



Village of Dane

**Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation
Plan 2023 – 2028**

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**This report was prepared by the Village of Dane with assistance from
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Adopted on October 2, 2023



[page reserved for adoption resolution]

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction4
 - 1.1 Plan Purpose4
 - 1.2 Planning Process.....4
 - 1.3 The Role of Parks, Recreation, and Trails5
- 2.1 Local & Regional Context7
- 2.2 Physical & Cultural Features.....7
- 2.3 Land Use and Economy8
- 2.4 Demographics8
- 2.5 Existing Plan Review10
- 3. Park & Recreation Goals.....11
- 4. Existing Parks & Recreation Inventory12
 - 4.1 Village-Owned Facilities12
 - 4.2 School Facilities.....13
 - 4.3 Local & Regional Trails13
- 5. Analysis of Needs and Demands14
 - 5.1 Quantitative Analysis14
 - 5.2 Geographic Analysis.....15
 - 5.3 Qualitative Analysis15
 - 5.4 Regional & State Insights.....16
- 6. Recommendations18
 - 6.1 Existing Park Facilities.....18
 - 6.2 New Park & Trail Facilities19
 - 6.3 Other Recommendations20
- 7. Implementation21
 - 7.1 Potential Funding Sources.....21
 - 7.2 Parkland Dedication, Fees in Lieu, and Impact Fees22
 - 7.3 Plan Adoption & Amendments22
 - 7.4 Capitol Improvement Planning.....23

- Appendix A: CORP-Related Survey Results
- Appendix B: Maps
- Appendix C: State and Federal Grant Resources

1. Introduction

[1.1 Plan Purpose](#)

Parks, recreation, and trails are key components of a community's quality of life. Not only do they provide a safe and healthy place to recreate, but they also serve to beautify communities, protect natural resources, and influence patterns of development.

The Village of Dane realizes the importance and benefits its parks, open space, and trail systems have on the Village's character and quality of life and is committed to providing for the recreational needs of its current and future residents. This plan intends to guide the continual improvement of the Village parks, recreation, and trail systems and to maintain eligibility for key state and federal park and recreation grants.

The plan is a compliment to the Village of Dane's Comprehensive Plan and will ensure Dane is aligned with local, regional, and state initiatives to promote outdoor recreation. This plan, along with the Village's other long-range plans and development-related ordinances, will be used to implement and promote its parks and recreation program.

Specifically, the plan provides:

- Information regarding demographic trends;
- An inventory of existing park and recreational facilities;
- An analysis of parkland and recreational needs and demands;
- General policy direction regarding park, recreation, open space, bicycle, and pedestrian facility planning and maintenance;
- Recommendations for improving existing parks, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities;
- Identifies the location for potential new parks and trails; and
- Implementation strategies.

This plan identifies conceptual locations for new parks and recommendations for existing parks, trails, and recreational facilities. In nearly every case, more detailed planning, engineering, study, budgeting, and discussions will be necessary before decisions are made to actually acquire land or construct recreational facilities.

[1.2 Planning Process](#)

Park and recreation planning is an essential component of long-range community planning in Dane. In 2023, the Village contracted with MSA Professional Services, Inc. to assist with developing the Village's first Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This planning process occurred in conjunction with updating the Village's Comprehensive Plan. The major project milestones are listed below:

- **PRC Project Kick-Off Meeting – March 2023**
 - Meeting with PRC to discuss issues and opportunities for the park system
- **Online Survey – April to May 2023**
 - A survey was open to the public from to collect input on park system improvements
- **PRC Meeting #2 –May 2023**
 - Meeting with PRC to discuss and prioritize recommendations for existing Village Parks
- **PRC Meeting #3 – July 2023**
 - Draft CORP presented to PRC for feedback
- **Village Board Adoption – February 2024**
 - Final CORP adopted by resolution alongside Comprehensive Plan

This plan was developed following the Guidelines for the Development of Local Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans of the 2019-2023 Wisconsin State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) created by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The plan content and format have been tailored to fit the needs of Dane.

[1.3 The Role of Parks, Recreation, and Trails](#)

The benefits of parks go far beyond simply being spaces where people can recreate. Parks contribute to individual's physical and mental health and provide public safety, environmental, economic, and social equity benefits to communities. Recently, parks have come to the forefront of public health discussions due to COVID-19. The pandemic put parks in the spotlight as people sought out natural areas as refuges from the virus. It is important to remember the benefits parks provide to the communities they serve, which include:

[Belonging](#)

Public parks are a unique amenity because they can be accessible to anyone in the community, regardless of age, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity. Though disparities do exist in the distribution and quality of parks and recreation amenities, many parks and recreation departments across the U.S. are rethinking how to engage and provide benefits to residents who do not currently have access to parks. If parks can be more inclusive, they have the potential to function as a nucleus of neighborhood activity, where residents can gather for social events, recreational activities, and meetings to discuss local issues—increasing social interaction and creating an overall sense of community.

[Community Health](#)

According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), individuals who use green spaces have fewer health issues, improved blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and reduced levels of stress—which can lead to lower incidences of depression. According to a report by the NRPA titled *The Economic Impact of Parks*, “Diabetic individuals taking 30-minute walks in a green space experienced lower blood glucose level than spending the same amount of time doing physical activity in other settings. Thirty minutes of walking in nature resulted in larger drops in blood glucose than three hours of cycling indoors.”

[Ecological Health](#)

Parks, forests, and trails have the potential to improve the health of residents and contribute to the greater

ecological health of cities. Parks are often tied together with environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, or significant woodlands which can include trails. These areas provide food and shelter for local wildlife and natural stormwater retention. Individual parks can provide important “rooms” of natural resource activity; however, they become even more functional when they can be linked together by environmental corridors, or “hallways.” Wildlife, plants, and water all depend on the ability to move freely within the environment from room to room.

