CITY OF STOUGHTON, 381 E. MAIN STREET, STOUGHTON, WISCONSIN

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

Resolution by the Common Council of the City of Stoughton approving City of Stoughton Park Design Guidelines

Committee Action: Parks & Recreation Committee recommended 6-0 on 11/15/22

Fiscal Impact: None

File Number:	R-19-2023	**Date Introduced:**	February 14, 2023

The City of Stoughton, Wisconsin, Common Council does proclaim as follows:

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the purpose of the City of Stoughton Park Design Guidelines (guidelines) is to provide direction to staff, consultants, contractors and developers in the design, construction, and maintenance of public parks, open space, trails , and recreation facilities in the City of Stoughton, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines will be used as a tool in evaluating submittals for all new parks and any significant changes to existing parks, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines provide general planning and design policies to be followed, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines provide site selection and planning principles, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines provide park design and development guidelines, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines provide a minimum criteria for site selection and a weighted criteria to evaluate site selection for new parks, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines are a working document and should be evaluated periodically for updates to follow industry trends; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Stoughton hereby approves the City of Stoughton Park Design Guidelines.

Council Action: ☐ **Adopted** ☐ **Failed** **Vote** _____

Mayoral Action: ☐ **Accept** ☐ **Veto**

_____

Tim Swadley, Mayor Date

Council Action: _____ ☐ **Override** **Vote** _____

CITY OF STOUGHTON
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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From: Dan Glynn, Director of Parks & Recreation

To: City Council

Subject: Park Design Guidelines

Date: January 18, 2023

The purpose of having park design guidelines is to provide direction to City staff, consultants, contractors, and developers in the design, construction, and maintenance of public parks, open space, trails, and recreation facilities in the City of Stoughton. The document will be used as a tool in evaluating submittals for all new parks and any significant changes to parks.

Not unlike other communities, the City's park system has flaws. This document should assist in preventing the same flaws with site selection guidance, placing compatible amenities in parks, and following best practices. While this document is not complete, it does cover significant ground in park site selection, park and trail design, and development. Future additions to the document may include standards such as amenities (tables, shelters, etc), landscapes (trees, prairies, etc), and/or maintenance standards.

There is no fiscal impact to adopting the guidelines. Changes to existing parks can be phased in over years when amenities age out and need to be replaced.

