



# Parks & Open Space Plan Update 2025-2030

April 15, 2024 – Village of Windsor Municipal Building



# Introductions

## Thanks for Coming to this Meeting!

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# Dane County Parks Planning and Development Team

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**Chris James**  
Park Planning Manager



**Lindsay Koehnke**  
Landscape Architect



**Dan Schmitt**  
Landscape Architect



**Alex DeSmidt**  
Senior Landscape Architect



**Jeff Prey**  
LTE Park Planner

# Dane County Parks Welcome

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**Joleen Stinson**  
Parks Director



# **ICEBREAKER**

**Have you ever attended a Dane County  
Parks and Open Space Plan public  
meeting before?**


# Meeting Notification Summary

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- Press release sent out on March 20th
- Dane County Parks Constant Contact e-vite on March 20th
- Posted to Dane County Parks events page on March 20<sup>th</sup>
- Sent Constant Contact e-vite on April 12<sup>th</sup>
- Public information meeting, **not** a public hearing
- Not a Park Commission meeting, no action items or official business
- Hybrid meeting, virtual or in-person option
- Opportunity for virtual attendees to provide chat comments/questions at the end of the meeting

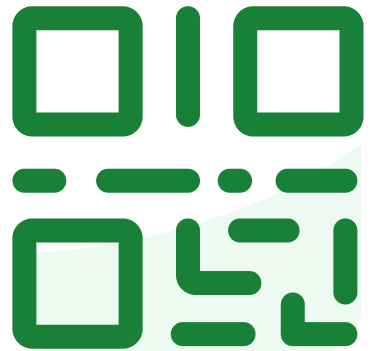
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# POLLING QUESTION



A scenic landscape featuring a field of yellow flowers in the foreground, a green hill with trees in the middle ground, and a blue sky with white clouds in the background. The text "POLLING QUESTION" is centered in the middle of the image.

# slido



**Join at [slido.com](https://slido.com)  
#3197181**

ⓘ Start presenting to display the joining instructions on this slide.



# slido



**What is your preferred way to be notified of an upcoming public information being hosted by Dane County Parks?**

**i** Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.


# Parks and Open Space Plan Update Meeting Agenda

- Dane County Parks Overview
- Current Eastern Dane County Projects
- Parks and Open Space Overview
- Planning Process and Schedule
- Demographics/Recreation Trends Overview
- Current POSP Staff Level Topics
- Public Input/Virtual Chat



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# POLLING QUESTION



slido



**What do you think of first when you hear  
“Dane County Parks?”**

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

# Dane County Parks Overview

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Dane County Parks welcomes 5 million visitors annually and manages over 18,000 acres of land, largest county park system in Wisconsin!

- 25 Recreation Parks (8 Dog Parks, 2 Disc Golf Courses, 4 Lake Access)
- 20 Wildlife Areas
- 14 Natural Resource Areas
- 4 Historical or Cultural Sites
- 2 Forests
- Over 100 miles of trails (bike, equestrian, & cross-country ski)
- Over 3,000 acres of conservation & streambank easements
- 5 campgrounds & multiple adult & youth group camp sites
- Lussier Family Heritage Center

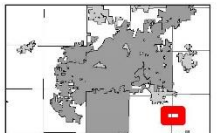
# Current Projects – Eastern Dane County

## Phase 2 Lower Yahara River Trail

- Over 2 mile connection from Fish Camp County Park to Williams Dr. at Lake Kegonsa State Park
- Future segments of the trail will complete connections to McFarland and Stoughton
- <https://lwrp.countyofdane.com/CurrentProjects/Detail/Lower-Yahara-River-Trail-Project>



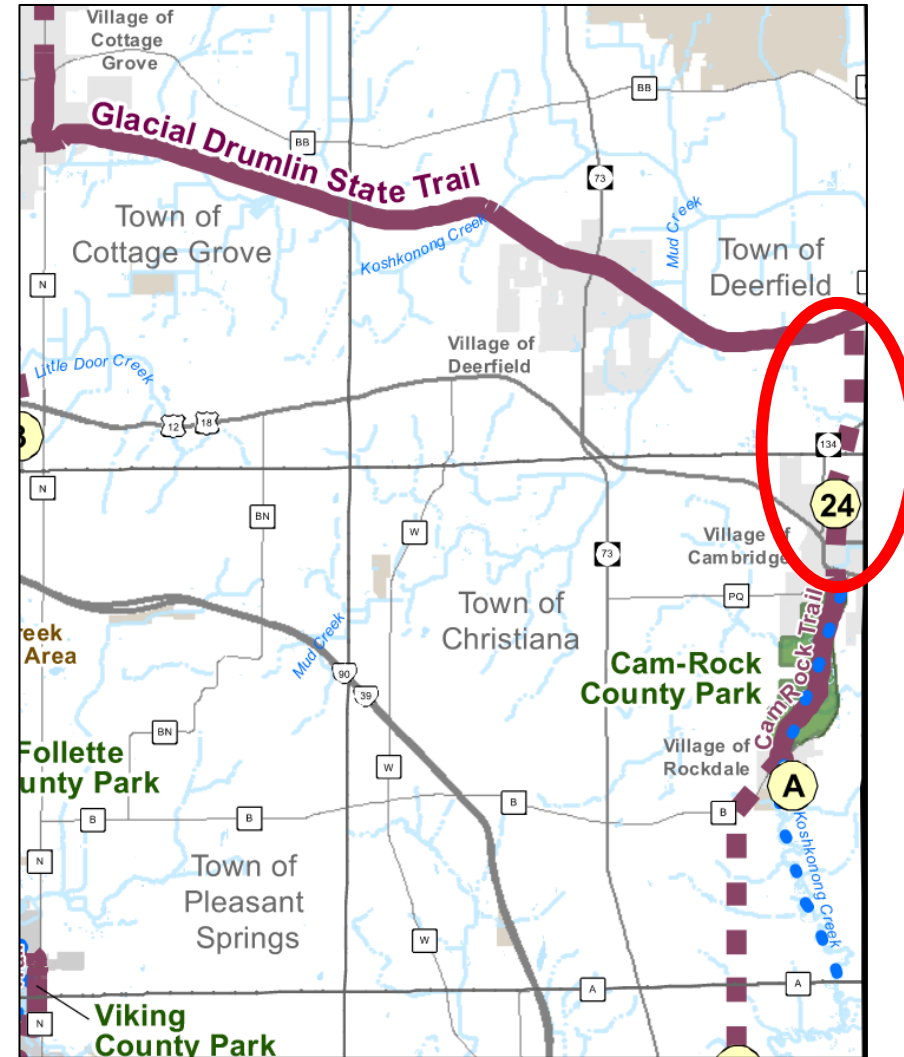
Lower Yahara River Trail, Phase 2  
Fish Camp County Park to Lake Kegonsa State Park



# Current Projects – Eastern Dane County

## CamRock Trail to Glacial Drumlin State Trail

- Dane County, Cambridge Foundation, Village of Cambridge, Friends of the CamRock to Glacial Drumlin Connector Trail, Inc. are continuing to plan for completing the off road trail connection that extends from CamRock County Park to the Glacial Drumlin State Trail



# Current Projects – Eastern Dane County



- Timber frame shelter finished Fall 2023.
- Pending new playground installation 2024.
- <https://lwr.dane.gov/CurrentProjects/Detail/McCarthy-Shelter-Parking-Playground>



