



CITY OF  
**EAU  
CLAIRE**

# Carson Park Master Plan 2021



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### City of Eau Claire Waterways and Park Commission

Meredith Ball  
 Kate Beaton City Council Representative  
 John Bodkin  
 Kirk Dahl  
 Ron Doering  
 Ellen Faulkner  
 Megan Holmes  
 Christopher Johnson  
 John Lor City Council Representative  
 Joseph Maurer  
 Jessica Schoen  
 Ryan Petrie - Comm. Development Dept. Planner  
 Renee Tyler - Comm. Services Dept. Director

### City Council

Terry Weld President  
 Emily Berge District 1  
 Emily Anderson District 2  
 Jeremy Gragert District 3  
 Jill Christopherson District 4  
 Andrew Werthmann District 5  
 Kate Beaton District 6  
 Catherin Emmanuelle District 7  
 David Klinkhammer At Large  
 John Lor At Large  
 Mai Xiong At Large

### City Staff

Steve Plaza Parks/Forestry Manager  
 Project Manager  
 Dawn Comte Recreation Manager  
 John Lofgren Community Services Park Supervisor  
 Steve Roscoe Community Services Park Supervisor  
 Dave Solberg Engineering Director  
 Interim City Manager  
 Aaron White Economic Development Director  
 Scott Allen Community Development Director  
 Chad Hoyord Deputy Police Chief  
 Chris Bell Fire Chief  
 Al Bertrang Deputy Fire Chief  
 Renee Tyler Community Services Director

### Plan Commission

Eric Larsen Chair  
 Gregory Granlund Vice Chair  
 James Seymour Secretary  
 Jill Christopherson City Council  
 Jeremy Gragert City Council  
 Craig Brenholt  
 Zina Obaid  
 Mary Proznik  
 Susan Wolfgram

### Consultants:

MSA Professional Services  
 Rettler Corporation



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Carson Park Master Plan was a year long effort to create a framework for planning future implementations at the facility. The plan provides a mechanism to assist in developing phases for improvements to the park and establish budgets for those efforts.

The study area for the Master Plan of Carson Park was the entirety of the park including Halfmoon Beach but excluded the Chippewa Valley Museum, Paul Bunyan Logging Camp, and Chippewa Valley Railroad. The planning effort incorporated ideas up to the main museum and outbuildings and boundaries of each of those facilities.

The Master Plan was a 3-phase project. Each phase also included an engagement process with stakeholders and the public. In Phase I Inventory and Analysis the site history, base file materials and support documents were collected. The planning team met with City staff (department leadership), a park advisory committee (friends and neighbors), and an athletic user group (UWEC, high school athletics and multiple baseball organizations). A public survey was conducted to help determine the potential improvements to the park from the community's perspective.

In Phase II Concept Development, two conceptual plans for the overall park and separate plans for the athletic fields and court sports were developed base on feedback from the stakeholder meetings and public survey. The athletic area of Carson Park was labeled the Sport Complex for clarity in describing the use area. The concepts were presented to the stakeholder groups for review and comments.

Phase III Final Master Plan and Report was the culmination of the planning effort. The stakeholder's feedback from the concepting phase guided the development of a comprehensive draft Master Plan. The draft plan was presented in a community input session and then followed up with a presentation to the Waterways and Parks Commission (WPC), Plan Commission, and City Council. The plan was approved by the WPC and adopted by the Plan Commission and City Council.



Aerial photo of Carson Park

Image courtesy of the City of Eau Claire





# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.1 A Brief History of Carson Park

Carson Park became a city park in 1915 but was known in Eau Claire before that period as Shaw’s Island. The Chippewa Valley Museum states the following history:

“Prior to becoming Carson Park in 1915, the peninsula had been used for recreation, lumber, and as a site for a hospital. People had enjoyed the area for recreational use since the 1850s, and by the end of the 1860s it was intended the land would be preserved as a park. However, an outbreak of smallpox caused a hospital to be built. In 1873, the hospital was burned, and the idea of using the land as a park slowly resurfaced. On April 28, 1889, the whole peninsula burned. By that time much of the peninsula was owned by the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company. The company purchased the remaining 30 acres it didn’t own from James S. Vail that August.”

