

DODGE COUNTY  
PARKS, OUTDOOR  
RECREATION AND  
OPEN SPACE PLAN  
APPENDICES

Adopted: 9.19.23



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# PART 1: DATA INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

## POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS

FIGURE 1.1: POPULATION COMPARISON

	2000	2010	2020	2022*	2000-2022
<b>Dodge County</b>	<b>85,897</b>	<b>88,759</b>	<b>89,396</b>	<b>88,822</b>	<b>3%</b>
Jefferson County	74,021	83,686	86,148	86,576	17%
Fond Du Lac County	97,296	101,633	104,154	104,162	7%
Washington County	117,493	131,887	136,761	138,229	18%
Columbia County	52,468	56,833	58,490	58,627	12%
Dane County	426,526	488,073	561,504	582,165	36%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,949,155	11%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Census.

\*WisDOA annual municipal population estimates, 2022.

Predicting future population growth is challenging and somewhat inexact. It should be noted that Dodge County’s actual future population will depend on social and economic trends, market conditions, attitudes toward growth, and development regulations. Figure 1.2 below depicts seven population projection methods. This set of projections was prepared specifically for this Plan and by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. All are projected through 2045. These forecasts provide the basis for determining future need for parks and open spaces.

FIGURE 1.2: DODGE COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	2020	2022**	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	% Change 2022- 2045	Population Increase 2022-2045
WisDOA Projections*	-	-	94,820	97,020	97,190	95,650	-	-	-
Linear Growth 1990-2022 (1)	89,396	88,822	89,972	91,888	93,804	95,720	97,636	10%	8,814
Linear Growth 2000-2022 (1)	89,396	88,822	89,221	89,886	90,550	91,215	91,880	3%	3,058
Linear Growth 2010-2022 (1)	89,396	88,822	88,838	88,864	88,890	88,917	88,943	0.1%	121
Compounded Growth 1990-2022 (2)	89,396	88,822	90,162	92,442	94,779	97,175	99,631	12%	10,809
<b>Compounded Growth 2000-2022 (2)</b>	<b>89,396</b>	<b>88,822</b>	<b>89,235</b>	<b>89,928</b>	<b>90,626</b>	<b>91,330</b>	<b>92,039</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3,217</b>
Compounded Growth 2010-2022 (2)	89,396	88,822	88,838	88,864	88,890	88,917	88,943	0.1%	121

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Census.

\*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2013 population estimate.

\*\*WisDOA annual municipal population estimates, 2022.

1. Extrapolated based on the average annual population change over the given years.
2. Extrapolated based on the average annual percent change over the given years.

These projections were derived using the following methodologies:

- **Wisconsin Department of Administration (WisDOA) Projections:** In 2013, the State Department of Administration forecasted population change for all communities in Wisconsin based on 2010 U.S. Census data. While the data used is somewhat dated, the projections are still relevant because of the County’s less dramatic population change over the past decade.
- **Linear Growth Rate (1990-2022, 2000-2022, 2010-2022):** These projections were calculated using the average annual population change over the time period and projecting that rate forward to 2045. The average annual population change for the various time periods ranged from 5 to 383 new people per year.
- **Annual Compounded Percentage Growth Rate (1990-2022, 2000-2022, 2010-2022):** These estimations are determined utilizing the annual average percentage change over the time period and extrapolating that rate forward to 2045. The average annual percentage change for the three time periods ranged from 0.0% to 0.5% growth.

## AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

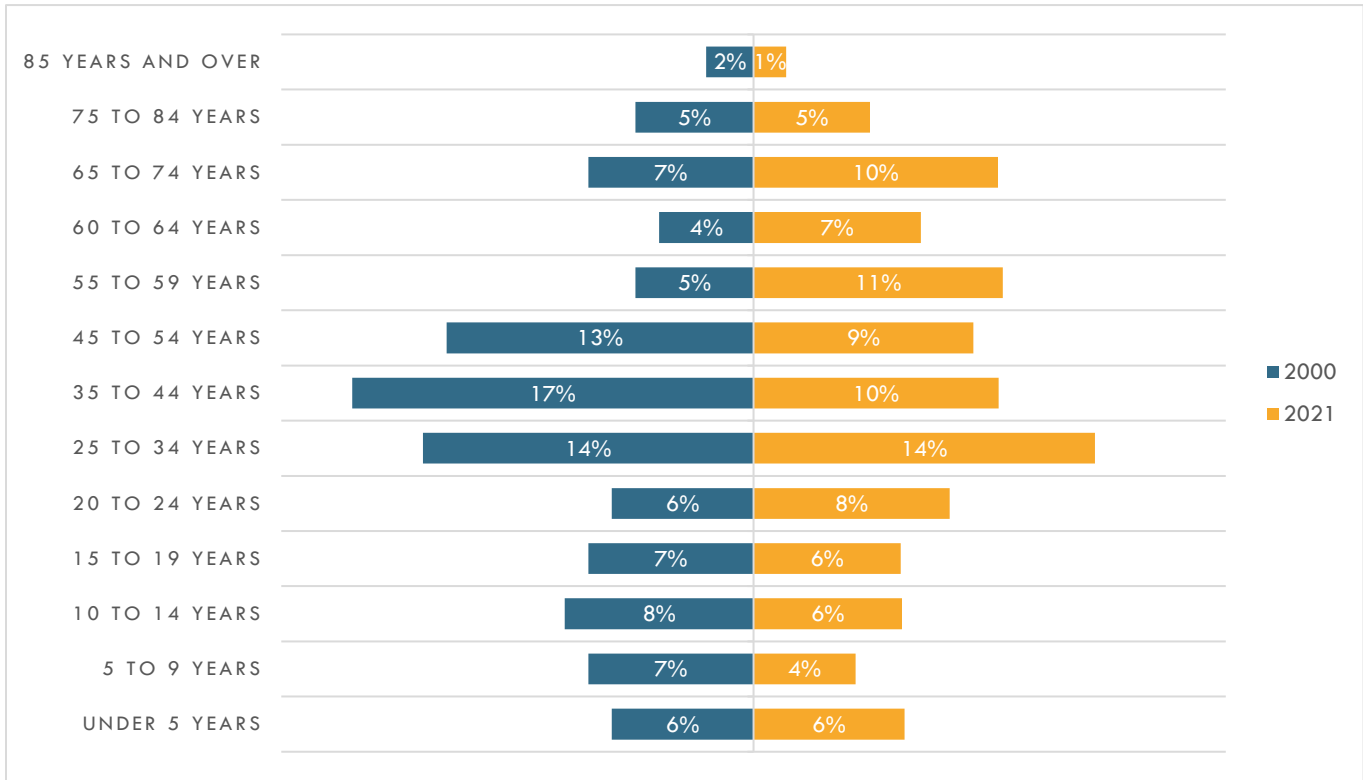
FIGURE 1.3: AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Median Age			Percent Under 18			Percent Over 65		
	2000	2010	2021	2000	2010	2021	2000	2010	2021
<b>Dodge County</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Jefferson County	37	38	42.9	25%	24%	20%	13%	13%	18%
Fond Du Lac County	37	40	41.8	25%	23%	21%	14%	15%	19%
Washington County	37	41	43.4	27%	25%	21%	11%	13%	19%
Columbia County	38	41	42.6	25%	24%	21%	14%	14%	18%
Dane County	33	34	36	23%	22%	20%	9%	10%	15%
Wisconsin	36	39	40	26%	24%	22%	13%	14%	18%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2010 Census.

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIGURE 1.4: DODGE COUNTY POPULATION PYRAMID



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2010 Census.

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY TRENDS

FIGURE 1.5: RACIAL COMMUNITY COMPARISONS, 2020

	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Fond Du Lac County	Washington County	Columbia County	Dane County	Wisconsin
White	89%	87%	88%	92%	92%	78%	80%
African American	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	5%	6%
American Indian	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%	1%
Asian	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	6%	3%
Two or More	5%	6%	5%	4%	4%	7%	6%
Other	2.4%	3.3%	3%	1%	1.3%	3.2%	3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census.

FIGURE 1.6: HISPANIC AND LATINO DISTRIBUTION

	2000	2010	2020
<b>Dodge County</b>	3%	4%	6%
Jefferson County	4%	7%	8%
Fond Du Lac County	2%	4%	6%
Washington County	1%	3%	4%
Columbia County	2%	3%	4%
Dane County	3%	6%	7%
Wisconsin	4%	6%	8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2020 Census.

## HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

FIGURE 1.7: 2020 HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTIC COMPARISONS

	Total Housing Units	Vacant Units	Percent Owner Occupied	Average Household Size
<b>Dodge County</b>	38,123	7%	69%	2.39
Jefferson County	36,376	7%	71%	2.44
Fond Du Lac County	45,740	6%	71%	2.37
Washington County	58,311	4%	77%	2.46
Columbia County	26,565	10%	75%	2.30
Dane County	248,795	4%	59%	2.33
Wisconsin	2,727,726	11%	67%	2.38

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census.

FIGURE 1.8: 2020 HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTIC COMPARISONS, CONTINUED

	Owner-Occupied Home Value	Median Owner-Occupied Costs per month with a mortgage	Gross Rent	Median Household Income
<b>Dodge County</b>	\$169,000	\$1,338	\$830	\$62,591
Jefferson County	\$194,300	\$1,478	\$869	\$67,167
Fond Du Lac County	\$162,600	\$1,328	\$786	\$64,147
Washington County	\$248,000	\$1,666	\$925	\$80,839
Columbia County	\$202,000	\$1,473	\$834	\$69,262
Dane County	\$278,700	\$1,808	\$1,118	\$75,179
Wisconsin	\$189,200	\$1,436	\$872	\$63,293

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census.

## OCCUPATION TRENDS

FIGURE 1.9: OCCUPATION BY INDUSTRY, DODGE COUNTY

Occupational Group	Percentage of Employed Labor Force	
	2000	2020
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	5%	3%
Construction	7%	7%
Manufacturing	33%	27%
Wholesale trade	3%	2%
Retail trade	11%	12%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4%	5%
Information	2%	1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4%	4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4%	6%
Education services, and healthcare and social assistance	16%	18%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5%	5%
Other services, except public administration	4%	4%
Public administration	4%	3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2000 Census.

## PUBLIC HEALTH TRENDS

FIGURE 1.10: PUBLIC HEALTH CONTEXT

	Overall Health Outcome Ranking*	Percentage of Adult Obesity
<b>Dodge County</b>	<b>43 out of 72</b>	<b>39%</b>
Jefferson County	15 out of 72	34%
Fond Du Lac County	41 out of 72	35%
Washington County	5 out of 72	33%
Columbia County	12 out of 72	35%
Dane County	7 out of 72	33%
Wisconsin	N/A	34%

\*2022 Health outcomes rankings are a combination of factors including length of life, quality of life, health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

Source: 2022 County Health Rankings, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

FIGURE 1.11: PUBLIC HEALTH CONTEXT

	Diagnosed With Diabetes*	Leading Cause of Death**	Life Expectancy***
<b>Dodge County</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>Heart Disease (216.2 per 100,000)</b>	<b>79.1</b>
Jefferson County	6.4%	Heart Disease (200.2 per 100,000)	80.5
Fond Du Lac County	7.7%	Heart Disease (217.7 per 100,000)	80.3
Washington County	7.4%	Heart Disease (204.8 per 100,000)	80.4
Columbia County	8.2%	Heart Disease (224.1 per 100,000)	79.2
Dane County	5.9%	Cancer (143.8 per 100,000)	81.2
Wisconsin	7.4%	Heart Disease (198.9 per 100,000)	79.5

\*Source: CDC, 2019.

\*\*Source: 2017 Wisconsin Public Health Profiles. Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

\*\*\*Source: Life Expectancy in Wisconsin 2010-2014. Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2016.

# PART 2: REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS AND REPORTS

A critical step in the park planning process is the examination of past planning efforts in the County and other related municipal, county, and state plans. A comprehensive understanding of how the County and its surrounding area have evolved over time and of how this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan can support additional future planning efforts helps establish guidelines for the recommendations and implementation strategies of this Plan.

Moreover, a review of existing plans helps identify ways this Plan can be adapted so that its goals, objectives, and policies align and coordinate with ongoing planning efforts within the State and region. The following is a summary of information from existing plans that informs the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Dodge County Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

## DODGE COUNTY PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY

### **Dodge County Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan (2015)**

This plan details an inventory of the existing parks and facilities in Dodge County, facility specific recommendations, preservation and protection initiatives, and ongoing projects and programs. This includes planning and acquisition priorities for regional bicycle, pedestrian, and water trail systems. This Plan is a component of the greater Dodge County Comprehensive Plan.

Overall goals of the plan include:

- Provide sufficient park land and recreation facilities to meet the current and projected future demand of County residents without adversely affecting existing natural and cultural resources.
- Showcase and preserve the characteristics and diversity of the natural, cultural, and historical resources of the County.
- Preserve large tracts of natural and agricultural rural landscapes at urban fringe areas that will provide regional resource protection and recreation benefits.
- Provide an inclusive parks system for all County residents that meets resident needs, links communities with recreational facilities and with each other, and that provides accessible recreational opportunities for all County residents.

The Dodge County Plan places a major emphasis on recommendations for new trails to connect existing and proposed parks, natural resource sites, and municipalities within the County.

### **Dodge County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2003)**

The Dodge County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was developed to promote and improve conditions throughout the County for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists. Several of the Plan's goals are supported by and mirror the goals and recommendations of this CORP, including the following:

- Develop a County-wide bicycle and pedestrian system that serves a variety of user types, ages, and abilities.
- Create facilities and policies that will increase bicycle and pedestrian safety and emphasize travel routes to major destinations, such as large communities, major outdoor recreation destinations, tourist destinations, and employment or government centers.
- Identify improvements at key State, County, or town roads that will complete loop routes, connect communities, or provide safer and more direct travel routes. Implement improvements such as sidewalks, marked crosswalks, designated bikeways, bike lanes, paved shoulders, and multi-use paths at these locations to help accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians on the road.
- Emphasize a system that facilitates bicycle travel into and out of Dodge County from the surrounding areas.
- Promote a County-wide commitment to pedestrian and bicycle safety and walkability/bikeability to create a healthier transportation system and lifestyle for all County residents.

### **Dodge County Comprehensive Plan (2011)**

The County's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2011, provides guidance on how and where the County might grow, develop, and change over the next twenty years. The Plan provides an overall vision, goals, objectives and policies, and specific issues and opportunities facing the County, and covers all nine essential elements of the state statutes governing long-term comprehensive planning. Some of the key opportunities and recommendations within the County's Comprehensive Plan include:

#### Transportation Goals:

- Encouraging pedestrian-oriented neighborhood designs that support a mix of uses to make walking and bicycling viable transportation options, minimizing traffic on existing streets in areas of new development.
- Support a transportation system which, through its location, capacity, and design, will effectively serve the existing land use development pattern and meet anticipated transportation demand generated by planned land uses.
- Build public facilities such as schools and parks near neighborhoods and complete sidewalk gaps along local routes to such facilities.

#### Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian trail systems:

- Improve bicycle safety around the Horicon Marsh by paving shoulders and adding signage to increase motorists' awareness of bicyclists.
- Work with local governments to create bicycle and pedestrian linkages between neighborhoods and subdivisions.

#### Diversify Recreational Opportunities:

- The County should work with local communities to establish programming to activate park and recreational spaces with activities for all ages, demographics, and abilities.
- Preserve and enhance park, open space, and recreational opportunities currently available in the County.

#### Additional recommendations include:

- Preserving the valuable natural features, resources, & characteristics of the County
- Protecting water quality
- Building on natural resource-based tourism opportunities
- Accommodating active and passive recreation areas
- Creating well-planned development, amenities, and transportation system connections
- Enhancing natural stormwater management

Many of the issues, opportunities, goals, objectives, and recommendations identified in the 2011 Comprehensive Plan are still relevant and applicable in 2022 and are reflected and supported throughout this Plan. This plan builds upon Comprehensive Plan information and recommendations, providing strategic updates to key areas to further advance and prioritize future park and recreation planning, development, upgrades, and integration into the community.

One of the County's Comprehensive Plan goals is to encourage communities to develop neighborhood designs that supports a range of transportation choices while providing access to natural areas and open spaces. This CORP provides specific recommendations for the implementation of trail networks and multimodal transportation facility options that help accomplish this goal. Creating an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that offers mobility, convenience, and safety to meet the needs of all citizens is a goal supported by both this plan and the County's existing Comprehensive Plan.

### Dodge County Park Master Plans

The Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department has, in conjunction with private consultant groups, prepared master plans for most of the County Park facilities. The Harnischfeger Master Park Plan was the most recently completed plan in 2008. The only County park that does not have an adopted master plan is Nitschke Mounds Park. Park master plans should be considered for review or updating every 15-20 years. The following summarizes the County's past Park Master Plans:

- **Astico Park Master Plan (1997):** This Park Master Plan's objectives focus on improving Astico Park's functionality, expanding the types of uses within the park, and providing a framework for the park's future expansion. Key recommendations include improving public access to the Crawfish River by installing ADA accessible fishing docks, improving the park's entrance, trail redesigns, installing play equipment, and increasing the number of campsites within the park. The Plan recommends installing two local historic bridges across the Crawfish River, developing a historic building collection for tourism and education, and creating an outdoor amphitheater.
- **Derge Park Master Plan (1999):** The Derge Park Master Plan outlines several improvements for this facility, including a new park sign, expanded boat trailer parking, a new shelter structure near Beaver Dam Lake, and improvements to existing nature trails and natural areas.
- **Harnischfeger Park Master Plan (2008):** The most recent County Park Master Plan, this 2008 Plan provides a framework for the maintenance, operation, and future development of Harnischfeger Park. Key recommendations from the Plan include increasing accessibility for residents of all ages and abilities, developing paved pathways connecting parking areas to key facilities, upgrading sports courts, expand canoe, kayak, and fishing access points, expanding the disc golf course, improving existing camping facilities and adding a hike-in campsite in the northern part of the park.

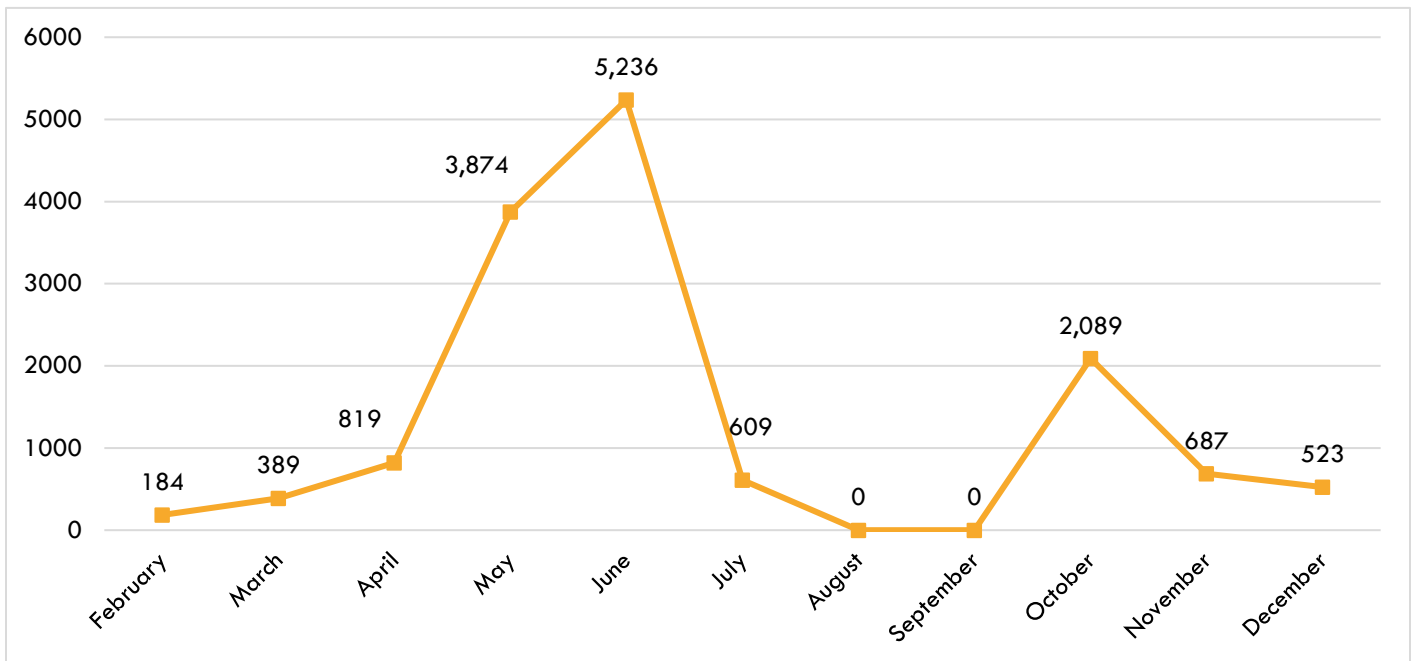


- Ledge Park Master Plan (2000):** This Plan’s focus is on providing roadway connections and enhancements to increase access to the park, protecting the location’s unique features, performing pond enhancements, and planning for future expansion along the west face of the Niagara Escarpment. Key Recommendations from the planning effort include developing a restroom and shower facility, solving onsite waste disposal issues, developing additional campsites, expanding the park’s trail system, improving signage, developing ledge protection barriers, and installing wildlife observation platforms.
- Wild Goose State Trail (WGST) Master Plan – Dodge County Segment (1990):** The goal of the WGST Master Plan was to provide a 21.6-mile-long recreation trail linked with Fond du Lac County’s 13-mile trail segment for year-round use that will provide safe, accessible transportation options for hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling, horseback riding, and ATV riding. The plan outlines land acquisition, a phased development schedule, and the trail route, as well as recommendations for seasonal maintenance and trail use options.

## DODGE COUNTY PARK ATTENDANCE COUNTS

Dodge County also actively tracks the number of visitors at several locations within the existing park and trail system. While traffic count data is somewhat inexact (see Figure 6.2 notes) and does not account for park users entering facilities via a mode of transportation other than via car, the information still confirms several trends. The data shows that the parks are well attended, with Astico Park and Ledge Park being the most visited locations in 2022 (see Figure 6.2). Traffic counts indicate that County parks generally experience peak use during early and mid-summer, with use generally picking up significantly around April and remaining high through October before dropping off sharply with the onset of winter. In general, during peak warm weather months, average monthly traffic at County parks tends to be twice as high as overall annual average traffic counts. Traffic counts for 2022 also indicate that park use is continuing to increase compared to previous years.

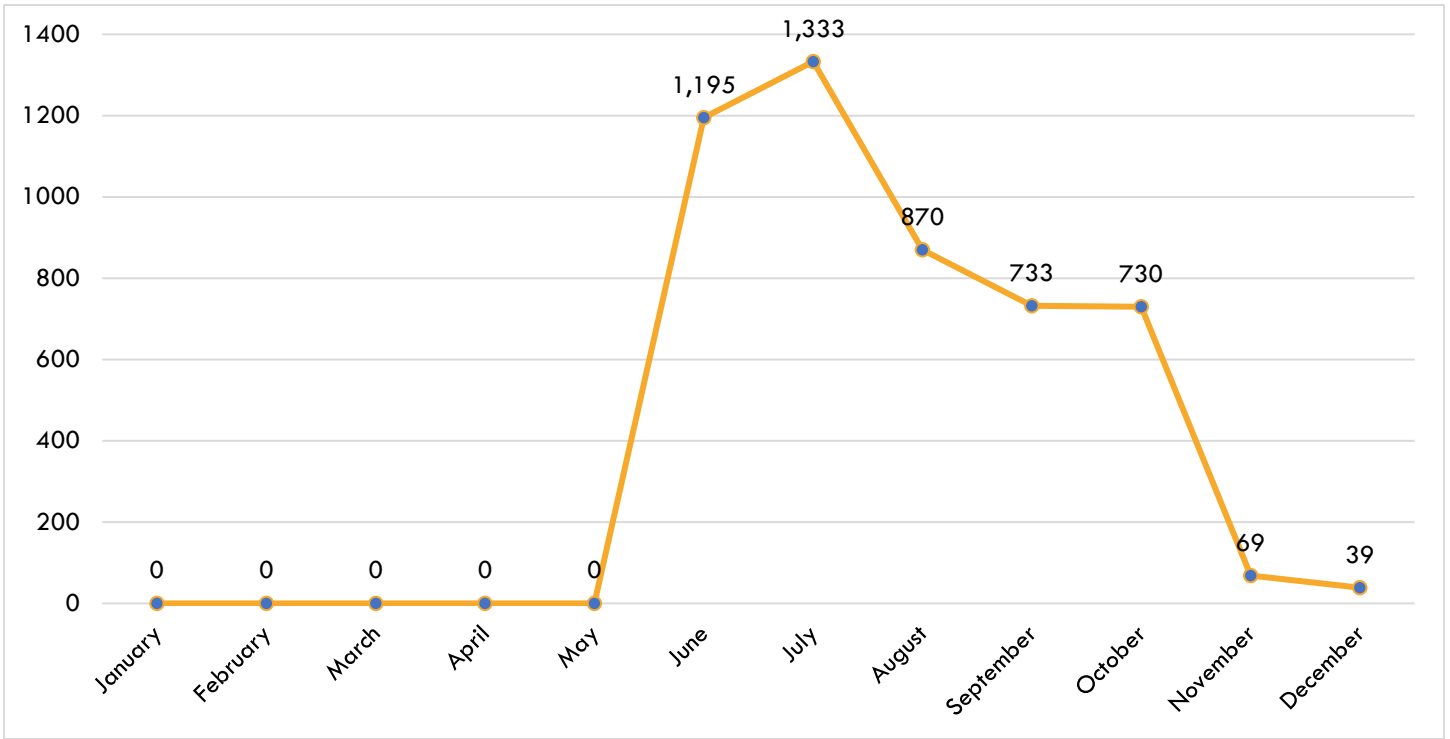
FIGURE 2.1: AVERAGE VEHICLES PER MONTH – ASTICO PARK (2022)



\*Astico Park Traffic Counter was not working between July – September 2022. The average monthly traffic count and peak monthly traffic count would likely be significantly higher if data for these months was recorded.

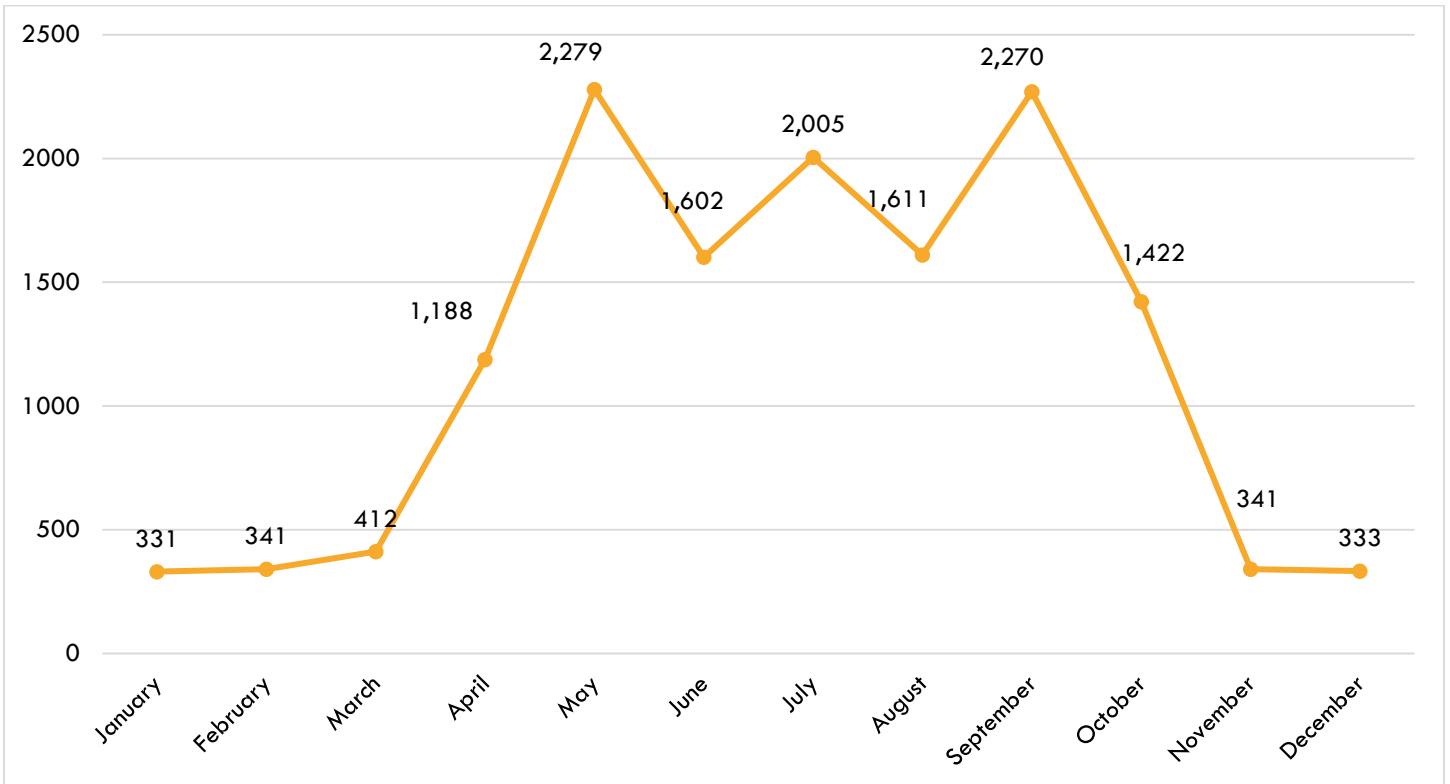
Source: Dodge County, 2022.

FIGURE 2.2: AVERAGE VEHICLES PER MONTH – DERGE PARK (2022)



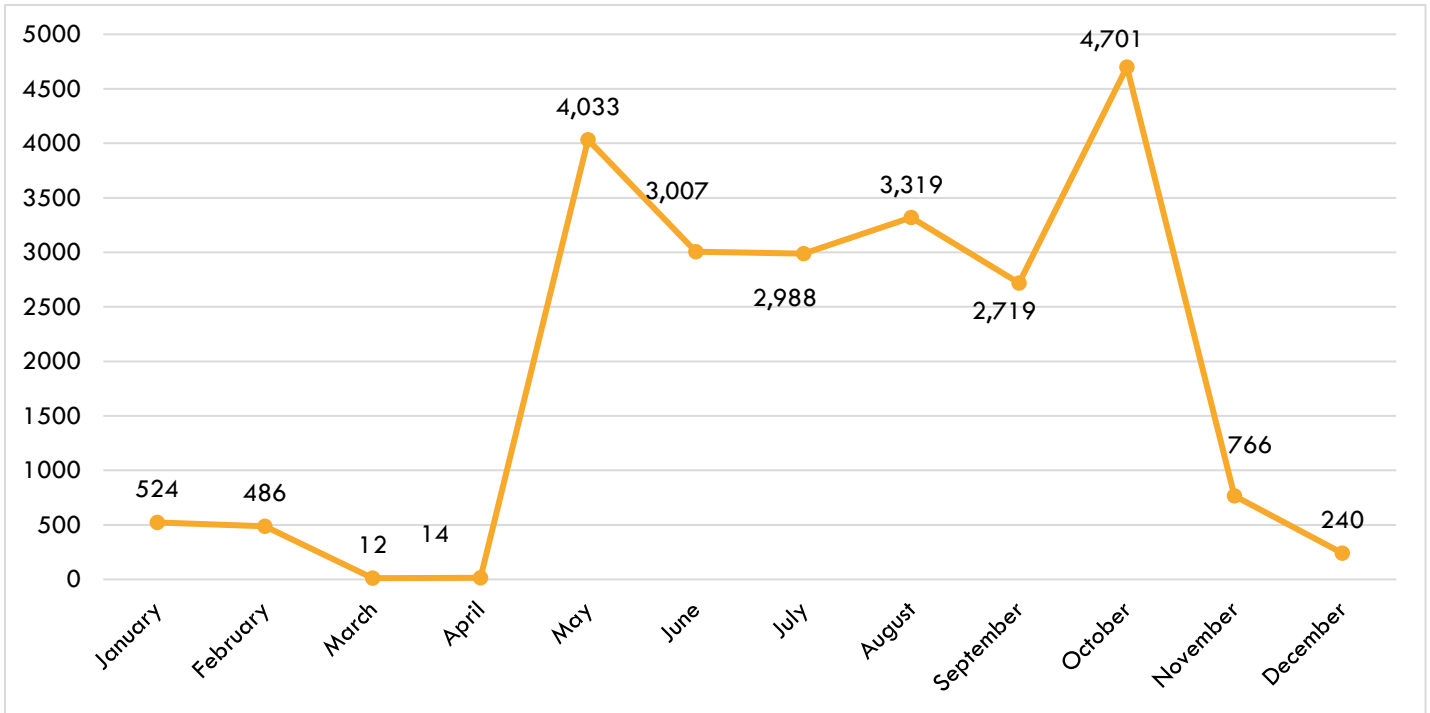
\*A traffic counter was not installed at Derge Park until May 2022. Values represent data recorded between June – December 2022.  
Source: Dodge County, 2022.

FIGURE 2.3: AVERAGE VEHICLES PER MONTH – HARNISCHFEGER PARK (2022)



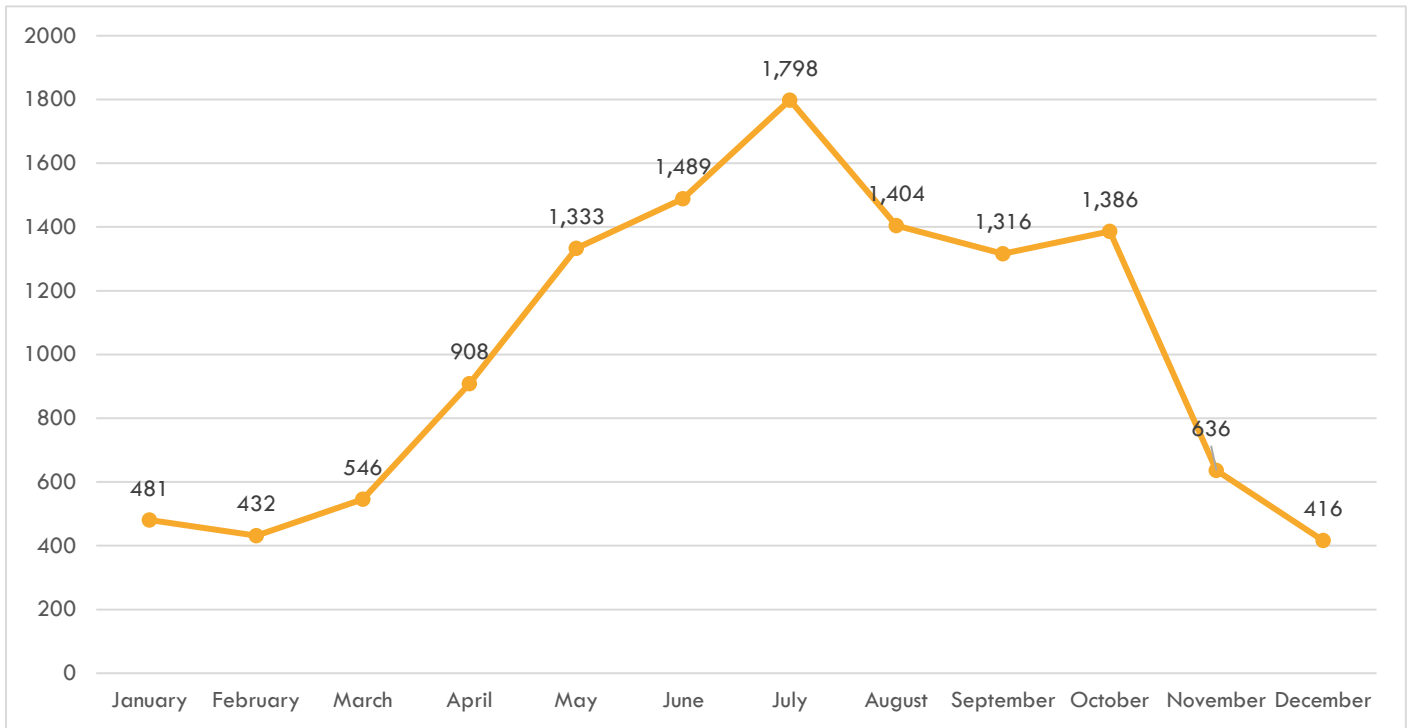
Source: Dodge County, 2022.

FIGURE 2.4: AVERAGE VEHICLES PER MONTH – LEDGE PARK (2022)



\*County data indicates that the traffic counter at Ledge Park was not working for the months of March and April in 2022.  
 Source: Dodge County, 2022.

FIGURE 2.5: AVERAGE VEHICLES PER MONTH – WILD GOOSE STATE TRAIL AT HWY 60 (2022)



Source: Dodge County, 2022.

FIGURE 2.6: DODGE COUNTY PARK ACTIVITY COUNTS

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Campsite Rentals	6,086	6,224	6,345	7,421	7,591	6,989	7,550	6,807	10,084	9,265
Number of Campsites Available	148	148	143	132	132	132	132	132	136	136
Firewood Sales (Bundles Sold)	5,208	5,500	4,500	4,300	4,585	3,888	4,062	2,875	3,586	3,382
Shelter Rentals	188	179	181	189	171	143	129	37	102	39
Number of Shelters Available	11	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	6
Watercraft Rentals	497	405	387	375	361	194	255	43	223	117

Source: Dodge County, 2023.

## RELATED PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY

### Municipal Park and Open Space Plans

There are multiple communities throughout Dodge County that also have adopted park plans. These plans identify goals, objectives, and policies, in addition to recommendations and action items. They also qualify municipalities for matching grant funds through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) and the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Fund. Each plan is inherently reflectively of the more defined and fine-grained components of the given municipality, however through this planning process, outreach was conducted with each municipality in the County to gather feedback and explore larger-scale ideas for parks, recreation, trails, and open space. These ideas manifested themselves through the focus group interviews that are detailed below and influenced this plan's goals, recommendations, and action items.

### Wisconsin Land Legacy Report (2006)

In the Wisconsin Land Legacy Report, the DNR identified those key places around the state that are critical to meeting Wisconsin's conservation and outdoor recreation needs over the next 50 years. The Report identifies several sites in Dodge County including:

- The Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins:** This area, mostly centered over Jefferson County, extends to portions of the southwest corner of Dodge County covering the Waterloo and Mud Lake Wildlife Areas and much of the Crawfish River. The identification of this Legacy Place spurred the creation of the Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) as a joint venture that incorporates the vision of several partner organizations, such as county and municipal officials, non-profit organizations, elected officials, DNR staff, and others. The GHA is envisioned as a network of parks, wildlife and natural areas, and historic and cultural sites connected to each other and nearby cities and villages by trails, waterways, and nature preserves.

Several park, conservation, and wildlife area expansion and partnership opportunities are being developed through the GHA. The partners of the GHA were key to the expansion of the Glacial River Trail through Jefferson County and extending into Rock and Dodge Counties. Opportunities exist for Dodge County to further partner with the GHA on park, trail and open space initiatives within the borders of the GHA in Dodge County. This area provides one of the best remaining chances in the southern part of the state to provide much needed recreation opportunities easily accessible to the large urban centers in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Camping, walking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing trails along with water-based recreation along the Crawfish River are the primary recreational focus.