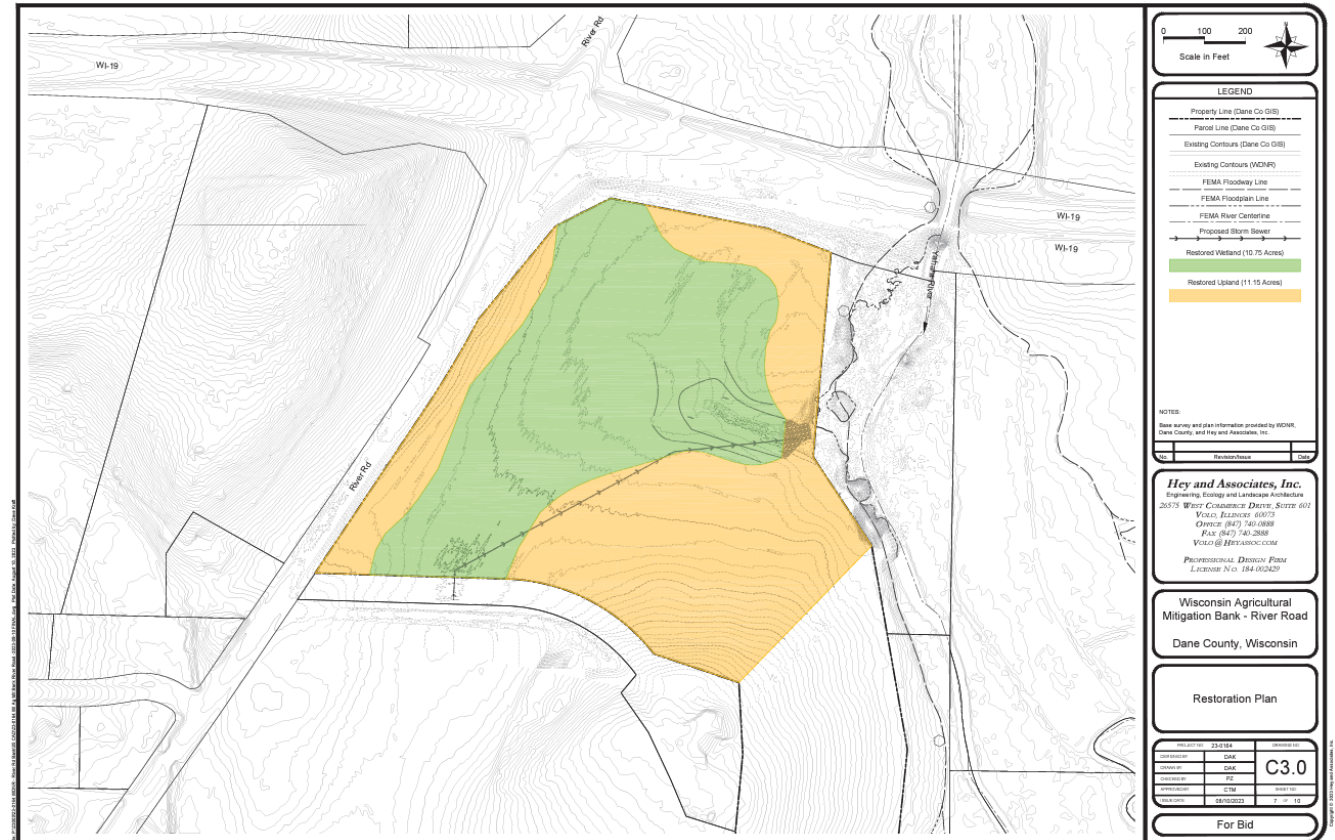


# Current Projects - Eastern Dane County



## Cherokee Marsh Wildlife Area – Agricultural Wetland Mitigation Bank

- Dane County is partnering with the WDNR, NRCS, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, & U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to restore ~31 acres of wetland & prairie adjacent to the Yahara River
- Funded through the NRCS Wetland Mitigation Banking Program to develop an agricultural wetland mitigation bank
- <https://lwr.d.countyofdane.com/CurrentProjects/Detail/Agricultural-Wetland-Mitigation-Bank>



# Current Projects - Eastern Dane County



## Token Creek County Park– Park Improvements

### Road Reconstruction

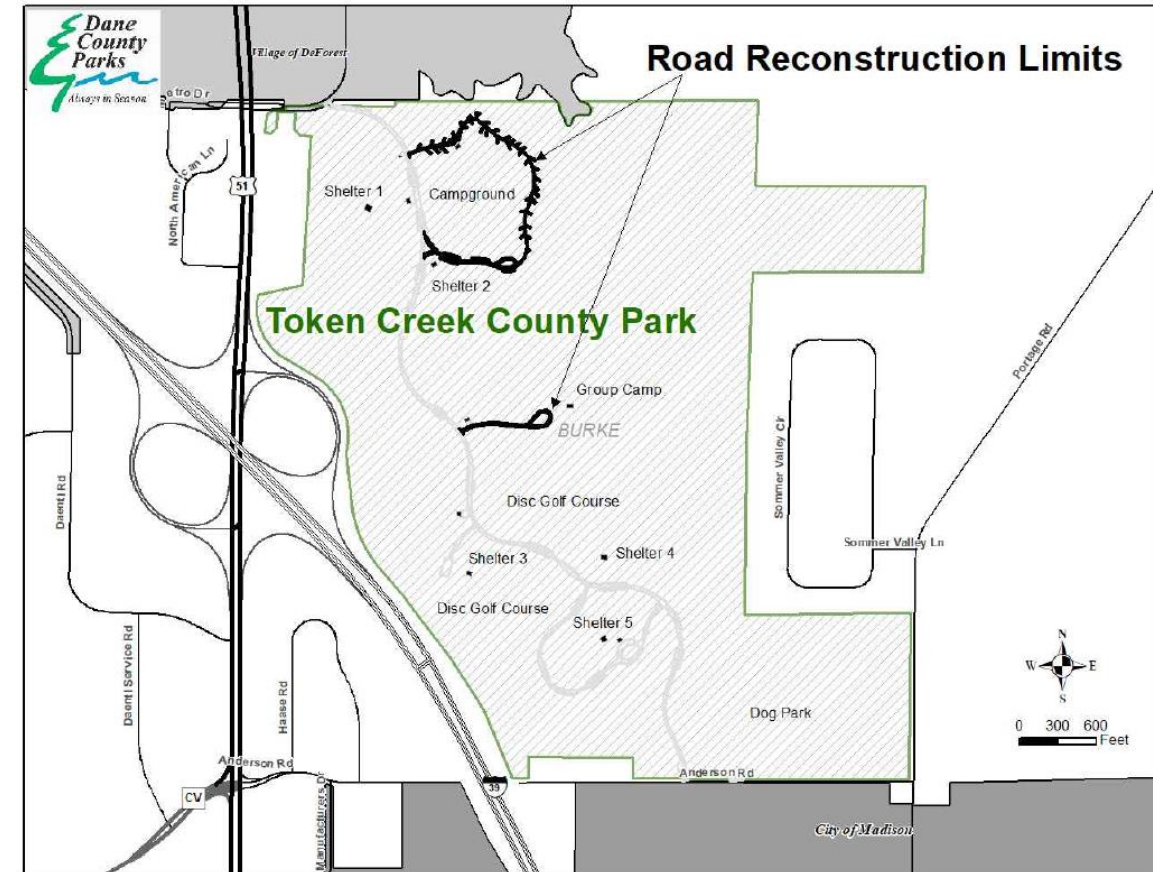
- Phase 2 – campground and group camp roads, Fall 2024
- Phase 1 – main park road to group camp, completed 2022

### Building Improvements

- New roof on group camp shelter, 2024
- New floors in campground restroom/showerhouse, 2024
- Planning for new storage building, 2024
- New roofs on shelters 1, 4, and 5 completed in 2023