The park was named in honor of Williams E. Carson, one of the wealthiest lumbermen in the Chippewa Valley. Carson’s heirs donated the land to the City of Eau Claire posthumously in their father’s name in 1914. Remnants of the history of logging and the lumber industry remain today, visible with the prominent stands of pine trees throughout the park. That history is also celebrated at the Chippewa Valley Museum and Paul Bunyan Logging Camp within Carson Park.



1.1 1930s aerial photo of Carson Park

Image courtesy of the Chippewa Valley Museum



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

There are several unique facilities in the park that were built during the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930's. The baseball and football stadiums and the tennis courts construction started in 1935. The first football game was held in 1936 followed in the 1937 by the first baseball game.

Several baseball player who went on to have notable careers debut at Carson Park Baseball Stadium. Among those players were Hank Aaron, Billy Burton, Wes Covington, Joe Torre, Bob Uecker and Andy Pafko. Hank Aaron, the most recognized player, was honored in 1994 with a statue and plaza at the stadium. Sadly Mr. Aaron past during the preparation of this master plan.

The Carson Park Baseball Stadium is the home for Memorial, North, Regis, and Immanuel Luthern High Schools, the Eau Claire Express, Bears and Pizza Hut American Legion teams.

The Carson Park Football Stadium was damaged by a tornado in 1982 which resulted in the implementation of a larger press box. A standalone concessions and restroom building was built behind the stadium in the 1990's. The stadium is home to Memorial, North and Regus High Schools and the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire until recently when a new stadium was built on campus.

The Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum opened in 1934. There are seven authentic building at the facility. The Camp sets next to the Chippewa Valley Museum which opened in 1974. The Chippewa Valley Museum has the 1882 Sunnyside School, 1866 Anderson Log House, and a period ice cream parlor.

The Chippewa Valley Railroad was added to the park in 1974, The 1/2 mile loop is a 1/4 scaled working railroad that replicates the timbering history of the valley. There is a roundhouse, depot, interlocking tower and maintenance building in a small village setting.



1.2 1940s aerial photo of Carson Park Baseball Stadium

Image courtesy of the Leader-Telegram

## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.2 Existing Conditions at Carson Park

Carson Park is approximately 134 acres surrounded by Half Moon Lake on three sides. The lake forms a peninsula that creates the park. There are 2 access points to Carson Park. The east entrance connects to Lake Street, which continues eastward toward downtown Eau Claire from the park. At the park boundary, the road becomes Carson Park Drive. The City recently replaced an old bridge structure over Half Moon Lake with a causeway with a smaller bridge structure mid-way in the lake crossing. The development of the causeway has also created more usable landmass and lake access for users.

There are three roads within Carson Park. Carson Park Drive extends through the park from the causeway to the west side, where that entrance connects to Menomonie Street. Carson Park Drive is two lanes with curb and gutter. The road is in fair to good conditions with recent improvements. Some portions of the pavement show cracking and patchwork.

Half Moon Drive extends the perimeter of the peninsula along the bluff edge, to and from Carson Park Drive. The pavement is asphalt but a lesser grade than that of Carson Park Drive. The Drive is in good condition for the quality of materials. There are no curb and gutters but opportunities for shoulder parking in a gravel edge. Once the Drive reaches the Chippewa Valley Museum on the east side of the park, the asphalt shows more cracking and patchwork.

Pavilion Drive cuts through the spine of the peninsula connecting Carson Park Drive on the south to Half Moon Drive on the north end of the park. Pavilion Drive is a wide road with curbing through the main parking lot adjacent to and serving the baseball and football stadiums. Once past these facilities, the Drive transitions into a similar cross-section like Half Moon Drive with no curbing, narrower pavement, and gravel shoulders. The pavement is in fair condition with cracking and patchwork.

For purposes of the Master Plan, the park is divided into 10 areas of study, each with distinct characteristics. These areas are used in the concept and final plan documentation to provide a basis for idea generation, cost breakdown, and potential project phasing. The existing conditions for these identified areas are as follows beginning with section 1.3 Braun's Bay and Marsh (page 16).



