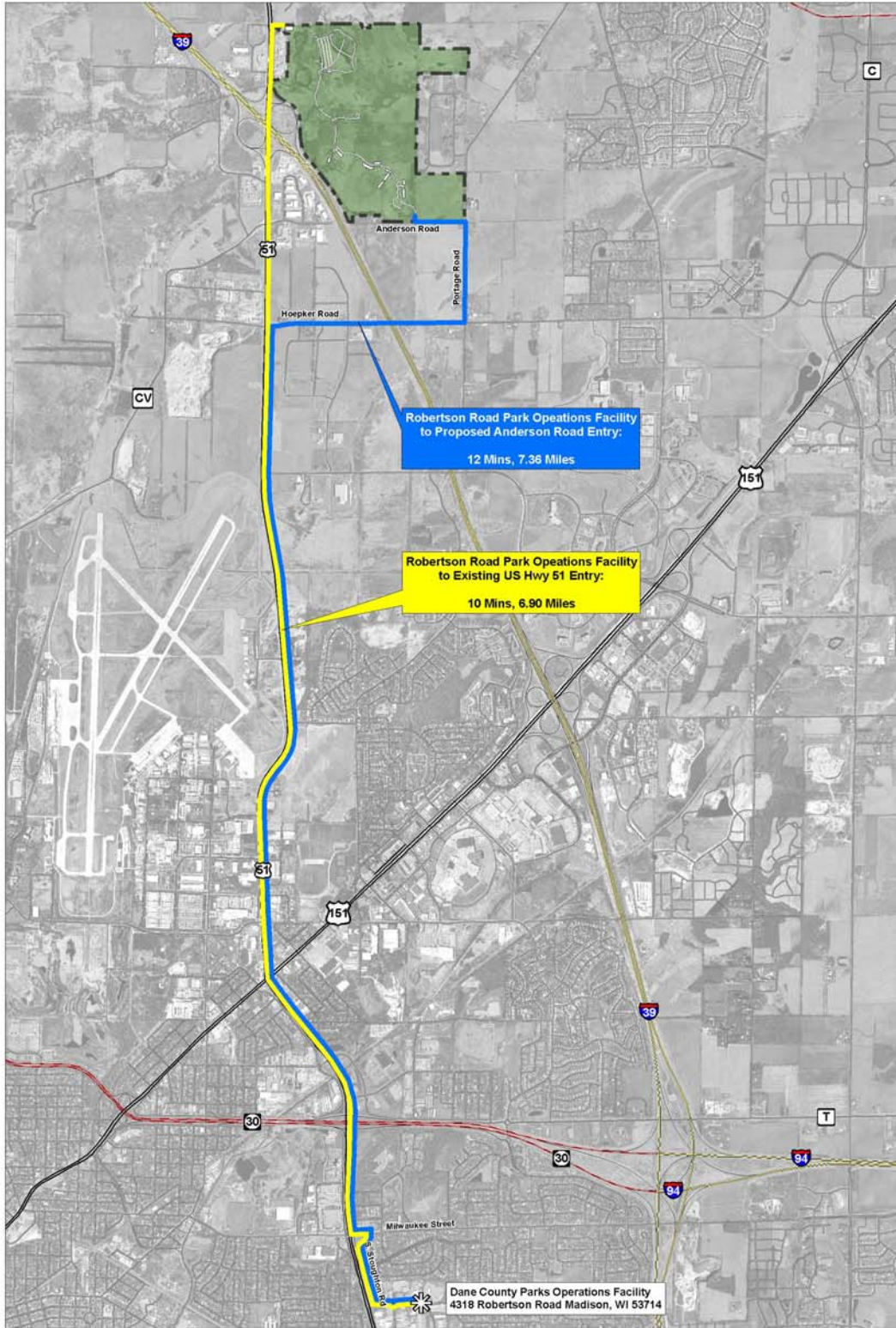
Blooming Grove EMS Travel Distance

Prepared By: ADD Jan. 6, 2011

Legend

- Blooming Grove EMS Routes
- To Existing North Entry
- To Proposed South Entry





Token Creek Park

Park Operations Travel Distance

Prepared By: ADD Jan. 6, 2011

Legend

Park Operations Routes

Yellow line: To Existing North Entry

Blue line: To Proposed South Entry

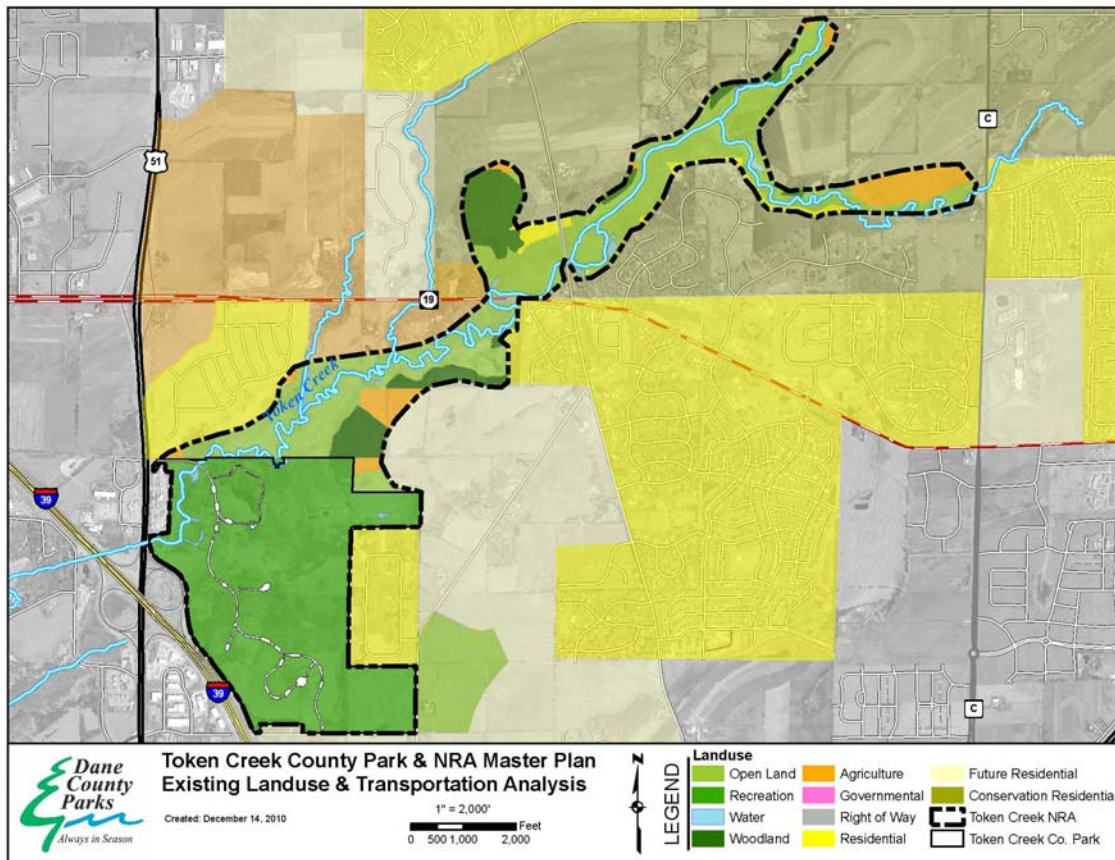


Opportunities

- Improve cross country skiing, hiking, disc golf and camping experience by reducing through park traffic.
- Reduce road maintenance costs by moving park entrance closer to activity areas.
- Deter loitering activity in the park by reducing unused parking areas and increasing use of program park areas.

Constraints

- Initial costs to implement relocated entrance.



EXISTING RECREATIONAL USES & FACILITIES

Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area provide several regional recreation destinations for County residents. Perhaps the highest recreation use of the park is the disc golf course. The disc golf course has a reputation as being one of the best in the country and has been the host of several national touring championship events. The dog exercise area is also extremely popular year round and includes a small dog area and dog playground equipment. The existing campground provides 35 sites and has significant opportunity for expansion including a new and improved group camp area. Other recreation use that occurs within the park includes equestrian trails, hiking, cross country skiing,

fishing, snowshoeing and archery hunting for deer by permit. There are currently five shelters that are reservable for special events and three restroom buildings.