### Disc Golf Course

- New course baskets installed

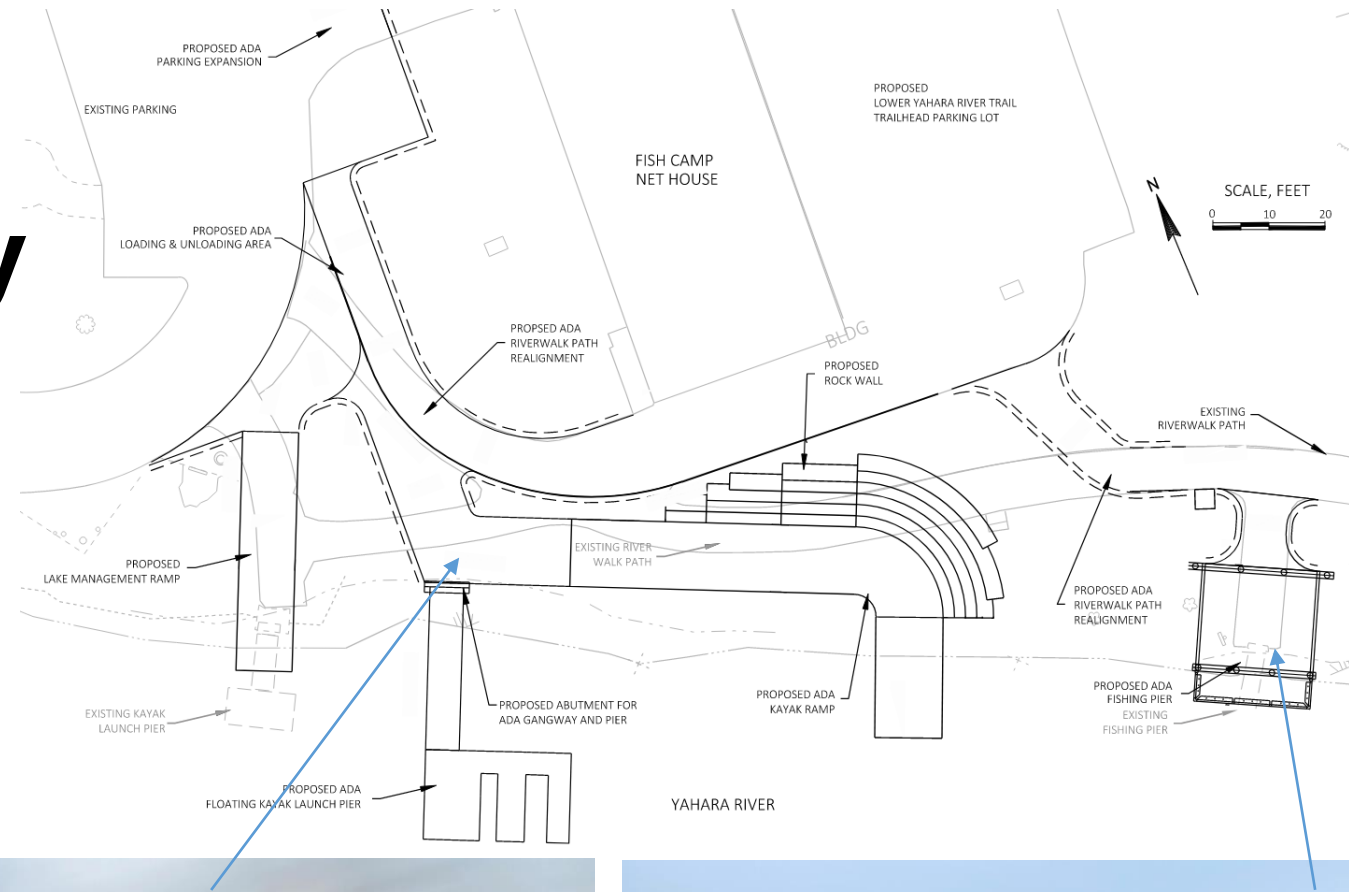


# Current Projects – Eastern Dane County

## Fish Camp County Park Accessible Shoreline Improvements

- A new accessible floating kayak launch
- A new accessible walk-in kayak ramp
- A new accessible fishing pier
- Improved aquatic plant harvester off-loading site
- ADA parking & landscaping upgrades

<https://lwr.d.countyofdane.com/CurrentProjects/Detail/Fish-Camp-Launch>



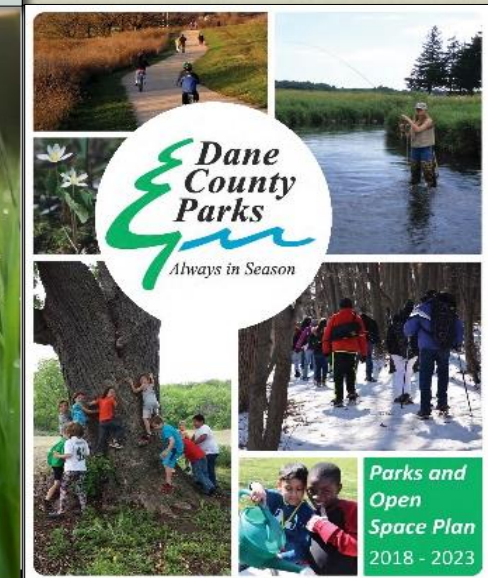
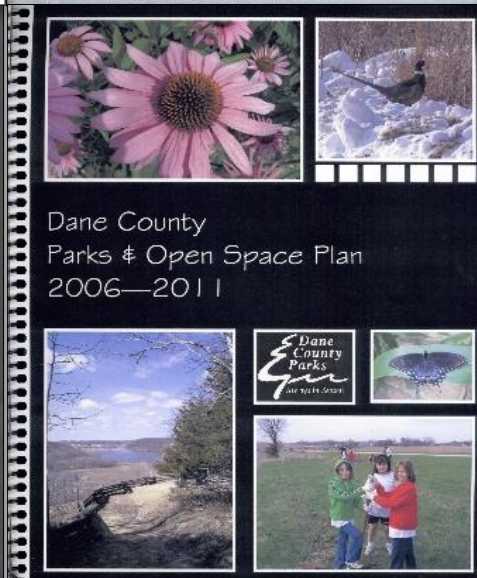
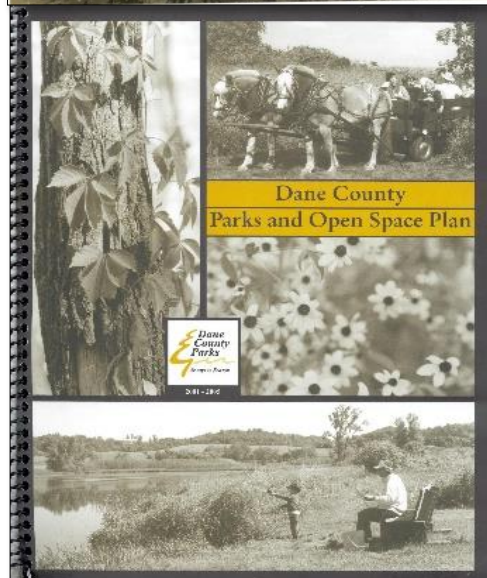
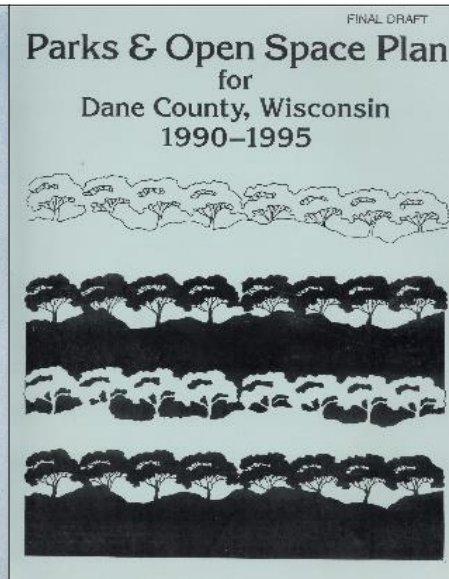
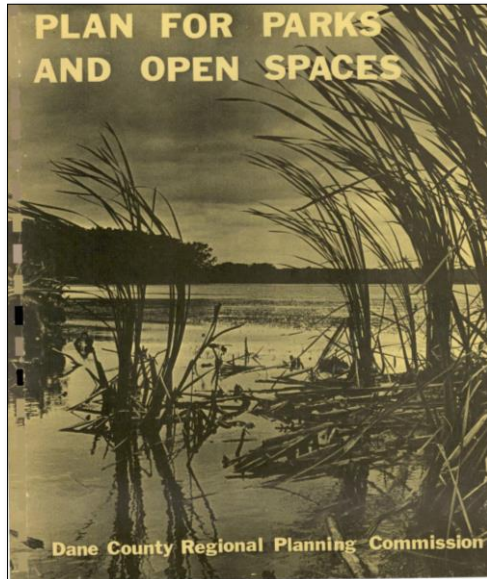
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A landscape photograph showing a wide, grassy field with several large, dark rocks scattered across it. In the background, there is a dense line of trees under a bright, slightly hazy sky. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

# **Parks and Open Space Overview**

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# 50 Plus Years of Parks and Open Space Plans!



# What is the Parks and Open Space Plan?

- First plan was completed in 1970
- Provides a common vision for park, recreation, and resource protection initiatives county-wide
- Provides a 'check-in' opportunity for Dane County Parks to interact with Partners/Public/Stakeholders
- Stewardship grant eligibility
  - Must be updated every 5 years



# Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan 2018 - 2023

## Dane County Parks System

- Recreation Park
- Natural Resource Area
- Wildlife Area
- Historical or Cultural Site
- Forest
- Trails
- Land & Water Legacy Wetland Sites
- Streambank Easements
- Conservation Easements
- Conservation Fund Grant Properties\*

## Dane County Natural Resource Area Project Areas

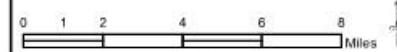
- Natural Resource Area Boundary (NRAB)
- Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor

## Reference Layers

- Existing Regional Shared-Use Trails
- Railroad
- Lake/Pond
- River/Stream
- US Fish and Wildlife Lands
- National Park Service Lands
- DNR Public Lands
- Municipalities

