

City of Brookfield
Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry

HIDDEN LAKE PARK AND TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Background and Frequently Asked Questions

PARK DEVELOPMENT

1. History of Park Planning

- **Park and Open Space Plan**

Historically, the City of Brookfield has been active in master planning and, more specifically, park and open space planning. A park and open space plan for the City was completed in 1966 and updated in 1976 and 1984. These plans were used as the basis for the development of a comprehensive park and open space plan that was prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) and adopted by the Common Council in 1990 and updated in 2002 and 2011.

- **Park Classifications**

The City of Brookfield classifies its parks as a multi-community, community, district or neighborhood. The City also classifies other park sites as a special use park, regional playfield, historic site, open space site, or conservancy area.

Hidden Lake Park is classified as a “neighborhood – special use” park which generally ranges from 5 to 24 acres in size and has a neighborhood-wide service radius area of 0.5-1.0 miles.

- **Hidden Lake Park Specific**

The 13.7 acre park site, located adjacent to Lilly Road south of Waynescott Road in the NW 1/4 of Section 13, was dedicated to the City in 2016 through the development approval process for the Hidden Lake Preserve multi-family residential development which satisfied the City’s requirements for park land dedication.

The dedication fulfilled a long-standing objective of the City’s Parks and Open Space Plan relative to providing for future neighborhood park in this section of the City. The service area boundary for the park is generally defined as Burleigh Road to the north, 124th Street to the east, North Avenue to the south and Lilly Road to the west and contains over 600 households. A planning and review public process has been initiated for the consideration of implementing neighborhood park related improvements on the parcel. The preliminary concept plan that has been developed and reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission presently proposes improvements on approximately ½ of the site to include a play field (open space area – no defined sport fields); playground equipment; a small picnic shelter; a trail connecting the public walkway on Lilly Road into the park with a continuing trail through the park to access a small scenic viewing deck at the shoreline of the adjacent quarry lake; and a small parking area. There is no lighting proposed and approximately 8 +/- acres of the existing vegetative buffer is proposed to remain around the perimeter (primarily north and south) of the site with additional landscaping and planting to enhance the existing vegetation.

2. What are Typical Features and Elements of a Neighborhood Park? ¹

Neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the City's Park and Open Space System and often serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Typical improvements provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation activities geared specifically for those living within the service area (1/4 – 1/2 mile distance uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers). A neighborhood park should be accessible from throughout the area by way of residential streets, sidewalks/pathways, or trails (where applicable).

Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive park uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner and not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems, etc. Typical facilities include a playfield (open space area), playground equipment, small picnic shelter, walking trails, and appropriate support facilities (small parking area).

3. Where are other neighborhood parks located?

There are a total of thirteen (13) sites classified as neighborhood parks in the City's Park and Open Space system. Listed below are parks similar in size and scope as the proposed Hidden Lake Park and locations:

- Kinsey Park – Elm Grove Road & Kinsey Park Drive
- Ruby Park – Calhoun Road & Deer Park Drive
- Imperial Park – Arden Avenue & Cherokee Drive
- Three Meadows Park – Three Meadows Drive & Elderlawn Parkway
- Lamplighter Park – Burlawn Parkway & Parkside Drive
- Meadows of Brookfield Park – Eastmoor Avenue & Mt. Vernon Avenue

4. How much of the existing vegetation is proposed to be removed?

A site inspection and review has been conducted by the City's engineering consultant (R. A. Smith National) with the site containing approximately 8.0 acres of developable land with the remaining 5.7 acres designated as wetlands. The park site is primarily wooded with mostly, lower-quality trees and an understory of glossy buckthorn and other mixed vegetation.

The proposed site improvements envision retaining approximately 60% (8± acres) of the existing vegetation primarily around the perimeter (north, east and south) of the site with additional landscaping and planting included to supplement and enhance the existing vegetation.

5. Do other neighborhood parks have similar vegetative buffer from adjacent residential properties?

Each park site is unique with different characteristics and proximity to adjacent properties. Where possible, an existing vegetative buffer has been retained and/or enhanced in neighborhood and other park developments where residential properties are adjacent to the park. Parks with similar vegetative buffering include Imperial, Kinsey, and Meadows of Brookfield. As a fully vegetated, undeveloped site for many years, the improvements being proposed attempt to balance active and passive recreational uses with the size and character of the site and neighborhood.

6. Why is a parking area necessary for a neighborhood park?

Although in general, the service area and location of a neighborhood park is intended to allow for a reasonable walking distance and access, there still will be a need to provide minimum parking facilities for those who are unable to walk to the park due to distance,

physical limitations, or weather. Without some on-site parking, visitors would have to park on adjacent residential streets.

7. What type of traffic is generated by neighborhood park use?

According to current traffic engineering standards, a typical single family home will generate an average of 10 vehicles trips per day: 5 out/ 5 back. A small neighborhood park of this size (less than 5 acres with no programmed active recreational facilities) will generate equal to or less than a typical single family residence.

8. Are dogs allowed?

As per City ordinance, dogs are permitted in parks only on parking lots and paved walkways and are not allowed on any grass areas and must be restrained on leashes.

9. What are the proposed park hours and will the police monitor park activity?

The proposed park hours will be “dawn to dusk” and the park will be policed by the City of Brookfield Police Department with assistance by park ranger patrol during the summer months. The Police Department can be notified immediately of any after hour or inappropriate/suspicious activity. The Police Chief has stated that “it is our experience that we have very few problems or calls for service at our neighborhood parks. These parks are usually utilized by residents from the immediate area and do not attract other people as our larger parks do. Officers are encouraged to patrol all of our parks and to spend time doing reports etc. while parked in them.”