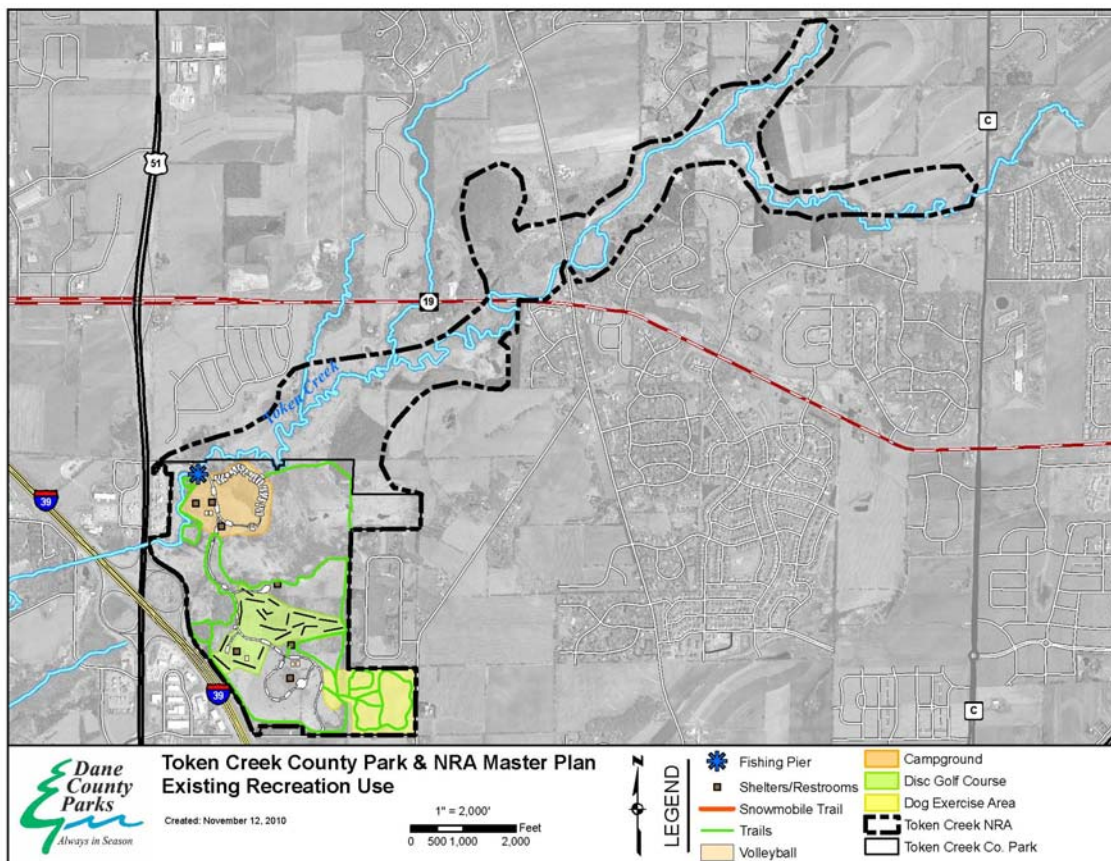
Most of the publically owned lands within the natural resource area boundary are owned by the Town of Windsor. Recreation use includes hiking trails and fishing where the stream is accessible. Culver Springs offers seasonal access to natural hiking trails that afford views of open cold water springs. Hunting is popular by area residents on privately owned lands within the natural resource area boundary surrounding the park. There currently are no public hunting opportunities within Token Creek County Park except the limited archery hunt within the park.

Opportunities

- Excellent opportunity to expand, snowshoeing, camping and disc golf areas.
- Promote unique coldwater trout fishery in northeastern Dane County.

Constraints

- Initial costs to implement campground/disc golf expansion areas.



