Parks and Recreation Board Meeting

Cravath Lakefront room 2nd floor 312 West Whitewater Str, Whitewater, WI, 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Topic: Park and Recreation Board Meeting
Time: Oct 15, 2025 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88020973407?pwd=bE4FaJciLGKYWowpuktjaBEG3oybFF.1

Meeting ID: 880 2097 3407
Passcode: 551260

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,88020973407#,,,,*551260# US (Chicago)
+16469313860,,88020973407#,,,,*551260# US

Join instructions
https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/88020973407/invitations?signature=yQoVexY7_-LoX_5MwRENnrhT-TrcAqmk2st3GwwSc7w

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Members: Steve Ryan, Stephanie Hicks, Neil Hicks, Kathleen Fleming, Dan Fuller, Mike Kilar, Mike Dowden, Deb Weberparl, Chad Ahrens, Alternate Vacant.

Staff: Kevin Boehm (Director), Michelle Dujardin (Assistant Director), Vacant (WAFC Manager), Jennifer Jackson (Adult Program Coordinator), Michael Maas (Youth Program Coordinator)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A committee member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Committee to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

1. Urban Forestry Minutes from July 28, 2025.
2. Urban Forestry Minutes from
3. Park and Recreation Board Minutes from September 17, 2025.
4. Urban Forestry minutes from March 24, 2025.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Committee action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Committee discusses that particular item.

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REPORTS

5. Director's Report

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

6. Discussion on SEWRPC Aquatic Plant Management Plan
7. Update on the future of the Ice Rink at Big Brick Park
8. Update on the use of the Armory Gym for adult open gym basketball.
9. Discussion and possible action on the Recreational Program Fee Policy.
10. Discussion and possible action on approving the 2026-2030 Park and Open Space Plan.
11. Discussion and possible action to recommend to the Common Council approval of an application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Grants for Local Projects program for the creation of a splash pad at Starin Park.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

12. Setting a date for Treyton's Field Spring Cleanup 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

City of WHITEWATER

Urban Forestry Commissio

Cravath Lakefront room 2nd floor 312 West Whitewater Str, Whitewater, WI, 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Monday, July 28, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Topic: Urban Forestry Commission
Time: Jul 28, 2025 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82152804858?pwd=Dv009gV9zzhbMcLx1Y3zETxLfyz4bD.1

Meeting ID: 821 5280 4858
Passcode: 525352

Dial by your location
• +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

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AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Alt at 5:30

ROLL CALL
PRESENT:
Chairperson Nick Alt
Board Member Sherry Stanek
Board Member Joshua Kapfer
Board Member Kerry Katovich
Board Member Bill Chandler
Board Member Marjorie Stoneman (Online)

ABSENT:
None

OTHERS PRESENT:
City Staff Kevin Boehm

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Motion made by Board Member Stanek, Seconded by Chairperson Alt to approve agenda with moving items 9, 10, 11 to the top of the agenda.
Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

None

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

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None

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

9. Update on Bird City. **Chandler**

   Chandler gave a report on the Purple Martin fletching's. He stated that the Chimney at the Whitewater Middle School has been listed on the DNR's list of Chimney Swift roosting chimneys. The Chimney Swift event will be called the Swift Night Out: Dive at Dusk and will be held on August 30, 2025

10. Discussion and possible action on hosting a Bird Fair. **Chandler**

    Discussion was had, Sherry will check with Hoo's Woods and Joshua will check with fellow Mortals to see if there is availability for either organization to come do a bird presentation and the costs associated with it. No action taken.

11. Discussion and possible action on doing a bird of the year this year.

    Discussion was had on combining the bird of the year and the Bird Fair into one event. No action taken.

1. Discussion and possible action on a work day at the Arboretum. **(ALT)**

Alt led discussion on the need of working at the Arboretum, no one was interested in taking this task on and leading the creation of a work day.

Motioned by Chairperson Alt and seconded by Board Member Stanek to table this discussion to the August meeting.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

2. Discussion and possible action on a education piece for the Whitewater Banner why the Bradford pear should not be used in plantings and the environmental impact of using them. **(ALT)**

Discussion was had on the environmental impact of Bradford Pears and other pears being invasive and spreading.

Motioned by Board Member Joshua to have Joshua contact Wes Everline and see if one of his students or interns could do some research and write an article regarding Bradford Pear trees in our local environment. Seconded by Chairperson Alt.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

3. Discussion and possible action on the use of Tree Sale funds to pay to remove Bradford Pear trees from the city landscape & replace with alternatives. **(ALT)**

Motioned by Board Member Stanek and seconded by Chairperson Alt to table discussion until August's meeting to allow the city forester to determine what the cost would be to remove and replace a Bradford pear tree.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

4. Discussion and possible action on education session at the Arboretum.

Motioned by Board Member Stanke and seconded by Board Member Kapfer to have Chairperson Alt contact Jim Neiss to see if he will develop an education program and table discussion until August's meeting.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

5. Discussion and possible action on funding ideas for the Arboretum. **(ALT)**

Discussion was had, no action taken.

6. Discussion and possible action on natural playground at Starin Park. **(Stanek)**

Stanek will discuss the possibility of Russ Walton creating something from the tree. Kapfer will look into if the DNR station and Stanek will contact Old World Wisconsin would be interested in the tree.

7. Discussion and possible approval of a 2026 Tree Sale. **(ALT)**

   Motioned by Board Member Stanek and seconded by Board Member Kapfer to table discussion until August meeting.

   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

8. Update on progress identifying all the trees in town.

   No action taken.

12. Discussion and possible action on outreach to the community to see if there is interest in putting up a Purple Martin House in Skyway Park. **(ALT)**

    Chairperson Alt will communicate with neighborhood members to gauge interest and bring back to a future item.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:41

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

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Urban Forestry Commissio

Cravath Lakefront room 2nd floor 312 West Whitewater Str, Whitewater, WI, 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Monday, August 25, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

1. Topic: Urban Forestry Commission
   Time: Aug 25, 2025 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
   Join Zoom Meeting
   https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88529480331?pwd=O8ujJsf9tOZN1D7fN1iypKnAZjOmXS.1

   Meeting ID: 885 2948 0331
   Passcode: 648772

   One tap mobile
   +13126266799,,88529480331#,,,,*648772# US (Chicago)

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Alt at 5:30

ROLL CALL
PRESENT:
Chairperson Nick Alt
Board Member Sherry Stanek
Board Member Joshua Kapfer
Board Member Kerry Katovich
Board Member Bill Chandler
Board Member Marjorie Stoneman (Online)

ABSENT:
None

OTHERS PRESENT:
City Staff Kevin Boehm

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Motion made by Board Member Kapfer, Seconded by Board member Chandler to approve agenda.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

2.

Urban Forestry Commission meeting minutes from July 28, 2025
Motion made by Board Member Kapfer, Seconded by Board member Stanek to approve minutes as presented.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Commission action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Commission discusses that particular item.

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None

STAFF REPORT

City Forester Andrew Beckman gave a report stating staff have been responding to work orders as they come in with tree pruning, hazard tree removal, new tree watering and stump grinding. 5 trees were lost from this years spring plantings, 3 were warrantied by the nursery.

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

3. Discussion and possible action on a work day at the Arboretum.

   It was discussed and determined that there would be a work day scheduled for the community on September 27, 2025 from 10-12noon, meet at the Generac shelter.

4. Discussion and possible action on an education piece for the Whitewater Banner why the Bradford pear should not be used in plantings and the environmental impact of planting them.

   Kapfer will work with a graduate student to create an article to publish an article and will get a timeline to the student.

5. Discussion and possible action on the use of Tree Sale funds to pay to remove Bradford Pear trees from the city landscape & replace with alternatives.

   City Forester provided a cost estimate of $3,295 to remove a tree due to the hazards associated with power lines and street locations. It was decided that this would not be in the best interest of the groups funds.

6. Discussion and possible action on education session at the Arboretum.

   Chairperson Alt will communicate with Jim Neiss to provide an education discussion and return at the next meeting with potential topics and Jim's availability.

7. Discussion and possible action on funding ideas for the Arboretum.

   Chairperson Alt suggested contacting Walmart, Generac and Kwik Trip for donations to the Arboretum. Staff member Boehm suggested coming up with a plan to determine the needs of the Arboretum before asking for funding. Stanek will look at organizations that may contribute and any associated deadlines for pathways, educational signage and tree identification tags.

8. Discussion and possible action on what to do with wood from Territorial Oak.

   Chairperson Alt made a motion to have Board Member Stanek to work with Russell Walton and come up with a plan to move forward with doing something with the wood from the Territorial Oak. Seconded by Board Member Stoneman.

   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

9. Discussion regarding having controlled burns in city parks.

   Boehm will work with the fire department to perform controlled burns at both his and their discretion when there is enough fuel to perform a quality burn.

TREE CITY

10. Discussion and possible action on holding a tree sale in 2026.

    Board member Stanek made a motion to hold a tree sale in 2026 on Arbor Day and that weekend. Seconded by Chairperson Alt.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Stoneman, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stanek, Chairperson Alt.

Discussion was had on the number of trees to purchase for the tree sale in 2026. Chairperson Alt made a motion to purchase 500 trees for the 2026 Tree Sale. There was no second so motion failed.

Board member Stanek made a motion to purchase the same number of trees as were purchased in 2025. Seconded by Board member Chandler.

Voting Yea: Board Member Stanek, Board Member Chandler, Board Member Stoneman. Voting Nay:, Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Chairperson Alt.

Motion failed due to tie vote.

Motioned by Katovich to purchase 400 trees at the 2026 tree sale. Seconded by Chairperson Alt.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt. Voting Nay: Board Member Stanek and Board Member Stoneman,

Motion passed.

11. Update on progress identifying all the trees in town.

City Forester Beckman and staff member Boehm have indicated that funds have been requested in the 2026-2027 City budget to contract to have all city street trees GIS located and identified. If those funds are approved, the city will apply for Wisconsin DNR grants to cost share that project.

BIRD CITY

12. Update on Bird City.

Board Member Chandler gave a report covering Chimney Swifts and the Swift Night Out covering #12, 13, 14. He gave details for the upcoming event, including the School District is assisting with the coordination of the event including promoting the event to students. He also gave a report on the Purple Martin's and Martin houses in the community and stated there is still room for additional birds to nest in all houses. Chandler and Boehm will work together to update the city and parks department websites.

13. Discussion and possible action on hosting a Bird Fair.

14. Discussion on Swift Night Out: Dive at Dusk on August 30, 2025.

15. Discussion and possible action on outreach to the community to see if there is interest in putting up a Purple Martin House in Skyway Park.

Discussion was had and Board member Chandler stated there is room for additional birds in all city owned houses and should be good for the next several years. Chairperson Alt

will reach out to residents to see if they want to support an additional birdhouse in the Skyway Park when he has time.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

City of WHITEWATER

Parks and Recreation Board Meetin

Cravath Lakefront room 2nd floor 312 West Whitewater Str, Whitewater, WI, 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

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1. Topic: Park and Recreation Board
   Time: Sep 17, 2025 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
   Join Zoom Meeting
   https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81248207137?pwd=jkZ8tNaJCmpzbCH8prnE1KWaqAjGMS.1

   Meeting ID: 812 4820 7137
   Passcode: 388004

   One tap mobile
   +19292056099,,81248207137#,,,,*388004# US (New York)
   +13017158592,,81248207137#,,,,*388004# US (Washington DC)

   Join instructions
   https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/81248207137/invitations?signature=9NG7kLNJdAmZV6b4Al3_d571tq8jAftkA6U1_jCXORQ

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Called to order by Chairperson Ryan at 5:30pm.

ROLL CALL

Members: Steve Ryan, Stephanie Hicks, Neil Hicks, Kathleen Fleming, Dan Fuller, Mike Kilar, Mike Dowden, Deb Weberparl, UWW Vacant, Alternate Vacant.

Staff: Kevin Boehm (Director), Michelle Dujardin (Assistant Director), Vacant (WAFC Manager), Jennifer Jackson (Adult Program Coordinator), Michael Maas (Youth Program Coordinator)

Members present: Chairperson Ryan, Vice Chair S. Hicks, N. Hicks, Flemming, fuller, Kilar, Dowden, Weberpal, Ahrens

Others Present: Staff member Kevin Boehm, resident David Stone.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Motioned by Fuller to approve the agenda as written. Seconded by S. Hicks. Voice vote: Aye

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

2. Park and Recreation Board Minutes from August 20, 2025.

Motioned by Weberpal to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by N Hicks. Voice vote:aye

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal board action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the board discusses that particular item.

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None

REPORTS

3. Director's Report

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

4. Annual Review of Recreational Program Fee Policy

   Board members directed Boehm to review other agencies non-resident rates and follow suit as well as not charge non-resident rates for programs that do not make in other communities but the participants can join our program to allow our program to make. Such as baseball programs that are based on a specific player amount to allow the

children to make. Additional request was to specifically place language into the policy to affect the WAFC and to also include adjusting the review time from annual to every 5 years.

5. Continuation of Parks and Open Space Plan work. Incorporating survey results, site visits, and staff recommendations into individual site recommendations.

   Boehm gave a review of the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan as a final rough draft, explained that he would bring the plan back to the board in October as a final plan and asked for any further input from board members to be sent to him as soon as possible.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:21pm.

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

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City of WHITEWATER

Urban Forestry Commissio

Cravath Lakefront room 2nd floor 312 West Whitewater Str, Whitewater, WI, 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Monday, March 24, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

Topic: Urban Forestry Commision
Time: Mar 24, 2025 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86740339960?pwd=Vq2Y4CsbTA4vMOaVIiqno7Tz0JxQWx.1

Meeting ID: 867 4033 9960
Passcode: 110869

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,86740339960#,,,,*110869# US (Chicago)

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MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Alt at 5:32

ROLL CALL
PRESENT
Chairperson Nick Alt
Board Member Kerry Katovich Arrived at 5:35
Board Member Joshua Kapfer Arrived at 5:35
Board Member Sherry Stanek
Board Member Bill Chandler
Board Member Carol McCormick

ABSENT
Council Representative Brienne Brown

OTHERS PRESENT
City Forester Andrew Beckman

City Staff Kevin Boehm
Citizen David Stone

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Motion made by Board Member Stanek, Seconded by Board Member McCormick.
Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

1. Minutes of January 27, 2025.
2. Minutes of February 24, 2025.

Motion made by Board Member McCormick, Seconded by Board Member Stanek.
Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

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None

TREASURER'S REPORT

3. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Stanek reported a balance of 905.25

4. Update on segregating funds between City and Urban Forestry Commission.

Chairperson Alt gave a report stating the commission has to absolutely has to close the existing bank account because it has the city EIN number associated to it. Options are to open a new account not associated with the city. Or to deposit the funds with the City Finance Department into fund 245. The funds will be available for the commission to use.

STAFF REPORT

Beckman provided a staff report stating crews are trimming trees and some removals. Staff will be performing stump grindings as weather allows. Staff have been doing GIS tree inventory.

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

5. Discussion and possible action to make Kerry Katovich a permanent member of the commission.

   Motion made by Chairperson Alt, Seconded by Board Member Chandler.
   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

Abstain: Board Member Katovich

6. Discussion and possible approval of updated Landscape plan for Martin Bower located at 411 N Newcomb Street.

   Motion made by Board Member Stanek to recommend to the Planning Commission approve plan with the addition of a screen around the generator per the planning guidelines, Seconded by Board Member McCormick.
   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

7. Discussion and possible action on retaining the stump and replacing all signage at the Territorial Oak until a time when rot or hazard dictates removal of the stump.

   Motion made by Board Member Stanek to leave the stump until the current forester deems the stump unsafe and directs city staff to re-install the signage that was removed from the tree and immediate area, Seconded by Board Member McCormick.
   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

8. Discussion and possible approval of final revision of the City of Whitewater, Landscape Design Guidelines and Standards.

   Motion made by Board Member Stanek, Seconded by Board Member Chandler.
   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

   Motion made by Chairperson Alt to amend the original motion to ensure that White Oak is added to the approved list, seconded by Board Member Katovich.

   Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

TREE CITY

9. Discussion on how is funding going to be secured on a continual basis for the future?

   Motion made by Board Member Stanek to table the item and add the item as a future agenda item with no date set, Seconded by Board Member McCormick.

Voting Yea: Board Member Kapfer, Board Member Katovich, Board Member McCormick, Board Member Chandler, Chairperson Alt, Board Member Stanek.

10. Discussion and possible action regarding 2025 Tree Sale

A. Amount to spend on trees.

B. Making sure order contains more of what people are requesting.

Chairperson Alt stated that this item is already complete.

11. Discussion on website updates for 2025 Tree Sale

Chairperson Alt stated that this item is already done.

12. Discussion on advertising for Tree Sale

Board Member Stanek gave an update on signage, banners and 4x4 signs, and bookmarks. Boehm stated that he will get permission from Code Enforcement to install the signage at the city entrances.

13. Discussion on payment of Arboretum website domain.

Boehm presented an issue with billing for the domain name and he needs access to the receipt to ensure proper payment.

BIRD CITY

Board Member Chandler gave an update on the Purple Martin houses and gave a written report that is attached.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Bird Fair **STANEK**
- Setting a date for a volunteer work day at the Arboretum. Picking up sticks, remove straps and stakes, light pruning, and installation of mulch. **ALT**
- Discussion on how funding is going to be secured on a continual basis for the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Board Member McCormick, Seconded by Stanek to Adjourn.

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Bird City Report
3/24/25

Martins. The Landlords at the 3 city-owned and 3 privately-owned houses were notified to uncover their houses, clean out nests, and tape over holes on the east, north, and west sides to attract less sparrows until the Martins arrive. The city-owned covers have been removed and stored in the city garage. All landlords were asked to run off the data sheet from the Purple Martin website to keep a record of arrival, laying, and fledging and send the data directly to the PM association at the end of the season.

Sparrows Sparrows were observed at Clay Street, so a trap was set by the landlord. The privately-owned Martin houses at Fremont Street always has an infestation of sparrows. The only solution is a repeating sparrow trap. However, the owner balks at the cost.

Bluebirds 4 of 7 Bluebird houses had living mice in them. 2 Mouse traps were baited and set under the houses to hopefully catch mice as they climb the pole.

International Children's Day. I asked and Miguel confirmed we have a table at the event, which is Saturday, April 12 at Lincoln School. Information about trees and a video of Chimney Swifts descending into the Whitewater Middle School will be shown.

Bill Chandler

AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CRAVATH AND TRIPPE LAKES

WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN

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Thomas Slawski, PhD ..... Chief Biologist

Special acknowledgement is due to Danielle Matuszak MS, Specialist-Biologist; Justin Poinsatte, PhD, Principal Specialist-Biologist; Hanna Helker, Intern Biologist; Thomas Slawski, PhD, Chief Biologist; Megan Deau, Principal Graphic Designer for their contributions to the conduct of this study and the preparation of this report. Acknowledgement is also extended to the members of the Lake Advisory Committee for their contributions to the report. Acknowledgement is also extended to the lake monitoring volunteers for their time, efforts, and equipment.

MEMORANDUM REPORT
NUMBER 275

AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CRAVATH AND TRIPPE LAKES, WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Prepared by the
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P.O. Box 1607
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August 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

Credit: Commission Staff

The Southeastern Wisconsin Planning Commission (Commission or SEWRPC) completed this aquatic plant inventory and management study of Cravath and Trippe Lakes (Lakes) on behalf of the City of Whitewater (City). This memorandum report is the Commission's first aquatic plant management plan for Cravath and Trippe Lakes. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will use data and conclusions generated as part of the Commission's study to help evaluate the Lakes' aquatic plant community and draft an updated Aquatic Plant Control permit.

1.1 PROJECT SETTING, BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND INTENT

Cravath Lake is a 70-acre impounded drainage lake located in the City of Whitewater in Walworth County. It is fed by both Spring Brook and Trippe Lake, and outflows to the Whitewater Creek, to the Bark River, and then to the Rock River (see Map 1.1).[1] Attaining a maximum depth of 10 feet, the Lake can support aquatic plant growth throughout most of its surface area. A 2017 survey performed by Lake and Pond Solutions observed 12 aquatic plant species in the Lake which included several beneficial native species such as Sago pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinata*), Illinois pondweed (*Potamogeton illinoensis*), and American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*). Invasive aquatic plant species, including Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) were also observed during the survey.

Trippe Lake is a 212-acre drainage lake also located in the City of Whitewater. It is fed by Whitewater Creek, and outflows into Cravath Lake (see Map 1.1). It has a maximum depth of 8 feet and was previously surveyed by Lake and Pond Solutions in 2017. A total of 16 species were reported, with similar beneficial native species (*Stuckenia pectinata*) as well as non-native invasives (*Potamogeton crispus* and *Myriophyllum spicatum*). Cravath and Trippe lakes underwent a drawdown from 2019 to 2021, followed by dredging and controlled burns in 2022 for management of aquatic plants. The aquatic plant survey conducted for this update was performed in July of 2024 where Commission staff utilized the recommended baseline monitoring protocol employed by the WDNR.[2]

[1] *www.wwparks.org/lakes.*

[2] *Hauxwell, J., S. Knight, K. Wagner, A. Mikulyuk, M. Nault, M. Porzky and S. Chase,* Recommended Baseline Monitoring of Aquatic Plants in Wisconsin: Sampling Design, Field and Laboratory Procedures, Data Entry and Analysis, and Applications*, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Science Services, Publication No. PUB-SS-1068, 2010.*

Map 1.1
Location, Public Access, and Bathymetry of Cravath and Trippe Lakes

Note: Aerial imagery from 2024; Bathymetry depths are from WDNR, Trippe Lake's contours are from 1961 and Cravath Lake's contours are from 1966 and thus may not reflect the current depth of the lakes.

PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH

PRIVATE BOAT LAUNCH

DAM

N

0 570 1,140 Feet

Source: SEWRPC and WDNR

The City of Whitewater manages aquatic plant growth on the Lakes to enhance navigation and recreational opportunities. Aquatic plant management is regulated by the WDNR and requires a permit. The City is required to reevaluate the aquatic plant community, update the aquatic plant management plan, and renew the aquatic plant management permit every five years. The City retained the Commission to reevaluate the Lakes' aquatic plant community and update the aquatic plant management plan. This updated plan needs to consider the present status of the aquatic plant community, must identify plant community changes that may have occurred, must examine the potential success or lack of success of the current aquatic plant management strategies, must consider current trends and issues that pertain to aquatic plant management issues and techniques, and must describe the methods and procedures associated with the proposed continuation of aquatic plant management in the Lakes. These efforts are supported through a WDNR NR 193 Surface Water Grant.

This updated aquatic plant management (APM) plan summarizes information and recommendations needed to manage the aquatic plant community of the Lakes. The plan covers four main topics:

- APM Goals and Objectives
- Aquatic Plant Community Changes and Quality
- Aquatic Plant Control Alternatives
- Recommended Aquatic Plant Management Plan

This memorandum focuses upon approaches to monitor and control actively growing nuisance populations of aquatic plants and presents a range of alternatives that could potentially be used to achieve desired APM goals and provides specific recommendations related to each alternative. These data and suggestions can be valuable resources when developing requisite APM permit applications and implementing future aquatic plant management efforts.

INVENTORY FINDINGS AND RELEVANCE TO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2

Credit: Commission Staff

2.1 AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Aquatic plant management (APM) programs are designed to further a variety of lake user and riparian landowner goals and desires. For example, most APM programs aim to improve lake navigability. However, APM programs must also be sensitive to other lake uses and must maintain or enhance a lake's ecological integrity. Consequently, APM program objectives are commonly developed in close consultation with many interested parties. The Cravath and Trippe Lakes (Lakes) APM plan considered input from the City of Whitewater (City), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and the public. Objectives of the Cravath and Trippe Lakes APM program include the following.

- Effectively control the quantity and density of nuisance aquatic plant growth in well-targeted portions of Cravath and Trippe Lakes. This objective helps:
    - Enhance water-based recreational opportunities,
    - Improve community-perceived aesthetic values, and
    - Maintain or enhance the Lakes' natural resource value.
- Manage the Lakes in an environmentally sensitive manner in conformance with *Wisconsin Administrative Code* standards and requirements under Chapters NR 103, "Water Quality Standards for Wetlands," NR 107, "Aquatic Plant Management," and NR 109, "Aquatic Plants: Introduction, Manual Removal & Mechanical Control Regulations." Following these rules helps the City preserve and enhance the Lakes' water quality, biotic communities, habitat value, and essential structure and relative function in relation to adjacent areas.
- Protect and maintain public health and promote public comfort, convenience, and welfare while safeguarding the Lakes' ecological health through environmentally sound management of vegetation, wildlife, fish, and other aquatic/semi-aquatic organisms in and around the Lakes.

- Promote a high-quality water-based experience for residents and visitors to the Lakes consistent with the policies and practices of the WDNR, as described in the regional water quality management plan, as amended.[3]

To meet these objectives, the City of Whitewater executed an agreement with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (Commission or SEWRPC) to investigate the characteristics of the Lakes and to develop an aquatic plant management plan update. As part of this planning process, surveys of the aquatic plant community and comparison to the previous survey results were conducted. This chapter presents the results of each of these inventories.

2.2 AQUATIC PLANT COMMUNITY COMPOSITION, CHANGE, AND QUALITY

All healthy lakes have plants and native aquatic plants form a foundational part of a lake ecosystem. Aquatic plants form an integral part of the aquatic food web, converting sediments and inorganic nutrients present in the water into organic compounds that are directly available as food to other aquatic organisms. Through photosynthesis, plants utilize energy from sunlight and release the oxygen required by many other aquatic life forms into the water. Aquatic plants also serve several other valuable functions in a lake ecosystem, including:

- Improving water quality by filtering excess nutrients from the water
- Providing habitat for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, and fishes
- Stabilizing lake bottom substrates
- Supplying food for waterfowl and various lake-dwelling animals

Even though aquatic plants may hinder human use and/or access to a lake, aquatic plants should not necessarily be eliminated or even significantly reduced in abundance because they often support many other beneficial functions (see Table 2.1). For example, water lilies play a significant role in providing shade, habitat, and food for fish and other important aquatic organisms. They also help prevent damage to the lakeshore by dampening the power of waves that could otherwise erode the shoreline. Additionally, the shade that these plants provide helps reduce the growth of undesirable plants because it limits the amount of sunlight reaching the lake bottom. Given these benefits, large-scale removal of native plants that may be perceived as a nuisance and should be avoided when developing plans for aquatic plant management.

Aquatic Plant Surveys

Aquatic plant inventories have been completed in Cravath and Trippe Lakes in the past to support aquatic plant management permit applications. WDNR surveyed the Lakes' aquatic plants in 2006, followed by Lake and Pond Solutions in 2017 to establish long-term management goals and permitted management of the Lakes. The City has decided to evaluate the Lakes' aquatic plant community and prepare an aquatic plant management plan for the Lakes. The 2017 and 2024 surveys used the same point-intercept grid and methodology (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2).[4,5,6] In this method, sampling sites are based on predetermined global

[3] *SEWRPC Planning Report No. 30,* A Regional Water Quality Management Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin—2000*,* Volume One, Inventory Findings*, September 1978,* Volume Two, Alternative Plans*, February 1979,* Volume Three, Recommended Plan*, June 1979, and SEWRPC Memorandum Report No. 93,* A Regional Water Quality Management Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: An Update and Status Report*, March 1995.*

[4] *Sampling methodology changed from transect-based methods in 2011 to a point-intercept method beginning with the 2017 survey.*

[5] *R. Jesson and R. Lound, Minnesota Department of Conservation* Game Investigational Report No. 6, An Evaluation of a Survey Technique for Submerged Aquatic Plants*, 1962; as refined in the Memo from S. Nichols to J. Bode, J. Leverence, S. Borman, S. Engel, and D. Helsel, entitled "analysis of Macrophyte Data for Ambient Lakes-Dutch Hollow and Redstone Lakes Example," Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, University of Wisconsin-Extension, February 4, 1994.*

[6] *J. Hauxwell, S. Knight, K. Wagner, A. Mikulyuk, M. Nault, M. Porzky, and S. Chase,* Recommended Baseline Monitoring of Aquatic Plants in Wisconsin: Sampling Design, Field and Laboratory Procedures, Data Entry and Analysis, and Applications*, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Science Services, Publication No. PUB-SS-1068 201, March 2010.*

Table 2.1
Examples of Positive Ecological Qualities Associated with a Subset of the Aquatic Plant Species Present or Historically Present in Cravath and Trippe Lakes

Aquatic Plant Species Present	Ecological Significance
Ceratophyllum demersum (coontail)	Provides good shelter for young fish; supports insects valuable as food for fish and ducklings; native
Elodea canadensis (common waterweed)	Provides shelter and support for insects which are valuable as fish food; native
Lemna spp. (duckweeds)	Very nutritious food source for waterfowl; mats can prevent extensive mosquito breeding; native
Myriophyllum spicatum (Eurasian watermilfoil)	None known. Invasive nonnative. Hinders navigation, outcompetes desirable aquatic plants, reduces water circulation, depresses oxygen levels, and reduces fish/invertebrate populations
Nelumbo lutea (American lotus)	Extensive stand provide habitat for wildlife, rhizomes consumed by muskrat and beaver; native
Potamogeton crispus (curly-leaf pondweed)	Adapted to cold water; mid-summer die-off can diminish water quality; invasive nonnative
Potamogeton gramineus (variable pondweed)	The fruit is an important food source for many waterfowl; also provides food for muskrat, deer, and beaver; native
Potamogeton natans (floating-leaf pondweed)	The late-forming fruit provides important food source for ducks; provides good fish habitat due to its shade and foraging opportunities; native
Stuckenia pectinata (Sago pondweed)	This plant is the most important pondweed for ducks, in addition to providing food and shelter for young fish; native

Note: Information obtained from A Manual of Aquatic Plants by Norman C. Fassett, University of Wisconsin Press; Guide to Wisconsin Aquatic Plants, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and, Through the Looking Glass: A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants, Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Source: SEWRPC

positioning system (GPS) location points that are arranged in a grid pattern across the entire surface of a lake. The grid patterns of Cravath and Trippe Lakes consist of 233 points and 305 points, respectively, (provided by WDNR) that allow the types and abundance of aquatic plants to be directly contrasted to prior point-intercept surveys. At each grid point sampling site, a single rake haul is taken and a qualitative assessment of the rake fullness, on a scale of zero to three, is made for each species identified. The same points were sampled using the same techniques in 2017 and 2024. This consistency enables more detailed evaluation of aquatic plant abundance and distribution change than has been possible in the past.

Commission staff conducted the 2024 survey on Cravath and Trippe Lake surveys on July 29th and July 15th-16th, respectively. Conditions during the surveys were adequate, with partly sunny skies and intermittent rain, low wind speeds, and little to no boat traffic. The Lakes' water clarity was low, which may have hindered visual observations of aquatic plant species within six feet of the sampling location. In general, the aquatic plant specimens were mature, and several species were in flower (e.g., white water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*)). In addition to the aquatic plants, Commission staff observed waterfowl, fish, muskrats, and turtles during the survey.

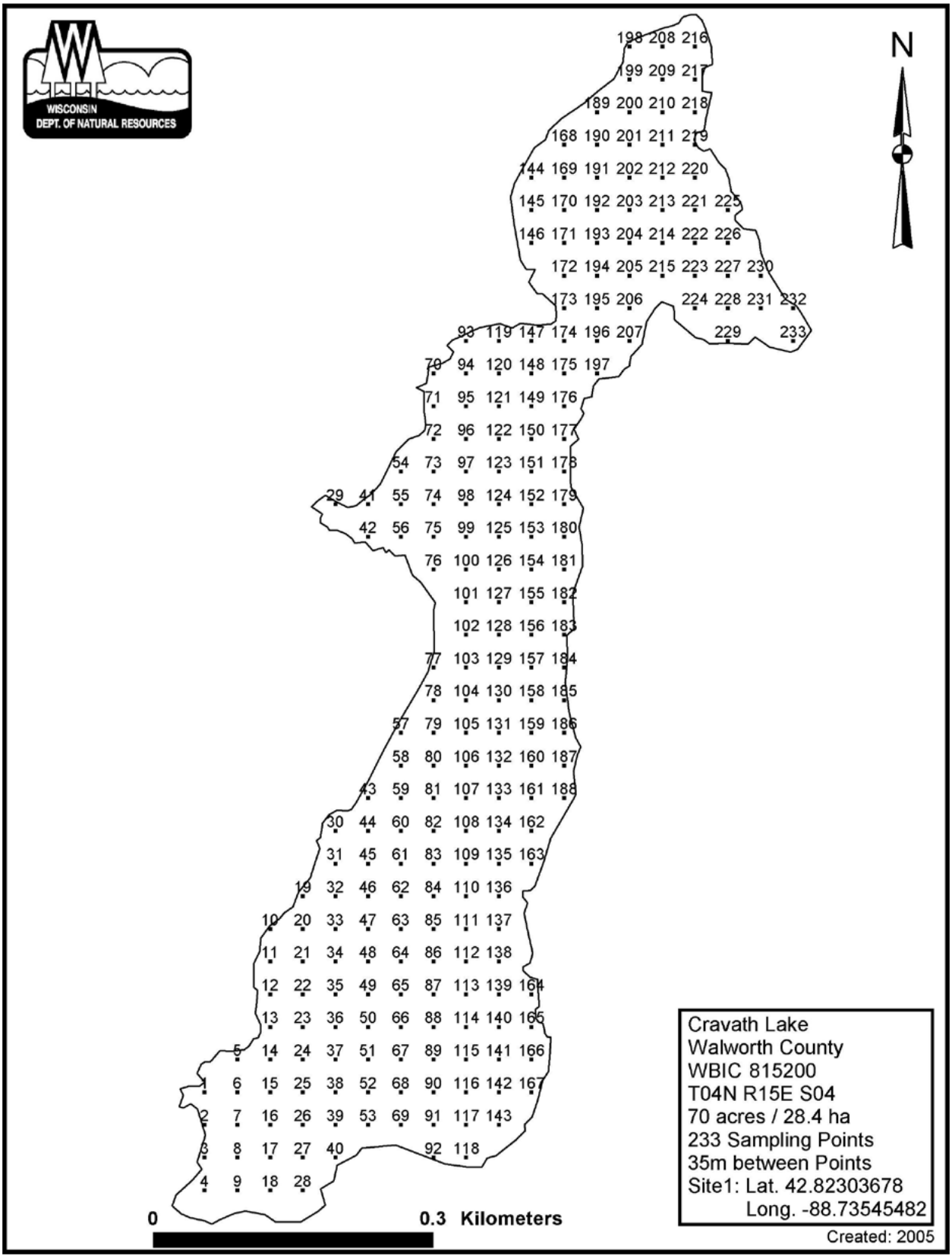
While Commission staff strived to survey as much of the Lakes as feasible, certain areas were not surveyed in 2024 compared to the 2017 survey. These areas included the southern bays of both lakes, as well as large portions near the shorelines that were non-navigable for sampling purposes due to dense cattail growth.[7] Other points that were not surveyed were either due to points that were deemed to be on shore or near to the dam.