- Glacial Habitat Restoration Area:** The Glacial Habitat Restoration Area (GHRA) is an existing DNR program that includes portions of Dodge, Fond du Lac, Winnebago and Columbia Counties. The GHRA takes a regional approach to wildlife management by restoring, creating and maintaining habitat for waterfowl, wild pheasants and non-game songbirds. The program's focus is the creation of a patchwork of restored grasslands and wetlands amid the established croplands and thereby maximizing wildlife habitat. In an era of increasing rural development and disappearing farmland and wetland, these areas are critical to the nesting, feeding and overall survival of birds and other wildlife populations. Through the purchase of land and the establishment of perpetual conservation easements, the GHRA is working towards its goal of restoring and conserving 38,600 acres of permanent grassland nesting cover and 11,000 acres of wetlands in the 24-township area. These restoration activities are made possible through a variety of funding sources including the use of state Stewardship funds which are used primarily for land acquisition activities. In addition, habitat restoration activities are funded through license fees as well as pheasant, turkey and waterfowl stamp accounts. Federal sources of funding are also utilized heavily including Pittman-Robertson Funds and North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants. Besides these public sources of funding, numerous local and state conservation organizations and private donors contribute financially to the success of the GHRA habitat objectives. Properties purchased by the state through the GHRA program are open to the public for hiking, sightseeing, hunting and trapping. Those properties in the conservation easement program remain under the control of the landowner and are open to public use only with the permission of the landowner.

- **Horicon Marsh:** Horicon Marsh is the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the United States and is one of only 15 sites in the U.S. that has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. It provides a rest stop for legendary concentrations of migrating waterfowl and is also an important nesting area for many species of waterfowl and wading birds. The National Wildlife Refuge here was originally created as a nesting area for the redhead duck and today it is still among the largest nesting areas for this bird in the eastern United States. Once drained and nearly destroyed in a failed attempt to convert the marsh to agricultural production, the restoration of Horicon Marsh is one of the great conservation success stories of the twentieth century. Nearly all of the 32,000-acre marsh is in public ownership, with the northern two-thirds a national wildlife refuge, and the southern one-third a state wildlife area. Additional protection is needed to improve and maintain the health of the ecosystem. Tributary streams deposit silt and nutrients in the marsh, causing poor water quality. Buffer strips along streams and improved farming practices on adjacent lands could help this situation.

Being only 50 miles from both Milwaukee and Madison, the marsh attracts large numbers of people each year who come to hunt, hike, bike, canoe, watch the enormous flocks of migrating geese and partake in other nature based recreational pursuits.

- **Niagara Escarpment:** Niagara Escarpment is a prominent rock ridge that spans nearly 1,000 miles in an arc across the Great Lakes region, forming the ancient “backbone” of North America. It runs from eastern Wisconsin to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, through southern Ontario to western New York State, where Niagara Falls cascades over it, giving the escarpment its name.

In Wisconsin, the Niagara Escarpment is a discontinuous ridge that stretches about 250 miles from Waukesha County north to Rock Island at the tip of Door County. Some areas of particular interest on or near this segment of the escarpment within Dodge County include the Neda Mine and Ledge Park. The Neda Mine, an abandoned iron mine in Dodge County, is already protected as a state natural area, and is one of the largest bat hibernacula in Wisconsin. At least three species of bats are found here, and it is estimated that over 50,000 bats hibernate in the maze of mine shafts and tunnels. Ledge Park is a popular county park that contains a campground and provides a panoramic view of Horicon Marsh from atop the ledge. Expansion of this park, both above and below the ledge, would increase recreation potential and would also provide more protection to natural features. The Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN) is a regional partnership that functions to provide a common forum for discussion and action which promotes awareness and education about the Niagara Escarpment. The Network also facilitates short- and long-term planning for the protection and conservation of this resource and helps to promote wise recreational use of the resource.

- **Upper Rock River:** The Upper Rock River, flowing from Horicon Marsh south through Watertown and Jefferson to Fort Atkinson, slowly winds through a mixture of farmland, woods, and marshes. Some large areas of floodplain as well as numerous glacial drumlins characterize the area’s topography. The floodplains contain a combination of marsh, grassland, forest and cropland. Widespread flooding is a common occurrence in many areas since the floodplains are extensive and the river has a very slight gradient (the fall of the river from the upper Federal dam in the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge to the upper Watertown dam is just 34 feet over 58 miles). The uplands are mostly farmed and contain scattered woodlots. The river has good scenic qualities along much of its length and provides opportunities for canoeing, boating and fishing. Wildlife is abundant and, although the Upper Rock does not have good water clarity and contains large numbers of carp, most of the river still supports a fair fishery for northern pike and walleye. Protection of adjacent uplands could permit recreational trails to be developed in some areas. Lowland areas have value for waterfowl and these values could be enhanced through wetland restoration. The area provides hunting opportunities for common game species such as deer, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, pheasant, duck, goose, and woodcock. In addition to the cities along its banks, the Upper Rock lies within 50 miles of the major population centers of Madison and Milwaukee and considerably closer to many other small and medium-sized communities. As a result, much of this river corridor is within an hour’s drive of over half the state’s population. Thus, the Upper Rock River offers a unique opportunity to combine natural resource protection, various outdoor recreation activities, and the protection of productive farmland.

### **Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) – 2019-2023**

The Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a blueprint for state and local outdoor recreation planning through support of national initiatives, helps set the course for recreation within the state by describing current recreation supply and trends, and provides a framework for future recreation development and focus. Some of the key issues, concerns, and factors influencing the future of outdoor recreation include:

- Demographic shifts in age, urbanization, and diversification
- The declining overall maintenance of infrastructure, especially recreational facilities
- Technology advances effecting the way we travel, use parks, and distribute information
- Equitable distribution of public lands
- Declining habitat quality and invasive species maintenance
- Increasing extreme weather events and weather pattern shifts
- Funding opportunities and increasing costs

Each of these factors are important to consider in any decision making related to the future needs and demands of the County's residents, in addition to the prioritization of recreational facilities and programming. The plan's key overarching goals for outdoor recreation include boosting participation in outdoor recreation, developing networks of partnerships, providing high-quality experiences, improving data to enhance visitor experiences, and enhancing funding and financial stability. Many of the goals within the SCORP are also reflected in this Plan and were heard throughout the public participation process as goals directly applicable to Dodge County.

### **Connections 2050 Statewide Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan (2022)**

Connections 2050 links statewide transportation policy to implementation, planning, programming, and other Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) activities. The plan calls for improved system integration for passengers and freight, as well as modernization to correct outdated infrastructure design and combine technological advancements with more traditional transportation infrastructure designs.

The Plan sets policy directions for the state trunk highway system, public transit, intercity travel, freight movement, bicycle and pedestrian travel, and funding, project scheduling and prioritization decisions. As part of the Connections 2050 planning process, WisDOT identified 37 System-level Priority Corridors. The corridor maps identify specific projects; however, the Plan does not guarantee that all potential projects will be implemented. Dodge County contains three of WisDOT's Priority Corridors: the 84<sup>th</sup> Division Railsplitters Corridor from Beaver Dam to Port Washington along WIS 33, the Rock River Corridor from Janesville to Oshkosh via WIS 26, and the Wild Goose Corridor from Madison to Oshkosh via US 151 and WIS 26. Recommendations in the Dodge County area include the potential reconstruction of the existing interchange at County Road D and US 151, Construct expressway upgrades from WIS 73 to County Road G and County Road B to County Road M. Some of these recommendations may have implications for transportation and recreational network planning by the County in relation to connecting and accessing parks, recreational facilities, and open space.

### **Wisconsin Healthy Communities**

The University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute designates municipalities as a "Wisconsin Healthy Community" to recognize and encourage local efforts that improve the overall community's health and wellbeing. The designation also aims to promote collaboration centered around health improvement. Dodge County has the Silver designation as of 2023, which is largely reflective of the Blue Zone Project and several other local initiatives within different communities across the county.

In order to achieve the gold designation, continued efforts need to be made in the following areas:

- All priority areas are represented, and the overall number of community accomplishments is greater than seven
- Implementation of sustainable and comprehensive long-term solutions
- Implementation of equitable and fair opportunities for health in the community addressing social determinants of health
- Diverse partnerships are working together to improve community well-being and formalized leadership capacity is established
- Resources (dollars, partners, and assets) have been secured, allocated, and leveraged toward implementation
- Continuously tracking plan outcomes through data-driven decision making
- The overarching goals of the Wisconsin Healthy Community Designation program are reflective of the community's overarching goals in this plan.

Source: Wisconsin Healthy Communities, 2023

# PART 3: NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

The natural resources of Dodge County offer a clean and abundant supply of groundwater and surface waters and provide a natural landscape of terrestrial and aquatic habitats such as forests, prairies, and wetlands. Natural resources include the parks, trails, scenic and conservation areas, and other outdoor places people rely on for recreation. Natural resources are essential to a vibrant economy and regional community – measured in tourism revenue, enhanced property values, sustainable agriculture and natural resource production, and environmental preservation initiatives. Dodge County has many unique natural features, agricultural, natural, and cultural resources that contribute greatly to quality of life within the region.

## CLIMATE

Climate is an important consideration for determining the range of recreational activities that should be provided for in the County. The Dodge County area has a continental climate characterized by significant changes in weather. Winters are cloudy, cold, and snowy. Lakes and rivers usually begin to freeze over in December and remain ice covered until March. During the spring, periods of warm weather alternate with cold spells. By the end of March, nearly all precipitation is in the form of rain. Summers are warm and at times hot and humid. Cool periods are also common during the summer months. Fall is generally mild during the day with cool clear nights. The change from fall to winter is often abrupt, as is the change from summer to fall.

## SOILS

The soils in Dodge County are a result of glacial deposits that consisted of unsorted sand, gravel, clay, limestone fragments, sandstone bedrock, and igneous metamorphic rock from outside the region. Many of these deposits have prompted mineral, sand, and gravel extraction throughout the County. Much of the soil is an upland silt loam of good agricultural quality. Topsoil depths generally range from 10 to 14 inches. The fertile soil contributes to high production of plant and animal life.

## WATERSHEDS AND WATER BODIES

Over 21,000 acres of surface water covers parts of Dodge County. A total of 31 lakes can be found in the County (however 18 of them were created by dams) and the area includes 50 rivers and streams. The average depth of the lakes is only 7.2 feet and almost half of the County's lakes are less than 10 surface acres in size. Due to the shallow depth, 23 of the 31 lakes tend to experience winter fish kill problems. There are extensive areas of wetland throughout the County, with Horicon Marsh being the most significant. The river system of the County is rather erratic with many intermittent streams. The county's surface waters, and adjacent natural areas generally provide recreational opportunities including hunting and fishing and are often important as wildlife habitat. The most prominent lakes in Dodge County include Beaver Dam Lake, Sinissippi Lake, Fox Lake, Neosho Millpond, Lake Emily, and Lost Lake. The County's most prominent rivers include the Rock River, Crawfish River, and Beaver Dam River.

## GROUNDWATER

The source of all groundwater is precipitation, which percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone called an aquifer, where it is then contained. Water in an aquifer travels from its source to a discharge point such as a well, wetland, spring, or lake. During periods of increased precipitation or thaw, this vast resource is replenished with water moving by gravity through permeable soils which is called a water table system. Contamination of groundwater reserves can result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal (septic effluent), runoff from livestock yards and urban areas, improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers, excessive lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from mining operations. Once groundwater contamination has occurred, successful remediation is expensive and can take years, or may never occur, depending upon the pollutant. Therefore, when considering specific land uses for an area, it is vital to consider the physical characteristics of the area and the relationships between the land and the proposed/actual use in order to ensure that groundwater contamination does not occur.

## VEGETATION

The amount of water saturation present in the soils of the land determines what types of plant and animal communities can live in the area. The ecology of Dodge County consists of woodlands containing hardwoods such as oak, elm, and maple trees, prairies, and wetlands. Much of the County's land held in conservation consists of native wetland habitat, which supports both aquatic and terrestrial species. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes, making lakes, rivers, and streams cleaner, and drinking water safer for consumption. Wetlands can also replenish groundwater supplies and help streams and riverways maintain flowing waters during dry months. Additionally, wetlands also provide invaluable habitat for fish, plants, and animals. There are approximately 109,000 acres of wetlands found throughout Dodge County.

## WILDLIFE HABITAT

The **Horicon National Wildlife Refuge**, consisting of 32,000 acres (20,482 acres within Dodge County), covers the northern two-thirds of the internationally recognized Horicon Marsh. The refuge is owned by the federal government and is managed and operated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The operation headquarters and visitor center is located on the east side of the refuge just south of State Highway 49. The preservation, restoration, and enhancement of endangered and threatened wildlife and their natural ecosystems is one of the primary management goals within the Refuge, as is providing an understanding and appreciation of fish and wildlife ecology to visitors. The refuge offers a significant resource-based recreational facility with natural resource compatible uses permitted in certain areas of the refuge. These permitted uses include wildlife watching, hiking, cross country skiing, an auto tour, as well as limited fishing, trapping, and hunting opportunities. Activities such as canoeing, boating, picnicking, camping, and motorized recreation are specifically prohibited due to their conflict with the management goals of the refuge. Additional protection is needed to improve and maintain the health of the ecosystem. Tributary streams deposit silt and nutrients in the marsh, causing poor water quality. Buffer strips along streams and improved farming practices on adjacent lands could help this situation.

The **Horicon State Wildlife Area** makes up the southern one-third of the Horicon Marsh, totaling approximately 11,009 acres. This State owned and Department of Natural Resources operated wildlife area provides a variety of recreational opportunities while still protecting the nesting habitats and critical resource areas. Canoeing, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, and hiking are the primary recreational activities available in this area. There are four Department of Natural Resources managed boat landings that provide access to the marsh. There are two landings in the City of Horicon, one each in the Town of Burnett and the Town of Williamstown. The "Conservation Hill" area near the old Department of Natural Resources field station contains hiking/cross country ski trails and scenic overlooks of the marsh. Hiking Trails are also available on Indermuehle Island and One Mile Island, nearby.

The **Trenton Waterfowl Production Area** consists of 374 acres located in the Town of Trenton just west of USH 151. The site provides wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation are opportunities provided for at this site.

The **Pieper Waterfowl Production Area** consists of 81 acres located in the Town of Burnett along STH 26, just off the Wild Goose State Trail. The site provides wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation are opportunities provided for at this site also.

The **Mud Lake Wildlife Area** is a large wildlife production area and public hunting/fishing reserve in the southwestern part of Dodge County. The area extends northeast along the Beaver Dam River covering approximately 3,957 acres, and is managed primarily for waterfowl and upland game species such as pheasants.

The **Shaw Marsh Wildlife Area** located just south of the City of Beaver Dam, serves as a wildlife production area for upland game species and waterfowl. The site covers approximately 906 acres and is available as a public hunting area.

The **Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area** is a 5,000-acre public hunting and wildlife viewing area located along the east branch of the Rock River. The site straddles the Dodge and Washington County border, with just under half of the total acreage located within Dodge County. The marsh is managed intensely for wildlife to provide recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, sightseeing, hiking and education. Facilities include educational signage, scenic overlooks, and two boat landings.

The **Waterloo Wildlife Area** is a public hunting area covering about 1,505 acres adjacent to the Maunsha and Crawfish Rivers in southwestern Dodge County. The area is managed primarily for upland game and waterfowl.

The **Westford Wildlife Area** is a 682-acre site located adjacent to the southwestern tip of Beaver Dam Lake. The site provides quality hunting opportunities.



The **Beaver Dam Lake Fishery Area** consists of five separate sites throughout the Towns of Fox Lake, Trenton and Westford which are managed to provide public access to Beaver Dam Lake for recreational uses. Furthermore, the sites were established to protect wetlands habitat critical for fish spawning, and to protect spring heads which provide refuge for fish to survive winter. The total area covers 152.7 acres, with 83.2 acres owned by the Department of Natural Resources and 69.5 acres under private ownership with a wetland easement agreement. The five sites include Fish Camp Public Access, North Access, Puckagee Springs, Hickory Bay Boat Access Parking Lot and Wetland Easement Area.

The **Fox Lake Fishery Area** is part of a wetland complex located on the west end of Fox Lake and was established primarily to protect critical fish spawning habitat. The state-owned lands cover approximately 464 acres along Fox Lake, with an additional 18.9 acres to the north acquired to protect wintering habitat for deer and pheasants. Wildlife management easements have also been obtained on an additional 282.8 acres of private lands in the area. The State-owned lands provide opportunities for fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife watching, canoeing, and nature study.

The **Glacial Habitat Restoration Areas** are scattered areas of restored wetlands, grasslands, and croplands acquired by the State Department of Natural Resources to create conditions more favorable for ducks, pheasants, and non-game grassland birds. Dodge County is one of four counties within a 24-town area included in the project. The parcels of land acquired through easements or fee title acquisition range in size from ten acres to a few hundred. Only the lands purchased by fee title are open to the public for hiking, nature study, hunting and trapping.

The **Sinissippi Public Hunting Area** covers 344 acres on the north end of Lake Sinissippi. The site is characterized by a knoll surrounded by lowland areas. There are no facilities developed on this state-owned property.

Scattered wildlife sites cover nearly 2,200 acres around Dodge County. These state-owned properties typically consist of small tracts of land acquired to provide specific habitat or environmental functions. The sites range from a few acres to a hundred or more.

## WOODLANDS

Little of the native prairie grasses and forest cover remain in Dodge County. The vast majority of land is cultivated, with approximately 89 percent of the County's 892 square miles classified as agricultural land which includes farm buildings, pastures, and cropped lands. Approximately 19,000 acres (3.3 percent) of land is in woodland use. Some woodland areas are held in public trust, but most of the County's wooded areas are on private lands and are widely scattered. The main woodland species in Dodge County include oak, elm, maple, and other hardwoods. Woodlands have both economic and ecological value besides providing an important recreational resource.

## CULTURAL FEATURES

Cultural features are as important as physical features in the recreation planning process. Archeological sites and historical sites are of interest to many people, and may constitute major tourist attractions, in addition to providing a recreational pursuit for Dodge County residents and visitors. Not all sites can be preserved for public access, nor would they warrant public preservation efforts. In general, care of such culturally significant sites is generally limited by volunteer time and available funding.

With the presence of the Horicon Marsh, the great historic hunting grounds, it is no surprise that Dodge County boasts numerous documented archeological sites that contain archeological evidence of early inhabitation. The State of Wisconsin Historical Society has identified 800 sites within Dodge County. Unfortunately, many of these sites have been destroyed over time or are in danger of being destroyed. An effort is needed to protect significant documented archeological sites.

## STATE OF WISCONSIN PARKS AND TRAILS

**Horicon State Wildlife Area:** The Horicon State Wildlife Area makes up the southern one-third of the Horicon Marsh, totaling approximately 11,009 acres. This State owned and Department of Natural Resources operated wildlife area provides a variety of recreational opportunities while still protecting the nesting habitats and critical resource areas. Canoeing, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, and hiking are the primary recreational activities available in this area. There are four Department of Natural Resources managed boat landings that provide access to the marsh. There are two landings in the City of Horicon, and one each in the Town of Burnett and the Village of Kekoskee. The "Conservation Hill" area near the old Department of Natural Resources field station contains hiking/cross country ski trails, scenic overlooks of the marsh, and a new shelter. Hiking trails are also available, on Indermuehle Island and One Mile Island, nearby.

**Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center:** The Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center, located off STH 28, provides marsh viewing and an information center for visitors. The center provides educational needs of the Horicon Marsh, while housing the Horicon - Department of Natural Resource service center. A world class interpretive exhibit hall highlighting the history and resources of the Horicon Marsh and surrounding area was opened to the public in 2015.

**Mud Lake Wildlife Area:** The Mud Lake Wildlife Area is a large wildlife production area and public hunting/fishing reserve in the southwestern part of Dodge County. The area extends northeast along the Beaver Dam River covering approximately 3,957 acres and is managed primarily for waterfowl and upland game species such as pheasants.

**Shaw Marsh Wildlife Area:** The Shaw Marsh Wildlife Area located just south of the City of Beaver Dam, serves as a wildlife production area for upland game species and waterfowl. The site covers approximately 906 acres and is available as a public hunting area.

**Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area:** The Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area is a 5,000-acre public hunting and wildlife viewing area located along the east branch of the Rock River. The site straddles the Dodge and Washington County border, with just under half of the total acreage located within Dodge County. The marsh is managed intensely for wildlife to provide recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, sightseeing, hiking and education. Facilities include educational signage, scenic overlooks, and two boat landings.

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**Glacial Habitat Restoration Areas:** The Glacial Habitat Restoration Areas are scattered areas of restored wetlands, grasslands, and croplands acquired by the State Department of Natural Resources to create conditions more favorable for ducks, pheasants, and non-game grassland birds. Dodge County is one of four counties within a 24-town area included in the project. The parcels of land acquired through easements or fee title acquisition range in size from ten acres to a few hundred. Only the lands purchased by fee title are open to the public for hiking, nature study, hunting and trapping.

**Sinissippi Public Hunting Area:** The Sinissippi Public Hunting Area covers 344 acres on the north end of Lake Sinissippi. The site is characterized by a knoll surrounded by lowland areas. There are no facilities developed on this state-owned property.

Scattered wildlife sites cover nearly 2,200 acres around Dodge County. These state-owned properties typically consist of small tracts of land acquired to provide specific habitat or environmental functions. The sites range from a few acres to a hundred or more.

## FEDERAL PARKS AND TRAILS

**Horicon National Wildlife Refuge:** Consisting of 21,417 acres (with 20,482 acres within Dodge County), the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge covers the northern two-thirds of the internationally recognized Horicon Marsh. The refuge is owned by the federal government and is managed and operated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The operation headquarters and visitor center is located on the east side of the refuge just south of State Highway 49. The refuge was originally established to protect and propagate ducks in the “Mississippi flyway”. The preservation, restoration, and enhancement of endangered and threatened wildlife and their natural ecosystems is one of the primary management goals within the refuge, as is providing an understanding of and appreciation for fish and wildlife ecology to visitors. The balancing of the environmental needs versus the refuge’s use and enjoyment for public recreational use and access is a key issue to be constantly addressed and monitored. The refuge offers a significant resource-based recreational facility with natural resource compatible uses permitted in certain areas of the refuge. These permitted uses include wildlife watching, hiking, cross country skiing, an auto tour, as well as limited fishing, trapping, and hunting opportunities. Activities such as canoeing, boating, picnicking, camping, and motorized recreation are specifically prohibited due to their conflict with the management goals of the refuge.

**Trenton Waterfowl Production Area:** The Trenton Waterfowl production area consists of 374 acres located in the Town of Trenton just west of USH 151. The site provides wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation are opportunities provided for at this site.

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## OTHER PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY

Outside of the park, open space, and recreational services provided directly by Dodge County, the State of Wisconsin, and the Federal Government, there are over 70 parks making up over 790 acres located within the cities, villages, and towns in Dodge County.

### Incorporated Areas

- **City of Beaver Dam**  
The City has a total of nearly 300 acres in 21 parks. A few of the City’s key facilities include a disc golf course, lakeside observation tower, fishing ramps and piers, baseball & softball fields, picnic pavilions, lake access sites for fishing, swimming, and boating, and tennis and basketball courts. There is also a dedicated Community Activities and Services Department which offers annual sports leagues, events, activities, camps, recreational programs, and lessons.
- **City of Fox Lake**  
The City has a total of 156 acres in 12 parks and 3 privately owned recreational facilities. Some of the City’s facilities include playgrounds, boat launches, swimming at the Fox Lake Aquatic Center, fishing piers, picnicking areas, and sports facilities. There are also a wide variety of recreational opportunities provided at the Fox Lake Community Center including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- **City of Horicon**  
The City of Horicon has a total of 88.2 acres in 9 parks. Some of the City’s key facilities include the Discher Park Aquatic Center, dog park, sports courts, pavilions and sheltered picnic areas, athletic fields, baseball and football fields, boat launches, fishing piers, and playground facilities. There are also a wide variety of recreational opportunities provided by the Horicon Recreation Department including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- **City of Juneau**  
The City of Juneau has a total of three municipal parks totaling 20 acres. The City’s key facilities include an outdoor fitness court at Juneau City Park, the Juneau Community Center, tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball and softball fields, and a concession stand with a rentable kitchen. There are also a wide variety of recreational opportunities provided by the Juneau Parks and Recreation Department including adult programs, youth activities and sports leagues, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- **City of Mayville**  
The City of Mayville has 14 municipal parks totaling 165.5 acres. The City’s key recreational opportunities include the Gold Star Memorial Trailhead, TAG indoor recreation center, a senior center, dog park, river access, golf course, and multiple baseball, softball, and soccer fields.

- Village of Brownsville**  
The Village of Brownsville has a total of approximately 36 acres in 2 parks. Some of the Village's facilities include a baseball field and softball diamonds, pavilions, playground equipment, tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts, nine soccer fields, and a disc golf course. There are also several recreational opportunities provided by area recreational associations including adult and youth sports programs and community events.
- Village of Clyman**  
The Village of Clyman has a total of 6.5 acres in one Village park. The Clyman Village Park is slated to see substantial upgrades over the course of 2023. The result of long-running fundraising efforts by the Clyman Cannery Baseball Club, the park will soon feature a brand-new playground and baseball field. There are several recreational opportunities provided by area recreation and sports associations, including adult and youth sports leagues.
- Village of Hustisford**  
The Village has a total of approximately 28 acres in 4 parks. Some of the Village's key facilities include playgrounds, a tennis court, basketball court, community center, and baseball field. There are also several of recreational opportunities provided by the Sinissippi Recreation Department including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- Village of Iron Ridge**  
The Village of Iron Ridge has a total of approximately 10 acres in 1 park. Some of the Village's key facilities include a baseball field, Community Center, basketball court, and tennis courts. There are also several recreational opportunities provided through area recreational associations, including adult programs, youth activities, senior sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- Village of Kekoskee**  
The Village of Kekoskee has a total of approximately 23 acres in one Village park. The Village's key facilities include river access and a boat launch and baseball field. There are also several recreational opportunities provided in the community, including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- Village of Lomira**  
The Village of Lomira has a total of approximately 52.5 acres in 5 parks and 1 trail. Some of the Village's key facilities include a spring-fed pond, playground and picnic areas, basketball court, nature trail, fishing pond, swimming area, and pavilion. There are also a wide variety of recreational opportunities provided by area clubs and associations, including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- Village of Lowell**  
The Village of Lowell has a total of approximately 9.3 acres in one park. The Village's facilities include open playfields, a pavilion, and a baseball field. There are also several recreational opportunities by local recreational associations including youth sports programs.
- Village of Neosho**  
The Village of Neosho has a total of approximately 7 acres in 3 parks. The Village's key facilities include a baseball field, waterfront greenspace, pavilion shelter, and boat launch.
- Village of Randolph**  
The Village has a total of approximately 20 acres in one park. Key facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, baseball field, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, playgrounds and three shelter areas. There are also several recreational opportunities provided by non-profit organizations including adult programs, youth activities, senior activities and programs, other sports programs and lessons, and community events.
- Village of Reeseville**  
The Village of Reeseville has a total of 8 acres in one park. The Village's key facilities include two baseball fields. There are several recreational opportunities provided by local recreation associations including adult and youth sports programs.
- Village of Theresa**  
The Village of Theresa has a total of approximately 17.6 acres in three parks. Some of the Village's key facilities include playgrounds, a boat launch, baseball field, and basketball court.

## Unincorporated Areas

The majority of the Towns in Dodge County do not own or maintain any park or open space. However, many of them have either County-owned or State-owned parks, open spaces, or other natural areas. The following is a list of the Towns that have municipal-owned parks.

- **Town of Ashippun**  
There is a total of approximately 5 acres on 2 park sites in the Town. Some of the key facilities include baseball fields and open space. There are also a variety of youth leagues and local events hosted by the Town.
- **Town of Burnett**  
In the Town of Burnett, there are two parks totaling 18 acres. Burnett Fireman's Park contains a baseball field, and Karstedt Park consists of open space.
- **Town of Calamus**  
There recreational facilities in the Town of Calamus include the Lost Lake boat launch and picnic site.
- **Town of Elba**  
The wayside on Hwy 60 is the only recreational facility in the Town of Elba.
- **Town of Fox Lake**  
Park facilities within Fox Lake consist of the Hickory Bay Road boat launch, Lake Emily launch, Fox Lake (Maple Point) launch, Crocker Street Park, Clausen Park, John "Red" Solis Children's Memorial Park, Fireman's Park, and the Fox Lake Dog Park. This park network consists of a total of approximately 18 acres of parkland and features playground equipment, boat launches, picnic areas, and a baseball field.
- **Town of Herman**  
None.
- **Town of Hustisford**  
In the town of Hustisford, there are four parks – Neider Park, Memorial Park, Lion's Park, and Fireman's Park. These parks consist of 25 acres and feature a baseball field, basketball court, tennis court, and soccer field.
- **Town of Lebanon**  
The town of Lebanon has two parks totaling 18 acres. Firemans Park contains a baseball field and playground equipment.
- **Town of Leroy**  
The Town of Leroy has one park consisting of one-acre of land and featuring a baseball and softball field.
- **Town of Rubicon**  
The Town of Rubicon has one park featuring 9 acres of land and a baseball field.
- **Town of Theresa**  
The Town of Theresa has 18 acres of parkland within three parks. Fireman's Park contains a baseball field, River Edge Park features a boat launch, and Willow Park contains playground equipment.
- **Town of Trenton**  
None.

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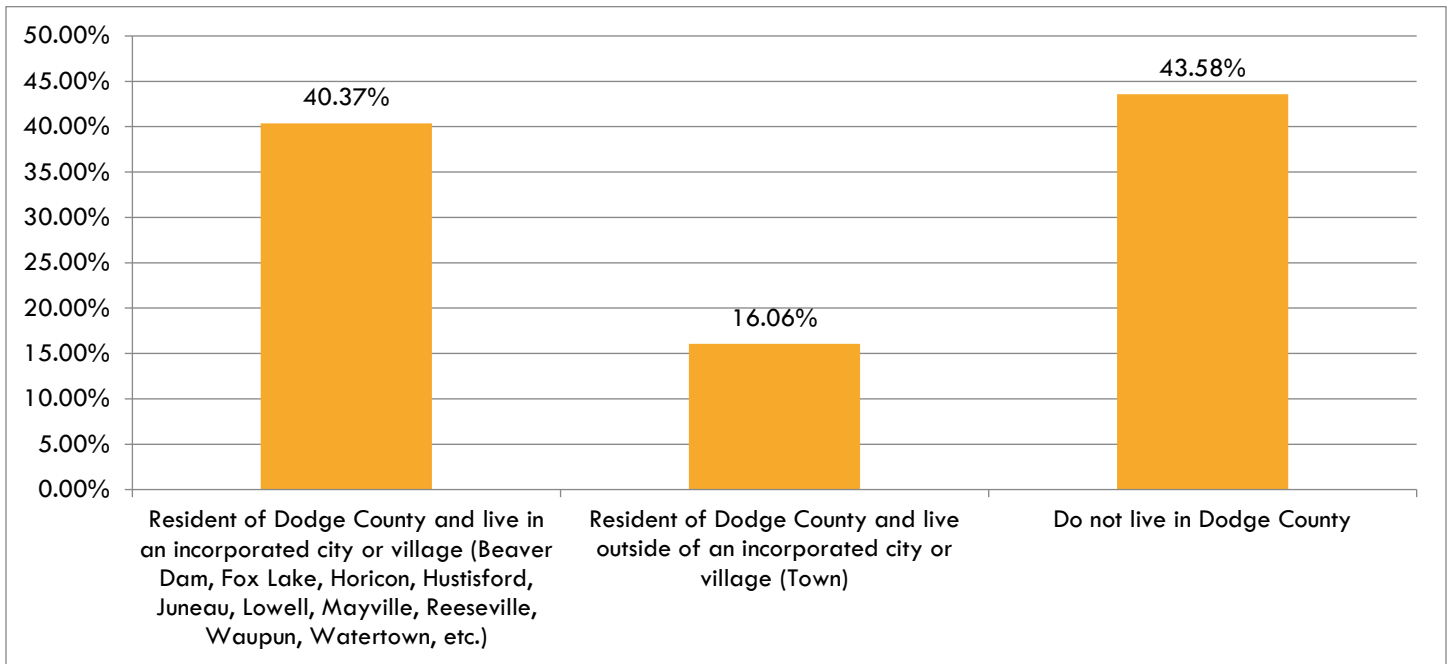
# PART 4: PUBLIC INPUT RESPONSES

## ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY

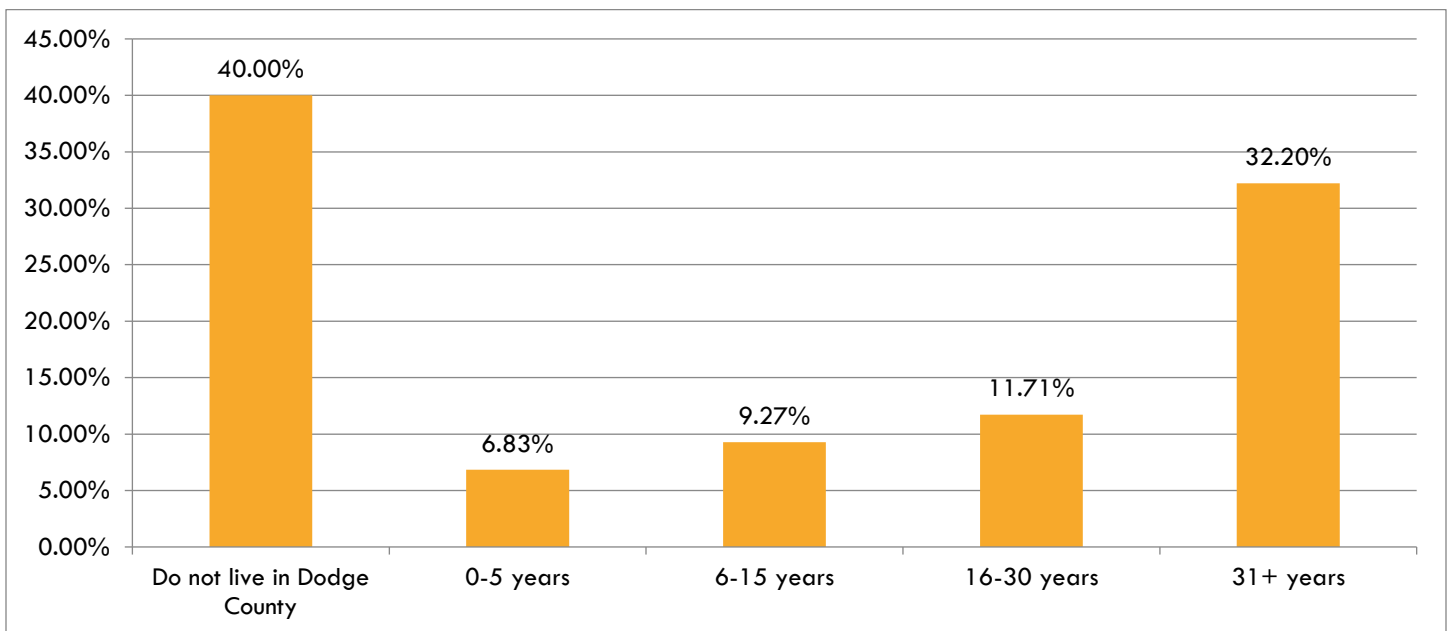
Dodge County conducted an online questionnaire via Survey Monkey from November 14, 2022, to December 16, 2022. In total, 219 people provided feedback. Overall, the survey focused on obtaining public opinion and feedback on the current levels of park use, current conditions, and future needs of the Dodge County park and recreation system.

The results of the survey, along with the other public input generated during the process, were used to form the core recommendations of the Plan. The following is a summary of all responses received. In many cases, percentages total to more than 100 percent, as respondents were allowed to select more than one response. Additionally, comments written-in were summarized below.

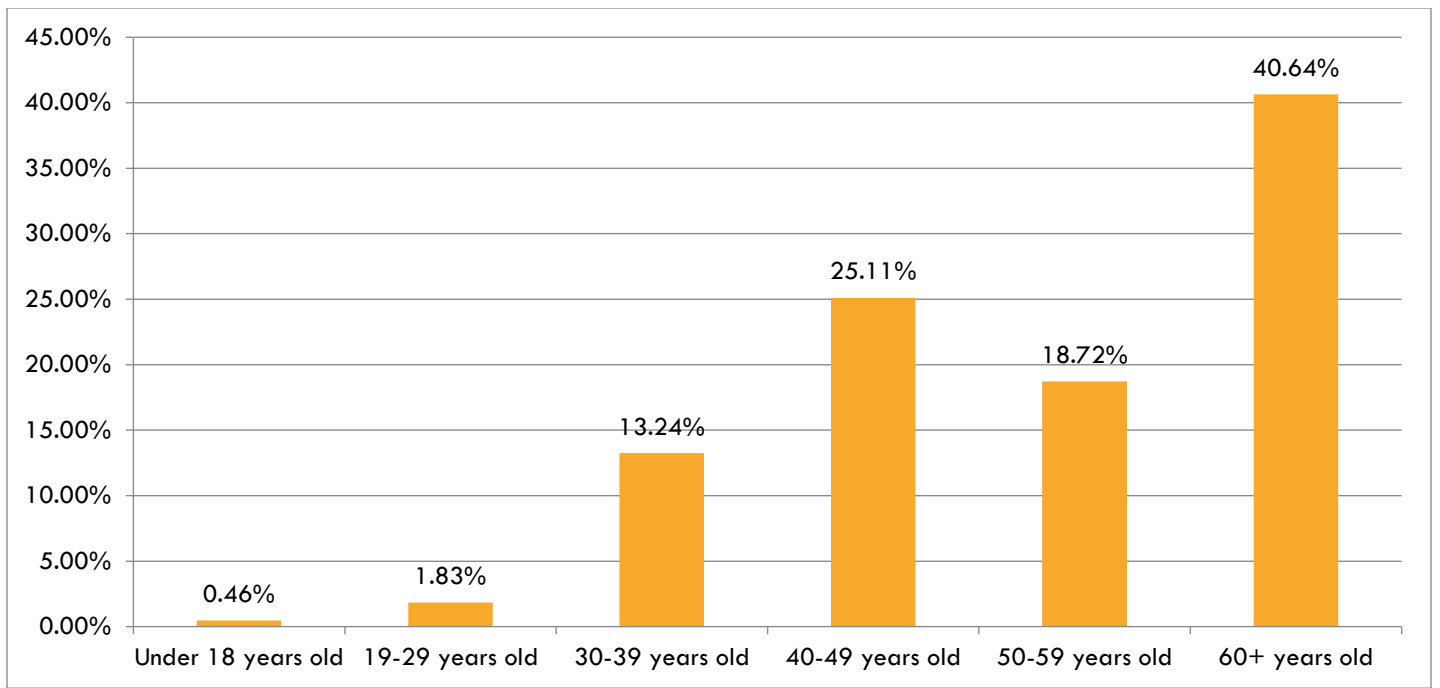
### Question 1: Please select the statement that best describes where you live.