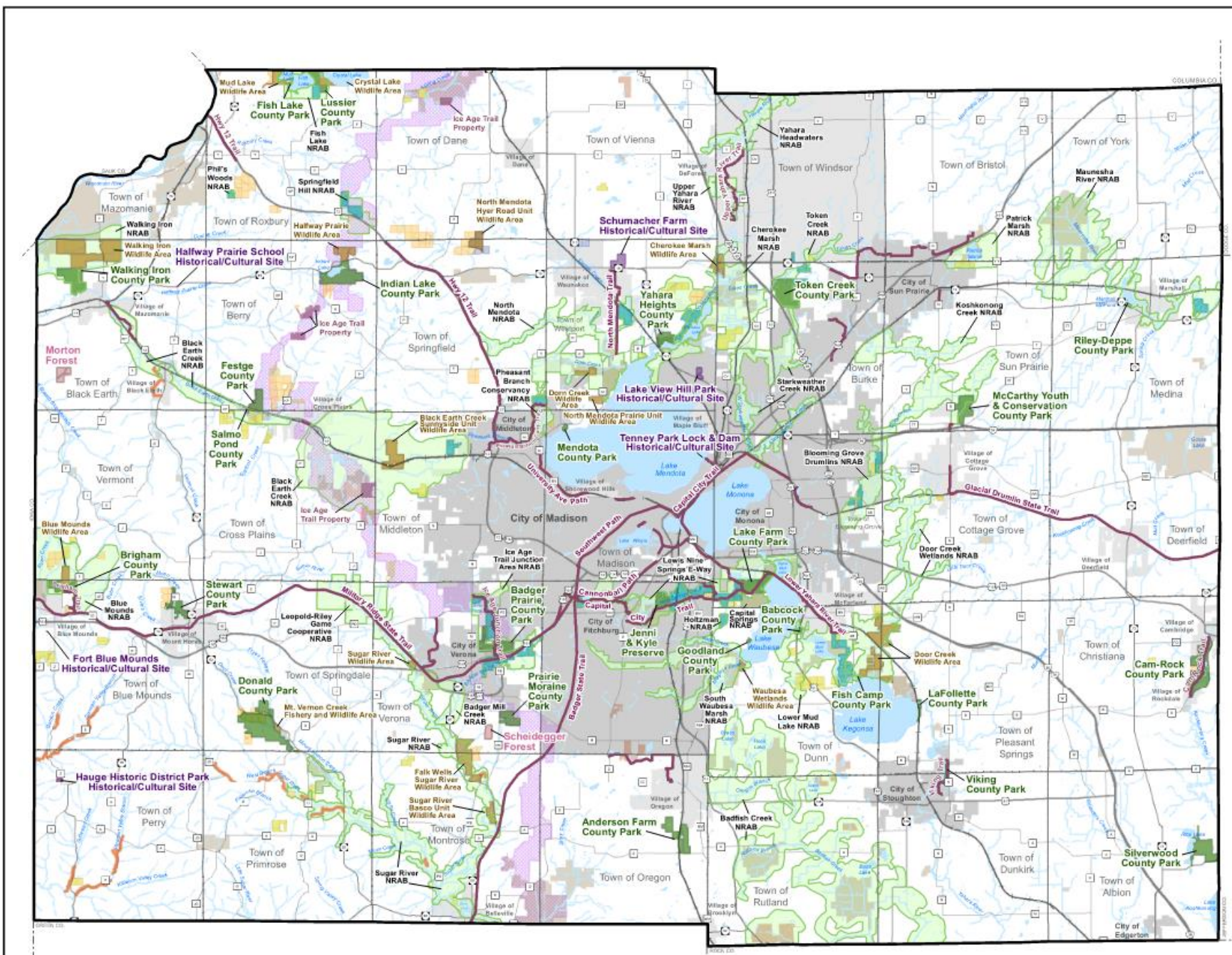
\*Conservation Fund Grant Properties are lands on easement or owned by local units of government under grants with assistance from the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program.

Map of Counties Surrounding Dane County



**Dane County Parks**  
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Map created by Dane County Parks on 8/1/2018, last updated 2/16/2018. Adapted on 4/12/18.  
File Location: H:\Parks\GIS\POSP\2018-2021\_POBSP\06P2018\_11x17.mxd



A serene landscape featuring a calm body of water, likely a lake or a wide river. The foreground is dominated by tall, dense reeds and grasses. In the middle ground, a wooden dock or pier extends into the water. The background is filled with a variety of trees, including tall evergreens and deciduous trees. The entire scene is overlaid with a soft, light green tint. A white rectangular box is positioned in the center of the image, containing the text.

**“The Journey is the  
Destination...”**



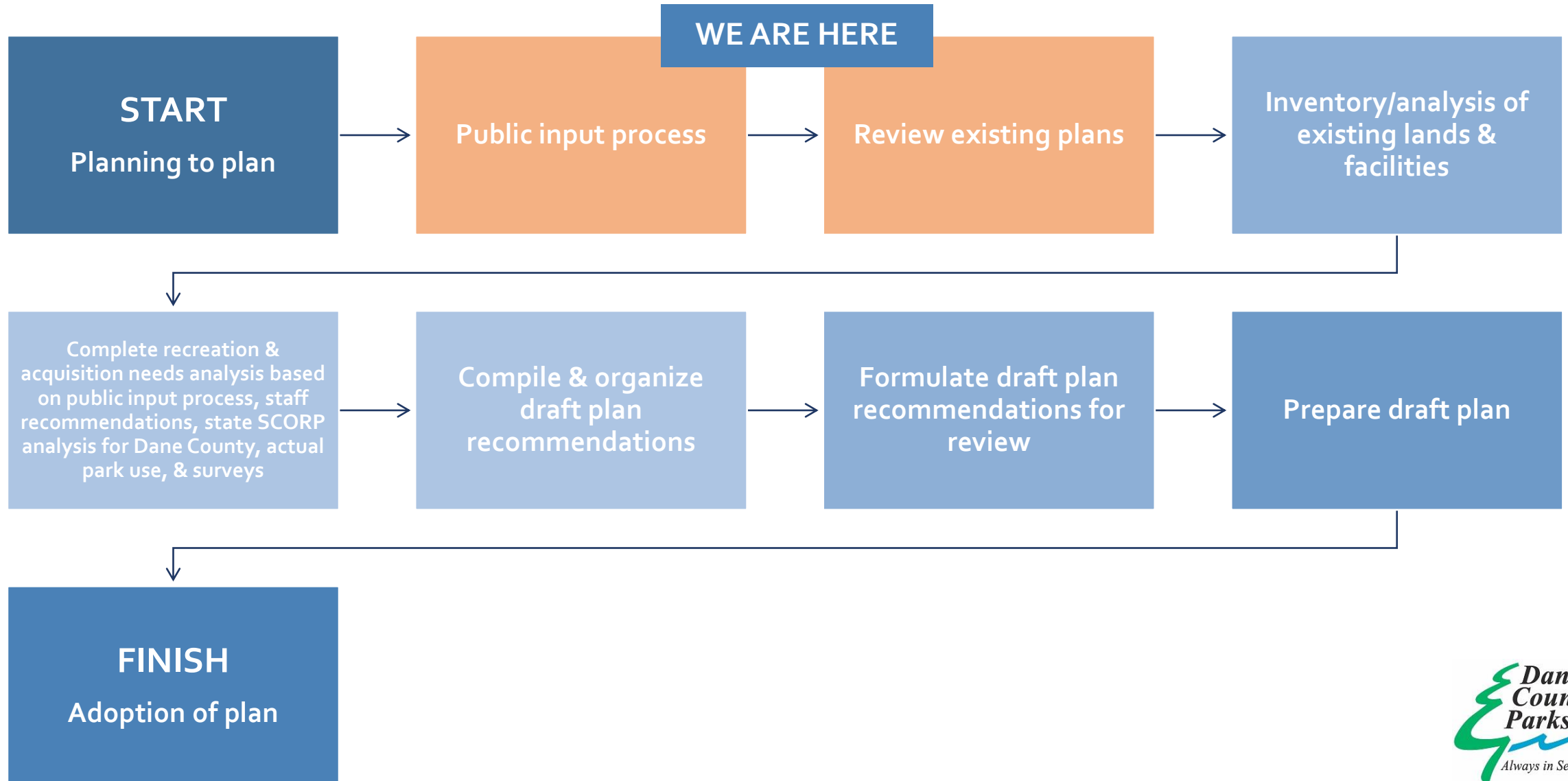
# What the Plan is NOT...