EXISTING PUBLIC LANDS

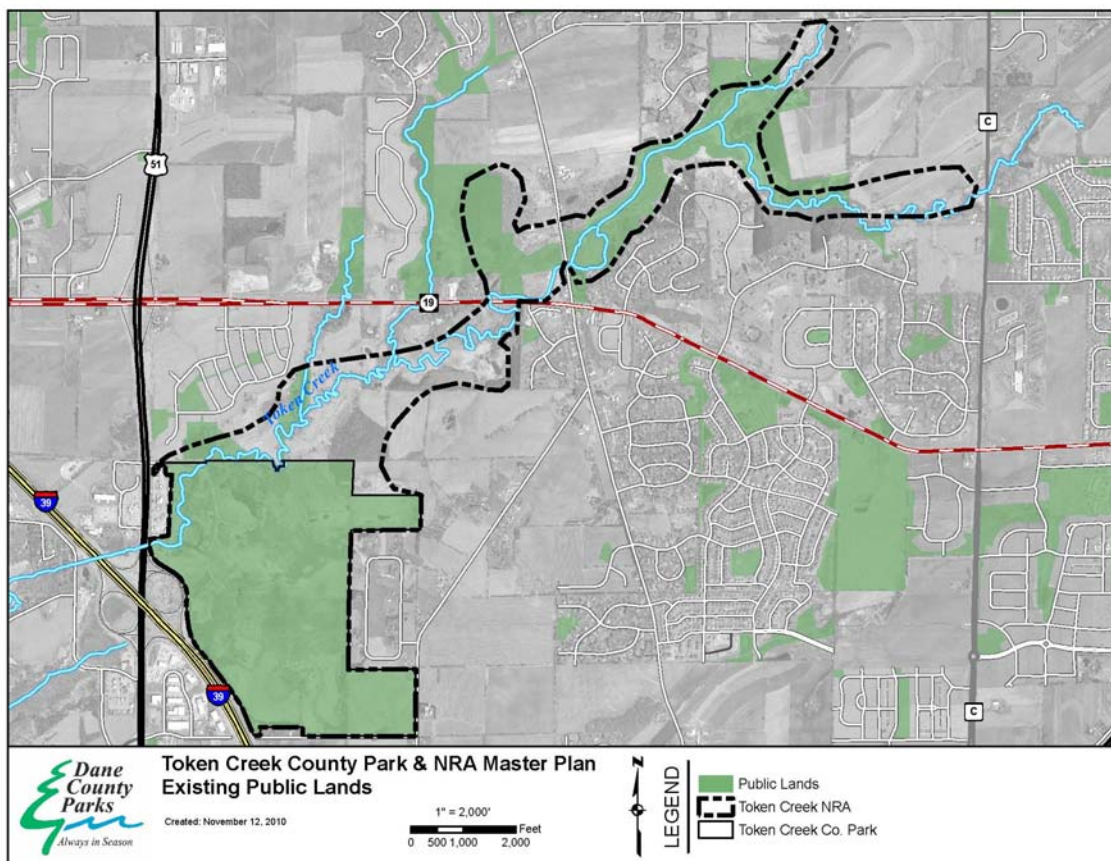
Token Creek Park and Natural Resource Area consist of a total of approximately 900 acres, of which just over 500 are currently in public ownership. Token Creek County Park is nearly 420 acres owned entirely by Dane County. The Town of Windsor owns about 200 acres at the Culver Springs property, and the Town and Village of Deforest school district own 80 acres of land at the Big Hill site. Dane County and the WDNR own about 30 acres of land on the north and south sides of STH 19 that include springs and a former carp pond.

Opportunities

- Much of the remaining private land within the natural resource area boundary is within large, contiguous parcels. Dane County only purchases land from willing sellers.

Constraints

- None considered.



V. PLANNING PURPOSE

The Town of Windsor, Token Creek Watershed Association, Dane County Land Conservation Division and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have been actively working on Token Creek habitat and water quality improvements for many years. The Town of Windsor/Token Creek Conservancy Committee also retained the consulting services of Bonestroo to complete a master plan that includes management and restoration, maintenance, awareness and support, and accessibility improvement recommendations for most of the natural resource area lands.

The original intent of Token Creek County Park was to create an interstate park that would provide a rest stop atmosphere for travelers stopping to rest on vacation trips to northern Wisconsin. With the abundance of new and modern rest areas along the interstate system, this objective is no longer a current park user need. In addition, park and conservation interest in Token Creek has since expanded throughout the natural resource area and entire watershed.

The decision to undertake a master planning process for Token Creek County Park and Natural Resource Area was primarily related to the need to redefine the park entrance and user groups, identify a regional trail corridor between the park and Sun Prairie, plan for expansion of disc golf and campground facilities within the park, and refine the natural resource area boundary.

Goals for the Dane County Master Planning process were established early in the master planning process and in response to stakeholder and public comments gathered.

Goals identified included:

1. Preserve and enhance significant resources.
2. Improve access and connections.
3. Provide improved definition of uses.
4. Provide improved views and security.
5. Identify and strengthen relationships with stakeholders.
6. Identify phases and costs for improvement.
7. Identify potential operational and maintenance efficiencies.
8. Identify potential funding and revenue sources.

One of the primary considerations when updating master plans for all parks is to investigate if modifications need to be made to improve overall safety and efficiency of how a park functions. Often times original landscaping becomes dense and overgrown preventing visibility of park users; and roads and parking lots do not efficiently and safely serve growing and changing park use and program areas.

CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) was originally coined and formulated by criminologist C. Ray Jeffery in the early 1970's. Although

largely ignored until fairly recently, his concepts have become widely accepted and expanded on by both public space designers and law enforcement staff. CPTED principles strive to deter criminal behavior in social environments through enhancing the perceived risk of detection and apprehension. CPTED elements that were considered for this master planning project included natural surveillance, natural access control, natural territorial reinforcement, active maintenance of facilities and activity support. Implementation of these design concepts will create a safer park environment that is easier and more economical to operate and maintain. More detailed information on CPTED principles can be found on line at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime_prevention_through_environmental_design

VI. PARK & NATURAL RESOURCE AREA VISION STATEMENT

Token Creek County Park will become a regional and regular family recreation destination for residents of Dane County. Recreation use will be busy and continuous throughout the southern half of the park; and passive, serene and safe throughout the northern half of the park. An expanded campground will provide a quality, natural experience amidst a very urban environment. Token Creek natural resource area will provide environmental education opportunities at parking areas and be lightly accessible to the public by hiking trails designed through upland areas. The stream will remain natural and be managed to provide a sustaining trout fishery. A regional bicycle pedestrian trail will provide Dane County residents non-motorized connections to the park and to educational nodes throughout the natural resource area.

VII. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following plan recommendations are presented graphically on the preferred alternative master plans for the park and natural resource area at the end of the document.

TOKEN CREEK COUNTY PARK

A. ROADS AND PARKING LOTS

This master plan recommends relocation of the existing park entrance to Anderson Road for reasons outlined under the Land Use and Transportation Inventory and Analysis discussion. The existing north entry road would become a 10' paved bicycle pedestrian trail. The existing double culvert bridge at the creek would be replaced with a clear span bicycle pedestrian bridge that could accommodate emergency vehicle access if needed. Relocation of the main entrance to Anderson Road would decrease winter park road snowplowing responsibility by over a mile. Upon relocation of the entrance, traffic would be directed by signage from the I 94 interchange south on USH 51 to the recently improved signalized intersection at Hoepker Road. Traffic would then be routed east on Hoepker Road and north on Portage to the Anderson Road entrance.

Anderson Road would require improvements to accommodate park and future Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood traffic.

It is also recommended to remove the existing group camp road and loop road at shelter 4 to accommodate the disc golf course expansion. A non-staffed drive by entry booth at Anderson Road would provide park brochures and information. Dane County will continue to coordinate with the City of Madison on Anderson Road improvements that will be consistent with the future Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood land use plans.

Most of the existing parking lots for high use areas are located on the main park road and sometimes result in park users straying into traffic while unloading vehicles. Other lots are segregated from use areas and are not visible from park program areas or daily traffic routes. This master plan recommends transitioning of all on road parking areas to new parking lots adjacent to the main roadway at the disc golf, shelter and dog exercise areas. A new loop road would be created to provide parking for equestrian trailers. When the entrance is relocated, accommodations for a seasonal, gated snowmobile parking area at the north end of the park off the proposed Savanna Oaks entry road should be included as long as the trail continues to exist.

B. TRAILS

The majority of trail improvements proposed would involve rerouting existing multi-use trails at the south end of the park to accommodate the relocated entry road and parking areas near the dog park. Specifically, the existing hiking/cross country ski trails east of the dog park would be relocated west of the parking lots to avoid dog park users from having to cross groomed ski trails in the winter. Two new dog park entry trails, one for the small dog area and one for the large dog park, would be constructed from a kiosk/pay tube area. Also, snowshoeing trails would be expanded from the disc golf course into natural areas to the north.

New multi-use trails would connect out of the proposed equestrian area east and west into the park. When the park entrance is relocated, a 10' wide paved multi-use trail would be constructed over the existing road base from the proposed 10 car parking lot to the fishing pier and north out of the park into the Savanna Oaks development.

C. DISC GOLF COURSE

A nine hole expansion is proposed for the disc golf course area that would be designed by local experts. The holes would be located south of the existing course on the west side of the main park road.

D. DOG EXERCISE AREA

Two new parking lots would be constructed for the dog exercise area that would include a new kiosk/pay tube site. A separate trail access to a new gate into the

small dog park area would be created. A new vault toilet is proposed that would be constructed between the parking lots and main park road.

E. FISHING and HUNTING

A ten car parking lot would be created at the edge of the campground that would service the fishing pier and stream access for fishing. Accessibility to the fishing pier would be provided by the proposed 10' wide bicycle pedestrian trail. There are no changes proposed for the existing archery deer permit program that takes place within the park.

F. CAMPING

Camping in Dane County has become increasingly popular, especially motor home camping for people who come to the area to visit family, attend special events or are receiving medical treatment in Madison. This master plan recommends expansion and upgrades that will better serve the types of campers that typically use urban area campgrounds. The group camp would be relocated to the north end of the park west of the existing campground to consolidate all camping use to the north end of the park. The existing restroom and shelter building would become group camp facilities. The playground area would be relocated to a more central location within the main camping area. With the relocation of the park entrance, there will no longer be through traffic continually driving past the campground area. The shelter 2 building would be converted to a registration and ranger office building with bathrooms/showers and dump station. A phased cost savings approach may be to construct a simple registration booth for campers to drive by until funds were available for an office/restroom/shower facility. Thirty eight new tent/pop-up sites and forty one pull through motor home sites would be added for a total of one hundred fourteen sites at the campground.