**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

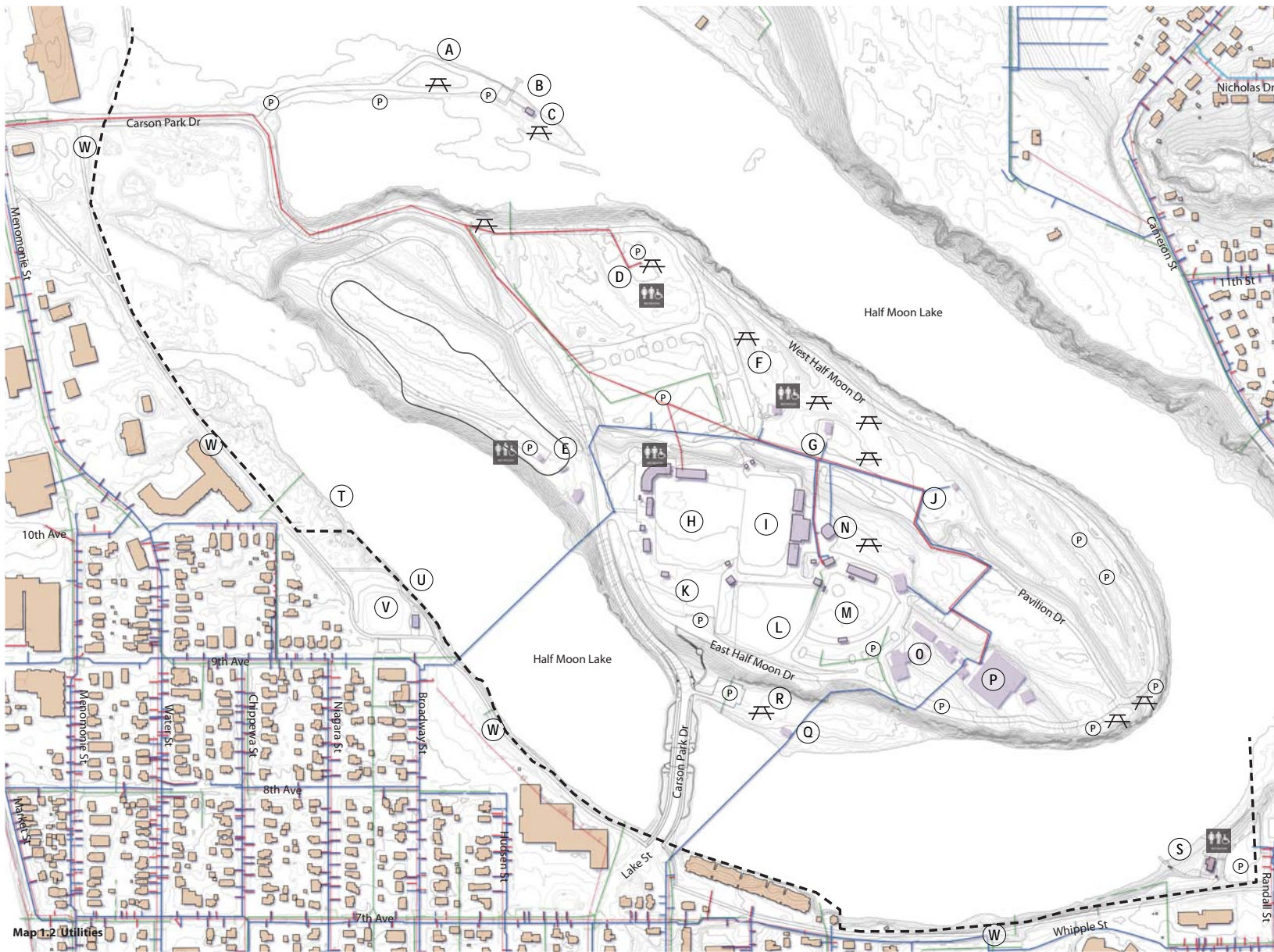
**LEGEND**

- (A) Braun's Bay Boat Launch
- (B) Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- (C) Braun's Bay Pavilion
- (D) Horseshoe Courts
- (E) Chippewa Valley Railroad
- (F) Pine Pavilion
- (G) Oak Pavilion
- (H) Carson Park Baseball Stadium
- (I) Carson Park Football Stadium
- (J) Carson Park Playground
- (K) Tennis Courts
- (L) Hobbs Softball Field
- (M) Gelein Softball Field
- (N) Concessions
- (O) Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- (P) Chippewa Valley Museum
- (Q) Birch Pavilion
- (R) Birch Playground
- (S) Half Moon Beach
- (T) 10th Ave. Boat Landing
- (U) Lakeshore Park Fishing Pier
- (V) Lakeshore Park
- (W) Chippewa River State Trail
- (P) Parking
- (S) Service
- (♿) Restrooms
- (⛶) Picnic Areas