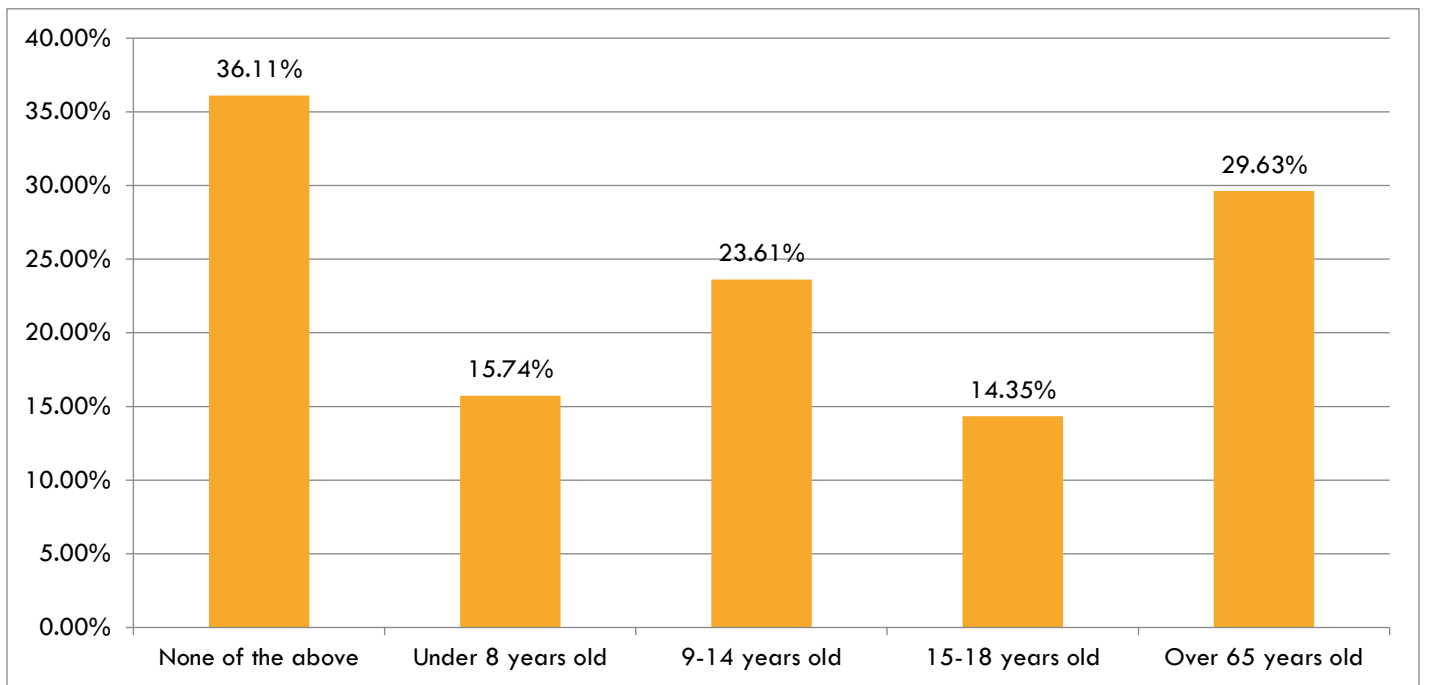
### Question 2: If you live in Dodge County, how long have you lived here?



**Question 3: What is the age group of the person filling out this survey?**



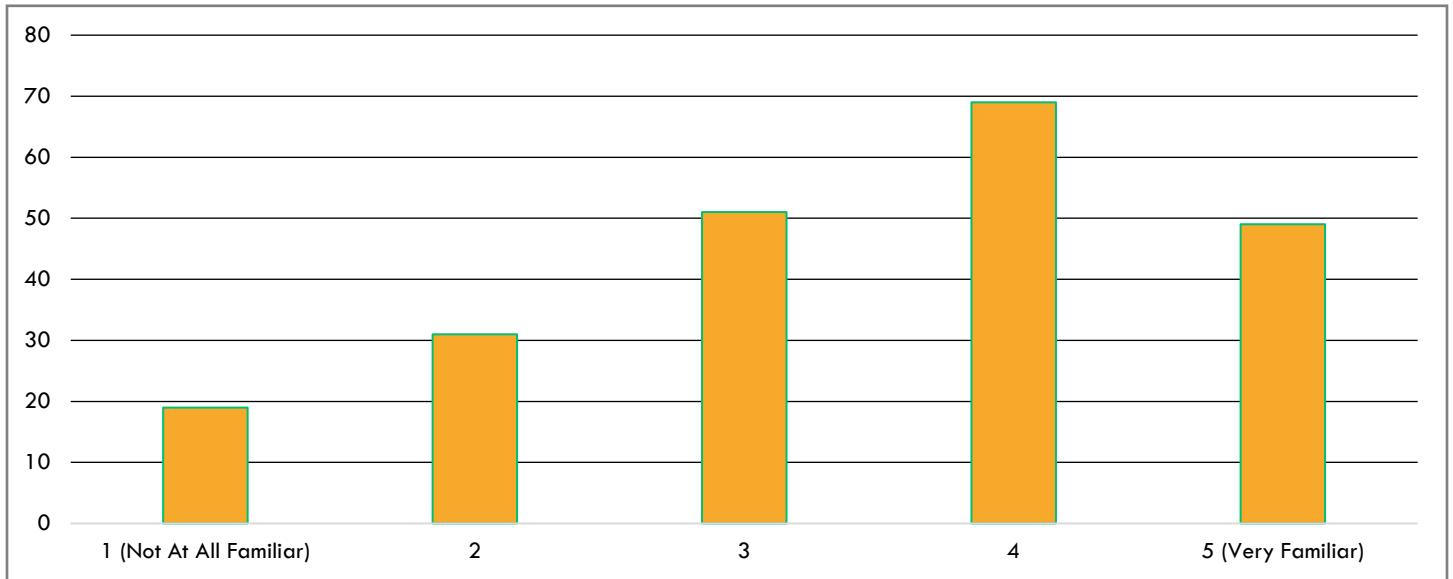
**Question 4: Including yourself, does anyone in your household fall into the following age ranges? (Select all that apply)**



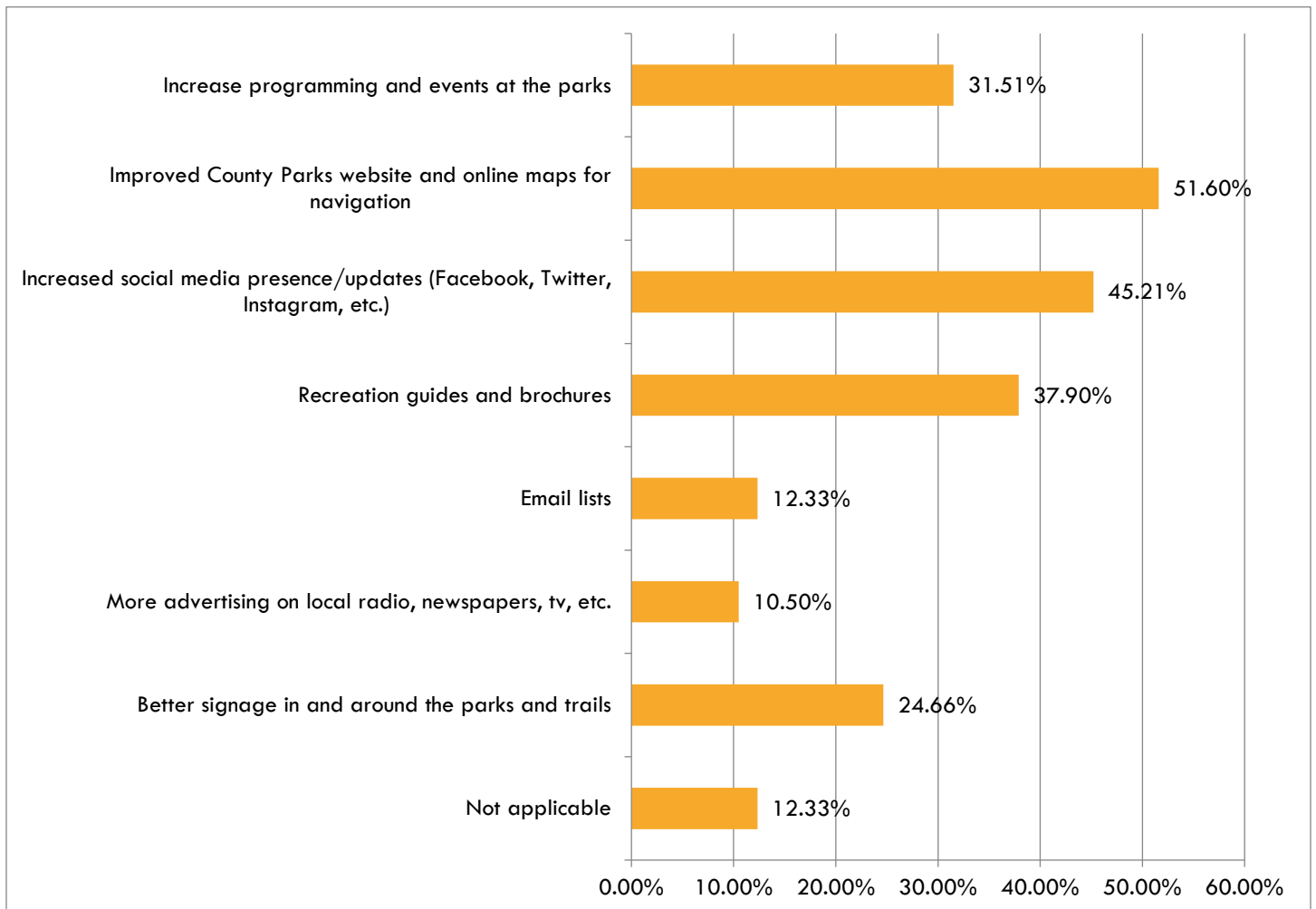


**Question 5: How familiar are you with the Dodge County parks and trails system? (scale of 1-5, where 1 = not at all familiar and 5 = very familiar)**

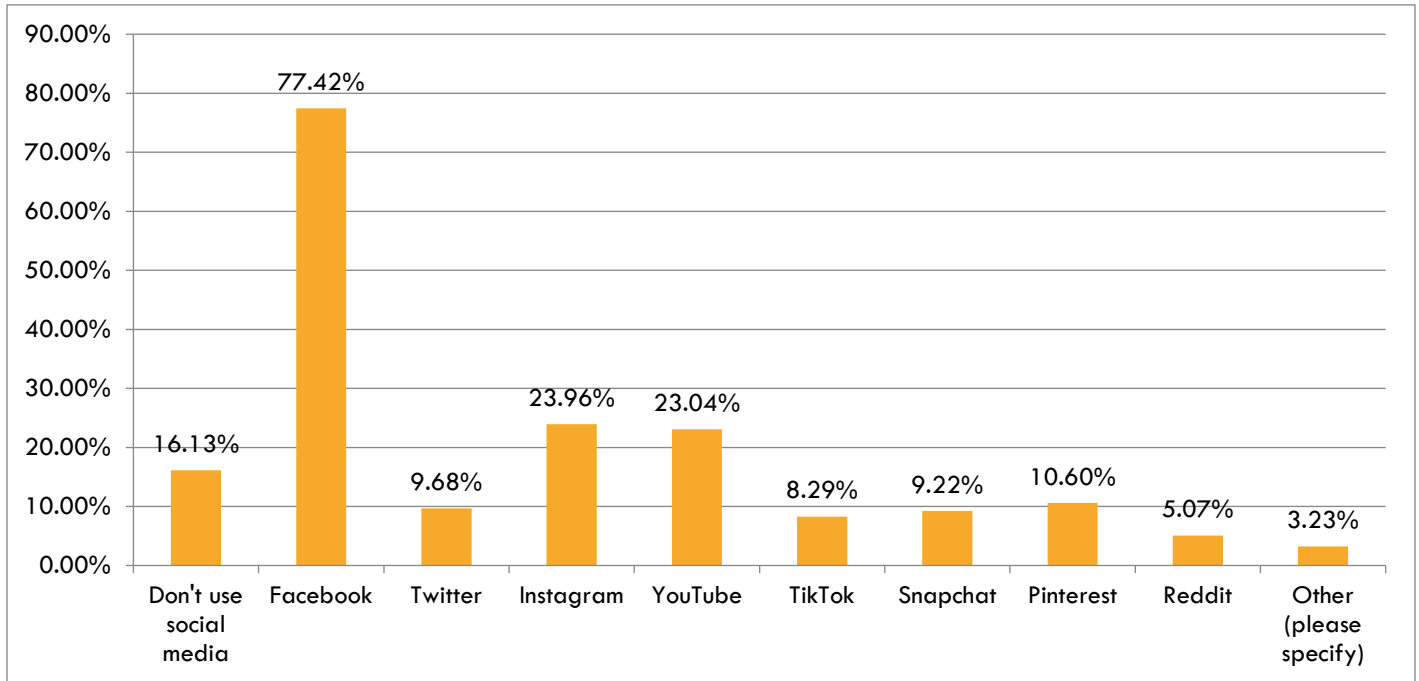
Average of all responses = 3.45



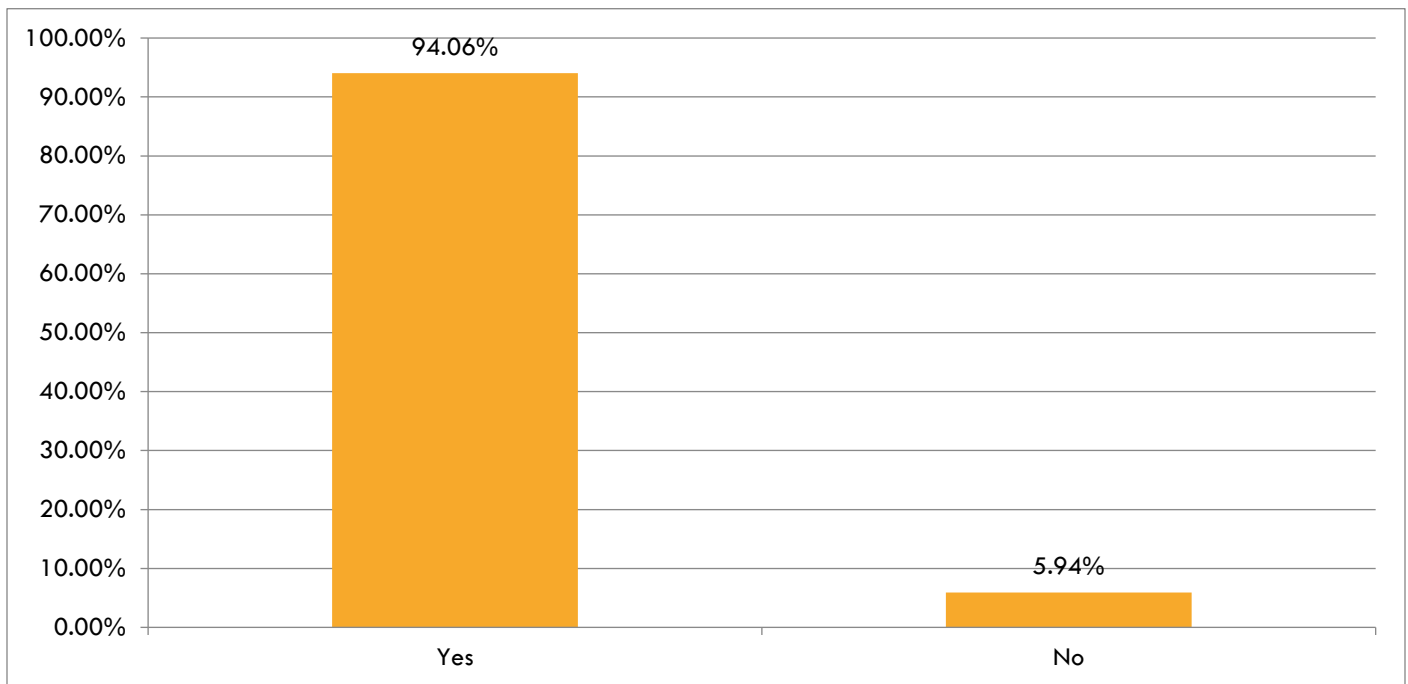
**Question 6: What is the best method to increase you or your household's level of familiarity with or use of the Dodge County parks system? (Select all that apply)**



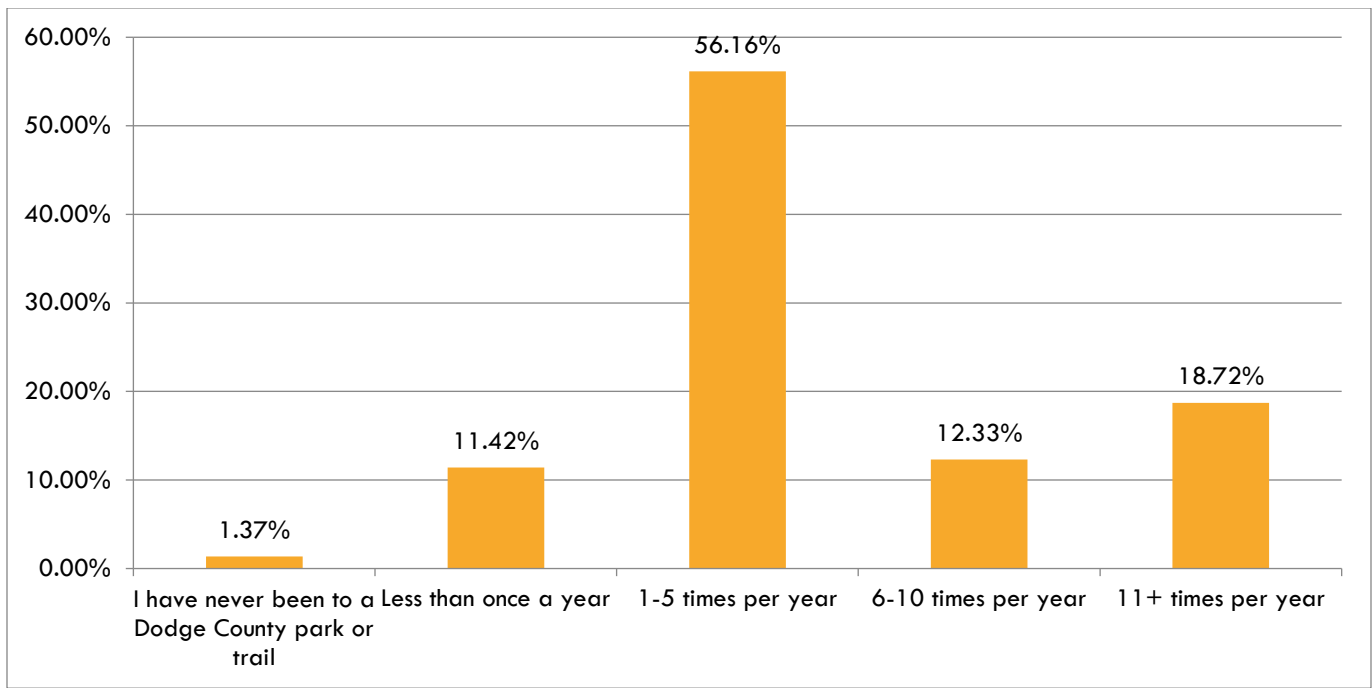
**Question 7: If you regularly use social media to get news and information, please identify which platform(s) you use the most often? (Select all that apply)**



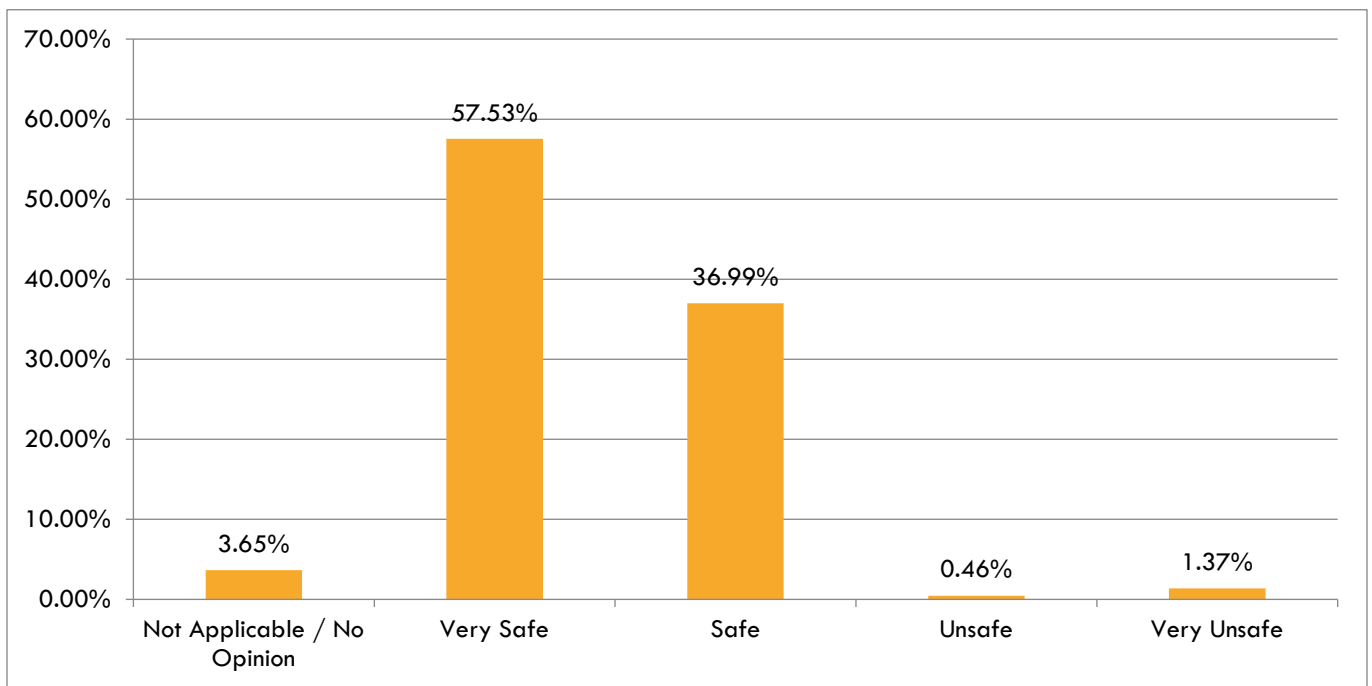
**Question 8: Have you or any member(s) of your household visited any Dodge County parks or trails during the past 12 months?**



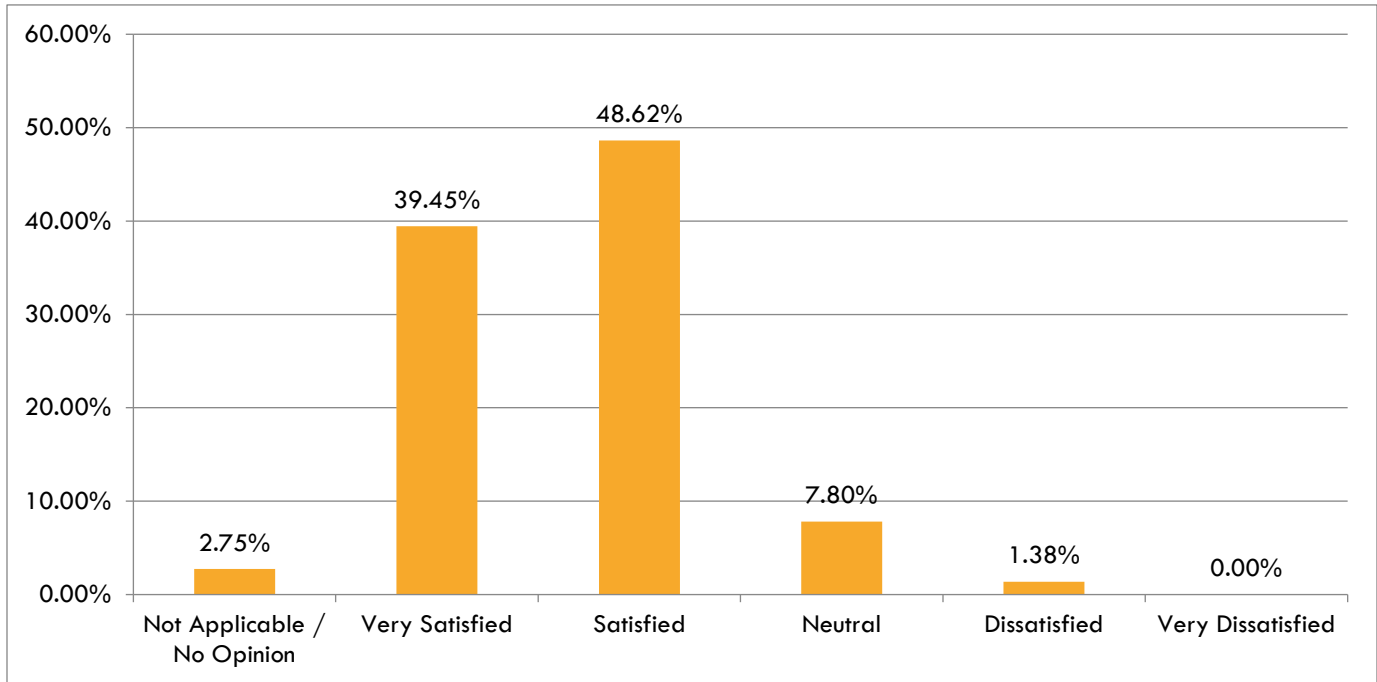
**Question 9: How often do you or member(s) of your household visit a Dodge County park or trail?**



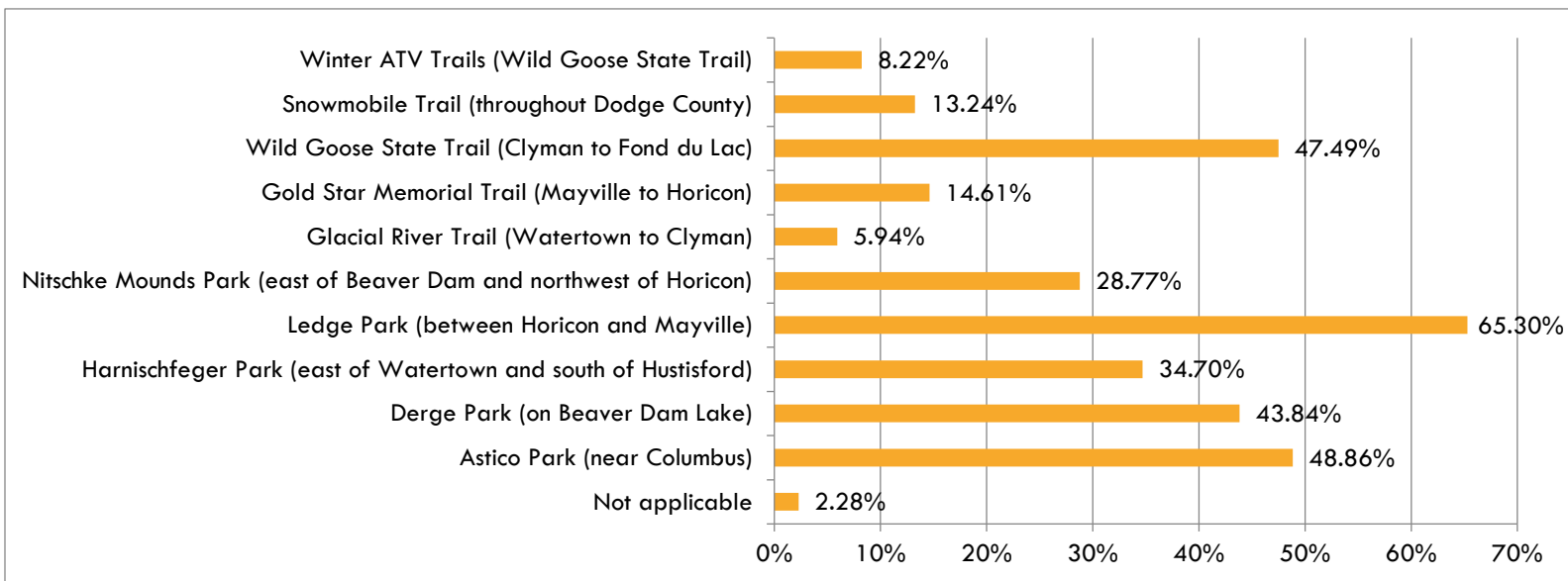
**Question 10: If you or anyone in your household has ever visited a Dodge County park or trail, how safe did you feel while you were there?**



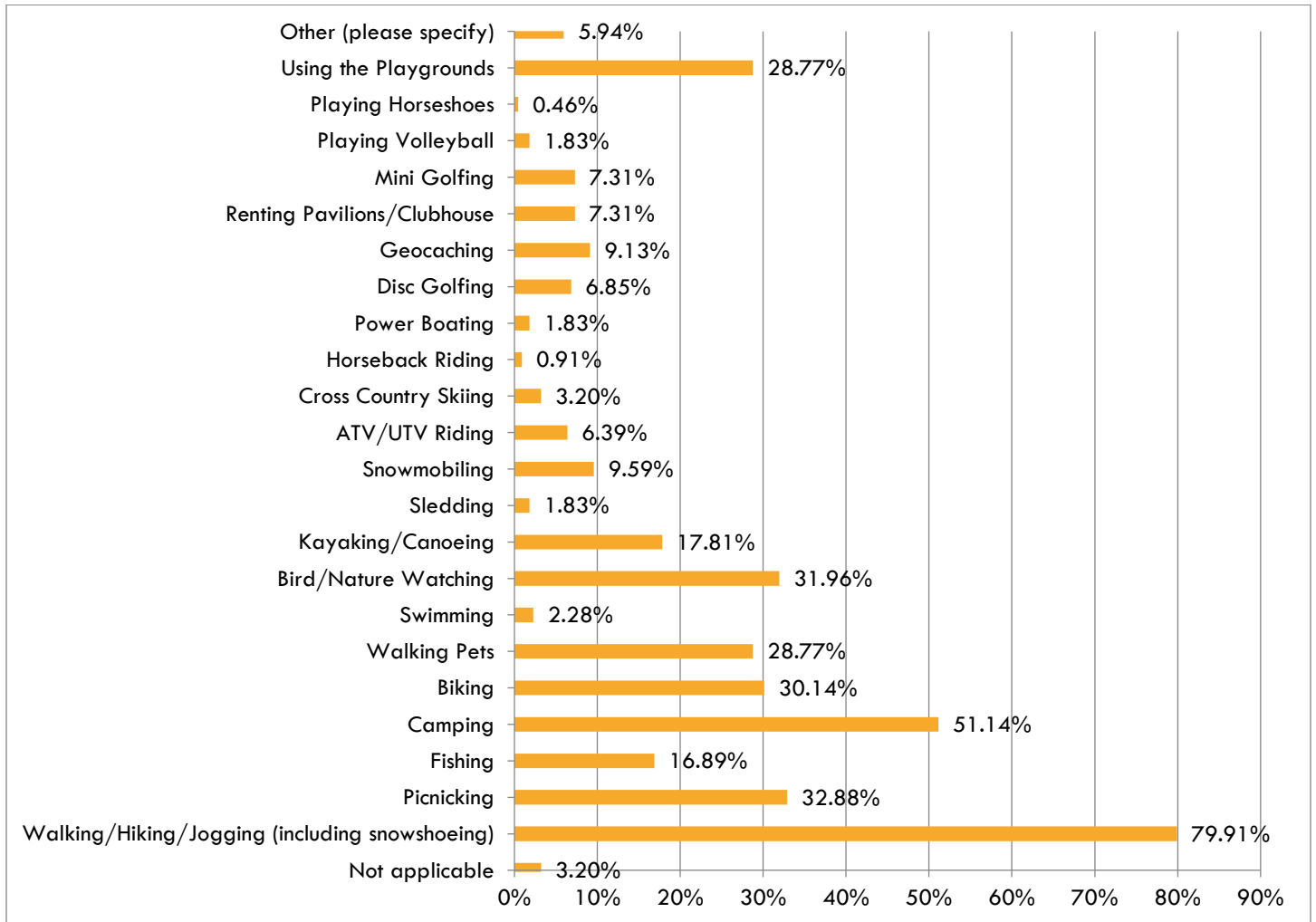
**Question 11: Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the level of maintenance and appearance of the Dodge County parks and trails system?**



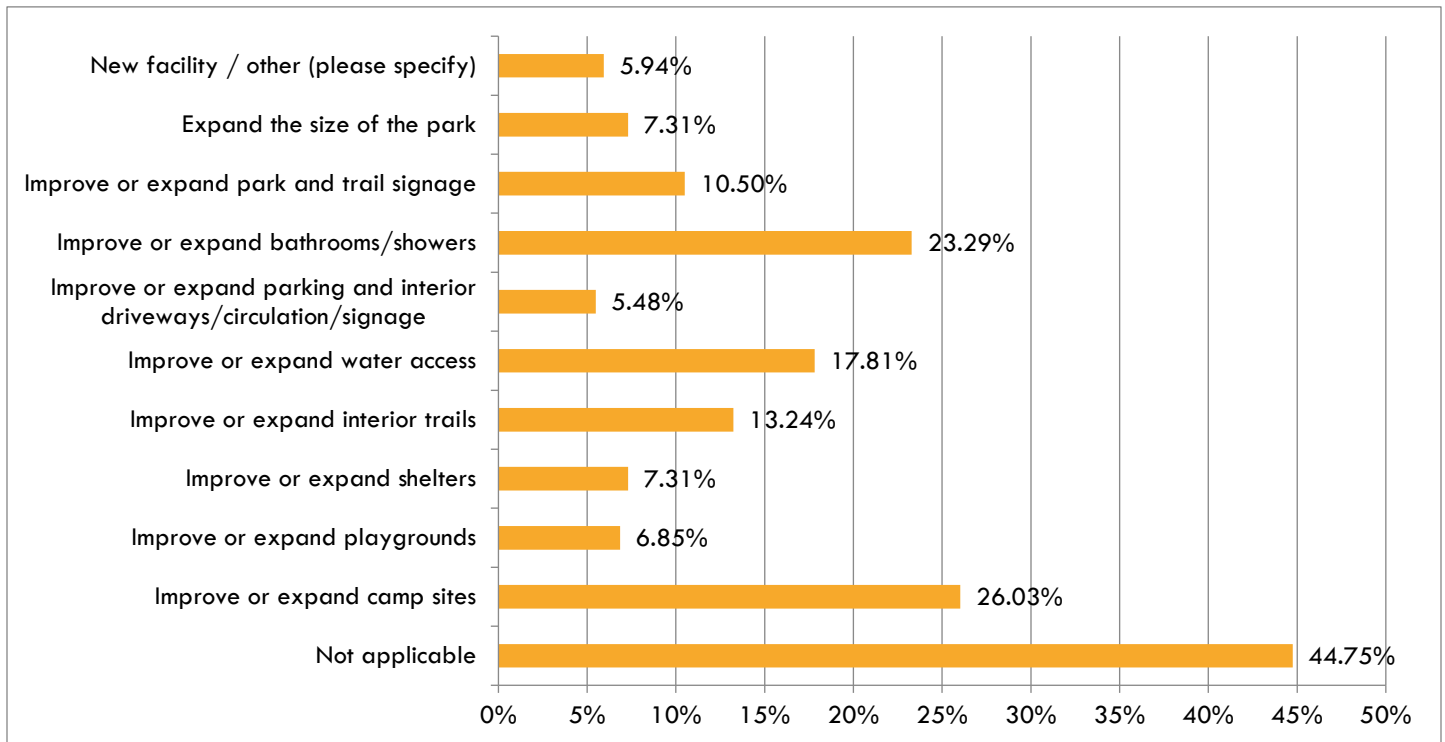
**Question 12: If you or anyone in your household has ever visited a Dodge County park or trail, which location did you visit? (Select all that apply)**



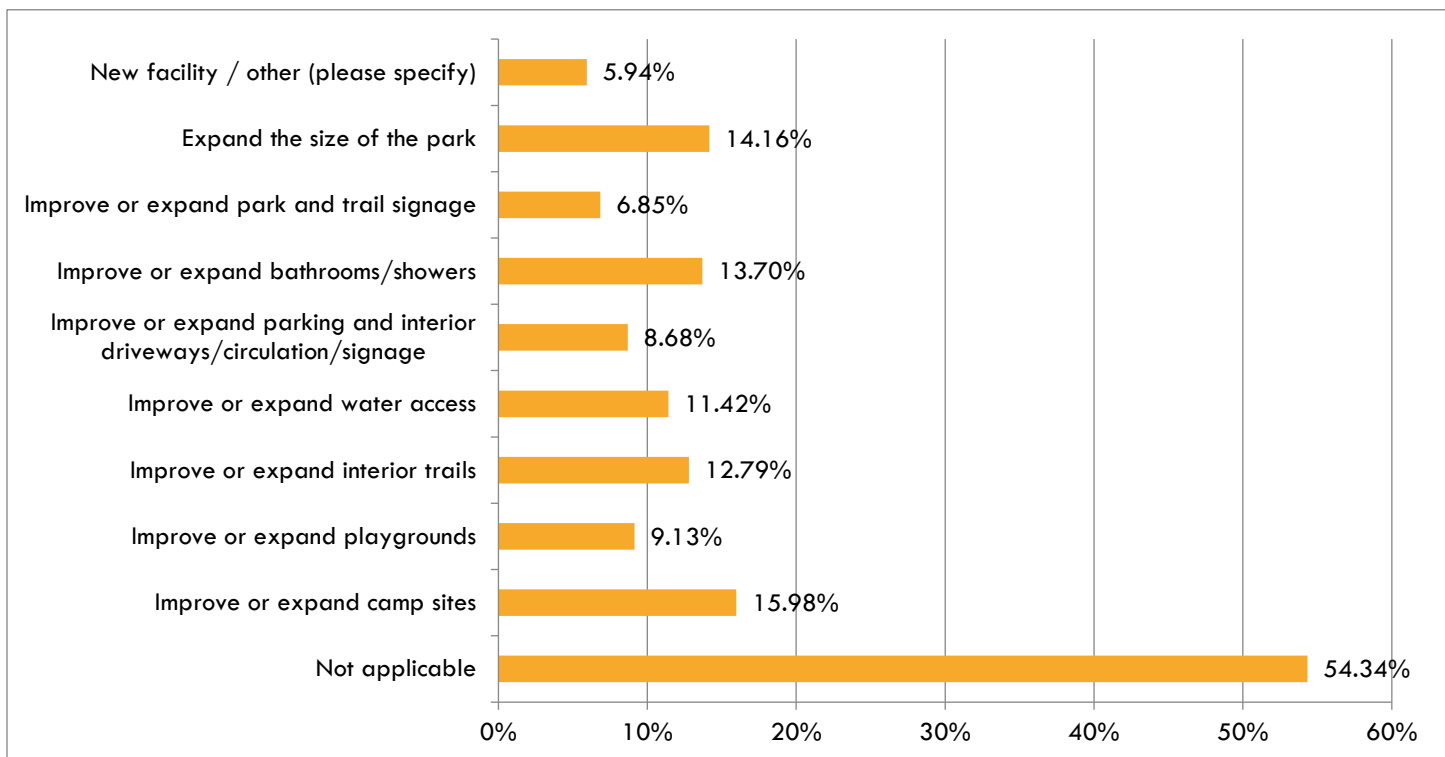
**Question 13: If you or anyone in your household has visited a Dodge County park or trail, which activity did you participate in while at the park or trail? (Select all that apply)**