Aquatic Plant Survey Metrics

Each aquatic plant species has preferred habitat conditions in which that species thrives as well as conditions that limit or completely inhibit its growth. For example, water conditions (e.g., depth, clarity, source, alkalinity, and nutrient concentrations), substrate composition, the presence of or absence of water movement, and pressure from herbivory and/or competition all can influence the type of aquatic plants found in a water

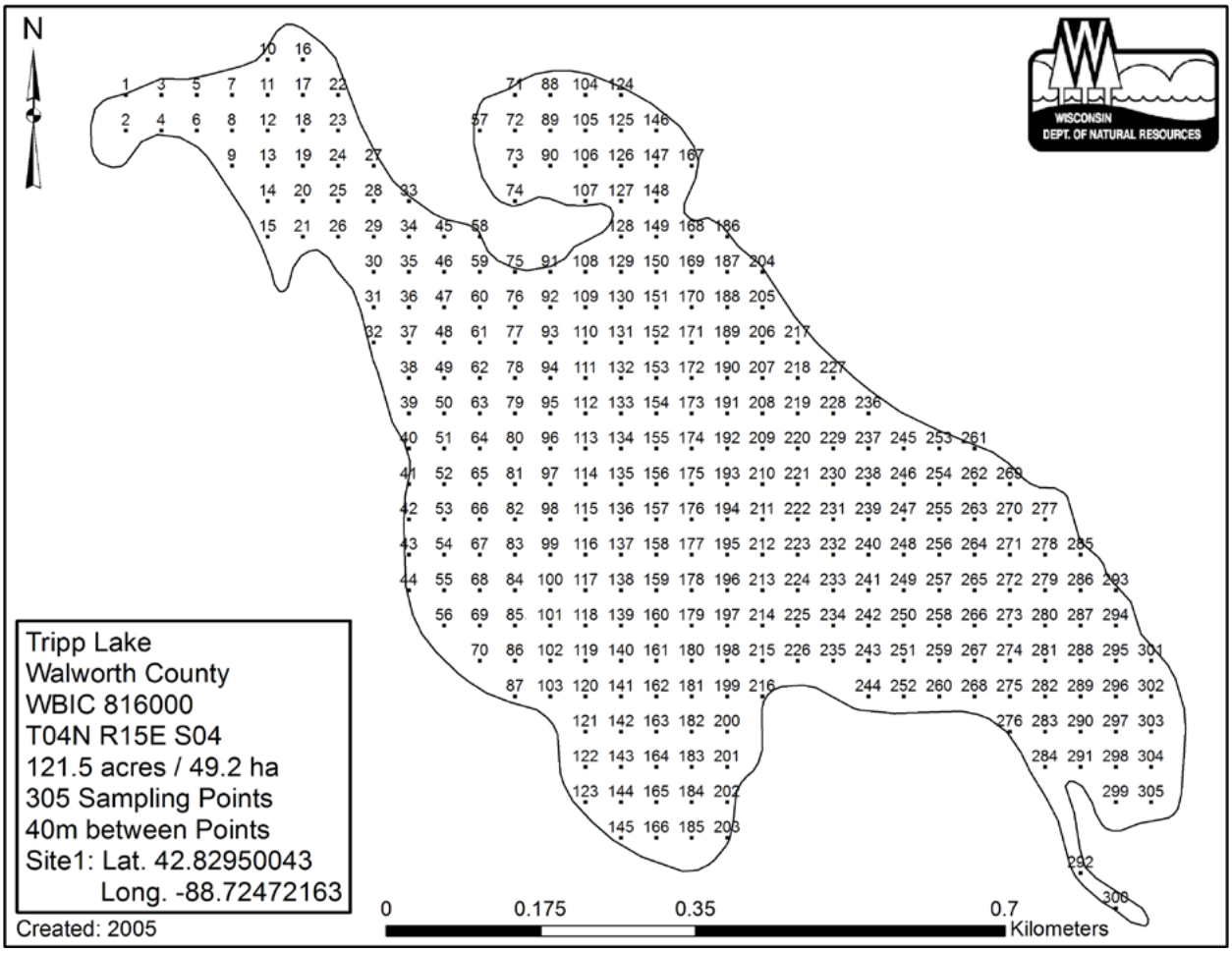
[7] *See Section 2.3 "Past and Present Aquatic Plant Management Practices" and section "Cattails in Trippe and Cravath Lakes for further descriptions of the Lakes' drawdown and subsequent cattail growth.*

Figure 2.1
Aquatic Plant Sampling Grid for Cravath Lake



Source: WDNR

Figure 2.2
Aquatic Plant Sampling Grid for Trippe Lake



Source: WDNR

body. All other factors being equal, water bodies with a diverse array of habitat variables are more likely to host a diverse aquatic plant community. For similar reasons, some areas of a particular lake may contain plant communities with low diversity, while other areas of the same lake may exhibit higher diversity. Historically, human manipulation has often favored certain plants and reduced biological diversity (biodiversity). Thoughtful aquatic plant management can help maintain or even enhance aquatic plant biodiversity.

Several metrics are useful to describe aquatic plant community condition and to design management strategies. These metrics include total rake fullness, maximum depth of colonization, species richness, biodiversity, evaluation of sensitive species, and relative species abundance. Metrics derived from the 2017 and 2024 point-intercept surveys are described below.

Cravath Lake

Total Rake Fullness

As described earlier in this section, Commission staff qualitatively rated the plant abundance at each survey point by how much of the sampling rake was covered by all aquatic plant species.[8] This rating, called total rake fullness, can be a useful metric evaluating general abundance of aquatic plants as part of the point-intercept survey. In the 2024 survey on Cravath Lake the average rake fullness was 1.32 (see Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3). This rake fullness is substantially lower than the average rake fullness of 2.36 recorded in the 2017 survey, indicating that the density of aquatic vegetation has decreased in that time.

[8] *This method follows the standard WDNR protocol.*

Table 2.2
Cravath Lake Aquatic Plant Summary Statistics: PI Survey 2024

Statistic	Value
Total number of sites visited	114
Total number of sites with vegetation	94
Total number of sites shallower than maximum depth of plants	114
Frequency of occurrence at sites shallower than maximum depth of plants	82.46
Simpson Diversity Index	0.62
Maximum depth of plants (feet)	7.00
Number of sites sampled using rake on Rope (R)	15
Number of sites sampled using rake on Pole (P)	99
Average number of all species per site (shallower than max depth)	1.49
Average number of all species per site (vegetation sites only)	1.81
Average number of native species per site (shallower than max depth)	1.46
Average number of native species per site (vegetation sites only)	1.78
Species Richness	7
Species Richness (including visuals)	9

Source: SEWRPC

Maximum Depth of Colonization

Maximum depth of colonization (MDC) can be a useful indicator of water quality, as turbid and/or eutrophic (nutrient-rich) lakes generally have shallower MDC than lakes with clear water.[9] It is important to note that for surveys using the point-intercept protocol, the protocol allows sampling to be discontinued at depths greater than the maximum depth of colonization for vascular plants. However, aquatic moss and macroalgae, such as musk grass and nitella, frequently colonize deeper than vascular plants and thus may be under-sampled in some lakes. For example, *Chara globularis* and *Nitella flexilis* have been found growing as deep as 37 and 35 feet, respectively, in Silver Lake, in Washington County. The MDC in 2024 in Cravath Lake was 7 feet, which was the deepest water depth recorded during the plant survey (see Table 2.2). Thus, the entire lake is shallow enough to support aquatic plant growth.

Species Richness

The number of distinct types of aquatic plants present in a lake is referred to as the species richness of the lake. Larger lakes with diverse lake basin morphology, less human disturbance, and/or healthier, more resilient lake ecosystems have greater species richness. Including visual sightings of aquatic plants, nine species were found in Cravath Lake during the 2024 survey (see Table 2.3). Commission staff saw between zero and five distinct aquatic plant species at individual sampling points on the Lake (see Figure 2.4).

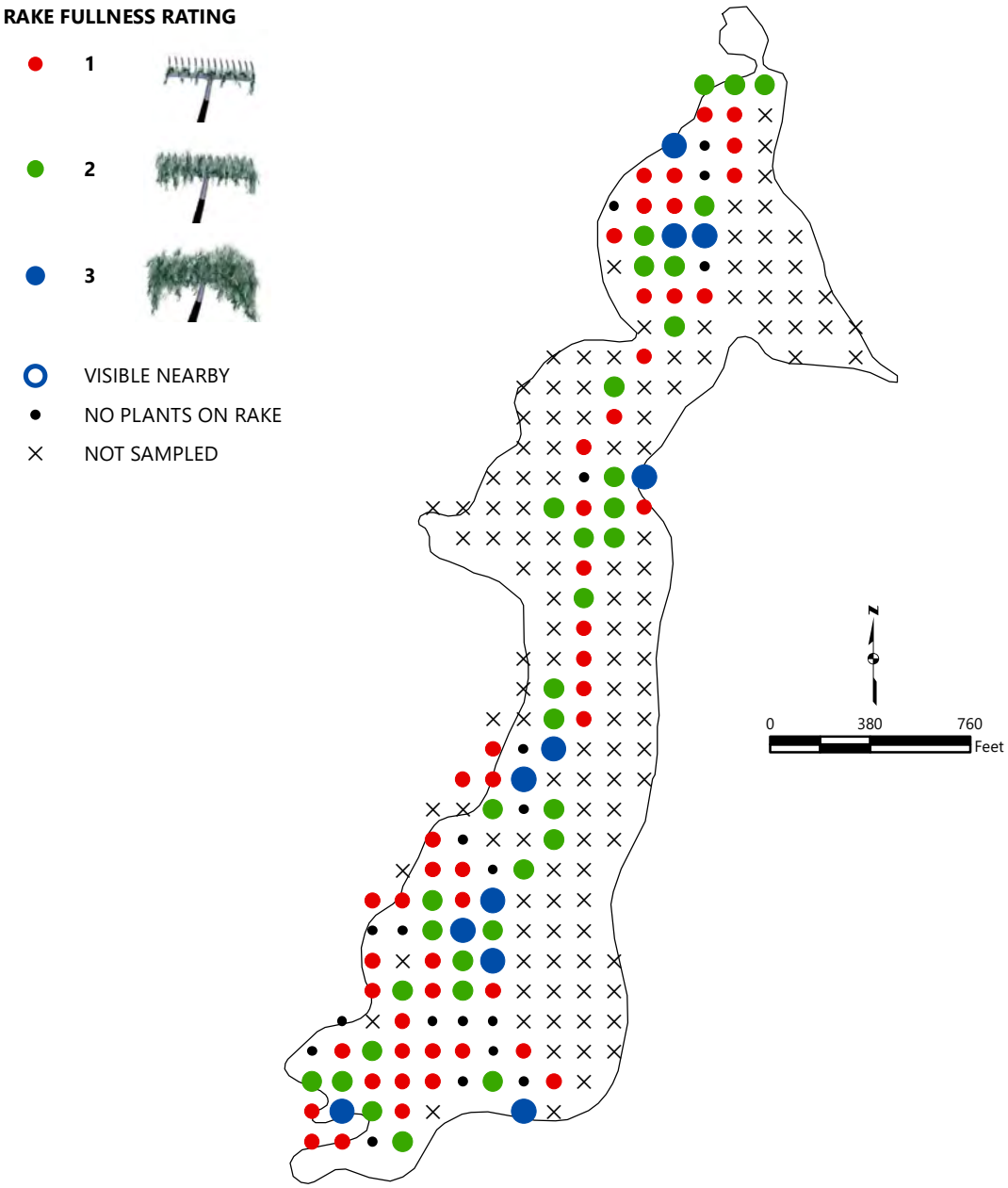
Biodiversity and Species Distribution

Species richness is often incorrectly used as a synonym for biodiversity. The difference in meaning between these terms is both subtle and significant. Biodiversity is based on the number of species present in a habitat along with the abundance of each species. For the purposes of this study, abundance was determined as the percentage of observations of each species compared to the total number of observations made. Aquatic plant biodiversity can be measured with the Simpson Diversity Index (SDI).[10] Using this measure, a community dominated by one or two species would be considered less diverse than one in which several different species have similar abundance. In general, more diverse biological communities are better able to maintain ecological integrity in response to environmental stresses. Promoting biodiversity not only helps sustain an ecosystem but preserves the spectrum of options useful for future management decisions. In 2024, Cravath Lake's SDI score was 0.62 in contrast to the Lake's 2017 SDI of 0.82 (see Table 2.2). Commission staff found between zero and 5 species at points withing Cravath Lake. Only two points had a species richness of 5 and only 6 points had richness of 4 (see Figure 2.4). With an SDI of 0.62, Cravath Lake has relatively low biodiversity compared to other lakes in Southeastern Wisconsin, which range in SDI values from approximately 0.5 (very low biodiversity) to 0.95 (very high biodiversity).

[9] *D.E. Canfield Jr, L. Langeland, and W.T. Haller, "Relations Between Water Transparency and Maximum Depth of Macrophyte Colonization in Lakes,"* Journal of Aquatic Plant Management *23, 1985.*

[10] *The SDI expresses values on a zero to one scale where 0 equates to no diversity and 1 equates to infinite diversity.*

Figure 2.3
Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Sensitive Species

Aquatic plant metrics, such as species richness and the floristic quality index (FQI), can be useful for evaluating lake health. In hard water lakes, such as those common in Southeastern Wisconsin, species richness generally increases with water clarity and decreases with nutrient enrichment.[11] The FQI is an assessment metric used to evaluate how closely a lake's aquatic plant community matches that of undisturbed, pre-settlement conditions.[12] To formulate this metric, Wisconsin aquatic plant species were assigned conservatism (C)

[11] *Vestergaard, O. and Sand-Jensen, K. "Alkalinity and Trophic State Regulate Aquatic Plant Distribution in Danish Lakes,"* Aquatic Botany *67, 2000.*

[12] *S. Nichols, "Floristic Quality Assessment of Wisconsin Lake Plant Communities with Example Applications,"* Lake and Reservoir Management *15(2), 1999.*

Table 2.3
Aquatic Plant Species Observed in Cravath Lake: 2006-2024

Aquatic Plant Species	Native or Invasive	2006	2017	2024
Ceratophyllum demersum	Native	X	X	X
Elodea canadensis	Native	X	X	X
Lemna minor	Native	X	X	X
Myriophyllum spicatum	Invasive	X	X	X
Nelumbo lutea	Native	--	X	--
Nuphar advena	Native	--	X	--
Nuphar variegata	Native	X	--	--
Nymphaea odorata	Native	X	X	X
Potamogeton crispus	Invasive	X	X	X
Potamogeton gramineus	Native	--	X	--
Potamogeton illinoensis	Native	--	X	--
Potamogeton natans	Native	--	X	--
Potamogeton zosteriformis	Native	X	X	--
Sagittaria sp.	Native	--	X	--
Sparganium sp.	Native	X	--	--
Spirodela polyrhiza	Native	X	--	--
Stuckenia pectinata	Native	X	X	X
Typha sp.	Hybrid	--	X	X
Wolffia sp.	Native	--	X	X
Species Total	--	11	16	9

Note: Red text indicates nonnative and/or invasive species.

Source: SEWRPC

values on a scale from zero to ten that reflect the likelihood that each species occurs in undisturbed habitat. These values were assigned based on the species substrate preference, tolerance of water turbidity, water drawdown tolerance, rooting strength, and primary reproductive means. Native "sensitive" species that are intolerant of ecological disturbance receive high C values, while natives that are disturbance tolerant receive low C values. Invasive species are assigned a C value of 0. A lake's FQI is calculated as the average C value of species identified in the lake, divided by the square root of species richness. In 2024 Cravath Lake had an FQI of 8.5 and an average C value of 3.8, indicating a community tolerant of disturbance.

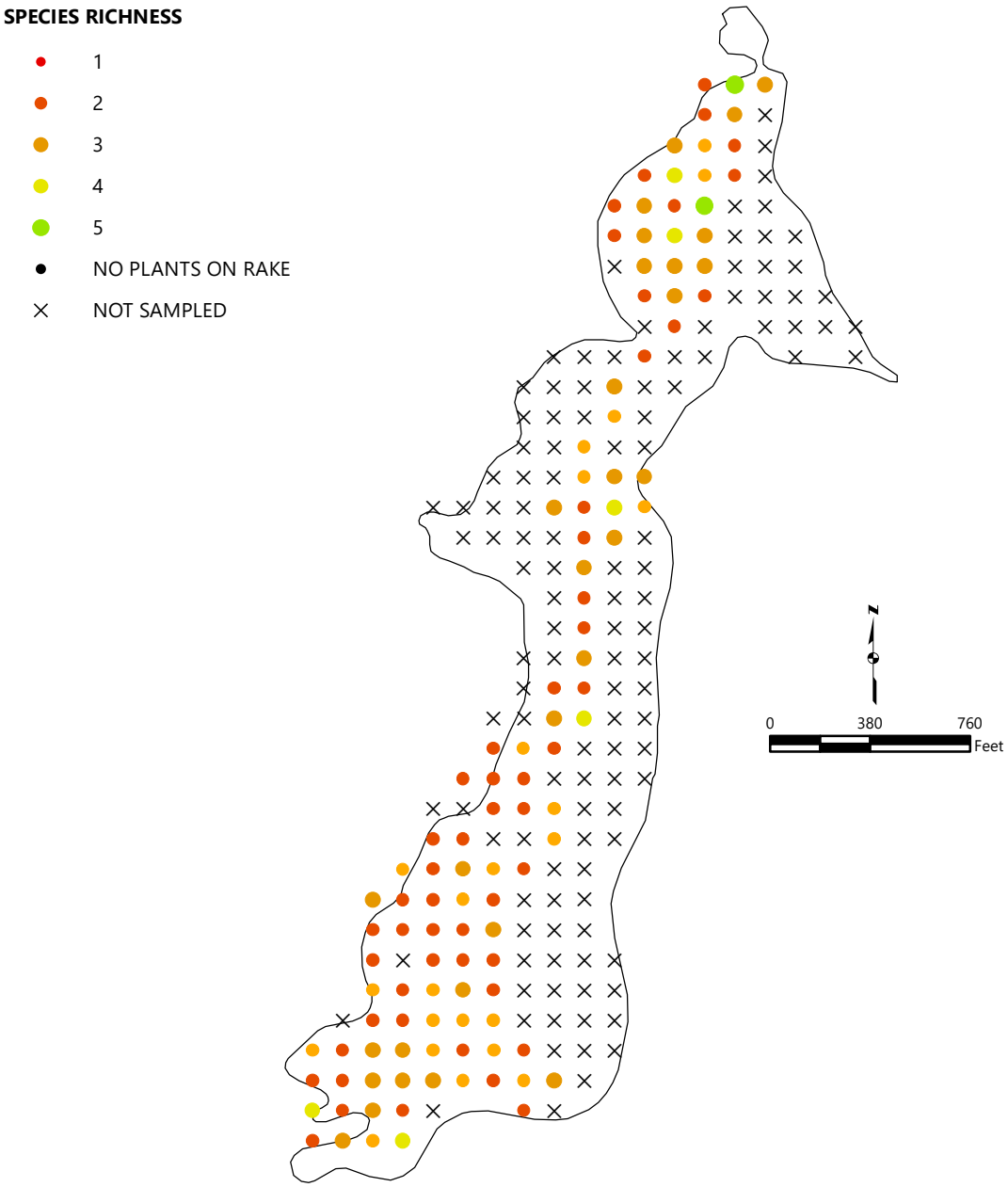
Aquatic plants metrics such as species richness and disturbance tolerance are often used as indicators of the ecological health of a lake due to aquatic plants' varying sensitivity to human activity. In hard water lakes, such as those common in Southeastern Wisconsin, species richness generally increases with water quality and decreases with nutrient enrichment.[13] Beginning with the 2024 impairment listing cycle, WDNR began utilizing a model developed to assess lake health by examining its aquatic plant community.[14] This model evaluates whether a lake has been disturbed by human activity using known species sensitivity to disturbance as well as the littoral frequency of occurrence of each species observed on the lake.[15] No sensitive aquatic plant species, as designated by this model, were found in Cravath Lake during the 2024 survey, but several species considered "tolerant" were observed, including EWM, coontail, duckweed, elodea, CLP, Illinois pondweed, Sago pondweed, and watermeal. The lack of sensitive species and the number of tolerant species in the Lake indicates that the water and subsequent plant community are not of high quality.

[13] *Vestergaard and Sand-Jensen, 2000,* op. cit.

[14] *Mikulyuk, A., M. Barton, J. Hauxwell, C. Hein, E. Kujawa, K. Minahan, M. E. Nault, D. L. Oele, and K. I. Wagner, "A Macrophyte Bioassessment Approach Linking Taxon-specific Tolerance and Abundance in North Temperate Lakes,"* Journal of Environmental Management *199: 172-180, 2017.*

[15] *Disturbance variables in the model included the lake's nutrient status, specific conductance (a proxy measurement for salt concentrations), and the amount of developed land use (e.g., agriculture, roads, urban lands) within the lake's watershed.*

Figure 2.4
Species Richness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Relative Species Abundance

In the 2024 survey of Cravath Lake, the five most common aquatic plant species found were: 1) Duckweed (*Lemna* sp.), 2) Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), 3) Elodea (*Elodea canadensis*), 4) Watermeal (*Wolffia* sp.), and 5) Curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) (see Appendix A, Figures A.1-A.5). Duckweed was observed at 112 points across Cravath Lake and could be seen clumping together among the cattail (*Typha* sp.) stands within the Lake. Coontail was found at 81 points across the Lake. Elodea was found at only 13 points in Cravath Lake, primarily located in the southern half of the Lake. Watermeal was found at twelve points in 2024.

Invasive Species

Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM)

EWM is one of eight milfoil species found in Wisconsin and is the only exotic or nonnative milfoil species. EWM favors mesotrophic to moderately eutrophic waters, fine organic-rich lake-bottom sediment, warmer water with moderate clarity and high alkalinity, and tolerates a wide range of pH and salinity.[16,17] In Southeastern Wisconsin, EWM can grow rapidly and has few natural enemies to inhibit its growth. Furthermore, it can grow explosively following major environmental disruptions, as small fragments of EWM can grow into entirely new plants.[18] For reasons such as these, EWM can grow to dominate an aquatic plant community in as little as two years.[19,20] In such cases, EWM can displace native plant species and interfere with the aesthetic and recreational use of waterbodies. However, established populations may rapidly decline after approximately ten to 15 years.[21]

Human-produced EWM fragments (e.g., created by boating through EWM), as well as fragments generated from natural processes (e.g., wind-induced turbulence, animal feeding/disturbance) readily colonize disturbed sites, contributing to EWM spread. EWM fragments can remain buoyant for two to three days in summer and two to six days in fall, with larger fragments remaining buoyant longer than smaller ones.[22] The fragments can also cling to boats, trailers, motors, and/or bait buckets where they can remain alive for weeks contributing to transfer of milfoil to other lakes. For these reasons, it is especially important to remove all vegetation from boats, trailers, and other equipment after removing them from the water and prior to launching in other waterbodies.

During the 2024 survey of Cravath Lake, Commission staff found EWM at 3 points across the Lake (see Appendix A, Figure A.6). All three points with EWM were located on the northern end of the lake, nearest to Cravath Lakefront Park and the outlet of the Lake. EWM was not found anywhere else in the lake. Two of the three points had a rake fullness of one and one point had a rake fullness of two.

Curly-Leaf Pondweed (CLP)

Curly-leaf pondweed, like Eurasian watermilfoil, is identified in Chapter NR 109 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code as a nonnative invasive aquatic plant. Although survey data suggests it presently is only a relatively minor species in terms of dominance, and, as such, is less likely to interfere with recreational boating activities, the plant can grow dense strands that exclude other high value aquatic plants. For this reason, curly-leaf pondweed must continue to be monitored and managed as an invasive member of the aquatic community. Lastly, it must be remembered that curly-leaf pondweed senesces by midsummer and therefore may be underrepresented in the inventory data presented in this report.

During the 2024 survey of Cravath Lake, Commission staff did not find CLP on the rake at any points across the Lake (see Appendix A, Figure A.5). It was, however, seen as a visual observation at four points at the southern end of the Lake. CLP was not found anywhere else in the lake.

Apparent Changes in Cravath Lake's Observed Aquatic Plant Communities: 2017 Versus 2024

The 2024 aquatic plant survey identified a total of nine different plant species including visual observations, half of the 18 species found in the 2017 aquatic plant survey. Thus, it is evident that Cravath Lake has lost some of the diversity of its aquatic plant community following the 2019 to 2021 drawdown.

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[16] *U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Islands Ecosystems at Risk (PIER), 2019.: hear/org/pier/species/myriophyllum_spicatum.htm.*

[17] *S.A. Nichols and B. H. Shaw, "Ecological Life Histories of the Three Aquatic Nuisance Plants: Myriophyllum spicatum, Potamogeton crispus, and Elodea canadensis,"* Hydrobiologia *131(1), 1986.*

[18] Ibid.

[19] *S.R. Carpenter, "The Decline of* Myriophyllum spicatum *in Eutrophic Wisconsin (USA) Lake,"* Canadian Journal of Botany *58(5), 1980.*

[20] *Les, D. H., and L. J. Mehrhoff, "Introduction of Nonindigenous Vascular Plants in Southern New England: a Historical Perspective,"* Biological Invasions *1:284-300, 1999.*

[21] *S.R. Carpenter, 1980, op. cit.*

[22] *J.D. Wood and M. D. Netherland, "How Long Do Shoot Fragments of Hydrilla (Hydrilla verticullata) and Eurasian Watermilfoil (Myriophyllum spicatum) Remain Buoyant?,"* Journal of Aquatic Plant Management *55: 76-82, 2017.*

In addition to the number of different aquatic plant species detected in the Lake, several other comparisons can be drawn between the 2017 and 2024 aquatic plant survey results, as examined below.

- The total littoral vegetated frequency of occurrence decreased by 17.5 percent from 2017 to 2024. It was 82.5 percent in 2024 compared to 100 percent in 2017 (see Table 2.2).

- The MDC in Cravath Lake during the 2024 survey was 7 feet, 1.5 feet deeper than the 2017 survey, where the MDC was 5.5 feet (see Table 2.2). However, this increase is likely due to the increase in the Lake's water depth as the lake was dredged during the 2019 to 2021 drawdown. In both the 2017 and 2024 surveys, the MDC equals the maximum water depth for the lake indicating that aquatic plants are able to grow across the entire waterbody.

- The composition and order of the five most common species changed from 2017 to 2024. Three of the 5 top most common species remained the same but the other two most common species changed. In 2024 the five were 1) duckweed, 2) coontail, 3) elodea, 4) watermeal, and 5) curly-leaf pondweed. In 2017 the five most common species were 1) duckweed, 2) coontail, 3) watermeal, 4) white water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*), and 5) Eurasian watermilfoil.

- Several native aquatic plant species have small populations within Cravath Lake including white water lily and sago pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinata*), both of which were found at less than 10 points across the Lake (see Table 2.4).

- EWM occurrence decreased greatly between 2017 and 2024. It was found at 98 points in 2017 and three sites in 2024 with an additional 21 visual sightings in 2017 and zero in 2024 (see Table 2.4 and Figure 2.5).

- CLP occurrence also decrease with it being found at zero points in 2024 compared to the 27 in 2017. There were 39 additional visual sightings in 2017 and only four sightings in 2024 (see Table 2.4 and Figure 2.6).

It should be noted that the City completed a multi-year drawdown to reduce aquatic invasive species on Cravath Lake.[23] Based on the minimal EWM and CLP found in Cravath Lake in 2024 compared to 2017, it can be concluded that the drawdown was successful in reducing invasive species populations in the Lake.

As was described earlier, sensitive aquatic plant species are the most vulnerable to human disturbance. Therefore, changes in sensitive species abundance can indicate the general magnitude of human disturbance derived stress on a waterbody's ecosystem. Overall, the sensitive species richness decreased between 2017 and 2024. The sensitive aquatic plant, variable pondweed (*Potamogeton gramineus*), was the only sensitive species found during the 2017 survey and was found at nine points on the Lake. No sensitive species were found in 2024. There are varying reasons that the loss of sensitive plant species can be attributed to including: lake drawdown, increased pollutants, competition by more tolerate plants species, or human disturbances.

Trippe Lake

Aquatic Plant Survey Metrics

In the 2024 survey on Trippe Lake the average rake fullness was 1.29 (see Table 2.5 and Figure 2.7). This rake fullness is slightly lower than Cravath and significantly lower than the 2017 survey of Trippe Lake, indicating that the aquatic plant density has declined following the drawdown. The MDC in 2024 in Trippe Lake was six feet (see Table 2.5). Considering that Trippe Lake reaches a maximum depth of eight feet in only one small portion of the lake, the MDC indicates that aquatic plants can colonize the vast majority of the lake bottom.

During the 2024 survey of Trippe Lake, including visual observations, 12 species of aquatic plants were documented (see Table 2.6). Commission staff found between zero and six individual species at a single point on the Lake (see Figure 2.8) In 2024, Trippe Lake's SDI score was 0.80 (see Table 2.5), up from its 2017 SDI of 0.75, indicating relatively good biodiversity of aquatic plants in the Lake.

[23] *See Section 2.3 "Past and Present Aquatic Plant Management Practices" for more information on the drawdown of Cravath and Trippe Lakes by the City of Whitewater.*

Table 2.4
Cravath Lake Aquatic Plant Survey Summary: July 2017 Versus July 2024

Aquatic Plant Species	Native or Invasive	Number of Sites Found[a] (2017/2024)	Frequency of Occurrence Within Vegetated Areas[b] (2017/2024)	Average Rake Fullness[c] (2017/2024)	Relative Frequency of Occurrence[d] (2017/2024)	Visual Sightings[e] (2017/2024)
Ceratophyllum demersum (coontail)	Native	200/67	95.69/71.28	2.20/1.57	23.6/39.4	1/14
Elodea canadensis (waterweed)	Native	74/12	35.41/12.77	1.27/1.17	8.7/7.1	14/1
Lemna minor (duckweed)	Native	193/79	92.34/84.04	1.71/1.42	22.8/46.5	12/33
Myriophyllum spicatum (Eurasian watermilfoil)	Invasive	98/3	46.89/3.19	1.35/1.33	11.6/1.8	21/0
Nelumbo lutea (American lotus)	Native	3/--	1.44/--	1.67/--	0.4/--	3/--
Nuphar advena (Yellow pond-lily)[f]	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	26/--
Nymphaea odorata (white water lily)	Native	53/1	25.36/1.06	1.43/1.00	6.3/0.6	88/5
Potamogeton crispus (curly-leaf pondweed)	Invasive	27/0	12.92/0	1.04/0	3.2/0	39/4
Potamogeton gramineus (variable pondweed)	Native	2/--	0.96/--	1.00/--	0.2/--	7/--
Potamogeton illinoensis (Illinois pondweed)[g]	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	1/--
Potamogeton natans (floating-leaf pondweed)	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	4/--
Potamogeton zosteriformis (flat-stem pondweed)	Native	5/--	2.39/--	1.00/--	0.6/--	4/--
Sagittaria sp. (arrowhead)	Native	1/--	0.48/--	1.00/--	0.1/--	5/--
Stuckenia pectinata (Sago pondweed)[g]	Native	14/1	6.70/1.06	1.00/1.00	1.7/0.6	36/8
Typha sp. (cattail)	Native	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	33/14
Wolffia sp. (watermeal)	Native	178/7	85.17/7.45	1.63/1.14	21.0/4.1	10/5

Note: Sampling occurred at 114 sampling sites on July 29th, 2024. 94 of the 114 surveyed sites had vegetation. Red text indicates non-native and/or invasive species.