Map 1-1 Existing Conditions





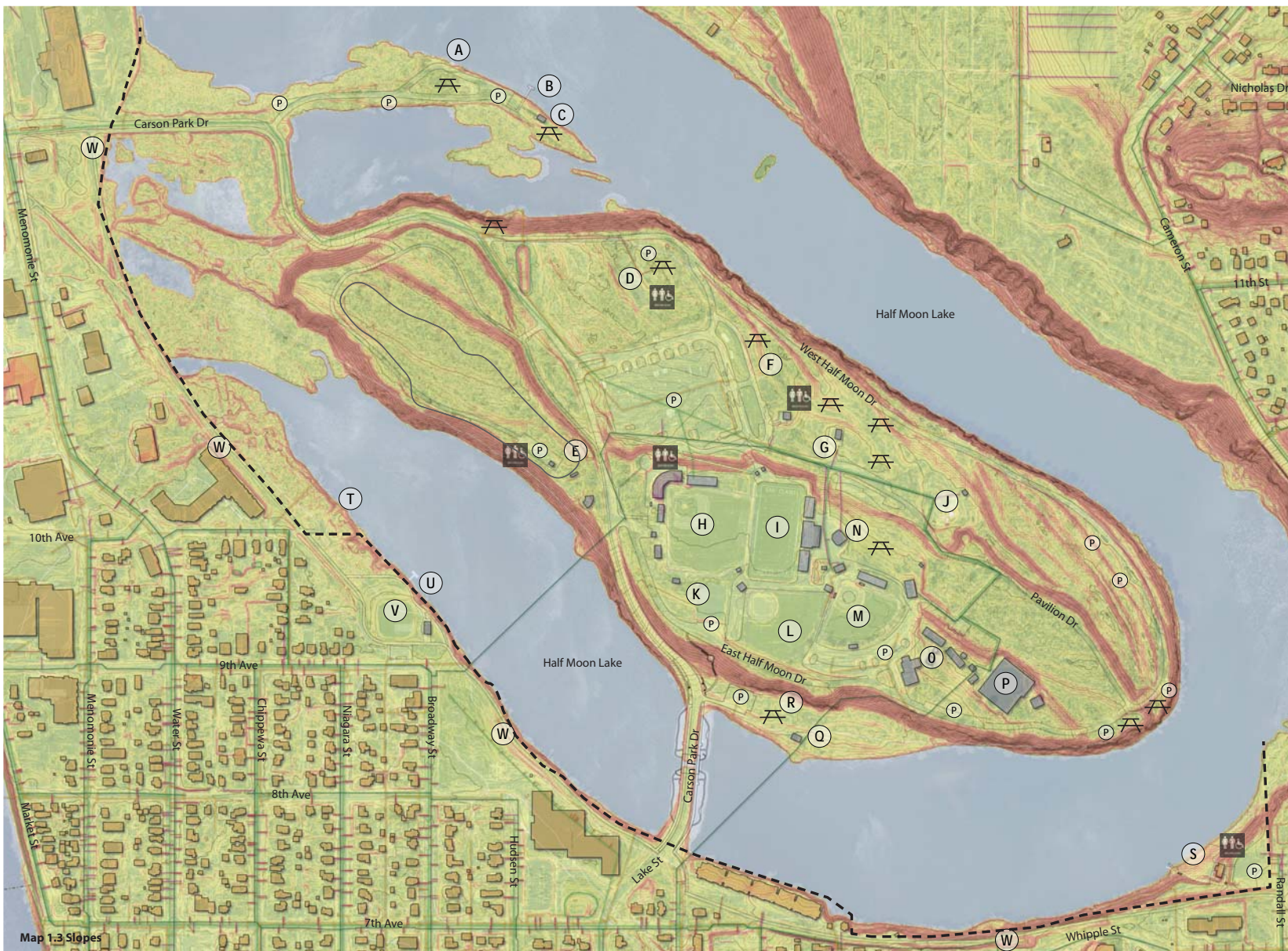
UTILITIES

LEGEND

- Sanitary Sewer
- Water
- Storm Sewer
- (A)** Braun's Bay Boat Launch
- (B)** Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- (C)** Braun's Bay Pavilion
- (D)** Horseshoe Courts
- (E)** Chippewa Valley Railroad
- (F)** Pine Pavilion
- (G)** Oak Pavilion
- (H)** Carson Park Baseball Stadium
- (I)** Carson Park Football Stadium
- (J)** Carson Park Playground
- (K)** Tennis Courts
- (L)** Hobbs Softball Field
- (M)** Gelein Softball Field
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- (U)** Lakeshore Park Fishing Pier
- (V)** Lakeshore Park
- (W)** Chippewa River State Trail
- (P)** Parking
- (S)** Service
- [Restroom Icon]** Restrooms
- [Picnic Area Icon]** Picnic Areas





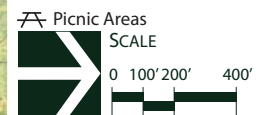


**SLOPES**  
**LEGEND**

Slope Steepness

- 0-5%
- 5-10%
- >10%

- A Braun's Bay Boat Launch
- B Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- C Braun's Bay Pavilion
- D Horseshoe Courts
- E Chippewa Valley Railroad
- F Pine Pavilion
- G Oak Pavilion
- H Carson Park Baseball Stadium
- I Carson Park Football Stadium
- J Carson Park Playground
- K Tennis Courts
- L Hobbs Softball Field
- M Gelein Softball Field
- N Concessions
- O Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- P Chippewa Valley Museum
- Q Birch Pavilion
- R Birch Playground
- S Half Moon Beach
- T 10th Ave. Boat Landing
- U Lakeshore Park Fishing Pier
- V Lakeshore Park
- W Chippewa River State Trail
- P Parking
- S Service
- R Restrooms
- P Picnic Areas



