



December 27, 2019

Citizens Environmental Quality Committee
Winona, Minnesota 55987

Dear Committee Members:

The next meeting of the Citizens Environmental Quality Committee meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 2nd, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. in the Misato Room of City Hall.**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Review and approval of December 2019 meeting notes**
3. **Goal Discussion: Energy (10 minutes)**
4. **Community Garden Locations Discussion (45 minutes)**
5. **Other Business (5 minutes)**
6. **Adjournment**

Sincerely,

John Howard

Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: December 5, 2019
TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm at the City Hall Misato Room
PRESENT: Dan Hall, David Rupp, Lynette Power
GUESTS:
STAFF: John Howard, Chad Ubl

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 4:37 pm by Chair Hall.
2. **Review and Approval of November Meeting Minutes:** David moved for approval, Lynette seconded. All in favor.
3. **Community Garden Locations Discussion:**

Chad Ubl, the City's Community Services Director, shared that five parks are mentioned in the park system comprehensive plan as possible community garden sites: Belmont- Whitten near Pelzer St, the East Recreation Center (ERC), Knopp Valley Park, Miller Park near the middle school and Valley Oaks Park (lower site). Two additional parks are also being considered: Sobieski Park in the east end and Lions Park. Lake Park was not included due to a number of reasons, but primarily because it is too wet. The area across from Lakeview Drive-in was rejected because it is on the disc course, and also will be used for storing dirt from the YMCA. The West lake park area to the High school is also too wet. Raised beds may help with the soil being overly wet, but would need water access, and that is not present at Lake Park. Chad and Park Staff in previous years did a thorough analysis of the pros and cons of the various sites. Sobieski seems to be rising to the top – meets most criteria. Timeline can't be concrete since the Friendship center move is still being worked out. Dan asked about when the ERC gardens would be reduced, and Chad said not until 2021. In past, the Park and Rec staff looked at vacant private lots and all green space – Julie is very familiar with this work. So far discussion about the community gardens has been internal to city staff.

Dan asked if there were low hanging fruit, such as the best choices where the City could move quickly. Chad responded that Sobieski seems to meet most criteria and seems to have neighborhood support. Sobieski is sandy soil, which is a consideration. Dan noted sandy loam is the best combination for many plants.

David believes it should be a no-brainer to move plots somewhere if the ERC plots are lost. Chad would like a nice aesthetic for Sobieski, which means the ERC materials would not be directly transferred.

Lynette asked how and why the East Rec/Friendship Center move impacts the gardens elsewhere? Lynette likes the visibility of Lake Park, and easy access. She wonders about using the YMCA soil for the gardens. David does not believe the soil is done compacting at West Lake, so will continue getting lower and wetter. Dan believes this area was mostly swampland.

David stated support for more gardens in more locations. He noted that the spots in the parks plan are distant, and not very walkable. Some parks in the community garden discussion are in neighborhoods with

lots with large amounts green space. Dan said deer can be a problem in Valley Oaks, and agreed there may not be need since the lots are large.

Chad said parks nearer the City center have barriers, such as historic look and use like Windom Park. Lynette discussed mentality of Europe where foods are grown on virtually every square inch and there is a culture of maximizing the space. She feels it is important to cultivate that ethos. Dan believes the availability of cheap food deters growing own food. Lynette noted the carbon footprint benefits of local food production would encourage more people to grow their own food. Chad noted water access challenges at Sinclair Park.

John asked if it would be useful for the CEQC to compile a list of pros or cons of the various sites for City consideration. Chad said that would be good.

Lynette brought up area under the new bridge and whether it could be garden space. Chad said these areas tend to be too wet for much use.

Dan asked about the next steps. 2020 budget does not include gardens, so any initiative in 2020 would require council action. Could work toward 2021 budget item. Chad also would like to gain additional information from the current community garden users. Lynette discussed how Maplewood in the Twin Cities has a very popular community garden program that sells out of plots within hours of starting, and their policy for weed maintenance.

If water is unavailable, large containers might be an option. The CEQC discussed shallow sandpoint wells as a solution to the lack of water availability, and if this water is clean. Dan brought up the issue of liability. It seems that the water would be equivalent to the River in the city center areas, which may have contamination such as mercury and PCBs. David and Dan discussed bioaccumulation problem of toxic chemicals with the fish.