An economic impact analysis that investigates camping demand and the rate of return verses capital investment should be conducted prior to making these improvements.

G. SHELTERS AND RESTROOMS

This Master Plan calls for relocation of all reservable shelter facilities to the southern portion of the park. As mentioned under the camping recommendations, Shelter 1 would be utilized for the group camp, and Shelter 2 would be converted to a campground registration stations and ranger office area.

Shelter 3 would have a gate installed to the existing parking area and a second 40 car parking lot added that would serve both shelter day use and disc golf overflow. A new playground is also proposed for shelter 3. A 40 car parking lot would also be added to the Shelter 4 area that would reduce conflict between parking for special events and the disc golf parking areas.

The loop road parking lots for the shelter 5 area would be replaced with 2 doubled loaded 60 car parking lots that would service both the existing shelter and a proposed new shelter. Parking for the existing shelter would be gated and opened only for special events and reservations. The new shelter would be similar in size to the existing and include 1 unisex restroom facility. A separate 20 car parking lot and vault toilet would also be created to service a new non-reservable picnicking area and would include a new playground area for both picnic area and shelter users.

If use of reservable shelters justifies, a future new shelter could be considered on the west side of the main entry road north of the equestrian area.

H. VEGETATIVE BUFFERS

A vegetative buffer is proposed between the disc golf expansion area and southwest park boundary. The buffer would consist primarily of dense, mid height conifer trees such as Black Hills Spruce and also contain a mix of native deciduous plantings. As the plantings become established, it will provide better separation between disc golf play and the multi-use trail.

I. EQUESTRIAN

A new loop drive would be created off the proposed new entry drive that would provide wide open areas for parking and turning around. A disabled equestrian mounting area would be created with an earthen bank with timber retaining wall.

J. NATURAL RESOURCE AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The Wisconsin DNR and Dane County Land Conservation Division are responsible planning and implementing water quality and habitat improvements for Token Creek and contributing watershed lands surrounding the park. Primary vegetation management activities at Token Creek County Park involve removal of invasive woody species to prevent further encroachment into surrounding wetlands. A dual objective has been to target areas that open up views throughout the park and into the marsh, such as the existing group camp, shelter 1 area and the eastern campground edge. The majority of invasive species removal efforts has concentrated on buckthorn, honeysuckle and seed bearing boxelder trees.

The Dane County Parks Naturalist will continue to plan and program all vegetation management activities within the park.

K. PARK MAINTENANCE BUILDING

The existing park maintenance building is in need of replacement. The proposed building would be relocated to the southeastern corner of the campground and similar in size.

TOKEN CREEK NATURAL RESOURCE AREA

A. REGIONAL TRAILS

Four types of regional trails were considered throughout the planning process: snowmobile, water, hard surface multi-use, and natural surface hiking.

Snowmobile Trails

There are 2 existing snowmobile trails that extend north from a parking area at the Token Creek County Park entrance. The current parking area location provides easy access to food and fuel for snowmobilers. When the main entrance to the park is relocated to Anderson Road, it is recommended that seasonal parking for snowmobile trail access continue to be provided as long as the trails are in place. Future snowmobile club trail planning efforts with the WDOT and Village of Deforest may result in this trailhead access being moved further to the north in the USH 51 corridor, at which time the current access would be abandoned.

Water Trails

Token Creek is identified as a water trail by Capitol Water Trails, Ltd. on the Yahara Headwaters Trail map. The existing bridge area provides public canoe and kayak access that should continued to be maintained. Their trail map also identifies the stream between the park and STH 19 as a future water trail. This master plan also proposes investigating provision of another water trailhead access west of the interstate that would provide easier access to the Cherokee Marsh.

Hard Surface Multi-Use Trails

The majority of the regional off road trails proposed within the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan for this area fall outside of County owned lands. Primary connections proposed include links from Token Creek County Park to the Village of Deforest, and Cities of Sun Prairie and Madison. The City of Madison has been actively planning and developing the Starkweather Creek bicycle pedestrian trail corridor that extends northeast from the downtown area toward Sun Prairie. More recent City of Madison planning efforts such as the Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Plan include recommendations for how the Starkweather Creek path would connect to Token Creek County Park. The Village of Deforest is also actively planning off road bicycle pedestrian trail connections to the park that would also eventually connect to the Upper Yahara River Natural Resource Area trail system.