[a] *Number of Sites refers to the number of sites at which the species was retrieved and identified on the rake during sampling.*

[b] *Frequency of Occurrence, expressed as a percent, is the percentage of times a particular species occurred when there was aquatic vegetation present at the sampling site.*

[c] *Average rake fullness is the average amount, on a scale of 0 to 3, of a particular species at each site where that species was retrieved by the rake.*

[d] *Relative Frequency of Occurrence, expressed as a percent, is the frequency of that particular species compared to the frequencies of all species present.*

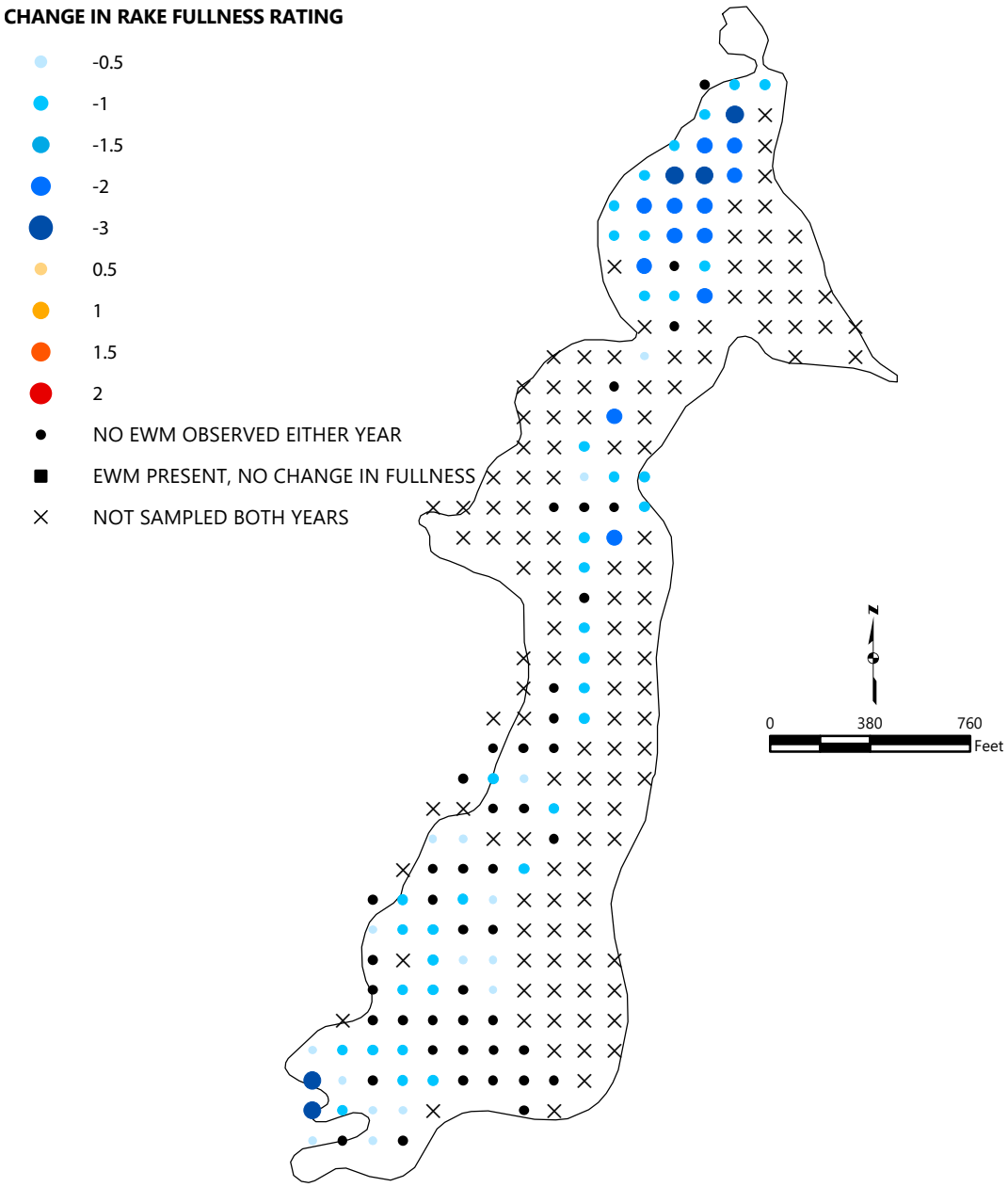
[e] *Visual Sightings is the number of sites where that particular species was visually observed within six feet of the actual rake haul location but was not actually retrieved on the rake and was not, therefore, assigned a rake fullness measurement for that site. At sites where this occurred, the species was simply marked as "present" at that site. Recording the number of visual sightings helps give a better picture of species distribution throughout the lake.*

[f] *Designated as a Species of Special Concern by the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory.*

[g] *Considered a high-value aquatic plant species known to offer important values in specific aquatic ecosystems under Section NR 107.08 (4) of the* Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Figure 2.5
Change in Eurasian Watermilfoil Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: 2017-2024



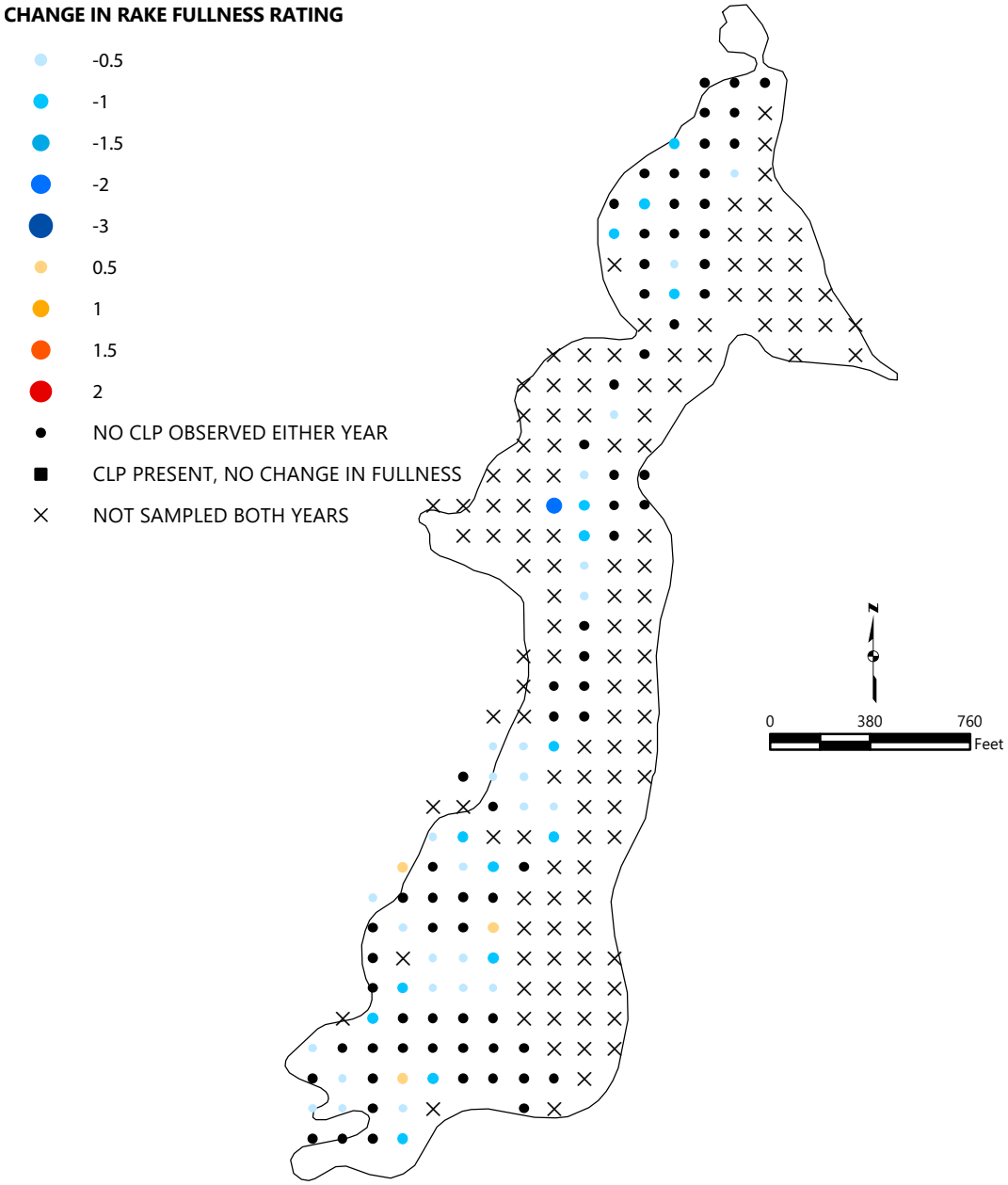
Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Sensitive Species

In 2024, Trippe Lake's FQI was 11.67, with a mean C value of 4.1 within the Lake. Although higher than Cravath Lake, these values are still lower than many lakes in southeastern Wisconsin as FQI within the Region ranges from 6.9 (poor) to 34 (excellent) while the mean C ranges from 4.0 (poor) to 7.5 (excellent). Many of the other low-scoring lakes within southeastern Wisconsin, such as Lake Comus and Honey Lake in Walworth County, are also stream impoundments.

Figure 2.6
Change in Curly-Leaf Pondweed Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: 2017-2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Similar to Cravath Lake, no sensitive aquatic plant species as described in Mikulyuk et al.[24], were found in Trippe Lake during the 2024 survey. However, several of the same tolerant species were observed. Sensitive plants species are more susceptible to pollution and human disturbances in the lake. The lack of sensitive species in the Lake indicates that the water and subsequent plant community are not of high quality. This can also be an indicator of high human disturbance and/or pollution in the Lake.

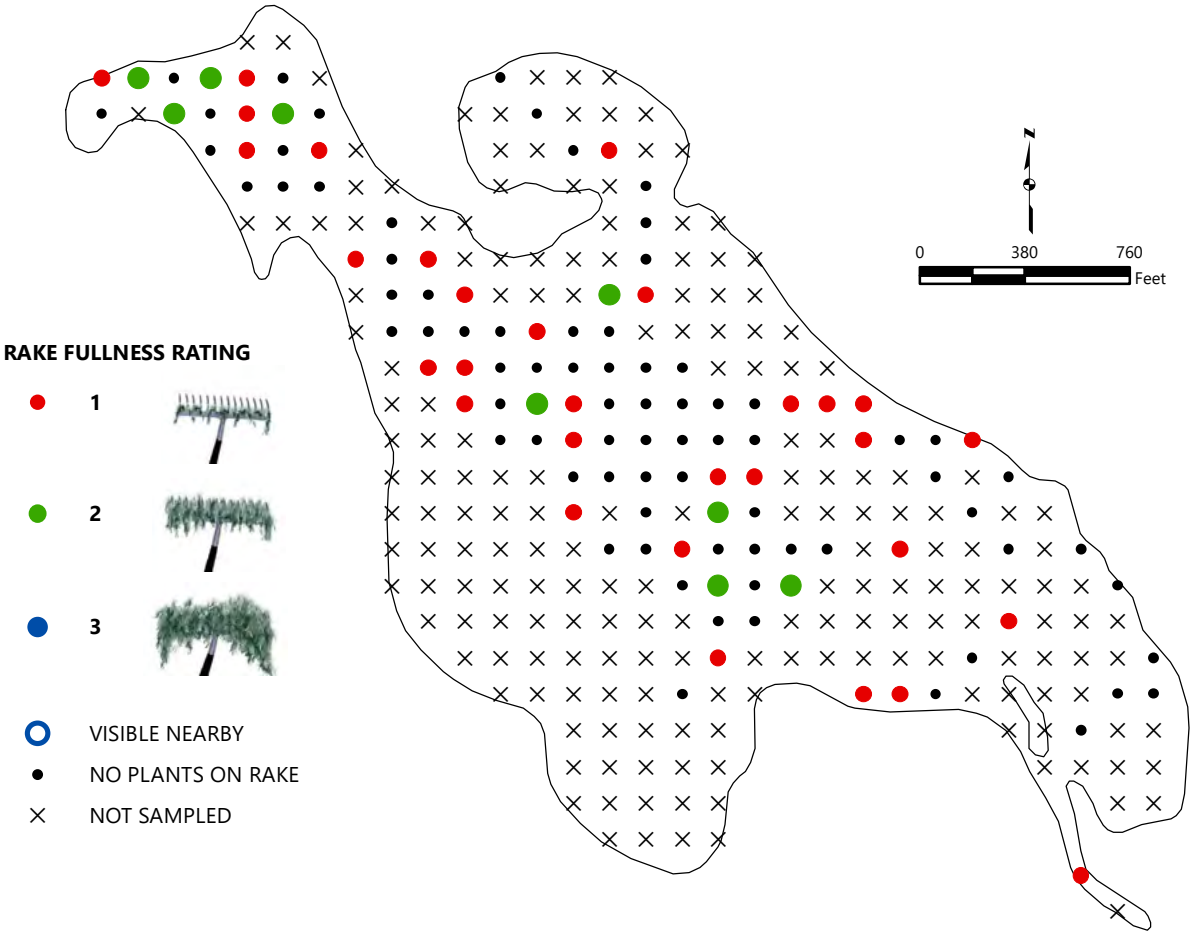
[24] *Mikulyuk, A.M., et al., "A Macrophyte Bioassessment Approach Linking Taxon-Specific Tolerance and Abundance in North Temperate Lakes,"* Journal of Environmental Management *199: 172-180, 2017.*

Table 2.5
Trippe Lake Aquatic Plant Summary Statistics: PI Survey 2024

Statistic	Value
Total number of sites visited	116
Total number of sites with vegetation	39
Total number of sites shallower than maximum depth of plants	116
Frequency of occurrence at sites shallower than maximum depth of plants	33.62
Simpson Diversity Index	0.80
Maximum depth of plants (feet)	6.00
Number of sites sampled using rake on Rope (R)	25
Number of sites sampled using rake on Pole (P)	91
Average number of all species per site (shallower than max depth)	0.49
Average number of all species per site (vegetation sites only)	1.46
Average number of native species per site (shallower than max depth)	0.39
Average number of native species per site (vegetation sites only)	1.29
Species Richness	9
Species Richness (including visuals)	13

Source: SEWRPC

Figure 2.7
Total Rake Fullness on Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Table 2.6
Aquatic Plant Species Observed in Trippe Lake: 2017-2024

Aquatic Plant Species	Native or Invasive	2017	2024
Ceratophyllum demersum	Native	X	X
Elodea canadensis	Native	X	X
Lemna minor	Native	X	X
Myriophyllum spicatum	Invasive	X	--
Nelumbo lutea	Native	X	X
Nuphar advena	Native	X	--
Nuphar variegata	Native	--	X
Nymphaea odorata	Native	X	X
Potamogeton crispus	Invasive	X	X
Potamogeton foliosus	Native	X	--
Potamogeton gramineus	Native	X	--
Potamogeton illinoensis	Native	X	--
Potamogeton natans	Native	X	--
Potamogeton nodosus	Native	X	--
Potamogeton zosteriformis	Native	X	--
Sagittaria sp.	Native	X	--
Sparganium sp.	Native	--	X
Schoenoplectus sp.	Native	--	X
Spirodela polyrhiza	Native	X	--
Stuckenia pectinata	Native	X	X
Typha sp.	Hybrid	X	X
Vallisneria americana	Native	X	--
Wolffia sp.	Native	X	X
Zizania sp.	Native	X	--
Species Total	--	21	12

Note: Red text indicates nonnative and/or invasive species.

Source: SEWRPC

Relative Species Abundance

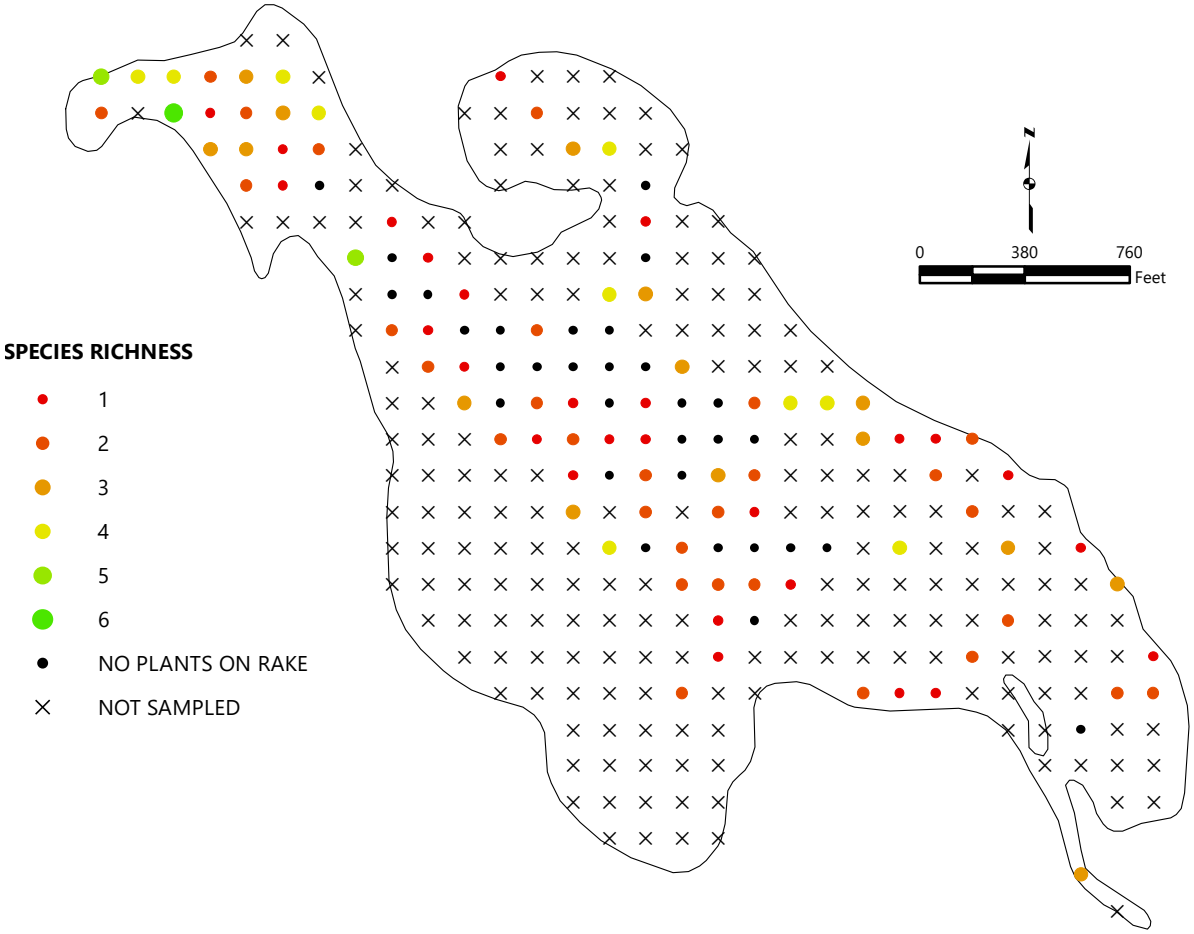
In the 2024 survey of Trippe Lake, the five most common aquatic plant species found were: 1) Duckweed (*Lemna* sp.), 2) Curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*), 3) Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), 4) Watermeal (*Wolffia* sp.), and 5) Sago pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinata*) (see Maps B.1 through B.5). Duckweed was found consistently throughout the Lake and was seen from a distance in areas that were non-navigable due to cattail growth. Curly-leaf pondweed was found in highest abundance in the northwestern portion of the lake and was mainly found as a visual sighting or as a 1 rake fullness. Only one point have a rake fullness for CLP of 2. Coontail was found intermittently throughout the Lake, never having a rake fullness higher that a 2. Watermeal, while found sporadically throughout Trippe Lake, inhabited similar areas to duckweed. Sago pondweed was found at 21 points on Trippe lake with only one point having a sago pondweed rake fullness of 2.

Invasive Species

No EWM was found in the 2024 survey in Trippe Lake, though it has historically been found in the Lake, including at 27 points in 2017. As described later in the chapter, water level drawdowns can be an effective tool for managing EWM populations as is evident by the substantial decrease in the EWM populations of both lakes since 2017.

Curly-leaf pondweed, like Eurasian watermilfoil, is identified in Chapter NR 109 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code as a nonnative invasive aquatic plant and thus must be monitored. In 2024, 12 points had CLP on the rake in Trippe Lake with an additional 27 visual observations (see Appendix B, Figure B.2). CLP was spread throughout the open water portions of the Lake but seen with the highest rake fullness in the northwestern portion of the Lake near the outlet.

Figure 2.8
Species Richness in Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Apparent Changes in Observed Aquatic Plant Communities in Trippe Lake: 2017 Versus 2024

The 2024 aquatic plant survey identified a total of 13 different plant species including visuals, compared to the 22 species found in the 2017 aquatic plant survey. Thus, it is evident that Trippe Lake has lost some of the diversity of its aquatic plant community.

In addition to the number of different aquatic plant species detected in the Lake, several other comparisons can be drawn between the 2017 and 2024 aquatic plant survey results, as examined below.

- The total littoral vegetated frequency of occurrence declined from 80.56 percent in 2017 to 33.62 in 2024, a decrease of 46.94 percent (see Table 2.5).

- The MDC in Trippe Lake during the 2024 survey was 6 feet, 1.5 feet shallower than the 2017 survey, where the MDC was 7.5 feet (see Table 2.5). In both surveys, aquatic plants were observed to the maximum water depth of the lake indicating that plants could cover the entirety of the lake bottom.

- The composition and order of the five most common species changed from 2017 to 2024. Two of the five most common species remained the same but the other three changed. In 2024, the five most common aquatic plant species found were: 1) duckweed, 2) curly-leaf pondweed, 3) coontail, 4) watermeal, and 5) sago pondweed (see Appendix B, Figure B.1-B.5). In 2017 the five most common species were 1) American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*), 2) coontail, 3) white water lily, 4) Eurasian watermilfoil and 5) duckweed.

- Several native aquatic plant species have small populations within Trippe Lake including spatterdock (*Nuphar variegata*) and bur reed (*Sparganium* sp.), both of which were found at fewer than 10 points across the Lake (see Table 2.7).

- CLP occurrence increased from four points in 2017 to 12 points in 2024 (see Table 2.7 and Figure 2.9). However, CLP still constitutes a small part of the overall aquatic plant community.

It should be noted that the City completed a multi-year drawdown to reduce aquatic invasive species on Trippe Lake.[25] Based on the lack of EWM and minimal CLP found in Trippe Lake in 2024 compared to 2017, it can be concluded that the drawdown was successful in reducing invasive species populations in the Lake.

As was described earlier, sensitive aquatic plant species are the most vulnerable to human disturbance. Therefore, changes in sensitive species abundance can indicate the general magnitude of human disturbance derived stress on a waterbody's ecosystem. Overall, the sensitive species richness decreased between 2017 and 2024. Two sensitive species were observed in 2017: variable pondweed (*Potamogeton gramineus*) was found at one point while yellow pond lily (*Nuphar advena*, not to be confused with spatterdock, *Nuphar variegata*) was found at four points. No sensitive species were found in 2024. There are varying reasons that the loss of sensitive plant species can be attributed to including: lake drawdown, increased pollutants, competition by more tolerate plants species, or human disturbances.

Cattails in Trippe and Cravath Lakes

A major concern of the Lakes' residents is the dense cattail growth in the Lakes. Hybrid cattail (*Typha x glauca*) are a hybridization of native broad-leaved cattail species (*Typha latifolia*) and invasive narrow-leaved cattail species (*Typha angustifolia*). Hybrid cattail will invade and colonize freshwater marshes, wet meadows, fens, roadsides, ditches, shallow ponds, streams and lakeshores.[26] While cattails have been present in the shallow areas of the lakes for many years, the population increased greatly after water levels remained low post-drawdown of both lakes.

Commission staff were unable to sample large portions of the lake due to the dense growth of hybrid cattails (see Figure 2.10 and Figure 2.11). Much of the shoreline was unable to be seen or accessed from the Lakes' open water due to the dense growth (see Figure 2.12). Commission staff used aerial imagery to estimate the increase of cattail growth in the Lakes from pre draw-down conditions in 2015 as well as recent cattail conditions in 2023 (see Figure 2.13)[27]. The cattail coverage on Trippe Lake in June 2015 was estimated to be 27 acres, or 22 percent. Comparatively, the cattail coverage in May 2023 was estimated to be 50 acres, or 41 percent or the lake acreage. Cravath Lake's cattail coverage in June 2015 was estimated to be 3 acres, or 5 percent. Comparatively, the cattail coverage in May 2023 was estimated to be 33 acres, or 47 percent.

2.3 PAST AND PRESENT AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In July of 2019, to "freeze out" invasive species, restore navigation depths, and to improve the overall health of the Lakes, the City began draining both Cravath and Trippe Lakes.[28] The project was originally planned to have the Lakes drawn down for one year but was extended to a second year to ensure maximum lake-bed exposure for the dredging of the lakes. By August 2021, the Lakes were fully drawn down and were originally planned to be refilled in the spring of 2022.

While the Lakes were drawn down, the City received permits to dredge out lake-bottom material to improve future navigation of the Lakes. As of March 1, 2022, 68,800 cubic yards of sediment had been removed from the Lakes, 85 percent of the original 81,000 cubic yards anticipated to be removed. To prepare for the

[25] *See Section 2.3 "Past and Present Aquatic Plant Management Practices" for more information on the drawdown of Cravath and Trippe Lakes by the City of Whitewater.*

[26] *dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/CattailHybrid.*

[27] *Cattail coverage on the lake utilized Google Earth historical imagery. Coverage estimates are approximate and are not exact due to difficulty distinguishing between cattail coverage and floating leaf aquatic plant coverage.*

[28] *For more information on the drawn downs, dredging and controlled burns see: www.whitewater-wi.gov/520/Lakes-Drawdown-Updates.*

Table 2.7
Trippe Lake Aquatic Plant Survey Summary: July 2017 Versus July 2024

Aquatic Plant Species	Native or Invasive	Number of Sites Found[a] (2017/2024)	Frequency of Occurrence Within Vegetated Areas[b] (2017/2024)	Average Rake Fullness[c] (2016/2024)	Relative Frequency of Occurrence[d] (2016/2024)	Visual Sightings[e] (2016/2024)
Ceratophyllum demersum (coontail)	Native	106/19	91.38/48.72	1.93/1.26	46.3/33.3	37/4
Elodea canadensis (waterweed)	Native	19/3	16.38/7.69	1.11/1.00	8.3/5.3	11/1
Lemna minor (duckweed)	Native	3/7	2.59/17.95	1.00/1.00	1.3/12.3	60/37
Myriophyllum spicatum (Eurasian watermilfoil)	Invasive	27/--	23.28/--	1.15/--	11.8/--	39/--
Nelumbo lutea (American lotus)	Native	19/1	16.38/2.56	1.84/1.00	8.3/1.8	208/3
Nuphar advena (Yellow pond-lily)[f]	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	4/--
Nuphar variegata (white-water lily)	Native	--/1	--/2.56	--/1.00	--/1.8	--/0
Nymphaea odorata (white water lily)	Native	15/0	12.93/0	1.53/0	6.6/0	80/8
Potamogeton crispus (curly-leaf pondweed)	Invasive	4/12	3.45/30.77	1.00/1.08	1.7/21.1	21/27
Potamogeton foliosus (leafy pondweed)	Native	3/--	2.59/--	1.00/--	1.3/--	8/--
Potamogeton gramineus (variable pondweed)	Native	1/--	0.86/--	1.00/--	0.4/--	0/--
Potamogeton illinoensis (Illinois pondweed)[g]	Native	4/--	3.45/--	1.25/--	1.7/--	5/--
Potamogeton natans (floating-leaf pondweed)	Native	12/--	10.34/--	1.75/--	5.2/--	14/--
Potamogeton nodosus (long-leafed pondweed)	Native	3/--	2.59/--	1.00/--	1.3/--	7/--
Potamogeton zosteriformis (flat-stem pondweed)	Native	1/--	0.86/--	1.00/--	0.4/--	2/--
Sagittaria sp. (arrowhead)	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	3/--
Sparganium sp. (bur-reed)	Native	--/0	--/0	--/0	--/0	--/1
Spirodela polyrhiza (large duckweed)	Native	1/--	0.86	1.00/--	0.4/--	2/--
Stuckenia pectinata (Sago pondweed)[g]	Native	6/9	5.17/23.08	1.00/1.11	2.6/15.8	48/12
Typha sp. (cattail)	Native	0/1	0/2.56	0/1.00	0/1.8	45/17
Vallisneria americana (eel-grass/wild celery)[g]	Native	5/--	4.31/--	1.20/--	2.2/--	5/--
Wolffia columbiana (common watermeal)	Native	0/4	0/10.26	0/1.00	0/7.0	25/17
Zizania sp. (wild rice)	Native	0/--	0/--	0/--	0/--	5/--

Note: Sampling occurred at 116 sampling sites on July 15th-16th, 2024. 39 of the 116 surveyed sites had vegetation. Red text indicates non-native and/or invasive species.

[a] *Number of Sites refers to the number of sites at which the species was retrieved and identified on the rake during sampling.*

[b] *Frequency of Occurrence, expressed as a percent, is the percentage of times a particular species occurred when there was aquatic vegetation present at the sampling site.*

[c] *Average rake fullness is the average amount, on a scale of 0 to 3, of a particular species at each site where that species was retrieved by the rake.*

[d] *Relative Frequency of Occurrence, expressed as a percent, is the frequency of that particular species compared to the frequencies of all species present.*

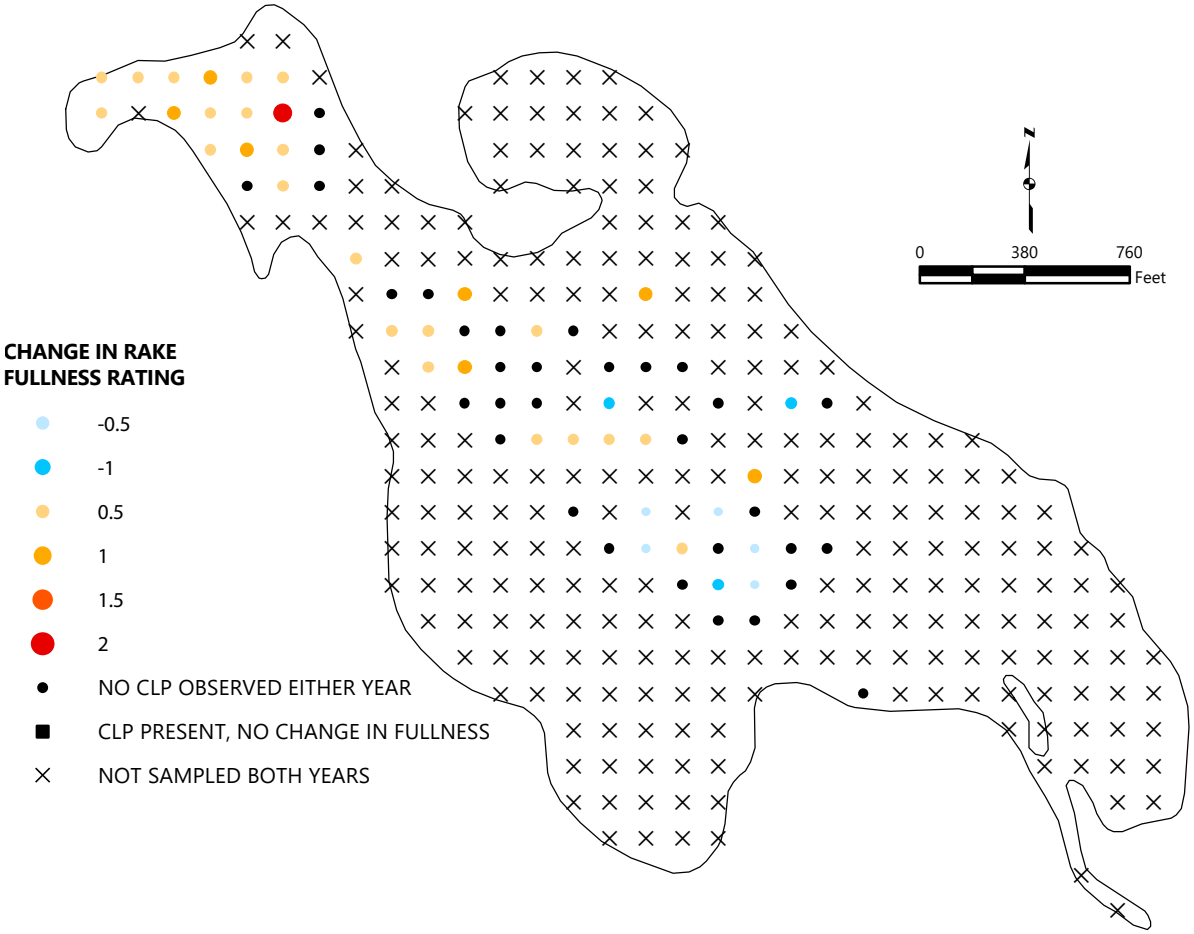
[e] *Visual Sightings is the number of sites where that particular species was visually observed within six feet of the actual rake haul location but was not actually retrieved on the rake and was not, therefore, assigned a rake fullness measurement for that site. At sites where this occurred, the species was simply marked as "present" at that site. Recording the number of visual sightings helps give a better picture of species distribution throughout the lake.*

[f] *Designated a Species of Special Concern by the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory.*

[g] *Considered a high-value aquatic plant species known to offer important values in specific aquatic ecosystems under Section NR 107.08 (4) of the* Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Figure 2.9
Change in Curly Leaf Pondweed in Trippe Lake: 2017-2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

dredging in early 2022, the City contracted with Field & Stream Restorations to conduct a controlled burn in areas of the Lakes (see Figure 2.14). Controlled burns are often used to remove invasive species and reduce the amount of settling sediment in the Lakes from decaying vegetation material from aquatic plants.

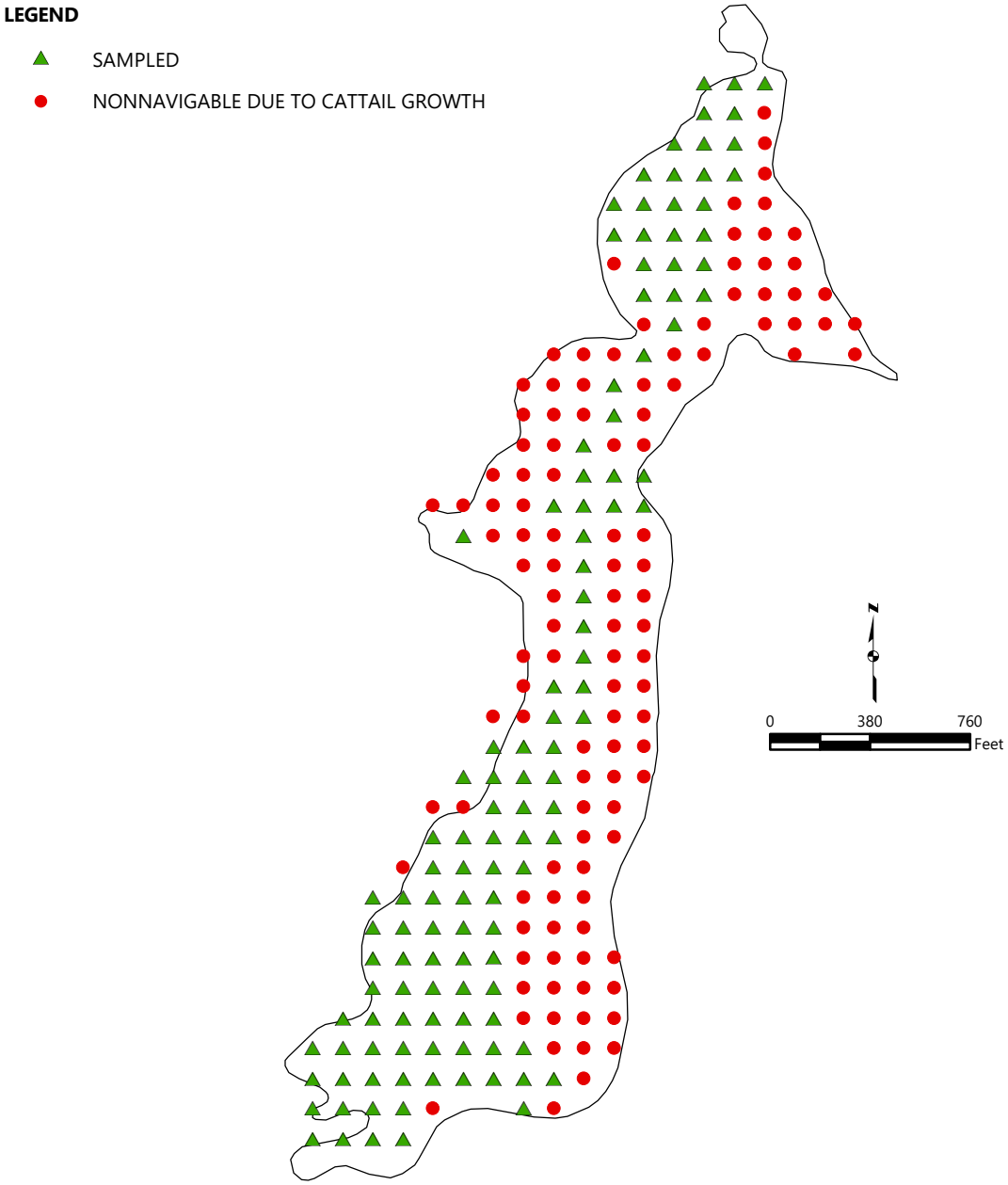
In the fall of 2023, the City received permits to dredge Cravath and Trippe Lakes to manage the cattail populations. In total, an estimated 16,300 square feet of material was removed from the Lakes from the Cravath fishing pier, the Cravath west lakefront dock, the Cravath concrete bump-out and the Trippe Lake boat launch. Additionally, in the fall of 2024, the City received a second permit to dredge the Lakes, removing an estimated 37,020 square feet of material. Material was removed from five locations: Cravath amphitheater, Cravath west lakefront dock, the Cravath west fishing pier, the Cravath eastern shoreline, and the Trippe fishing pier at the Clay Street Nature Park.

2.4 POTENTIAL AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGIES

Aquatic plant management techniques can be classified into six categories.

