

Memorandum

To: Troy Klecker, City of Owatonna

From: Jason Amberg, WSB

Date: February 18, 2019

Re: Parks and Trails System Master Plan
WSB Project No. 013022

The majority of public comments addressed trail connectivity, walkability to parks, the need for improvements at lakes, and trails/shelters for winter activities. Residents would like to see the trails around Owatonna be safe, cohesive, and facilitate runners and bikers.

Specific locations for additional trails or improvements were Bixby Road, Country View to the 4 corners (Rose St and County 43), the portion of Muckle trail near Bridge St, and along Crestview between Dane Road and Wedgwood Drive.

Residents have noticed there are fewer parks in southeast Owatonna and would like this to be taken into consideration during long-range planning.

Lake Kohlmeier and Lake Chase were both noted as places people like to fish and residents would appreciate more rules on catch-and-release, as well as, restocking the lakes. Overall, residents love the Owatonna park system and would like to enjoy the parks and trails year-round without worrying about safety and accessibility.

This following serves as a summary of common themes we have discovered through our professional assessment of the park and trail system combined with public feedback.

1. Parks
 - a. Positive aspects
 - i. Scenic properties along waterways
 - ii. Various recreation opportunities and amenities
 - iii. Parks and School District - Shared spaces for a wide variety of recreation
 - b. Areas of opportunity to improve
 - i. Reprogram some parks so they aren't so crowded with amenities (some are losing their 'parklike' feel).
 - ii. Compliance with ADA accessibility standards
 - iii. Aging amenities / equipment
 - iv. Connections to neighborhoods
 - v. Lack of distribution of winter recreational opportunities in the city
 - vi. Litter / dog waste
2. Trails
 - a. Positive aspects:
 - i. Scenic routes / greenways through natural elements and waterways
 - ii. Many great trails

- iii. Lighted trails, many places to stop and sit, exercise stations
- iv. Majority of trails are well maintained
- b. Areas of opportunity to improve
 - i. Hairpin turn near downtown area
 - ii. Critical gaps and lack of connectivity to parks
 - iii. Some areas of the city are not well connected to system (southeast)
 - iv. Flooding / trail closures could use guidance for alternate routes
 - v. Connection to areas west of I35
 - vi. Trail connections outside of city – heading north and east
- 3. Public's top park destinations. These are also favorite parks to take visitors from out of town.
 - a. Kaplan's Woods
 - b. Morehouse Park
 - c. Mineral Springs Park