Park Design Guidelines

Dan Glynn

Director of Parks & Recreation

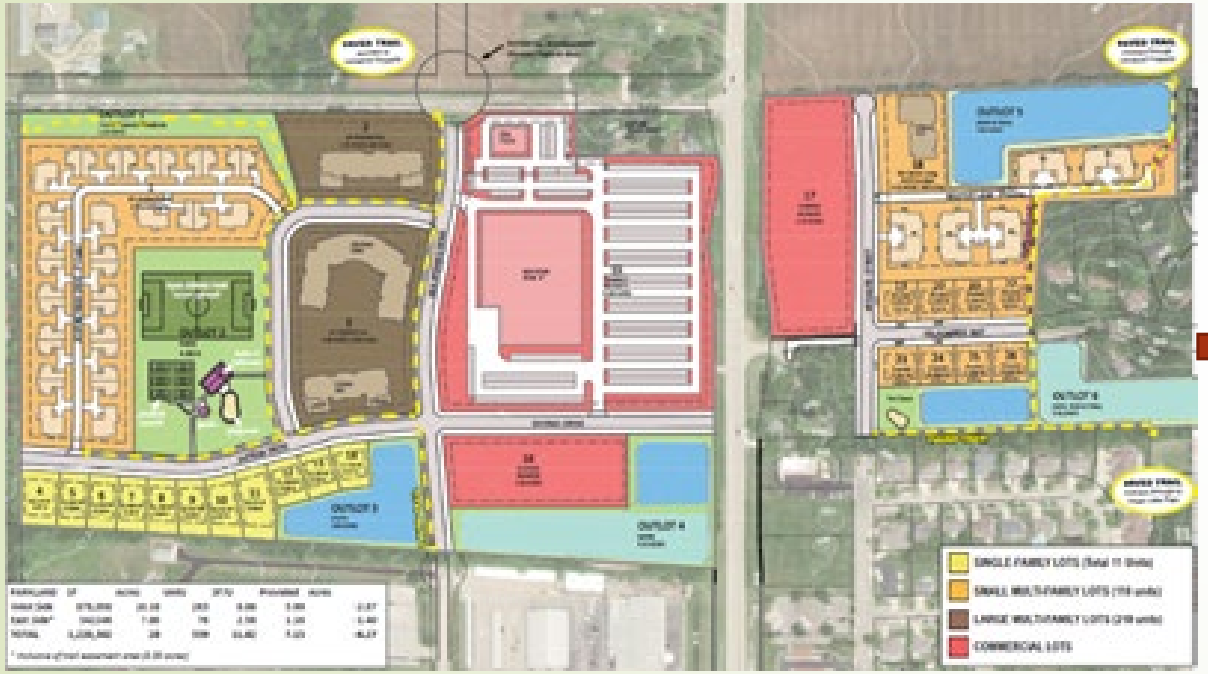
Purpose & Goals

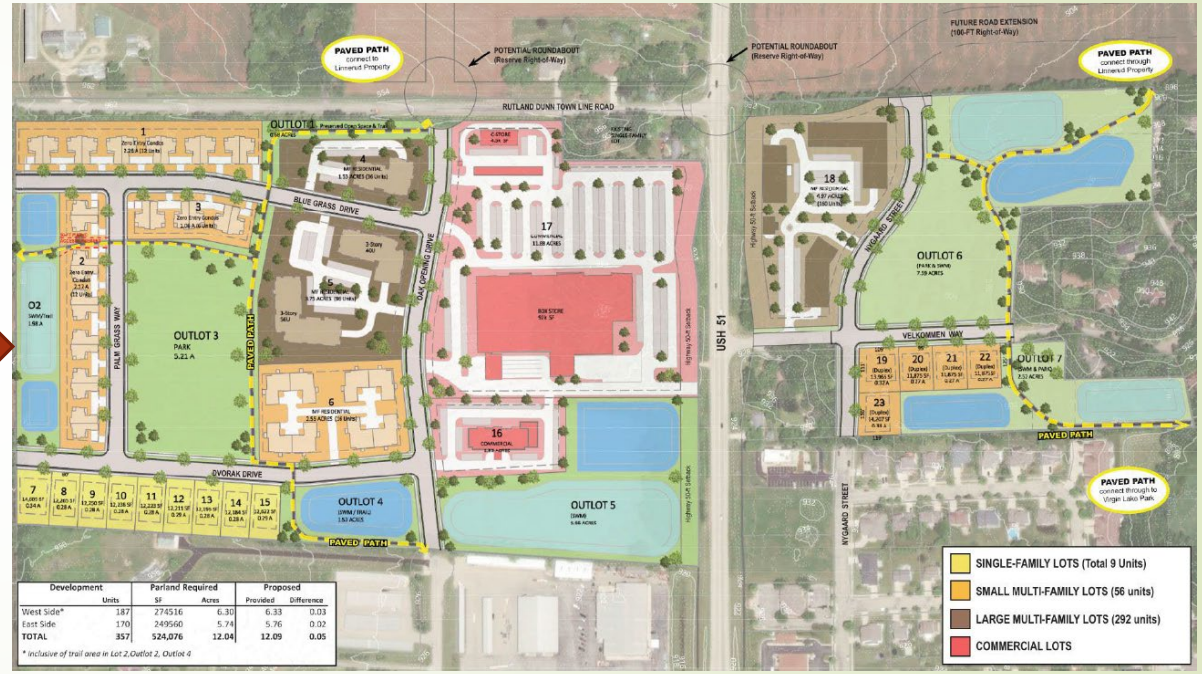
- Purpose
  - Provide direction to everyone working on parks – staff, consultants, developers, etc
  - Tool for evaluating new parks and significant changes to existing parks
- Goals
  - Provide guidance to developers for site selection and development
  - Create a standard for parks, park equipment, and amenities

How did we get there?