[Economic Prosperity](#)

Leisure time is an important component of everyone's lifestyle and increasingly people are choosing locations to live based on quality-of-life factors, including recreational amenities. The ability to retain or attract new residents has direct economic benefits for communities. For this reason, having a great park, recreation, and trail system contributes directly to economic development. According to a study completed by the NRPA and George Mason University, 72% of 70 communities studied use parks and recreation images in their economic development materials. The study notes that parks and recreation contribute to economic development through business attraction and retention, as well as talent attraction. Additionally, if a park system is designed with connections to regional destinations, it can attract outside visitors. This tourism can bring significant benefit to local businesses.

[Connections](#)

Connecting parks and recreational facilities to each

other and the general population via trails is important to encourage safe, alternative modes of transportation. These paths can provide an important alternate means of traveling for those who prefer to bike for health or environmental reasons and for those who lack other means of transportation due to age, income or disability. Shared-use paths also provide important connections to public transit. According to the National Household Travel Survey conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, 85% of transit trips begin and end with walking and nearly one in six walking trips is made for the purpose of accessing public transit.

Impact of COVID-19

With the COVID-19 pandemic, communities are seeing increased demand for trails and parks, and it is likely these shifts will impact parks well into the future. Funding for park and recreation may also shift in light of the pandemic—there will likely be a more diverse set of funding sources and partnerships for park and recreation projects (such as the American Rescue Plan). Following the social upheaval of 2020, parks and recreation departments are likely to put greater emphasis on health equity and social justice in parks and programming.

2. About Dane

2.1 Local & Regional Context

The Village of Dane is located in south central Wisconsin in Dane County. Dane is a suburb of Madison located roughly 25 miles north of the capital city, roughly halfway between Madison and Devil's Lake State Park—30 miles to the northwest. The main roads through the Village are State Highway 113 and South Military Ridge Road. Highway 113 becomes County Road V east of the Village, and connects the community to the Village of DeForest—8 miles to the east. The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad line runs through the community from southeast to northwest, connecting Madison to Reedsburg, WI—45 miles northwest.

2.2 Physical & Cultural Features

There are no known waterways that run through the community. However, Lake Melvin (stormwater retention pond) is located in the northeast corner of the community, and is surrounded by open space. The village is mostly surrounded by agricultural land uses, and still includes some agriculture within its boundaries. The area is well suited for farming and agricultural activity due to its relatively flat geography in the north, and generally rolling hills topography to the south.

The Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) does not identify any stewardship areas within the community, however some such areas abut the village. CARPC maps show some environmental corridors within the Village—specifically Lake Melvin Park, Bert Deans Park, and some drainage areas in the southeast triangle. Due to the intensity of agricultural land uses in the surrounding area, groundwater in and around the Village of Dane is considered to have high nitrates from farm activity infiltration.

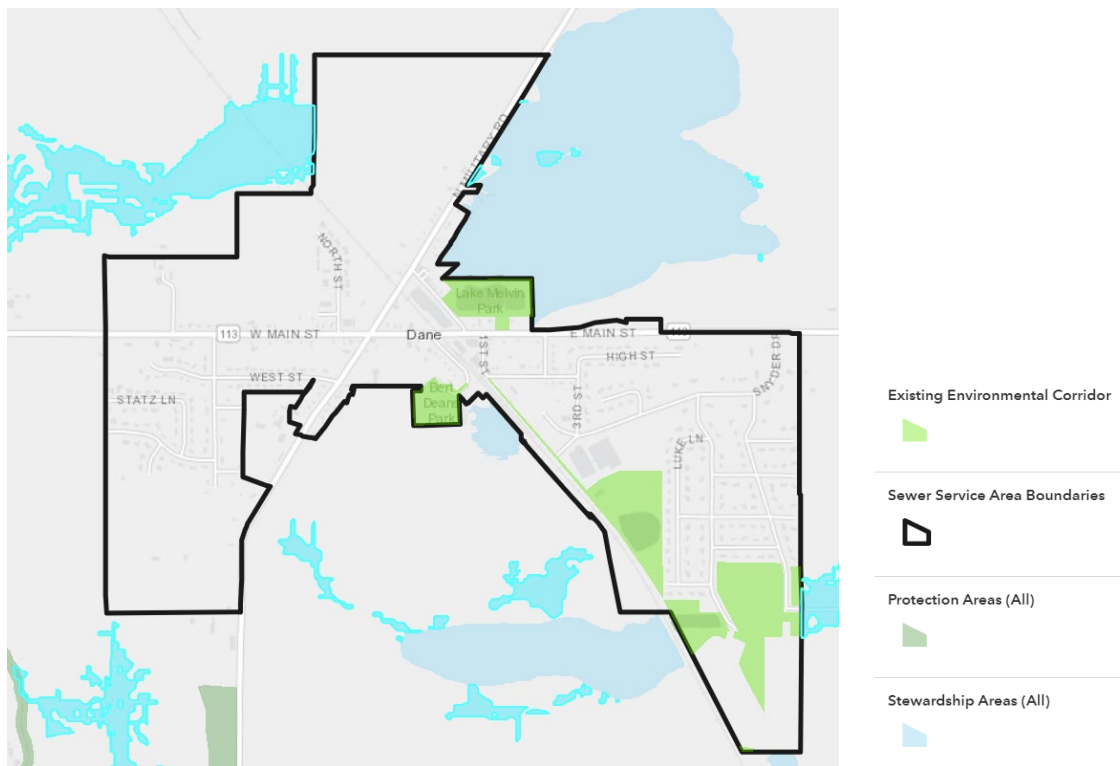


Figure 1: CARPC Environmental Corridor, Protection and Stewardship Areas; Source: CARPC Open Data Portal

A post office called *Dane* was first established in 1844. The Village was named for Nathan Dane, author of the Northwest Ordinance—the first organized territory incorporation in the growing United States—which detailed the settlement of the Great Lakes region. The Village was incorporated in April 1899. The community's St. Michael Catholic Church was struck by lightning and burned down in 1974, but it has since been rebuilt.