Map 1.3 Slopes







## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

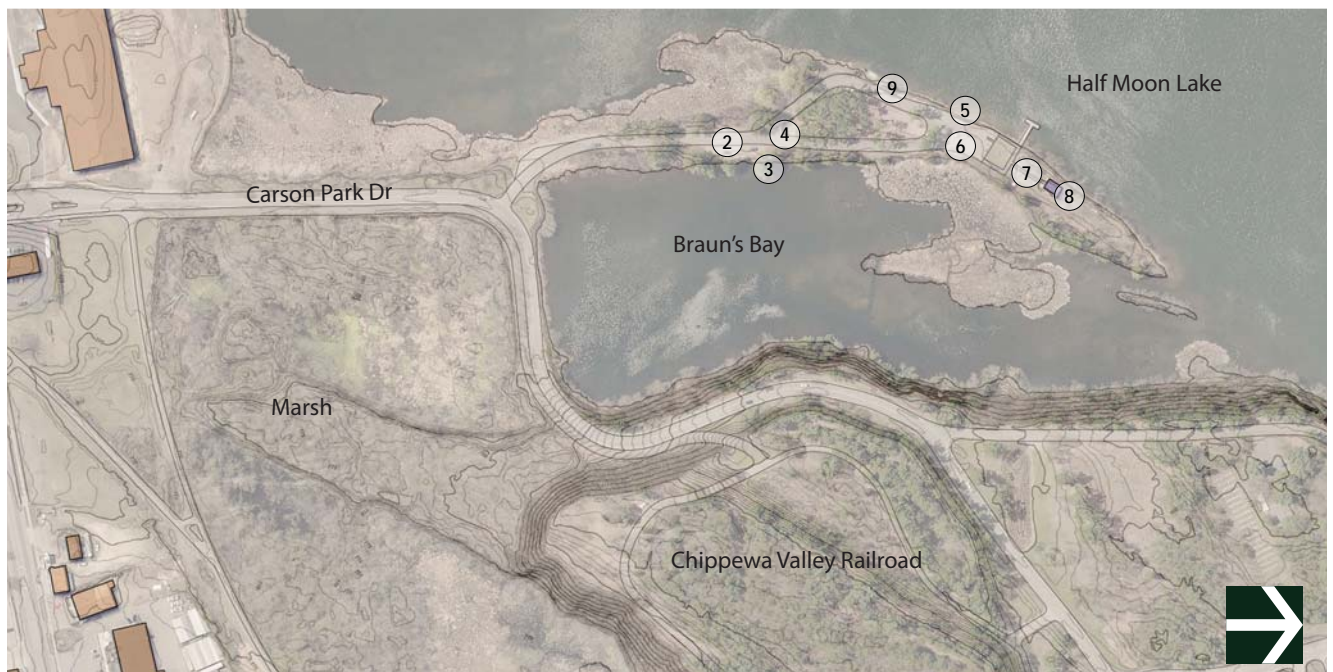
### 1.3 Braun’s Bay and Marsh

Braun’s Bay is at the southwest side of Carson Park in a lowland marsh area. The bay is shallow and connects to Half Moon Lake through a narrow channel on its north end. Park users can access the bay via kayak or canoe.

A smaller peninsula of usable park space is located between Braun’s Bay and Half Moon Lake. A site access road from Carson Park Drive connects to a parking lot that serves a shelter, picnic area, personal watercraft launch, fishing pier, and multiple benches. The access road was recently paved except for some portions of the north end of the parking lot, which has cracking and in poorer condition.

Portable restrooms are near the shelter, but there is no permanent restroom building. The shelter is older and in fair condition and has space for 6 to 8 picnic tables. A flat maintained open space north of the shelter provides an area for lawn activities.

The launch serves personal watercraft (kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddle-boards) only. A kiosk at the launch provides information about the lake and park. A fishing pier is nearby and in good condition. The pier is fully accessible and has a railing that meets ADA requirements while providing the opportunity to fish. There are no trails on the peninsula or in the marsh area south of Carson Park Drive. A short asphalt path connects the parking lot to the shelter and fishing pier. There are newly constructed accessible walk connections at the intersection of the access road and Carson Park Drive. Carson Park Drive does have a paved multi-use trail along the inbound lane into the park from the south entrance at Menomonie Street. The multi-use trail runs along Carson Park Drive until midway up the bluff to the upper portions of the park. At that point, the trail veers off and becomes a separate trail for several hundred feet.