- Need
  - Existing parks with amenities that are not suitable for the type of park that are located in.
  - Developers unaware of park system needs, wants, and/or desires
    - Negotiating process
- Not aware of any other local agencies with guidelines
- Popular nationally
- Conversations with park planners and wildlife specialists with DNR
- Reference materials

Site Selection Example





General Planning & Design Policies

General Planning & Design Policies

- Best practices for planning and design
  - Public input
  - Involving maintenance and recreation program staff in design process
  - Layout to minimize neighborhood conflicts
  - Visibility
  - ADA Compliance
  - Sustainable design

Site Selection and Planning Principles

- Consistency with other plans such as the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Environmental Protection
- Accessibility & Connectivity
  - Walkability for neighborhood and mini parks
  - Efficient and connected bike and pedestrian transportation

Park Design and Development Guidelines

- Differs by park type/classification
  - Community Park
  - Neighborhood Park
  - Mini Parks
  - Special Use Parks
  - Trail Corridors & Greenways
  - Natural Areas
- Features and amenities to consider and to avoid depending on park type

Community Park

- Diverse recreational activity and serve several neighborhoods.
- 10+ acres
- Visitors arrive by car, bike, or foot.
- Stoughton example – Racetrack Park

Community Park:
Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Two-thirds or more of the site should be available for active recreation use.
- Active recreation use typically for programmed activities
- Buffering
- Visibility and frontage
- Parking
- Access
  - Arterial or collector street
  - Trail corridor and/or greenway connectivity

Community Parks: Features & Amenities to Consider

- Playgrounds
- Open turf areas for unstructured play
- *Designated sport fields. Fields may be in a complex within the park.*
- Looped pathway system
- Permanent restrooms
- Tennis and pickleball courts. *Courts may be in a complex within the park.*
- *Concessions or vendor space*
- *Field lighting*
- *Off-street parking*
- *Skate park*
- Splash pad
- Off-leash dog area
- Community gardens
- Interpretive signage
- Public art
- *Indoor Recreation Center*
- Landscape improvements including tree plantings
- *Storage or maintenance buildings*

Neighborhood Park

- Serve a variety of age groups within a limited area or neighborhood.
- Typically include space for unstructured active recreational use.
- Typical size is between 3-10 acres
- Stoughton example – East Park

Neighborhood Park:
Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Slopes
- Visibility & Frontage
- Access
  - Sidewalks & Trail Corridor and/or Greenway
- Parking
- Placement of noise producing amenities
- Neighborhood feel

Neighborhood Parks: Features & Amenities to Consider

- Playgrounds
- Open turf area for unstructured play
- Basketball (full or half) court
- Volleyball court
- Multi-use fields for practice
- Picnic tables
- Small picnic shelter
- Pathway connecting park elements
- Interpretive signage
- Natural area (if present at site)
- Portable or permanent restrooms
- Landscape improvements including tree planting
- On-street parking

Neighborhood Park: Features & Amenities to Avoid

- Horticulture or annual plantings unless sponsored and maintained by a neighborhood or community group
- Indoor recreation center
- Wading pools and similar types of amenities that require staff supervision or highly specialized maintenance
- Sports fields for league play
- Off-street parking

Mini Park

- Typically placed in underserved areas
- Typically function as a neighborhood park
- Typical size is 1 acre or less
- Stoughton example – Criddle Park

Mini Parks:
Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Slopes
- Visibility/Frontage
- Access

Mini Parks:
Features & Amenities to Consider & Avoid

To Consider:

- Open air shelter or small event space
- Children's playground including specialized play equipment such as tot lots
- Half basketball court
- Community garden
- Landscape improvements including tree planting

To Avoid:

- Off-street parking
- Permanent restrooms

Special Use Park

- Specialized or single purpose spaces
- Event spaces, plazas, nature centers, etc
- No set standard size
- Stoughton example – Rotary Park

Special Use Park:
Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Size should be scaled to intended use
- Access

Special use Parks:
Features & Amenities to Consider & Avoid

To Consider:

- Special use facility or facilities
- Portable or permanent restrooms
- Landscape improvements
- On-street or off-street parking
- Pathway system
- Seating

To Avoid:

- Uses that conflict or detract from the special use

Trail Corridors & Greenways

- Include both developed, landscaped corridors and more natural, less developed greenways
- Users arrive by car, bicycle, or foot
- Stoughton example – River Trail

Trail Corridors & Greenways: Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Follow continues special feature strips
- Corridor width
- Connectivity
- Trail surface

Trail Corridors & Greenways: Features & Amenities to Consider & Avoid

To Consider:

- Paved pathways
- Viewpoints
- Seating areas
- Picnic tables
- Wayfinding signage
- Trailhead or entry kiosk
- Landscaped areas, ornamental plantings, turf areas
- Maintained natural vegetation
- Fences, landscaping, or other features to control access near adjoining residential areas
- Parking at major trailheads

To Avoid:

- Active use facilities such as sport fields and paved courts (only in trail corridor areas)

Natural Areas

- Preserve or protect environmentally sensitive areas
  - Wildlife habitats
  - River corridors
  - Plant species
- Users arrive by car, bicycle, or foot
- Use a trail within the natural area
- Stoughton example – Yahara River wetlands behind the industrial park

Natural Areas:
Site Selection & Development Guidelines

- Size should be dictated by natural resource
- Acquisition
- Development and site improvements
- Site use
- Parking considerations

Natural Areas:
Features & Amenities to Consider & Avoid

To Consider:

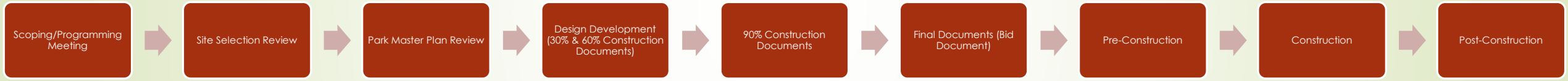
- Interpretive signage
- Small picnic shelter
- Limited picnic areas
- Trail and pathway system
- Trailhead or entry kiosk
- Viewpoints
- Interpretive or education facilities
- Portable or permanent restrooms (depending on facilities and anticipated amount of site use)
- On-street or off-street parking (depending on anticipated amount of site use

To Avoid:

- Depends on site

Guidance for Developers

Design & Review Process for City Parks



Site Selection Process, Minimum Criteria, and Weighted Criteria

- Site selection process is used for the continuing acquisition of open space for new parks and public recreation areas.
  - Typically a site within a new development

- Minimum Criteria
- Weighted Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- Site size – 90% of land required per the parkland dedication requirement
- Slopes – 5% or less in 10% of the land
- Contiguous
- Frontage – 50% of frontage by public street, public areas, and/or undeveloped land with no rear residential lots adjacent to the park.
- Existing conditions – no overhead utility lines, easements, unstable soils, floodplains, wetlands, toxic conditions
- Pedestrian and bikeway connectivity

Weighted Criteria

- Two different weighted criteria
  - Base Criteria
  - Bonus Criteria

Weighted Criteria: Base

- Dedication Percent
  - 100% of parkland dedication: 30 points
  - 91-99% of parkland dedication: 15 points
  - 90% of parkland dedication: 5 points
- Slopes
  - Slopes of 5% or less in 50% or more of parkland: 15 points
  - Slopes of 5% or less in 25-49% of parkland: 10 points
  - Slopes of 5% or less in 10-24% of parkland: 5 points
- Frontages
  - 80-100% of frontage border are public streets, public areas, and/or undeveloped land: 25 points
  - 60-79% of frontage border are public streets, public areas, and/or undeveloped land: 15 points
  - 50-59% of frontage border are public streets, public areas, and/or undeveloped land: 5 points
- Connectivity
  - Park is connected with a 75+ foot wide off-road trail corridor: 30 points
  - Park is connected with a 50-75+ foot wide off-road trail corridor: 15 points
  - Park is connected to other parks with off-road trail: 5 points

Weighted Criteria: Bonus

- Historical or cultural resources on-site: 10 points
- Undisturbed sites supporting significant and diverse plant and wildlife habitat: 10 points
- Park size is over 10 acres: 5 points
- Park can be expanded with future development: 5 points
- Waterfront access: 5 points
- Healthy, established, mature, and non-invasive trees: 5 points
- Land dedication is over the parkland dedication requirement by 10%: 5 points

Point Test

Park		Base Score	Bonus Score	Total Score
Bjoin		70	5	75
Dunkirk		50	5	55
East Side		60	5	65
Lowell		60	15	75
Nordic Ridge		50	0	50
Norse		45	0	45
Schefelker		45	20	65
Veterans		60	10	70
Virgin Lake		75	0	75
Westview Ridge		45	0	45
51 West (East)		75	0	75
51 West (West)		65	0	65
KPW		75	15	90
Stonecrest		65	10	75
Magnolia Springs		50	20	70
Average				66.3333333

Site Evaluation Report

- Report completed by the developer
- Summarizes the site and why it was selected over other areas
- Utilizes the minimum and weighted criteria
- Provides clarity to the Parks & Recreation Committee on why it is a good or bad site

Future

- Working document
- Other park design guideline documents have sections that specify:
  - Size, scale, and type of amenities
  - Service levels

Questions