Another regional trail is proposed that would eventually connect Token Creek County Park to Patrick Marsh in Sun Prairie. The Token Creek Conservancy Committee expressed a preference to have this trail aligned north of the natural resource area and Culver Springs property to avoid impact/disturbance to the creek and adjacent wetlands. They also suggested the trail be aligned north of the Big Hill and potentially follow Egge Road. Two alternative or additional

alignments are also shown for this trail that could provide a more scenic experience and access to additional residential neighborhoods.

The County's role for developing these trails would be to possibly provide Conservation Fund dollars to assist with acquiring land or easements that may be needed for the trail. In 2011, there may also be funds available through the Dane County PARC initiative to support trail development. Design, engineering and construction of these trails would be the responsibility of area local units of government and/or other entities on lands that are not owned by Dane County.

Dane County only purchases land from willing sellers, and any trails shown on privately owned parcels could not be developed unless easements or land were purchased from willing sellers or they were included in a future approved development plat.

Natural Surface Trails

Additional hiking trails are proposed that could provide a future connection from the Culver Springs trailhead to residential neighborhoods to the south and east. Again, development of these trails could only occur if private landowners were willing to sell necessary land or easements or they were included in a future approved development plat.

All hiking trail improvements within the NRA/Token Creek Conservancy boundary would be the responsibility of the Town, Deforest School District and/or their volunteers.

B. NATURAL RESOURCE AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The Wisconsin DNR fishery manager has been working with the Town and Token Creek Conservancy Committee and Watershed Association on stream restoration and efforts to enhance a cold water fishery. The County will continue to consider and participate with land acquisition partnerships to help further these efforts.

The Town of Windsor also retained the consulting firm of Bonestroo to prepare a master plan that provided vegetation management strategies for Conservancy lands. If requested, the County's role could be to help provide volunteers to carry out vegetation management initiatives through the Dane County Adult Conservation Team program. Another suggested volunteer project was to install wood duck houses along the creek.

C. PUBLIC ACCESS

Much of the natural resource area is relatively inaccessible due to extensive wetlands and dense vegetation. This master plan proposes development of five new parking/trailhead areas. Construction, operation and maintenance costs associated with these access areas would be coordinated with the local units of government prior to development.

CTH C Access

This parking area is proposed at the far east end of the natural resource area and would provide a 2 sided kiosk and parking for approximately 10 cars. This area would only be developed if additional public lands were purchased from the Conservancy property to CTH C.

Pumpkin Hollow Access

This parking area is proposed west of Portage Road and is envisioned to be developed as part of the future Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood development plan. The parking area or public land access would be developed on the western edge of planned residential areas and would allow for walk in access to the creek if these lands were to come into public ownership from willing sellers. A designated parking area may not be necessary if future roadway layout accommodates for on street parking along public greenspaces.

DNR Carp Pond Access

A small, 5-10 car gravel parking lot easily visible from STH 19 is proposed that would allow for walk in fishing access to the creek. A perimeter fence and gate would allow the lot to be closed when the fishing season was not open. This parking area may also accommodate future public access to the proposed multi-use paved trail.

USH 51 Snowmobile Access

This parking access would take the place of the existing access provided at the current Token Creek County Park entrance. The proposed access is shown on the graphic Natural Resource Area master plan at the southwest intersection of US 51 and STH 19; however, the exact location may be different based on future negotiations between the Village of Deforest, snowmobile clubs and the Wisconsin DOT.

D. INTERPRETIVE AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE

Interpretive and educational signage is envisioned to take place primarily at parking lots and trailheads throughout the natural resource area. The Town, Token Creek Conservancy Committee, Deforest School District and Token Creek Watershed Association would be responsible for future development of interpretive signage on their lands north of STH 19. Dane County Parks could consider developing educational signage related to the significance of the cold water fishery and amount of base flow water Token Creek provides to Lake Mendota at the public fishing pier.

VIII. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

The majority of lands recommended for future acquisition within this plan are adjacent to the natural resource area boundary and located northeast of the park between STH 19 and Portage Road. These lands are intended to provide additional buffering and public access to the creek corridor. There is another proposed boundary expansion area in the creek headwater areas north of Egge Road.

One acquisition project is included within the plan for Token Creek County Park. Dane County and the City of Madison would potentially partner on acquiring property if necessary for the improving the intersection of Anderson and Portage Road to accommodate the park entrance relocation and future Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood improvements.

These proposed boundary adjustments are shown on the Natural Resource Area Preferred Alternative Master Plan at the end of the report. Dane County only purchase land from willing sellers.