2.3 Land Use and Economy

According to Dane's Comprehensive Plan data, 70% of the land use within the community is agricultural in nature. The next largest land use is Residential (25%), which is primarily clustered along Highway 113/Main Street, and east side of the village. The intersection of the highway and S Military Road is where the business and industrial center of the village is located.

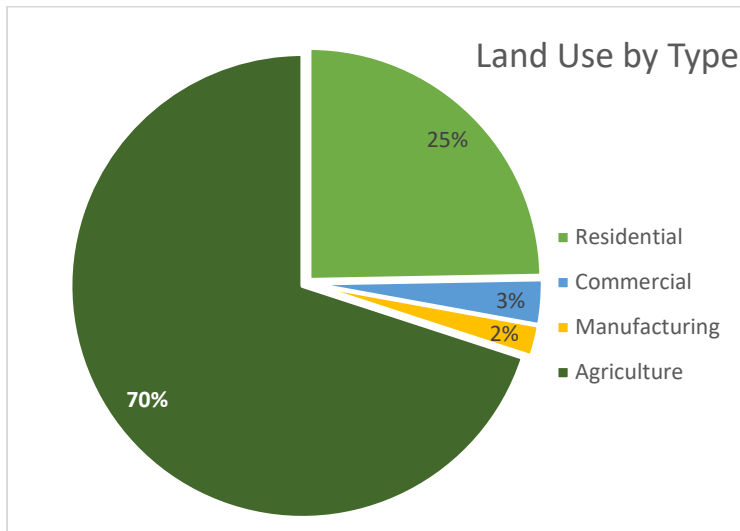


Figure 2: Land Use by Type in the Village of Dane; Source: Dane Comprehensive Plan

2.4 Demographics

This section describes some historic demographic trends in Dane as it pertains to population, age composition, and housing. This includes data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS), whose data are reported as rolling averages over a 5-year period. Because ACS data are only estimates and contain a margin of error, they may not always represent conditions as accurately as decennial census data. The population projections are provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) circa 2013; these projections have been adjusted to reflect the results of the 2020 census count.

Population

Per the 2020 census, Dane’s population is 1,117 people. From 1980 to 2020, the population of Dane increased by 115.6%%, much higher than the rate of increase in Dane County (73.5%) and the State overall (25.2%).

According to the DOA’s 2013 population projections (adjusted to reflect the results of the 2020 census), the Village is expected to add an additional 260 residents between 2020 and 2040. While the DOA forecast appears low, given Dane’s smaller population size this growth represents a 23.3% increase over a 20-year period, or 1.17% annual growth. This projection is higher than the projected growth for Dane County (14.0%) and higher than the State (8.1%). New park lands and facilities may be necessary to continue meeting the demands of new residents and neighborhoods.

Population History & Projections			
	Village of Dane	Dane County	Wisconsin
1980	518	323,545	4,705,642
1990	621	367,085	4,891,769
2000	799	426,526	5,363,715
2010	995	488,073	5,686,986
2020	1,117	561,504	5,893,718
Projections			
2025	1,195	585,632	6,086,628
2030	1,264	609,053	6,255,437
2035	1,328	626,081	6,353,901
2040	1,377	639,985	6,368,975
Change			
1980-2020	599	237,959	1,188,076
2020-2040	260	78,481	475,257
Percent Growth			
1980-2020	115.6%	73.5%	25.2%
2020-2040	23.3%	14.0%	8.1%

Table 1.1: Dane Population Summary; Source: Decennial Census & DOA Population Projections (2013)

Age Composition

Age composition is an important consideration in park and recreational planning as individuals interests and physical abilities vary due to age. Table 1.2 summarizes the age composition of Dane’s population based on 2021 ACS 5-year estimates. Approximately 23% of the population is considered youth (<20 years old) which is lower than its rate in 2010 (36%). Approximately 7% of Dane’s population is considered at retirement age (>65 years old), which is equal than its rate in 2010. Approximately two-thirds of the community are under the age of 40. The median age of the Village increased from 30.6 in 2010 to 34.0 in 2021, which is below the state median of 39.1.

Statewide and nationwide, there is a predictable rise in the 65+ age cohort as more members of the Baby Boomer Generation enter retirement.

Age by Range		
Age	Total	Percentage
0-9	124	12%
10-19	113	11%
20-29	185	18%
30-39	231	22%
40-49	128	12%
50-59	120	11%
60-69	113	11%
70-79	27	3%
80+	14	1%
Median	34.0	

Table 1.2: Dane Age Composition; Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing

Based on 2021 ACS 5-year estimates, there are approximately 389 households in the Village, 36% of which include at least one child under 18 years old. The total number of households increased by 9 since 2010; the number of households with at least one child under 18 years old declined 14% since 2010. The average household size in Dane in 2021 was 2.71 individuals, a decrease from 3.11 in 2010. This indicates fewer, and smaller households, and follows national trends (and other communities across the state) showing decreases in average household size attributed largely to smaller families, increases in life expectancy, and increases in single parent households. In total there were approximately 389 occupied housing units (out of 408) in the Village based on 2021 ACS estimates; of the occupied units, 296 (76%) were owner-occupied and 93 (24%) were renter occupied.

Household Statistics	
Households	
2000	279
2010 ACS	380
2021 ACS	389
Average Household Size	
2000	2.86
2010 ACS	3.11
2021 ACS	2.71
% of Households with individuals under 18	
2000	43%
2010 ACS	50%
2021 ACS	36%

*Table 1.3: Dane Households Summary;
Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

2.5 Existing Plan Review

At the time of this plan, the Village of Dane was in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan. No other known plans are in place at this time.