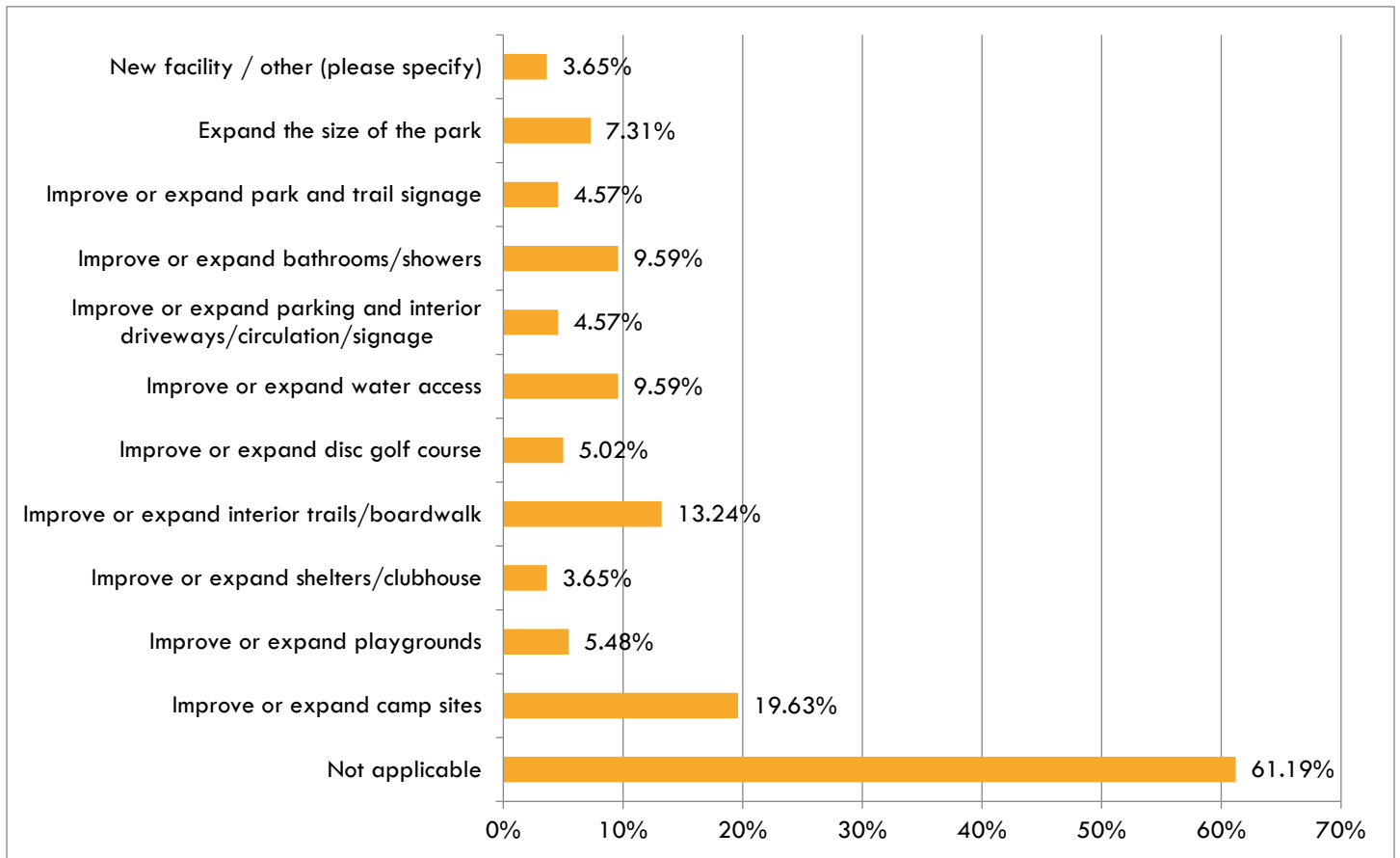
**Question 14: In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for Astico Park (near Columbus) over the next 5 years? (Select up to 3 total options)**



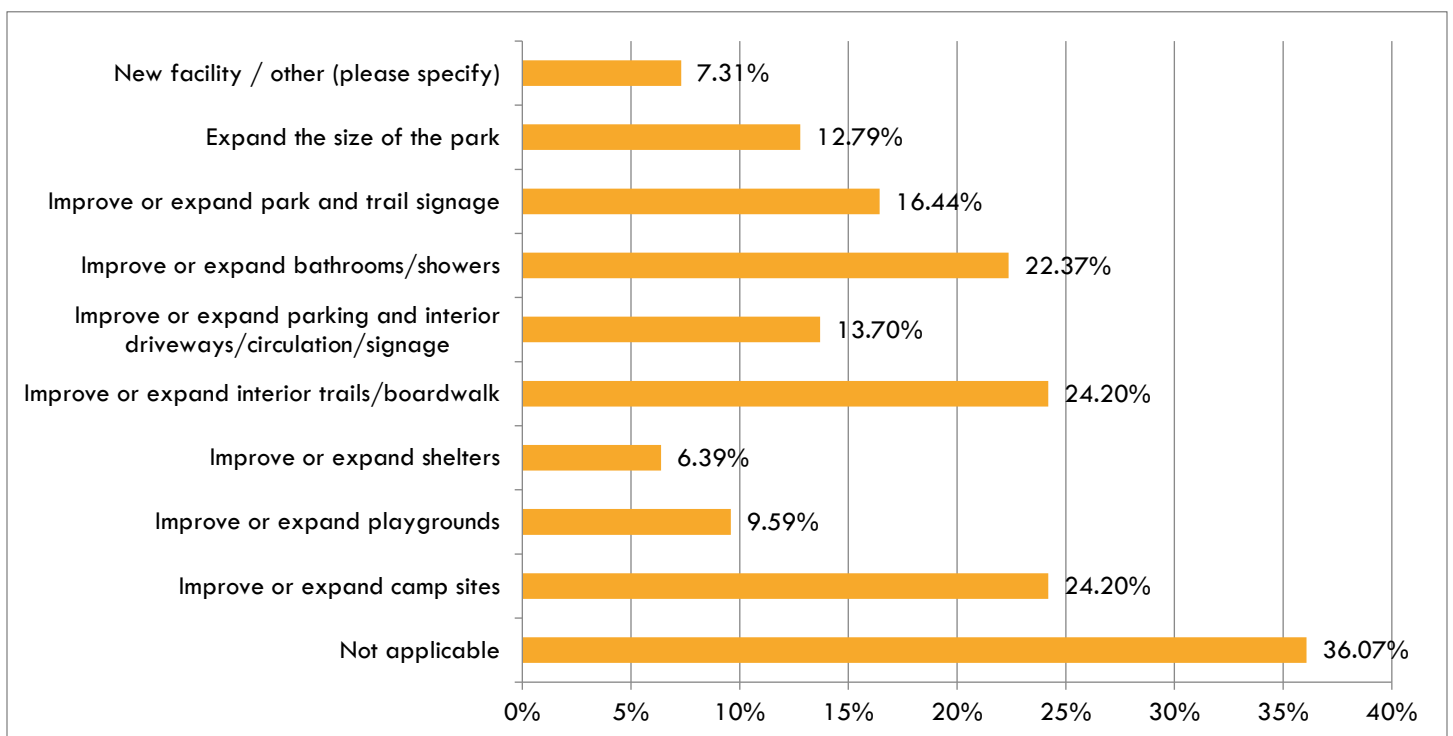
**Question 15: In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for Derge Park (on Beaver Dam Lake) over the next 5 years? (Select up to 3 total options)**



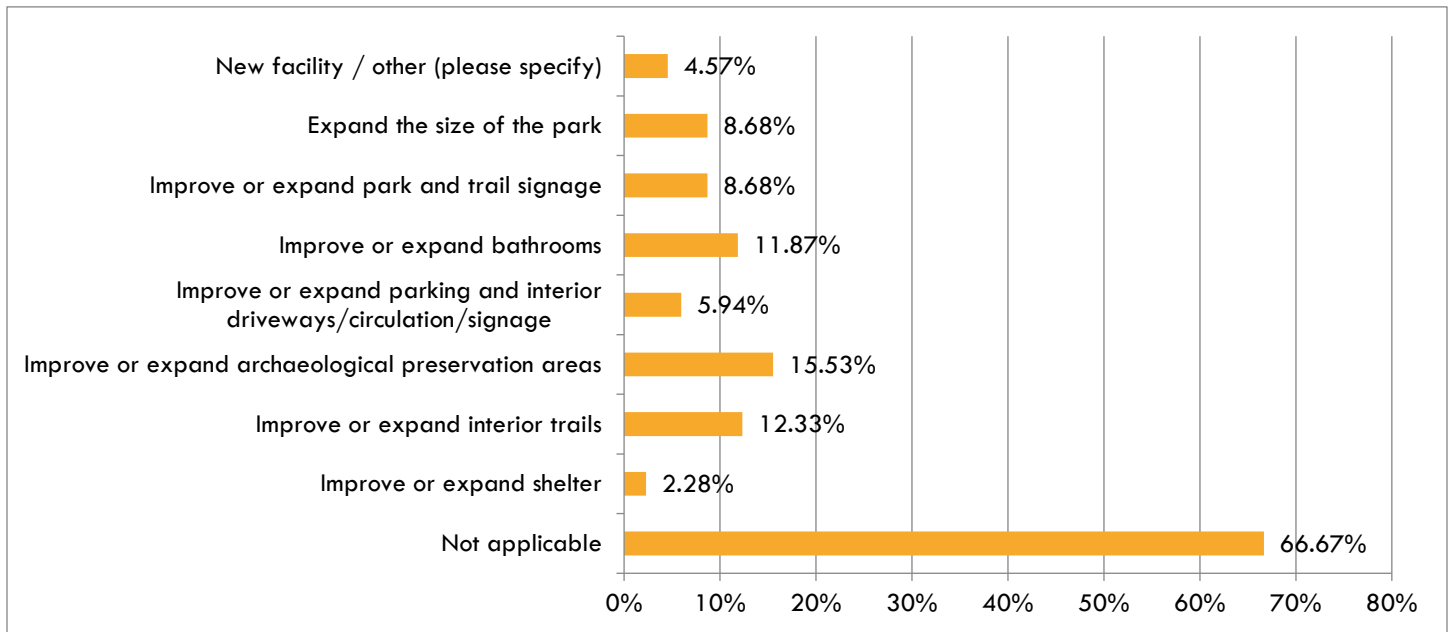
**Question 16: In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for Harnischfeger Park (east of Watertown and south of Hustisford) over the next 5 years? (Select up to 3 total options)**



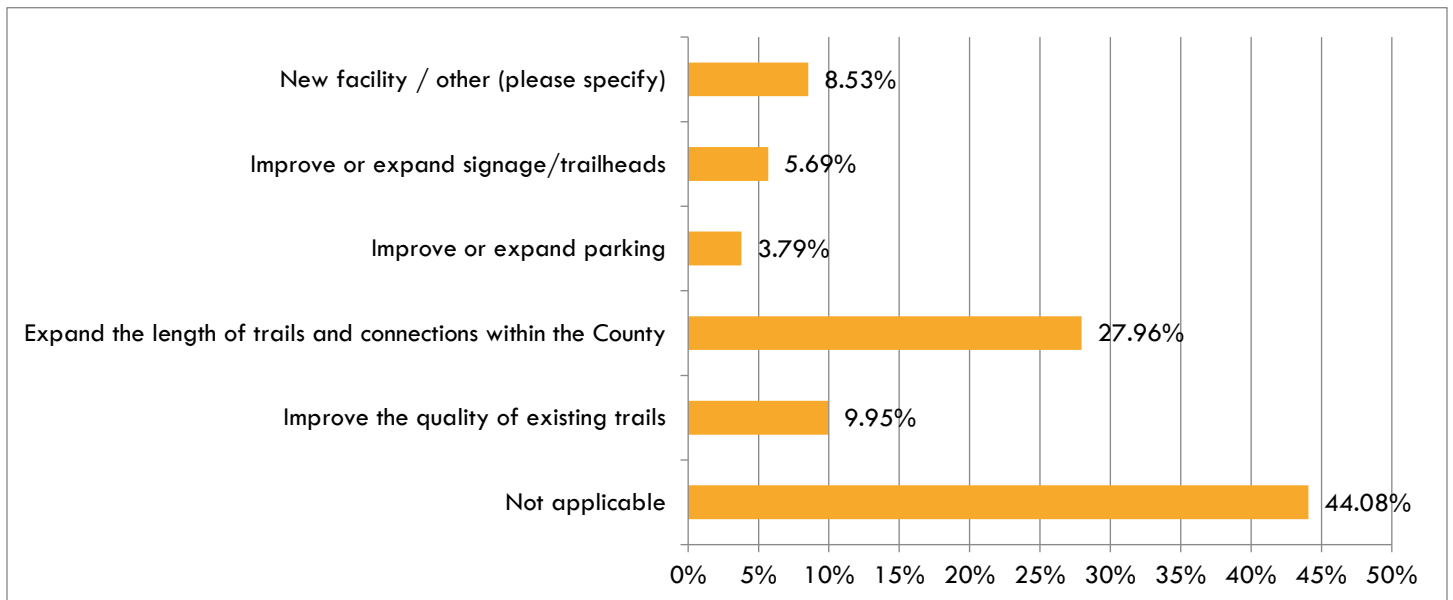
**Question 17: In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for Ledge Park (between Horicon and Mayville) over the next 5 years? (Select up to 3 total options)**



**Question 18: In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for Nitschke Mounds Park (east of Beaver Dam and northwest of Horicon) over the next 5 years? (Select up to 3 total options)**

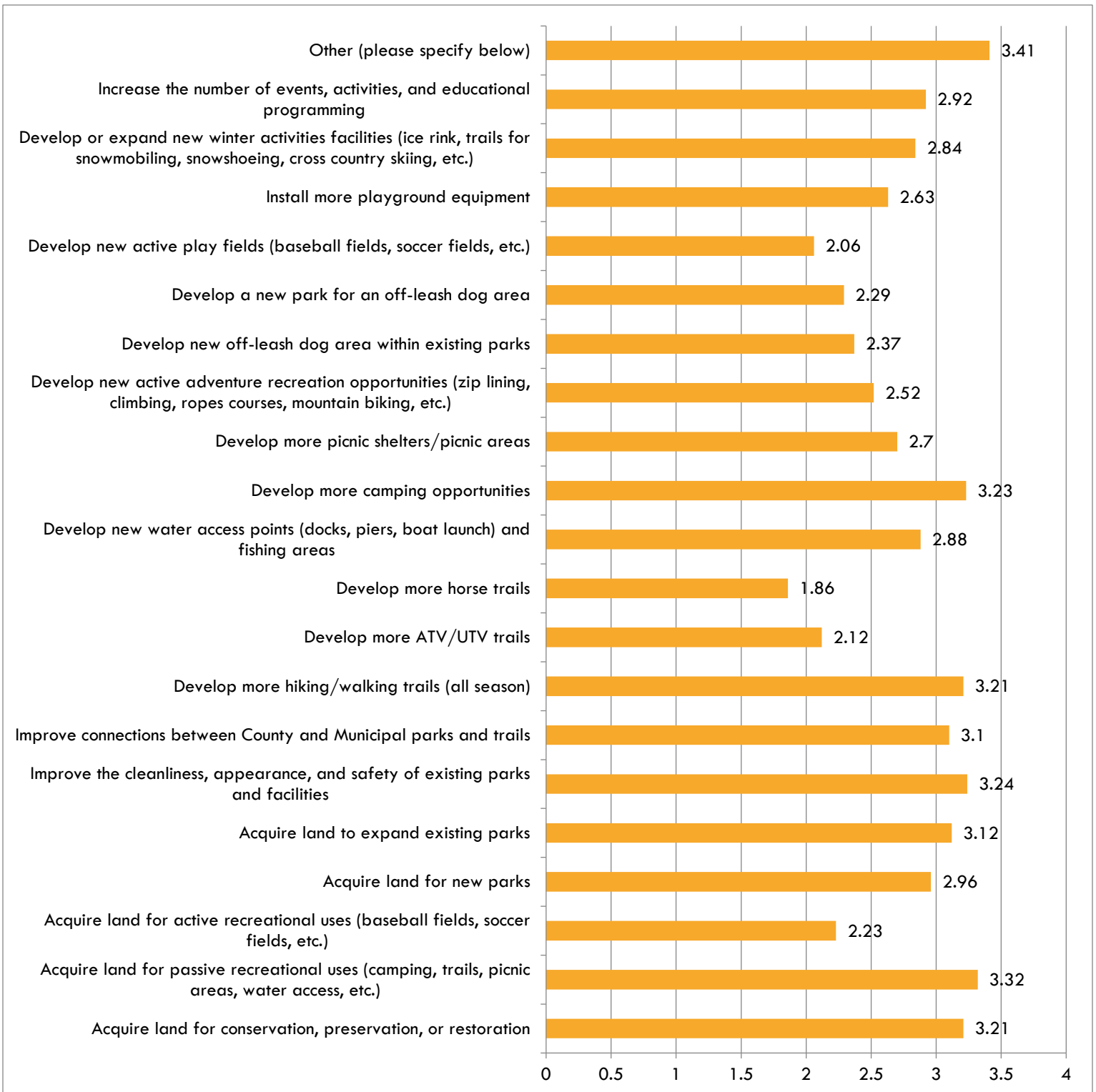


**Question 19: In your opinion, what is the top priority for the County's trail system (Glacial River, Gold Star Memorial, and Wild Goose State Trail) over the next 5 years?**



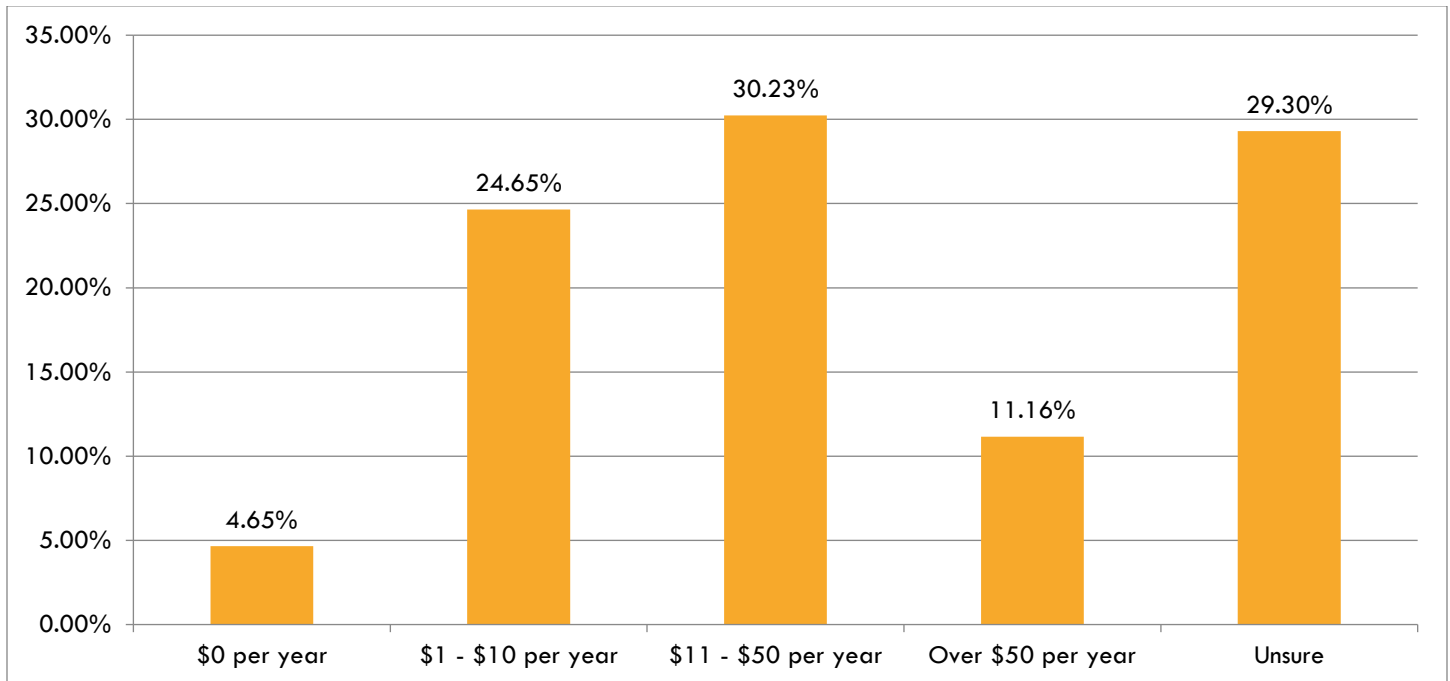


**Question 20: Listed below are potential overarching initiatives that Dodge County could pursue. For each of the following, please indicate the importance of taking the specified action. (Very important, somewhat important, no opinion, somewhat unimportant, very unimportant) The higher the weighted average value, the more important the initiative was rated.**



Question 20 additional "Other" category comments: Disc Golf (3), Skateboard and Rollerblading (1), Trail connecting Lake Emily to Fox Lake (1), expanding camping opportunities (1), adding a second bathroom/shower (1), update aging picnic tables, shelters, bathrooms (1), mountain biking trail (1), programming and events – specifically related to Native American culture (1)

**Question 21: How much of a tax increase would you be willing to pay to acquire more parkland or add new amenities to the Dodge County parks and trails system?**



**Question 22: Please share any additional comments that could assist Dodge County in improving parks, trails, open space, or recreational facilities and services. (fill in the blank)**

**56 Written Comments Received**

- We do a lot of camping in dodge cty parks because they are small and peaceful. Let's keep it that way! Thank you for all you do to maintain the parks!
- Improve electrical at campsites.
- More Disc Golf courses!
- Getting the word out online about different things. I had no idea about any of those parks, or most of the trails
- Walking/bike trail from Waupun to Goose Trail.
- Smooth trails for roller skating/blading
- I am on the Friends of Clausen Park committee in Fox Lake. We would love to see the Gold Star trail connect to our upcoming improvements.
- Having a bike lane to the wild goose trail would do wonders for the economy of Waupun!
- N/A
- With all the cities approving UTV/ATV use it would be nice to go from the east side of 151 to the west side of 151 in Waupun
- Connect the Wild Goose to Waupun bike trails. Expand the parks, but not for baseball, football, etc. Utilize the existing natural beauty with Disc Golf Courses. Consult with local disc golf experts to make smart choices about the land uses.
- We need to connect Waupun to the Wild goose trail via a bike trail!
- Would like to see NEW development in areas under served, where trails are not close. Would like to see something in the north-western corner of Dodge.
- Hike/bike trail parking & connectivity to other trails & communities would be nice. Kayak launches would be great. Campsites for "big rigs" as RVs are much bigger than when most of these parks were built.
- I appreciate the park that we use. It's always in good condition and the users seem to respect the area. Thank you for what you do. Consider bringing in a Camping Group person or two when discussing new/expansion of campgrounds. National camping organizations are in search of fairgrounds that can handle large amounts of campers, that have a facility for their entertainment inside a nice building and so forth.
- There are a whole new group of campers that need a place to run their Atv/Utvs, electric bikes, and those working out of their campers.
- Open space for baseball/softball and soccer, is there enough population to support it for many years. You don't want to see it turn into a field of weeds, with no usage. If you create one remember Hot Air Balloons need large fields with no power lines around and a community could host a rally.

Just want to say thank you for maintaining such a wonderful park system. We are especially fond of the large group camp sites, similar to what is available at Ledge Park.

Astico Park needs a new flush toilet/shower building and or new pit toilets.

None

Allow golf carts

Expand harnishager electrical to all sites

Have a meeting and invite people for input as a group. You may even get some free labor.

Love Dodge Cty parks! Only place we camp. The sites need to be upgraded (space, electrical, water). More sites with distance between them. Upgrade bathroom at Astico and Derge. Fix the shower curtains in ledge cause they are way to small. Provide more security throughout the nights at the parks. Sheriff comes through most always but could use a bit more presence in some parks. Add more speed limit signs in the parks.

We stayed & camped at Astigo County Park. It is a nice park, but we initially had a problem with the electrical hook up at our initial campsite - so they moved us to one that was better. I recommend correcting that for safety - old / loose connection. Also the showers were a little out dated.

What you have so far is very good.

Improve camp site driveways and campfire rings.

I really like the historical education the parks can provide. Showing the kids or having kids show their parents how the Indians did things, how the early settlers did things and even early 20th century folks did things is fun.

Do not live in Dodge county so that's why I said \$0 for taxes. The camping sites could use improvement on privacy.

upgrade or at least tidy up the pit toilet near the remaining picnic shelter at Astico

I can't speak for the tax initiatives for residents however, those non-residents may be willing to pay more tax on stays. I personally found that DERGE was more than affordable and would be willing to pay 30/day for 30 amp and 40/day for 50 amp or metered service with a lower weekly or monthly cost. I typically visit my family for a week or two and use DERGE due to vicinity to Beaver Dam.

I really enjoy the three parks I have been too.

full hook ups

We have noticed that there is a lack of checking people in at the campsite and making sure they are in the right one. The host person is not very attentive to helping the Campers when needed. They are gone most of the time. And letting Campers that do not pay a fee and/or homeless stay while others pay their camping fees.

At Derge, they could add some extra lights at different parts of the campground for safety at night. We have seen a lot Campers like to walk and sometimes with their dogs. It gets quite dark in some areas. Thank you for listening. We love Derge - its a great park.

they are pretty great the way they are

Astico is a great park! We live in Jefferson County but grew up in Reeseville. I had not been there since I was a kid. Great place for easy fall weekend camping with our mini winnie!

The water heater for the showers at Harnischfeger Park needs replaced! 🚿🚿🚿

The exhaust fans in the shower house at Harnischfeger need to be improved. It gets like a sauna in the shower. Also the shower heads were changed at Harnischfeger and now you get extremely hot water right away that goes cold in matter of minutes. The old shower heads and water temp was perfect!!

I don't live in WI and used Ledge Park for one night camping passing through. Nice park. I think the signage to point you to the park could be improved. More marketing of the park. I beat the bushes to find the availability of the park.

We have nice parks. Just keep up the ones we have.

You really need to upgrade the electrical service at the county parks, especially the sites for bigger rigs. Most rigs these days have 50 amp service to run all their amenities. 30 amp service just doesn't cut it anymore.

We love the park system. There are many opportunities for businesses along the park systems. I would love wild goose trail to have coffee shop or ice cream store near it. Likewise for other parks and Dodge county. Would be a great draw for business opportunities.

Clean, safe, and well maintained parks are number one priority. Then promote them. The best parks are the ones you know about.

A rec path from Hustisford to the wild goose trail head would make some great trail connections and allow most of the lake sinissippi and Hustisford residents access to a great trail network without having to drive to the trail head

Recommend the County pursue a 5 mile paved multi-use trail from Hustisford to the Wild Goose State Trail. Cycling along highway 60 is unsafe and the alternatives are not much safer.

More garbage can access. The amount of garbage we pick up is crazy but the lack of places to put the garbage is worse. I think if there were more cans we would see less litter.

i would be interested in learning if i could donate toward or volunteer to post more "leash your dog" signs on the Wild Goose Trail.

N/A

Please see comment regarding day use of Ledge Park camping sites.

Disc golf is becoming a very popular sport. Golfers/ tourist travel long distances to play a good course such as sandy Knoll in Washington County

My wife and I use the bike trail often, in excess of 25 times per season. We would like to see additional bike trails that would connect Allenton to Randolph, Fox Lake to Ashippun, and Lomira to Columbus. These bike trails can also be used for winter sports.

Establish and maintain more groomed cross country trails.

Develop a mountain bike trail system. At present the nearest mountain bike trail is 45-60 mile drive. Examine the possibility of using existing county owned park land for this project.

Astico has dangerous bathrooms without lights, half walls instead of full, the existing bathrooms are a detraction from the park with inconvenient placement.

Thank you for providing a platform to provide feedback.

The County Parks needs to find ways to utilize the Boy Scouts of America volunteers for park improvement. The labor is "free". There are many troops of both Boys and Girls in the area. Please make them feel welcome. They are looking for adventure.

The more outdoors spaces for the public the better.

Hiring an events coordinator for events at parks during the camping season

**Question 23: If you would like to receive email notifications from the Dodge County Land Resource and Parks Department, please enter your email address below.**

A total of 59 email addresses were provided by respondents.

## ANNUAL CAMPER SURVEY

The County conducted a survey of campers at Astico, Derge, Harnischfeger, and Ledge Parks in 2022 . In total, 740 people provided feedback. Overall, the survey focused on obtaining public opinion and feedback on camping experiences, use trends, and future needs of the Dodge County Park and recreation system’s campsites.

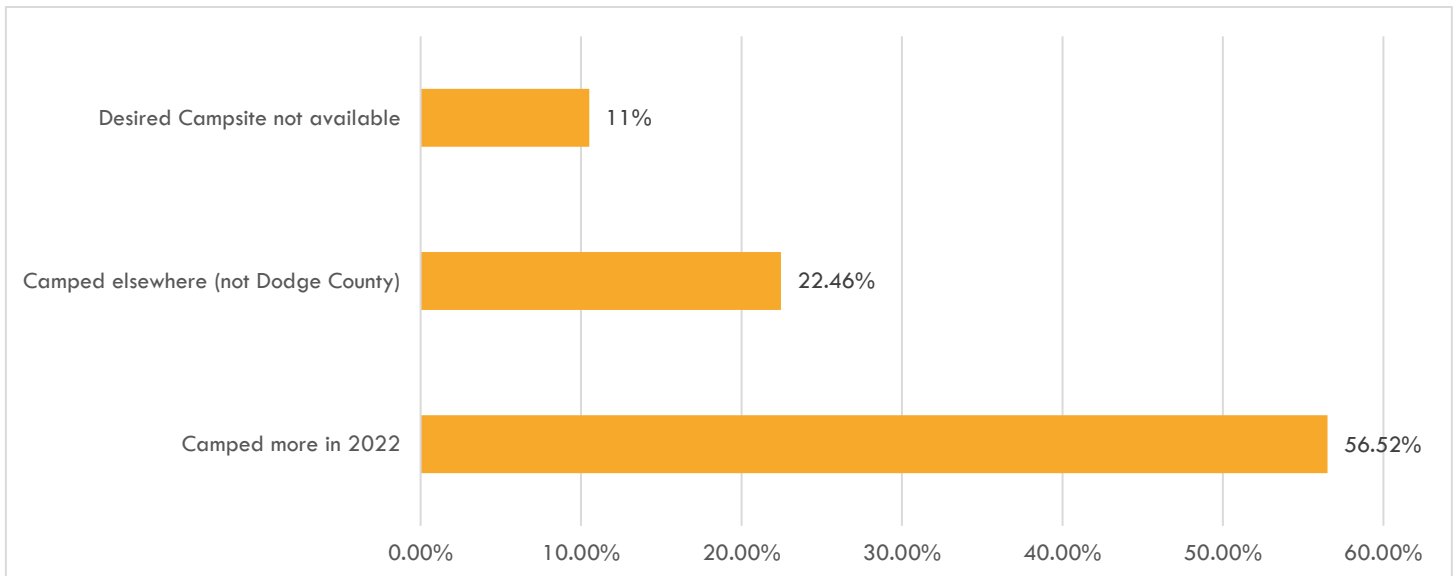
The results of the survey, along with the other public input generated during the process, helped inform the core recommendations of the Plan. The following is a summary of all responses received separated for each park for which surveys were provided. Additionally, comments written-in are compiled below.

### Astico Park

**Question 1: How many people answered the survey?**

282 people responded to the survey.

**Question 2: If you camped at Astico Park less in 2022 than in 2021, what were your main reasons? (top three answers)**

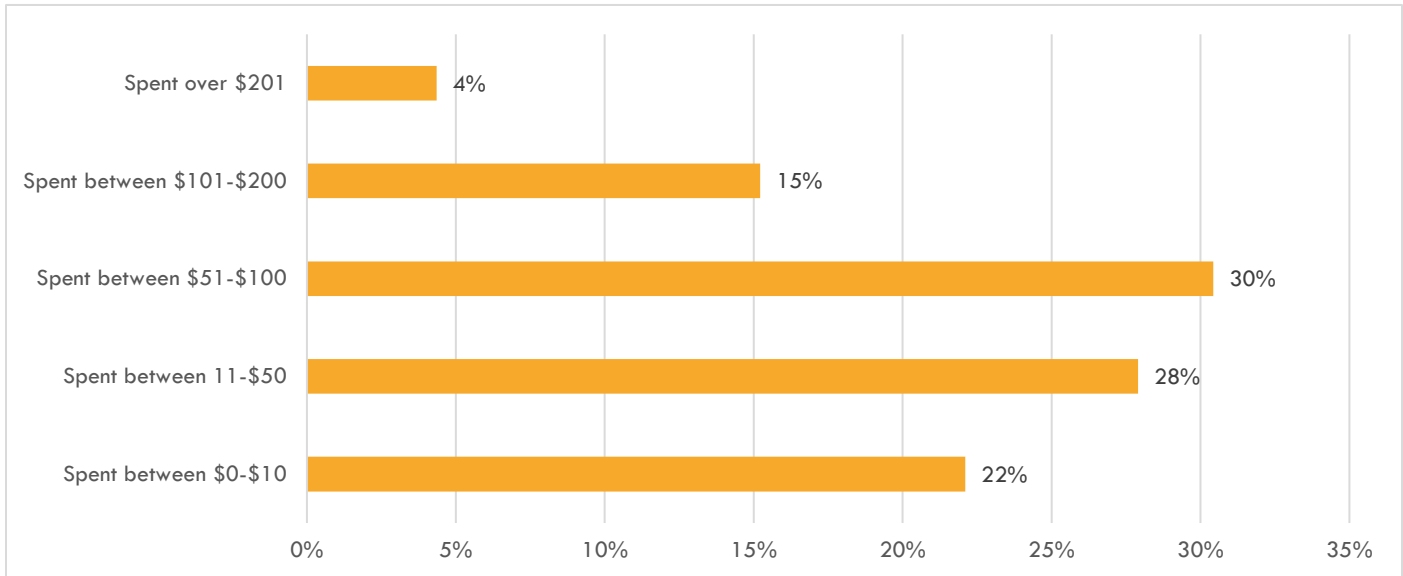


Question 2 additional comments: Hard to find campsites due to demand (2), Showers in need of updates (1)

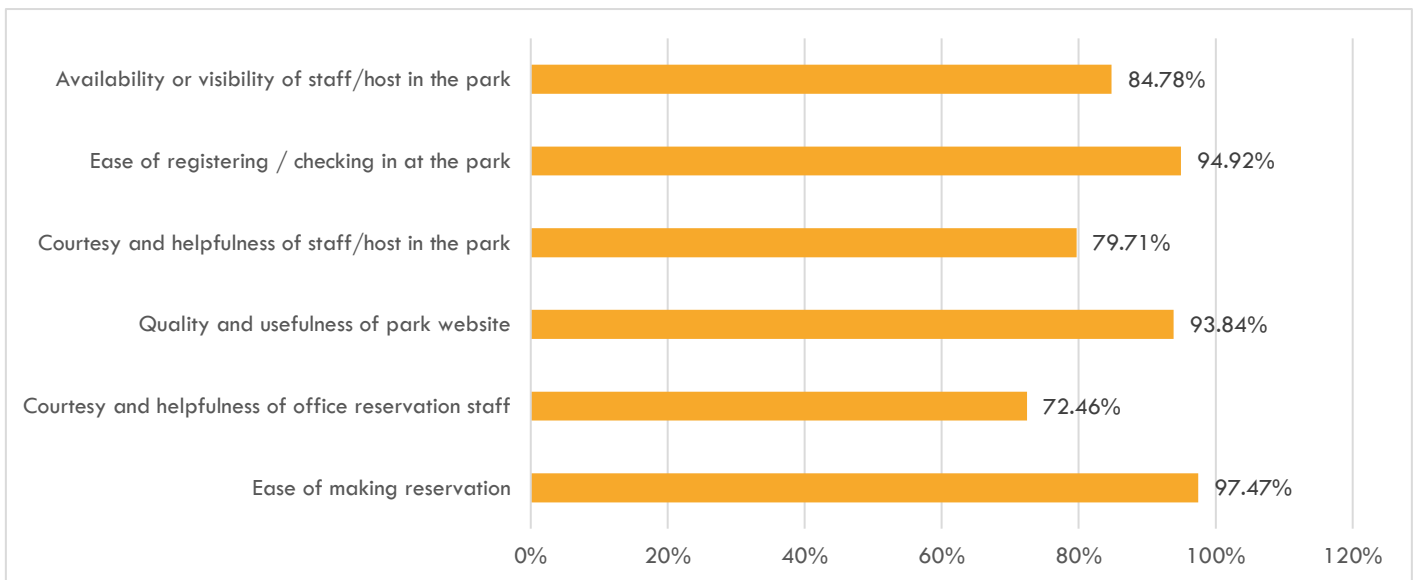
### Question 3: Average Nights Camper Stayed?

- 2022: 3 nights on average
- 2021: 2.67 nights on average
- 2020: 2.78 nights on average

### Question 4: How much money did you spend in the area for food, gas, supplies, and entertainment (not including park fees paid)?

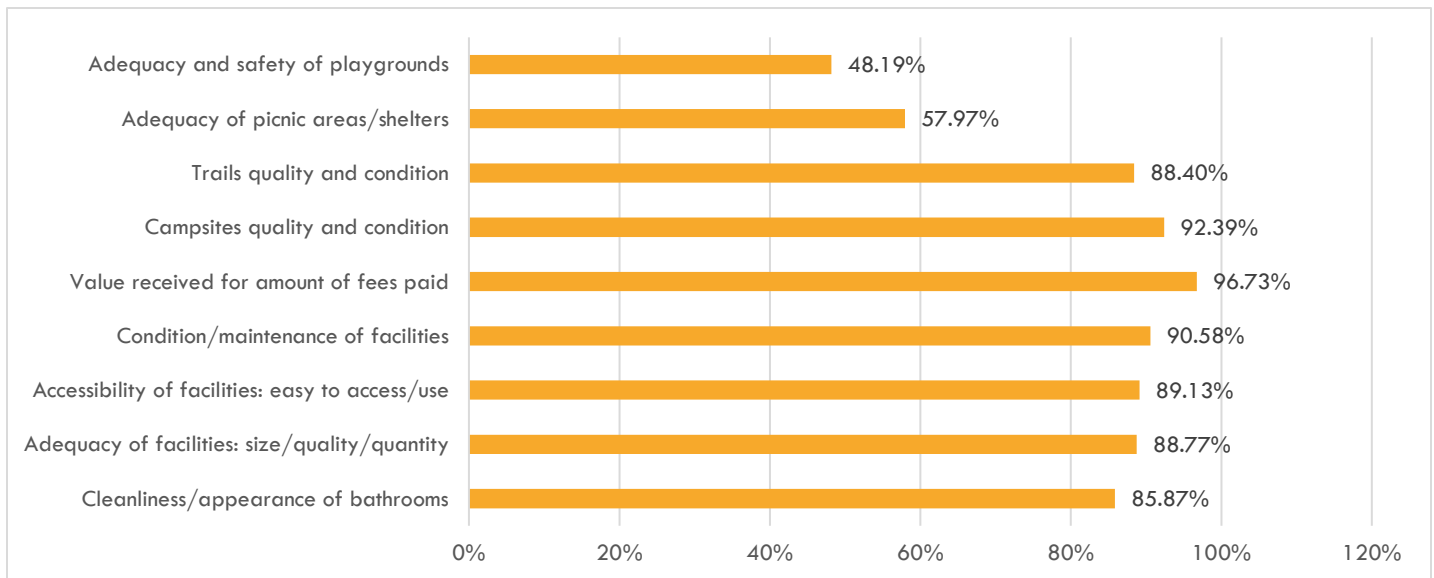


### Question 5: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our service.



Question 5 additional comments: Friendly and helpful experience with camp staff (4), Did not see staff on site (2), Issues with online reservations (1)

**Question 6: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our facilities.**



Question 6 additional comments: Positive comments about park facilities (3), Need for improvements to bathrooms and shower facilities (6), Need for additional updates at campsites and within the park (12)

**Question 7: What services or facilities would you like to see added at Astico Park?**

Written Comments Received
Honestly, I think it is perfect. It is such a unique campground. Love that there is water, trails, the cool bridge, paved areas, geocache and that it is quiet. I love the large area where the tent campers are. It was our first time there and we loved it. Someday we will be back!
Pickle ball court
I see horseshoe pits on the map, honestly in years of staying there I never realized that. Will have to look. Path down to bridges was more challenging than I had hoped. My parents could not make it down, to uneven & steep in spots. Could have been washout due to recent rains. Would love disc golf there, but unsure where without being disruptive.
Dog park
I wish they'd get ice coolers so we didn't have to leave every day just to go buy bags of ice!!
If they were able to sell ice at the park that would make EVERY trip so much easier. We always run out of ice.
Volleyball nets back or another area for kids
Volleyball net and sand pit for it! I know so many people who would camp here more if it had just this one single thing! People need things to do to have fun! It would also help if some of the River edge campsites had better area to fish from.
giant bounce pad
Septic hook up sites would be amazing especially with the lack of bathrooms/showers
Water hookup for RVs would be nice
Water hook-ups
Full hookups
Water/sewer hookups full
Water hookup for Rv
Please allow extended stays in a campsite beyond 7 days when no other people have asked to reserve the site.
The women's toilet/shower was closed quite few times for painting
A shower room on the lower part Danville. Bigger playground on the lower part as well.
The bathrooms and showers need a lot of work done to them. The men's didn't even have door on for the toilet
More bathroom/shower houses
Another piped bathroom in the park. We camp at the electric sites on the river and it's quite a hike to get to the showers/flush toilets
Better bathroom in Danville area
Shower house/ bathroom improvements
Improve the shower facilities. Each shower bay should have private changing area.
New free showers, more cleaning of toilets, dog poop picked up, dogs not left in campers barking while people are gone from camper
Bathrooms, boat take in/out
Updated showers and bathrooms

Shower curtain divider between the two shower stalls/areas for privacy.