- *Physical measures* include lake bottom coverings
- *Biological measures* include the use of organisms such as herbivorous insects
- *Manual measures* involve physically removing plants by hand or using hand-held tools such as rakes

Figure 2.10
Cattail Extent on Cravath Lake: July 2024



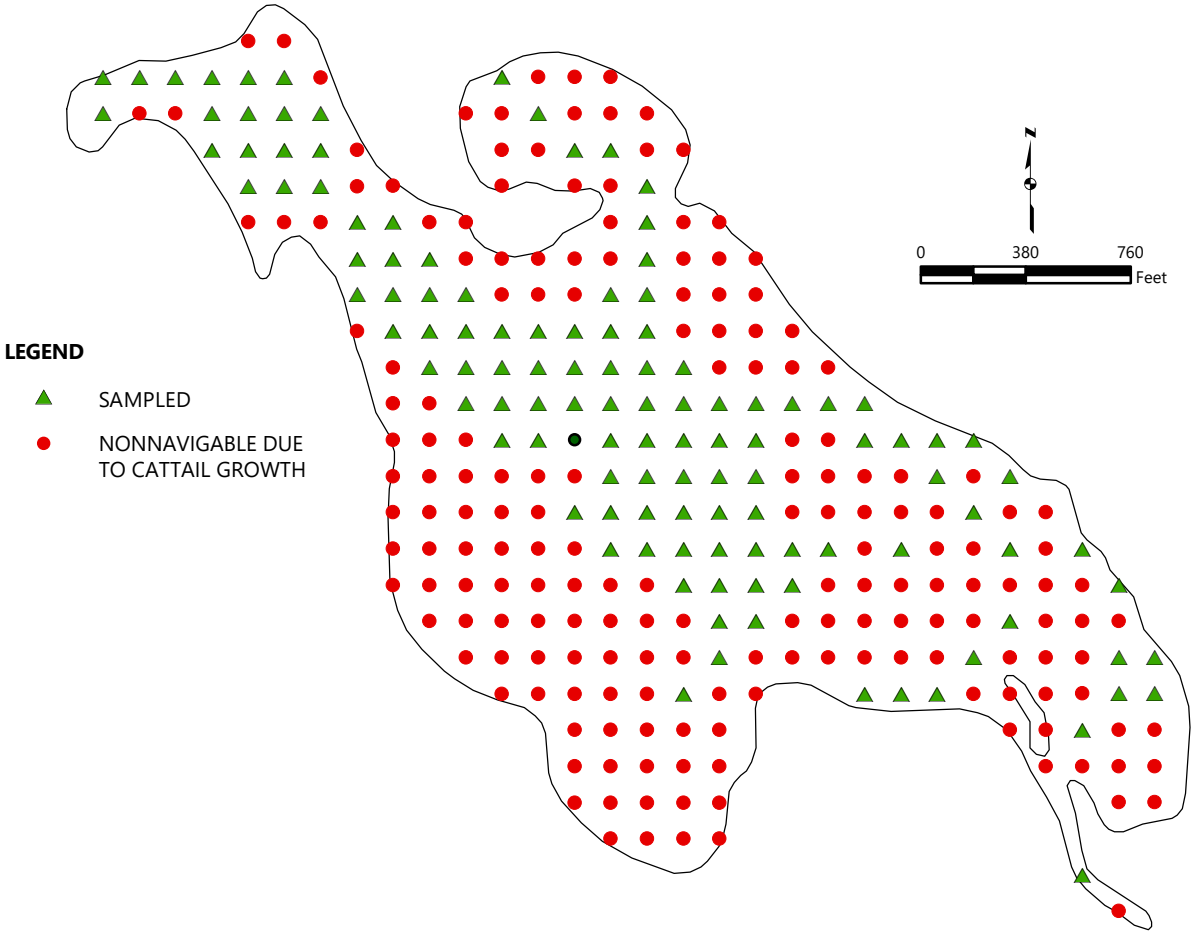
Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

- *Mechanical measures* rely on artificial power sources and remove aquatic plants with a machine known as a harvester or by suction harvesting
- *Chemical measures* use aquatic herbicides to kill nuisance and nonnative plants *in-situ*
- *Water level manipulation measures* utilize fluctuations in water levels to reduce aquatic plant abundance and promote growth of specific native species

All aquatic plant control measures are stringently regulated and most require a State of Wisconsin permit. Chemical controls, for example, require a permit and are regulated under *Wisconsin Administrative Code* Chapter NR 107, "Aquatic Plant Management," while placing bottom covers (a physical measure) requires

Figure 2.11
Cattail Extent on Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

a WDNR permit under Chapter 30 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. All other aquatic plant management practices are regulated under *Wisconsin Administrative Code* Chapter NR 109, "Aquatic Plants: Introduction, Manual Removal and Mechanical Control Regulations." Furthermore, the aquatic plant management measures described in this plan are consistent with the requirements of Chapter NR 7, "Recreational Boating Facilities Program," and with the public recreational boating access requirements relating to eligibility under the State cost-share grant programs set forth in *Wisconsin Administrative Code* Chapter NR 1, "Natural Resources Board Policies." Water level manipulations require a permit and are regulated under *Wisconsin Statutes* 30.18 and 31.02.[29,30] More details about each aquatic plant management category are discussed in the following sections, while recommendations are provided later in this document.

Non-compliance with aquatic plant management permit requirements is an enforceable violation of Wisconsin law and may lead to fines and/or complete permit revocation. The information and recommendations provided in this memorandum help to frame permit requirements. Permits can cover up to a five-year period.[31] At the end of that period, the aquatic plant management plan must be updated. The updated plan must consider the results of a new aquatic plant survey and should evaluate the success, failure, and effects

[29] *docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/30/ii/18.*

[30] *docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/31/02.*

[31] *Five-year permits allow a consistent aquatic plant management plan to be implemented over a significant length of time. This process allows the selected aquatic plant management measures to be evaluated at the end of the permit cycle.*

Figure 2.12
Hybrid Cattails in Cravath and Trippe Lakes: July 2024

Trippe Lake Cattails

Cravath Lake Cattails

Source: SEWRPC

of earlier plant management activities that have occurred on the lake.[32] These plans and plan execution are reviewed and overseen by the WDNR regional lakes and aquatic invasive species coordinators.[33]

Physical Measures

Lake-bottom covers and light screens provide limited control of rooted plants by creating a physical barrier that reduces or eliminates plant-available sunlight. Various materials such as pea gravel or synthetics like polyethylene, polypropylene, fiberglass, and nylon can be used as covers. The longevity, effectiveness, and overall value of some physical measures is questionable. The WDNR does not permit these kinds of controls. Consequently, lake-bottom covers are not a viable aquatic plant control strategy for the lakes.

Biological Measures

Biological control offers an alternative to direct human intervention to manage nuisance or exotic plants. Biological control techniques traditionally use herbivorous insects that feed upon nuisance plants. This approach has been effective in some southeastern Wisconsin lakes.[34] For example, milfoil weevils (*Eurhychiopsis lecontei)* have been used to control EWM. Milfoil weevils do best in waterbodies with balanced panfish populations,[35] where dense EWM beds reach the surface close to shore, where natural shoreline areas include leaf litter that provides habitat for over-wintering weevils, and where there is comparatively little boat traffic. This technique is not presently commercially available, making the use of milfoil weevils non-viable for the Lakes.

Manual Measures

Manually removing specific types of vegetation is a highly selective means of controlling nuisance aquatic plant growth, including invasive species such as EWM. Two commonly employed methods include hand raking and hand pulling. Both physically remove target plants from a lake. Since most plant stems, leaves,

[32] *Aquatic plant harvesters must report harvesting activities as one of the permit requirements.*

[33] *Information on the current aquatic invasive species coordinator is found on the WDNR website.*

[34] *B. Moorman, "A Battle with Purple Loosestrife: A Beginner's Experience with Biological Control,"* LakeLine *17(3): 20-21, 34-37, September 1997; see also, C.B. Huffacker, D.L. Dahlsen, D.H. Janzen, and G.G. Kennedy, Insect Influences in the Regulation of Plant Population and Communities, pp. 659-696, 1984; and C.B. Huffacker and R.L. Rabb, editors,* Ecological Entomology*, John Wiley, New York, New York, USA.*

[35] *Panfish such as bluegill and pumpkinseed are predators of herbivorous insects. High populations of panfish lead to excess predation of milfoil weevils.*

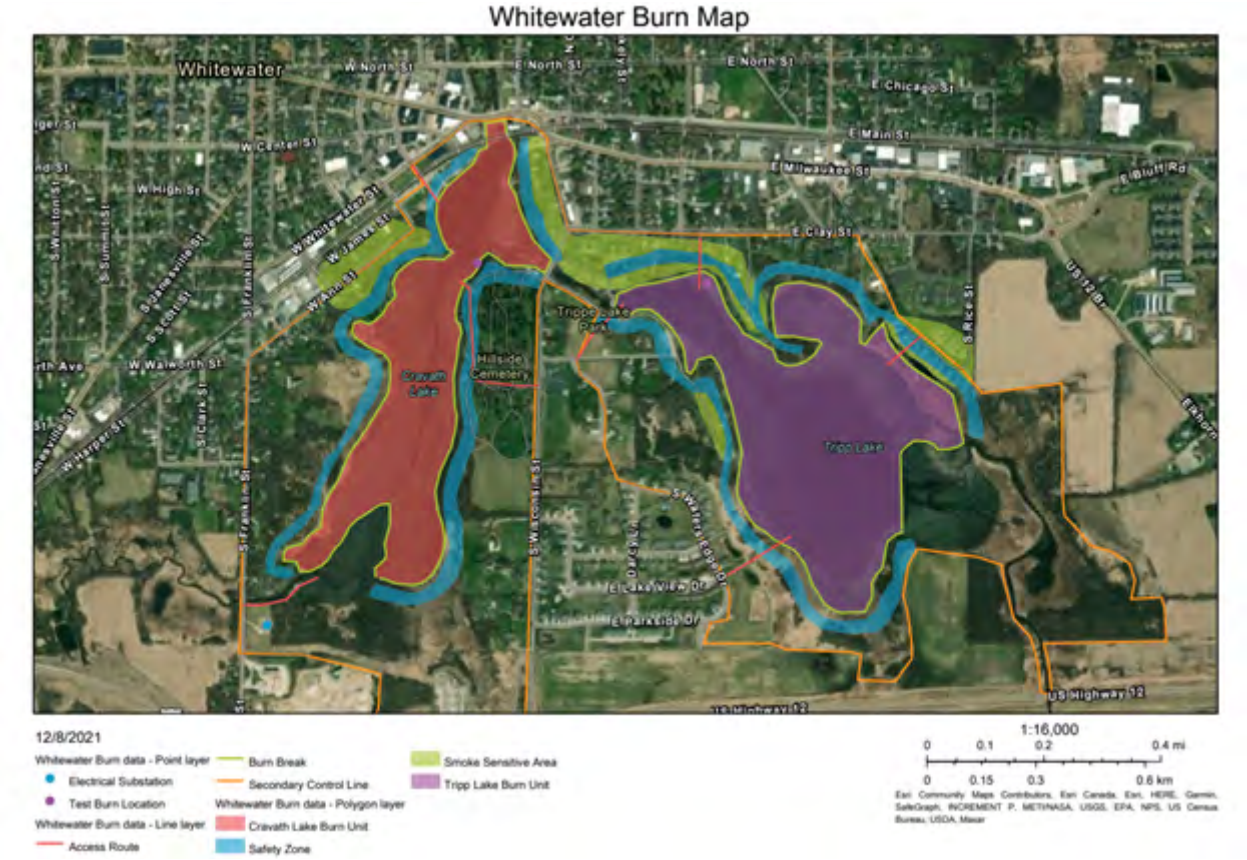
Figure 2.13
Hybrid Cattail Extent in Cravath and Trippe Lakes

June 2015 Cattails

May 2023 Cattails

Google Earth Pro Imagery

Figure 2.14
Controlled Burn Map for Cravath and Trippe Lakes: December 2021



Source: City of Whitewater, Field & Stream Restorations

roots, and seeds are actively removed from the lake, the reproductive potential and nutrients contained by pulled/raked plants material is also removed. These plants, seeds, and nutrients would otherwise re-enter the lake's water column or be deposited on the lake bottom. Hence, this aquatic plant management technique helps incrementally maintain water depth, improves water quality, and can help decrease the spread of nuisance/exotic plants. Hand raking and hand pulling are readily allowed by WDNR and are practical methods to control riparian landowner scale problems.

Raking with specially designed hand tools is particularly useful in shallow nearshore areas. This method allows nonnative plants to be removed and provides a safe and convenient aquatic plant control method in deeper nearshore waters around piers and docks. Advantages of this method include:

- Tools are inexpensive ($100 to $150 each)
- The method is easy to learn and use
- It may be employed by riparian landowners without a permit if certain conditions are met
- Results are immediately apparent
- Plant material is immediately removed from a lake (including seeds)[36]

[36] *Most of the material is removed during raking, however fragmentation/local spread from raking can occur in addition to fragmentation/local spread from wave action/other mechanical disruption.*

The second manual control method, hand-pulling whole plants (stems, roots, leaves, seeds) where they occur in isolated stands, is a simple means to control nuisance and invasive plants in shallow nearshore areas that may not support large-scale initiatives. This method is particularly helpful when attempting to target nonnative plants (e.g., EWM, CLP) during the high growth season when native and nonnative species often mix. Hand pulling is more selective than raking, mechanical removal, and chemical treatments, and, if carefully applied, is less damaging to native plant communities. Recommendations regarding hand-pulling, hand-cutting, and raking are discussed later in this document.

Mechanical Measures

Two methods of mechanical harvesting are currently employed in Wisconsin - mechanical harvesting and suction harvesting. Both are regulated by WDNR and require a permit.[37]

Mechanical Harvesting

Aquatic plants can be mechanically gathered using specialized equipment commonly referred to as harvesters. Harvesters use an adjustable depth cutting apparatus that can cut and remove plants from the water surface to up to about five feet below the water surface. The harvester gathers cut plants with a conveyor, basket, or other device. Mechanical harvesting is often a very practical and efficient means to control nuisance plant growth and is widely employed in Southeastern Wisconsin.

In addition to controlling plant growth, gathering and removing plant material from a lake reduces in-lake nutrient recycling, sedimentation, and targets plant reproductive potential. In other words, harvesting removes plant biomass, which would otherwise decompose and release nutrients, sediment, and seeds or other reproductive structures (e.g., turions, bulbils, plant fragments) into a lake. Mechanical harvesting is particularly effective and popular for large-scale open-water projects. However, small harvesters are also produced that are particularly suited to working around obstacles such as piers and docks in shallow nearshore areas.

An advantage of mechanical harvesting is that the harvester, when properly operated, "mows" aquatic plants and, therefore, typically leaves enough living plant material in place to provide shelter for aquatic wildlife and stabilize lake-bottom sediment. Harvesting, when done properly, does not kill aquatic plants, it simply trims plants back. Aside from residual plant mass remaining because of imperfect treatment strategy execution, none of the other aquatic plant management methods purposely leave living plant material in place after treatment. Aquatic plant harvesting has been shown to allow light to penetrate to the lakebed and stimulate regrowth of suppressed native plants. This is particularly effective when controlling invasive plant species that commonly grow quickly early in the season (e.g., EWM, curly-leaf pondweed) when native plants have not yet emerged or appreciably grown.

A disadvantage of mechanical harvesting is that the harvesting process may fragment plants and thereby unintentionally propagate EWM and curly-leaf pondweed. EWM fragments are particularly successful in establishing themselves in areas where plant roots have been removed. This underscores the need to avoid harvesting or otherwise disrupting native plant roots. Harvesting may also agitate bottom sediments in shallow areas, thereby increasing turbidity and resulting in deleterious effects such as smothering fish breeding habitat and nesting sites. To this end, most WDNR-issued permits do not allow deep-cut harvesting in water less than three feet deep,[38] which limits the utility of this alternative in many littoral and shoal areas. Nevertheless, if employed correctly and carefully under suitable conditions, harvesting can benefit navigation lane maintenance and can reduce regrowth of nuisance plants while maintaining, or even enhancing, native plant communities. Due to the depth of the Lakes and the desire for cattail control, traditional cutting mechanical harvesting is not a feasible method to be used on the Lakes.

Suction Harvesting, DASH, and Diver-Assisted Hand Pulling

Another mechanical plant harvesting method uses suction to remove aquatic plants from a lake. Suction harvesting removes sediment, aquatic plants, plant roots, and anything else from the lake bottom and disposes this material outside the lake. Since bottom material is removed from the lake, this technique also requires a dredging permit in addition to the aquatic plant management permit.

[37] *Mechanical control permit conditions depend upon harvesting equipment type and specific equipment specifications.*

[38] *Deep-cut harvesting is harvesting to within one foot of the lake bottom. This is not allowed in shallow water because it is challenging to ensure that the harvester avoids lake-bottom contact in such areas.*

First permitted in 2014, DASH is a mechanical process where divers identify and pull select aquatic plants and roots from the lakebed and then insert the entire plant into a suction hose that transports the plant to the surface for collection and disposal. The process is a mechanically assisted method for hand-pulling aquatic plants. Such labor-intensive work by skilled professional divers is, at present, a costly undertaking and long-term monitoring will need to evaluate the efficacy of the technique. If the City or individual property owners choose to employ DASH, a NR 109 permit is required. Nevertheless, many apparent advantages are associated with this method including: 1) lower potential to release plant fragments when compared to mechanical harvesting, raking, and hand-pulling, thereby reducing spread and growth of invasive plants like EWM; 2) increased selectivity of plant removal when compared to mechanical harvesting which in turn reduces native plant loss; and 3) lower potential for disturbing fish habitat. This method will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

Water Level Manipulation Measures

Manipulating water levels can also be an effective method for controlling aquatic plant growth and restoring native aquatic plant species, particularly emergent species such as bulrush and wild rice.[39] While water level manipulation affects all aquatic plants within the drawdown zone, two studies from Price County, Wisconsin show reduced abundance of invasive EWM and curly-leaf pondweed and increased abundance of native plant species following winter drawdowns.[40,41] Thus, drawdowns can be used to dramatically alter the composition of a lake's aquatic plant community. As described in Section 2.3, the City drew down both Cravath and Trippe Lakes and successfully reduced the populations of EWM and CLP.

While drawdowns are effective in reducing submerged invasive species populations, undesired emergent species, such as invasive cattails and phragmites, can also colonize exposed sediment, so measures should be taken to curtail their growth during a drawdown.[42] Both Cravath and Trippe Lakes have experienced this with 41 percent of Trippe and 47 percent of Cravath having dense hybrid cattail growth, to the extent of impeding navigation in the Lakes. Additionally, water level manipulation can also have unintended impacts on water chemistry and lake fauna.[43,44] Decreased water clarity and dissolved oxygen concentrations as well as increased nutrient concentrations and algal abundance have all been reported following lake drawdowns. It will be important to monitor the Lakes in the years to come following any potential drawdown.

Controlled Winter Burning

Prescribed burns, also known as controlled burns, are useful in managing emergent plants during drawdowns. While lakes are drawn down, existing organic material from aquatic plants are exposed and able to be burned off. This reduces the amount of plant material on the bottom of the lake, can reduce nonnative plant populations and can allow for new areas to become available for beneficial native plants to grow.

Controlled burns often require a burn plan.[45] A burn plan is a document that addresses all aspects of the burn to ensure a safe implementation of controlled burning activities. The plan should contain the following:

- Describe site conditions, including existing vegetation and desired future conditions
- Dictate specific weather conditions and ignition patterns needed for desired fire behavior

[39] *For detailed literature reviews on water level manipulation as an aquatic plant control measure, see C. Blanke, A. Mikulyuk, M. Nault, et al., Strategic Analysis of Aquatic Plant Management in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, pp. 167-171, 2019 as well as J.R. Carmignani and A.H. Roy, "Ecological Impacts of Winter Water Level Drawdowns on Lake Littoral Zones: A Review,"* Aquatic Sciences *79: 803-824, 2017.*

[40] *Onterra, LLC, Lac Sault Dore, Price County, Wisconsin: Comprehensive Management Plan, 2013.*

[41] *Onterra, LLC, Musser Lake Drawdown Monitoring Report, Price County, Wisconsin, 2016.*

[42] *Blanke et al., 2019, op. cit.*

[43] Ibid.

[44] *Cooke,* op. cit.

[45] *For more information on controlled burns, see dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestfire/prescribedfire.*

- Outline any issues relating to communities, roads, structure, adjacent lands, smoke management and/or traffic control
- Outline and smoke sensitive areas such as schools, airports or hospitals
- Identify fire break parameters
- Identify personnel and equipment need to safely complete the burn
- Outline of a contingency plan for reacting to any emergencies surrounding the burn

Burns are recommended to be conducted during the winter for lakes. WDNR also recommends that a trained burn boss be consulted on the parameters of the prescribed fire and to be available during the burn. It is also encouraged to reach out to local authorities to ensure they are following local ordinances and regulations. Due to the ability of the lake to be drawn down during the winter months, a controlled burn on the lakes may be beneficial in assisting with aquatic plant management, particularly for encroachment of hybrid cattail.

3 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Credit: Commission Staff

This chapter summarizes the information and recommendations needed to manage aquatic plants in Cravath and Trippe Lakes (Lakes), particularly the nonnative species of hybrid cattail, Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) and curly-leaf pondweed (CLP). Accordingly, it presents a range of alternatives that could potentially be used, and provides specific recommendations related to each alternative. The measures discussed focus on those that can be implemented by the City of Whitewater (City) in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and residents on the Lakes. The aquatic plant management recommendations contained in this chapter are limited to approaches that monitor and control nuisance level aquatic plant growth in the Lakes after the growth has already occurred.

The individual recommendations presented below, and which collectively constitute the recommended aquatic plant management plan, balance three major goals:

- Improving navigational access within the Lakes
- Protecting the native aquatic plant community
- Controlling CLP, EWM, and hybrid cattail populations

Plan provisions also ensure that current recreational uses of the Lakes (e.g., swimming, boating, fishing) are maintained or promoted. The plan recommendations described below consider common, State-approved, aquatic plant management alternatives including manual, chemical, and mechanical measures.

3.1 RECOMMENDED AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The most effective plans to manage nuisance and invasive aquatic plant growth rely on a combination of methods and techniques as well as consideration of when and where these techniques should be applied. The recommended aquatic plant management plan techniques are briefly summarized in the following paragraphs. These management techniques were discussed with both the City and the WDNR.

Aquatic Plant Management Recommendations

The most effective plans to manage nuisance and invasive aquatic plant growth rely on a *combination* of methods and techniques. A "silver bullet" single-minded strategy rarely produces the most efficient, most reliable, or best overall result. This plan recommends three primary aquatic plant management techniques: harvesting, chemical treatment, and prescribed burning. Each of these techniques have custom adaptations for the conditions present in the Lakes. These methods are combined to form the recommended Cravath and Trippe Lakes' aquatic plant management program. The elements of this program are listed below.

1. **Prescribed/controlled burning of cattail material** should be considered to manage the cattail populations that have densely colonized large portions of the Lakes. WDNR requires the drawdown of lakes to be completed before October 1st to protect any animals that overwinter in lake beds. Controlled burns should be done during the months during a lake-drawdown when the lakebeds are exposed and easily accessed. The City should consult with WDNR and the County to ensure they are following local and state regulations regarding prescribed/controlled burns. Due to the ability to draw down both lakes, this management technique should be considered a high priority.

2. **Chemical treatment of hybrid cattail populations.** The spraying of chemicals has long been used as a method to control non-native plant populations. In the case of Cravath and Trippe Lakes, helicopter spraying of Imazapyr or Glyphosate to control hybrid cattails should be considered a high priority.[46] Chemical applications should be limited to developed shorelines including the shorelines near the lakefront parks.[47] Imazapyr is most effective when used during spring, when cattails are still actively growing. Glyphosate is most effective when sprayed in the autumn as cattails begin to die back for the winter. In addition to helicopter spraying, hand-wicking and regular spraying from boats, on foot, or from amphibious vehicles should also be considered for smaller cattail stands or in areas where helicopter spraying is not feasible or desired due to proximity to residences or sensitive species (e.g., near stands of yellow water lily (*Nuphar advena*), a Species of Special Concern).

3. **Invasive species plant control.** While the 2024 aquatic plant survey did not reveal a need to actively control EWM or CLP, these plants should still be monitored. As aquatic plant community species change, the need for management changes. This is particularly true in heavily used shallow areas. It should be noted that should winter drawdowns be utilized for controlled burns, they will also assist in keeping invasive species such as EWM and CLP under control. This recommendation should be considered a high priority.

4. **Manual removal of nuisance plant growth in near-shore areas** should be considered in areas too shallow, inaccessible, or otherwise unsuitable for other plant control methods. "Manual removal" is defined as control of aquatic plants by hand or using hand-held non-powered tools. Cattails can often be drowned out using manual removal techniques such as below-water cutting of the stalks in early spring and late fall. Given what is known of plant distribution, this option is given medium priority. Riparian landowners need not obtain a permit for manually removing aquatic plants if they confine this activity to a 30-foot width of shoreline (including the recreational use area such as a pier) that does not extend more than 100 feet into the Lakes and they remove all resulting plant materials from the Lakes.[48] A permit is required if the property owner lives adjacent to a sensitive area or if the City or other group actively engages in such work.[49] Prior to the "raking/hand-pulling" season, an educational campaign should be actively conducted to help assure that shoreline residents appreciate the value of native plants, understand the relationship between algae and plants (i.e., more algae will

[46] *Should chemical spraying be utilized as a management strategy, maps of the location of the spray events should be created and approved by WDNR.*

[47] *All chemical applications should be in compliance with NR 107.08(3).*

[48] *The manual removal area limitation for nearshore aquatic plants applies to shorelines where native plants are present. The removal area limitation does not apply to areas populated solely with nonnative and invasive plants.*

[49] *If a lake district or other group wants to remove invasive species along the shoreline, a permit is necessary under Chapter NR 109, "Aquatic Plants: Introduction, Manual Removal and Mechanical Control Regulations," of the* Wisconsin Administrative Code, *as the removal of aquatic plants is not being completed by an individual property owner along his or her property.*

grow if fewer plants remain), know the basics of plant identification, and the specifics about the actions they are allowed to legally take to "clean up" their shorelines.[50]

5. **Diver-Assisted Suction Harvesting or Hand-pulling.** Diver-assisted harvesting or hand-pulling is beneficial when conducting aquatic plant management in an area that a full-sized harvester may not be able to reach. Additionally, it is useful when targeting specific invasive species while keeping native species intact. This tactic may be useful when targeting smaller specific or shallower areas of the Lakes. This recommendation should be considered a low priority.

6. **Stocking of native aquatic plant species.** Once hybrid cattail and other non-native aquatic plant populations have been lowered, opportunities for native aquatic plant colonization will be increased. Stocking of native aquatic plans will promote biodiversity of the plant community in the Lakes as well as assist in preventing the rebound on nonnative and nuisance species of plants. It is recommended that native plants which have been previously documented in the Lakes (e.g., *Potamogeton natans*, *P. gramineus*, *P. zosteriformis*, *P. illinoensis*, *P. nodosus*, *Valisneria americana*) be stocked. Some methods for transplanting native plants include hand planting, weighting and sinking plants, as well as weaving plants in mats or blocks that are placed in the waterbody. These methods vary in their cost, feasibility, and success rates.[51] This recommendation should be considered a medium priority.[52]

7. **Begin participating in the Clean Boats Clean Waters program to monitor the public launches.** Participation in this program proactively encourages lake users to clean boats and equipment before launching and after using them in Cravath and Trippe Lakes. The WDNR has a grant program that can help fund monitoring efforts (see "Future Funding" later in this chapter).

8. **Stay abreast of best management practices to address invasive species.** The City should regularly communicate with Walworth County and WDNR staff about the most effective treatment options for invasive species as novel techniques and/or chemical products that may more effectively target these species become available.

At this time, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (Commission or SEWRPC) staff are not recommending the use of mechanical harvesting in Cravath or Trippe Lakes due to the high density of cattails and the low abundance and density of aquatic plants. Should the City desire to do mechanical harvesting in the Lakes, they would be required to obtain a permit from the WDNR. Should the submersed aquatic plant community grow to a nuisance level that impedes navigation, the City may then consider mechanical harvesting. Harvesting lanes should not exceed 30 feet in width and maintain a minimum of one foot of plant growth on the bottom of the lane (see Figure 3.1).

To ensure sustainable recreational use and the long-term health of the Lake, the following conditions must be added to all aquatic plant harvesting practices:

1. **Maintain at least 12 inches of living plant material after harvesting.** Harvesting equipment operators must not intentionally denude the lakebed. Instead, the goal of harvesting is to maintain and promote healthy native aquatic plant growth. Harvesting invasive aquatic plants can promote native plant regrowth since many invasive aquatic plants grow early in the season depriving later emerging native plants of light and growing room.

2. **Harvesting native pondweeds (*Potamogeton* spp.) and muskgrasses (*Chara* spp.) outside of the designated harvesting lanes is prohibited.** These plants provide habitat for young fish, reptiles, and insects in the Lake.

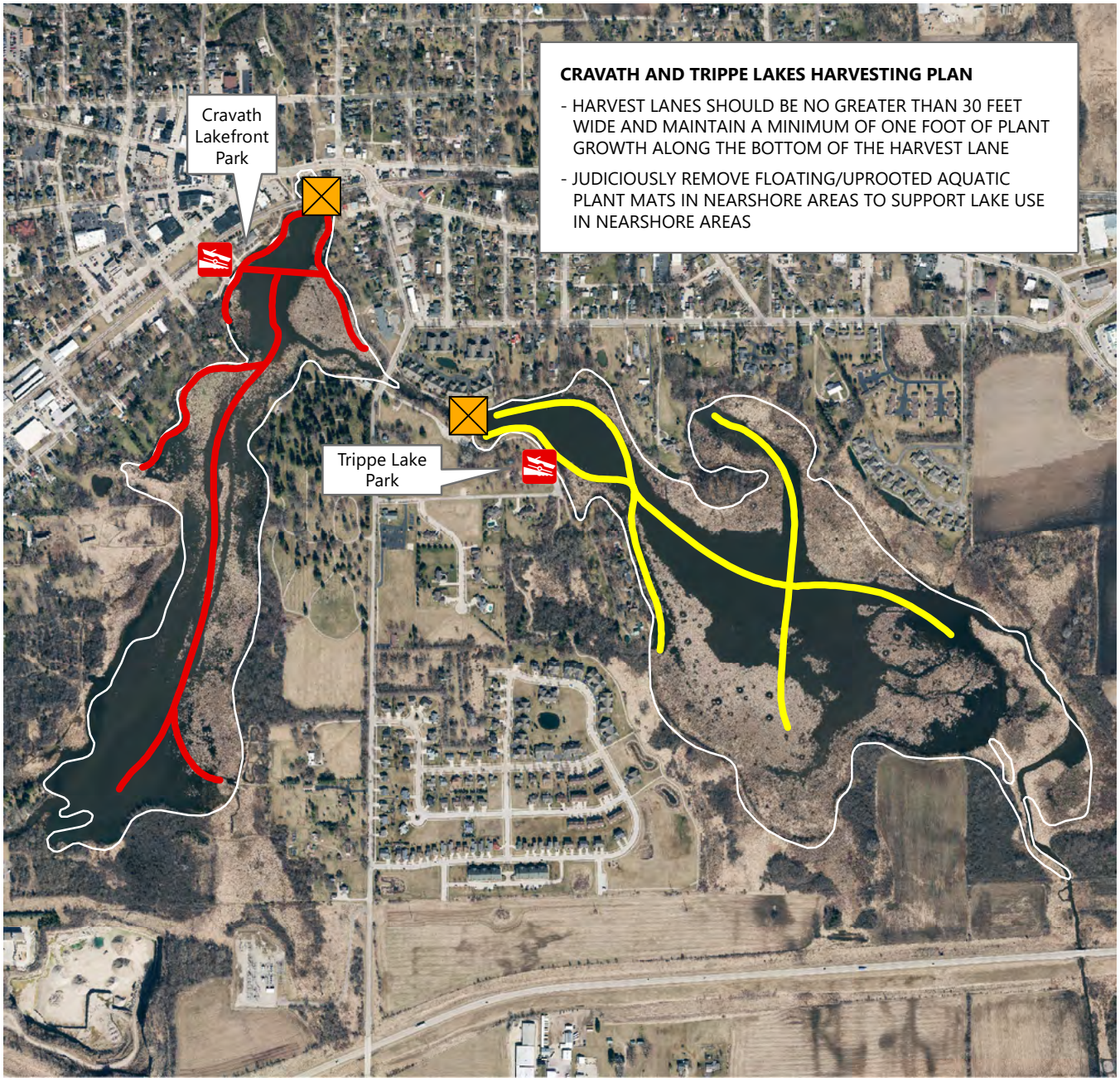
3. **Inspect all cut plants for live animals. Immediately return live animals to the water.** A second staff person equipped with a net should accompany and assist the harvester operator. Animals

[50] *Commission and WDNR staff could help review documents developed for this purpose.*

[51] *For further information on methods and pros/cons to the different methods can be found at edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/SS685.*

[52] *Stocking of native plants have been partially successful in lakes in SE Wisconsin such as Lac La Belle and Okauchee Lakes.*

Figure 3.1
Mechanical Harvesting Recommendations in Cravath and Trippe Lakes: 2025-2029



Note: Aerial imagery from 2024

PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH
PRIVATE BOAT LAUNCH
DAM
TRIPPE HARVESTING LANES
CRAVATH HARVESTING LANES

N
0 575 1,150 Feet

Source: SEWRPC

can be caught in the harvester and harvested plants, particularly when cutting larger plant mats. Consequently, carefully examine cut materials to avoid inadvertent harvest of fish, crustaceans, amphibians, turtles, and other animals.

4. **Harvesting should not occur in the early spring** to avoid disturbing fish spawning. Studies suggest that harvesting activities can significantly disturb the many fish species that spawn in early spring. Thus, avoiding harvesting during this time can benefit the Lake's fishery.

5. **All harvester operators should adhere to the harvesting specifications and practices as described in the harvesting permit.** Harvester operators should review of the aquatic plant management plan and associated permits with special emphasis focused on the need to restrict cutting in shallow areas and have plant identification skills to encourage preservation of native plant communities. Additionally, all harvester operators are obligated to record their work for inclusion in annual reports that are required under harvesting permits.

6. **Harvesting can fragment plants.** Plant fragments may float in the Lake, accumulate on shorelines, and help spread undesirable plants. The harvesting program should include a comprehensive plant pickup program that all residents can use. This helps assure that harvesting does not create a nuisance for Lake residents. The program typically includes residents raking plants, placing them in a convenient location accessible to the harvester (e.g., the end of a pier), and regularly scheduled pickup of cut plants by the harvester operators. This effort should be as collaborative as practical.

7. **Proper disposal of aquatic plants is required.** All plant debris collected from harvesting activities must be collected and disposed at the designated disposal sites using the designated disposal route, as shown on Figure 3.2. No aquatic plant material may be deposited within identified floodplain and wetland areas.