Map 1.5 Braun’s Bay and Marsh

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.2 Park road into Braun's Bay area and pulloff gravel parking



1.3 Park bench overlooking Braun's Bay



1.4 Parking and turnaround



1.5 Accessible fishing pier



1.6 Parking, pier dedication plaque and entry to shelter



1.7 Braun's Bay shelter



1.8 Views inside the shelter



1.9 Boat launch and park kiosk

## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.4 Steep Bluff with Limited Access

Carson Park has two low lying areas, Braun’s Bay and Birch Pavilion area. The main part of the park is on a higher plateau, approximately 40 feet higher in elevation forming a larger peninsula surrounded by Half Moon Lake. Most of the topography in this area is steep and undeveloped. The most dramatic slopes are along the south and east side of the main park peninsula.

There is limited access between upper and lower park along this portion of the bluff. A new step system was recently added that connects the Birch Pavilion to the sport complex. A small plaza with wall seating is at the halfway point in the steps.

The bluff is heavily wooded with stone outcroppings in several places. The outcroppings provide a unique feature to the park and are traversed with several informal paths that are around and over the stones.



1.10 New steps near Birch Pavilion



1.11 Stone outcroppings at Birch Pavilion

### 1.5 Steep Bluff with Access

The remaining bluff on the west side of the park is not as steep or high. There are several footpaths that reach the shoreline of the lake. These areas are small and informal, providing opportunities for fishing or direct access to the lake. There are a couple of older wood and metal benches along the bluff line, partway down the slope toward the shoreline. The benches are in poor condition, and the ground around them rutted.