Updates to the bathrooms would be nice; a shower would be great.

Would love to see more flush toilets

More restroom access.

A few more additional restrooms

New Restrooms or at least updated.

More flush toilets or improved pit toilets with better ventilation!!

flush toilets in lower area

Upgrades to the shower building or adding bathroom/shower building in the upper campground. Pit toilets need some remodeling.

I'd love to see another set of flush toilets!

We love Astico, but the bathroom and shower facilities are in need of some serious upgrades.

More showers

More bathroom

Modernized bathrooms

Real bathrooms in the back area

new or updated bathrooms

Newer bath facilities, more sitting areas on the trails.

More flushing toilets would be nice

Shower building up closer to the campsite

Showers cleaner

A couple extra shower stalls are always appreciated

Another updated bathhouse/showers and more campsites with electric

Updated showers and bathrooms

Shower curtain divider between the two shower stalls/areas for privacy.

Updates to the bathrooms would be nice; a shower would be great.

Better lighting in pit toilet buildings

Update the main bathroom it's not very pleasant and always toilet issues

Better bathrooms.

Showers

Would like to see shower building modernized.

A new shelter

New shelter to replace the one torn down

Build a shelter/cover for the firewood. Also an ice machine would be useful. Propane tank

Bigger pavilion more centrally located for shade and shelter from rain

Another pavilion would be nice for day rentals, but otherwise always satisfied with this location.

Possible water hookups on the sites. Also, some of the sites need to be relevelled out.

Water and septic at the campsites

Water hookup

How about some full hookups

More paved sites

Water for sure. Sewer would be an extra plus

More electric sites

Please adjust the price of the group site as its not worth the fee for what's offered from the site

More accurate recommended site size/vs actual size. We've been there (Astico) enough times to know what sites we can fit in even though website says we won't fit.

There is so much space in the top grassy area that more campsites could be added.

More level sites

More campsites by the river

pull through sites

More electric sites

It wouldn't hurt to relevel some of the asphalt pads and the gravel pads also.

Water at the sites would be ideal but we understand the cost to install would probably mean higher site fees so we are fine with it the way it is.

More campsites with electric.

Water at the sites would be nice!

Water and/ or sewer hook ups at camp sites would be great.

Water hook ups at the sites

Sewer service on some lots.

Pool

Is it possible to make a swimming beach on the river???

Swimming would be nice

An alternative trail to get down the river/ large bridge area. Current one is VERY steep and has loose gravel.

More trails

More Trails, more things for kids to do

Clearing by water for mire fishing spots

Remove smaller trees and brush along river to allow better fishing access

More trees for shade and water on site

More play areas

MANY more trees. I understand that a storm took out most of the trees. I suggest an aggressive planting with well thought out strategic placement.

Love to see the playground upgraded! It's been there since I was a child.

Maybe posted park phone numbers in campground for reporting problem's quickly.

The kayak area was not well marked in terms of complimentary or how to check out/use/return. We did not have time to use it anyway, but if it was clear via signage how to borrow, we'd like to plan on it next time we drive by since we liked the Astico Park, but can't carry any watercraft equipment.

Small area to be able to rent fishing poles and maybe someplace to be able to get some bait

Water&50amp

Better access to water to fill-up on arrival and a better way to enter the park so people aren't lined up on the road on a hill.

Easier way to put your Kayaks in on the river by the office.

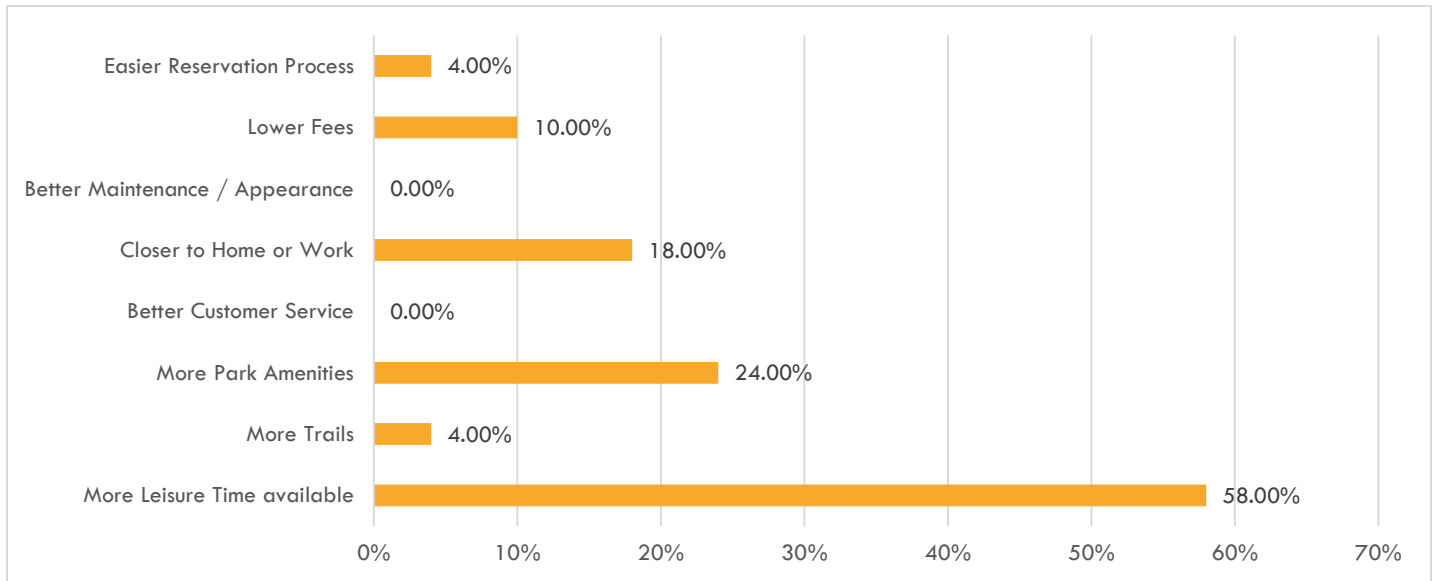
Would like to see kayak launch in the campground area

Dedicated fishing pier

Additional water fill locations since the current fill at check-in can keep others waiting while you fill up the fresh tank.

fish in more areas that are by the river. I understand the trees have to stay but the brush and weeds should be trimmed,

**Question 8: What would encourage you and your family to visit or use Astico Park on a more regular basis?**



**Written Comments Received**

Overall, this is an excellent peaceful family-oriented campground that we enjoy camping at. It's close to our home & is a beautiful park/area.

I think it is great how it is. The only reason we might not be back is because we like to try new campgrounds. So maybe in a few more years we will be back or if we want a close to home camping weekend we will be back sooner! We love how rustic and big the campground is!

We enjoyed our stay at the park while camping. It was a perfect location for us to enjoy antiquing at WI largest antique mall. We also enjoyed the shops in downtown Columbus.

It is a great park with abundant trails and water throughout

Once of best county parks in the area.

Better bike connections to the town of Columbus. Maybe bike route signage from the train station.



We likely book more Dodge County Park camping weekends if the cancellation policy was in line with the Wisconsin State Park camping cancellation policy.

I was very happy with the customer service I received when I needed to reschedule a camping trip last summer!

It was so loud in the tent area. I don't know if we will be back, due to that. The pit toilets are disgusting and there is no lights either. There was no hot water for showers so we had to take literal ice cold showers (equivalent to sticking our heads under the natural spring water) but I believe there was something wrong with the water heater while we were there.

The park was OK, but the manure trucks from Sassy Farms going back and forth every 3 minutes was awful. We will not stay at Astico again if that persists.

Some people were loud and the host did nothing and would not answer their door

less barking dogs

Don't raise price

Park is good, price was good.

Whenever we have been there we have enjoyed our stay. We would like to see rates not increase for sure, if they went down a bit that would be good as well. Overall we have liked coming to Astico and camping down on the bottom by the dam.

Bathroom and shower facilities are huge for us as no bathroom in our camper

Better maintenance only in bathrooms. Everything else was wonderful

Bathrooms

we like coming to the campground, but the toilet/shower facilities really need some upgrades.

Showers, toilets, pit toilets looked very poorly cared for. Fresh fixtures and a little paint is an easy fix

Additional bathrooms/ improved playgrounds

again this place is great and close to home, but the lack of decent bathrooms makes it hard to get the family to want to come.

Another restroom/shower facility on top of the hill would be appreciated.

Bathroom update. No gaps in women's bathroom doors.

We camp at different places, and will be back.

I would come down and use the group site if it wasn't more expensive than getting a group site at a state park.

I think the park is pretty nice the way it is but I think more sites in the park would make it easier to get in because there would be more availability. Also, we like to camp the beginning of November and April and you used to be one of the few parks still open. This year you closed October 31 and weren't open beginning of April and we were forced to go elsewhere.

Make more camping spots by the water with electric hookups

Level the sites in the Danville area

More sites by river.

Bigger campsites by the river.

The sites we had were great!

We hope to start camping at Astico more often.

Some campsites are too close together, not enough trees in between them for privacy.

More lots with concrete pads

Some campsite drives need improvement and fire rings need upgrading.

More sites that accommodate travel trailers

I like that I can often get a reservation without a lot of lead time. Love the park.

Being that there isn't a pool or splash pad or anything like that, because we have kids it is a park we choose not to visit mid June thru mid September, because it tends to be too hot for the kids, and us adults too, to be outside and really enjoy it. So we visit KOAs during the hottest times of summer.

Clean swimming water

Wi-Fi

I helped demo reservation systems for you a few years back. I still find yours one of the easiest of anywhere we go.

Too many places and not enough time.

Astico Park is a gem. Our grandsons love camping and hiking the trails.

MORE trails but I do know one family did not reserve with our group because her 'kids would be bored and not have enough to do"

More shade trees

Again, just having the river bank trimmed up

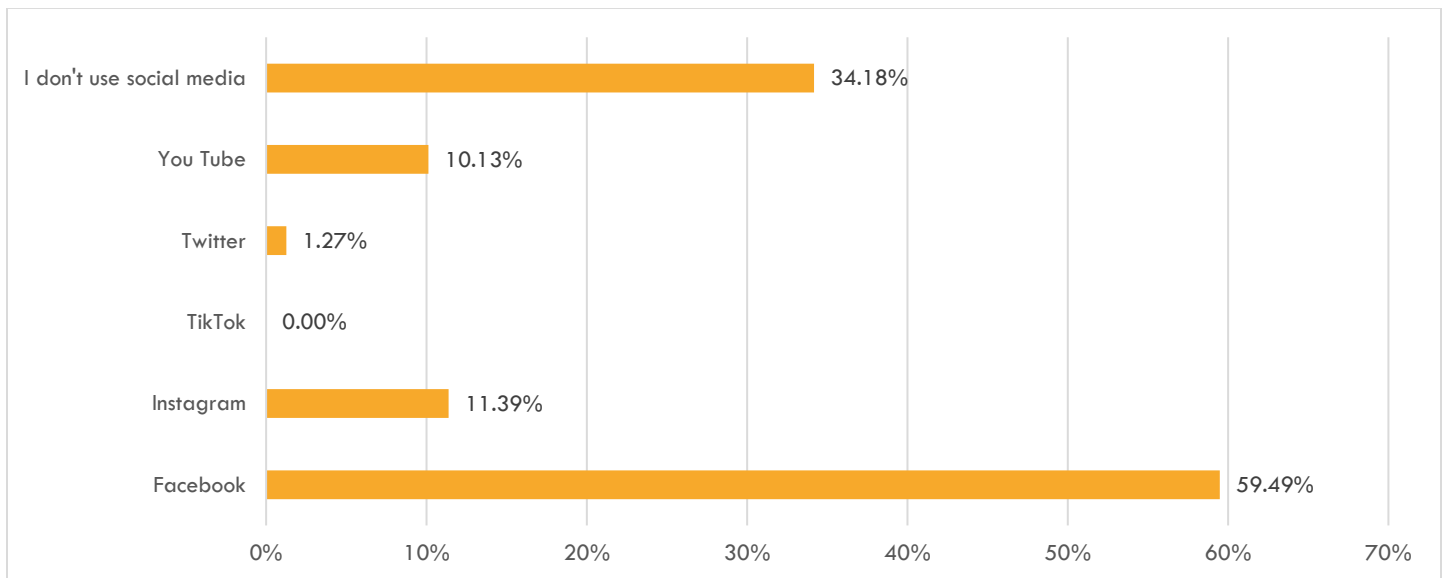
We will continue to enjoy the park multiple times annually as it is one of our favorite campgrounds for rest and relaxation.

Upgraded shower facilities would be awesome, as well as blacktop pads for the River sites would make Astico top notch in our book.

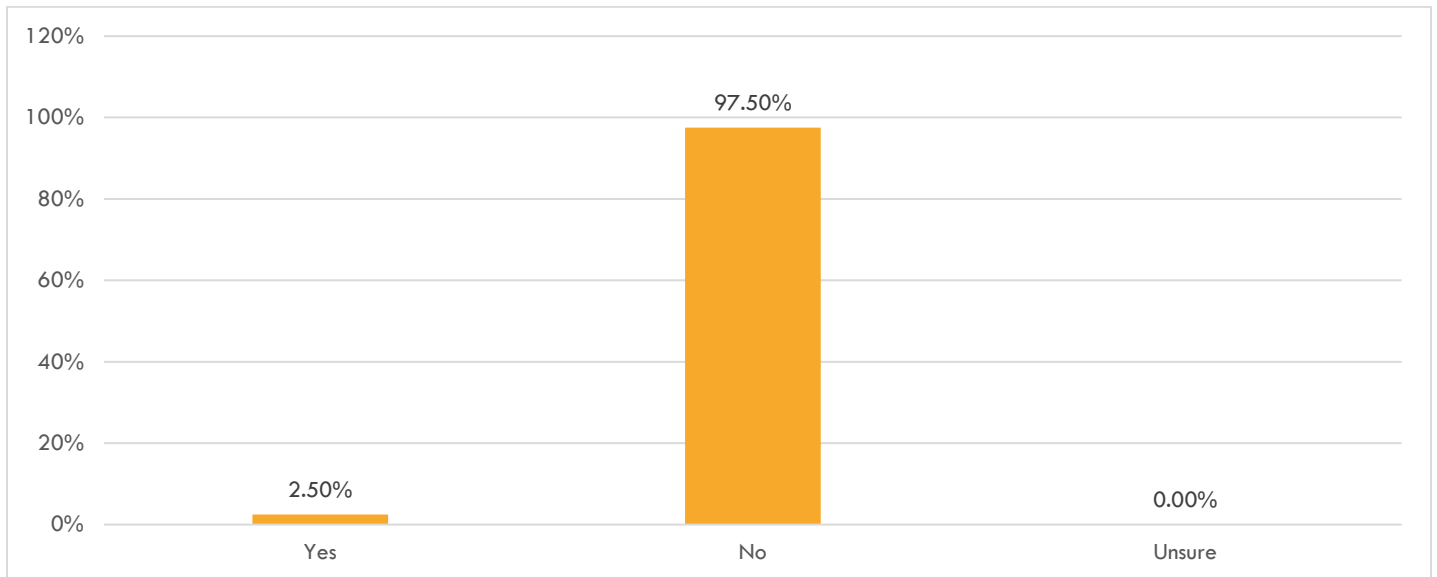
More dog friendly

Needs a volleyball court with sand!

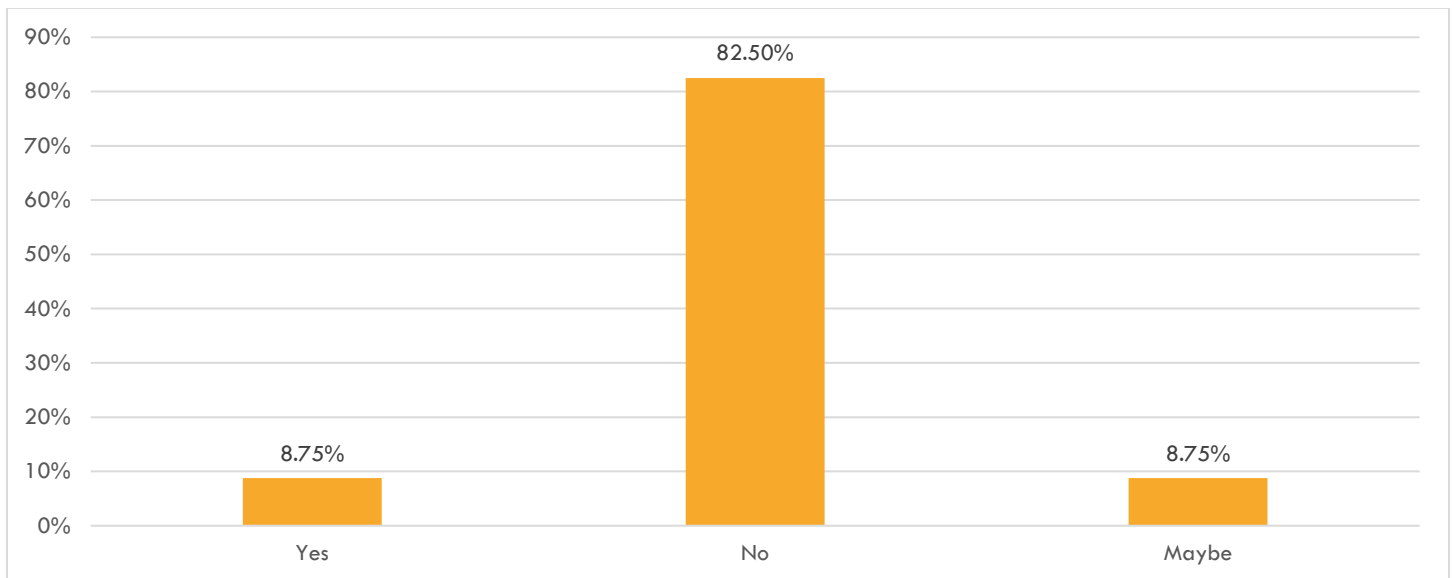
**Question 9: What social media platform(s) do you use to receive travel, recreation, or leisure information?**



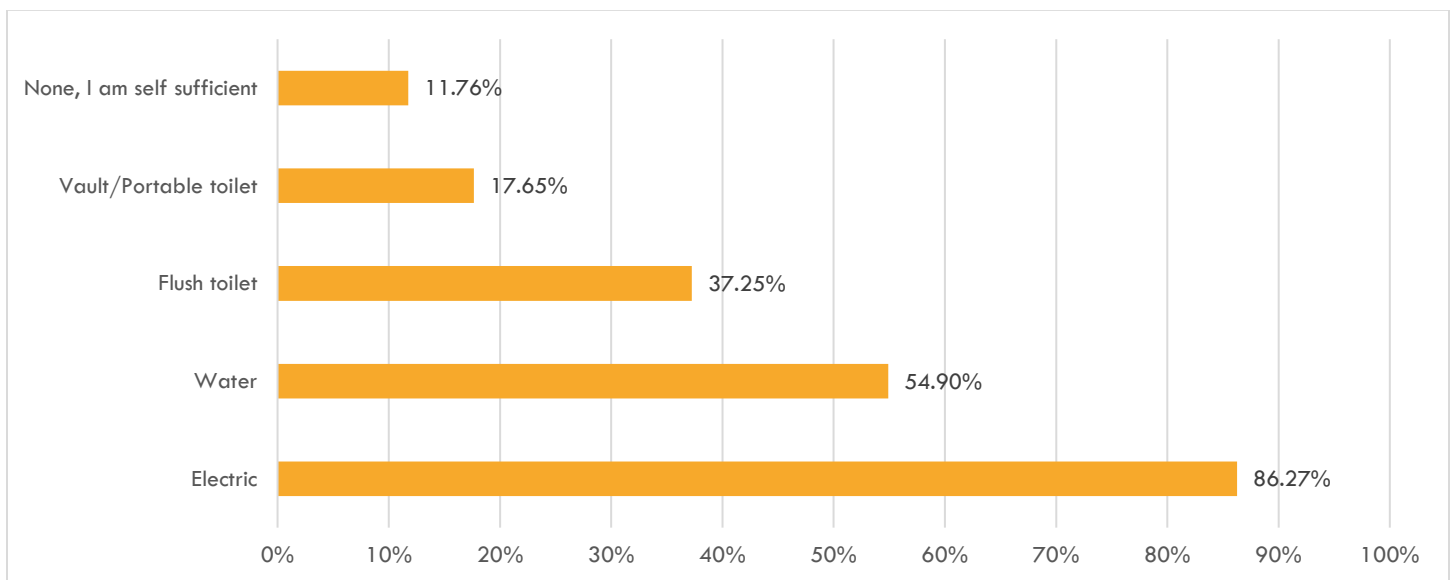
**Question 10: In the past, have you camped in the Dodge County Parks during winter?**



**Question 11: Do you have interest in being able to camp in Dodge County Parks over winter in the future?**



**Question 12: What facilities would need to be available for you to do winter camping?**

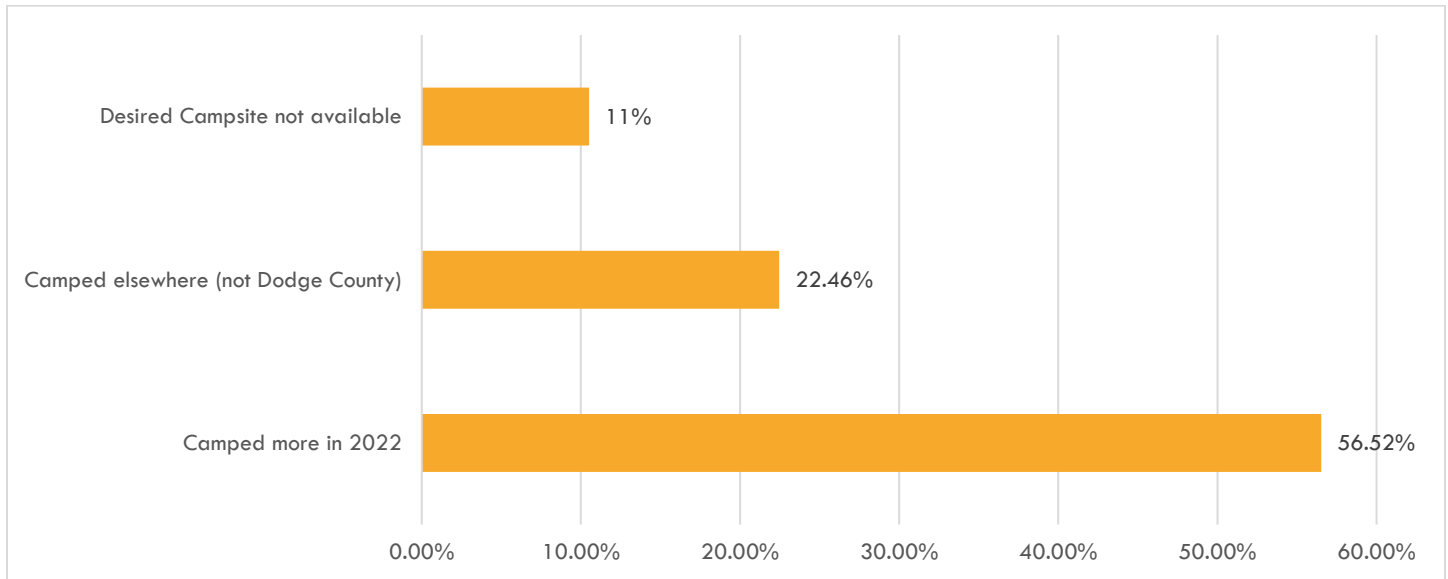


## **Derge Park**

### **Question 1: How many people answered the survey?**

101 people responded to the survey.

### **Question 2: If you camped at Derge Park less in 2022 than in 2021, what were your main reasons? (top three answers)**

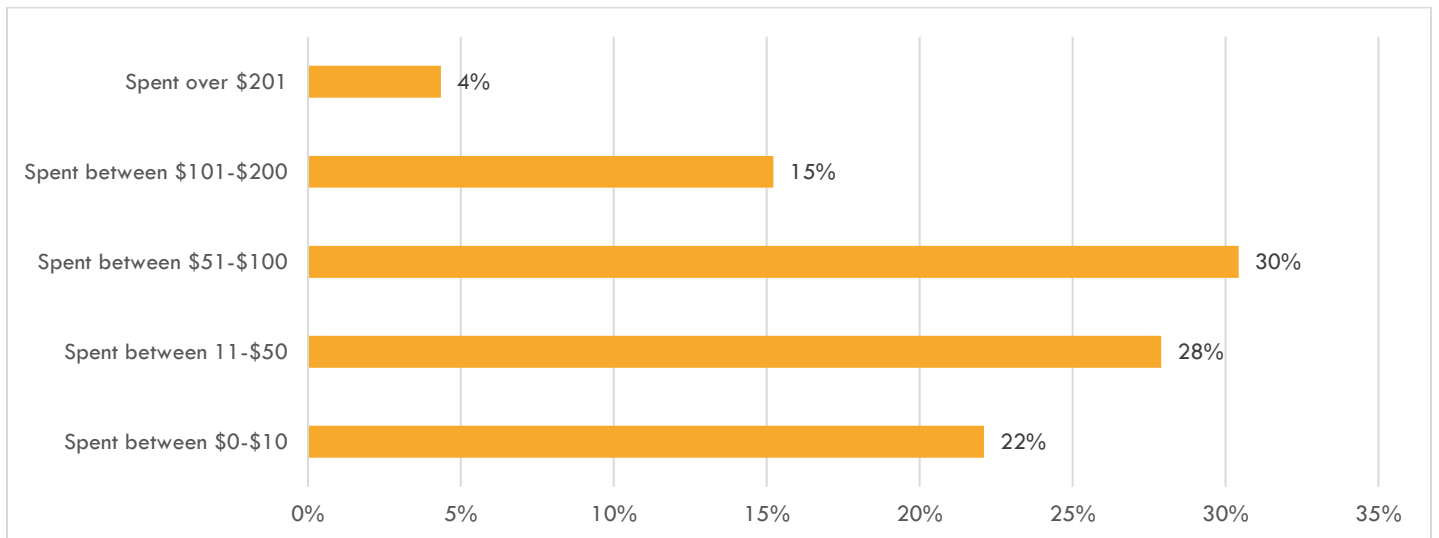


Question 2 additional comments: Need for electricity at site (1)

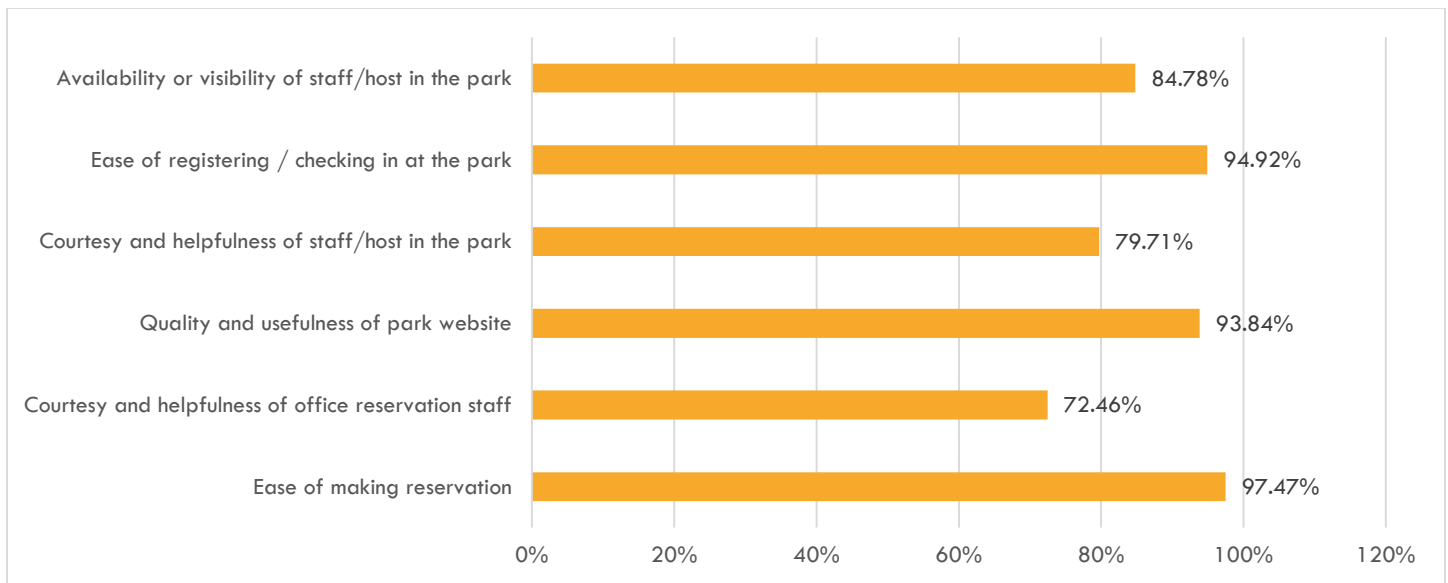
### **Question 3: Average Nights Camper Stayed?**

- 2022: 3 nights on average
- 2021: 3.36nights on average
- 2020: 3.05 nights on average

### **Question 4: How much money did you spend in the area for food, gas, supplies, and entertainment (not including park fees paid)?**

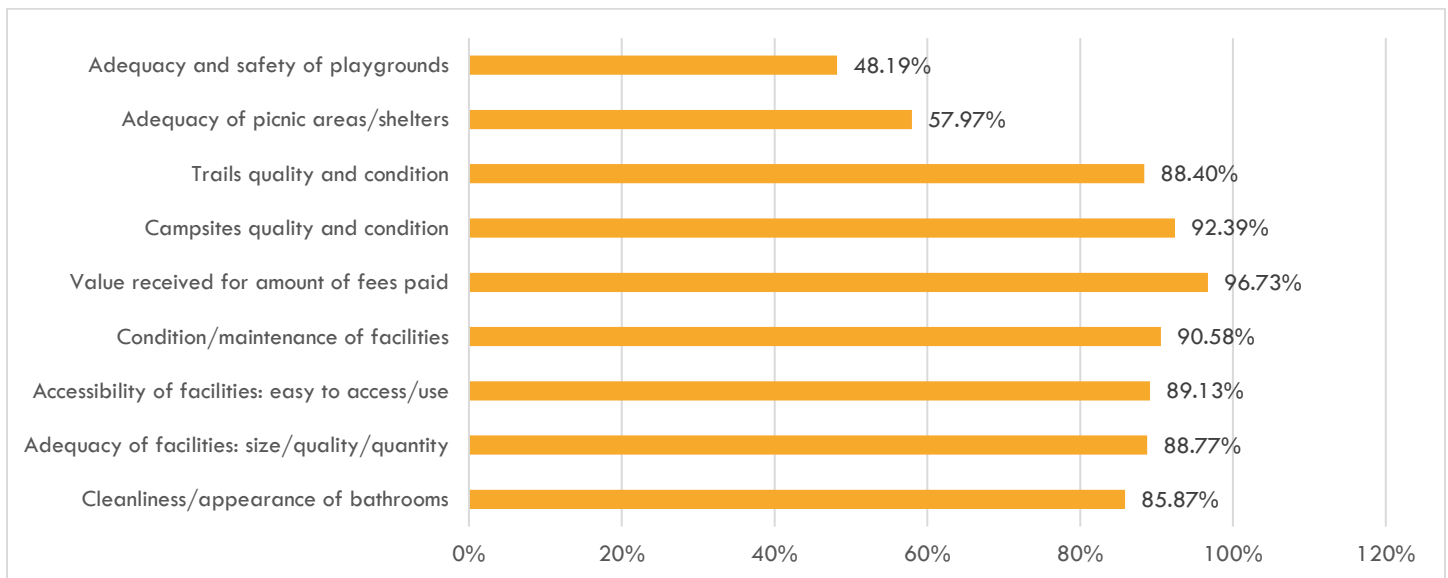


**Question 5: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our service.**



Question 5 additional comments: Friendly and helpful experience with camp staff (5), Did not see staff on site (8), Issues with online reservations (3),

**Question 6: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our facilities.**

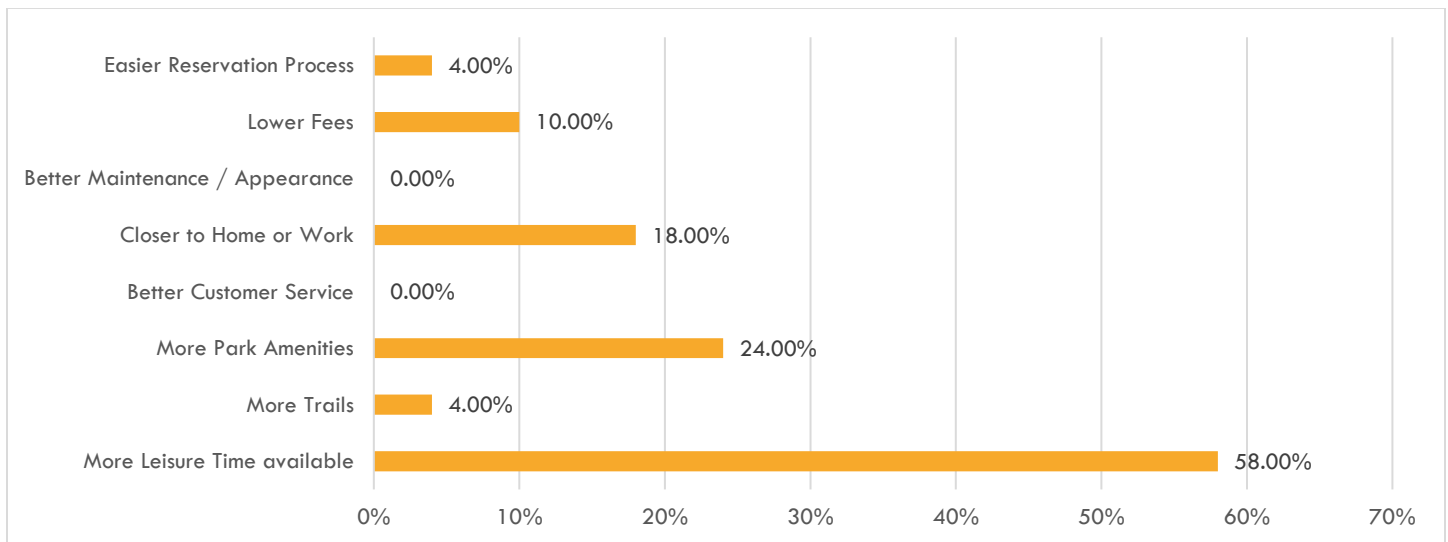


Question 6 additional comments: Positive comments about park facilities (2), Need for improvements to bathrooms and shower facilities (5), Need for additional updates at campsites and within the park (5)

## Question 7: What services or facilities would you like to see added at Derge Park?

Written Comments Received
Bigger playground, beach access from campground
A fishing pier or rentals for on the water.
More fishing access for those without boats
On bulletin board a Map with starred spots for Friday night fish fry's, or places to eat/ ice cream spots in area. Key shopping area's for supplies should be circled on map. Hi-lite best routes noting construction and detours.
Better playground
More playground
Larger playground for kids.
more playground equipment
More playground equipment Longer trails if something could be worked out
More playground equipment Longer trails if something could be worked out
Shower room with "on-demand" hot water system, locking door for privacy.
The women's shower heads updated and replaced.
Better shower water controls
Shelter House
Campsite numbering and identifying each campsite needs improvement. Old numbers linger in the campground making it difficult to know where each spot should be. Windbreak or shrub line along west property line. The winds and late afternoon sun are intense!!!!!!
It would be nice to have water sewer and electric
Continue to enlarge and add sites!
Water hookup at camp sites.
Electric hookup on site 12 before the registration was open. I booked the site online for the 2023 season thinking it had Electric.
water available at camp sites
50 amp service would be wonderful
Water hookups at sites.
water hook up
Water and 50 amp
We travel in a 35 ft. Class A, so would like to have 50 Amp electrical hookups. There were a number of very nice sites in the park that did not have electrical hook ups, but we were fortunate to find a site for the weekend that did.
newer electric at the sites . warmer water in the restroom in Oct.
Water at the sites would be nice.
Longer & wider paved/concrete campsites for camper
Camp in a motor home, little more needed.
Access to swimming
Trails
Trails for hiking
A longer hiking trail would be nice.
Hiking trails
More trees, had a site without trees
We did like that Derge is improving the grounds by removing a couple campsites and adding some campsites. With some being longer pad length. Plus the upgrade of 50 AMP, which was not completed yet when we stay this year. Would also like for more campsite pads be length by 5 to 10 ft.. There have been years where the nats have been so bad could not sit outside at night. Any possible of spraying the campground. We've been in LA campground that they came in and sprayed when the misquotes where bad. Be willing to pay more for camping.
Park was going thru updates. Looks like nice updates being done.
a couple of water fountains to make it easier to obtain water.
canoe or watersport rental would be nice
Kayak or canoe rentals
Water hookups to certain sites would be ideal.
Kayak rentals
WIFI (otherwise, leave it intimate) - with the updated electrical, it'll be perfect - the town is close enough for supplies
Not added but highly improved DRY burning wood!
Gun range
I received a gift certificate last year and was unable to use it on your website and it states to drop in box but you have to make reservations to stay at least to make sure you have a site.

**Question 8: What would encourage you and your family to visit or use Derge Park on a more regular basis?**



**Written Comments Received**

The Derge Park campground is very nice. We have continued to visit since first staying a few years ago. It is close to a pumpkin farm we frequent in October and really enjoy the campground for its amenities and proximity to the farm.

We currently live full time in our RV, so there is nothing (short of family moving to the area!) that would result in our visiting the park on a more regular basis. However, if we come through the area again we would definitely try to stay again. I view Derge Park as one of the hidden gems we have come across in our travels. Large spacious sites, clean and well kept, quiet and private yet not too far from services, and reasonably priced.

Derge is known for a quiet, clean, peaceful, spacious and laid-back place. We've had visitors from Oregon and Florida who were very pleased at how quiet and peaceful this park is, compared to commercial parks where units are jammed together, with thousands of kids screaming and yelling, and drunks raising hell. We're told we have a treasure here -- please Dodge County -- keep it that way. How about Military Discounts?

I would like to see at all Dodge county parks an additional fee for non county residents. If I go to fondulac parks we pay extra!

We enjoy camping at the park and do not want to see fees go up at all but if they went down some it would be good for us Posting on what restaurants/pizza shops in area deliver to park, if none, work out a deal that would encourage them. Concrete corn hole game setup, with bags available at caretakers trailer for check out. For the many family groups, camping clubs, consider special rate over 8 units to use your park when noted upon registration, online. Or a special weekend (or two - spring/fall) for them as an introduction to the park and other Dodge County Parks, with speaker to give presentation on the future they may look forward too. Strong Wi-Fi availability to check mail, but no Streaming of movies or shows.

We are 100 miles from Derge Park, we use this park as its half way point for other family members. Under Better Maintenance/Appearance, would like to see all pavement pads lengthen. Campers are getting bigger in length.

Unfortunately, we were in a spot next to a family that was living full time in a tent with two or three large great dane dogs and a falcon they kept in a Styrofoam cooler box. (yes, the big predator bird Falcon). It's not the parks fault but their kid kept showing up to our spot without any supervision and the dogs were left alone in the tent quite often while they were gone.