Future Funding

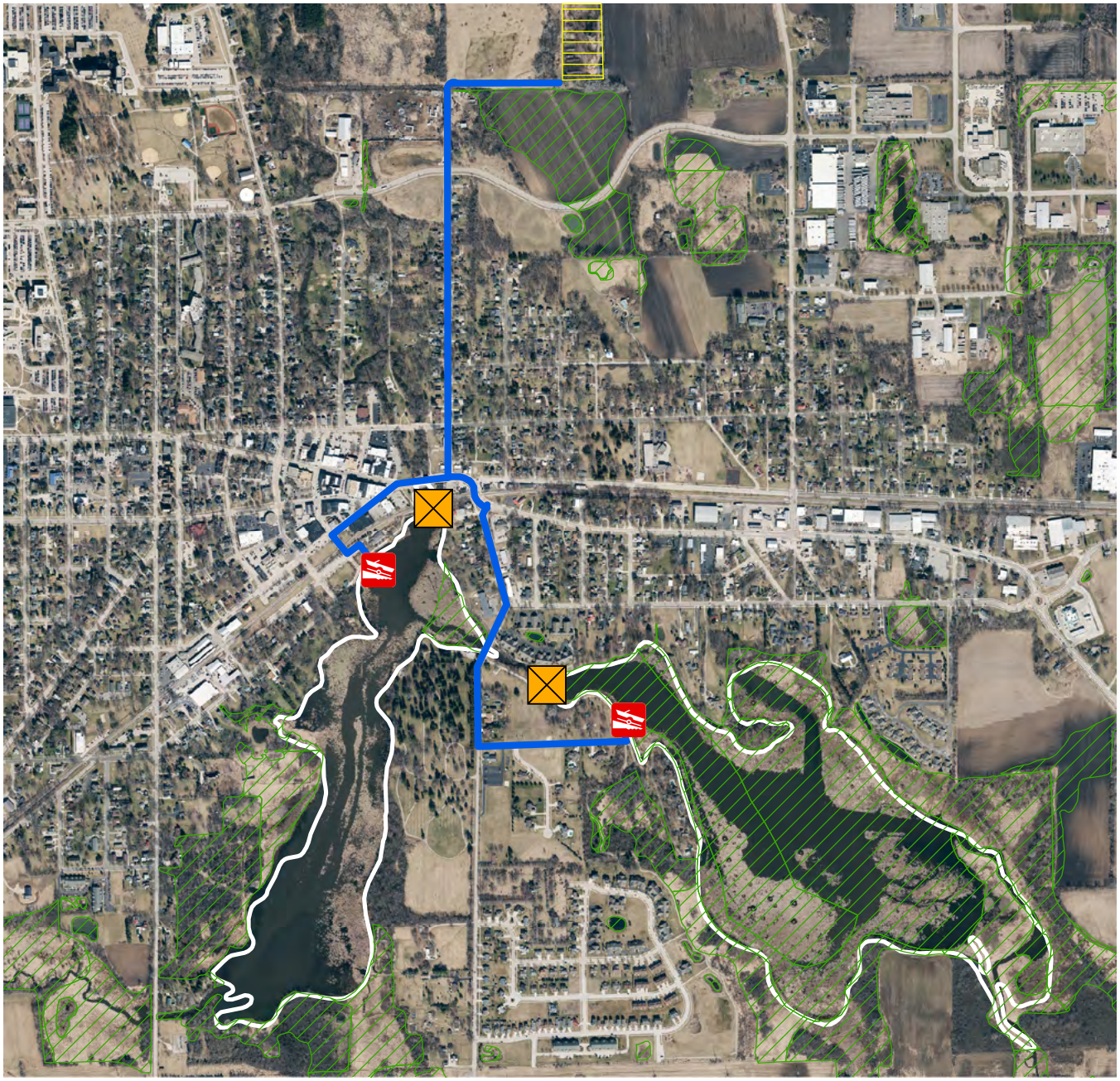
The City should utilize WDNR Surface Water Grants to further their efforts in monitoring and managing the Lakes, inspecting watercraft at boat launches, and targeting areas for management. Key grant programs to fund these efforts are as follows:

- **Clean Boats, Clean Waters** – this grant program covers up to 75 percent of up to $24,000 to conduct watercraft inspections, collect data, educate boaters about invasive species, and reporting invasive species to the WDNR.

- **Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention** – this grant program covers up to 75 percent of $4,000 for projects that help prevent the spread of AIS species. Eligible costs include the acquisition of decontamination equipment at public boat launches as well as targeted management at boat launches or other access points. All lakes are eligible for at least $4,000 in funding. The City must participate in the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program to maintain eligibility for this grant program.

- **Aquatic Invasive Species Control** – this grant program covers up to 75 percent of up to $50,000 for small-scale projects and $150,000 for large-scale projects that suppress or reduce an AIS population within a lake. Given the current limited spread of EWM and CLP within the lakes, the small-scale project is more appropriate at this time. The large-scale projects should be considered if the populations of these species increase or a novel invasive species, such as starry stonewort, is observed within the lake. Aquatic Invasive Species Control grants fund projects that utilize integrated pest management and are designed to cause multi-season suppression of the target species. An approved aquatic plant management plan is a requirement to participate in this program and only approved recommendations from the plan are eligible projects for funding through this program.

Figure 3.2
Harvesting Disposal Route and Location for Cravath and Trippe Lakes: 2025-2029



Note: Aerial imagery from 2024

PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH

PRIVATE BOAT LAUNCH

DAM

HARVESTING DISPOSAL

ROUTE DISPOSAL SITE

WDNR DESIGNATED WETLANDS

N

0 720 1,440 Feet

Source: SEWRPC

- **Recreational Boating Facilities Grant Program**[53] – this grant program covers up to 50 percent of $250,00 for a recreational boating facility project. These projects can include aquatic plant harvesting equipment, rehabilitation of facilities, trash skimming equipment, improvement or repair of locks, construction projects such as ramps or dredging for safe water depths. The City has received grants from this program in the past to assist with the funding of projects.

The City should consider applying for these grant programs whenever feasible to support the monitoring, communication, watercraft inspection, and targeted management recommended in this aquatic plant management plan.

3.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As requested by the City, the Commission worked with the City to develop a scope of work to provide information needed to allow the City to apply for aquatic plant management permits. This report, which documents the findings and recommendations of the study, examines existing and anticipated conditions, potential aquatic plant management problems, and lake use. Conformant with the study's intent, the plan includes recommended actions and management measures as well as options for future funding.

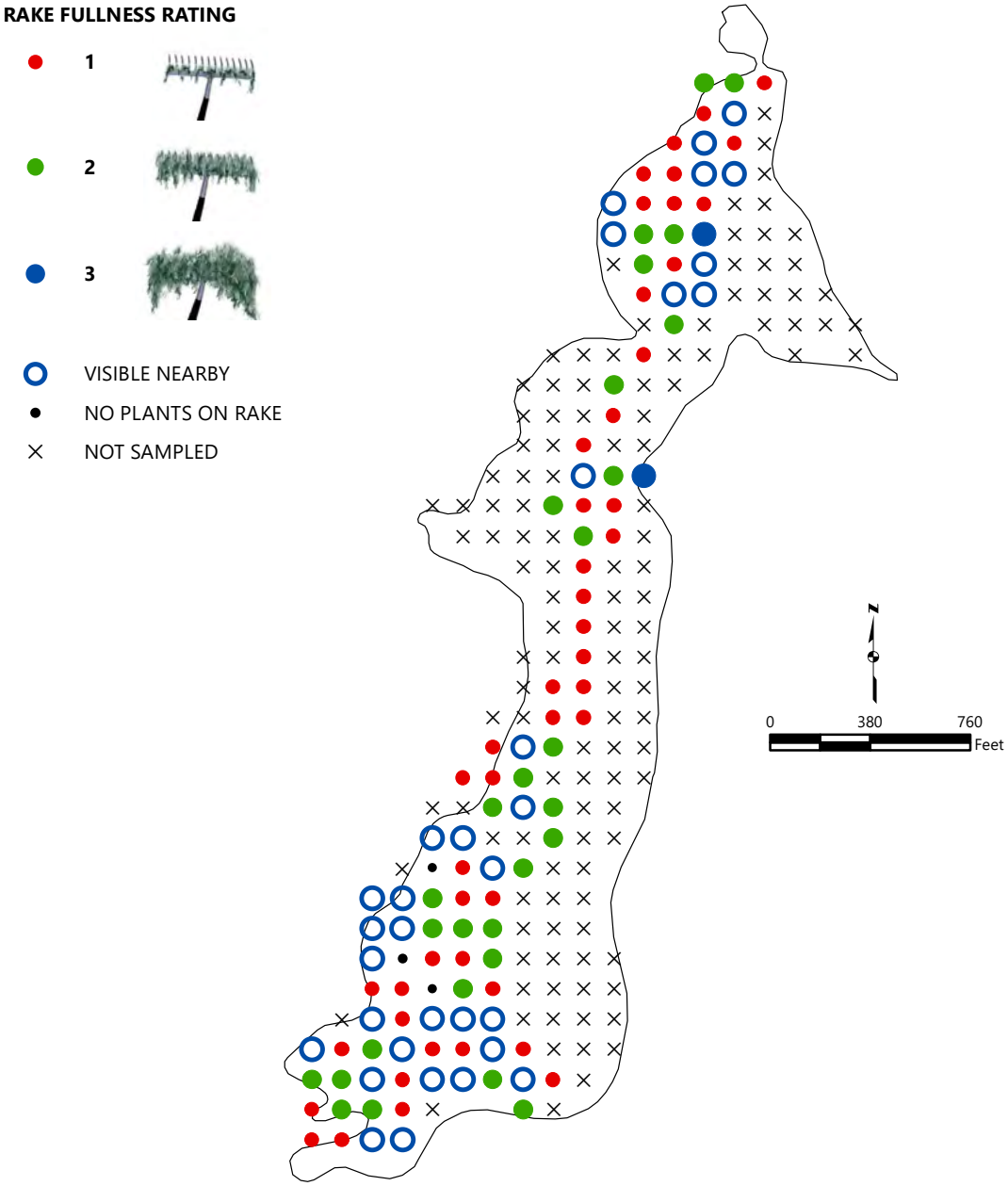
Successfully implementing this plan will require cooperative engagement from the City, State and regional agencies, Walworth County, municipalities, and residents/users of the Lakes. The recommended measures help foster conditions sustaining and enhancing the natural beauty and ambience of Cravath and Trippe Lakes while promoting a wide array of water-based recreational activities suitable for the Lakes' intrinsic characteristics.

[53] *dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/RBF.html.*

APPENDICES

CRAVATH LAKE AQUATIC PLANT RAKE FULLNESS APPENDIX A

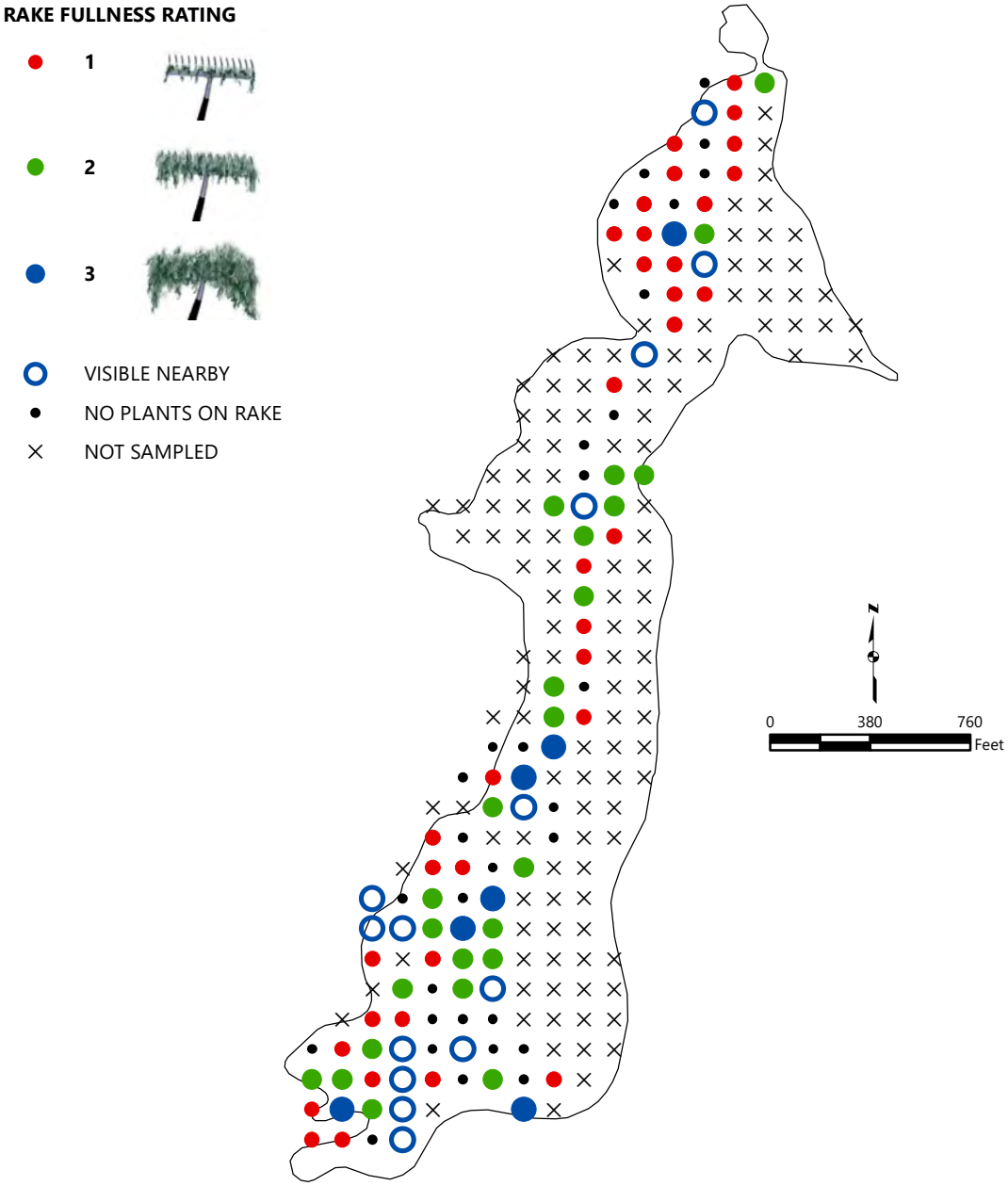
Figure A.1
Duckweed Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

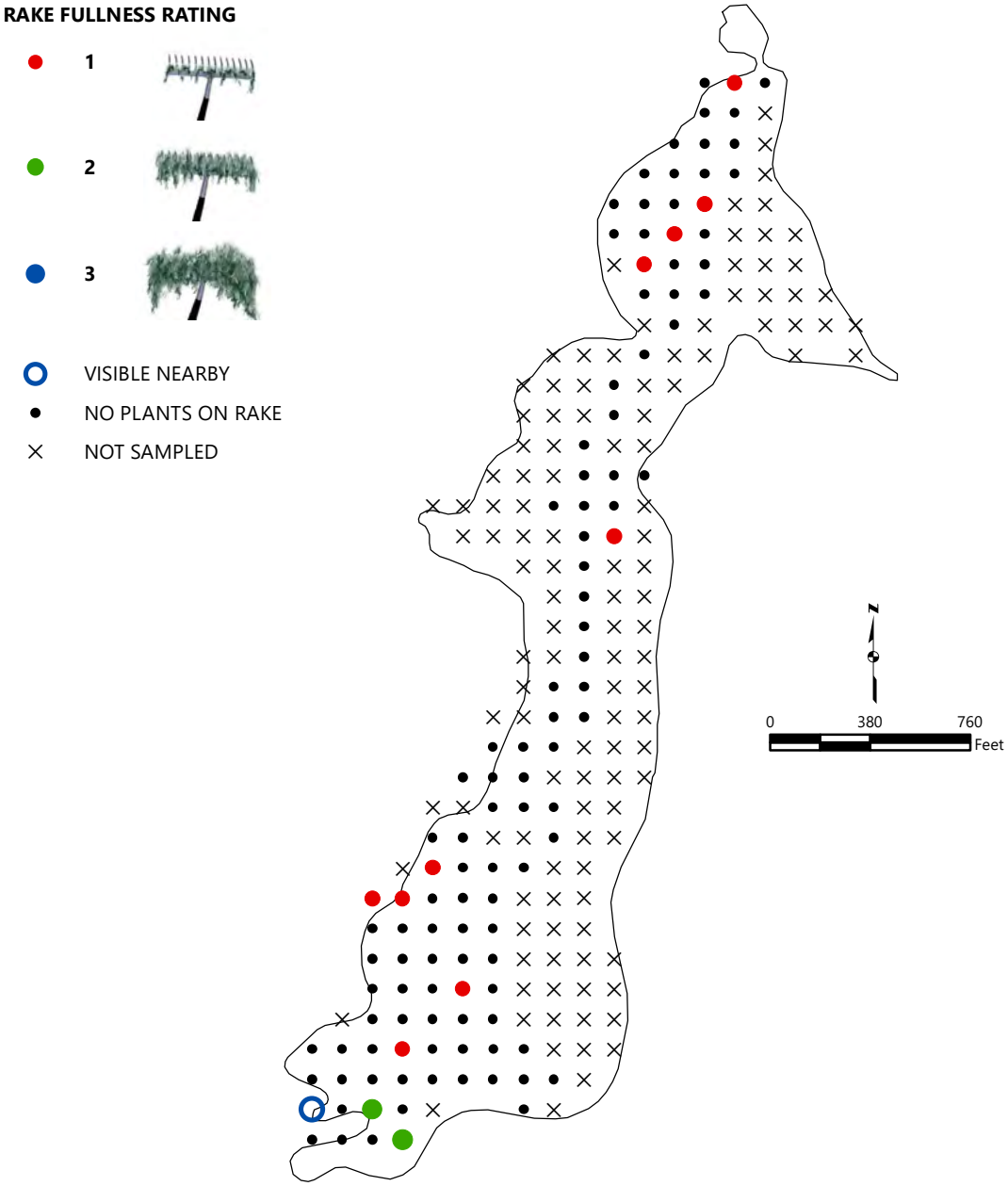
Figure A.2
Coontail Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

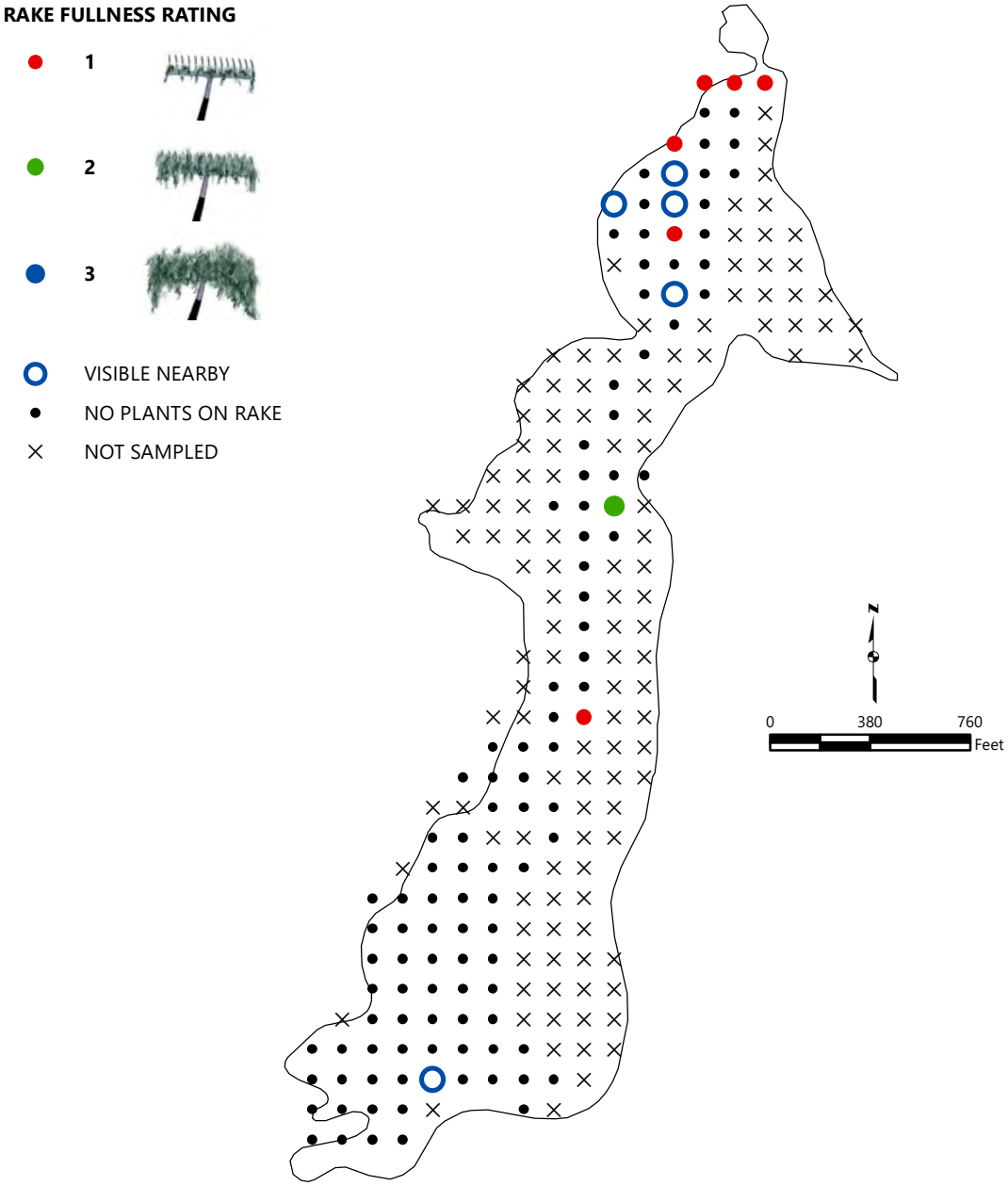
Figure A.3
Elodea Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

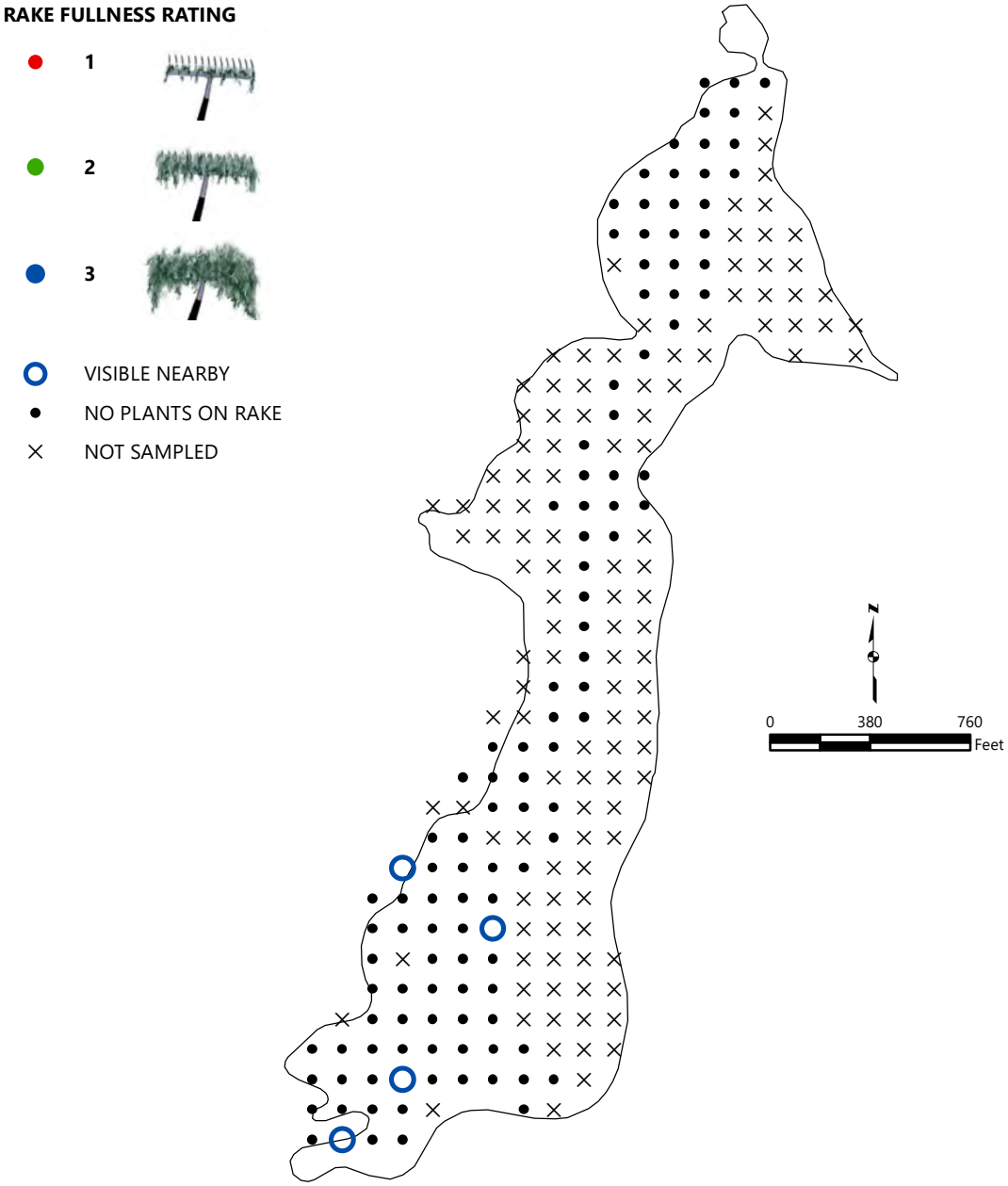
Figure A.4
Watermeal Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

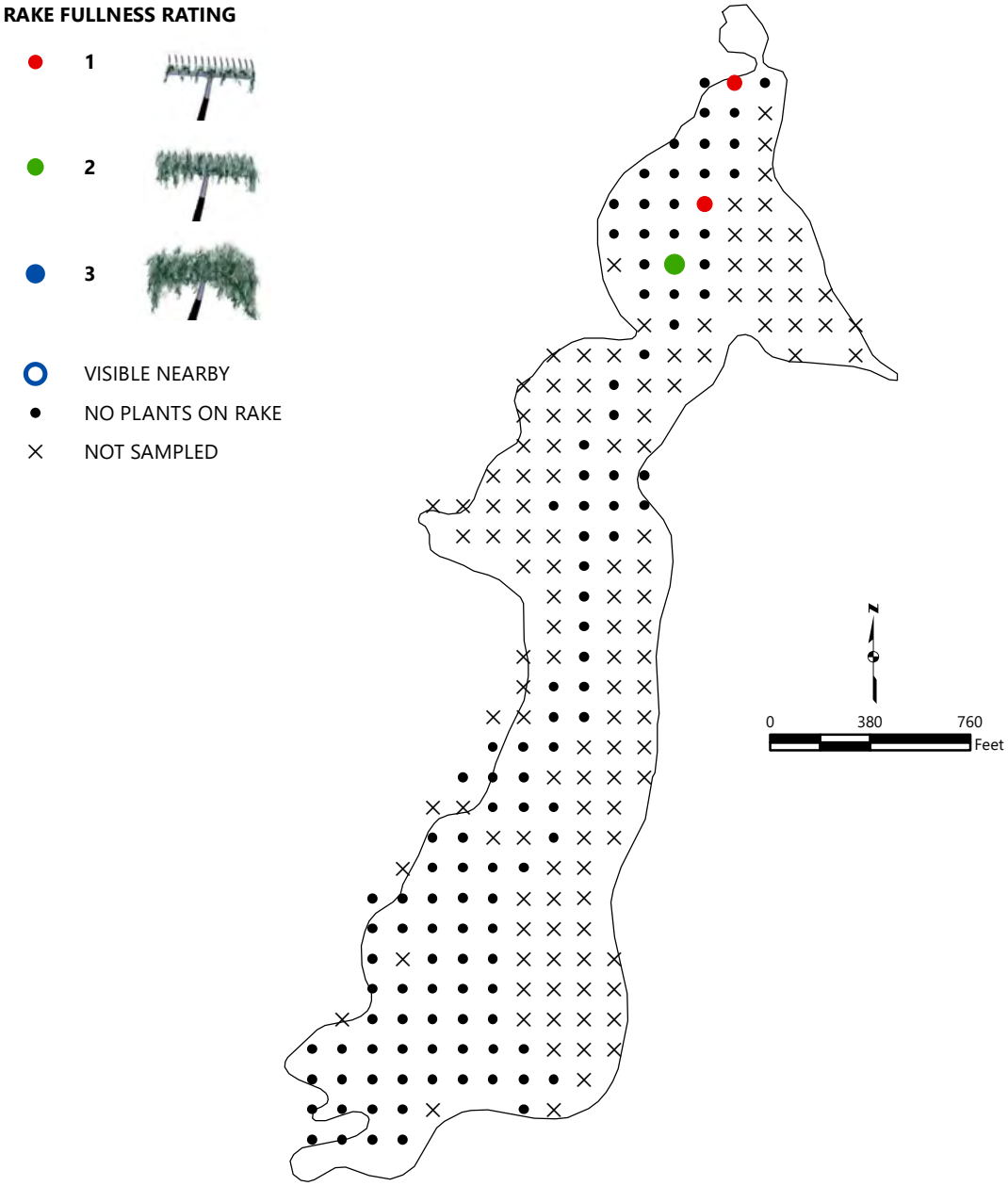
Figure A.5
Curly-Leaf Pondweed Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Figure A.6
Eurasian Watermilfoil Total Rake Fullness in Cravath Lake: July 2024

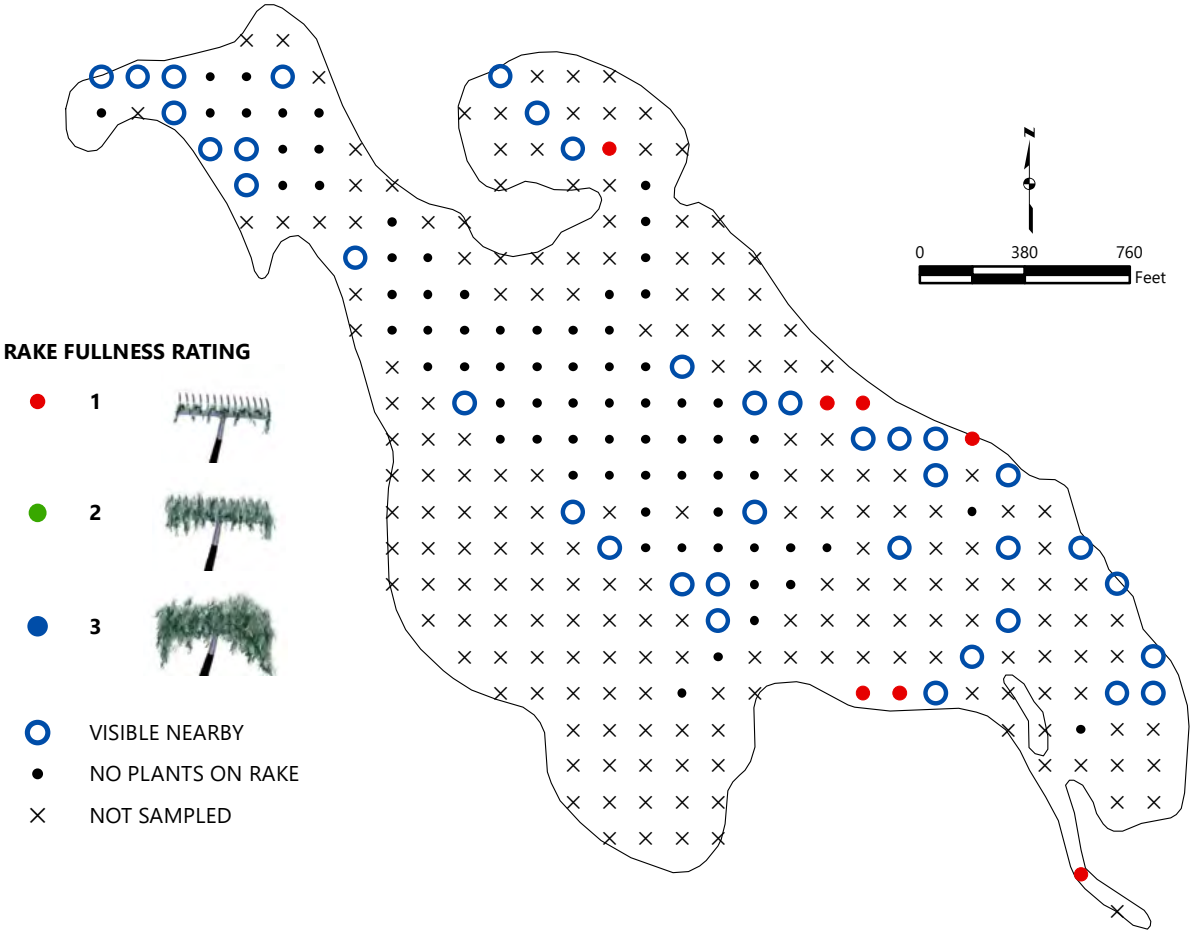


Note: Survey was conducted on Cravath Lake on July 29th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

APPENDIX B
TRIPPE LAKE AQUATIC PLANT RAKE FULLNESS

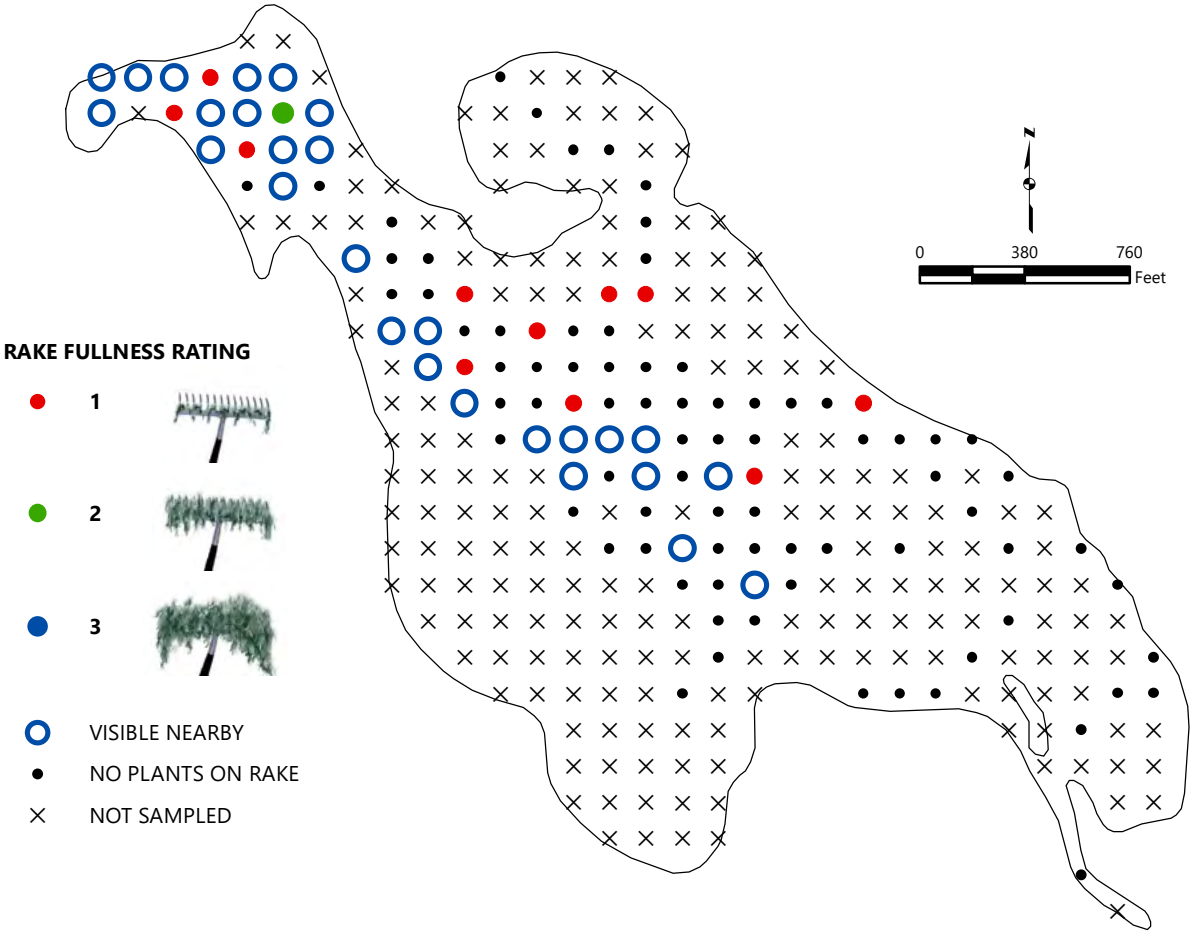
Figure B.1
Duckweed Rake Fullness in Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-July16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