The bluff edge in this portion of the park is lined by Half Moon Drive at the higher elevations. There are 2 pullout parking lanes and a small parking lot along this portion of the Drive that are near to the informal footpaths down to the shoreline. This section of the bluff is heavily wooded, as well, predominantly with white pines. The area has a native upper Wisconsin appearance providing a rustic and quieter part of the park.

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.12 Bench seat along West Half Moon Drive



1.13 Dirt path and bench near the point



1.14 Informal path along bluff at the point



1.15 Informal path along west bluff



1.16 Views to Half Moon Lake from West Half Moon Drive



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.6 Chippewa Valley Railroad and Woodlands

The Chippewa Valley Railroad, 16-in gauge (1/4 scale) steam locomotive, is accessed by a winding road through heavily wooded highlands in the south end of the park. The access road is like Half Moon Drive and does not have curbing. The pavement is in good condition. There is a two to three-foot gravel shoulder along both sides. Several places along the road are used for pull-off parking. A small materials storage area for maintenance purposes is near the entrance of the access road at Carson Park Drive.

The most southern point of the access road (about halfway) an open, lawn area overlooks the lower marsh and is used for picnics and gatherings. From that point the rail line runs parallel to the road leading into the parking lot for the Chippewa Valley Railroad facility. At the facility there are several buildings and a shelter related to the 1/4 scale of the Railroad. These buildings create a small village setting. A 1/2-mile rail line extends through the heavily forested area. Most of the trees in this woodland are pine.

There is an overlook near the Railroad parking lot with two benches and views of the marshy lowlands. A stone marker describes the canal that once connected logging operations to Half Moon Lake. The benches are relatively new and in good condition. Dirt footpaths provide access to each bench.

A short, concrete walk connects the Chippewa Valley Railroad site to nearby Carson Park Drive and a crosswalk to the baseball field. The walk is fully accessible.

In this portion of the park, the multi-use trail extends through the woods near the rail line, separate from Carson Park Drive. The trail follows along the base of a small bluff with the rail, visually unseen, along the higher elevation. The trail eventually joins Carson Park Drive as the road descends the bluff to the causeway at the east park entrance.



Map 1.6 Chippewa Valley Railroad and Woodlands

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.17 Bike path at entrance to Chippewa Valley Railroad



1.18 Road to Chippewa Valley Railroad



1.19 Informal picnic area along road to Chippewa Valley Railroad



1.20 Chippewa Valley Railroad



1.21 Rail crossing



1.22 The Canal historic plaque



1.23 Chippewa Valley Railroad Station



1.24 Carson Park Drive crossing from CVR to the baseball field

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## 1.7 Sports Complex

The sports complex is comprised of six use areas; Carson Park Baseball Stadium, Carson Park Football Stadium, three tennis courts, Hobbs Softball Field, Gelein Softball Field, and the horseshoe courts. These facilities make up a large portion of the center of the park.



1.25 Carson Park existing sport fields courtesy of Visit Eau Claire



Map 1.7 Sports Complex



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Carson Park Baseball Stadium is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This WPA structure was built in 1936. The main grandstand has a limestone facade and is a cherished structure that has been well maintained over the years. The field is home to the Eau Claire Express, a Northwood League team as well as serving local high school teams. A plaza on the back, ticket booth, side was added in the 1990's and named for Eau Claire Braves Henry "Hank" Aaron. The plaza is in good condition and houses the Eau Claire Baseball Hall of Fame. Donor pavers are in several spots in the plaza.

Over time aluminum bleacher seating extending out along the first and third baselines were added. They are separated from the historic structure. The dugouts are in front of the bleachers and are small and in poor condition.



1.26 Historic Carson Park Baseball Stadium



1.27 Hank Aaron Plaza



1.28 3rd baseline bleachers and dugout

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Further down the first baseline is a picnic area with tables, a multi-tiered wood deck system, and a beer garden along the home run fence. At this end of the field are several portable restrooms. Also, a paved area behind the bleachers and around the picnic table is used as maintenance storage and trash collection. A few pieces of play equipment are along the third-base line near the foul pole. This side of the outfield shares space with the visitor bleachers of the football field. The turf and fence are affected by this dual use. The field is well lit. The outfield fence is chain-link and lined with billboard sponsor in season. According to the Eau Claire Express website, the field capacity is 4,700 patrons.