Just to make you aware, There was a trailer in site 5 that uses the park all season and beyond. I was told this by a couple that live close to the park.

Easier to make a last minute reservation and availability. Also like to have camping available during ice fishing season.

Women's shower

I would like to see the electric moved from the middle of the pads to the left rear corner (when backing in) and upgraded to 50 amp. I do realize that this would be expensive and by no means prevents us from visiting.

Water hookups at each site and 50 amp service

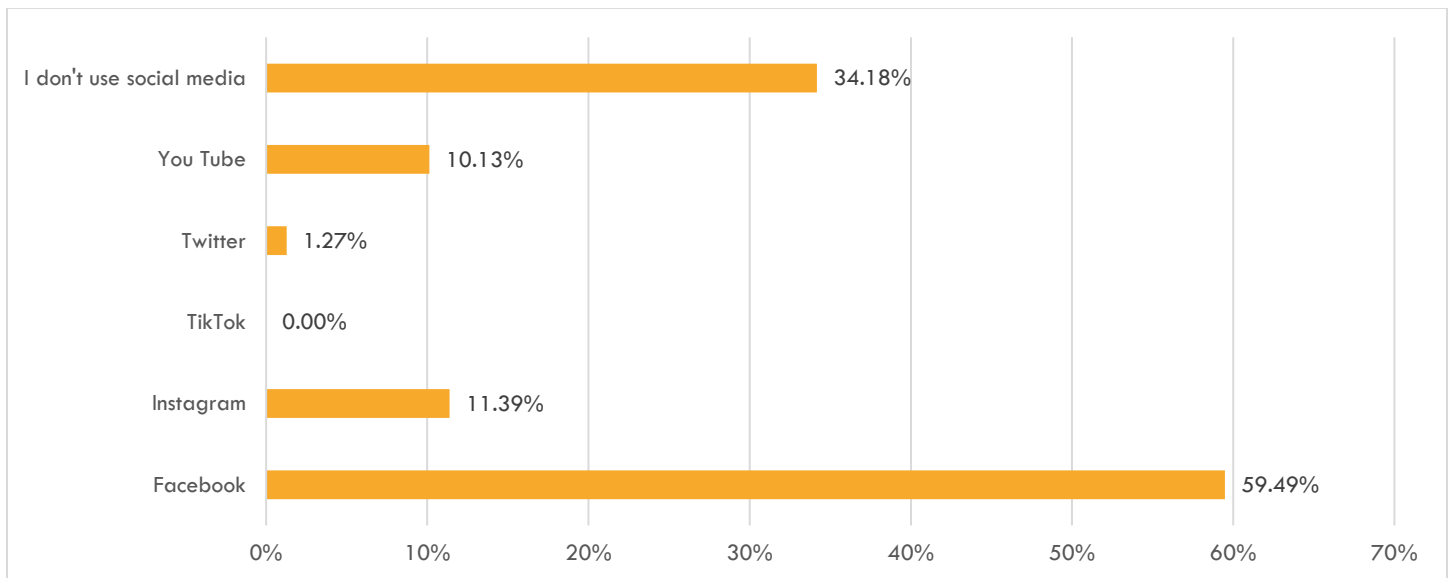
Water hook ups at campsites. Larger level areas for campers

Maybe the local farmers will allow a mowed walking trail along the corn and soybean fields.

Maybe a canoe rental would be a nice amenity to offer.

more areas to park pontoon and jet skis without getting yelled at by the host every time we come. Its so nice being right by the lake but the host always hassles us with the equipment we bring, jet ski trailer and pontoon.

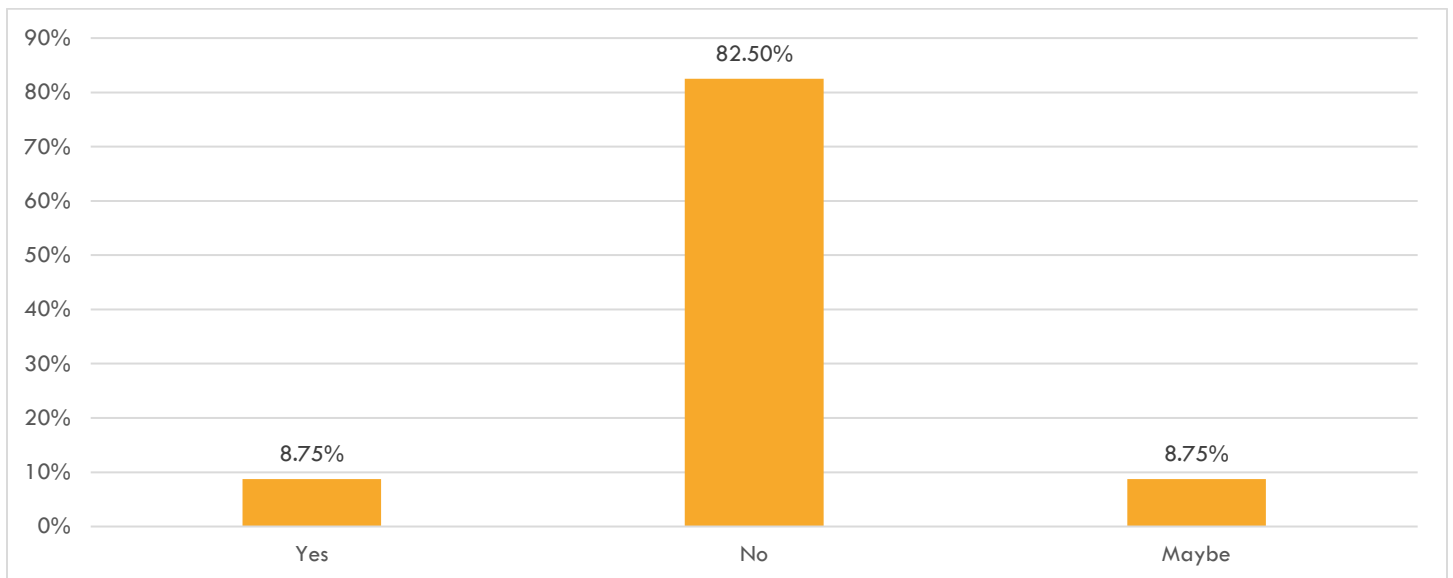
**Question 9: What social media platform(s) do you use to receive travel, recreation, or leisure information?**



**Question 10: In the past, have you camped in the Dodge County Parks during winter?**

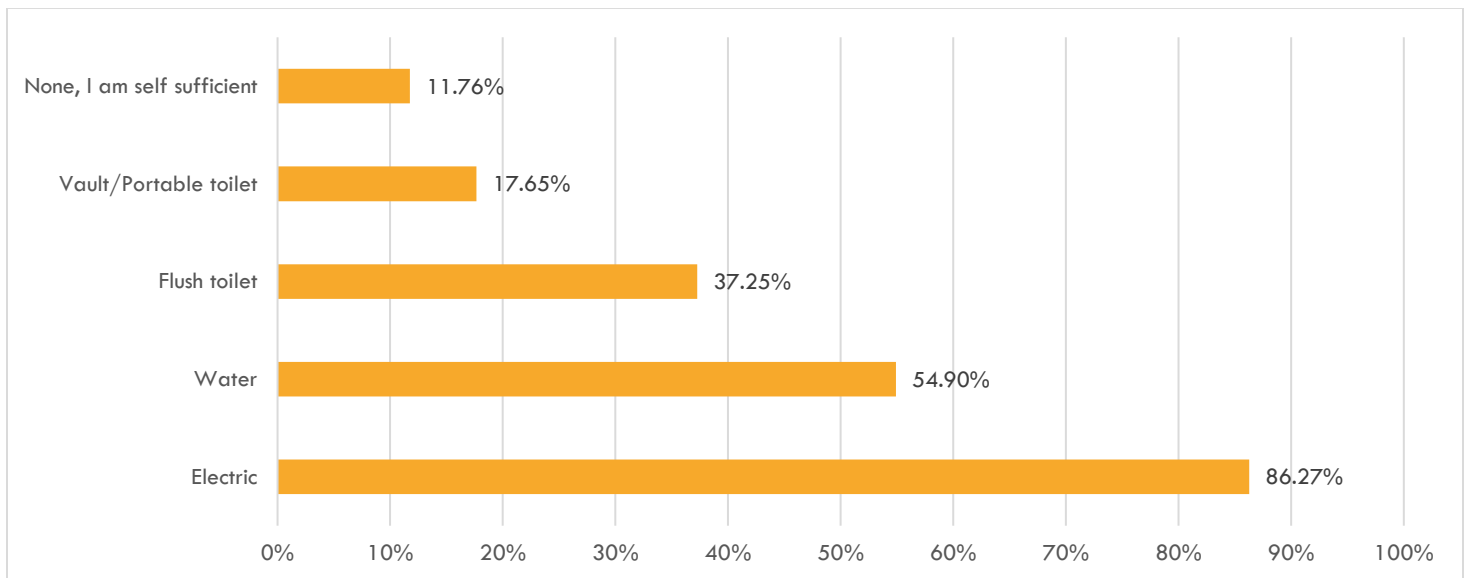
No data was collected for this question.

**Question 11: Do you have interest in being able to camp in Dodge County Parks over winter in the future?**





**Question 12: What facilities would need to be available for you to do winter camping?**

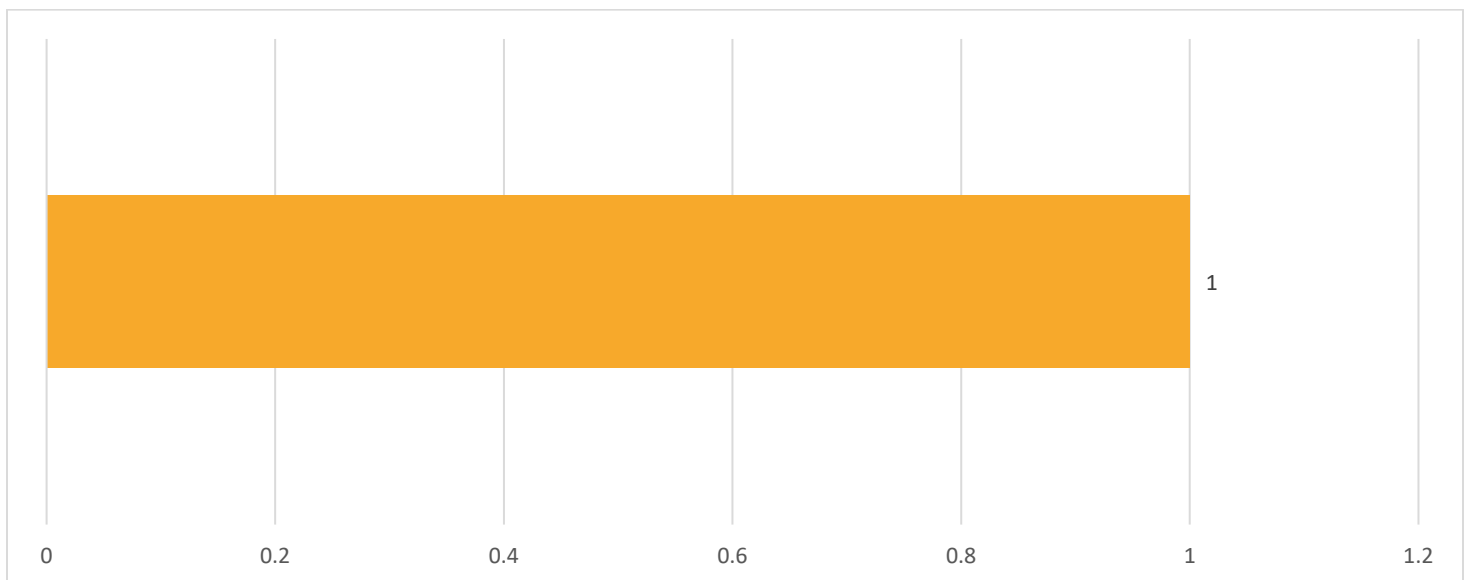


**Harnischfeger Park**

**Question 1: How many people answered the survey?**

81 people responded to the survey.

**Question 2: If you camped at Harnischfeger Park less in 2022 than in 2021, what were your main reasons? (top three answers)**

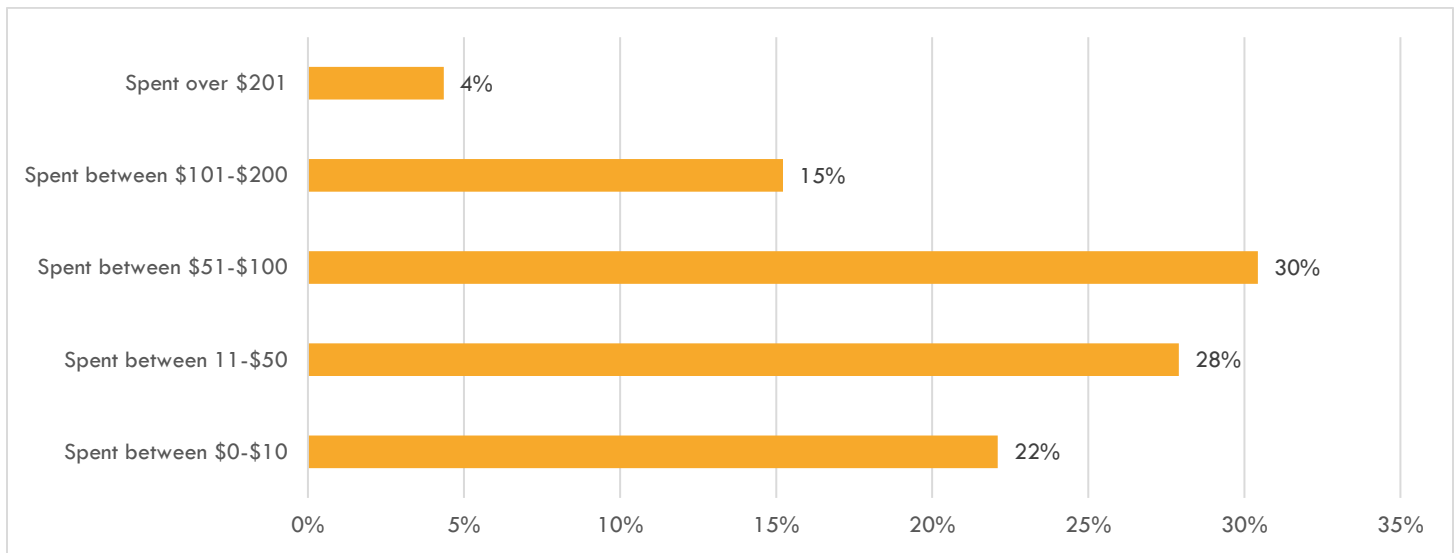


Question 2 additional comments: Hard to find campsites due to demand (1), Were not aware of the park before this year (3)

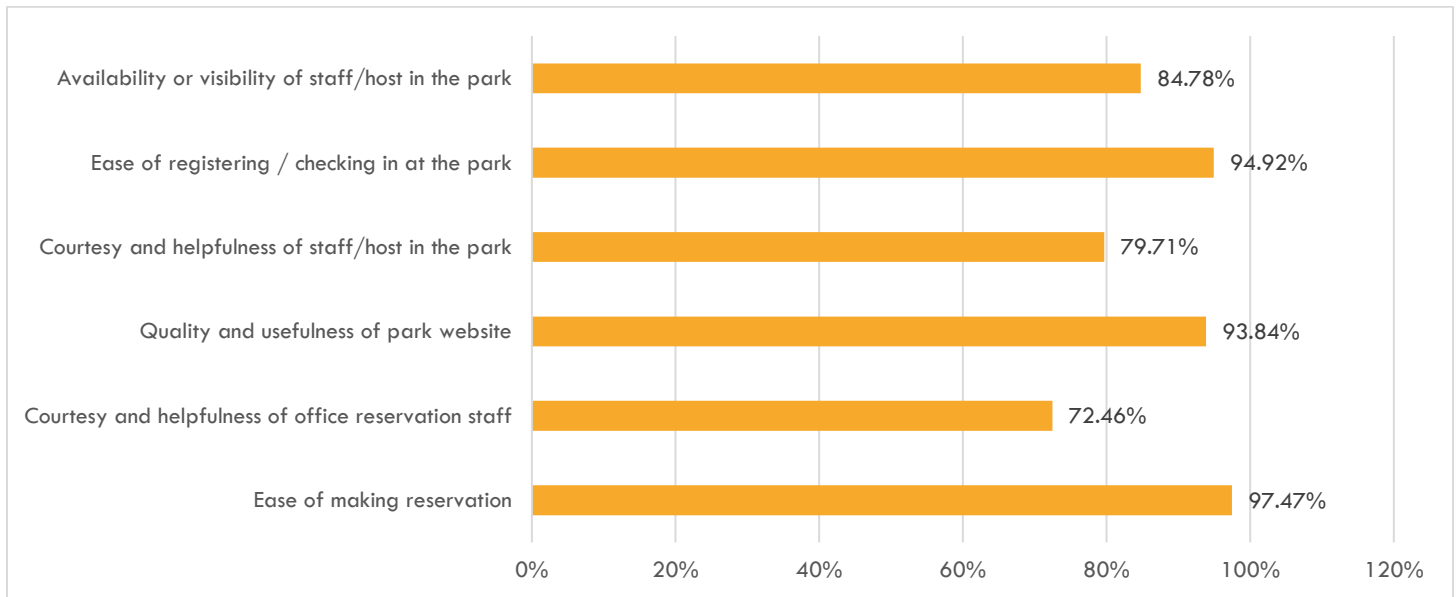
**Question 3: Average Nights Camper Stayed?**

- 2022: 2 nights on average
- 2021: 3.98 nights on average
- 2020: 1.73 nights on average

**Question 4: How much money did you spend in the area for food, gas, supplies, and entertainment (not including park fees paid)?**

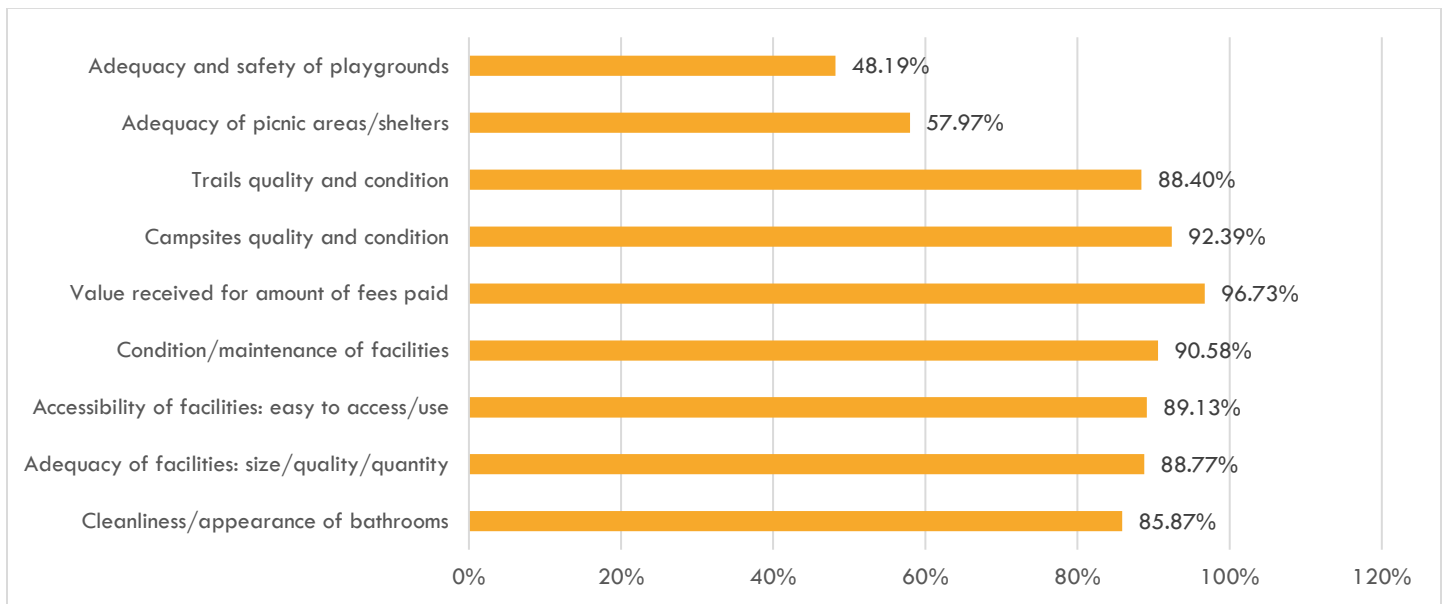


**Question 5: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our service.**



Question 5 additional comments: Friendly and helpful experience with camp staff (17), Did not see staff on site (1)

**Question 6: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our facilities.**

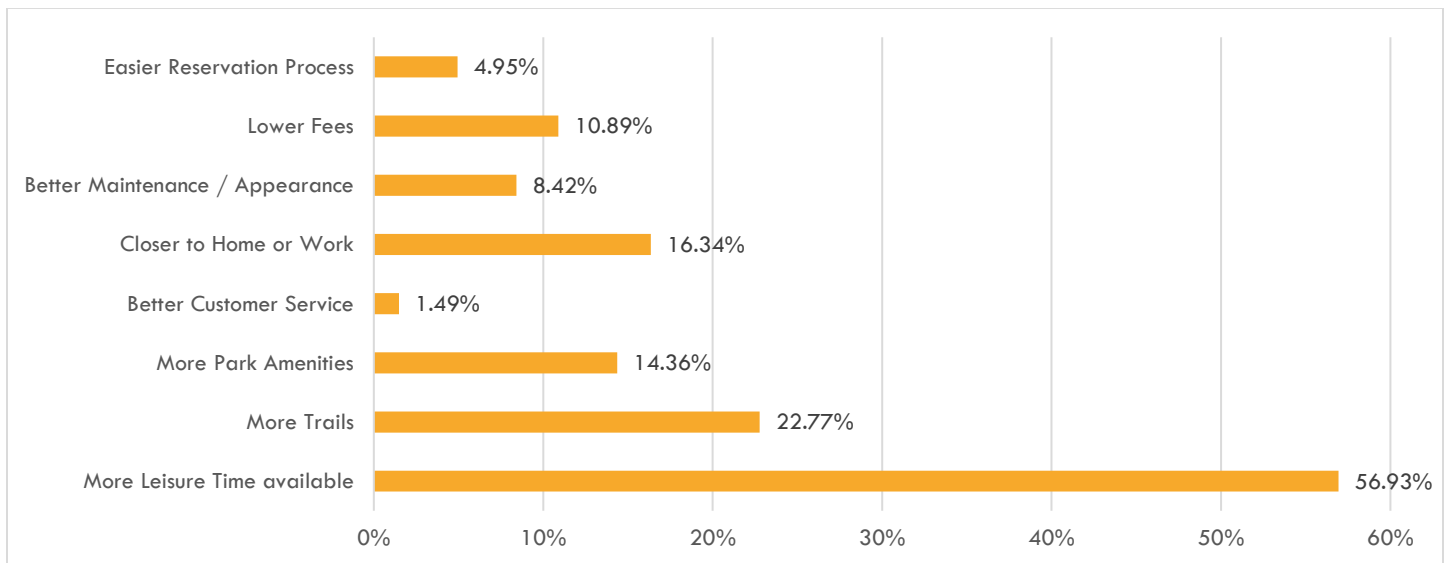


Question 6 additional comments: Positive comments about park facilities (1), Flooding issues (2), Need for additional updates at campsites and within the park (3)

**Question 7: What services or facilities would you like to see added at Harnischfeger\_Park?**

Written Comments Received
Frisbee golf? Winter daytime activities? Cross country skiing?
There should always be a way to check in manually in a pinch. Had it been later, I would have been in a pinch.
Keep the disc golf course. It was the reason I stayed there and have returned for day trips.
Dump station is critical due to the amount of campers visiting this park.
stand up paddle boards for rent
To have someone be able to drop us off to kayak some where so that we could end up at the campground when we are done.
A shuffle board court.
50 amp electric
More shaded sites
Full hook ups on all sites
All sites to have water and electric.
More places to fish the river. More piers?
A small store .
More water sites. And the sites could be a little longer.
Additional electrical sites
spread out the campsites
More campsites
Electric at every site.
We love the fact that it's small and quiet but a few more sites with electric hookups would be lovely
Sewer to all hookups
Solid 50 amp service Big rig friendly- trim trees on a couple of Add a bit more gravel to sites Would love to see paved rv sites
more electric campsites
More campsites and showers. Updating of mini golf course. Electricity added at Group site, or ability to use generator at group site.
More full-time host support.
Swimming pond
Make sure the trails don't flood over
swimming is the only thing I could think of, but I don't know how you would do that? A splash pad?
I'd love to see more area for fishing and such. Maybe a bigger launch for kayaks
Earlier boat rentals in the season
Waterpark/pool

**Question 8: What would encourage you and your family to visit or use Harnischfeger\_Park on a more regular basis?**



**Written Comments Received**

- Overall, this is an excellent peaceful family-oriented campground that we enjoy camping at. It's close to our home & is a beautiful park/area.
- I think it is great how it is. The only reason we might not be back is because we like to try new campgrounds. So maybe in a few more years we will be back or if we want a close to home camping weekend we will be back sooner! We love how rustic and big the campground is!
- We enjoyed our stay at the park while camping. It was a perfect location for us to enjoy antiquing at WI largest antique mall. We also enjoyed the shops in downtown Columbus.
- It is a great park with abundant trails and water throughout
- Once of best county parks in the area.
- Better bike connections to the town of Columbus. Maybe bike route signage from the train station.
- We likely book more Dodge County Park camping weekends if the cancellation policy was in line with the Wisconsin State Park camping cancellation policy.
- I was very happy with the customer service I received when I needed to reschedule a camping trip last summer!
- It was so loud in the tent area. I don't know if we will be back, due to that. The pit toilets are disgusting and there is no lights either. There was no hot water for showers so we had to take literal ice cold showers (equivalent to sticking our heads under the natural spring water) but I believe there was something wrong with the water heater while we were there.
- The park was OK, but the manure trucks from Sassy Farms going back and forth every 3 minutes was awful. We will not stay at Astico again if that persists.
- Some people were loud and the host did nothing and would not answer their door
- less barking dogs
- Don't raise price
- Park is good, price was good.
- Whenever we have been there we have enjoyed our stay. We would like to see rates not increase for sure, if they went down a bit that would be good as well. Overall we have liked coming to Astico and camping down on the bottom by the dam.
- Bathroom and shower facilities are huge for us as no bathroom in our camper
- Better maintenance only in bathrooms. Everything else was wonderful
- Bathrooms
- we like coming to the campground, but the toilet/shower facilities really need some upgrades.
- Showers, toilets, pit toilets looked very poorly cared for. Fresh fixtures and a little paint is an easy fix
- Additional bathrooms/ improved playgrounds
- again this place is great and close to home, but the lack of decent bathrooms makes it hard to get the family to want to come.
- Another restroom/shower facility on top of the hill would be appreciated.
- Bathroom update. No gaps in women's bathroom doors.
- We camp at different places, and will be back.
- I would come down and use the group site if it wasn't more expensive than getting a group site at a state park.
- I think the park is pretty nice the way it is but I think more sites in the park would make it easier to get in because there would be more availability. Also, we like to camp the beginning of November and April and you used to be one of the few parks still open. This year you closed October 31 and weren't open beginning of April and we were forced to go elsewhere.
- Make more camping spots by the water with electric hookups

Level the sites in the Danville area

More sites by river.

Bigger campsites by the river.

The sites we had were great!

We hope to start camping at Astico more often.

Some campsites are too close together, not enough tees in between them for privacy.

More lots with concrete pads

Some campsite drives need improvement and fire rings need upgrading.

More sites that accommodate travel trailers

I like that I can often get a reservation without a lot of lead time. Love the park.

Being that there isn't a pool or splash pad or anything like that, because we have kids it is a park we choose not to visit mid June thru mid September, because it tends to be too hot for the kids, and us adults too, to be outside and really enjoy it. So we visit KOAs during the hottest times of summer.

Clean swimming water

Wi-Fi

I helped demo reservation systems for you a few years back. I still find yours one of the easiest of anywhere we go.

Too many places and not enough time.

Astico Park is a gem. Our grandsons love camping and hiking the trails.

MORE trails but I do know one family did not reserve with our group because her 'kids would be bored and not have enough to do"

More shade trees

Again, just having the river bank trimmed up

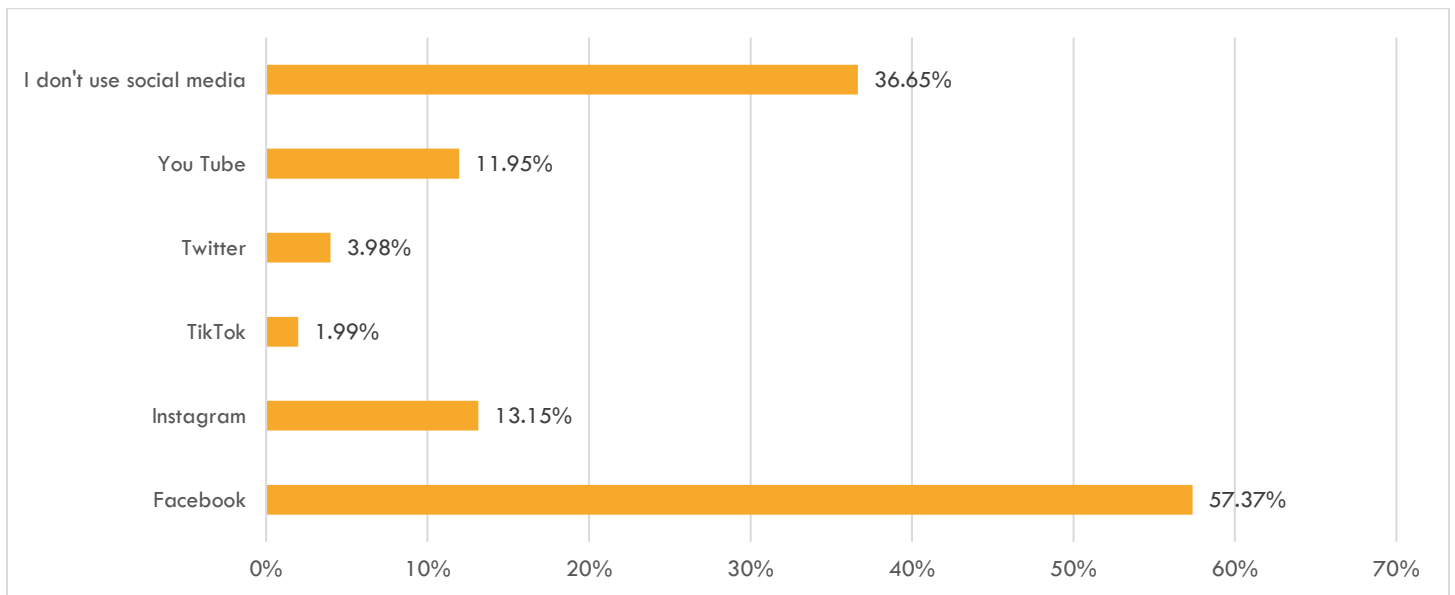
We will continue to enjoy the park multiple times annually as it is one of our favorite campgrounds for rest and relaxation.

Upgraded shower facilities would be awesome, as well as blacktop pads for the River sites would make Astico top notch in our book.

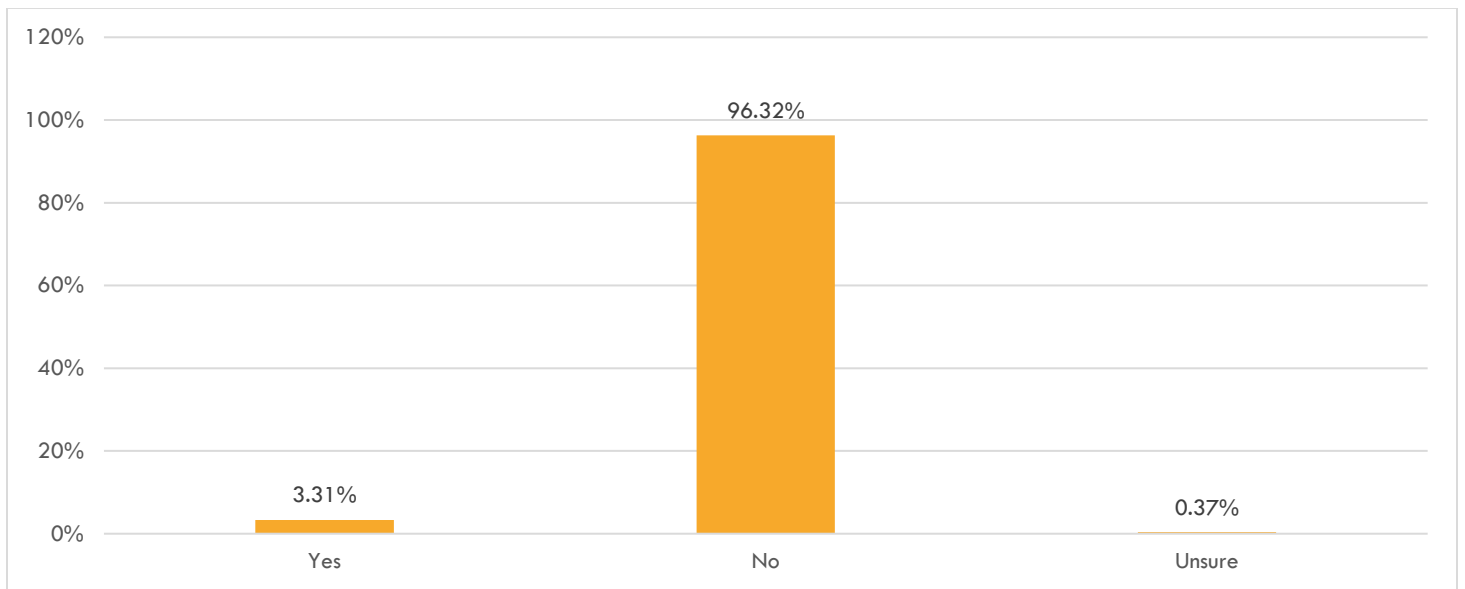
More dog friendly

Needs a volleyball court with sand!

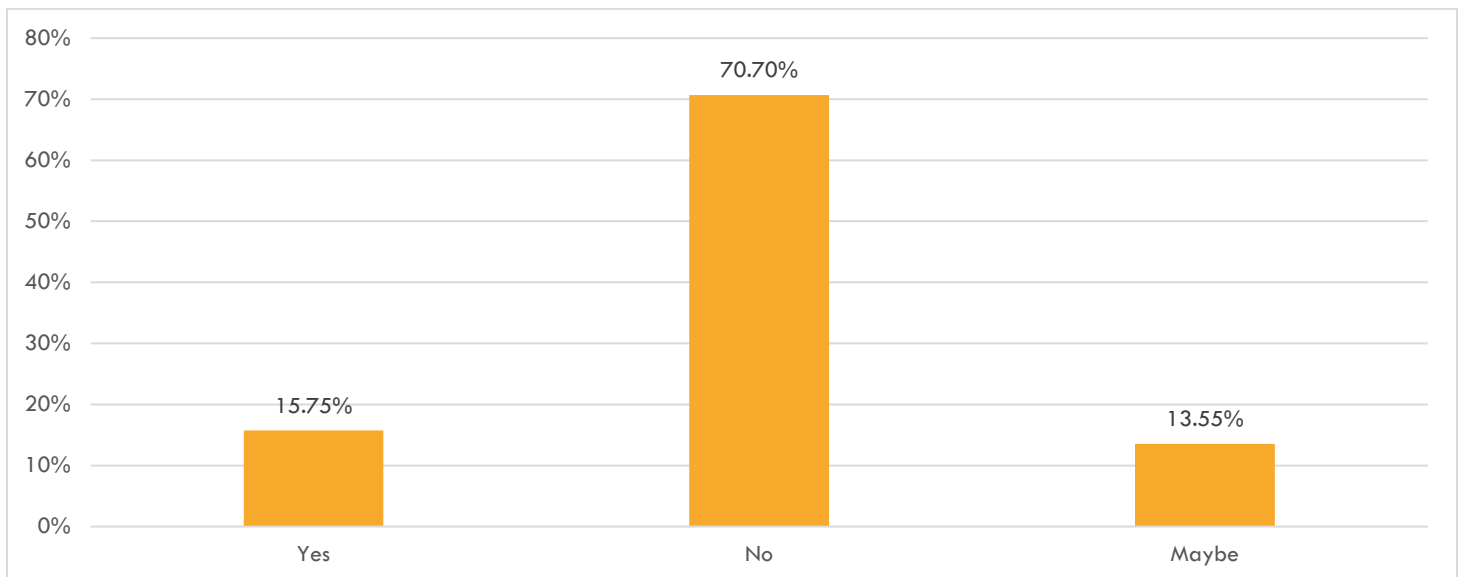
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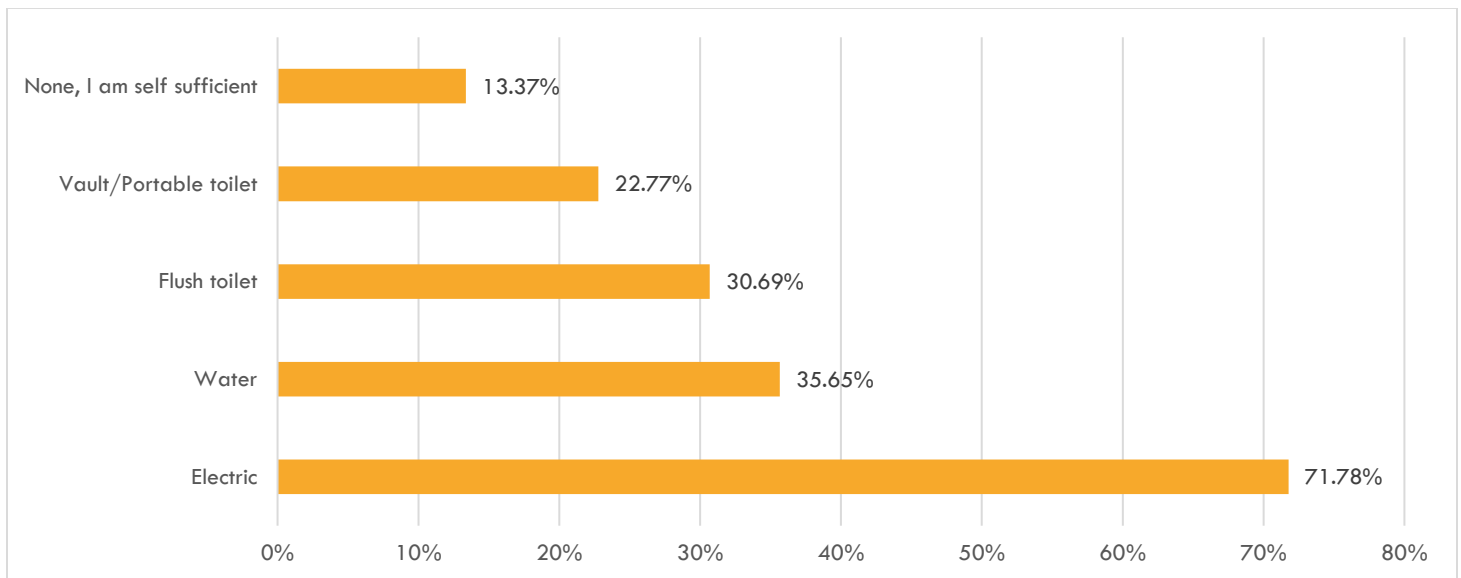
**Question 10: In the past, have you camped in the Dodge County Parks during winter?**



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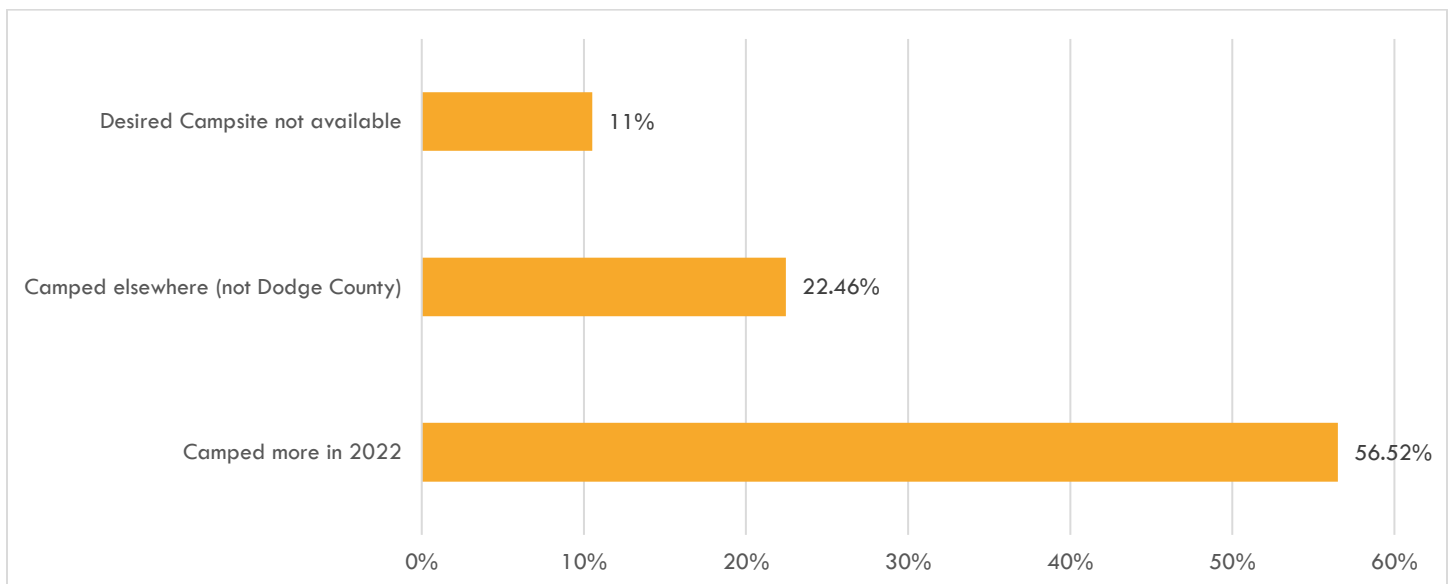


**Ledge Park**

**Question 1: How many people answered the survey?**

276 people responded to the survey.