Dan suggests keeping this topic on the agenda. David noted the value of working on community gardens to keep it on top of mind. David wondered about the suitability of the east end of Levee Park. Levee Park would

Dan cautioned of trying to get funds this year – seems difficult to add anything after the budget is set. Lynette sees the garden as being a relatively inexpensive project, and not an elaborate project.

4. **Goal Discussion: Documenting the City's Environmental Actions and Progress:**

John stated that this is the second goal being discussed, and the purpose today is to determine changes and suitability. David asked if that the work is being done. John replied yes that the framework for B3 and GreenStep are complete, but require continual updating. David asked if this work is still a goal of actually more of a role? David clarified that a role is ongoing while a goal has a set deadline. Dan noted that many of our goals are process oriented. John added that some tasks, such as GreenStep reporting, will be completed irrespective of them being on the CEQC goal sheet since it is a program requirement.

David wondered if other sets of data should be included, and focused on. John noted that some of the public dissemination is not actively happening. Lynette wonders where it would be reported, but would like information distributed. Lynette finds goal setting to be inspiring, and public would benefit from being aware of goals and progress.

David asked if the City has developed metrics for success? John stated no. Dan sees GreenStep filling that role. David wondered if regulatory and GreenStep are all the City needs, or more in depth.

Lynette asked about the B3 energy database. John said it is an energy tracking system that was required for municipalities when it launched in 2012, and was updated last year by the City's GreenCorps member. It allows for comparison between municipal buildings. Winona is generally in the middle in terms of energy performance.

David says the time bound nature needs updating. John can do that and bring back to the CEQC.

Lynette asked about the public food component. John replied that it applies to public garden, and was recommended by Bruno. John does not see a way to get reliable data other than the number of participants. John said there are annual surveys for the City garden's participants, and will check on data availability. Lynette finds her garden is a significant source of food, and wonders if we can ask gardeners to include an estimate of their food production.

5. **Continue Low Carbon Transportation Discussion:**

John said that the Active Transportation goal is included in the packet to make sure he captured the changes discussed by the CEQC. David said it looks good, but asked if there is still an active transportation committee as mentioned in point 1. John said the active transportation committee is no more, so can be removed.

Lynette asked if fleet efficiency is included as a task? Lynette shared about seeing an electric bus on the highway and thinks it would be great to have electric busses. John noted the City has looked into the possibility, and current electric bus options lack the range. John shared that the VW settlement funds are going towards school bus and electric bus replacement throughout the state, but the City's fleet is not eligible because the busses run on gasoline and not diesel. David asked about charging stations through the VW settlement grant, which John replied are a focus of the VW funds. John described that the funding for charging stations goes to a driving corridors, and this makes it more challenging for an individual city to participate since it requires coordination throughout the corridor. His impression is the corridor method is better suited to a company that builds the charging stations.

6. **CEQC Officers:** John said it would be good to have official chair and vice chair positions because they are listed in the bylaws and are typical for City boards and commissions. Dan is happy to continue serving as the Chair. David is perfectly willing to serve as the Vice Chair. Motion by Lynette to approve the slate of nominations, second by David. All in favor.

7. **Grant update:**

John shared about grants that the City is pursuing or has applied for recently. The City intends to continue our partnership with Winona County on invasive species work, specifically targeting oriental bittersweet and other eradicate list species. The City received grant funds for tree planting. Lynette asked about the species diversity. John said there are about 20 species, mostly native species. Lynette asked if messy species are still

being planted. John said that the City considers messiness, but the main criteria are survivability, infrastructure conflicts and pollinator value. Messy trees are typically diverted to parks or areas where it will not impact roads or sidewalks.

John described a recent grant application to construct check dams to slow water flow and erosion from outfalls at the top of the Wincrest development. David finds it heartening to see this project being developed.

The last grant option discussed was the VW Settlement Funds. John described that the MPCA is developing a plan for the next round of funding, and taking public comments. Lynette wondered if the City is talking to businesses about putting in vehicle charging. John said this has mostly been done by the Winona Climate Action Network group. Lynette mentioned she talked with Jack Richter about electric vehicle charging in the downtown area. She would encourage new buildings add charges. Lynette asked about requirements to add electric vehicle spaces, and John said that has been done in other cities, but has not been discussed by the City. Lynette encourages City discussion on this. Dan described his experience with the Planning commission, and how they tend to look at more concrete proposals rather than discuss items.