3. Park & Recreation Goals

The following goals are adapted from the *National Park, Recreation, and Open Space Standards*, a publication of the National Recreation and Park Association, for application by the Village. They represent general best practices for municipalities and parks and recreation departments across the U.S.

1. Dane’s parks should provide opportunities for all persons regardless of race, creed, age, sex, or economic status.
2. Advance land acquisition based upon a park and open space system should begin immediately in order to prevent the loss of high-quality sites to other development interests.
3. Facilities should be centrally located within the area that they are intended to serve, must have safe, have adequate access, and be distributed so that all persons in the community can be served.
4. Land acquired for use as parks or recreation areas should be suitable for the specific intended use, and when possible, for multiple uses.
5. Land adjacent to recreation and open space areas should be used in ways that will not interfere with the purposes for which the recreation or open space land was intended, and in addition, recreation and open space areas should be compatible with surrounding land uses.
6. The design of individual park and recreation sites should be as flexible as possible to reflect the changing patterns of recreational needs in a given service area.
7. Special efforts should be made to provide for easy access to and the use of all facilities by the elderly, ill and disabled, very young, and otherwise less-mobile groups in the community.
8. Recreation and open space land should be protected in perpetuity against encroachment by other uses that will inhibit the recreation or open space nature of the land.
9. Park and recreation areas should be used to separate incompatible land uses and guide future urban development.
10. Neighborhood and community level recreation areas should adjoin schools whenever possible. This can enhance the school environment and prevent duplication of facilities.
11. Citizen involvement in the recreation and open space decision-making process should be encouraged and expanded.
12. Facility development must be reviewed with safety in mind, adhering to accepted standards prior to installation.

4. Existing Parks & Recreation Inventory

The following chapter contains information about Village-owned facilities, trails, and recreation programs. Privately-owned parks are not included in this analysis because they are typically only open to private neighborhoods and the Village does not have jurisdiction over these parks.

4.1 Village-Owned Facilities

Dane currently owns four parks and recreational facilities under the following classifications:

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are typically sites with a smaller collection of recreational activities and typically are intended to serve residents that live nearest to the park. Facilities may include athletic fields, sports courts, playgrounds, and picnic areas. Neighborhood parks may or may not have permanent restroom facilities. Desirable size is between 3 and 10 acres.

- **Meinrod Karls:** a 1.78-acre park is located on Sunset Drive on the west side of the village. This park features an open shelter, playground equipment, basketball court, and an open grass lawn. The village provides a portable toilet during the summer months.
- **Lake Melvin Park:** a 7.23-acre park located in the northeast corner of the village. It is used for fishing and includes benches and a shelter without restrooms.

Community Parks

Community parks are sites of diverse recreational activities and typically include a mix of facilities such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools, and baseball diamonds. Community parks tend to draw residents from around the community, not just those who live close by. These parks typically have permanent restroom facilities, and a desirable size is between 10 and 25 acres but will vary depending on the facilities offered. The following parks in Dane are categorized as community parks:

- **Capitol Valley Park:** an 9.26-acre park located on Capitol Valley Way in the far southeast corner of the



Playground at Bert Deans Park



Playground at Capitol Valley Park



Bleachers at Bert Deans Park

village. It includes a picnic shelter, lighted concessions building with outlets, restrooms, playground, soccer goals, baseball field with bleachers and scoreboard, and a total of 1.5 acres of open grass lawn.

- **Bert Deans Park:** a 4.88-acre facility located in the center of the Village. This park's facility includes two large lighted picnic shelters with outlets; restrooms; concessions building with electric coolers and outlets; playground; lighted softball field with bleachers and scoreboard; and a lighted T-ball field with bleachers.

4.2 School Facilities

In many communities, schools can also meet community's recreational needs as they provide many of the same facilities found in neighborhood parks, such as playground equipment and athletic fields. However, the Village of Dane is included within the School District of Lodi, which does not have any public schools located within the community. There is one private catholic institution in the Village, Blessed Trinity, which offers grades 4K through 8th. The school's primary recreational facility is an outdoor playground.

4.3 Local & Regional Trails

The Village of Dane does not have any local or regional trails at this time. However, the community is located a short drive from Lodi, Waunakee, and Deforest—all of which have local trails available for riding.

The greater Dane County and Madison area is home to hundreds of miles of local and regional trails including:

- The 400 State Trail
- Badger State Trail
- Blackhawk Path (Shorewood Hills)
- Cannonball Path (Fitchburg)
- Capital City State Trail
- Glacial Drumlin State Trail
- Lower Yahara River Trail
- Military Ridge State Trail
- Pheasant Branch Creek Corridor Trail
- Wingra Creek Park Trails
- Madison Commuter Paths



Lake Melvin Park

5. Analysis of Needs and Demands

This chapter presents an analysis of how well the Village’s existing park and recreation facilities satisfy current needs. The adequacy of the Village’s existing park and recreation systems are evaluated using the following methods:

- **Quantitative Analysis** - a comparison of existing parkland acreage and population projections versus park and recreational agencies across the US, including a review of the amount of parkland available to Village residents.
- **Geographic Analysis** - an analysis of the geographic distribution of parks within the Village.
- **Qualitative Analysis** – a summary of the results and feedback gathered from the online survey.
- **Regional & State Insights** - a summary of the demand trends in recreational amenities at the regional and state level.

5.1 Quantitative Analysis

An analysis of existing recreational land area is provided to determine if the recreational needs of residents are being met. This analysis is limited to an evaluation of Village-owned park land and does not include school facilities.