**Question 2: If you camped at Ledge Park less in 2022 than in 2021, what were your main reasons? (top three answers)**

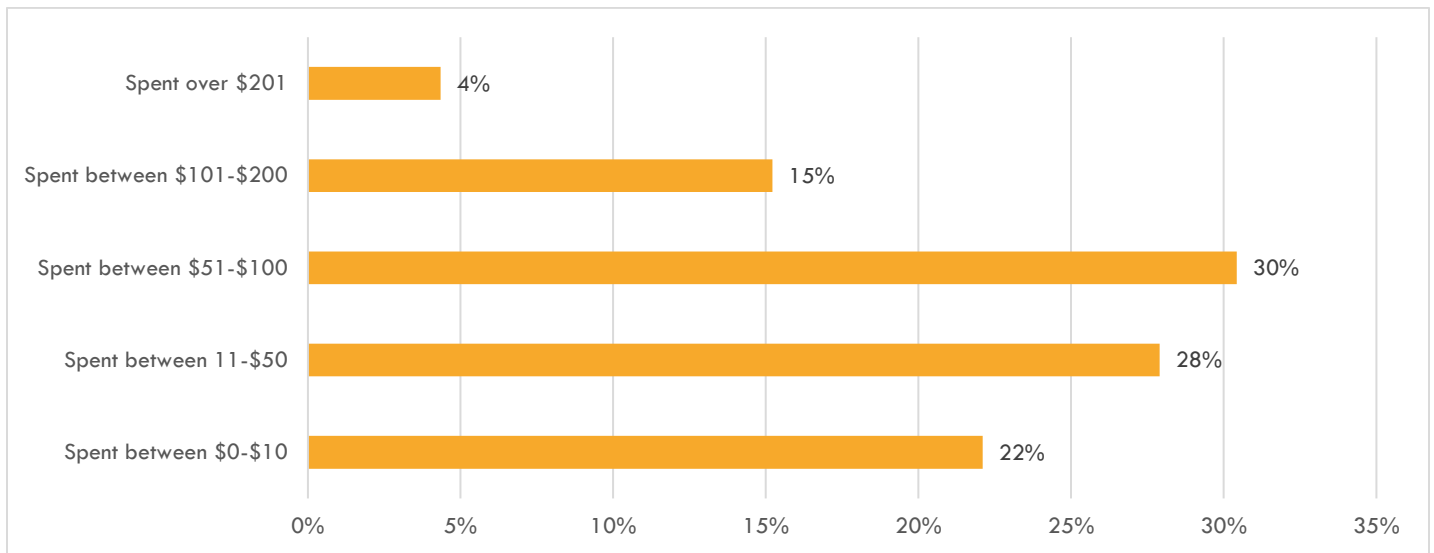


Question 2 additional comments: Hard to find campsites due to demand (2)

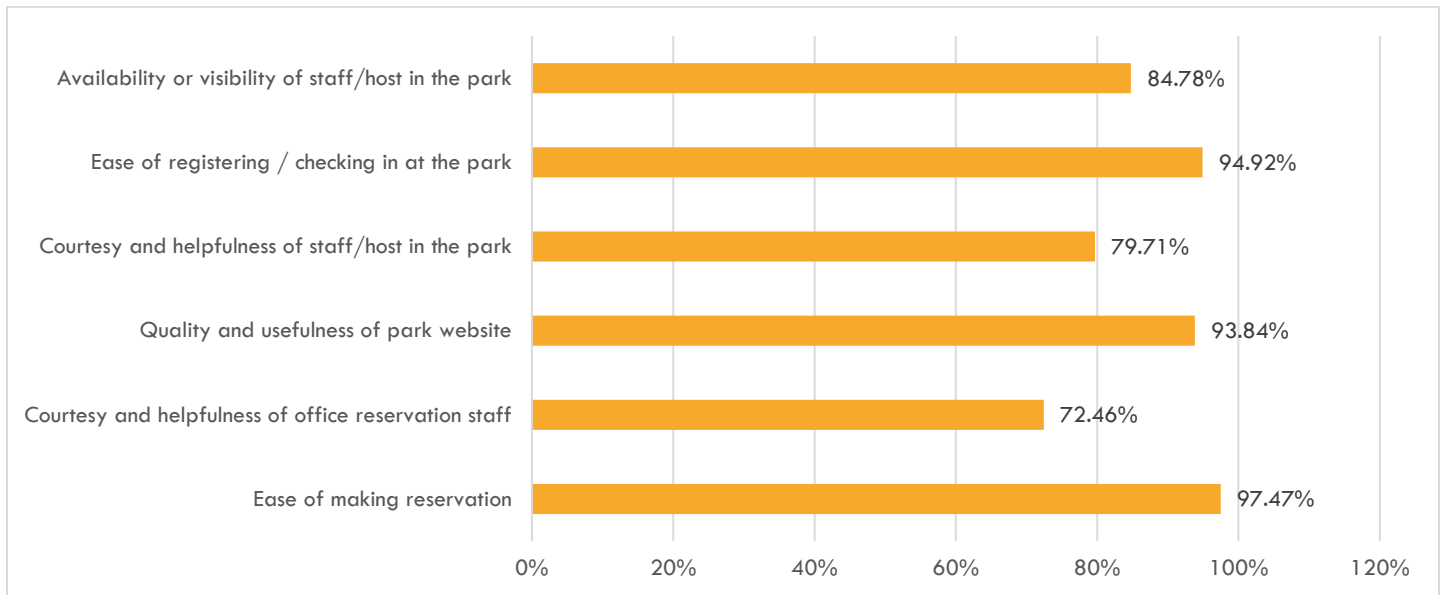
**Question 3: Average Nights Camper Stayed?**

- 2022: 3 nights on average
- 2021: 2.49 nights on average
- 2020: 2.6 nights on average

**Question 4: How much money did you spend in the area for food, gas, supplies, and entertainment (not including park fees paid)?**



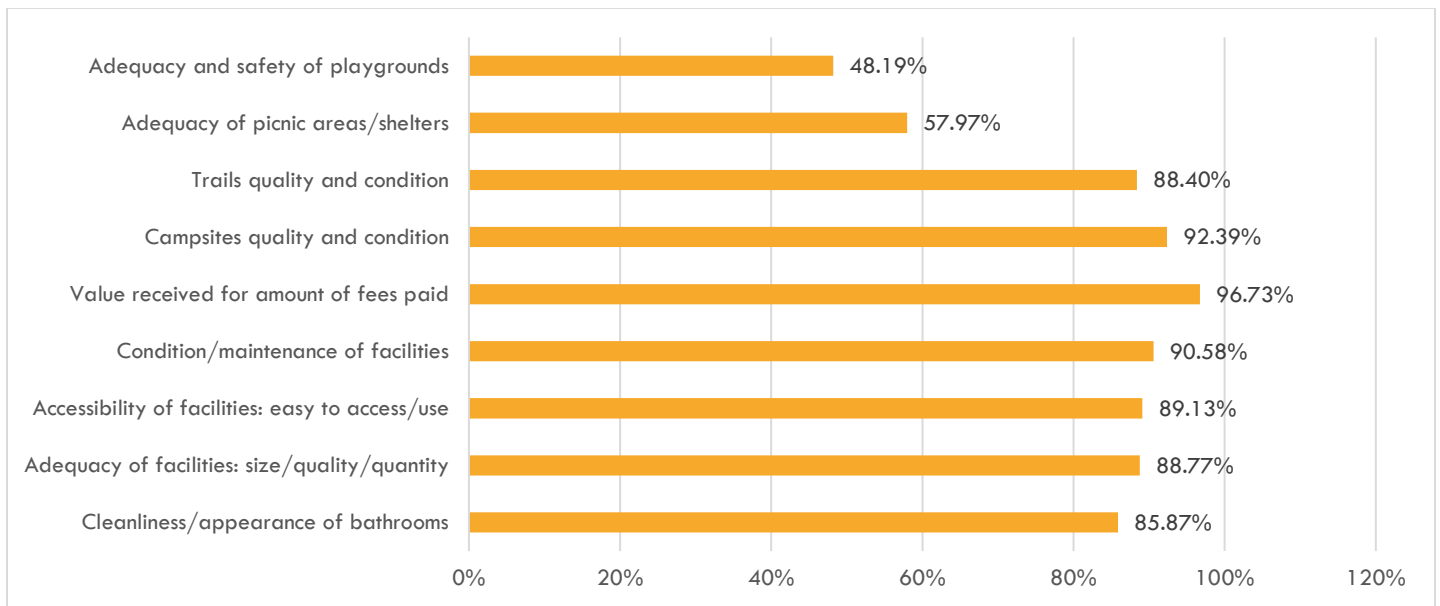
**Question 5: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our service.**



Question 5 additional comments: Friendly and helpful experience with camp staff (18), Did not see staff on site (4)



**Question 6: Please rate your level of satisfaction with our facilities.**



Question 6 additional comments: Positive comments about park facilities (6), Need for additional updates at campsites and within the park (9), need for bathroom and shower area upgrades (14)

**Question 7: What services or facilities would you like to see added at Ledge Park?**

Written Comments Received
Horse shoe pits, disc golf, areas for adult games
Disk golf course would be pretty cool! We use Waupun campground's course almost daily if we are staying there.
Heat in shower
Another Restrooms on top by shelter. More electric sights.
More restrooms not out-houses with showers and nice sink area
more restrooms
Why don't YOU use the pathetic Restrooms on the East side of the campground? Compared to the facilities across from the camp host, has this one ever been cleaned or updated since the turn of the century?
A second toilet/shower bldg. at north end of camping loop (sites 12-15 area).
Plumbed restrooms in the tent camping area
Need to make much bigger the dump station . I stopped my 34 foot 5th wheel to add water and damaged my rear leveler. Very costly. I will never go back . We like Derge Park the best
I know it's a huge expense and an even bigger task, but a second dump station would be awesome
Absolutely love Ledge Park. The one improvement that would be nice (though not cheap) would be to relocate the dump station. It would be nice not to have to drive through the park again after dumping in order to leave. Seems like there is a nice area for one halfway between the current location and the office.
Dump station moved closer to the entrance.
Better dumping station
More electric sites. 50 amp
Maybe more electrical hookup
More electric camp sites large enough for trailers. Especially during crunch times like holidays and fall colors.
50 amp electrical
A place to buy firewood!
Fishing
hot water sinks for washing hands
Ice machine and propane tank
able to purchase ice
Certainly not a requirement as town is close, but ice would be great.
ice sales
Water hookups would be nice. Dump station needs improvement for longer campers; big tree close to exit. Also have to drive through park again once emptied, seems to be going in wrong direction.
Can't think of anything at present.

Nothing I can think of

Don't change anything.

I love this park, I don't think anything needs to be added or changed!

I can't think of any

Satisfied with how it is

Content with what you have

Love that it is a sweet small basic campground. I vote to leave it just as it is

I enjoy the size it is

Better way to make reservations

The distance to the Restrooms limits who I would bring with me to this campground.

More Restrooms/showers

More showers and more flush toilets

More flush restrooms and showers.

Another bath house closer to the campsites

Flush toilets near the middle of the park, near big shelter. The pit toilets are in bad shape, old.

restrooms with running water would make more sense in the tent camping area versus the rv area, as rv's typically have those amenities built in. It would be nice to not have to walk through all the big RVs for a hot shower

We enjoy the natural, rustic vibe of Ledge Park. Some additional amenities might detract from that. However, an additional Restrooms/shower facility might be nice.

Updated Restrooms options at the lower portion by the meditation tree

I would love to see a new shower building With shower that have outside entrances And separate toilet areas

restrooms seem far away compared to other campgrounds. I'm not sure where I would put them though.

I feel like the Restrooms/ shower building could be updated.... better inside lighting, etc. Get rid of the mosquitoes 😊

Better showers and restrooms

Another Restrooms

Larger toilet/shower facility. There were times last year that it was hard to find a time that the one flush toilet or shower was not in use

Fireplace grates on all pits More restrooms and showers

Better roads and camping sites (level) with clearer numbers

The potholes in the roads are rough in vehicles, but does it stop us from coming

showers

I have no idea where to find water, sorry if it's clearly marked. We have only stayed in #20 so we don't drive through the campground and that may be why we haven't found water.

reflective directional signage to loops and campsites

Opening the lower ledge up to group camping or just camping in general again would be nice

Please make those grass sites gravel.

Sites made fuller with plant life. It's not a huge thing for me but the sites are VERY open.

Gravel pads that are level. After a rainy weekend, the sites are muddy or under water.

More camp sites for rvs with electric usage

Water to all sites. That was honestly the only complaint-if you could call it that. Lol we were on the back side of the park which was nice and quiet.

More privacy b/w camp sites w/tress, bushes, greenery, etc.

Fix flooded campsites

Fill in low sites

More electric sites

More electric sites, more flushable toilets

More electric campsites, an extra dump station would be helpful

More electric sites. Water added to sites.

Would additionally like to be able to get a broad overview of dates available for sites from a calendar view so could go directly to available dates rather than trying to keep putting in date guesses.

Convenience store

Swimming or splash pad

Swimming

Wi-Fi. More electric sites.

More trail markings would be nice. Easy to follow trails but trail heads marked would be nice.

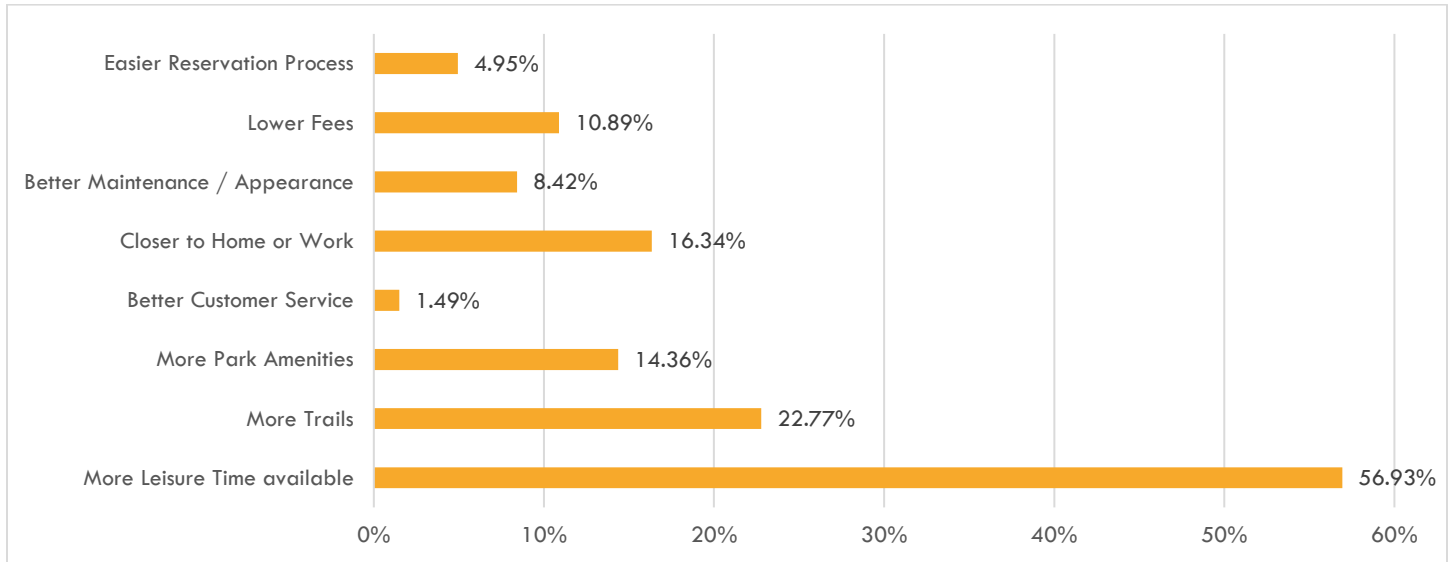
More trails

More walking trails

Maybe cutting some of the vegetation to improve the spectacular views of the marsh.

- Water
- Water at the campsites.
- Water hookups at the sites
- Water hookup at campsites for RVs would be real nice!
- Water hook ups
- Water hookup for Rv
- water spigots closer to campsites
- Water hookup
- Water at sites, camping pads, new restrooms
- Boost your Wi-Fi
- Delivery of wood from site to site! This would greatly help the older campers!

**Question 8: What would encourage you and your family to visit or use Ledge\_Park on a more regular basis?**



**Written Comments Received**

- We like to camp there when we attend Brewer games.
- I reside in Elkhorn, WI, so the park is not too far, but not close enough to me to use more frequently. I stay there primarily while exploring Horicon Marsh.
- Site availability
- Need to make much bigger the dump station. I stopped my 34-foot 5th wheel to add water and damaged my rear leveler. Very costly. I will never go back. We like Derge Park the best
- Install electricity on all sites!
- Some of the trees need trimming and gravel in the campsite pads.
- We camp there because it is close to all members of our party. We normally camp in NE Wisconsin.
- Don't mess this up with excess 'amenities'. It's too small and precious to attract overuse.
- My wife and I thought it was an awesome park, no improvements come to mind, it was a great campground, we'll be back.
- Don't change a thing. Beautiful park!
- We like to visit many parks, mostly state parks. However, state parks are hard to get into, so we have been camping at county parks instead. But we do travel around.
- We love Ledge Park - have been going for years. In fairly recent past, 2-night minimum reservation was required - that wasn't the case when we camped in October. Not sure if policy changed or because it was late in the season, but it was great to be able to make a one-night reservation. We live close enough and enjoy last-minute trips for a night. This is a beautiful park - keep it rustic, quiet and special!
- Overall, really like this park. Staff is great.
- Stayed at park for first time in 2022. Loved it. Nice and quiet. Camping spread out. Easy to get to
- Love this park and the staff. I have stayed a few times each year since I found out about it, both in the non electric and electric areas. It's so nice and quiet and always a great getaway...a hidden gem!
- Being close by & reasonably priced, we like camping at Ledge as a spur of the moment choice. Love this park!
- The online reservation should not cost extra. That is my only complaint
- Restrooms near the tent camping area was stinky and gross.
- Just an update on the restrooms

It would be nice to have the full service Restrooms central to the camping.

Better pit toilets, the smell was dreadful. I've used many, at many different campsites, these are on my list of the worst. Other than the pits, we loved the park!!

We love to camp here but updated showers and pads for campers would be great

Repave the roads around the campsites or at least fill in the pot holes.

Limited number of sites available. Family next to us had an rv and 3 tents on their site.

Sites made to look fuller

Campsites are wash out zones with many muddy and puddle areas when it rains. Broken glass at campsites. Visitor with very loud music rolled into group campsite and was planning on staying but I discouraged them.

Campsites further apart.

Add more sites. We camp with other families and it is difficult to find sites together at times

More camp sites available with electric usage and with some shade for rvs.

Sites 12-19 could really use some additional gravel as they can get very muddy whenever there's rain. I have chosen not to camp if those are the only open sites if it has been or is forecasted to rain. Btw, the road in the campsite area is in terrible condition. Many large potholes and/or pavement missing altogether! With the average value of RVs these days being upwards of 40k-50k\$ no one wants to damage their property on subpar roadways. I have been camping at Ledge Park for over 30 years and the lack of maintenance on the original roads is appalling. In my opinion- to much money was spent on a lavish playground that gets more usage from non-paying locals than it has ever gotten from paid campers or pavilion users.

Again, more secluded electric sites would be awesome, and I bet popular with a lot more people than just us. We have loved the trails at the Ledge for years, and the newer outlook is really awesome for watching sunsets! Any contact with hosts or county employees in person or on the phone has always been friendly and welcoming. We definitely don't have any real complaints.

More campsites. Often times they are all reserved.

More private camping spaces. More lower vegetation might reduce sound.

We will still be back but would come more often if there was water at the sites.

Would like to see some sites have water hookup available at sites

it would be nice to have on line and in person reservation available

we won't stay during the hot days of summer due to no swimming beach or pool. We only stay during the spring or Fall.

The only thing that would have increased my availability to be there more would be Wi-Fi connection as I work from home or anywhere i have dependable wifi connections

We have grandchildren who enjoy mountain biking. Opening a hiking trail to mountain biking would be nice.

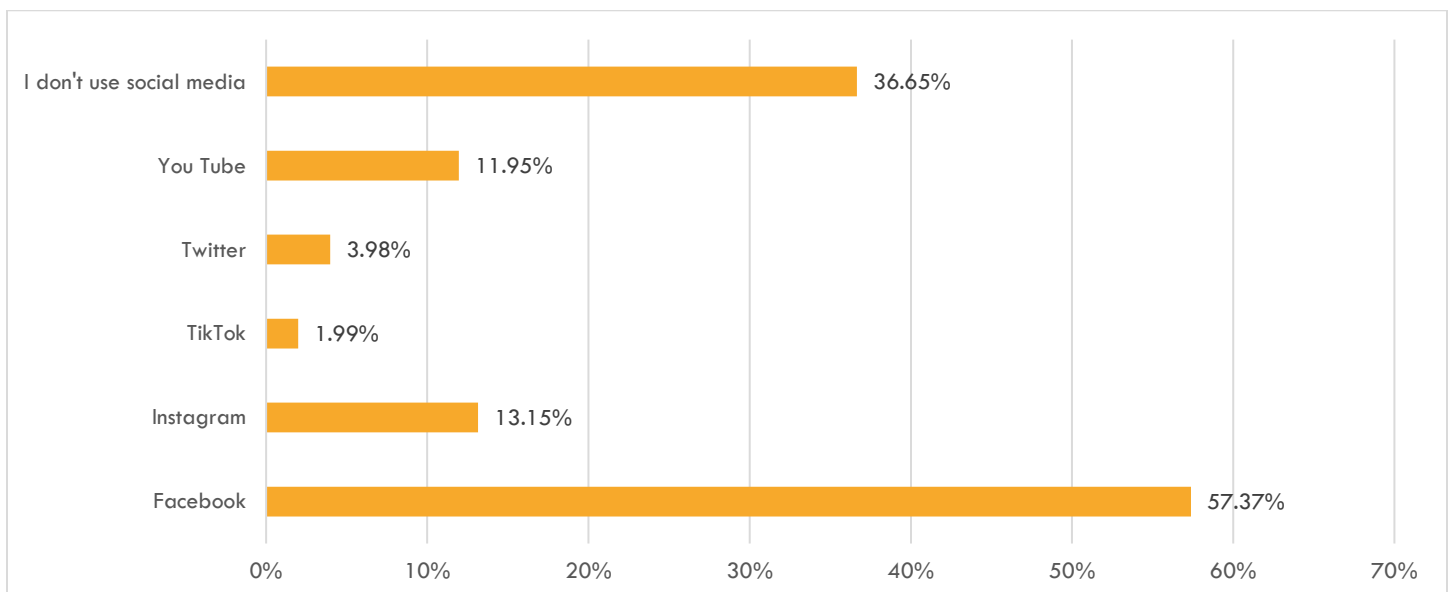
A trail to the marsh would be amazing.

Water as well as electric, new restrooms

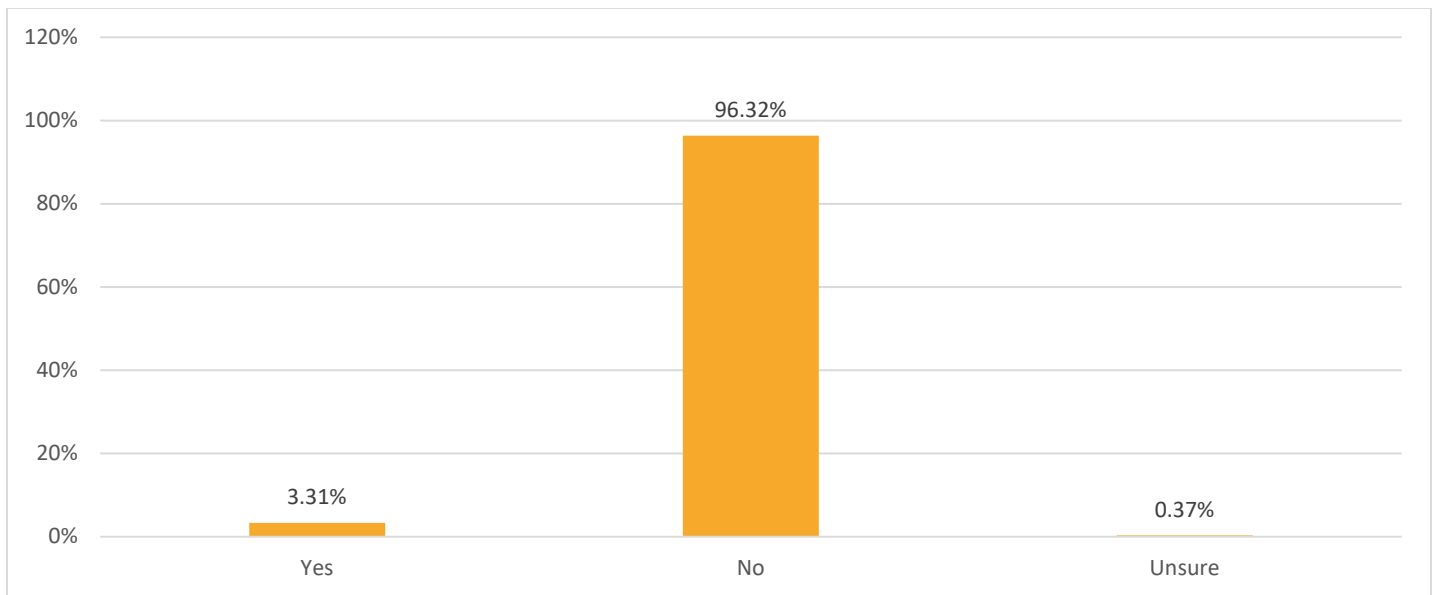
Dry wood.

For our needs the park is wonderful just the way it is. FYI the day we were there and went to dump our sewer, the area was covered with waste as the septic system was full someone emptied right on the road or started emptying and the septic tank overflowed. We went home and emptied at our local county park.

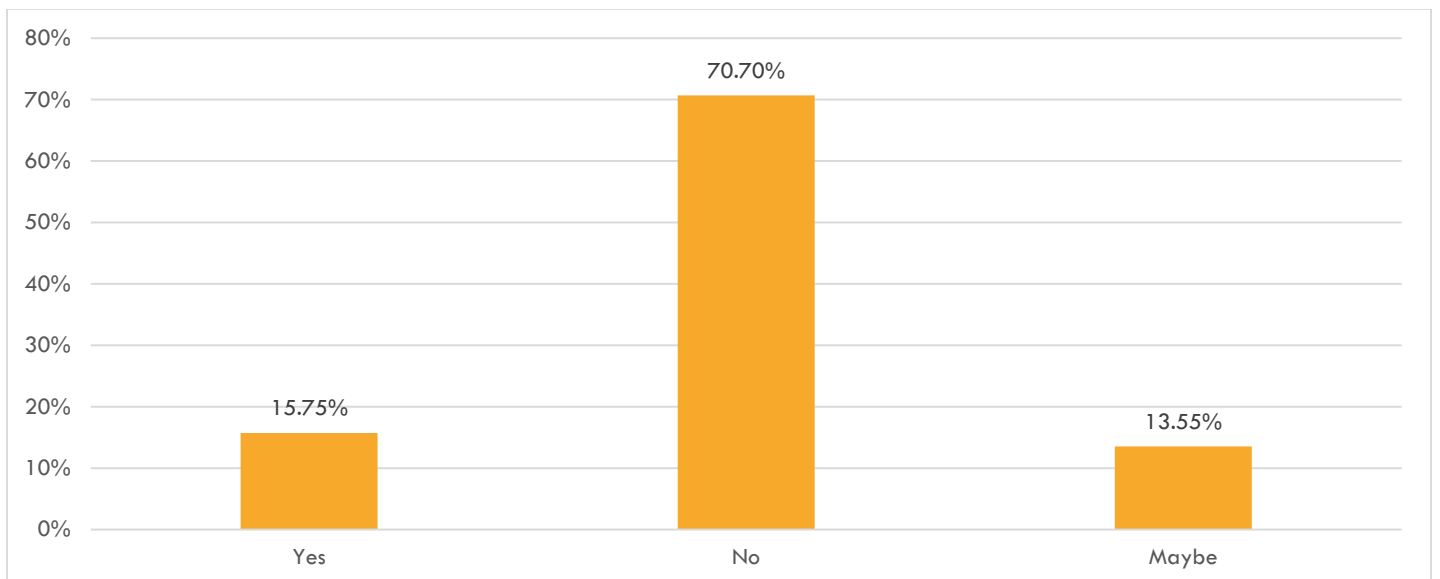
**Question 9: What social media platform(s) do you use to receive travel, recreation, or leisure information?**



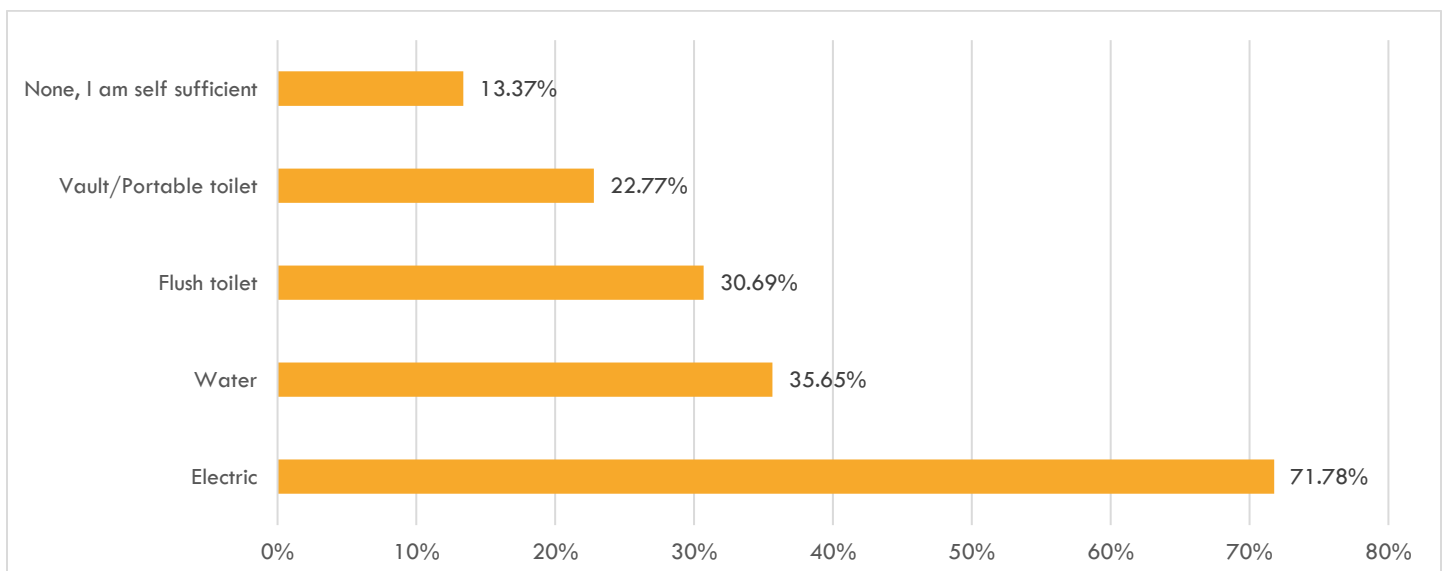
**Question 10: In the past, have you camped in the Dodge County Parks during winter?**



**Question 11: Do you have interest in being able to camp in Dodge County Parks over winter in the future?**



**Question 12: What facilities would need to be available for you to do winter camping?**



## FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Dodge County conducted a series of in-person and virtual focus group interview listening sessions in November and December of 2022. Four different meetings occurred, including:

- Session 1 on November 16: Nitschke Mounds Friends Group (8 total attendees)
- Session 2 on December 14: Municipal and School District Staff (6 total attendees)
- Session 3 on December 14: Trails and Public Health Representatives (10 total attendees)
- Session 4 on December 14: Harnischfeger Park and Dodge County Park Donors (3 total attendees)

Like the survey, the results were used to form the core recommendations of this plan. The following is a summary of all responses received.

### What People Liked Most Today?

- Wide variety of recreational opportunities offered in the parks and that they are distributed around the county well.
- Like the balance in each park in terms of retaining natural resources and more active recreational uses (camping).
- Trails, especially the Gold Star Trail, is used frequently and really valued by residents.
- Community pulled together to acquire Harnischfeger Park, which was privately-owned and now it features the Fall Festival and a wide/unique array of recreational, cultural, and historic opportunities.
- Campers come to the Dodge County parks from all over, which helps drive tourism and camp sites are pretty much 100% occupied on weekends in the summer.
- Overall, hiking trails and river access are great in Dodge County. Ledge Park observation area and boardwalk are very popular.

### What Needs Improvement Today?

- Ecological restoration to remove invasive species and improve prairies and oak savannahs
- Some existing gaps in the park locations within Dodge County – northwest area only has Derge but that is where most of population is located, and that park offers limited recreational opportunities now. Reevaluate the park service areas through this plan to identify gaps.
- Expanding trails throughout the County (all users, including horses). Completion of the Gold Star Trail and Pelican Path. Add more winter trail options in parks.
- Comparison of Dodge County's recreational offerings to those of neighboring counties to find out what's missing here.
- ADA access throughout the parks with signage and ADA playgrounds could be improved.
- Expand existing parks to offer new recreational opportunities and to retain existing natural resource areas.
- Establish policies for benchmarks related to sustainability and conservation with new developments in the parks.
- On the existing trails, add bollards or gates where they cross roadways to prevent driving on trails and parking in unauthorized areas.
- Lots of people use parks for off-leash dog runs now – a dedicated facility for this would hopefully help in stopping this from happening and increasing enforcement could as well.
- Improve and upgrade campsites in all parks with electric service.
- Better connectivity and off-street opportunities along the Glacial River Trail, specially in Clyman and south into Watertown. Expand on-road opportunities and connections across Dodge County on underutilized roads by establishing a vision for county-wide connectivity.
- Expand camping opportunities in Harnischfeger Park, but need to expand site to accommodate this.
- Increase wayfinding signage along existing trails and add bathrooms. Also, adding warning signage along trails for usability, safety, and establishing a rating system for accessibility.
- River level fluctuation at Harnischfeger Park makes kayak launch and navigation challenging. Need to improve coordination with dams on this.
- Add kayak/canoe rentals at Derge Park to compliment the rentals in the City of Beaver Dam and in Horicon in replacement of private entity boat tours starting downtown.

### What New Recreational Opportunities Do People Want To See?

- Mountain biking, but this would be best suited for a new park or existing park expansion area.
- Horse trails and horse camping would be best suited for new park or existing park expansion area.
- Off-leash dog park area would also be best suited for new park or existing park expansion area.

- Adding more winter trails and recreational opportunities in existing parks.
- Expanding climbing opportunities at Ledge Park.
- Increase opportunities for kayaking/canoeing on rivers with rental options.
- Trail connection improvements from Ledge Park to Mayville and Horicon (work with Wings Over Wisconsin on this), from Fox Lake to Beaver Dam (Gold Star Trail), from Columbus to Hartford and Horicon, from Hustisford to Wild Goose State Trail (Pelican Path), from Horicon to the Horicon Marsh (work with the DNR on this), and from Waupun to Wild Goose State Trail and Horicon Marsh.
- Add a Dodge County Park in the Town of Hustisford.
- Improve coordination with local area School Districts in utilizing the parks more and potential for projects in the parks using school groups.
- Establish a connected grid across Dodge County with off-road bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities.
- Connect trails to playground equipment and similar destinations in parks. A centrally-located bicycle shop or other stops along the trails would provide great connectivity and benefits for people staying longer and spending money in Dodge County.
- Promote a healthy community and improve public health through outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Better connections to the Horicon Marsh and coordination on tourism efforts/events.
- New parks could be added in Dodge County, especially if old scout camps are for sale or other similar unique natural features are present on-site (Dodge County typically only will entertain options for new parks over 100 acres).
- Add telescope or similar facility to the observation area at Ledge Park.

#### **Nitschke Mounds-Specific Feedback**

- Ecological restoration to remove invasive species and improve prairies and oak savannahs.
- Need a parking area and stop for horse riders on Wild Goose with bathrooms – could have natural camp sites offered too – west side of park could potentially accommodate this and get trail users off of ROW.
- Off-leash dog area on west side might work but conflicts with horse travelers along trail and the archaeological assets of the site.
- Could add a lookout tower over the mounds and park.
- Add meeting space for education, community gatherings, Native American exhibits, and cultural artifacts.
- Storybook trail is being considered for the park now – recommended for the future.
- Need a Master Plan for the site – all other locations have one except for this park.
- Map the removed mounds on-site, but not feasible to add landmarks for them.
- Need electric to the existing shelter to become more usable – shelter could be improved with signage and displays for youth education – partner with School Districts to get kids out here to see it and learn about the history.
- Expand, widen, and improve the surfacing of trails in the park and connection to the Wild Goose State Trail.

#### **What Other Communities Have Good Examples That Could Be Replicated in Dodge County?**

- Using monuments or other public art features to draw people to different locations and establish a cohesive brand for tourist attraction across Dodge County parks and trails (ex. Beaver Dam murals).
- Developing community-wide maps to amenities, trails, and destinations (ex. Ice Age Trail or Rock River Trail Alliance website).
- Old Abe Trail and El Roy Sparta Trail attracts visitors for longer trips because it has interconnected destinations to visit.
- Vilas County offers a fully developed off-street trail network that could work in Dodge County.
- Beaver Dam added limestone terracing along the shoreline which has increased the number of fishermen. Could be done near Derge Park.
- Dane County really promotes people donating land for future parks. This could be replicated in Dodge County to add more parkland.
- Door County and WisDNR do a lot more with interpretive signage, which could be added in Dodge County over time.
- County-wide tour events that go to all parks and destinations in Dodge County. Could leverage existing private tour groups to do more of this.