8. **Other Business:** John updated about membership. Nathan is interested, Celeste is as well, but unable to make the meetings unless they are after 8 pm. David and Dan were hesitant about moving to such a late start time. There are three openings on the CEQC presently. Lynette shared an air quality webinar from the EPA.

Meeting adjourned at 5:59 PM by acclamation.

Notes prepared by John Howard.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 3. Goal Discussion: Energy

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Jan. 2, 2020

Please review the CEQC's goal worksheet for the Support and Work Towards Cost-Effective Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy goal. The purpose of the discussion is to ensure the goal is relevant and appropriate.

Please also confirm the edits to the Documenting the City's Environmental Actions and Progress goal reviewed in December are accurate.

CEQC Goal Setting Worksheet – adapted from the [Univ. of Virginia](#)

Priority Goal: Support and Work Towards Cost-Effective Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Hold additional workshops to educate the community about energy efficiency and renewable energy option. Review and select GreenStep energy efficiency goals to achieve. Utilize renewable energy for City electricity. Also implement Partners in Energy (PiE) goals. Work will be accomplished by working with Sustain Winona, the Partners in Energy Group, and the City's Sustainability Coordinator.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Number of workshops, completion of GreenStep reporting, and meeting PiE goals. Percentage of City electricity coming from renewable sources, and reduction in City electrical usage.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Yes, multiple Minnesota Cities have completed GreenStep reporting. Approximately 10 other Minnesota PiE communities. Many cities in Minnesota utilize renewable energy and have implemented energy efficiency measures.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Clear connection to Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically policy # 2.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Energy efficiency projects should be undertaken in 2018, with PiE activities underway since fall 2017. City is currently moving forward with investigating solar.

CEQC Goal Setting Worksheet – adapted from the [Univ. of Virginia](#)

Priority Goal: Documenting the City's Environmental Actions and Progress

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Information will be compiled and updated for the B3 energy benchmarking program and GreenStep database by City staff and CEQC members. An annual report on the City's environmental progress should be produced utilizing the information collected. As part of this report, or possibly as a distinct report, information on local food production and evaluation should be tallied, ~~such as the number of participants in community gardens and pounds of food grown.~~

The information compiled will inform and guide future city actions/endeavors.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Annual report completed and disseminated to the public.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Yes, other cities complete GreenStep and B3 reports, as well as broader environmental reports.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Yes, environmental goals have a clear connection to CEQC, and Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan. Documentation is a large piece of the GreenStep Cities program.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

GreenStep data is due each year on May 1st. B3 ~~has multi-year backlog~~ was resolved by November, but could be complete by May 2018. An Annual report will be assembled by end of ~~each the summer-September of 2018~~ utilizing this data.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 4. Community Garden Locations Discussion

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Jan. 2, 2020

Based on discussion at the December meeting, the next step for the CEQC in terms of community gardens is to develop a list of pros and cons to the various potential garden sites. Staff has assembled a list with possible locations with some pros and cons included to facilitate the review process based on previous discussions and personal knowledge. Please review this list and come with your own ideas for the pros and cons of the locations.

The list is currently broken into two sections: parks currently under consideration by the Parks plan, and other park areas mentioned during CEQC discussions or with residents. Staff expects the review of all sites will take at least two sessions to complete.

For reference, the current community garden at the East Rec Center encompasses approximately 17,500 sq. feet, and hosts 53 plots. Of this area, approximately 2,500 sq. feet is plantable. The areas enclosed in red boxes at each park on the maps are simply to provide a measurement of scale and a rough possible location.