IX. ACTION PLAN

The action plan identifies major capital park improvement projects to be carried out over the next 7 years. Implementation of tasks identified in the action plan will be contingent on availability of funding and staff to carry them out. Barring these constraints, items prioritized as “immediate” should occur within 1-3 years, “pending” within 3-5 years and “future” would occur within 5-7 years or as necessary milestones are realized. ***All estimated costs are general and should be revised after detailed plans and specifications are completed for each project.***

TASK	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PROJECT SCOPE	COMMENTS/ COST
Planning, Design, Engineering, Cost Estimates and Permits for New Entrance at Anderson Road	Immediate	Consultant	Site development, grading plans, cost estimates and permits for new park entrance.	Estimated Cost: \$35,000
Construct New Entrance at Anderson Road	Immediate	DCP/DCH	Reconstruct approximately 1,400' of Anderson Road, and construct 1000' of new interior park road. Includes signage.	Project could be contracted with Dane County Highway. Coordinate design and explore cost sharing options with City of Madison. \$250,000
Planning, Design, Engineering, Cost Estimates and Permits New Parking Lot Area at Dog Exercise and Equestrian Area	Immediate	Consultant	Grading plans, cost estimates and permits for proposed parking area at dog exercise area.	Estimated Cost: \$25,000
Construct New Parking Lot and Interior Roadway Improvements at Dog Exercise and Equestrian Areas	Immediate	DCP/DCH	Construct 30 and 60 car parking lots, equestrian loop drive, necessary gates, kiosks, and signage.	Estimate Cost: \$220,000
Planning, Design, Engineering, Cost Estimates and Permits New Parking Lot at Disc Golf Area	Immediate	Consultant	Grading plans, cost estimates and permits for proposed parking area at disc golf area.	Estimated Cost: \$20,000
Construct New Parking Lot Improvements at Disc Golf Area	Immediate	DCP/DCH	Construct 60 car parking lot, necessary gates, kiosks, and signage.	Estimated Cost: \$120,000
Park Maintenance Building	Immediate	DCP	Construct new, similar size.	Estimated Cost: \$80,000
Vault Toilet Dog Park Area	Pending	Contracted/PW	Construction of 1 unisex vault toilet facility.	Estimated Cost: \$30,000
Planning, Design, Engineering, Cost Estimates and Permits New Parking Lot at Shelter 3 Area	Pending	Consultant	Grading plans, cost estimates and permits for proposed parking area at shelter 3 area.	Estimated Cost: \$10,000
Construct New Parking Lot and Roadway Improvements at Shelter 3 Area	Pending	DCP/DCH	Construct 40 car parking lot, necessary gates, kiosks, and signage.	Estimate Cost: \$90,000

TASK	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PROJECT SCOPE	COMMENTS/COST
Planning, Design, Engineering, Cost Estimates and Permits Proposed Campground Improvements	Pending	Consultant	Grading and site development plans, cost estimates and permits for proposed campground improvements.	Estimated Cost: \$30,000
Construct Park Ranger Registration Station	Future	Contracted/PW	Includes construction of Ranger station with restrooms/showers for campers, associated parking facilities, dump station.	Timeline dependent on budgets and demand. Estimated Cost: \$260,000 Prepare economic impact analysis prior to constructing.
Construct additional 79 campground sites.	Future	Contracted/PW	Includes campground pads, internal roads, water, electrical, playground.	Estimated Cost: \$180,000, implementation could be phased over several years.
Development of picnic area at Shelter 4 area.	Future	DCP	Includes 20 car parking lot, picnic tables and grills.	Estimated Cost: \$85,000
Construct new shelter building.	Future	Contracted/PW	Includes 60 car parking lot, shelter with restroom.	Estimated Cost: \$280,000 Implement if demand justifies.

X. SUMMARY

The Town of Windsor, Token Creek Conservancy Committee and Watershed Association, and Deforest School District continue to actively steward and educate users of the significance of the Token Creek natural resource area lands with help from the Wisconsin DNR. This has proven to be a successful working partnership and should continue to function in this manner. Multiple benefits will materialize quickly for both operation staff and users of Token Creek County Park by implementing short term recommendations outlined in this plan.

This master plan is meant to serve as a guide for future acquisition and orderly improvements to the park and natural resource area. Additional detailed construction drawings and planning will still need to be prepared for many of the recommendations found within this plan. As the park and recreation use continue to grow over the next 5-10 years, the plan should be revisited and amended as necessary to reflect current trends and conditions.