Total Park Acreage Surplus/Deficit (in acres)					
Year	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	1,117	1,195	1,264	1,328	1,377
Total Supply (acres)	23.2	23.2	23.2	23.2	23.2
Demand (10.5 acres/1,000)	11.7	12.6	13.3	13.9	14.5
Surplus (10.5 acres/1,000)	11.4	10.6	9.9	9.2	8.7

Table 5.1: Active Park Acreage Supply and Demand Analysis; Source: U.S. Census Bureau & WI DOA Population Projections.

Park Acreage Level of Service

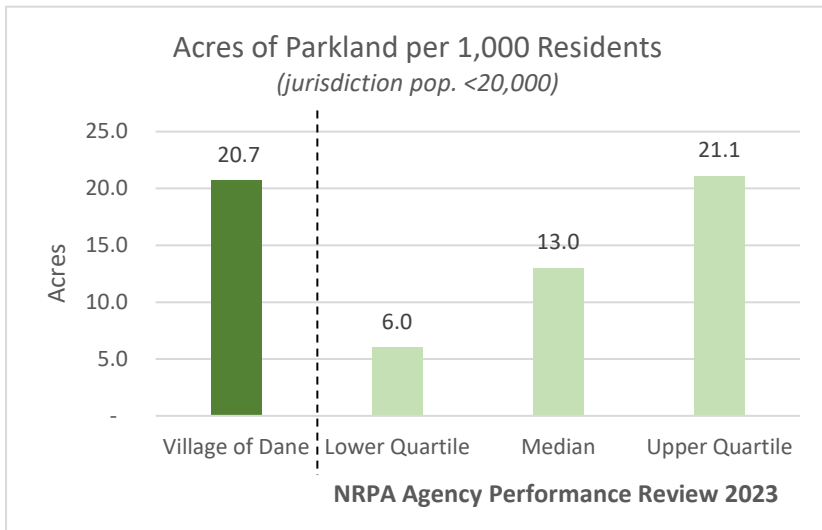


Figure 5.1: Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents; Source: NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Review

Using the population projections included in Chapter 2, Table 5.1 details the projected supply and demand for parkland based on the Village’s population. Assuming the population projections are correct, and the Village does not add additional parkland, by 2040 there will be a surplus of 8.7 acres above the NRPA standard to provide at least 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

The NRPA collects information from park and recreation departments across the US, including the number of

residents per park, budgets, staffing, and park amenities. This data is organized by jurisdiction size so that communities of similar size across the US can see metrics typical of its peers. Figure 5.1 shows the rate of Dane’s parkland per 1,000 residents in comparison to jurisdictions of similar size across the U.S, in this case jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people. The Village is above the national median, and nearly on par with the upper quartile for similarly sized communities.

Based on the total acreage of parkland, this analysis suggests the Village likely does not need to acquire additional parkland by the year 2040 to maintain a standard of 10.5 acres of per 1,000 residents. However, if new subdivisions are added to the Village, increasing the size of the community, this would likely change. The geographic, qualitative, regional, and state analysis in the following sections provide additional guidance on parkland needs.

[5.2 Geographic Analysis](#)

The location of parks in relation to the Village of Dane’s residents is an important indicator of how well existing facilities are dispersed throughout the community. The National Recreation and Park Association, in partnerships with the Trust for Public Land and the Urban Land Institute, is part of a national effort dedicated to improve access to safe, quality parks and green spaces.

The effort is focused on a goal of everyone in the U.S. having access to a park within a 10-minute walk (approximately ½ mile) of their home by 2050. Based on this effort, the green area in the Park Service Areas Map in Appendix B indicates where in the Village a resident is within a roughly 10-minute walk of a Village-owned park. The majority of the developed areas of the Village fall within the 10-minute walk service area, with gaps present in the north and south portion of the community. However, these areas are not developed or largely agricultural, meaning people are less likely to live in these areas. Overall, this map indicates that the Village’s parks are relatively well distributed throughout the community.

What this map does not speak to are the on-the-ground conditions of the Village’s sidewalks and roadways, which impacts resident’s experience walking to nearby parks. The following section contains additional insights regarding perceptions of bicycling and pedestrian safety in the community.

[5.3 Qualitative Analysis](#)

An online survey was available early in the planning process for the public to provide their feedback on parks and recreation needs. 164 people began the survey, with the number of subsequent responses varying from question to question. The full results of the survey are available in Appendix A. The following section highlights some of the main takeaways from the survey.

[Profile of Respondents](#)

The majority of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44 (56.1%), and 51.6% of all respondents had children under the age of 18 living in their household. 97.5% of respondents live in the Village of Dane, with the remaining 2.5% living elsewhere in Dane County. 75% of respondents have lived in the Village of Dane for 6 or more years.

[Park Activities & Amenities](#)

The most popular activities and facilities survey respondents reported themselves or a member of their

household using in Dane parks were playground equipment (64.2%), restrooms or portable toilets (59.5%), picnic tables (58.1%), and shelter (41.9%).

When asked which amenities they would like to see added, improved, or expanded in the Village, the top six responses were (survey takers could chose up to 6 selections):

- Off-road walking/biking trails (36%)
- Playground equipment (33%)
- Splash pad (32%)
- Dog Park (30%)
- Basketball Courts (26%)
- Restrooms (26%)

Safety & Accessibility

90% of survey respondents did not have concerns about safety or accessibility in Dane's parks. For those that did express concerns, common reasons included:

- Broken playground equipment
- Lack of parking at Bert Deans Park, specifically disabled parking
- Accessibility into parks from parking areas

Funding

Survey takers were asked if they would support the Village allocating additional funds to a number of items relating to parks. 66% of respondents supported allocating more funds for new park facilities or equipment; 60% of respondents also supported allocating more funds for sidewalk facilities/pedestrian enhancements; 56% supported existing park facilities maintenance.

42% of respondents did not support parkland acquisition (30% unsure), while 31% did not support the funding of additional staff to manage the parks system (39% unsure).