Legend to Map cutouts:



= Storm sewer (box), storm sewer line



= Water line

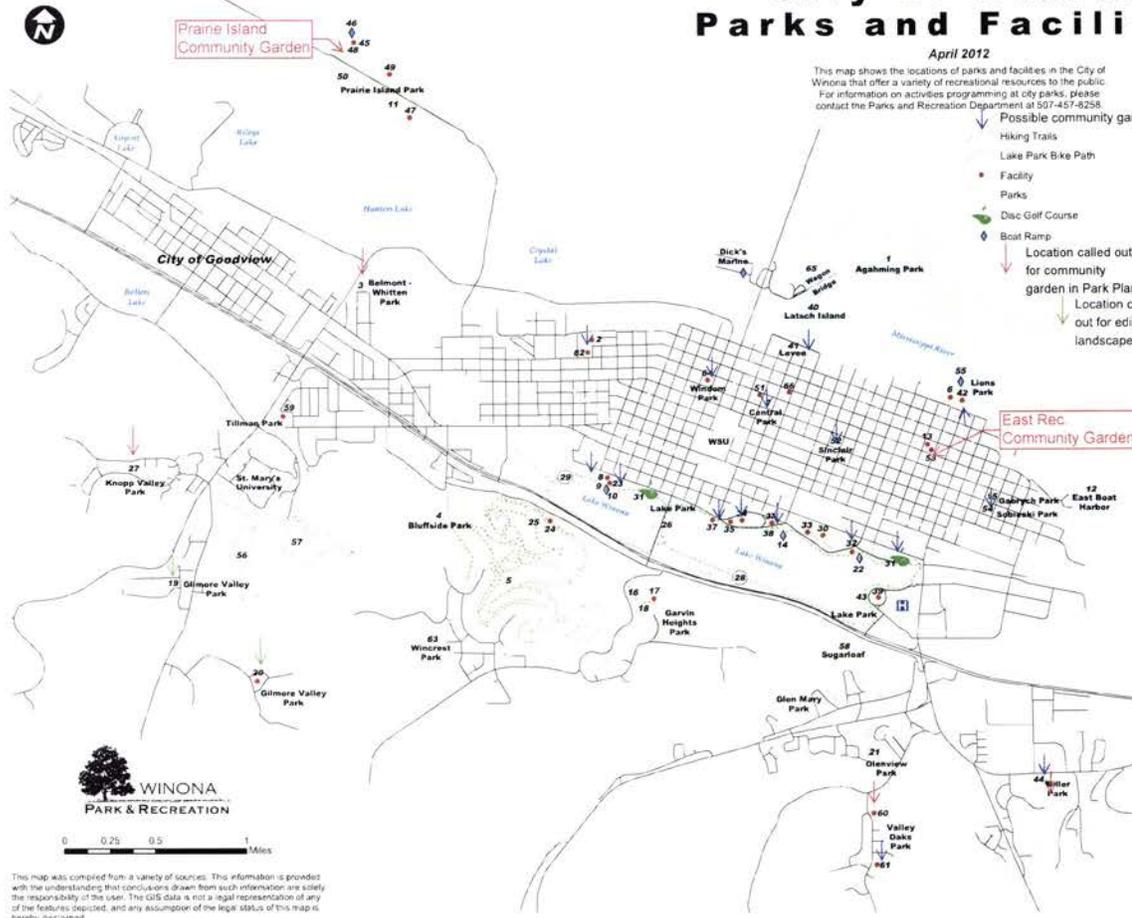


= Tree (orange dot)

City of Winona Parks and Facilities

April 2012

This map shows the locations of parks and facilities in the City of Winona that offer a variety of recreational resources to the public. For information on activities programming at city parks, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 507-457-8258.