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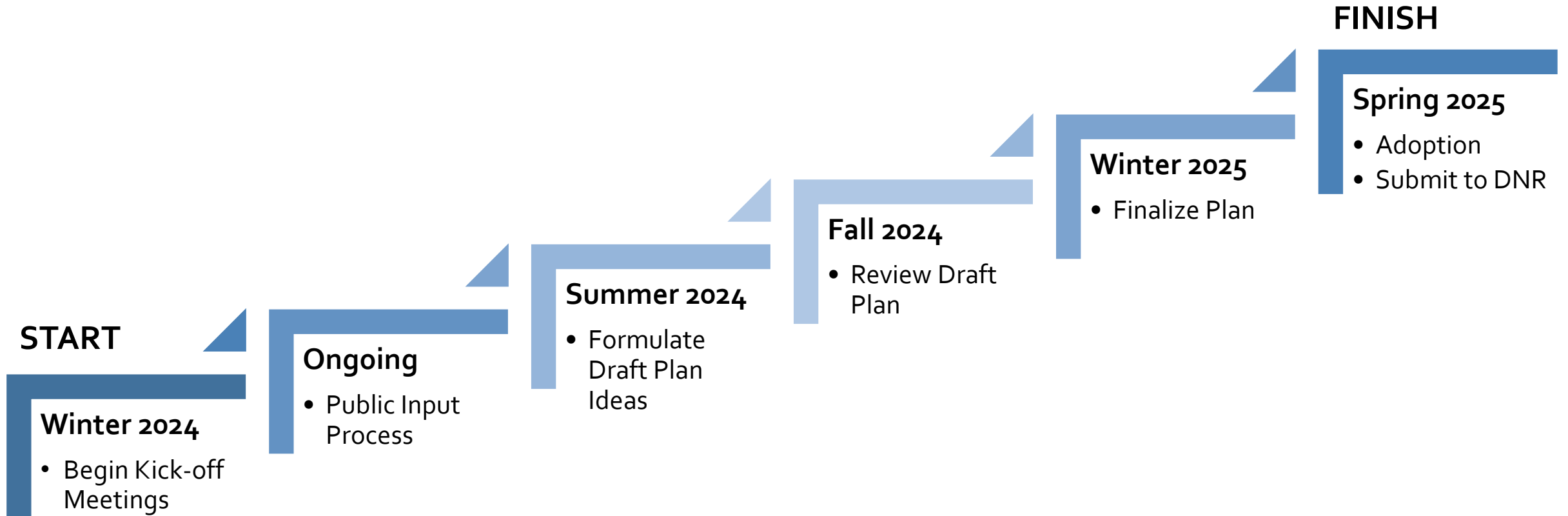
- A Land Use Plan or Zoning tool
  - Unless a local unit of government adopts it
- A trail development plan
- A park development plan



# Planning Process



# Planning Process Timeline



# Current Plan Update Status

In Process....

- Public input meetings
- Online survey
- Land & facility inventory
- Population analysis
- Recreation needs analysis





**Overall...The 2018-2023 Dane County  
Parks and Open Space Plan is still  
actively being implemented and the  
majority of the plan recommendations  
will continue to be valid**

A landscape photograph of a field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. In the foreground, the branches of a bare tree are silhouetted against the sky. The middle ground shows a field of tall grasses or reeds, and the background features a line of trees under a hazy sky. The word "Demographics" is overlaid in the center in a bold, black, serif font. There are white horizontal bars at the top and bottom of the image.

# Demographics

# Demographics

Statistics that describe population and their characteristics

- Population size, age, race, etc.

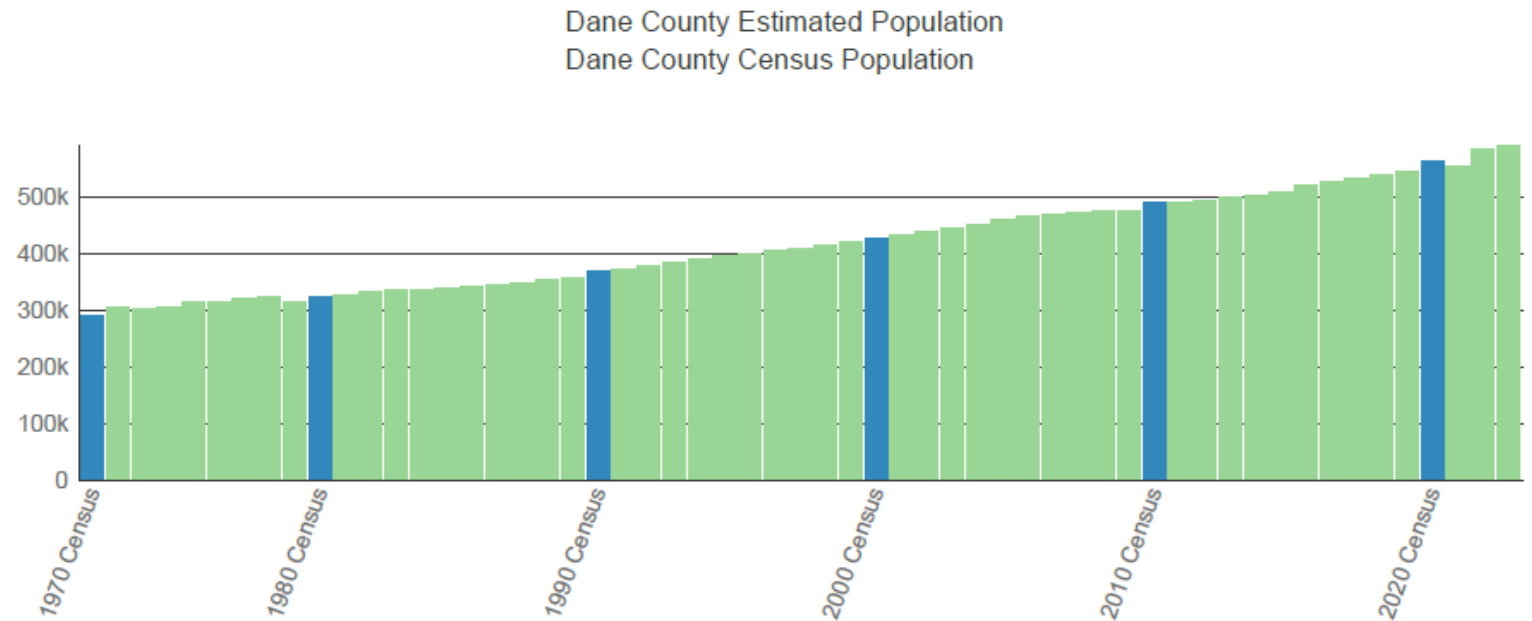


# Demographics - Population

Dane County is the fastest growing county in Wisconsin and has the second highest population in the state.

- Dane County makes up 10% of Wisconsin's population
- The population has grown 16.1% from 2010 to 2022