10. How will storm water be managed?

Storm water management for the site will be regulated by Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 151, Brookfield Municipal code Title 14: Storm Water Management, and Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) Chapter 13: Surface Water and Storm Water. The rate of runoff from the site after construction will be less than it is today. The quality of runoff will be treated onsite. Infiltration of runoff will also be pursued through the park design.

11. What will happen to the wildlife present on the site?

Approximately 60% (8± acres) of the existing vegetation will be retained and enhanced which will continue to provide wildlife habitat. Additional collaborative steps can be taken by the City and the neighborhood to improve the existing habitat.²

12. Will a park decrease my home value?

There is available literature and studies that conclude that neighborhood parks have a potentially positive impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods.²

13. What is the timetable for the project?

If approved, the park project is scheduled to be publicly bid in early 2018 with construction to occur during late spring and summer and completion expected by November 2018.

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

1. What other trail development/improvements are being proposed for the area?

In addition and complimentary to the park development plan, preliminary concept plans have been developed to construct an off-road trail that would extend to the south and east from the park trail, through the adjacent private conservancy and around the south of the quarry lake, and connect to 131st and Center Streets as part of the ongoing implementation of the Greenway Trail System.

2. Is there community support for the development of off-road trails/pathways?

A Community Opinion Survey conducted in fall 2010 as part of the Park and Open Space Plan update consisted of a mail-back survey sent to 3,000 randomly-selected households in the City. Facilities receiving the highest ratings, based on use and in terms of perceived quality, were the Wirth Aquatic Center, the Skate Park, nature areas and trails, soccer fields, and baseball and softball fields. Biking, walking, and running pathways were identified as the most important recreational facility in the City. Residents that attended the public information meetings in November 2010 also indicated strong support for trails and the preservation of the greenway system. City surveys in 2007 and 2012 have also confirmed the general desire for and favorable ratings of pathways.

3. What is the timetable for the project?

If approved, the trail project is scheduled to be publicly bid in early 2019 with construction to be initiated spring-summer 2019 and substantial completion expected by November 2019.

4. What considerations go into the design of trails?

General and detailed design criteria was incorporated into the Greenway Corridor Recreational Trail Plan and is considered as part of each individual trail segment project to include:

General Design Criteria

- Allow human access to the greenways for nature viewing, picnics, biking, walking or running for recreation, fitness, or transportation, and access for city infrastructure management purposes. The trail alignment should provide for the minimum disturbance of the flora and fauna of the greenways.
- Provide alternative transportation routes to the residents of Brookfield to connect them to neighborhoods, shopping and employment centers, civic buildings, parks, schools and open space areas and to regional trails.
- The greenway trails will be designed with the following uses in mind: pedestrians and wheelchair; non-motorized bicycle use; strollers; in-line skates.
- Trails will use the existing greenway corridors whenever possible. Land acquisition will be kept to a minimum by the use of land already owned by the City of Brookfield.
- Longitudinal and cross slopes will be kept to a minimum during design. ADA accessibility requirements will be considered and met where possible.
- Trail tread will be wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles as feasible; access points will be designed with emergency vehicle access in mind. Trail surfaces will be designed to be useful for as many months of the year as possible.
- The trails should avoid interference with existing drainage patterns or the volume of water the greenways can carry.
- Vegetation clearing should be kept to a minimum but will be necessary to provide proper sight distances at curves and road crossings.
- Trail surfaces will be designed to accommodate the allowed uses and require the minimum amount of maintenance.
- The safety of the trail users.
- People enjoying the trail system should get a sense of the many different ecological communities contained within Brookfield's greenways.

Detailed Design Criteria

- Selecting a configuration
- Positioning the trail within the greenway corridor

- Determining the longitudinal and cross slopes of the corridor landscape that affect trail routing and adjusting trail location and alignment accordingly
- Defining the width of the trail tread based on the projected user groups
- Computing the design load and traffic load for the trail based on projected use
- Identifying the dominant soils along the selected route
- Accommodating drainage patterns and wetlands existing within the greenway corridor
- Delineating the vegetative clearing limits necessary to accommodate the trail and the users.

5. How will the trail be constructed?

Trail width is designed to be 8' (asphalt). The maintained grass shoulders of the asphalt trail are approximately 4'. Trail grading, culvert installation, and surfacing would be performed by a contractor hired by the City. Gate and sign installations, and other related improvements are performed by City of Brookfield Parks & Forestry personnel

6. What are the hours of operation and rules of use for the trail?

The Greenway Trails are posted with rule signs that indicate trail hours are from dawn to dusk and that no motorized vehicles are permitted in addition to other information.

7. Who uses the trails?

Generally speaking – your neighbors for permitted, non-motorized nature based uses such as walking, running, rollerblading and hiking. Most of the trails also meet the Americans with Disabilities Act standards for the safety and enjoyment of all.

8. How will the trail be separated from adjacent private properties?

The trail will be separated from adjacent properties by existing natural vegetation. Additional buffering vegetation may be added as necessary.

9. Do recreational trails cause crime and vandalism?

There is little local (police incident reports) or national evidence to support the fear that greenway trails produce disturbance to private landowners. In fact, various studies that have been conducted pertaining to this issue provide evidence to the contrary.

10. How will the trail be policed and patrolled?

The trail will be policed by the City of Brookfield Police Department and assisted by park ranger patrol during the summer months.

¹ Excerpts from “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines” Publication – A Project of the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration

² Additional information available at the Public Forum and Open House and on the City’s website