5.4 Regional & State Insights

Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2018-2023

Last updated in 2018, this plan is a locally led effort to identify and resolve open space and recreational issues and opportunities in Dane County. It includes an existing land and facility inventory and park considerations used to create recommendations for county-owned park, open space, and recreational facilities. Dane County is recognized for its extensive trail system; however, none of the identified trail projects would directly impact the Village of Dane. The closest trail recommendation comes in the North Mendota Trail, which would connect to the Village of Waunakee.

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2019-2023

The Wisconsin SCORP features a Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA). The ROA examines existing outdoor-recreation opportunities compared to future opportunities in eight regions throughout Wisconsin. The Village of Dane and Dane County are located within Southern Gateways region.

Input from members of the public in the Southern Gateways region identified the following recreational needs in their region:

- Trails for motorized recreation
- Hiking/walking/running trails

- Bicycle trails – both paved and natural surface
- Camping – rustic/quiet campgrounds

The top outdoor recreation activities residents living in this region participate in include:

- ATV/UTV Riding
- Bicycling – surface trails
- Bicycling – mountain biking, single track
- Camping – tent
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing
- Fishing – from a boat, canoe or kayak
- Fishing – from shore
- Hiking, walking and running on trails
- Swimming
- Snowmobiling

6. Recommendations

The quantitative and geographic analysis discussed in the previous chapter reveals the need for improvements to existing facilities, as well as the potential acquisition and development of new sites for future recreational use. It should be noted that some of the recommendations may require considerable cooperation with other entities, including the citizens of Dane, local civic and business associations, and state agencies. In nearly every case, more detailed planning, engineering, study, budgeting, and/or discussion will be necessary before decisions are made to actually acquire land or construct recreational facilities.

The recommendations of this plan are divided into three major sections: (1) existing park facilities (2) new or expanded park facilities and trails; (3) other recommendations.

The timeline for completing the recommendations listed in Section 6.1 are detailed in the following chapter and should be used to guide budgeting decisions. High priority items should occur in the next one to two years (2024-2025), Medium priority items should occur over the next three to five years (2026-2028) and low priority items are likely to be completed beyond 2029 (5+ years); however, initial planning can begin earlier to bring these items closer to fruition. Due to budgetary constraints, it is unlikely that all of the recommendations within this chapter will be implemented in the next five years. Maintenance and improvement projects will be prioritized on an annual basis by Village staff and as part of the Village's annual budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Many of the recommendations regarding locating new park or trail facilities will be coordinated with the sale or donation of land by other parties; therefore, the timing is much more variable. Acquisition projects will be implemented through donation, dedication, purchase, or a combination thereof.

6.1 Existing Park Facilities

The following recommended improvements were gathered through discussions with Village staff, park site visits, and the online survey. Please see Chapter 7 for priority levels and cost estimates for each recommendation.

Neighborhood Parks

Meinrod Karls Park

- Add parking, including accessible parking spots.
- Install paved paths connecting all the park's elements together.
- Install lighting, including solar lights in the short-term.
- Plant trees throughout park.
- Install soccer nets.
- Encourage picnicking at the park by adding campground grills, picnic tables, Adirondack chairs, family-sized porch swings, and/or lawn games such as corn hole.
- Add a fire pit/council ring oriented to the sunset.
- Install permanent restroom facilities with electrical outlets.

Lake Melvin Park

- Add a fenced-in dog park in northeast corner of the park.
- Add more picnic tables.
- Install lighting.
- Develop a landscape plan for the park that promotes perennial and native species and removes dead trees.
- Install signage throughout the park that describes the vegetation, history of the site, and importance of

Lake Melvin (technically a retention pond) for the Village's infrastructure.

- Develop a water feature or fountain.
- Enhance park entrance and signage.
- Install a gazebo.
- Mow a walking path through the prairie grass.
- Add permanent restroom facilities.

Community Parks

Capitol Valley Park

- Install paved, accessible paths to connect all the elements of the park together and to the street.
- Upgrade playground and include features catered to children with disabilities and sensory needs.
- Install lighting throughout the park and along future paths. Solar lights could be installed in the short-term.
- Plant more trees throughout the park.
- Add picnic tables.
- Set up temporary ice-skating facility in the winter by flooding the field.
- Replace existing shelter with a larger, enclosed facility that can accommodate indoor activities during the winter.
- Add a multi-use sports court (pickleball, tennis, and/or basketball).
- Add dugouts adjacent to the baseball field.
- Install concrete/steel bag boards.

Bert Deans Park

- Upgrade/replace playground equipment. Include features geared towards older kids.
- Expand parking, including accessible parking spots, and stabilize driveway.
- Improve basketball court and convert to a multi-use facility.
- Remove existing structures and consolidate into one building that includes a kitchen, bathroom, and shelter.
- Acquire land from the Deans family adjacent to the park to use as a parking lot and access point.
- Add dugouts for the tee-ball diamond.
- Plant trees or install stationary shade fixture near the tee-ball diamond.
- Replace existing shed with a barn shed or repour/correct flooring in existing shed. Install a screen/projector for movie in the park events.
- Replace lighting fixtures and poles.

6.2 New Park & Trail Facilities

The Village should develop new parks in areas that are underserved by existing facilities and areas where future residential expansion is expected to occur. There should be a focus on the acquisition of park and open space which will advance the goals and policies of this plan or the Dane Comprehensive Plan.

The Proposed Parks & Trails Map in Appendix B identifies the location of two park expansions; these were determined through meetings with Parks and Recreation Committee and the Village President. These locations are as follows:

Site A: The northeast corner of Lake Melvin Park is the proposed location for a fenced-off, off-leash dog park for the Village.

Site B: Land west of Bert Deans Park is proposed for acquisition by the Village to expand the park, create a larger parking lot, and improve driveway access.