Population Estimates over Time: 1970-2023



Source: Wisconsin Population and Housing Estimates



# Increasing Population Size and Growth Rate

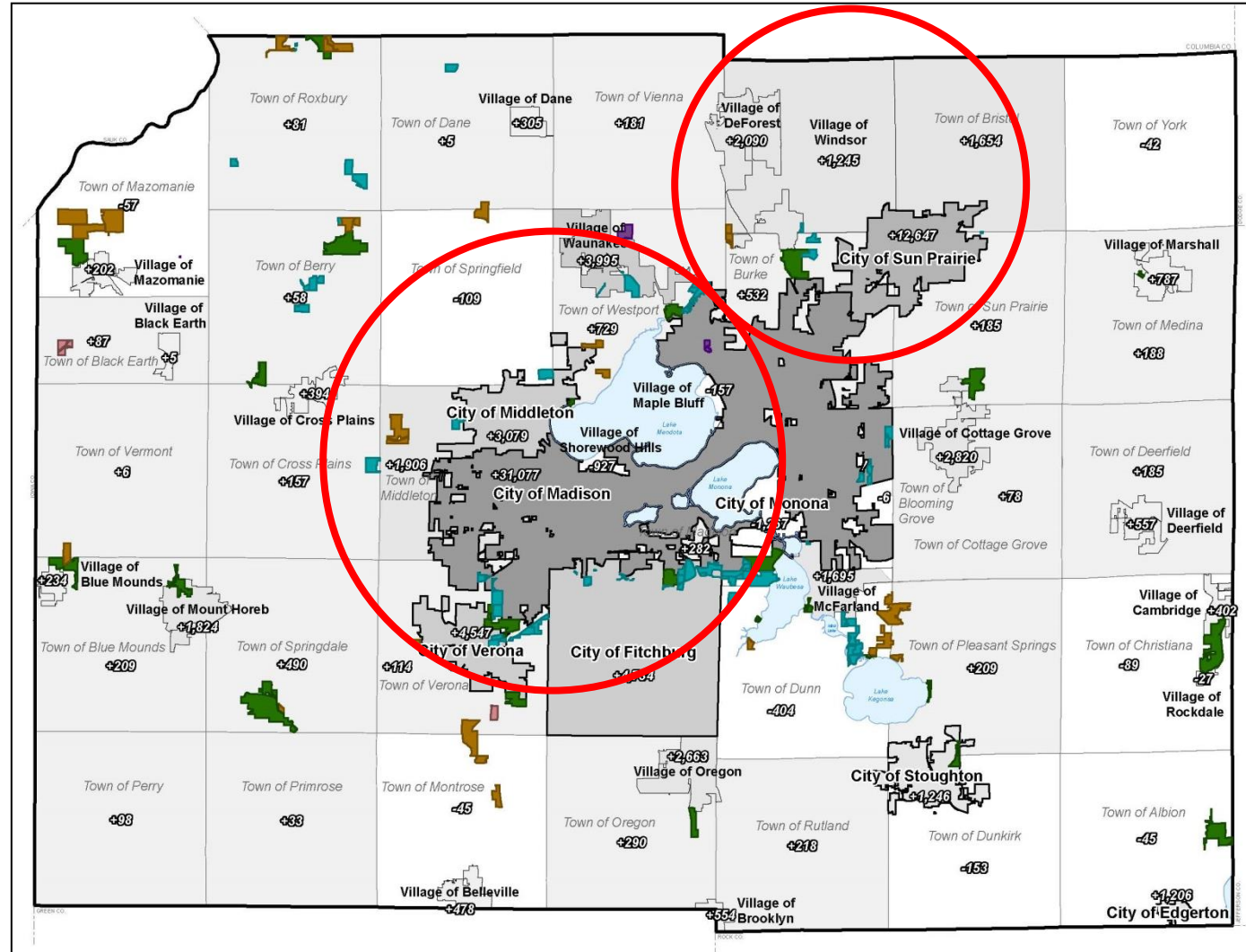
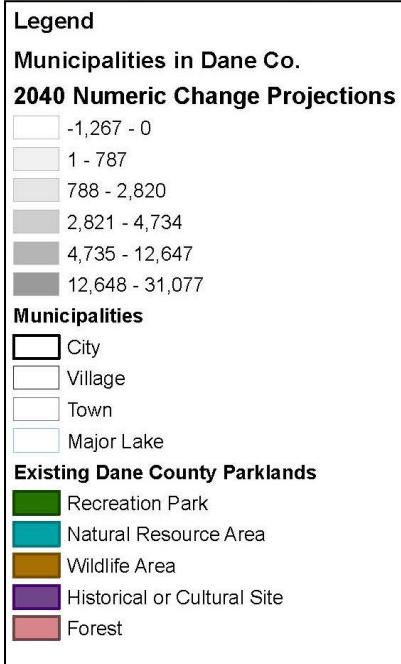
## Planner's Perspective – Why does it matter?

- Consistent increasing trends in both population size and growth suggest continued need for system-wide planned park expansion
- Avoid “loving our parks to death”



# Dane County 2040 Numeric Population Projections

Based on the 2017 population growth estimates and the projections for future growth by 2040, the most growth is expected in the center and the north east quadrant of the County.



# Increasing Population Areas

## Planner's Perspective – Why does it matter?

- Plan for locations of future regional parks
- Plan for future regional trail connections
- Identify future acquisition priorities

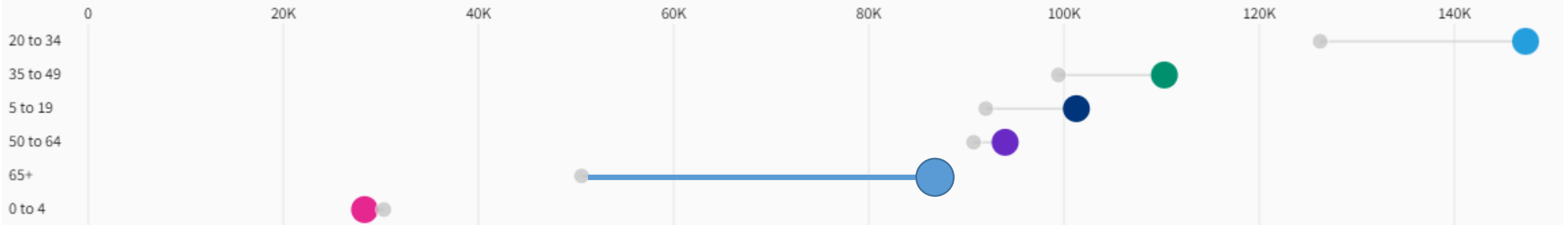


# Demographics - Age

Among six age groups — 0 to 4, 5 to 19, 20 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and older

- **The 65+ group was the fastest growing between 2010 and 2022 with its population increasing 72.2% between 2010-2022.**
- The 0 to 4 age group declined the most dropping 6.5% between 2010 and 2022.

## Population by age in Dane County



# Increasing Age Trend

## Planner's Perspective – Why does it matter?

- Provide for multi-generational recreation uses and spaces
- Provide enhanced accessibility at recreation parks and developed access areas

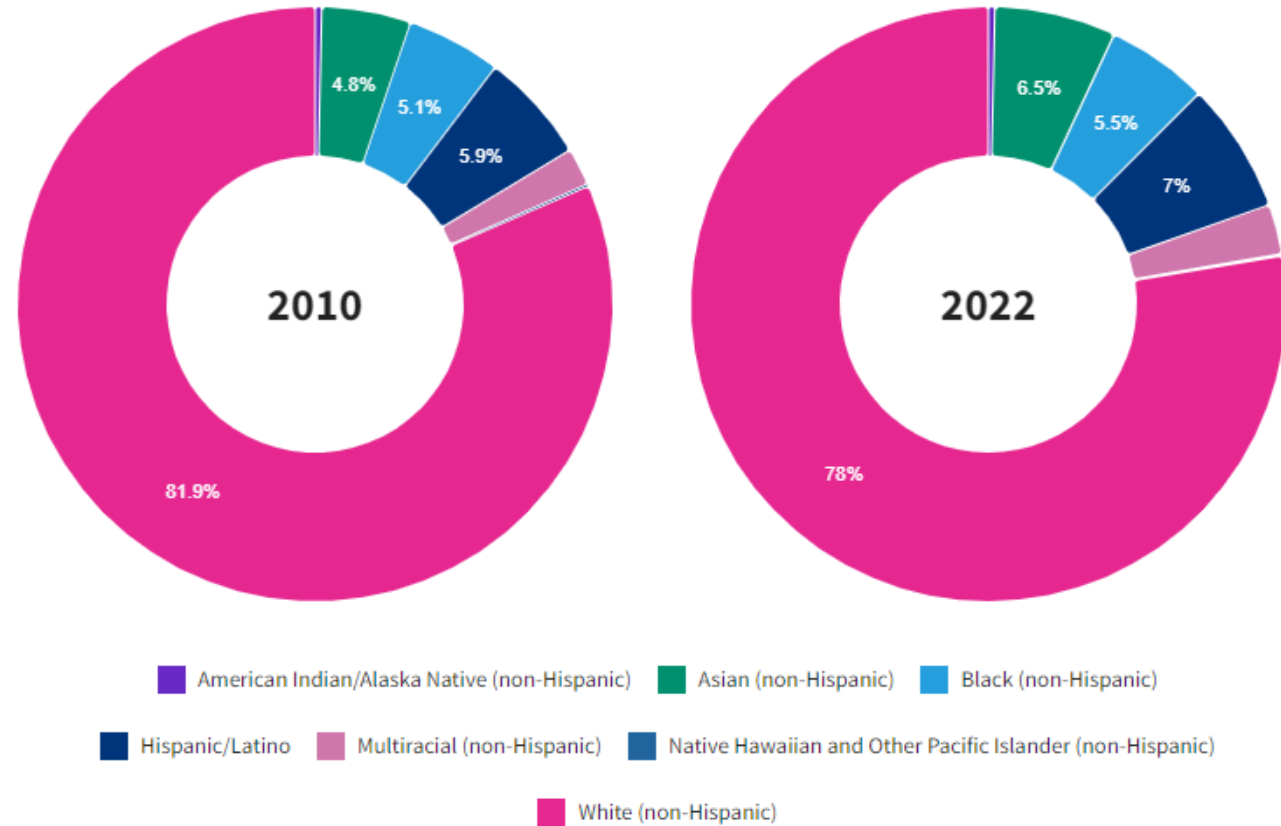


# Demographics – Dane County Race/Ethnicity

It is important to understand the race and ethnicity demographics within Dane County to effectively plan parks that are equitable and inclusive to all residents.