### **What Emerging Trends Are There Related to Parks and Recreation?**

- Connecting biking, walking, and hiking trails to and from each community, park, and destination across the county.
- Other counties have used user-fees for trail improvement, but Dodge County traditionally has used donations and grant funds to complete trail expansions. However, it could be an option in the future.
- Better connect the online presence of recreational offerings across the county. Need to add links on municipal websites to Dodge County parks and trails.
- Large increase in UTV riders, which could be better incorporated in parks or connections to destinations across the county.

### **What Are Your Top Priorities For The Future?**

- Increasing coordination, communication, and distribution of information across the county (social media, websites, maps, events, word of mouth, etc.).
- Keep Dodge County Parks nature-based with outdoor amenities, don't over subscribe the sites where this could be lost.
- Increase the number of events held in Dodge County Parks.
- Update and complete a new Dodge County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan working with other jurisdictions on planning for bicycle and pedestrian connections and add facilities when county highways are redone.
- Improve trail system connectivity for commuters, young people, and recreation through safety improvements and off-road facilities for all user level types. Address low-hanging fruit implementation options first with the intent of implementing long-range vision overtime.
- Establish Dodge County as a premier destination for rural outdoor recreation and wildlife viewing to attract visitors who come for multiple days (all levels – federal, state, county, and local).
- Connecting opportunities with the private sector and local groups who can assist in funding improvements (ex. Beaver Dam Area Community Foundation, Friends Groups, Health Organizations, etc.)

## **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE RESPONSES**

A public open house event was held on June 29, 2023. This event provided an opportunity for the public to review draft materials, ask questions of staff and consultants, and provide comments on the draft plan prior to Land Resources and Parks Committee and County Board action on the plan. Approximately 10 total people were in attendance for the public open house. Comments included:

- Agreement and support for the recommended trails as depicted on Map 6 and the Astico Park recommendation graphics.
- Desire to see increased and improved multi-use trail and on-road bicycle connections throughout Dodge County.
- Important to continue to prioritize the potential Pelican Path connection within this plan.



# PART 5: POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

## GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

Dodge County has successfully in several past efforts to obtain grant funding for various projects within the parks and trails system. Over the last decade, the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department has been successfully awarded the following grants for parks and trails:

FIGURE 1.14 PREVIOUS GRANT AWARDS

Grant Award	Project
2022 WisDOT Transportation Alternatives Grant	Gold Star Memorial Trail Phase 2 Design and Construction
2022 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2022 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2021 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2021 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2020 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2020 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2019 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2019 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2019 Stewardship – Urban Rivers Grant	Gold Star Memorial Trail Phase 1 Design and Construction
2018 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2018 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2018 Urban Forestry Grant	Gravel Bed Nursery, Inventory, and Plantings at Derge and Ledge Parks
2017 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2017 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2017 Urban Forestry Grant	Harnischfeger Park Tree Inventory & Planting
2016 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2016 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2016 Urban Forestry Grant	Astico Park Tree Inventory & Planting
2016 DNR – Aids for Development of Local Parks Grant	Gold Star Memorial Trail Phase 1 Design and Construction
2016 DNR – Recreation Trails	Gold Star Memorial Trail Phase 1 Design and Construction
2016 DNR – Recreation Trails	Gold Star Memorial Trail Phase 1 Design and Construction (Theiler Park)
2015 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2015 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2014 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2014 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2013 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2013 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2012 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2012 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2011 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2011 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2010 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2010 Snowmobile Aids Grant	West Bend Bridge Construction
2010 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2009 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2009 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2009 FEMA Emergency Grant	West Bend Bridge Construction
2009 County Conservation Aids	Harnischfeger Park Wildlife Ponds Phase II Development
2008 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2008 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance Supplemental
2008 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2008 County Conservation Aids	Harnischfeger Park Wildlife Ponds Phase I Development
2007 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2007 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance Supplemental
2007 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance

2007 DNR – Recreational Trails Act	Wild Goose State Trail Parking Lot Expansion
2006 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2006 Snowmobile Aids Grant – Bridge	Irish Creek Bridge
2006 Snowmobile Aids Grant – Bridge	Butler Creek Bridge
2006 Snowmobile Aids Grant – Bridge	Silver Creek Bridge
2006 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2005 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2005 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2005 DNR – Aids for Development of Local Parks	Harnischfeger Park Canoe Launch
2004 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2004 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2004 DNR – Stewardship – Urban River Grant	Harnischfeger Park Acquisition
2003 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2003 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2003 DNR – Federal Recreational Trails Act	Wild Goose State Trail Rehabilitation
2003 DNR – Land & Water Construction Fund	NMP Acquisition
2003 DNR – Aids for Development of Local Parks	Ledge Park Toilet & Shower Building Construction
2003 DNR – Aids for Development of Local Parks	Astico Park Entrance and Camping Rehabilitation
2002 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2002 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Alto Creek Bridge
2002 Snowmobile Aids Grant	New Trails Added (77.5 miles)
2002 DNR – Aids for Development of Local Parks	Ledge Park Pond/Shelter Project
2002 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2001 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2001 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance
2000 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance
2000 Snowmobile Aids Grant	Snowmobile Trail Network Maintenance, Supplemental
2000 ATV Trail Aids Grant	ATV Trail Network Maintenance

FIGURE 1.15: POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead- line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
<b>Wisconsin Knowles-Nelson</b>						
<a href="#">Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)</a>	To acquire or develop public, nature-based outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$4 million avail. per yr.</li> <li>• 50% local match per project</li> </ul>	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required</li> <li>• Priority for land acquisition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projects must comply with ADA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
<a href="#">Urban Greenspace Program (UGS)</a>	To acquire land to provide natural space within or near urban areas or to protect scenic or ecological features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1.6 million avail. per yr.</li> <li>• 50% local match per project</li> </ul>	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required</li> <li>▪ Projects must comply with ADA</li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead-line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
<a href="#">Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)</a>	To acquire development rights for nature-based outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1.6 million avail. per yr.</li> <li>• 50% local match per project</li> </ul>	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds available to acquire development rights in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial, or commercial developments are in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May include enhancements of outdoor recreation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
<a href="#">Urban Rivers Grant Program (UR)</a>	To acquire lands or rights in lands adjacent to urban rivers for the purpose of preserving or restoring them for economic revitalization or nature-based outdoor recreation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$800,000 avail. per yr.</li> <li>• 50% local match per project</li> </ul>	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projects must comply with ADA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
<a href="#">Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)</a>	To acquire or develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% local match per project</li> <li>• Land acquisition</li> <li>• Development of recreational facilities</li> </ul>	May 1	A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required.	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
<a href="#">Recreational Trails Program (RTP)</a>	To maintain, develop, rehabilitate, and acquire land for motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant assistance to develop or maintain trails up to 80%.</li> <li>• Awards up to \$100,000.</li> <li>• Rehabilitation and maintenance of existing trails and trailhead facilities.</li> <li>• Development of new trails, trail linkages, and trailhead facilities with some restrictions on federal lands.</li> <li>• Acquisition of property for trails in areas with limited trail opportunities.</li> </ul>	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds may only be used on trails which have been identified in, or which further a specific goal of a local, county, or state trail plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funds may be used on trails that are referenced in a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan</li> <li>▪ Projects must comply with ADA.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
<b>Statewide Multi-Modal Improvement Program (SMIP)</b>						
<a href="#">Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)</a>	To fund facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, including rehabilitating and operating historic transportation buildings and structures, restoring railway depots, and landscaping near transportation facilities.	20% required match	January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construction projects must be over \$100,000.</li> <li>▪ Non-construction projects must be over \$50,000.</li> </ul>	WisDOT	<a href="https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/tap.aspx">https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/tap.aspx</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead- line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
<a href="#">Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U)</a>	To fund a range of transportation-related activities, including projects on higher function local roads and local safety improvements.	WisDOT recommends federal funding be approved at the 80% maximum but allows Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committees to provide as low as 50% federal funding at approval.	Spring	For 2022-2027 program development, total funds available are \$92.5 million.	WisDOT	<a href="https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-urban.aspx">https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-urban.aspx</a>
<a href="#">Surface Transportation Program – Rural (STP-R)</a>	To fund a wide range of transportation-related activities, including projects on higher function local roads and local safety improvements.	WisDOT recommends federal funding be approved at the 80% maximum but allows Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committees to provide as low as 50% federal funding at approval.	Spring	For 2022-2027 program development, total funds available are \$43.3 million.	WisDOT	<a href="https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-rural.aspx">https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-rural.aspx</a>
<b>Section 402-Highway Safety Funds</b>						
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	To develop and implement on a continuing basis stand-alone safety projects designed to reduce the number and severity of crashes on all streets and highways.	Federal funding ratio usually 90%, requiring a 10% match of state and/or local funds.	February	Funds highway safety projects at sites that have experienced a high crash history. Emphasis is on low-cost options that can be implemented quickly.	WisDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program	<a href="https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx">https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx</a>
<b>Other Programs</b>						
Urban Forestry Grants	To fund tree maintenance, planting, and public awareness.	\$1,000-\$25,000 grants awarded with a 50% local match	Oct 1	Urban forestry, training, and street tree inventory	Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/urbanforests/grants">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/urbanforests/grants</a>
Hazard Elimination Program	To improve railway-highway crossings	10% local match per project	August	Communities are encouraged to start working with the District Office.	WisDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	<a href="https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx">https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx</a>
PeopleForBikes	To improve bicycling in the U.S.		Oct 31		People For Bikes	<a href="https://www.peopleforbikes.org/">https://www.peopleforbikes.org/</a>
Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	To support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users.	\$200,000-\$50 million	Sept 15	Eligible projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop or update a comprehensive safety action plan (Action Plan).</li> <li>• Conduct planning, design, and development activities in support of an Action Plan.</li> <li>• Carry out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan.</li> </ul>	US DOT	<a href="https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A">https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead-line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
BLM Headquarters Wildlife Resource Management	To maintain, restore, and conserve species and their habitats.	\$25,000-\$1.5 million	April 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect biodiversity.</li> <li>• Identify, conserve, and restore priority habitats.</li> <li>• Promote resiliency</li> </ul>	U.S. Dept of Interior	pglass@blm.gov
BLM Headquarters Recreation and Visitor Services	To provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities that benefit public and local communities.			<p>Some goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage, facilitate, and improve partnership with and access to public lands.</li> <li>• Improve climate resiliency on public lands while enhancing outdoor recreational opportunities and activities.</li> <li>• Improve public health and safety at developed recreation sites and areas by updating and modernizing infrastructure.</li> <li>• Invite increased recreational access for all Americans to encourage enjoyment of BLM-managed public lands and waters.</li> </ul>	U.S. Dept of Interior	<a href="https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation">https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation</a>
North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)	To increase bird populations and wetland habitat while supporting local economies and American traditions such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, family farming, and cattle ranching.	Up to \$2 million	Feb 5 July 8 Oct 13	Projects must involve only long-term protection, restoration, enhancement, and/or establishment of wetland and associated upland habitats to benefit migratory birds.	US Dept of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service	<a href="https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-grants-us-standard">https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-grants-us-standard</a>
AARP Community Challenge	Small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average grant amount \$11,500.</li> <li>• 76% of grants less than \$15,000.</li> </ul>	March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve public spaces, housing, transportation, and civic engagement.</li> <li>• Support diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> <li>• Build engagement for programs under new federal laws.</li> <li>• Pursue innovative ideas that support people age 50 or older.</li> </ul>	AARP	<a href="https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/">https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead-line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Private Donations	Local donations, fundraising and sponsorship opportunities by businesses and/or individuals					
Wisconsin Main Street Community Program	To revitalize comprehensive downtown programs, including streetscapes.	Technical Assistance	No Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General downtown program.</li> <li>• May benefit trail enhancements through streetscaping.</li> </ul>	National Main Street Center	<a href="https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/main-street/">https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/main-street/</a>
<b>Aquatic Restoration Programs</b>						
Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention and Management Grants	To manage and educate on AIS.	\$24,000-\$150,000, depending on type of grant	Nov 15	Types of grants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIS Prevention</li> <li>• Clean Boats, Clean Waters</li> <li>• AIS Population Management</li> <li>• Early Detection &amp; Response</li> <li>• AIS Research &amp; Demonstration</li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG</a>
Surface Water Restoration and Management Grants	To provide cost-sharing for surface water protection and restoration. Funding available for education, ecological assessments, planning, and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants cover up to 75% of costs.</li> <li>• \$25,000-\$200,000, depending on type of grant.</li> </ul>	Nov 15	Types of grants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Lakes &amp; Rivers</li> <li>• Surface Water Restoration</li> <li>• Management Plan Implementation</li> <li>• Ordinance Development</li> <li>• Fee Simple Land Easement &amp; Acquisition</li> <li>• Wetland Restoration Incentives</li> </ul>	Wisconsin DNR	<a href="https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/SurfaceWater.html">https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/SurfaceWater.html</a>
<b>Sustainability Programs</b>						
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin	To fund many different kinds of projects that benefit wildlife.	Grants vary by type, some open to annual applications, and some by invitation only.	Varies	Types of grants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bird Protection Fund</li> <li>• C.D. Besadny Conservation Fund</li> <li>• Norma and Stanley DeBoer Quiet Trails Fund</li> </ul>	Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin	<a href="https://www.wisconsinconservation.org/grant-programs/">https://www.wisconsinconservation.org/grant-programs/</a>
Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants	Among other priorities, offers grants that allow for pocket parks and community gardens as part of their funding.	Maximum \$500,000	July 28	Types of grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Grants</li> <li>• Implementation Grants</li> </ul>	HUD	<a href="https://www.hud.gov/program_office/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/planninggrants">https://www.hud.gov/program_office/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/planninggrants</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead-line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge	To help provide planning support, technical assistance, and training to foster placemaking activities in rural communities.	Maximum \$250,000	Aug 15	<a href="#">Past recipients</a> have reviewed critical water infrastructure needs and planned to turn vacant lots into green infrastructure.	USDA	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/initiatives/rural-placemaking-innovation-challenge">https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/initiatives/rural-placemaking-innovation-challenge</a>
National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program	Supports long-term wetland conservation by awarding up to \$1 million for wetland conservation projects.	Not listed	Not listed		US Fish and Wildlife Service	<a href="https://www.fws.gov/story/national-coastal-wetlands-conservation-grants">https://www.fws.gov/story/national-coastal-wetlands-conservation-grants</a>
Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant	To reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the <a href="#">National Flood Insurance Program</a> .	\$25,000-\$900,000, depending on type of grant and recipient	Jan 28	Can include parks and similar green spaces.	FEMA	<a href="https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/floods">https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/floods</a>
Urban & Community Forestry Program	Technical, financial, and educational assistance program, delivering nature-based solutions to ensure a resilient and equitable tree canopy.			Some areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> </ul>	US Forest Service	<a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf">https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf</a>
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs	To support community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities.			Can include parks and similar green spaces.	HUD	<a href="https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/">https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/</a>
Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program	To develop community capacity to sustain local natural resources by providing modest financial assistance to diverse local partnerships focused on improving water quality, watersheds, and the species and habitats they support.	\$20,000-\$50,000	Jan 25	Ecological improvements may include one or more of the following: wetland, riparian, forest and coastal habitat restoration; wildlife conservation, community tree canopy enhancement, water quality monitoring and green infrastructure best management practices for managing run-off.	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	<a href="https://www.nfwf.org/programs/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program-2022-request-proposals">https://www.nfwf.org/programs/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program-2022-request-proposals</a>
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Environmental Grant	Awards grants through invited proposals and the occasional funding competition.	Although unsolicited proposals not being considered, inquiries about future support for projects that fall within the Environment Program's four focuses can be submitted through a letter of inquiry.		Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Conservation</li> <li>• Wildlife and Energy Development</li> <li>• Strengthening the Conservation Field</li> <li>• Environmental Stewardship in the Tri-State Area</li> </ul>	Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	<a href="https://www.ddcf.org/grants/">https://www.ddcf.org/grants/</a>

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead- line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Bruce Krier Charitable Foundation Education and Environmental Grants for Wisconsin-based Organizations	To support local education and environmental causes.	Funds principally but not limited to the counties of Sheboygan and Ozaukee.	Feb 28		Bruce Krier Charitable Foundation	<a href="https://brucekrierfoundation.org/grant-making/guidelines/">https://brucekrierfoundation.org/grant-making/guidelines/</a>
Cornell Douglas Foundation Grants	For nonprofits to advocate for environmental health and justice, encourage stewardship of the environment, and further respect for sustainability of resources.	Average grant amount \$10,000.	Year-round	Some areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Health &amp; Justice</li> <li>• Land Conservation</li> <li>• Sustainability of Resources</li> <li>• Watershed Protection</li> </ul>	Cornell Douglas Foundation	<a href="https://cornelldouglas.org/apply/">https://cornelldouglas.org/apply/</a>
NiSource Charitable Foundation Grants	Among other areas of focus, these grants fund nonprofits' work on environmental stewardship: protection and restoration of natural resources, energy conservation, and environmental work.	Not listed	Not listed		NiSource Charitable Foundation	<a href="https://www.nisource.com/company/contact-us">https://www.nisource.com/company/contact-us</a>
Mitsubishi Corporation Grants	For nonprofits that work on environmental causes throughout the Americas, encompassing both the physical and social environments in which we live.	Not listed	Year-round	Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• Sustainable development</li> <li>• Environmental justice</li> <li>• Environmental education</li> </ul>	Mitsubishi Corporation	<a href="https://www.mitsubishicorp.com/us/en/mcfa/">https://www.mitsubishicorp.com/us/en/mcfa/</a> <a href="https://www.mitsubishicorp.com/us/en/mcfa/">https://www.mitsubishicorp.com/us/en/mcfa/</a>
Lawrence Foundation Grants	For nonprofits to support environmental, education, human services, and other causes.	Not listed	April 30 Oct 31	Awards both program and operating grants with no geographical restrictions.	Lawrence Foundation	<a href="https://thelawrencefoundation.org/application-process">https://thelawrencefoundation.org/application-process</a>
Georgia-Pacific Foundation Grant	For nonprofits to support environmental programs (among several areas of focus).	Not listed	Rolling cycle	One area of focus: environmental programs that promote clean air and water, recycling, and land and resource conservation	Georgia-Pacific Foundation	<a href="https://www.gp.com/community">https://www.gp.com/community</a>
Waste Management Charitable Giving	For nonprofits to provide renewal resources to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and to conserve and maintain wetlands, wildlife habitats, and green spaces.	Not listed	Year-round		Waste Management	<a href="https://www.wm.com/us/en/inside-wm/social-impact/community-impact">https://www.wm.com/us/en/inside-wm/social-impact/community-impact</a>



Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Dead-line	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Patagonia Environmental Grants	Support innovative work that addresses the root causes of the environmental crisis and seeks to protect both the environment and affected communities.	\$5,000-\$20,000, according to program	Varies		Patagonia	<a href="https://www.patagonia.com/how-we-fund/">https://www.patagonia.com/how-we-fund/</a>
SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund	One focus: Habitat protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications accepted by request only.</li> <li>• Most grants \$10,000-\$25,000.</li> </ul>	April 30 Nov 30		SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund	<a href="https://swbg-conservationfund.org/grant-seekers/">https://swbg-conservationfund.org/grant-seekers/</a>
Walmart Foundation National Giving Program Grant	For non-profits that operate on a national scope through affiliates in many states around the country or through programs that operate regionally/locally but seek funding to replicate program activities nationally.	\$250,000 and above	Year-round	Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunger Relief &amp; Healthy Eating</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Women's Economic Empowerment</li> <li>• Career Opportunity</li> </ul>	Walmart Foundation	<a href="https://walmart.org/how-we-give">https://walmart.org/how-we-give</a>
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	To provide professional services to help achieve conservation and outdoor recreation project vision.	Does not provide financial assistance or monetary grants.	March 1	<a href="#">Contact the state program manager</a> to discuss the proposed project and current application process.	National Park Service	<a href="https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm">https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm</a>
<b>Solar Programs</b>						
High Energy Cost Grants	Assists with lowering energy costs for families and individuals in areas with extremely high per-household energy costs.	\$100,000-\$3 million	July 6	An allowable use of funds is for renewable energy facilities, including solar, wind, hydropower or biomass technologies used for on- or off-grid.	USDA	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/electric-programs/high-energy-cost-grants">https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/electric-programs/high-energy-cost-grants</a>
Solar for Good	To foster the expansion of solar power among nonprofits in Wisconsin.		Sept 1	Awards grant funding or solar panels to nonprofit organizations, helping them switch to clean, renewable, solar energy.	RENEW Wisconsin	<a href="https://www.renewwisconsin.org/solarforgood/">https://www.renewwisconsin.org/solarforgood/</a>

## OTHER ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES

Beyond seeking grant funding to support park and recreational projects over the planning, the following includes other potential funding sources that should be further explored and pursued for the implementation of this plan. Many are directly related to the collaboration recommendations (Chapter 8), funding analysis (Chapter 9), and supporting action items (Chapter 10) documented within the plan.

Other alternative funding sources include:

- Tourism agencies, economic development groups, chambers of commerce, cultural, art, and civic groups, and convention and visitor bureaus
- Private businesses, charitable groups, and similar private organizations, endowments, and foundations
- Private residents, landowners, donation programs, and volunteer and friends groups
- Public health groups, organizations, hospitals, and clinics
- Municipal, state, and federal government entities
- School districts, private schools, technical colleges, and universities

# **PART 6: POTENTIAL EXISTING PARK EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES**

## **EXPANSION OPPORTUNITY MAPS**

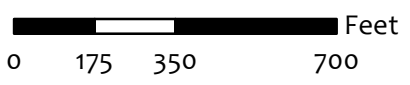
Dodge County recognizes that expansion opportunities of existing parks may provide an effective way of expanding recreational offerings within each location. This strategy has been successfully utilized over the years in several existing parks. Each map listed within this section is a generalized location of a potential expansion of the park's boundaries where logical extensions of recreational activities could take place in the long-term. They are not intended to be exact boundaries and any expansion is based on the acquisition of land by Dodge County and the neighboring landowner's willingness to sell such land. Any potential future land acquisition will be done on a case-by-case basis working with private landowners in a coordinated effort.

MAP 6.1: ASTICO PARK

# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Astico Park

- Existing Snow-Mobile Trails
- Rail
- US or State Highway
- Other Road
- County Park
- County Park Footprint
- Parcels
- Potential Expansion Area (Long Term)
- Surface Water



Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA

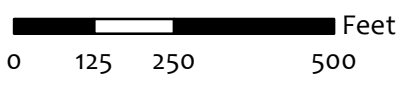


MAP 6.2: DERGE PARK

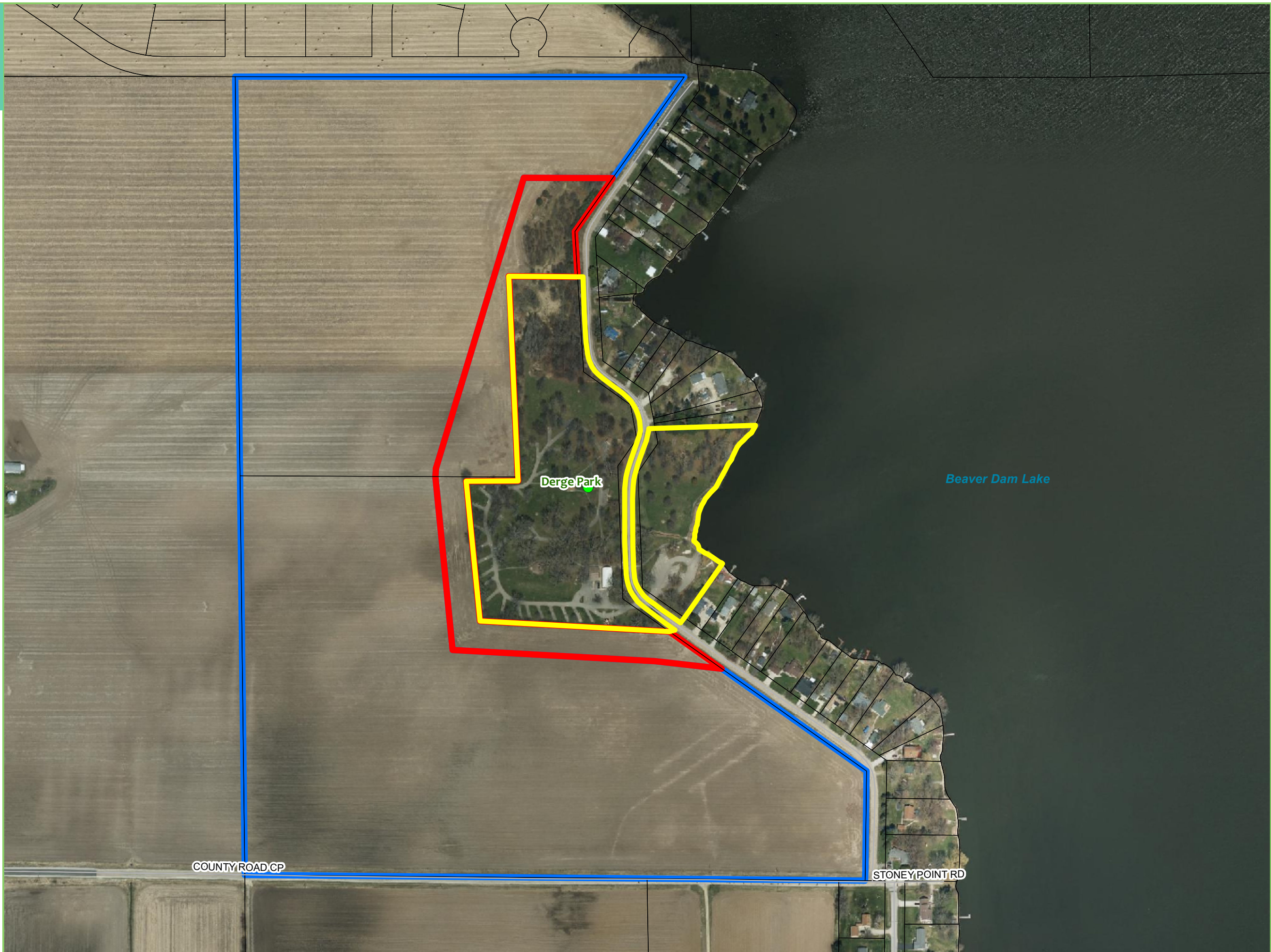
# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Derge Park

- Roads
- County Park
- ▭ County Park Footprint
- ▭ Parcels
- ▭ Priority Expansion Area
- ▭ Potential Expansion Area (Long Term)



Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA



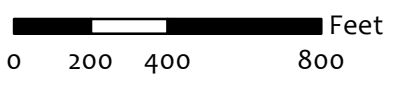
MAP 6.3: HARNISCHFEGER PARK



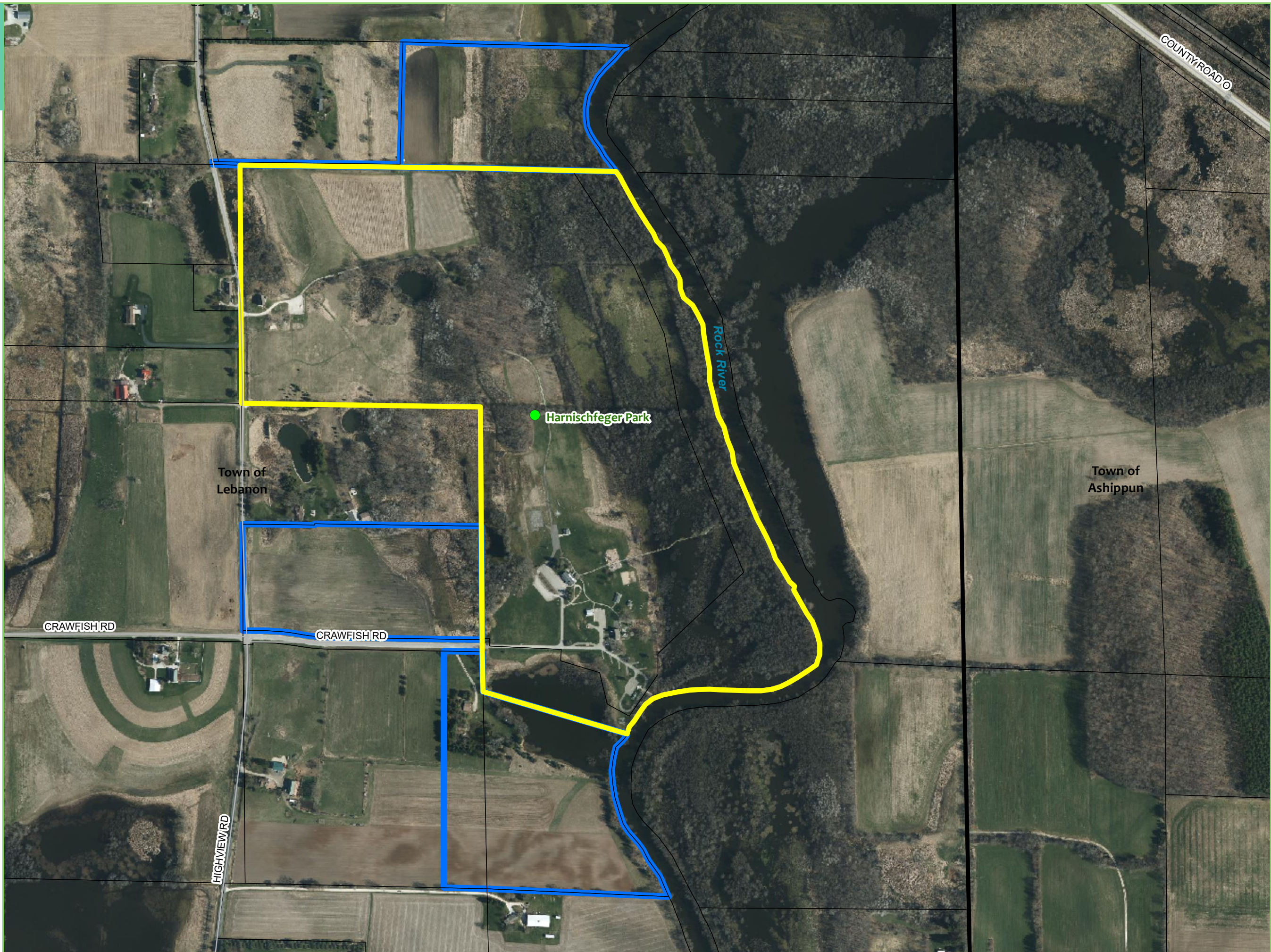
# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Harnischfeger Park

- Rail
- Roads
- ▭ Municipal Boundaries
- County Park
- ▭ County Park Footprint
- ▭ Parcels
- ▭ Potential Expansion Area (Long Term)



Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA

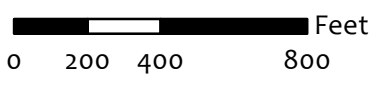


MAP 6.4: LEDGE PARK

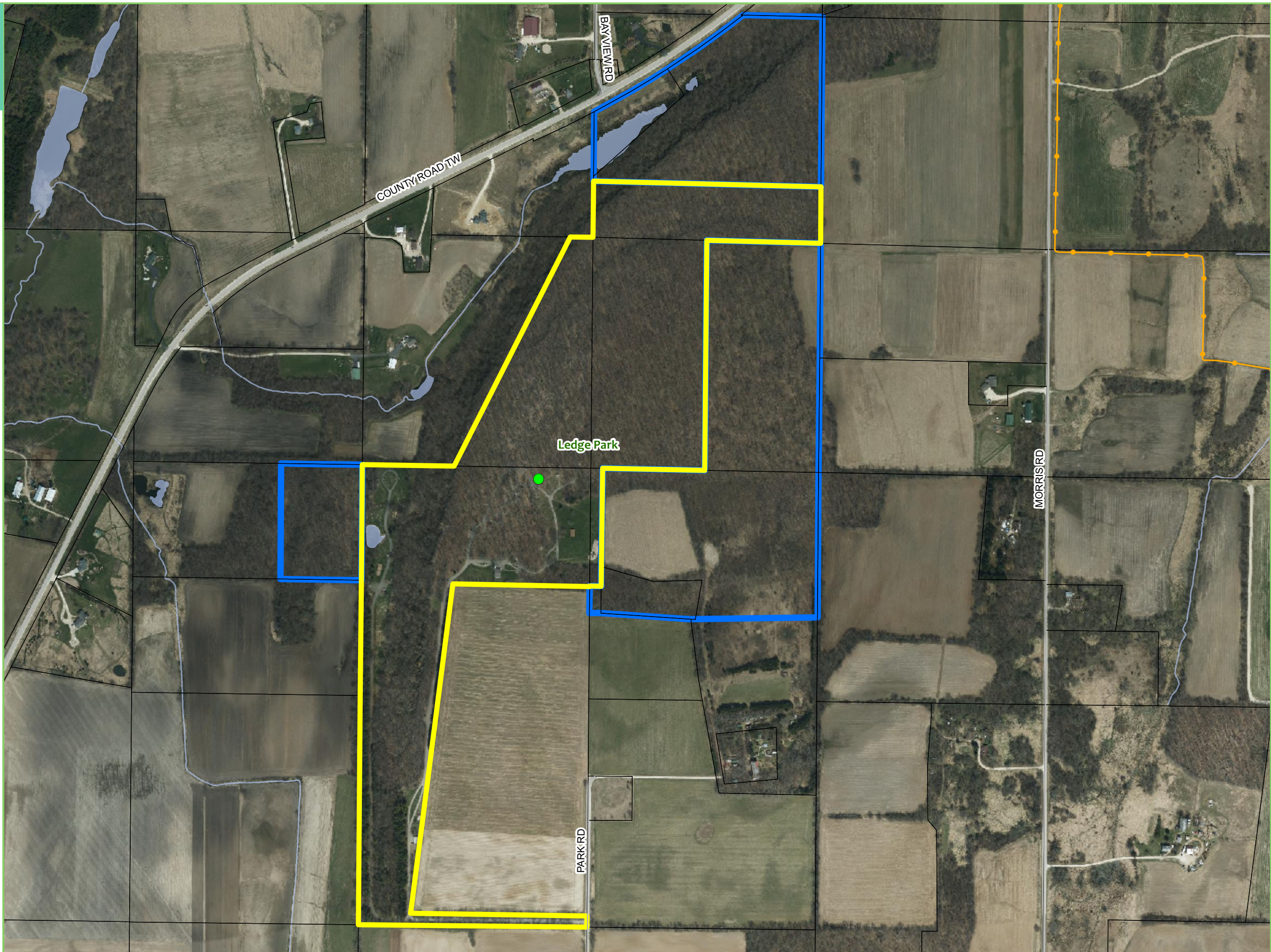
# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Ledge Park

- Existing Snow-Mobile Trails
- Roads
- County Park
- County Park Footprint
- Parcels
- Potential Expansion Area (Long Term)
- Surface Water






Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA

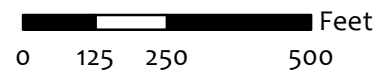


MAP 6.5: NITSCHKE MOUNDS PARK

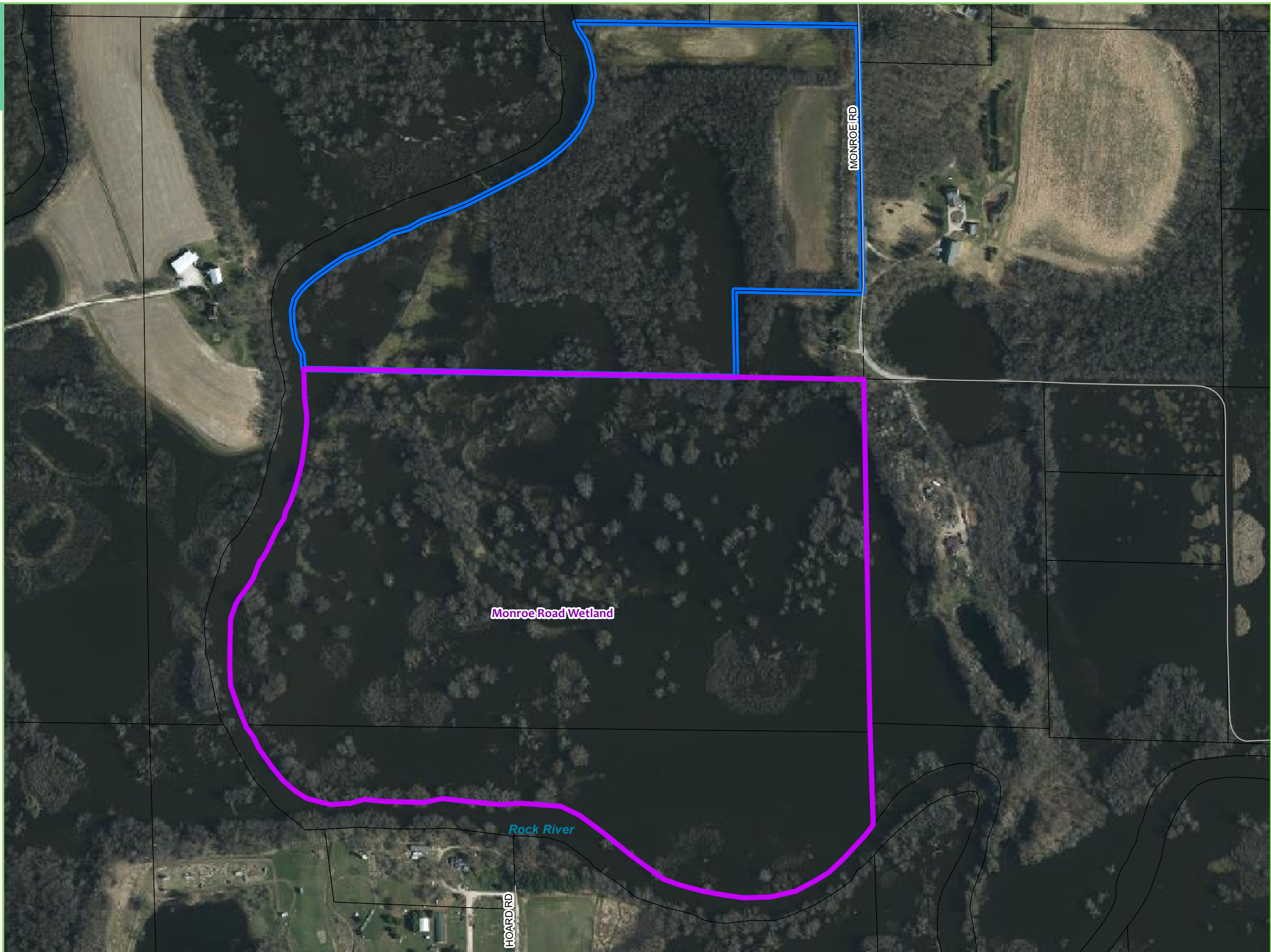
# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Monroe Road Wetland

- Roads
-  County Special Use Area
-  Parcels
-  Potential Expansion Area  
for Road Access (Long  
Term)



Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA

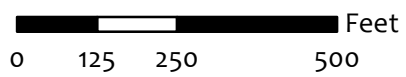


MAP 6.6: MONROE ROAD WETLANDS

# Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## Nitschke Mounds Park

- Existing Bike/Pedestrian Trails
- Roads
- County Park
- County Park Footprint
- Parcels
- Potential Expansion Area for Mounds (Long Term)
- Surface Water



Date: 9/19/2023  
Sources: WI DNR, Dodge County,  
FEMA, USDA