Park / Facility

Park / Facility	Location
1. Agahming Wildlife Refuge	NONE
2. Aquatic Center	780 W. 4th St.
3. Belmont-Whitten Park	2 Lenora St.
4. Bluffs Park	800 W. Lake Blvd.
5. Bluffs Trails	800 W. Lake Blvd.
6. Bud King Ice Arena	670 E. Front
7. Central Park (2nd Ward)	50 W. Broadway
8. Dakota Street Fields	750 Dakota St.
9. Dakota Street Pier	800 Dakota St.
10. Dakota Street Boat Ramp	800 Dakota St.
11. Deer Park	915 Prairie Island Rd. N.
12. East Boat Harbor	1250 E. 4th
13. East Recreation Center	210 Zumbro St.
14. Franklin Boat Ramp	NONE
15. Gabrych Park	950 E. 7th St.
16. Garvin Heights (Lower)	250 W. Lake Blvd.
17. Garvin Heights Lookout	200 East Garvin Heights Blvd.
18. Garvin Heights Trails	NONE
19. Gimmore Valley Shelter I	1150 Country Dr.
20. Gimmore Valley Shelter II	157 Jay Bee Dr.
21. Glenview Park	550 Glenview Dr.
22. Hamilton Street Boat Ramp	NONE
23. Hiawatha Valley Mammal Shelter	527 W. Lake St.
24. Holzinger Lodge	925 W. Lake Blvd.
25. Holzinger Trails	NONE
26. Huff Street Pier	924 Huff St.
27. Knopp Valley Park	200 Knopp Valley Dr.
28. Lake Park	NONE
29. Lake Park - East	NONE
30. Lake Park - West	NONE
31. Bambenek Fields	290 E. Lake Park Dr.
32. Disc Golf Courses	NONE
33. Lions Shelter	525 E. Lake Park Dr.
34. Jaycee Shelter	340 Lake Park Dr.
35. Bands Shell	85 Lake Park Dr.
36. Veteran's Memorial Park	60 W. Lake Park Dr.
37. Rose Garden Gazebo	190 E. Lake Park Dr.
38. Lake Lodge	113 W. Lake Park Dr.
39. Lake Park Pier	NONE
40. Unity Park	860 Parks Ave.
41. Latsch Island	NONE
42. Levee	NONE
43. Lions Youth Fields	730 E. Front St.
44. Mankato Park	NONE
45. Miller Park	200 Links Ln.
46. Prairie Island	1450 Prairie Island Rd. N.
47. McNally Landing	1340 Prairie Island Rd. N.
48. Spillway Boat Ramp	915 Prairie Island Rd. N.
49. Latsch Shelter	1340 Prairie Island Rd. N.
50. Kiwanis Shelter	1120 Prairie Island Rd. N.
51. Prairie Island Campground	NONE
52. Prairie Island Trails	NONE
53. Senior Center	255 Main St.
54. Masonic Temple	3rd floor of Senior Center
55. Sinclair Park (3rd Ward)	310 E. Broadway
56. Skate Park Community Garden	210 Zumbro St.
57. Sobieski Park (4th Ward)	950 E. 8th St.
58. St. Charles Street Boat Ramp	660 E. Front St.
59. St. Mary's Hiking Trails	NONE
60. St. Mary's Ski Trails	NONE
61. Sugarloaf Hiking Trails	NONE
62. Tiltman Park	549 Kerry Dr.
63. Valley Oaks Park	200 Valley Oaks Dr.
64. Valley Oaks Lodge	250 Valley Oaks Dr.
65. West Recreation Center	800 W. 5th St.
66. Wincrest Park	1350 Woodpark Rd.
67. Windom Park (1st Ward)	250 W. Broadway St.
68. Windom Park Gazebo	250 W. Broadway St.
69. Wagon Bridge	NONE
70. City Hall / Park Rec. Office	207 Lafayette St.

This map was compiled from a variety of sources. The information is provided with the understanding that conclusions drawn from such information are solely the responsibility of the user. The GIS data is not a legal representation of any of the features depicted, and any assumption of the legal status of this map is hereby disclaimed.



Parks Considered by Parks Comprehensive Plan, or under discussion:

Site Name: Belmont Whitten Park	Location on site: West half or Center
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large open area • Little or no competing use 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat distant to population center • Water access? • Near industrial area.



Site Name: Knopp Valley Park	Location on site: South end
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area • Ample road parking • Electrical connection 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing would break up openness of park • Distant to city center



Site Name: Gilmore Valley Park I - Country Drive Park	Location on site: North or Central
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal park programming 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distant Would utilize large fraction of the park



Site Name: Gilmore Valley Park II	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little use 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distant Possibly moderate shade Water access?