- Diversity increased from 2010 to 2022
- Asian population grew the most with a 1.7% increase

Racial makeup of Dane County



Source: USA Facts

# Diversity and Recreation in the US

- National recreation trend planners estimate that 72% of people participating in outdoor recreation currently are white
- If outdoor recreation participants do not become more diverse over the next 30 years, total outdoor participation rates in the US could fall from 54% to 40%

*Source: Outdoor Foundation – 2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report*



# Diversity and Recreation Users

## Planner's Perspective – Why does it matter?

- Inclusion of All People in Parks
- Sustain future support for conservation of public lands and parks
- Better understand what types of recreation are needed
- Eliminate barriers in parks





# Demographics Summary

- Dane County's population is the second highest in the state and is estimated to continue to be the fastest growing county in the state  
Dane County's 65 and older population is estimated to continue to be the fastest growing age range
- Dane County has one of the most diverse populations in the state




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# Recreation Trends

A person is silhouetted while fishing in a small boat on a calm lake. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a shimmering golden reflection on the water. The background shows a dense line of trees under a soft, hazy sky. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

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# POLLING QUESTION



A scenic landscape featuring a field of yellow flowers in the foreground, a green hill with trees in the middle ground, and a blue sky with white clouds in the background. The text "POLLING QUESTION" is centered in the image.

# slido



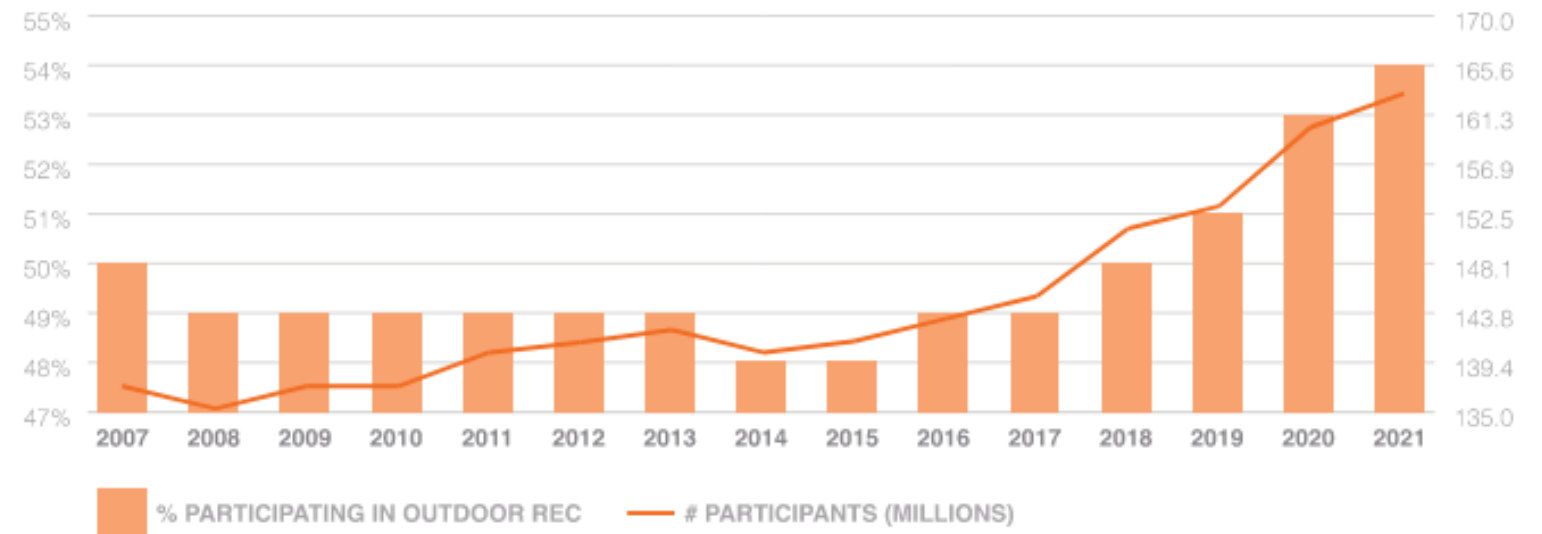
**If you had to choose one (1) favorite outdoor recreation activity to participate in, which one would it be?**

**i** Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

# Current National Recreation Participation Trends

- Pandemic increased new and returning outdoor participants by 26% - 2021 had the highest ever recorded.





















**OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION GROWTH TRENDS**  
2007 TO 2021








Source: NRPA – 2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report

# Current National Recreation Trends

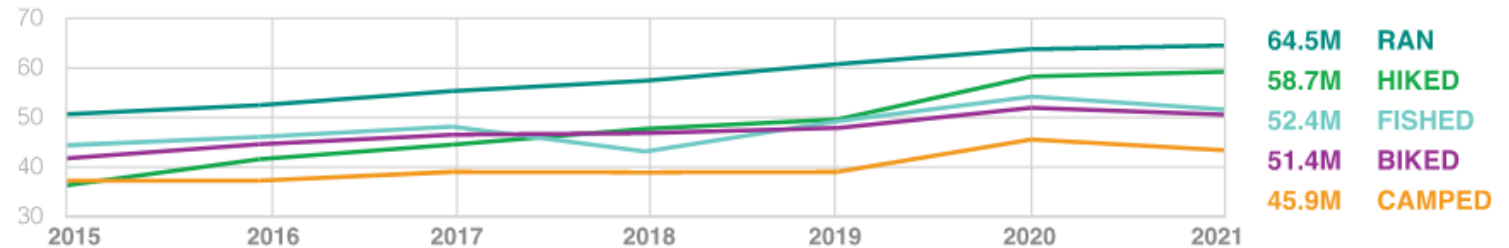
## INTEREST LEVEL OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BY RACE/ETHNICITY

INTEREST LEVEL	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER PERSONS	AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK PERSONS	HISPANIC/LATINX PERSONS	WHITE PERSONS
1	 23.8%	 15.4%	 20.8%	 22%
2	 22.3%	 11.8%	 17.9%	 18.7%
3	 16.7%	 10.8%	 17%	 17.7%
4	 17.7%	 7.2%	 15.7%	 16.9%
5	 9.8%	 6.3%	 13.8%	 15.4%

**LEGEND**

-  CAMPING
-  BIKING
-  FISHING
-  HIKING
-  RUNNING

## TOP FIVE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES (MILLIONS OF PARTICIPANTS) 2015 TO 2021



Source: NRPA – 2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report

# National Recreation Trends

## Planner's Perspective – Why does it matter?

- Dane County has a strong population of out of state residents, migration trends continue to increase
- In general, national trends are a good barometer of what is happening in local recreation