The Proposed Parks & Trails Map in Appendix B also identifies a number of suggested locations for new multi-use trails in the Village, primarily:

Segment a: Proposed mowed walking path through the prairie grass at Lake Melvin Park.

Segment c & d: Proposed segment **c** is a multi-use paved trail along the railroad right-of-way intended to connect Capitol Valley Park to Bert Deans Park. Segment **d** is a proposed alternate route.

Segment e & f: Proposed segment **e** is a multi-use paved trail to allow safe pedestrian access off of Highway 113 into Meinrod Karls Park. Segment **f** is an alternate route that would connect Meinrod Karls Park to South Military Road.

Segment g: If the land identified in Site B were to be acquired, a trail or sidewalk connecting to segments **e** and **f** should be included in the site design to allow for safe pedestrian access into Bert Deans Park; segment **g** is a potential route for a connection into Bert Deans Park.

6.3 Other Recommendations

Additional recommendations that apply generally across the Village's park system include:

- The Village should collaborate with Dane County Parks on paved shared-use trail routes that would connect the Village of Dane to the greater trail system, likely via South Military Road.
- Improve marketing and communication to the public of the Village parks and amenities.
- Install bike racks at all Village-owned parks.
- Create a uniform system for trash and recycling collection at all Village-owned parks.
- Install multi-use drinking water and bottle filling stations in all Village parks.

7. Implementation

This chapter summarizes tools and mechanisms that the Village can use to fund implementation of the park and open space recommendations discussed in the previous chapter as well as plan adoption and amendment procedures.

[7.1 Potential Funding Sources](#)

Maintenance and operational expenses for the Village's parks are generally funded through property taxes, user fees, or the general fund. As the park system grows the need to increase funding to meet the basic maintenance and operational costs also grows. Often there are insufficient funds to undertake major capital improvement projects. There are a wide variety of potential funding sources to assist with up-front capital costs, including acquisition of land and the development of new recreational facilities.

GRANT PROGRAMS

An important source of funding is grant programs offered by state and federal agencies, especially the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Table 7.1 in Appendix C provides a summary of common state and federal park and recreation grant programs. The table is not an exhaustive list of grant programs, rather those that are typically used by municipalities. Other grant programs may exist and information regarding funding details shown in Table 7.1 should be verified with grant providers prior to seeking grant funding.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING & VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Community groups and civic organizations are sometimes willing to organize fundraising efforts to assist with these costs, and they may also be able to marshal volunteer labor to assist with small development projects such as trail creation or playground installations. Local business and corporate support should also be sought. Both non-profit and for-profit organizations can be rewarded for their support with acknowledgement on a plaque or sign at the site.

The Village can set up an endowment fund as an additional means of providing continual financial support for park acquisition and development. An endowment fund works like a permanent savings account. The amount individuals give, which is the principal, is never spent. Only the interest income is spent, thereby providing a continual source of monies. A park endowment fund can provide a means for residents to either bequeath money or provide ongoing donations to the Village's park system, with the certainty that the money donated will only be used for the advancement of recreation in the community. Gifts to an endowment fund are typically tax deductible under federal and state law.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

As part of a broader plan to redevelop an area, the Village can use tax increment financing to assist with parkland or trail acquisition and development. There are some limitations to what revenues from a TIF district can be used to pay for, generally the costs of constructing public buildings cannot be funded with TIF. Tax increment could be used for land acquisition, trail and site development. Under state statute 66.1105 a municipality can use tax increment to complete public improvements within a 0.5-mile radius of the TID, so long as the use of the funds supports and benefits the TID.

501(C)3 FOUNDATION

7.2 Parkland Dedication, Fees in Lieu, and Impact Fees

The Village's Municipal Code includes regulations regarding parkland dedication. Within the corporate limits of the Village, subdividers are required to dedicate sufficient land to provide park, recreation, and general open space to meet the anticipated neighborhood needs of residential areas, as determined necessary or desirable by this plan.

Parkland Dedication Requirement

Per Section 463-18(C) the Village currently requires parkland dedication for new subdivisions. The developer shall dedicate sufficient land area to provide adequate park, playground, recreation and open space to meet the needs to be created by and to be provided for the land division, subdivision or comprehensive development. The minimum dedication shall be one acre per 15 single-family lots or 15 residential units.

Fees in Lieu

If parkland dedication is not possible, a subdivider may satisfy the requirement for setting aside land for parks, recreation areas, or general open space by payment of a fee in lieu of land. These fees are collected and used for purchase of new park land. Per Section 463-18(D):

Where, in the sole discretion of the Village Board, there is no land suitable for parks within the proposed land division or the dedication of land would not be compatible with the Village's Comprehensive Plan or park plan, the minimum size under Subsection C cannot be met, or Village officials determine that a cash contribution would better serve the public interest, the Village Board shall require the subdivider to contribute a park and recreation development fee in lieu of land. The fees collected shall be held in a nonlapsing fund to be used for purchase, development, improvement and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, open spaces and other recreational sites and facilities. The total fee shall be computed on the basis of the maximum residential use of each parcel permitted in the particular zoning district under Chapter 520, Zoning. The fee shall be as set by the Village Board. The fee shall be paid to the Village at the time of final plat or certified survey approval. This fee shall be annually adjusted by the Clerk-Treasurer by adding to the base fee the consumer price index (CPI) cost on March 1 of that year for each possible dwelling unit within the plat/land division allowed by Chapter 520, Zoning.

The Village Board shall also require that in the case of a partial dedication of land, the fee in lieu shall be equivalent to the undedicated portion of land to equal the equivalent of 100% parkland dedication (e.g. 75% of the total land, plus 25% fee in lieu). The current base fee, as of the time of this plan, is \$800 per residential unit.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are a one-time fee that is assessed and paid as a special charge to develop new parks facilities and amenities (i.e. sport courts, playgrounds, etc.); park impact fees cannot be used to pay for the purchase of acquisition of new parkland. Communities choose to charge park impact fees because the cost to develop new parks is relatively high – roughly \$700,000 for a typical neighborhood park. State statutes allow park impact fees to be collected based on maintaining, not increasing park service levels.