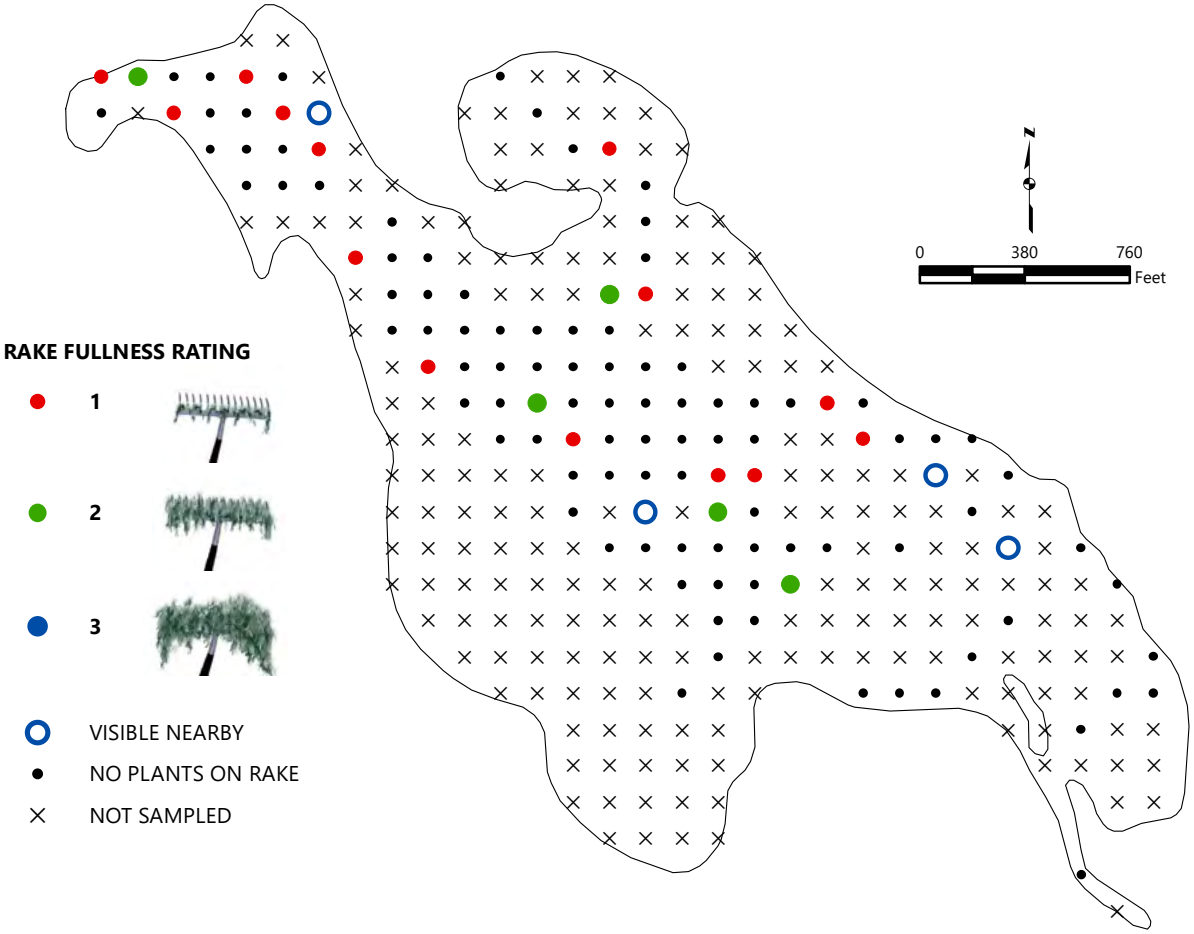
Figure B.2
Curly-Leaf Pondweed Rake Fullness on Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-July16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

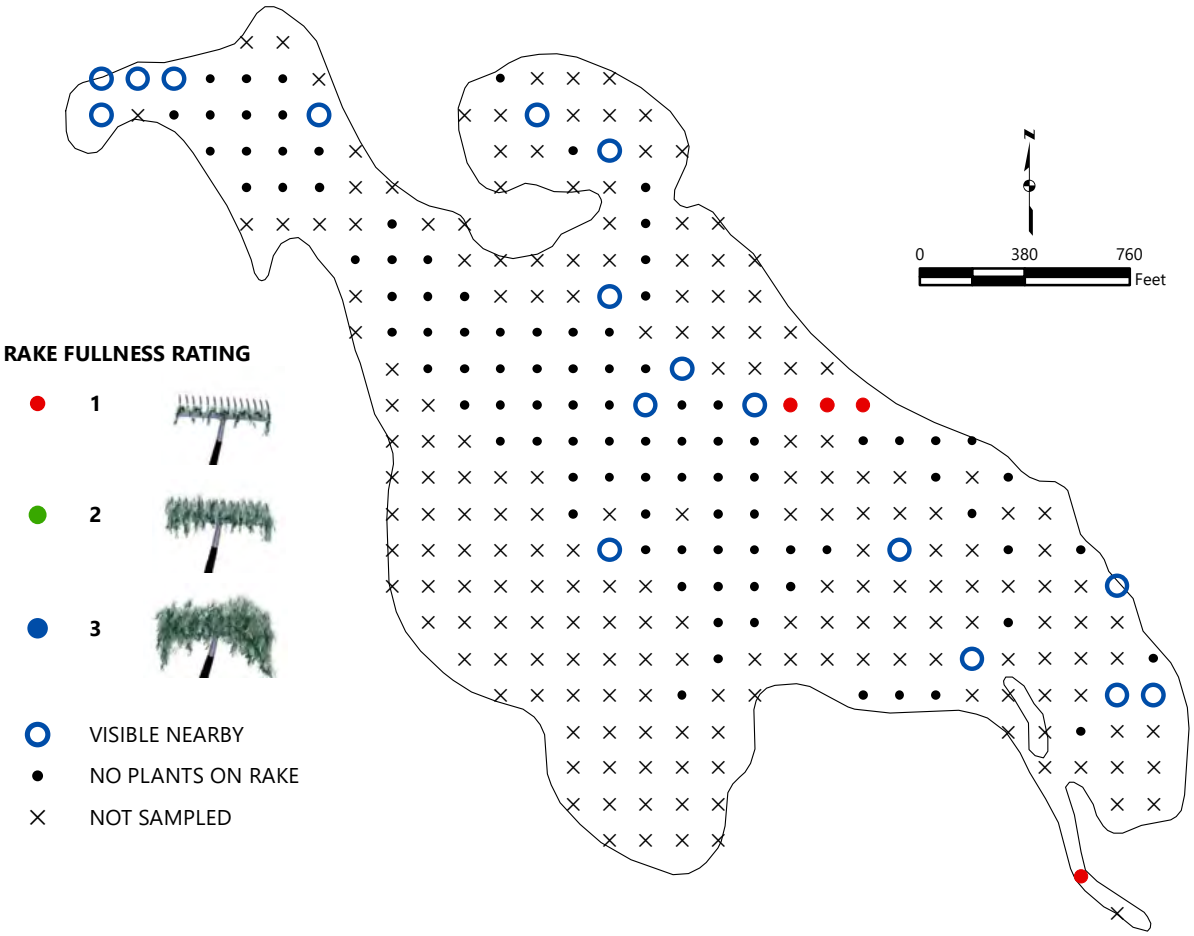
Figure B.3
Coontail Rake Fullness in Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-July16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

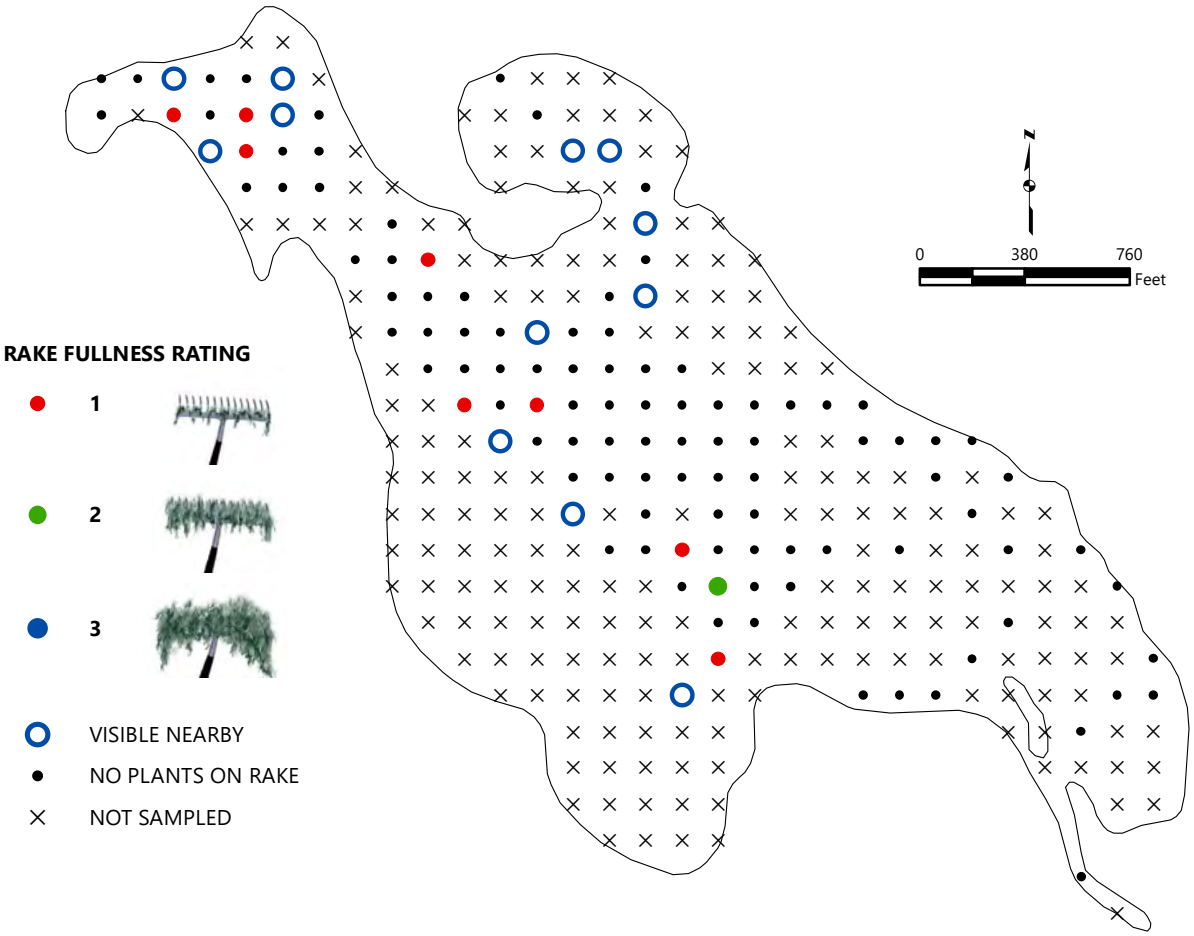
Figure B.4
Watermeal Rake Fullness in Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-July16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

Figure B.5
Sago Pondweed Rake Fullness in Trippe Lake: July 2024



Note: Survey was conducted on Trippe Lake on July 15th-July16th, 2024.

Source: WDNR and SEWRPC

CITY OF WHITEWATER POLICY	TITLE: **RECREATION PROGRAM FEE POLICY**	
POLICY SOURCE: Parks and Recreation Department	Parks and Recreation Board Approval Date: November 5, 2007 Revised: November 7, 2011, October 15, 2025	TEXT NAME: G:\Park & Rec\General Information\Policy\ Recreation Program Fee Policy

I. Purpose

It is the purpose of this policy to provide clear guidelines for establishing fair and reasonable participant fees for all recreation programs, ensuring fiscal responsibility while promoting equitable access and community participation for both residents and non-residents.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the City of Whitewater to open participation in Parks and Recreation Department sports and instructional, and special programs to all interested participants, and to charge fees that align with the cost recovery guidelines outlined in this policy.

The Parks and Recreation Department shall establish participant fees that meet cost recovery goals while maintaining accessibility and inclusivity for all community members

III. Definitions

1. *Youth* – age 17 and under
2. *Adult* – age 18-54
3. *Senior/Older Adults* – age 55 and older
4. *Special needs* – individuals of all ages requiring special accommodations due to physical, cognitive, developmental, or other disabilities.
5. *Sports Team* – Compilation of individuals who participate as a group in a designated sport, i.e., basketball, soccer, baseball, flag football, etc.
6. *Administrative costs* – General cost of administrating programs such as clerical staff, legal counsel, administrative overhead, payroll and finance functions, marketing, technology support, and capital improvements.
7. *Operating costs* – Costs directly related to the operation of a program. These costs include direct program staff, supplies and services.
8. *Resident* - Any person whose primary residence lieswithin the limits of the Whitewater Unified School District, as verified by physical address.
9. *Non-resident* - Any person who does not reside withinthe limits of the Whitewater Unified School District.
10. *Cost Recovery* – The percentage of total program costs (including operating and administrative expenses) that are offset through participant fees, sponsorships, or other revenue sources.

IV. Cost Recovery

1. Youth instructional and sports programsshall recover 110% of the operating costs of those programs.
2. Adult instructional and sports programsshall recover 110% of the operating costs of those programs.
3. Senior programsshall recover 110% of the operating costs of those programs.
4. Drop-In and Special Event programsshould recover approximately 50% of the operating costs of those programs through fees, sponsorships, or donations.

5. Contractual program fees will be established to recover the administrative costs of the City (typically 15-20%), any supply or material expenses incurred by the City, and to adequately reimburse the contractual provider.
6. Programs operated jointly with another municipal department will not charge a non-resident fee to participants from that community.

V. Fees

1. Program fees will be collected through team entry fees, individual registration fees, or general user fees.
2. All youth and adult program participants requesting to register after the deadline will be accepted if available spots remain in the program and a late processing fee of $10.00 is paid. Exception: All adult sports teams requesting to register after the deadline will be accepted if the team meets the league criteria and a late processing fee of $25.00 is paid.
3. All program fees will be established based on the cost recovery guidelines.
4. Participants having financial difficulties may apply for fee assistance as outlined in the Recreation Sunshine Fund Program (Financial Assistance Program).
5. All fee adjustments noted in this policy will become effective immediately upon approval by the Parks and Recreation Board.
6. All non-residents as defined in Article III will be charged an additional 10% fee on top of the resident rate of participating in a program.

7. Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center (WAFC) Memberships:

- Membership fees at the WAFC shall follow the established fee schedule approved by the Parks and Recreation Board.
- A **$100 cancellation fee** will be assessed for any cancellation of an annual membership, regardless of whether the membership was paid in full or established through a monthly draft.
- Monthly memberships without an annual commitment will be charged an additional **25%** above the standard rate.
- All other WAFC membership policies, rates, and adjustments shall remain consistent with this Recreation Program Fee Policy.

VI. Falsification of Information

The registrant will be removed from all registered programs and all fees will be forfeited if the registrant falsified information on a registration form.

Registrants may appeal removal by submitting a written request to the Parks and Recreation Director within (10) business days of notification.

VII. Refunds

1. A full refund will be credited or issued to the participant for any program cancelled by the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. A full refund will be credited or issued to the participant if a program time, date, or location is changed by the Parks and Recreation Department and the participant is unable to attend because of the change.
3. A team fee will be refunded until the deadline for the team registration. After the

deadline, the team fee will be refunded only if there is another team willing to fill that spot in the league. Refunds will not be granted for any reason after the playing schedules are created by the Parks and Recreation Department.

4. All refund requests not identified in Items 1-3, must be approved by the Parks Board through a written request. The board will review the request at its next scheduled meeting after the department receives the refund request.
5. Refund requestsmust be submitted within thirty (30) days of the original program start date. Approved refunds will be credited to the family account in the registration software program. Requests for a cash or credit card refund will be subject to a $10.00 processing fee per participant and program unless the program was cancelled by the department.
6. Late fees paid by either teams or individuals will not be refunded unless the program is cancelled by the Department.
7. Refunds of $5.00 or less will not be processed, but will be credited to the family account.
8. Participants withdrawing prior to completion of 25% of a mulit-week program may be eligible for a prorated refund at the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Director.

VIII. Review of Policy

1. This policy will be reviewed every five (5)years by the Park Board withany proposed revisions will be approved by the Board following review.

IX. Effective Date and Adoption

Effective Date: October 15, 2025
Approved by the Parks and Recreation Board on: October 15, 2025

City of WHITEWATER
Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan

2026-2031

Acknowledgments

The *Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026-2031* reflects the commitment and collaboration of City of Whitewater staff, leadership, and the Parks and Recreation Board. Their guidance and expertise ensured that this plan represents the community's vision for its parks and open spaces.

City Staff

- John Weidl, City Manager
- Kevin Boehm, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facility Maintenance
- Brad Marquardt, Director of Public Works
- Brian Neumeister, Streets and Forestry Superintendent
- Mason Becker, Community Development Director

Parks and Recreation Board

- Steve Ryan, Chair
- Stephanie Hicks, Vice Chair
- Neil Hicks, Councilmember
- Mike Dowden, WWUSD Representative
- Mike Kilar
- Kathleen Fleming
- Dan Fuller
- Deb Weberpal

Common Council

- Michael Smith, District 1
- Orin Smith, District 2
- Steven Sahyun, District 3
- Brian Schanen, District 4, Pro Tem
- Neil Hicks, District 5
- Greg Majkrzak, At Large
- Patrick Singer, At Large, President

Special thanks go to all the Parks, Recreation, Facility Maintenance, and Streets staff whose day-to-day work keeps our parks and public spaces welcoming, safe, and accessible for all residents.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities are part of what makes Whitewater a great place to live. From Cravath Lakefront Park's community events and lakeside views, to the everyday activities at Starin Park and the trails that connect our neighborhoods, these public spaces strengthen health, community, and local identity. They provide safe places to gather, play, and enjoy nature, while protecting our lakes, woodlands, and natural areas for future generations.

As Whitewater grows and changes, planning ahead is essential. Shifts in population, new development, and aging infrastructure bring both opportunities and challenges. This plan ensures that our parks remain safe, welcoming, and high-quality spaces for all residents — children and families, students, older adults, and visitors alike.

The *Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026-2031* serves as a roadmap for maintaining, enhancing, and expanding the community's parks, trails, natural areas, and recreational amenities. It identifies both immediate needs (2026–2031) and long-term goals (through 2036) to guide investments and decision-making. The plan focuses on equitable access, environmental stewardship, and sustainability, while also supporting broader community goals around health, inclusion, and climate resilience.

This plan was prepared in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) guidelines to maintain eligibility for critical funding programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Wisconsin Stewardship Program. DNR certification requires that the plan be updated every five years to reflect changing community needs and priorities.

Finally, the plan is adopted as an element of the City of Whitewater Master Plan under Wisconsin Statutes §62.23. It builds upon earlier City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plans and integrates with related documents such as the Whitewater Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and neighborhood development plans. A separate Strategic Plan will follow, providing site-specific recommendations and project-level details. Where inconsistencies arise, the recommendations of the 2026-2031 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan shall take precedence.

2. The Vital Role of Parks and Recreation in the Community

In Whitewater, parks and recreation are not luxuries — they are fundamental to the quality of life. From everyday moments like children playing at Big Brick Park or neighbors meeting on the trails at Moraine View, to community traditions such as the Fourth of July celebration at Cravath Lakefront and concerts at the Frawley Family Amphitheater, these shared spaces shape the character of the city.

Parks and Public Health

Access to parks is directly tied to the health and wellness of Whitewater residents. Trails, playgrounds, athletic fields, and the Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center provide year-round opportunities for physical activity. These resources help reduce chronic health risks while also improving mental and social wellbeing. For older adults, walking loops, shaded seating, and accessible paths encourage mobility and community connection. For students and families, sports facilities, splash pads, and open spaces provide active outlets that support lifelong healthy habits.

Community, Identity, and Inclusion

Parks are also where community identity is built. They are the backdrop for weddings, festivals, youth sports, and volunteer events that bring residents together across generations. Starin Park hosts the Senior Center and Treyton's Field of Dreams, serving as a hub of intergenerational activity. Cravath Lakefront is home to markets, music, and multicultural celebrations that reflect Whitewater's diversity. UW–Whitewater students and long-term residents alike rely on parks for recreation and social life, creating common ground that unites the city.

Economic Value

A strong park system supports the local economy. Festivals, tournaments, and community events draw visitors who support small businesses, restaurants, and lodging. Families considering a move to Whitewater, or graduates choosing to stay, often point to parks, trails, and quality of life as deciding factors. Well-maintained parks enhance property values and make the community more attractive to employers, further strengthening Whitewater's long-term vitality.

Environmental Stewardship

Whitewater's parks and natural areas also serve as vital green infrastructure. Conservancy lands like the Whitewater Creek Nature Area and the Effigy Mounds Preserve protect cultural and ecological resources while offering opportunities for quiet reflection. Ray Trost Nature Preserve and other natural sites provide habitat for wildlife and space for environmental education. Trees, wetlands, and greenways reduce flooding, improve air and water quality, and increase resilience to climate change. Investments in tree planting, invasive species management, and shoreline restoration make parks an important part of the city's environmental strategy.

Equity and Accessibility

Above all, parks and recreation are public resources that serve everyone. Inclusive playgrounds, ADA-compliant facilities, affordable programs, and safe connections ensure that all residents — regardless of age, ability, or income — can benefit. Parks are places where barriers break down and where Whitewater's values of equity, inclusion, and community pride are lived out every day.

A Reflection of Whitewater's Values

Ultimately, the Whitewater park system reflects community values: health, equity, sustainability, and shared quality of life. By investing in and caring for these spaces, the City ensures that parks and recreation will remain at the heart of Whitewater for generations to come.

3. Background Information and Community Profile

Whitewater is both a small city and a regional hub, shaped by its unique mix of long-term residents, families, and a large student population. The city straddles Jefferson and Walworth Counties, covers roughly nine square miles, and is served by the Whitewater Unified School District (WUSD). This dual identity — a tight-knit community and a university town — influences housing, recreation, and transportation needs and directly shapes the role of the park system.

Since 1980, Whitewater has experienced modest but steady population change, influenced by both permanent residents and enrollment at the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater (UW–Whitewater). For planning purposes, this plan uses the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 decennial census count of 14,889 residents as the baseline population for the 2026–2031 planning period. Between 2020 and 2025, preliminary estimates indicate that Whitewater's population grew to approximately 15,646 residents, reflecting an increase of about 757 people (5%). UW–Whitewater continues to be a major driver of demand for recreation and social spaces, with 2025–2026 enrollment projected at approximately 12,075 students, including the Rock County campus (University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, 2025).

3.1 Population Trends

Between the 2020 U.S. Census and 2025 population estimates, Whitewater's population increased, rising from 14,889 residents in 2020 to approximately 15,646 residents in 2025. This growth represents an addition of about 757 residents, or a 5% increase citywide. The Jefferson County portion of the city grew modestly, while the Walworth County portion accounted for the majority of the increase (Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2025 Preliminary Municipal Population Estimates; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census).

Population Change (2020–2025)

Whitewater Population: 2020 Census vs. 2025 Preliminary Estimates

Source / Geography	2020 Census	2025 Estimate	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Jefferson County portion	4,416	4,029	–387	–8.8%

Source / Geography	2020 Census	2025 Estimate	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Walworth County portion	10,473*	11,617	+1,144	+10.9%
Whitewater Total	**14,889**	**15,646**	**+757**	**+5.1%**

*Note: The Walworth County portion is derived by subtracting the Jefferson County population (4,416) from the Census total (14,889).

In practical terms, this means that Whitewater has slightly more residents today than five years ago — and its service population remains especially high when UW–Whitewater students are factored in.

3.2 Age Distribution

Whitewater remains younger than many surrounding communities due to the student population. In 2025, 88.7% of residents are age 18 or older, compared to 88.2% in 2020. At the same time, seniors (65+) are projected to grow steadily in number, while family-age residents remain relatively stable.

This unique age mix — a large student population alongside a growing senior population — creates diverse recreation needs. Students drive demand for trails, sports fields, and social gathering spaces, while older adults benefit from accessible paths, shaded seating, and low-impact recreation.

3.3 Implications for Parks Planning

Demographic trends carry important implications for the city's parks and recreation system:

- **Population growth and stable family-age households** mean the city must focus on reinvesting in existing assets, ensuring they remain modern, safe, and attractive while also accommodating gradual increases in demand, rather than relying solely on new growth to fund amenities.
- **Student influence** drives strong demand for active sports facilities, trails, multipurpose courts, and flexible spaces that support informal recreation and social connection.
- **The increasing Latino population** contributes to the city's cultural diversity and underscores the need for welcoming, family-orientated gathering spaces, bilingual communication, and inclusive programming.

- **Aging residents** require accessible parks with smooth walking loops, benches, shaded gathering areas, and universally designed facilities. Investments in ADA compliance will ensure parks serve residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Community identity** depends on parks that bring people together — from student intramurals and youth sports to senior activities and citywide festivals.

Together, these dynamics underscore the importance of a balanced system: one that maintains and modernizes existing parks, expands trail connectivity, and provides amenities that serve Whitewater's full spectrum of residents — from students to seniors.

4. Planning Process

The development of the *Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026-2031* was a collaborative process designed to combine data, professional expertise, and the voices of residents. Each phase built upon the previous one, ensuring that the final plan reflects both technical needs and community priorities.

Phase 1: Project Initiation and Background Review

The planning process began with a thorough review of existing documents, including the 2008–2013 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, the 2015 Strategic Plan, neighborhood development plans, and the Whitewater Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This step established a baseline by updating demographics, land use patterns, growth indicators, and facility inventories. Reviewing past plans allowed the City to identify which recommendations had been implemented, which remained outstanding, and where new priorities were emerging.

Phase 2: Community Engagement

Public input played a central role in shaping the plan. In 2025, a citywide survey gathered responses from hundreds of residents, providing insight into how people use parks, what amenities they value most, and where they see gaps. A second survey is planned for the end of 2026 to broaden representation and measure progress as the plan is implemented.

Phase 3: Park Inventory, Site Assessments, and Mapping

Every park, open space, and facility was inventoried and assessed for size, classification, amenities, condition, and accessibility. This included documenting whether facilities met ADA standards, identifying where infrastructure such as restrooms or shelters were aging, and mapping service areas to show geographic equity. GIS-based mapping also highlighted gaps in access, particularly in developing neighborhoods, and opportunities for future trail connections.

Phase 4: Needs Assessment and Strategic Themes

Data from the inventory was synthesized to identify key needs. These included modernizing aging facilities, expanding trail connectivity, addressing equity and accessibility gaps, and increasing shade, natural restoration, and environmental

stewardship. Strategic themes emerged around maintenance, connectivity, inclusion, and resilience.

Phase 5: Goals, Recommendations, and Draft Plan

Building on these findings, City staff and the Parks and Recreation Board drafted the mission, vision, and core values for the plan. Goals were established around quality, equity, connectivity, stewardship, engagement, and sustainable funding. System-wide and site-specific recommendations were developed to guide future investment, ensuring that the plan not only sets priorities but also identifies strategies for implementation.

Phase 6: Review, Adoption, and Integration

The draft plan is being reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board, Plan Commission, and the Common Council. Following adoption, it will be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for certification, maintaining the City's eligibility for Stewardship and LWCF grant programs. Once certified, the plan will be integrated into the City's Comprehensive Plan. A follow-up Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan will provide more detailed project phasing, cost estimates, and site-specific implementation steps.

5. Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Enhance quality of life in Whitewater by providing safe, inclusive, and inspiring parks, recreation programs, and open spaces for all.

Vision

Whitewater will be a community where parks and recreation are central to daily life — places where residents and students connect with nature, gather with friends and family, celebrate traditions, and build a healthier, more sustainable future.

Core Values

Our work is guided by values that reflect the spirit of Whitewater:

- **Inclusion and Accessibility** – Every park and program should be welcoming, safe, and usable for all ages and abilities.
- **Stewardship and Sustainability** – We protect and enhance the city's natural, cultural, and financial resources for future generations.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – Parks and recreation support physical activity, mental health, and community resilience.
- **Community Pride and Connection** – Parks bring people together, strengthen neighborhoods, and build civic pride.
- **Innovation and Excellence** – We embrace creativity and continuous improvement to deliver high-quality services.
- **Environmental Responsibility** – Sustainable design and maintenance practices keep Whitewater's parks resilient and inspiring.

6. Park and Recreation System Overview

The City of Whitewater manages a diverse system of parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities that provide opportunities for play, wellness, cultural expression, and environmental stewardship. To organize this system and evaluate future needs, the plan uses the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) classification system, adapted to Whitewater's context.

Park Classification and Standards

Two benchmarks guide system planning:

- **Gross Acreage Standard** – NRPA recommends 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents (not including conservancy lands). With more than approximately 160 acres of developed parkland, Whitewater exceeds this guideline.
- **Service Area Standard** – Each park type has a typical service radius. This ensures residents can reach a park within a short walk or bike ride, and helps identify gaps in access in growing or underserved neighborhoods.

Park Classifications

- **Mini Parks (up to 2.5 acres)**
  - **Service Area:** Within ¼ mile
  - **Population Served:** 0.25–0.5 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Small, walkable greenspaces designed to serve nearby residents.
- **Neighborhood Parks (2–10 acres)**
  - **Service Area:** ¼–½ mile
  - **Population Served:** 1–2 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Moderately sized parks serving surrounding residential areas, typically including playgrounds, courts, or open green space.
- **Community Parks (10+ acres)**
  - **Service Area:** 1.5 miles or more
  - **Population Served:** 5–8 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Large, multi-purpose parks that serve the entire community and often support regional visitors.

Park Type	Typical Size	Service Area	Population Served	Typical Features
Mini Park	Up to 2.5 acres	¼ mile radius	0.25–0.5 acres per 1,000 residents	Tot lots, benches, pocket greens
Neighborhood Park	2–10 acres	¼–½ mile radius	1–2 acres per 1,000 residents	Playgrounds, sport courts, picnic shelters, open lawns
Community Park	10+ acres	1.5+ mile radius	5–8 acres per 1,000 residents	Ballfields, aquatic facilities, event space, trails, parking

Recreation Area Classifications

- **Active Recreation Areas** – Facilities for structured, high-use activities such as athletic fields, playgrounds, courts, skateparks, splash pads, dog parks, and community gardens.
- **Passive Recreation Areas** – Open/natural areas designed for less-structured recreation like walking, picnicking, or nature viewing.
- **Special Use Areas** – Unique or civic facilities such as amphitheaters, plazas, or historic sites that provide cultural or interpretive value.
- **Conservancy Areas** – Permanently protected natural lands, often sensitive environments such as wetlands, floodplains, and wildlife corridors. These areas are not counted as developed parkland but are essential to habitat protection and ecological resilience.

Note on Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve

The Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve holds unique cultural and spiritual significance as a sacred Native American burial site. It is managed as both a Special Use and Conservancy Area, with an emphasis on preservation and education. The preserve, approximately 21.5 acres, is not included in the developed park acreage but remains one of the most meaningful sites in the park system.

7. Existing Parks and Open Spaces Inventory

The City of Whitewater manages 22 properties. Each listing includes the park name, classification, location, acreage, features, and notes.

Armory Gym & Community Building — *Special Use Area*

- **Location:** 146 W North St.
- **Acreage:** 0.9 acres
- **Features:** Gymnasium, summer camp space, dance studio, classroom space, community food pantry, kitchen space.
- **Notes:** Multifunctional public facility; polling location for Wards 1–7.

Big Brick Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 611 W Center St.
- **Acreage:** 1.1 acres
- **Features:** Open green space, playground, basketball court, drinking water.
- **Notes:** Seasonal community ice rink and warming house.

Brewery Hill Park / Skatepark — *Neighborhood Park*

- **Location:** 116 W North St.
- **Acreage:** 7.3 acres
- **Features:** Open green space, drinking water, multipurpose trail, 8,000 sq. ft. skatepark, fishing access.
- **Notes:** Popular with teens and young adults.

Clay Street Nature Park — *Mini Park (Conservancy designation)*

- **Location:** 511 E Clay St.
- **Acreage:** 1.41 acres
- **Features:** Open green space, fishing access.
- **Notes:** Passive recreation elements; portions managed as natural preservation area.

Cravath Lakefront Park — *Community Park*

- **Location:** 341 S Fremont St.
- **Acreage:** 6.1 acres

- **Features:** Open-air picnic shelter, indoor rental (Cravath Lakefront Building), drinking water, restrooms, boat ramp, fishing, trails, ungroomed XC skiing, snowshoeing, amphitheater, open green space, lakeside views, trail connections.
- **Notes:** Central gathering space; home to Christmas at Cravath, Tuesday Market, Food Truck Festival, Concerts in the Park, Fourth of July, and other major events.

Flat Iron Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 402 W Main St.
- **Acreage:** 0.7 acres
- **Features:** Birge Fountain.
- **Notes:** Summer "Savory Sounds" music series hosted by Whitewater Arts Alliance.

Main Street Shoppes Courtyard — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 112 N 1st St.
- **Acreage:** 0.1 acres
- **Features:** Seating area with picnic tables.
- **Notes:** Small plaza-style site in the downtown district.

Meadowsweet Park — *Neighborhood Park*

- **Location:** 601 N Tratt St.
- **Acreage:** 4 acres
- **Features:** Open green space, detention area, sidewalks.
- **Notes:** Lightly developed site; no formal amenities.

Mill Race Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 124 W Main St.
- **Acreage:** 0.6 acres
- **Features:** Lake access, fishing access.
- **Notes:** Small site with water access for passive recreation.

Minneiska Park — *Community Park*

- **Location:** Parkside Dr. & Tanner Way
- **Acreage:** 20 acres

- **Features:** Trails, playground equipment, open space.
- **Notes:** Serves surrounding residential areas with trail connections.

Moraine View Park — *Community Park*

- **Location:** 1201 Innovation Dr.
- **Acreage:** 45 acres
- **Features:** Multi-use trails, community gardens, soccer fields.
- **Notes:** Large, partly developed site with mixed recreational uses.

Optimist Turtle Mound Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 1302 Turtle Mound Ln.
- **Acreage:** 1.0 acres
- **Features:** Playground, open-air picnic shelter, open green space.
- **Notes:** Used for both recreation and cultural purposes.

Ray Trost Nature Preserve — *Mini Park (Conservancy designation)*

- **Location:** 130 W Starin Rd.
- **Acreage:** 2.0 acres
- **Features:** Multi-use trails, seating, reflection garden.
- **Notes:** Dedicated in honor of former city naturalist; contemplative and educational value.

Skyway Park — *Neighborhood Park*

- **Location:** Tower Hill Pass (Park Crest Subdivision)
- **Acreage:** 4.0 acres
- **Features:** Playground, open green space.
- **Notes:** Serves adjacent residential neighborhood.

Starin Park — *Community Park*

- **Location:** 504 W Starin Rd.
- **Acreage:** 34.6 acres
- **Features:** Multi-use trails; community building; public restrooms; Senior Center; Arboretum; historic water tower; Treyton's Field of Dreams; open-air shelters; horseshoe pits; basketball courts; baseball diamonds; outdoor fitness equipment.

- **Notes:** One of the city's oldest and most-used parks; major intergenerational hub.

Trippe Lake Park — *Community Park*

- **Location:** 407 S Wisconsin St.
- **Acreage:** 24.2 acres
- **Features:** Picnic area, open-air picnic shelter, restrooms, playground, boat ramp, fishing, trails/hiking.
- **Notes:** Popular destination for nature access and passive recreation.

Walton East Gate Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** Jakes Way & Ash Ln.
- **Acreage:** 2.0 acres
- **Features:** Playground, open green space.
- **Notes:** Neighborhood green space.