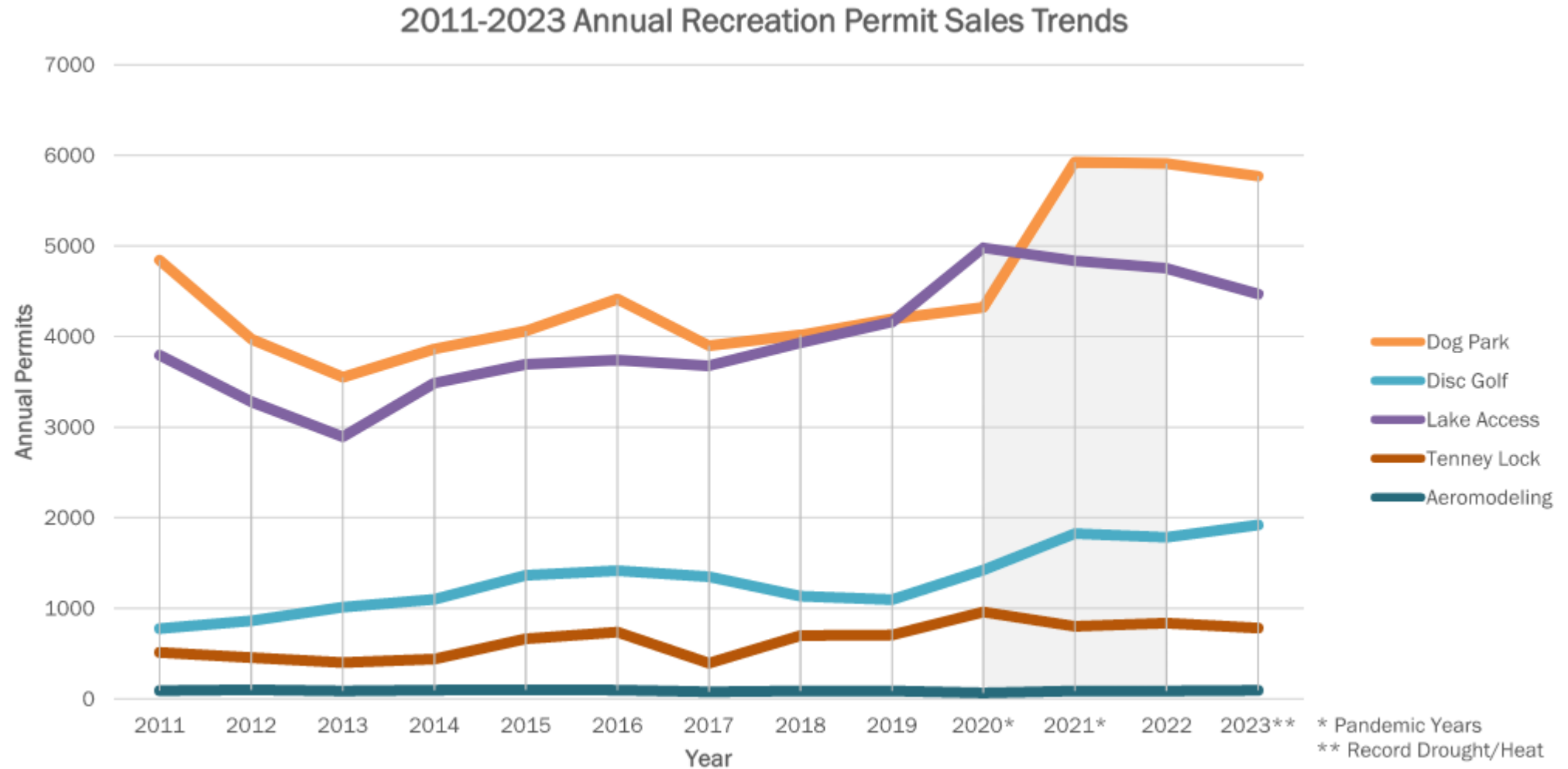
# Current Dane County Recreation Trends

Walking	48.1%
Dog Orientated (Parks)	43.1%
Swimming	40.0%
Running	27.5%
Beach	25.6%
Backpack Hiking	22.6%
Hiking	21.9%
Bicycling	18.0%
Visit Zoo	17.4%
Basketball	16.6%
Fishing	16.5%

Source: MRI-Simmons Survey of the American Consumer

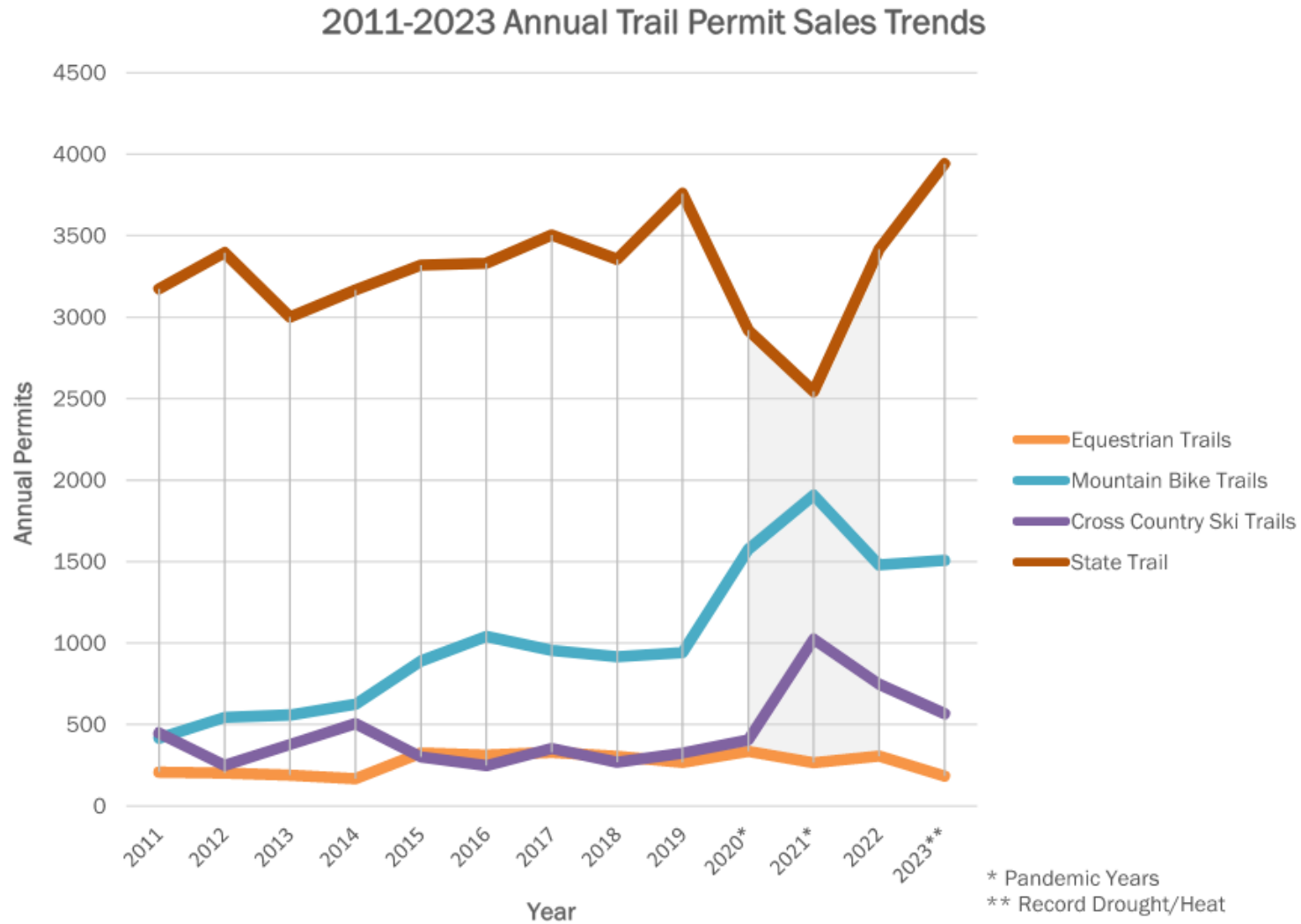


# Current Dane County Recreation Trends



Source: Dane County Parks

# Current Dane County Trail Trends



Source: Dane County Parks

# Recreation Trend Summary

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- Outdoor recreation participation increased dramatically both nationally and locally during the pandemic
- Post pandemic participation rate of increase is moderating but appears to be maintaining higher levels than pre-pandemic
- Running, walking, hiking, biking, and fishing were the top 5 most popular national recreation activities
- Dog exercise areas, biking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, outdoor education, and disc golf continue to be popular activities in Dane County Parks



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# **Parks/LWRD Planning Considerations**

# Current Parks/LWRD Staff Level Topics

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- Regional trail project priorities
- Improving accessibility and inclusivity
- LWRD/Parks stream and wetland restoration projects
- Measuring carbon sequestration for restoration projects
- Renewable and green energy
- Climate change impacts on parks & recreation
- Cultural resource preservation practices and policies
- Pandemic impacts on parks & recreation
- How do we sustain maintenance for an expanding system
- Expanding outdoor education and strategic engagement

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A person is silhouetted in a small boat on a calm lake at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a shimmering path of light across the water. The background shows a dense line of trees under a soft, hazy sky. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

# Summary and Public Input

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# Meeting Takeaways

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- Dane County is the second largest and fastest growing county in Wisconsin
- Dane County Parks is the largest metro county park system in WI
- Fastest growth areas continue to be central and northeast area of the county
- Overall population continues to trend older
- Walking, running, hiking, biking, and fishing continue to be some of the most popular outdoor past times, nationally and locally
- Dog parks, disc golf, multi-use trails, lake access sites, camping, and outdoor education are popular Dane County Parks outdoor activities

# What You Need to Know about the POSP

- The Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan provides a county-wide common vision for park, recreation, and resource protection initiatives
- The plan is updated every 5 years
- Dane County Parks will be gathering public comments/ideas through June 2024
- Draft Parks and Open Space Plan available for review Fall of 2024





# How You Can Provide Feedback on the 2025-2030 Dane County POSP?

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- Written comment forms
- Email comments: [james@countyofdane.com](mailto:james@countyofdane.com)
- Mail comments:
  - Dane County Parks
  - Attn: Chris James
  - 4212 Robertson Road
  - Madison, WI 53714

# Take the 2025-2030 POSP Survey

## Feedback Survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/POSP2024>



English

## Encuesta

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/POSP2024ESP>



Spanish

# We Want to Hear From You!

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Please....

- Respect your allotted time limit – 3 minutes
- Virtual participants enter questions/comments in chat
- Do not interrupt or interject while others are commenting
- Do not laugh at someone else's idea
- Refrain from talking while others are commenting



We'll be here as long as we can afterward to answer additional questions.



THANK YOU

*Courtesy Shan Bartus*

## Contact Information



**CHRIS JAMES**  
PARK PLANNING MANAGER

PHONE:  
**(608) 235-2252**

EMAIL:  
**[james@countyofdane.com](mailto:james@countyofdane.com)**

WEBSITE:  
**[danecountyparks.com](http://danecountyparks.com)**

Join us!