Site Name: Miller Park	Location on site: East side
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open area • Near large apartment area – so areas without garden access 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distant • Parking limited



Site Name: Sobieski	Location on site: East side?
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near existing garden Smaller yards in neighborhood, so more likely to meet need. Water and electrical access from building 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller area Moderate shade



Site Name: Lions Park	Location on site: Between ball fields
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near old garden. Lots of parking. 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoehorned into site Industrial area with plastic smell



Site Name: Valley Oaks Park	Location on site: South end
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other competing uses 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technically a storm pond Distant Limited parking



Other Park Areas:

Site Name: Aquatic Center	Location on site: Southeast corner
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Central• Water access• Nearby parking	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderate shading• Congestion in summer



Site Name: Central Park	Location on site: SW corner or NE corner
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current use Downtown location 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small area Moderate shade



Site Name: West Lake Park	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little used. Central Parking available. 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swampy



Site Name: West Lake Park - Central	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no competing use • Parking • Central • Water access from drinking fountain. 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas are swampy • Soils likely a mix of sand and muck.



Site Name: East Lake Park	Location on site: Lake Lodge and north
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and electrical access • Parking • Central 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North areas may be too shaded and swampy. • South area may interfere with picnickers, very sandy soil.



Site Name: East Lake Park	Location on site: Band Shell
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area not used regularly • Central • Water access potentially from band shell for western area 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic on soccer game nights and band nights. • Possibly swampy.



Site Name: East Lake Park	Location on site: Rose garden
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking to the south • Central • In cultivated area 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be perceived as too close to the rose garden.



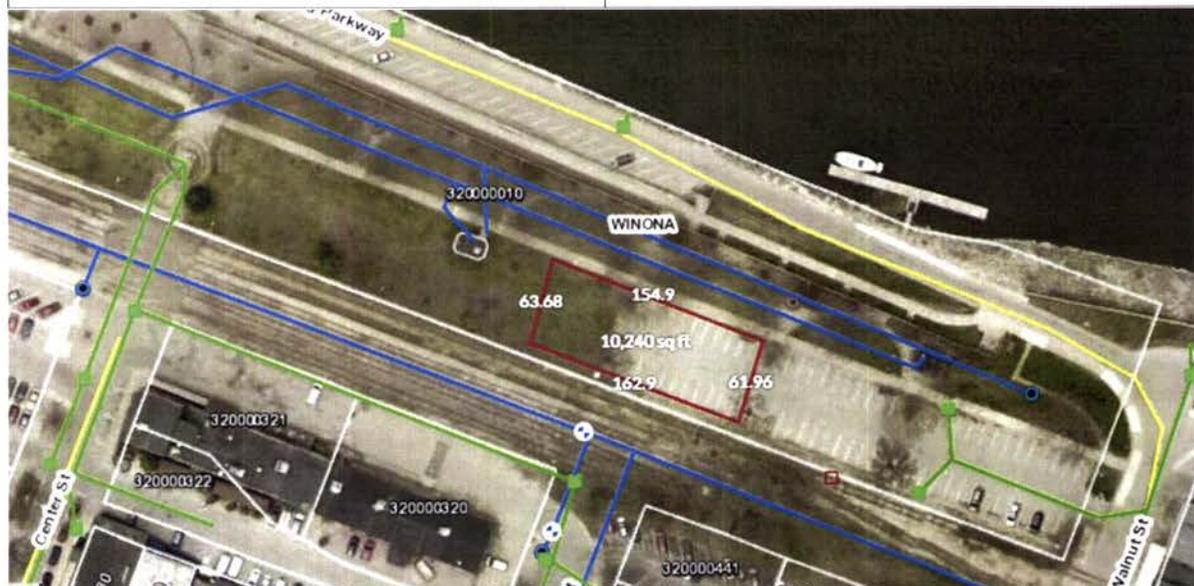
Site Name: East Lake Park	Location on site: East of softball fields
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No competing uses • Central • Excludes geese 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softballs may end up in garden.



Site Name: East Lake Park	Location on site: Lake View Drive-In area
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area • Central location • Less active area of park 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for stray Frisbee • Area may be used for dirt spoils storage.



Site Name: Levee Park	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central • Likely electrical and water access 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trees than other parks • Some periods of heavy summer use



Site Name: Lot near Links Lane	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No competing uses 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developable land, so interim use. Distant to population center. Parking



Site Name: Sinclair Park	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More trees than other parks Multiple other park uses



Site Name: Upper Valley Oaks	Location on site: South or Central
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no competing use. • Water and electrical accessible via park building. 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distant • Abundant Deer



Site Name: Windom Park	Location on site:
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central location • Likely electrical and water connections 	Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic park, so use consideration and design requirements. • Limited area.