Walton Oaks Park — *Mini Park*

- **Location:** 654 Stonefield Ln.
- **Acreage:** 2.6 acres
- **Features:** Open green space.
- **Notes:** Serves Walton Oaks subdivision.

Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center (WAFC) — *Special Use Area*

- **Location:** 580 S Elizabeth St.
- **Acreage:** Facility footprint within school campus
- **Features:** Indoor pool; leisure pool with slide, lazy river & water play; fitness center; locker rooms; concessions; fitness studio; meeting room; program space.
- **Notes:** Partnership facility with School District; provides year-round aquatic and fitness opportunities.

Whitewater Bark Park — *Special Use Area*

- **Location:** 546 N Jefferson St.
- **Acreage:** 3.64 acres
- **Features:** Fenced dog park, seating, shade structures.
- **Notes:** Heavily used; volunteer-supported amenity.

Whitewater Creek Nature Area — *Conservancy Area*

- **Location:** 685 N Fremont St.
- **Acreage:** ~60 acres
- **Features:** Woodlands and stream corridors; informal trail access; wildlife viewing.
- **Notes:** Conservancy land managed for habitat and passive use.

Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve — *Special Use/Conservancy Area*

- **Location:** 288 Indian Mound Pkwy
- **Acreage:** ~21.5 acres
- **Features:** Sacred Native American burial mounds; interpretive and natural setting.
- **Notes:** Managed with cultural and ecological sensitivity; not included in developed acreage totals.

Park / Facility	Classification	Acreage
Armory Gym & Community Building	Special Use Area	0.9
Big Brick Park	Mini Park	1.1
Brewery Hill Park / Skatepark	Neighborhood Park	7.3
Clay Street Nature Park	Mini Park (Conservancy)	1.41
Cravath Lakefront Park	Community Park	6.1
Flat Iron Park	Mini Park	0.7
Main Street Shoppes Courtyard	Mini Park	0.1
Meadowsweet Park	Neighborhood Park	4.0
Mill Race Park	Mini Park	0.6
Minneiska Park	Community Park	20.0
Moraine View Park	Community Park	45.0
Optimist Turtle Mound Park	Mini Park	1.0
Ray Trost Nature Preserve	Mini Park (Conservancy)	2.0
Skyway Park	Neighborhood Park	4.0
Starin Park	Community Park	34.6
Trippe Lake Park	Community Park	24.2
Walton East Gate Park	Mini Park	2.0
Walton Oaks Park	Mini Park	2.6

Park / Facility	Classification	Acreage
Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center (WAFC)	Special Use Area	N/A*
Whitewater Bark Park	Special Use Area	3.64
Whitewater Creek Nature Area	Conservancy Area	~60.0
Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve	Special Use / Conservancy Area	~21.5

Total Developed Acreage: 161.25 acres
Conservancy Lands (not counted as developed): 81.5 acres
Grand Total (All Managed Lands): 242.75 acres

* WAFC footprint lies within the School District campus and is not counted toward parkland acreage.

8. Needs Assessment

The needs assessment combines input from residents, data from surveys, site assessments, and professional evaluations of the park and recreation system. Together, these findings highlight what Whitewater values most, where the system performs well, and where improvements are needed to ensure equitable access, long-term sustainability, and high-quality experiences for all.

Community Engagement Themes

The 2025 Open Space Community Survey (427 responses) and the 2025 Recreation Programs Survey (135 responses) provided a comprehensive view of community needs. Respondents represented a range of age groups, with strong participation from households aged 35–54 and retirees. UW–Whitewater students were underrepresented, which is notable given their impact on local recreation.

Park access is strong, with 66.2 percent of residents reporting they can walk to a nearby park and 64.7 percent able to reach destinations by bicycle. Most residents visit parks weekly or monthly, with Starin Park, Cravath Lakefront Park, Trippe Lake Park, and the Whitewater Bark Park seeing the highest levels of frequent use.

Recreation program participation is also significant, with 61.5 percent of residents reporting attendance at a recreation program or event in the past three years. The most cited events were Concerts in the Park and Christmas at Cravath, with additional participation in youth sports, fitness programs, arts, and family events.

Priorities Identified by Residents

Maintenance and modernization are the top priority, with 74.6 percent of households identifying the need to keep parks clean, safe, and functional. Trails and connectivity were strongly supported, with 55.1 percent prioritizing hiking trails and 53.9 percent paved trails. Open-ended comments emphasized the importance of neighborhood trail connections, particularly east–west across the city. Accessibility and inclusion also emerged as key themes, with 28.2 percent identifying accessible parks as a top priority. Satisfaction ratings were lowest for restrooms and playgrounds, reflecting outdated equipment and ADA barriers. Environmental stewardship was another strong theme, with 44.9 percent requesting more shade and tree canopy, and 41.2 percent supporting restoration of natural areas. Residents highlighted invasive species control, habitat protection, and

shoreline improvements as important environmental strategies. Expanded amenities were requested by smaller but notable groups, including a splash pad (19.8 percent), pickleball courts (20.4 percent), and kayak or canoe launches (15.0 percent).

Programming and Events Needs

The Recreation Programs Survey identified demand for a wider and more diverse range of offerings. Residents prioritized music and arts (58 percent), nature and environmental education (49.5 percent), adult fitness (40.1 percent), multicultural events (34.2 percent), and senior activities (30.6 percent). Emerging interests included STEM and educational programs (41 percent), outdoor adventure (67 percent), performing arts (36 percent), and arts and crafts (44 percent). Desired events included seasonal celebrations (66 percent), community festivals (61 percent), arts and crafts fairs (58 percent), outdoor movies (45 percent), and cultural or heritage celebrations (39 percent).

These results suggest programming should not only expand but diversify, meeting resident interest in both traditional recreation (fitness, sports, nature) and new opportunities (STEM, cultural events, outdoor adventure).

Barriers to Participation

Barriers to participation vary between park access and program attendance. In the Recreation Survey, only 46.7 percent of residents said they were fully aware of program offerings, while 48.1 percent were only somewhat aware. In the Open Space Survey, 20.8 percent cited lack of awareness of events as a barrier to use. Scheduling conflicts were also significant, with 39 percent reporting that program times do not fit their schedules. Evenings and weekends were the most preferred times for participation.

Other barriers include program cost (20 percent), transportation (7 percent), and mobility limitations (6.6 percent). While most residents (90.9 percent) reported feeling safe in parks and trails, a small percentage (6.6 percent) cited safety concerns as a barrier.

Facility and Infrastructure Needs

Survey results and site assessments identified facility reinvestment as a core need. Restrooms and playgrounds received the lowest satisfaction ratings and require

modernization. Many playgrounds need replacement and inclusive design with accessible surfacing and routes. Trails remain incomplete, limiting connections between neighborhoods, schools, and parks. Natural areas require sustained investment in tree planting, invasive species management, and shoreline stabilization.

Climate and Resilience Needs

Residents expressed strong support for strategies that address climate resilience. Priorities include stormwater and flooding solutions such as dredging, shoreline stabilization, rain gardens, and bioswales; expanded tree canopy and shade structures at high-use sites to address heat; invasive species control and native plantings to support biodiversity; and sustainable operations through light-colored, heat-reducing pavements, water-wise landscaping, and transitioning to electric landscaping equipment where feasible.

Senior Recreation Needs

The Recreation Survey highlighted significant gaps in awareness and use of senior programming. Among respondents over age 55, 64 percent were unaware of the Senior Center. Barriers included limited awareness, lack of variety in programming, and scheduling conflicts. Expanded promotion, diversified program offerings, and partnerships with local organizations will be essential to meeting the recreation needs of older adults.

9. Recommendations and Strategies

The recommendations in this plan are designed to balance community priorities, address identified gaps, and ensure sustainable management of Whitewater's park and recreation system. They reflect the findings of the 2025 Community Surveys, site assessments, and best practices in parks and recreation planning. Recommendations are presented in two categories: system-wide strategies and site-specific improvements.

System-Wide Recommendations

High Priority

- **Maintenance and modernization** – Residents ranked maintaining clean and functional facilities as their highest priority, with 74.6 percent identifying it as essential. This includes restrooms, shelters, signage, roofs, and other core infrastructure.
- **Accessibility and inclusion** – With 28.2 percent of residents identifying accessible parks as a top priority, upgrades are needed to ensure ADA compliance and universal design. Improvements include accessible restrooms, inclusive playgrounds, and safe trail access.
- **Connectivity and trails** – Hiking trails (55.1 percent) and paved trails (53.9 percent) were the most requested amenities. Expanded trail networks and safe walking/biking connections between neighborhoods, schools, and downtown should be prioritized.

Medium Priority

- **Shade and environmental enhancements** – 44.9 percent of households requested more shade trees and 41.2 percent supported natural area restoration. Tree planting, shade structures, shoreline stabilization, and invasive species management are central to this strategy.
- **Expanded amenities** – Smaller but notable groups supported the addition of splash pads (19.8 percent), pickleball courts (20.4 percent), kayak or canoe launches (15.0 percent), and multipurpose fields and courts.
- **Programming and events** – The Recreation Programs Survey identified strong demand for music and arts (58 percent), nature and environmental education (49.5 percent), adult fitness (40.1 percent), multicultural events (34.2 percent), and senior activities (30.6 percent). Emerging interests

included STEM and educational programming (41 percent), outdoor adventure (67 percent), performing arts (36 percent), and arts and crafts (44 percent). Events such as seasonal celebrations, community festivals, arts and crafts fairs, outdoor movies, and cultural or heritage events were also frequently requested.

- **Partnerships and funding** – Partnerships with UW–Whitewater, service clubs, businesses, and nonprofit organizations will be essential to expand capacity. Continued pursuit of grants, sponsorships, and other funding sources will support both capital and operational needs.
- **Marketing and communication** – While previously considered lower priority, both surveys demonstrated significant gaps in awareness. In the Recreation Programs Survey, only 46.7 percent of respondents said they were fully aware of program offerings, and 48.1 percent were only somewhat aware. Expanded communication through social media, email newsletters, signage, and community outreach are necessary.

Low Priority

- **Specialized amenities and promotions** – While less broadly supported, interest remains for niche amenities such as agility equipment at the Bark Park, expanded disc golf, and other specialized facilities. These should be considered opportunistically in partnership with community groups.

Site-Specific Recommendations

Armory Gym & Community Building

- Sealcoat parking lot.
- Refinish Gym floor.
- Install drop ceiling in Dance Studio.
- Better defined program space and utilization.
- Continue routine maintenance and community programming.

Big Brick Park

- Discontinue ice rink maintenance due to rising staff costs and low community usage.
- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Brewery Hill Park / Skatepark

- Repair skatepark features, possible relocation to Big Brick Park.
- Improve access to creek for increased fishability.

Clay Street Nature Park

- Replace pier.
- Remove nonnative shoreline trees.
- Add benches for passive recreation.
- Include in Lakes Management planning for invasive species and shoreline improvements.

Cravath Lakefront Park

- Repair sinking sidewalk bricks to improve accessibility.
- Address dam issues required by state regulations.
- Improve flower gardens.
- Install new sign structure for informational signage.
- Replace roof on Cravath Community Building.
- Replace roof on picnic shelter.
- Improve seating for concerts.
- Consider increased community event planning.
- Sealcoat parking lot.
- Installation of new fishing/kayak pier.
- Installation of new fountain.
- Include in Lakes Management planning for invasive species and shoreline improvements.

Flat Iron Park

- Installation of digital signage.
- Repair Birge Fountain.

Main Street Shoppes Courtyard

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Meadowsweet Park

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Mill Race Park

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Minneiska Park

- Improve playground accessibility with paths, ramps, borders, and surfacing.
- Repair pathways and replace damaged benches.
- Replace pathway connection to Trippe Lake Park.
- Add disc golf and link to Trippe Park.
- Install soccer practice goals.
- Evaluate potential pickleball site.
- Long term installation of restroom facility.

Moraine View Park

- Construct restroom/concession building.
- Create maintenance management plan for facility.

Optimist Turtle Mound Park

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Ray Trost Nature Preserve

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue ecological monitoring and stewardship. Continue routine maintenance.

Skyway Park

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Starin Park

- Replace roofs on shelters and restrooms.

- Replace Senior Center restrooms.
- Install splash pad.
- Install new shelter.
- Replace playground equipment.
- Replace grills with larger picnic-size grills at both shelters.
- Ballfield complex improvements:
    - Install shade structures at bleachers.
    - Inspect and repair bleachers.
    - Repair or replace fencing.
    - Resurface diamonds, prioritizing FCCU field.
    - Improve turf in outfields.
    - Replace outfield screens.
    - Paint dugouts.
    - Inspect and repair/replace timbers on stairs west side of Southern Lakes Field.
    - Repair scoreboards, install protective screen on Treyton's Field of Dreams scoreboard.
    - Evaluate concrete pads.
    - Purchase aerifier.
    - Purchase infield rake.
- Maintain Arboretum with dedicated resources.
- Sealcoat parking lots and repaint lines.

Trippe Lake Park

- Replace outdated playground equipment.
- Address dam and shoreline issues as required by the state.
- Improve rain garden.
- Reconstruct retaining wall and hillside improvements.
- Replace walkway and railings on bridges.
- Repair or replace pathway behind condominiums.
- Remove/replace brick veneer from wall behind condominiums.
- Install parking lot at top of sledding hill.
- Replace roof on upper shelter.
- Repaint and stain upper shelter.
- Replace grills with larger picnic-size grills at both shelters.
- Repair and sealcoat existing parking lot.

Walton East Gate Park

- Improve playground accessibility and safety surfacing.
- Evaluate potential for a basketball court, pickleball court or splash pad.

Walton Oaks Park

- No major improvements recommended at this time. Continue routine maintenance.

Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center (WAFC)

- Major improvements anticipated, but to be addressed through upcoming capital campaign.
- This plan does not list individual projects to avoid duplication; recommendations will be integrated with campaign outcomes.

Whitewater Bark Park

- Install new drinking fountain.
- Add improved signage.
- Add benches.
- Plant additional shade trees.
- Installation of shade structures.
- Explore addition of agility equipment.

Whitewater Creek Nature Area

- Parking lot improvements.
- Invasive tree removal.
- Continue ecological monitoring and stewardship.

Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve

Management activities at the Effigy Mounds Preserve will continue to follow the guidelines established in the *Effigy Mounds Preserve Maintenance Plan (2011)*, including prescribed burns, native vegetation restoration, and invasive species control conducted in coordination with the Friends of the Mounds and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Lakes Management

Cravath Lake, Trippe Lake, and Clay Street Nature Park contain important water resources that provide recreation and community value but face ecological challenges requiring active management. A coordinated lakes management plan should be developed in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR, consultants, and local stakeholders guided by SEWRPC's Lake Protection Plan (2011) and Aquatic Plant Management Plan (2025).

Cravath Lake

- Invasive species removal.
- Cattail removal and shoreline management.
- Long-term management strategy to be developed with partners.

Trippe Lake

- Invasive species removal.
- Cattail removal and shoreline management.
- Long-term management strategy to be developed with partners.

Clay Street Nature Park

- Invasive species removal.
- Shoreline and pond management.
- Long-term management strategy to be developed with partners.

System-Wide Pathway Maintenance

- Sealcoat and maintain multi-use pathways throughout the city to preserve surface condition, safety, and accessibility.

Veterans Park

- Develop a new dedicated Veterans Park to honor those who have served in the armed forces.
- Consolidate all existing veterans' monuments from throughout the community into this park, creating a single, unified location for remembrance.

- Include new memorial features such as monuments, flags, interpretive signage, and contemplative seating areas.
- Design the park to support community ceremonies and gatherings, while maintaining a quiet and respectful atmosphere for daily use.
- Integrate accessibility, shade, and landscaping consistent with other civic spaces in Whitewater.
- Establish ongoing partnerships with veterans' groups and community organizations to guide design, programming, and long-term stewardship.

Summary

Together, the system-wide and site-specific recommendations form a balanced roadmap for Whitewater's parks and recreation system. They reflect what residents emphasized in the 2025 Community Surveys—maintenance, trails, accessibility, shade, programming diversity, and communication—while also addressing Board and staff observations of urgent facility needs. The next section, the Implementation Plan, translates these recommendations into phased actions, and responsibilities to guide the City of Whitewater in carrying out this plan over the next five years.

10. Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a framework for translating recommendations into action. It outlines priorities, timelines, funding opportunities, and responsibilities for carrying out improvements across Whitewater's parks and recreation system. While the plan emphasizes the next five years (2026–2031), it also considers longer-term strategies to guide investments through 2036.

Guiding Principles

The following principles inform implementation:

- **Maintain first, expand second.** Reinvestment in existing facilities will be prioritized before adding new amenities.
- **Leverage partnerships.** Collaboration with UW–Whitewater, community organizations, and regional agencies will extend capacity and resources.
- **Pursue grants and funding strategically.** Maintaining DNR certification ensures eligibility for Stewardship and LWCF grants, which should be paired with local funds, sponsorships, and donations.
- **Advance equity and inclusion.** Every project will be evaluated for its contribution to accessibility, safety, and welcoming design.
- **Plan for resilience.** Projects should integrate sustainable practices, from energy-efficient equipment to nature-based stormwater management.

Phasing and Prioritization

Projects are phased into three categories:

Immediate (2026–2027)

- ADA upgrades to playgrounds, restrooms, and surfacing at high-use parks.
- Roof replacements at Cravath Lakefront, Trippe Lake, and Starin Park facilities.
- Skatepark repairs at Brewery Hill Park.
- Installation of splash pad and picnic shelter at Starin Park.
- Moraine View concession stand and restroom construction.
- Dam compliance projects at Cravath and Trippe Lake.
- Communication improvements: updated website, program guide, and coordinated marketing.
- Expanded program offerings in music/arts, fitness, and nature education.

Mid-Term (2028–2030)

- Shade structures at Starin Park ballfields, Bark Park and other high-use play areas.
- New amenities: kayak/canoe launches at Trippe and Cravath, and multipurpose courts.
- Playground replacements at additional neighborhood parks.
- Expanded programming in STEM, multicultural events, and outdoor adventure.
- Senior Center renovation and program expansion.

Long-Term (2030–2035)

- Continued natural area restoration, invasive species management, and canopy expansion.
- Ongoing upgrades to shelters, signage, and restrooms as needed.
- Trail connections linking neighborhoods, schools, and downtown.
- Evaluation of emerging recreation trends and future amenities.

Funding and Partnerships

Implementation will require a blend of local investment and external funding. Key opportunities include:

- Wisconsin DNR Stewardship Program
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Wisconsin DOT Transportation Alternatives Program (for trails)
- Partnerships with UW–Whitewater, Whitewater Unified School District for facilities and program expansion
- Service clubs, businesses, and nonprofit sponsorships for targeted projects
- Volunteer and “friends of parks” groups to support stewardship and programming

Monitoring and Updates

Implementation will be tracked through annual reporting to the Parks and Recreation Board. Progress will be measured against the following benchmarks:

- Number of facility upgrades completed.
- Miles of trails added or improved.
- New amenities introduced.
- Program participation and satisfaction levels.

- Grant dollars leveraged.

The Implementation Plan is intended to be flexible, allowing projects to shift as funding, partnerships, and opportunities evolve. Regular updates and community input will ensure that the City of Whitewater remains responsive to changing needs and priorities.

11. Conclusion

The 2026-2031 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan establishes a comprehensive framework for guiding the future of Whitewater's parks, open spaces, and recreation programs. Developed with significant input from residents and City staff, the plan reflects the community's shared values of health, inclusion, environmental stewardship, and civic pride.

Through a combination of system-wide strategies and site-specific improvements, the plan prioritizes reinvestment in existing facilities, expansion of trail connections, improved accessibility, and a broader range of recreation opportunities. Survey results clearly demonstrate that residents' value clean and well-maintained parks, safe and inclusive play spaces, and diverse programs that serve all ages and abilities.

Implementation of this plan will require collaboration, creativity, and sustained investment. Partnerships with UW–Whitewater, service clubs, nonprofit organizations, and regional agencies will expand the City's capacity. Continued pursuit of state and federal grants, along with innovative funding approaches, will be essential to leverage local resources.

This plan also positions Whitewater to remain eligible for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) funding programs, ensuring that the City can maximize external support for future projects. Annual monitoring and reporting will keep the plan responsive to changing community needs, and the next five-year update will build upon the accomplishments of this cycle.

Ultimately, the plan affirms that parks and recreation are essential to the identity, vitality, and resilience of Whitewater. By committing to the recommendations outlined here, the City can ensure that its parks, open spaces, and recreation programs continue to enrich daily life, foster community connections, and protect natural and cultural resources for generations to come.

Call to Action

The success of this plan depends on collective commitment. City leaders, partner organizations, and residents all have a role to play in sustaining Whitewater's parks and recreation system. By working together—through stewardship, volunteerism,

advocacy, and investment—the community can transform the goals of this plan into tangible improvements that enhance daily life.

The creation of Veterans Park, which could consolidate all existing veterans' monuments into a unified, dedicated space, represents a legacy investment that reflects Whitewater's values of remembrance, honor, and community pride. The next chapter for Whitewater's parks begins with the choices we make today.

Appendix A. Public Engagement Summary

Community Survey

Two community surveys were conducted in 2025 to guide this plan:

- **Open Space Community Survey** – 427 responses, focused on park use, facilities, and priorities for investment.
- **Recreation Programs Survey** – 135 responses, focused on awareness, participation, barriers, and program/event preferences.

Key findings are integrated throughout Sections 7, 8, and 9 of this plan.

Open Space Community Survey (427 responses)

- **Access:** 66.2% of residents can walk to a nearby park; 64.7% can access by bicycle.
- **Most visited parks:** Starin Park (40.8%), Cravath Lakefront (33.0%), Trippe Lake (13.1%), and Whitewater Bark Park.
- **Priorities:** Maintenance (74.6%), infrastructure modernization (44.2%), shade/trees (44.9%), natural area restoration (41.2%), accessible parks (28.2%).
- **Amenities requested:** Hiking trails (55.1%), paved trails (53.9%), open space/natural areas (49.0%), playgrounds (48.8%). Smaller groups requested splash pad (19.8%), pickleball courts (20.4%), and kayak/canoe launches (15.0%).
- **Programming priorities:** Music and arts (58.0%), nature/environment (49.5%), adult fitness (40.1%), senior activities (30.6%), multicultural events (34.2%).
- **Barriers:** Not aware of programs/events (20.8%), lack of time (20.8%), mobility limitations (6.6%), safety concerns (6.6%), transportation (2.9%).
- **Safety:** 90.9% of residents reported feeling safe in parks and trails.

Recreation Programs Survey (135 responses)

- **Awareness:** Only 46.7% of respondents were fully aware of recreation programs; 48.1% were somewhat aware.
- **Participation:** 61.5% participated in a program/event in the last three years. Top events included Concerts in the Park and Christmas at Cravath.

- **Barriers:** Lack of awareness (45%), program times not fitting schedules (39%), cost (20%), no programs of interest (13%), transportation (7%).
- **Preferred times:** Weekday evenings (65%), Saturday mornings (46%), Saturday afternoons (41%), Sunday afternoons (39%).
- **Program interests:** Outdoor adventure (67%), sports/fitness (59%), arts and crafts (44%), STEM/educational programs (41%), performing arts (36%).
- **Event preferences:** Seasonal events (66%), community festivals (61%), arts and crafts fairs (58%), outdoor movies (45%), cultural/heritage celebrations (39%).
- **Senior programs:** 64% of respondents over 55 were unaware of the Senior Center, citing lack of awareness, variety, and scheduling as barriers.

Conclusion

The community surveys provided a clear and consistent picture of Whitewater's priorities. Maintenance, accessibility, trail connectivity, shade, and program diversity emerged as the most significant themes across all forms of engagement. These results directly shaped the needs assessment in Section 8 and informed the system-wide and site-specific recommendations in Section 9, ensuring that this plan is rooted in the expressed values and aspirations of the community.

Appendix B. Maps

A series of maps were developed to support the planning and analysis of the City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026–2031**.** These maps illustrate existing park and open-space conditions, walkability, and regional connectivity. Full-resolution versions are included in the digital appendix.

Map 1. Existing Parks and Open Spaces

Displays the distribution of community parks, neighborhood parks, mini-parks, special-use areas, and conservancy lands. Highlights geographic service gaps, including neighborhoods that currently lack a park within a short walking distance.

Map 2. NRPA 10-Minute Walk Access to Parks

This map illustrates the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) "10-Minute Walk" accessibility model**,** representing the distance most residents can comfortably walk—approximately ½ mile—to reach a park or recreation area.
The shaded areas show locations within Whitewater that fall inside a ½-mile walking radius of an existing park, open space, or recreation facility.
Areas outside the shaded zones identify neighborhoods and future development areas that lack a nearby park within a 10-minute walk.
This analysis helps the City evaluate geographic equity in park access and prioritize future park sites or trail connections to ensure that all residents—regardless of neighborhood—can reach a park safely and conveniently by foot or bicycle.

Map 3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Reference Maps (2013)

The following maps are drawn from the City of Whitewater Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, prepared by the Wisconsin Bike Fed (November 2013).
They are included here as legacy reference materials to illustrate the evolution of Whitewater's bicycle and pedestrian network and to provide context for ongoing connectivity goals.
While several of the proposed facilities have since been constructed, modified, or reprioritized, these maps remain a valuable foundation for understanding long-term network vision.
Updated mapping will be produced in coordination with the forthcoming Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan**.**

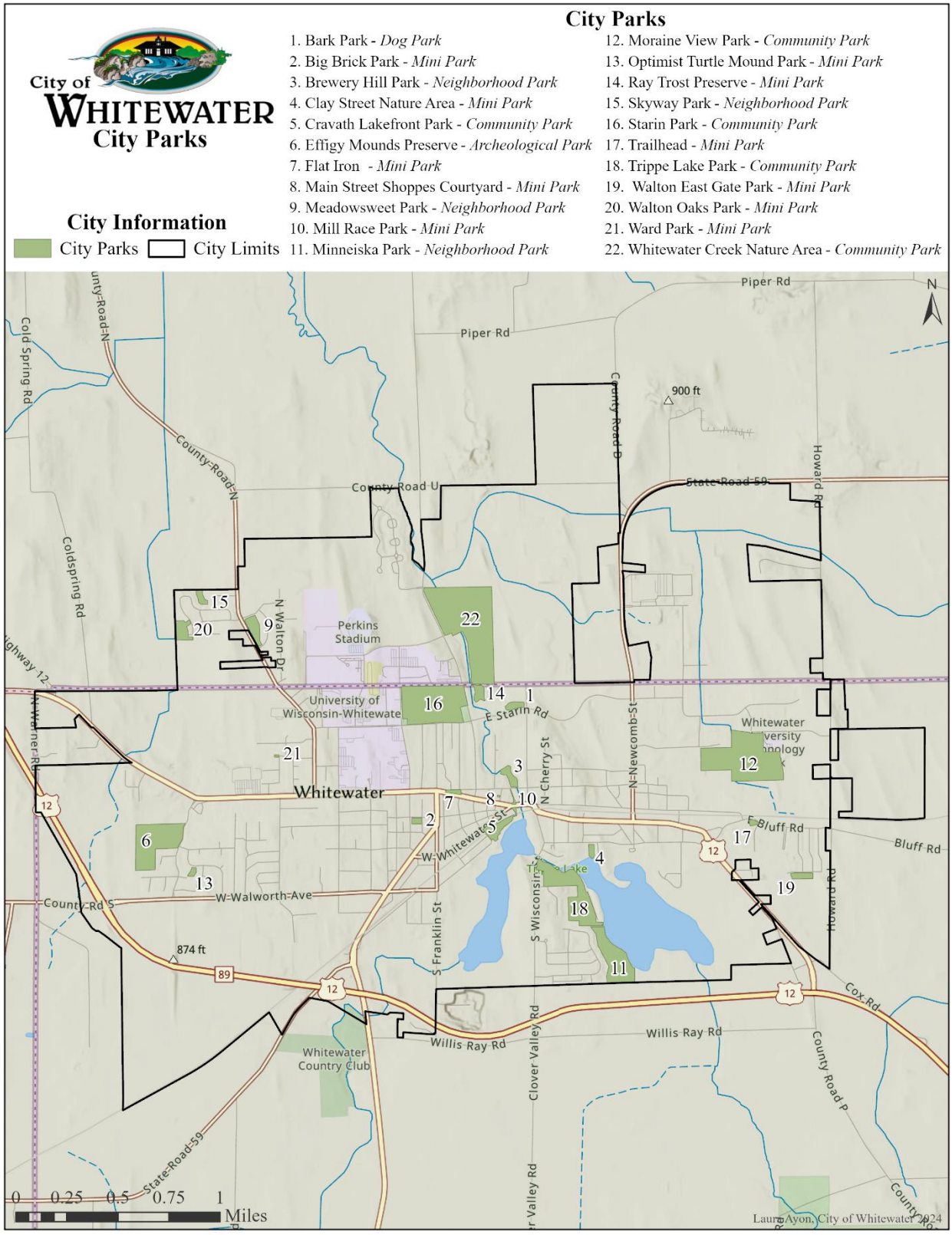
Included Legacy Maps

- **Map 3-1. Existing Conditions (2013)** – Baseline inventory of on-street and off-street bicycle facilities and shared-use paths.
- **Map 3-2. Opportunities and Constraints (2013)** – Identifies network gaps, barriers, and opportunities for improved bicycle and pedestrian connections.

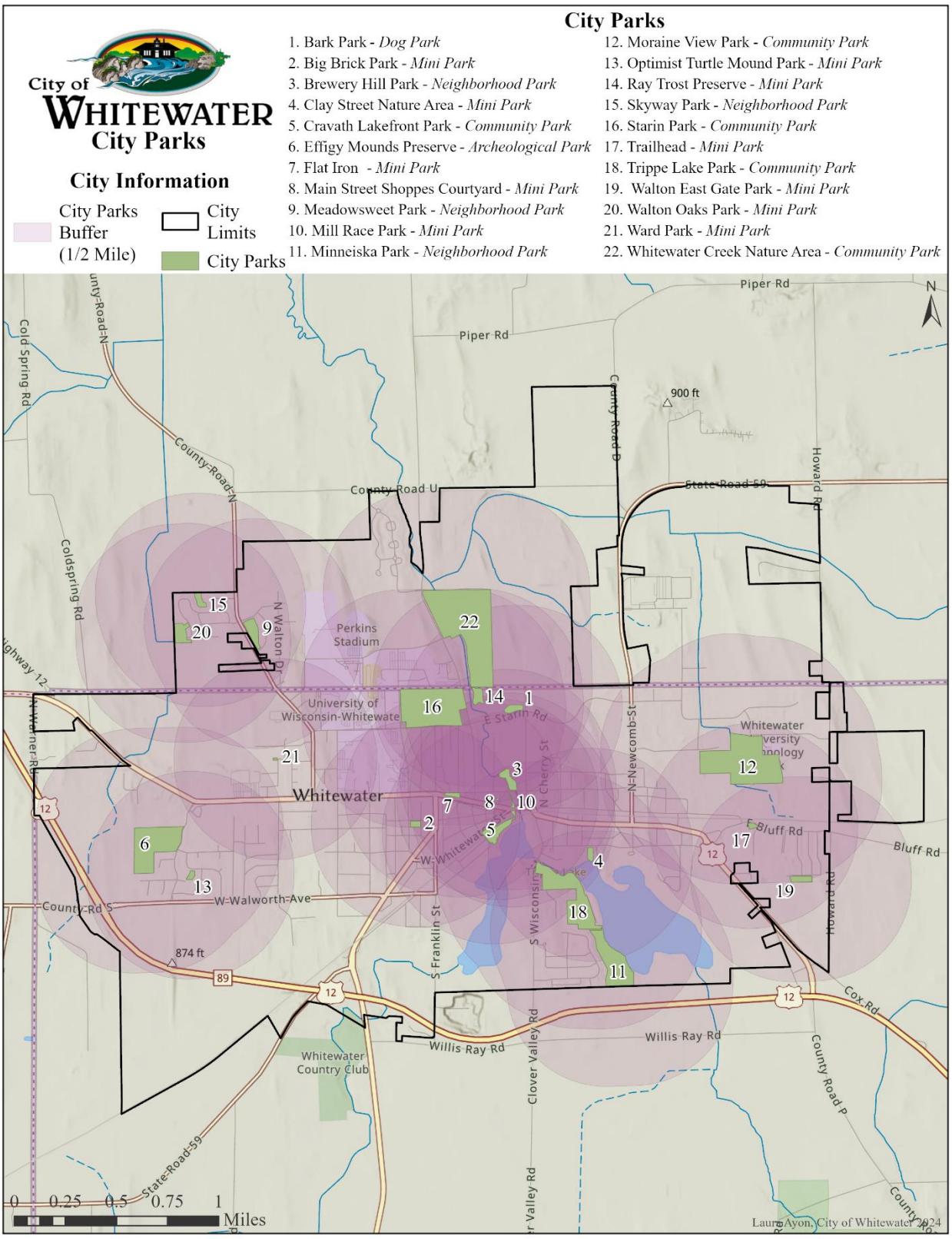
- **Map 4-1. Recommended Bikeway Network (2013)** – Illustrates the recommended citywide bikeway and shared-use-path system.
- **Maps 7-1 through 7-4. Project Prioritization (2013)** – Depict short-, medium-, and long-term phases for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure implementation.

Source: City of Whitewater Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 2013.
Note: These maps are retained for reference purposes only. They depict recommendations and project phasing from 2013 and may not reflect existing conditions or recently completed infrastructure.