The Village requires an impact fee that is set by its annual fee schedule. In 2023, the fee is \$1,200 per residential dwelling unit.

7.3 Plan Adoption & Amendments

Best practice procedures for plan adoption are highlighted below:

Parks and Recreation Committee Recommendation

The Committee should meet to review the plan and pass a motion to recommend approval of the plan or plan amendment by the Village Board.

Public Hearing

Prior to adopting this plan, or plan amendment, Dane can hold at least one public hearing to discuss the proposed plan or plan amendment; a public hearing is not required by the DNR to adopt this plan. If a public hearing is held, at least 30 days prior to the hearing a Class 1 notice must be published that contains, at minimum, the following:

- The date, time, and location of the hearing.
- A summary of the proposed plan or plan amendment.
- The local government staff who may be contacted for additional information.
- Where to inspect and how to obtain a copy of the proposed plan or amendment before the hearing.

The notice should also provide a method for submitting written comments, and those comments should be read or summarized at the public hearing.

Plan Adoption

The plan and any future amendments become official Village policy when Village Board passes, by a majority vote of all elected members, an adoption resolution. The Board may choose to revise the plan after it has been recommended by the Parks and Recreation Committee, and after a public hearing (optional).

Plan Amendment vs. Plan Update

Amendments can be made at any time, but the Village should not amend the plan more than once per year. A common recommended approach is to establish a consistent annual schedule for consideration of minor plan amendments as needed. This plan should be updated every five years in order to maintain eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Stewardship funding. Unlike an amendment, a plan update should revisit the entirety of the plan content and include more robust opportunities for public participation.

7.4 Capitol Improvement Planning

The recommendations for each existing park, as seen in Chapter 6, are organized in the following table to help with capital improvement planning over the next five years. A cost estimate range and priority level (ideal time frame to be completed) has been assigned to each recommendation.

The priority levels are as follows:

- High-Priority: 1-2 years (2023-2025)
- Medium-Priority: 3-5 years (2026-2028)
- Low-Priority: 6+ years (beyond 2029)

The cost estimate ranges are as follows:

- \$= \$5,000 - \$10,000
- \$\$= \$15,000 - \$30,000
- \$\$\$= \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$\$\$\$= >\$250,000
- Maint.= General Maintenance (assumed to be <\$5,000)

Neighborhood Parks	Cost Estimate	Priority
Lake Melvin Park		
Add a fenced-in dog park in northeast corner of the park.	\$\$	High
Add more picnic tables.	\$	Medium
Install lighting.	\$\$\$	Medium
Develop a landscape plan for the park that promotes perennial and native species and removes dead trees.	\$	High
Install signage throughout the park that describes the vegetation, history of the site, and importance of Lake Melvin (technically a detention pond) for the Village's infrastructure.	\$	Medium
Develop a water feature or fountain.	\$\$\$	Medium
Enhance park entrance and signage.	\$\$\$	Medium
Install a gazebo.	\$\$\$	Low
Mow a walking path through the prairie grass.	\$	High
Meinrod Karls Park		
Add parking, including accessible parking spots.	\$\$	Medium
Install paved paths connecting all the park's elements together.	\$\$\$	Low
Install lighting, including solar lights in the short-term.	\$\$\$	High
Plant trees strategically throughout the park.	\$	High
Install soccer nets.	\$	Medium
Encourage picnicking at the park by adding campground grills, picnic tables, Adirondack chairs, family-sized porch swings, and/or lawn games such as corn hole.	TBD	Medium
Add a fire pit/council ring oriented to the sunset.	\$\$	Medium
Install permanent restroom facilities with electrical outlets.	\$\$\$\$	Low
Capitol Valley Park		
Install paved, accessible paths to connect all the elements of the park together and to the street.	\$\$\$	2024
Upgrade playground and include features catered to children with disabilities and sensory needs. Add a zipline to cater to older children.	\$\$\$\$	High
Install lighting throughout the park and along future paths. Solar lights could be installed in the short-term.	\$\$	High
Plant more trees strategically throughout the park.	\$	High
Add picnic tables.	\$	Medium
Set up temporary ice-skating facility in the winter by flooding the field.	\$	Low
Replace existing shelter with a larger, enclosed facility that can accommodate indoor activities during the winter.	\$\$\$\$	Medium
Add a multi-use sports court (pickleball, tennis, and/or basketball).	\$\$\$	2024
Add dugouts adjacent to the baseball field.	\$\$	Low

Install concrete/steel bag boards.	\$	Medium
Community Parks		
Bert Deans Park		
Upgrade/replace playground equipment. Include features geared towards older kids.	\$\$\$	2024
Expand parking, including accessible parking spots, and stabilize driveway.	\$\$\$\$	Medium
Remove existing structures and consolidate into one building that includes a kitchen, bathroom, and shelter.	\$\$\$\$	Low
Acquire land adjacent to the park to use as a parking lot and access point.	\$\$\$\$	Low
Add dugouts for the tee-ball diamond.	\$\$	Low
Plant trees or install stationary shade fixture near the tee-ball diamond.	\$\$	Medium
Replace existing shed with a barn shed or repour/correct flooring in existing shed. Install a screen/projector for movie in the park events.	TBD	Medium
Replace lighting fixtures and poles.	\$\$\$\$	High
Upgrade basketball court, add permanent lawn games (bags, ladder toss, etc.) area, add fitness equipment to cater to teenagers and young adults.	\$\$\$\$	High



Lake Melvin Park