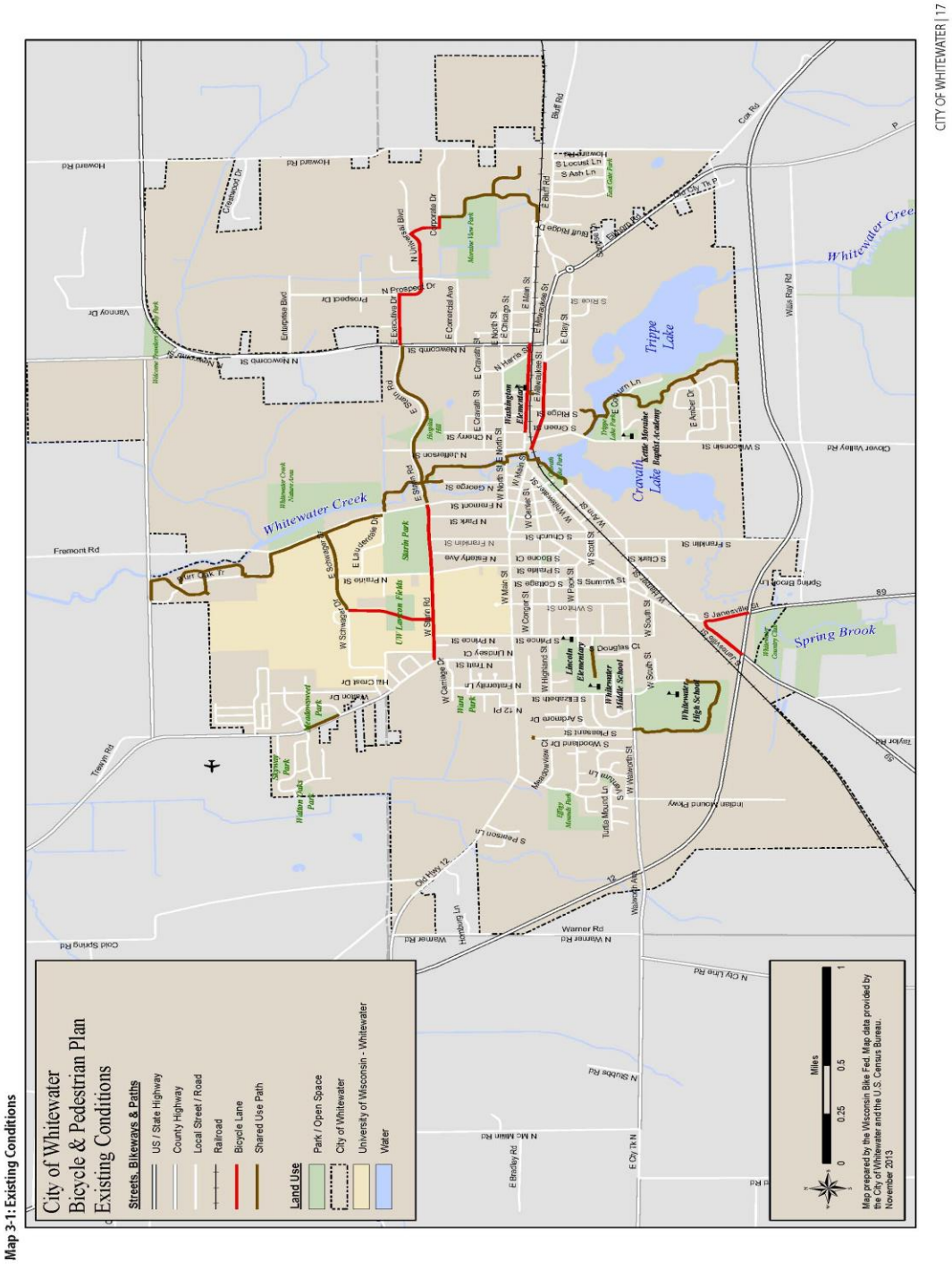
Map 1: Existing Parks and Open Spaces



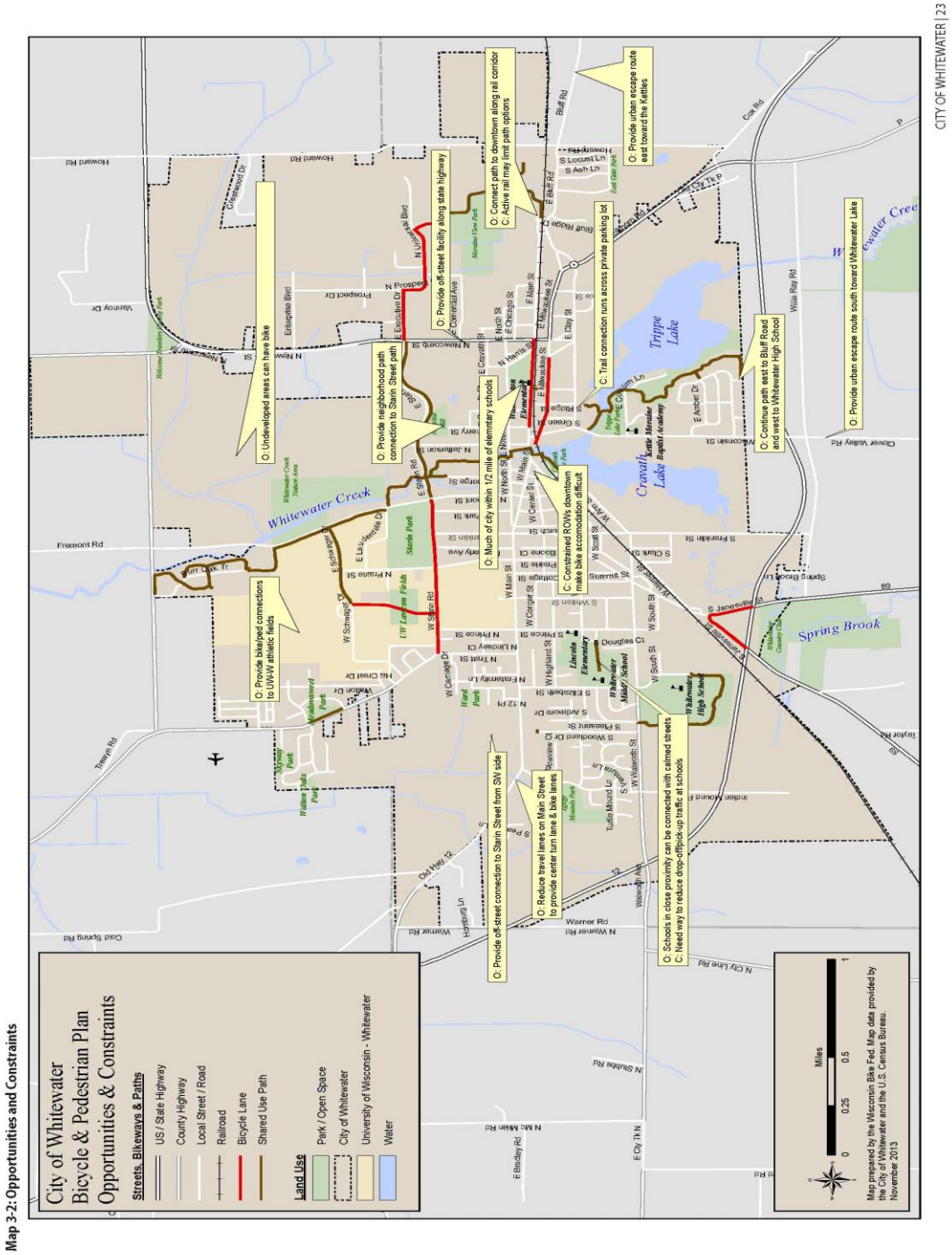
Map 2: NRPA 10-Minute Walk Access to Parks



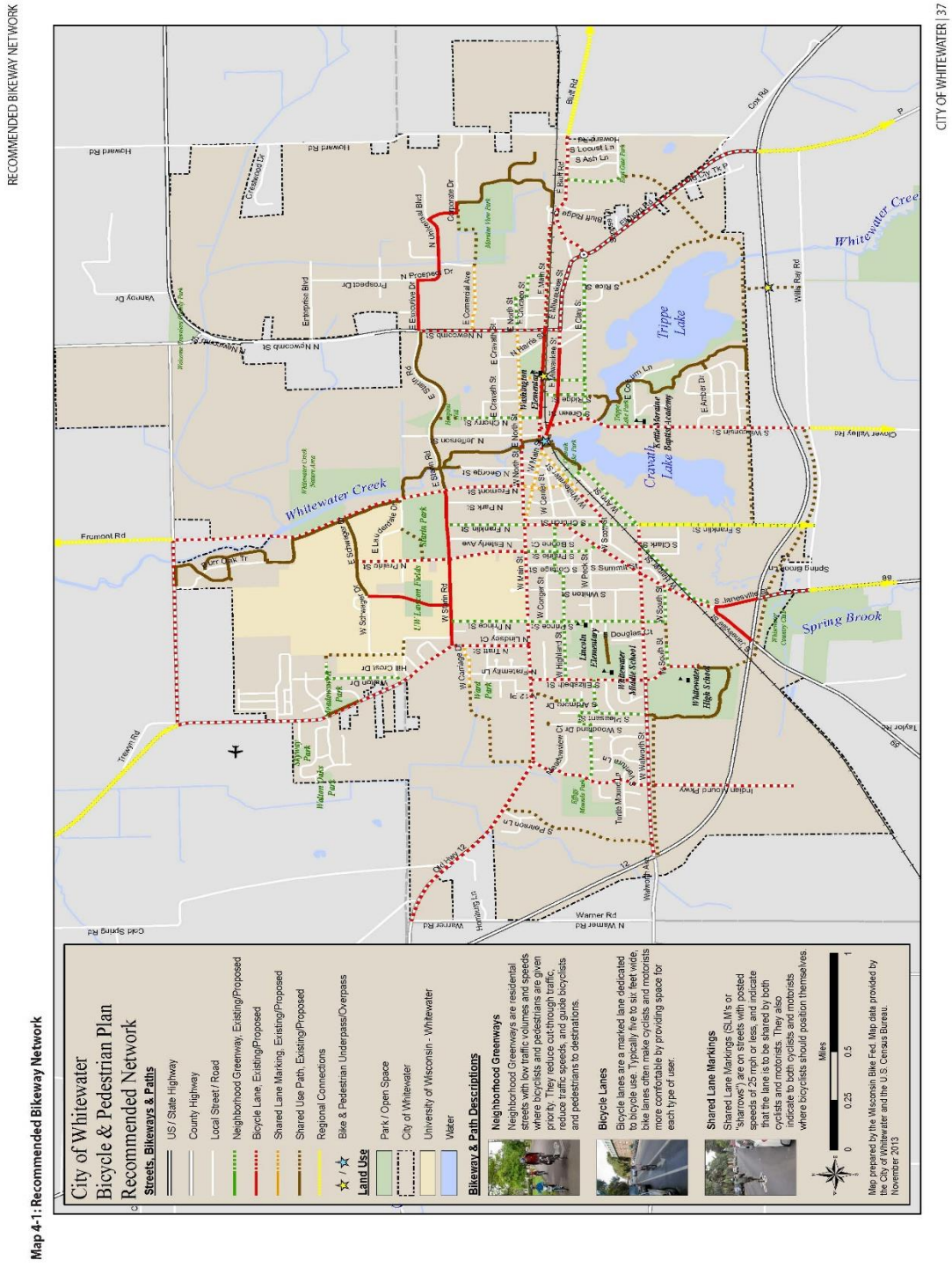
Map 3-1. Existing Conditions (2013)



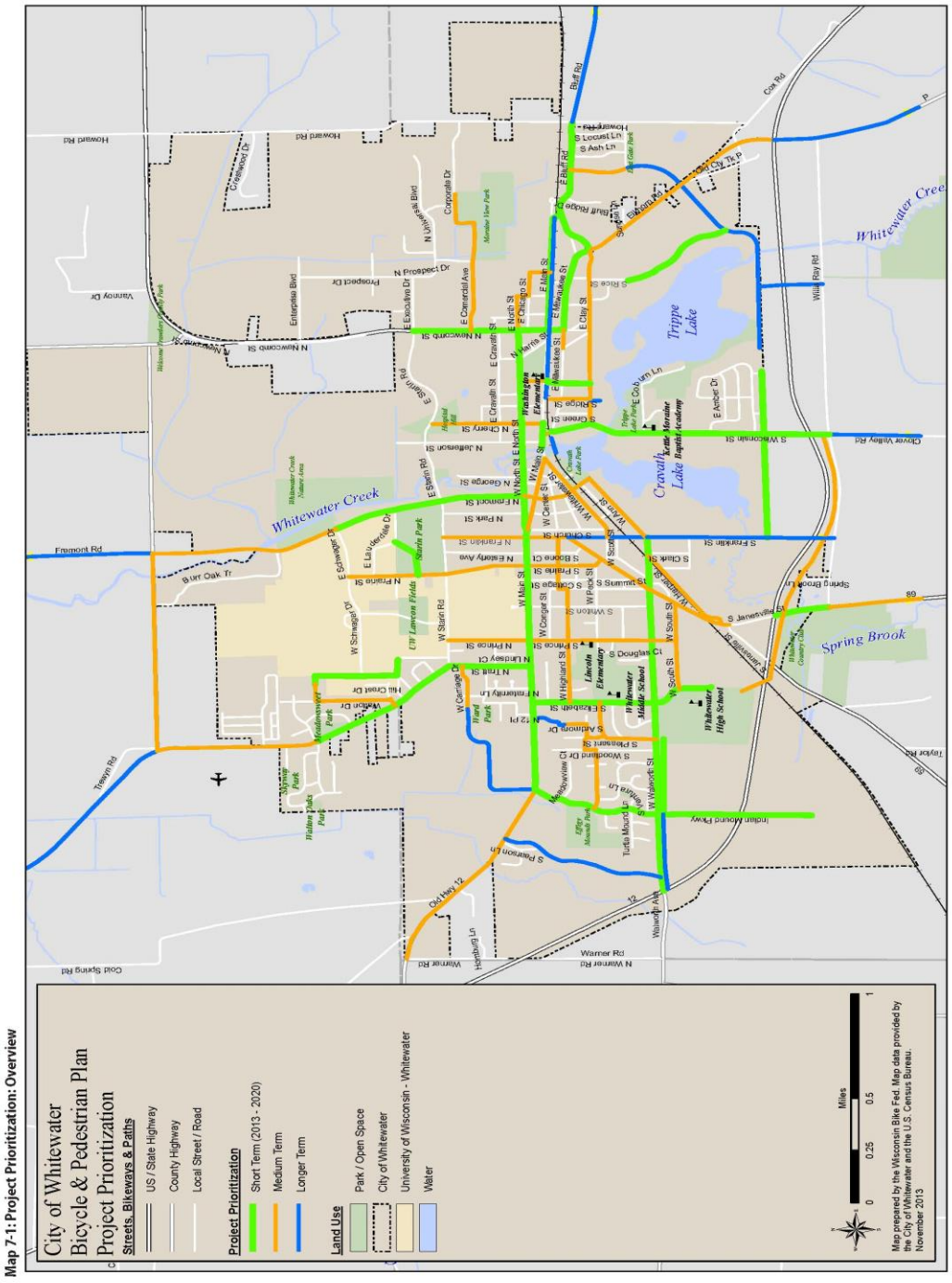
Map 3-2. Opportunities and Constraints (2013)

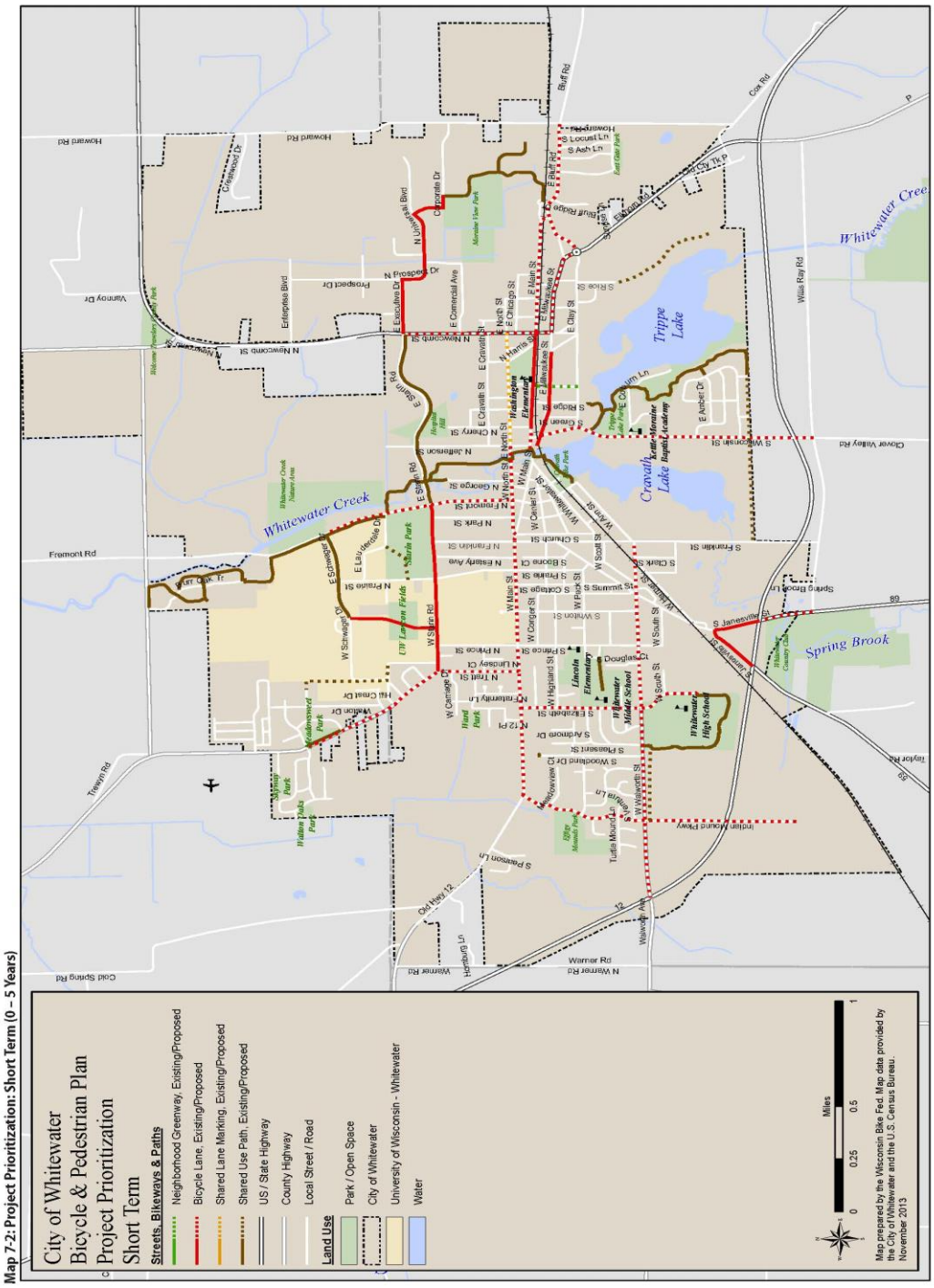


Map 4-1. Recommended Bikeway Network (2013)

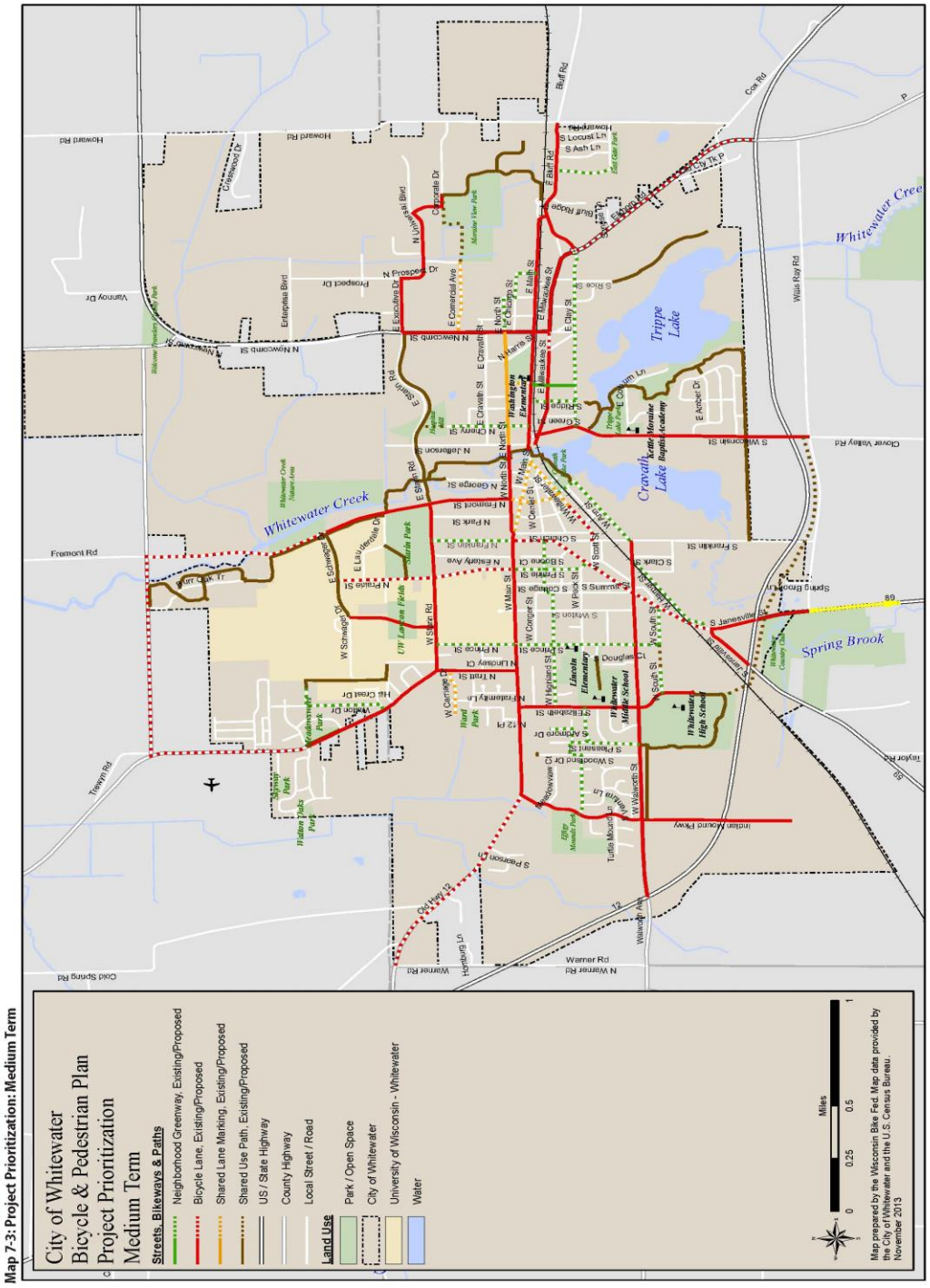


Maps 7-1 through 7-4. Project Prioritization (2013)

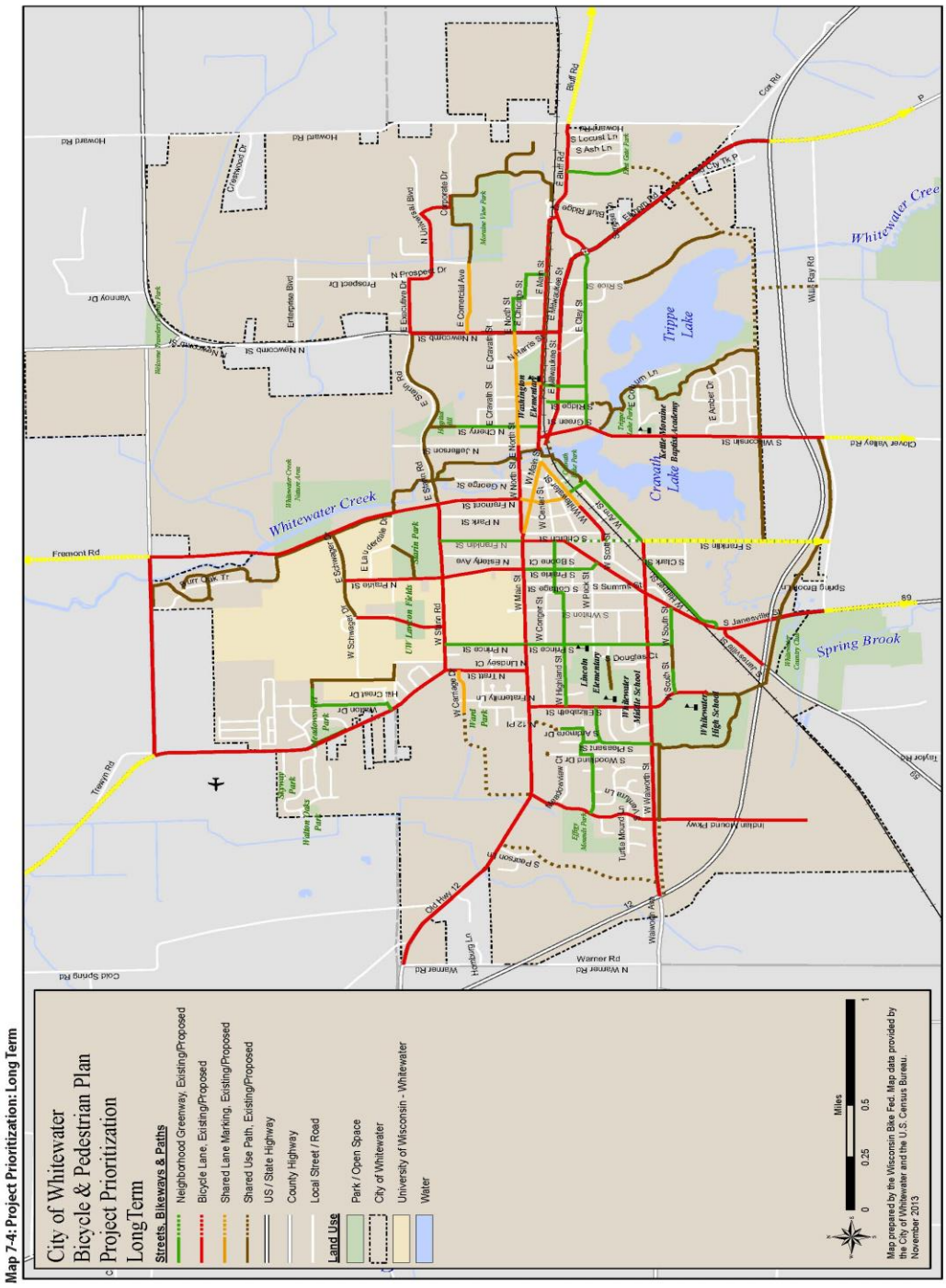




Map 7-2: Project Prioritization: Short Term (0 – 5 Years)



Map 7-3: Project Prioritization: Medium Term



Map 7-4: Project Prioritization: Long Term

Appendix C. Implementation Matrix

Purpose and Approach

The Implementation Matrix serves as a bridge between the policy framework of this Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, 2026 – 2031 and the day-to-day work of delivering park improvements, programs, and maintenance.

Rather than a static table of cost estimates, the City of Whitewater will maintain a living Implementation Matrix as an internal working document. This allows staff and partners to track progress, update priorities, and adapt to new funding opportunities while maintaining consistency with the adopted plan.

Integration with the Strategic Plan

A detailed, project-level Implementation Matrix—including cost ranges, phasing, responsible parties, and potential funding sources—will be incorporated into the forthcoming Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan**.** That document will provide the depth needed for capital planning, grant applications, and coordination with the City's annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**.**

Annual Review and Updates

City staff will:

- Update the working matrix each year to reflect completed, in-progress, and upcoming projects.
- Present progress reports to the Parks and Recreation Board and Common Council as part of annual budget deliberations.
- Record changes in project timing, costs, or scope to ensure continued eligibility for Wisconsin DNR Stewardship and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) programs.

Summary Statement

The Implementation Matrix is therefore understood as a dynamic management tool**,** not a fixed appendix. It ensures that the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2026 – 2031) remain actionable, measurable, and responsive to evolving community needs, fiscal conditions, and partnership opportunities.

Appendix D. Community Survey Reports

This appendix includes the full results of the two community surveys conducted in 2025 to guide the development of this plan. Together, the surveys reflect the perspectives of more than 550 residents and provide the foundation for the needs assessment and recommendations in Sections 8 and 9.

- **Appendix D-1: Open Space Community Survey Report (2025)**
  427 responses focused on park use, facilities, and investment priorities.
- **Appendix D-2: Recreation Programs Survey Report (2025)**
  135 responses focused on awareness, participation, barriers, and program/event preferences.

The complete PDF reports, including frequency tables, cross-tabulations, and open-ended comments, are included in the digital appendix.

Appendix E. References and Data Sources

The following sources provided the demographic, mapping, and technical background used in preparing the **City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026–2031**. These references ensure transparency and accuracy in the data, mapping, and analysis that informed the plan's findings and recommendations.

Demographics and Population

- U.S. Census Bureau, *2020 Census of Population and Housing*
- Wisconsin Department of Administration, *Preliminary 2025 Population Estimates*

Parks and Recreation Data

- City of Whitewater, *Park and Facility Inventory (2024–2025)*
- Whitewater Unified School District, *Facility Use Agreements and Enrollment Data*
- UW–Whitewater, *Campus Recreation and Student Enrollment Reports*

Surveys

- City of Whitewater, *2025 Open Space Community Survey (427 responses)*
- City of Whitewater, *2025 Recreation Programs Survey (135 responses)*

Mapping and Environmental Data

Geospatial information and environmental layers used to prepare maps and spatial analyses for this plan were drawn from the following primary sources:

- **City of Whitewater GIS Department** – base maps, park boundaries, and community facilities.
- **Jefferson and Walworth County GIS Departments** – parcels, road networks, hydrology, and topography.
- **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** – wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, and stewardship lands.
- **U.S. Census Bureau and Wisconsin Department of Administration** – municipal boundaries and population geography.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** – soils, land cover, and elevation data.

These datasets were integrated to produce the plan's park inventory maps**,** service-area analysis**,** and the NRPA 10-Minute Walk access model, helping identify areas of strong coverage and neighborhoods that would benefit from improved park access.

Plans and Policy Documents

- City of Whitewater, *Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2008–2013)*
- City of Whitewater, *Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan (2015)*
- City of Whitewater, *Whitewater Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2013)* Used as a reference for existing and proposed bikeway routes shown in Appendix B (Legacy Mapping).
- City of Whitewater, *Effigy Mounds Preserve Maintenance Plan* (2011**)** – Guides long-term cultural and ecological stewardship of the Effigy Mounds Preserve, including prescribed burns, invasive species control, and native vegetation restoration activities. Referenced in Section 9 for site-specific management practices.
- Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), *Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Cravath and Trippe Lakes***,** Memorandum Report No. 275 (2025) – Prepared for the City of Whitewater in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR. Provides detailed survey data, management recommendations, and implementation strategies for aquatic vegetation, invasive species control, and cattail management in Cravath and Trippe Lakes, including prescribed burning, drawdown evaluation, and lake restoration measures.
- Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), *Lake Protection Plan for Cravath and Trippe Lakes* (2011) – Provides early baseline data on water quality, watershed conditions, and aquatic-plant communities. Establishes initial recommendations for sediment reduction, shoreline restoration, and storm-water management, forming the foundation for subsequent SEWRPC and DNR lake-management efforts.

Closing Statement

This Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan represents the collective vision of the Whitewater community. By combining technical data, public engagement, and professional analysis, it provides a clear roadmap for the next decade of investment and stewardship. The appendices preserve the supporting data and engagement materials that guided this process, ensuring transparency and continuity for future updates. With this plan, the City of Whitewater reaffirms its commitment to maintaining and enhancing parks, open spaces, and recreation opportunities for all residents—now and in the years to come.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-R-1021

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR STATE OF WISCONSIN NON-STATE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE STARIN PARK SPLASH PAD AND PARK ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

WHEREAS, this resolution was reviewed by the Park and Recreation Board and is recommended for approval by said board; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin, through the Department of Administration (DOA), has announced a competitive Non-State Grant Program for shovel-ready local government projects that demonstrate immediate community benefit; and

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater recognizes that access to safe, inclusive, and affordable recreation facilities is essential to community health, wellbeing, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, public input gathered through the City's forthcoming Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2026–2031) identified strong community support for construction of a splash pad as one of Whitewater's highest recreation priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Board has reviewed community feedback and system-wide needs and has identified Starin Park as the preferred site for the splash pad, based on its central location, existing infrastructure, parking, restrooms, and accessibility. The project will also include complementary park enhancements such as fencing, a picnic shelter, landscaping, and shaded seating to create a welcoming and family-friendly destination. Utility connections can be readily extended to serve the facility, and the site is otherwise shovel ready for construction; and

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater has included the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project in its 2026 Capital Improvement Program, demonstrating a local financial commitment and readiness to proceed upon award of State funding; and

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater has a poverty rate significantly higher than the Wisconsin state average, reflecting a diverse population that includes working families and students with limited resources, and recognizes that a no-cost public splash pad will provide equitable access to recreation, social connection, and outdoor activity for all residents regardless of income or ability; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project aligns with the goals of the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Non-State Grant Program by providing an immediate, visible improvement to public facilities, strengthening community resilience, and enhancing the quality of life for residents across socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project has received strong local support from residents, community organizations, and the City's Parks and Recreation Board, reflecting a shared commitment to expanding equitable, no-cost recreation opportunities for families throughout Whitewater; and

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater has the demonstrated capacity and experience to successfully manage state and federal grant-funded park projects, including DNR Stewardship and LWCF programs, and maintains qualified staff and contractors to ensure timely, compliant completion and long-term maintenance of the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project.

WHEREAS, the project site is shovel ready and that all site, utility, and design elements necessary for construction are in place or can be completed promptly to meet the State's funding timeline.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Common Council of the City of Whitewater, Walworth and Jefferson Counties, Wisconsin, that the City of Whitewater hereby authorizes the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facility Maintenance to prepare and submit an application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration Non-State Grant Program for the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Whitewater commits to providing the required local match and to maintaining and operating the facility as a no-cost public recreation amenity for the long-term benefit of the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Manager and Director of Parks, Recreation and Facility Maintenance are hereby authorized to execute all documents and take all actions necessary to submit and administer the grant application on behalf of the City of Whitewater.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Common Council affirms its **strong support** for the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project and designates it as a **priority community investment** under the City's Parks and Recreation system improvements.

Resolution was introduced by Council Member _____, who moved for its adoption.

Seconded by Council Member _____.

DATE	October 21, 2025			
	YES	NO	PASS	ABSENT
Michael Smith				
Orin Smith				
Steven Sahyun				
Brian Schanen				
Neil Hicks				
Greg Majkrzak				
Patrick Singer				
Total:				

ADOPTED: _____

_____
John Weidl, City Manager

ATTEST:

_____
Heather Boehm, City Clerk

City of WHITEWATER	**Park and Recreation Board**
Meeting Date:	October 15, 2025
Agenda Item:	Discussion and possible action to recommend to the Common Council approval of an application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Grants for Local Projects program for the creation of a splash pad at Starin Park.
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Kevin Boehm, kboehm@whitewater-wi.gov, 262-473-0122

BACKGROUND
(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

The State of Wisconsin, through the Department of Administration (DOA), has announced a competitive Non-State Grant Program to support shovel-ready local government projects with a statewide public purpose. The program provides capital funding for construction projects that enhance public infrastructure and community well-being.

The City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department is preparing an application for the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project, a shovel-ready initiative that will construct a new, fully accessible splash pad and related amenities within Starin Park. Planned improvements include fencing, a picnic shelter, shaded seating, landscaping, and ADA-accessible connections to existing restrooms and parking areas.

This project directly responds to priorities identified in the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2026–2031), where community input ranked a splash pad as one of the most desired new recreation facilities. The proposed improvements will provide a no-cost, family-oriented recreation opportunity for residents of all ages and abilities while strengthening equitable access to outdoor amenities in a community with a poverty rate above the state average.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
(Dates, committees, action taken)

- The Parks and Recreation Board has previously discussed and supported the concept of a splash pad installation within Starin Park as part of the long-range park improvement strategy.

- Inclusion of the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project has been requested in the 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to provide local matching funds required by the DOA grant program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT
(If none, state N/A)

The City is currently awaiting finalized design drawings and cost estimates for the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project. However, $400,000 has been requested in the 2026/2027 Capital Improvement Program to serve as the City's local match and primary funding source.

Under the DOA Non-State Grant Program requirements, the City must demonstrate at least a 50% local match for eligibility. If awarded, the DOA grant would significantly offset local costs and allow the project to proceed on an accelerated timeline.

Staff will immediately begin a fundraising campaign to offset costs and allow for the inclusion of additio amenities such as a picnic shelter, fencing, and landscaping to further enhance the park's usability and aesthetic value.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff respectfully requests that the Parks and Recreation Board approve a motion of support for submission of the City's grant application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration Non-State Grant Program for the Starin Park Splash Pad and Park Enhancement Project.

Formal support from the Board will accompany the application and be referenced in the Council Resolution authorizing submission to the DOA.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

Draft Common Council Resolution – *Authorizing Application for State of Wisconsin Non-State Grant Program Funding*