1.29 Natural turf field at Carson Park Baseball Stadium



1.30 Multi-tiered wood deck system Beer Garden



1.31 Beer Garden, storage and picnic tables



1.32 Playground at Carson Park Baseball Stadium



1.33 Scoreboard at Carson Park Baseball Stadium



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Carson Park Football Stadium was also constructed in the 1930's. In 1982 a tornado destroyed parts of the original stone stadium. Subsequent renovations have covered most of the stone structure with concrete block walls and aluminum bleachers. The University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire played their home games at the stadium but will be relocating to an on-campus field currently under construction (2021). Local high school teams still use the field.

The field is synthetic and is in good condition. The stadium does not have a running track. A standalone concession building and large concrete plaza are on the backside of the stadium. The concessions and stadium additions are concrete block. The two-story renovated press box has metal siding. The renovations are nearing 30 years old and showing wear.



1.34 Synthetic turf field at Carson Park Football Stadium



1.35 Carson Park Football Stadium

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.36 Concessions building at Carson Park Football Stadium



1.37 Ticket booth and entrance to the Carson Park Football Stadium



## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Parking for both the baseball and football field is located to the west of the fields in a large lot. This is the main parking for the park and is also used for fairs and large gatherings.. The parking lot has perimeter islands separating it from Pavilion Drive, however, there are no internal islands or trees to shade the lot. A concrete walk runs along the east edge of the lot and connects to both stadiums with an accessible ramp. A large concrete staircase directs patrons to a gateway with two ticket booths on the west end of the football field. The fields are around 15-feet above the parking lot. An emergency access drive is located behind the football stadium connecting Pavilion Drive to the concessions area.



1.38 Main parking lot for the Carson Park Baseball and Football Stadium



1.39 Ramped walk to stadiums from main parking



1.40 Steps to stadiums from main parking

Three tennis courts are located behind the baseball field along East Half Moon Lake Drive. The courts surfaces appear in good condition. The fence around the courts is black vinyl coated and in good condition. A small parking lot is located on the east side of the courts.



1.41 Tennis courts at Carson Park

## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

To the north of the tennis courts is Hobbs Softball Field. The field is used for community teams. There are aluminum bleachers on both baselines. A concrete block and wood concession building is located behind home plate. The structure is in good condition. The field surface is turf and lit for evening and nighttime play.



1.42 Hobb Field

Next to Hobbs Field is Gelein Field. Gelein was home to UW Eau Claire’s Division III National Champion Women’s Softball. The field is turf and in good condition with a much larger grandstand seating. The concessions building is two stories with a press box on the second floor. The building is concrete block on the first level and vinyl siding on the second. There are picnic tables around the perimeter of the concessions building. The field has sunken dugouts with roofs. Vinyl coated chain-link fencing surrounds the field which is well lit for evening and nighttime play. A larger parking lot serving both softball fields is east of the home-run fence of Gelein Field. The lot follows the curvature of the outfield fence and terminates at Carson Park’s maintenance building. The maintenance building is concrete block, in good condition, has good access to the facility, and is screened from most of the park vegetation.

A utility corridor stretches between the baseball field, softball fields, and the football field. The path is a wide asphalt connection that provides maintenance and emergency access to the fields. The asphalt has cracking and is in fair condition.



1.43 Gelein Field



1.44 Press box and concessions at Gelein Field



1.45 Utility corridor between fields

To the west of the main parking lot for the baseball field is the Carson Park Horseshoe Courts which has held the World Horseshoe Tournament in past years. There are 18 horseshoe courts that are fenced and lit. A wood sided restroom shelter is dedicated to the courts. The building is showing some wear and is in fair condition. A small parking lot with a picnic area is located on the west side of the site. A new memorial bench in the memory of John Dolezel is near the parking lot overlooking the courts.



1.46 Horseshoe courts at Carson Park



1.47 Horseshoe courts concession and restrooms



1.48 Bleachers at the horseshoe courts

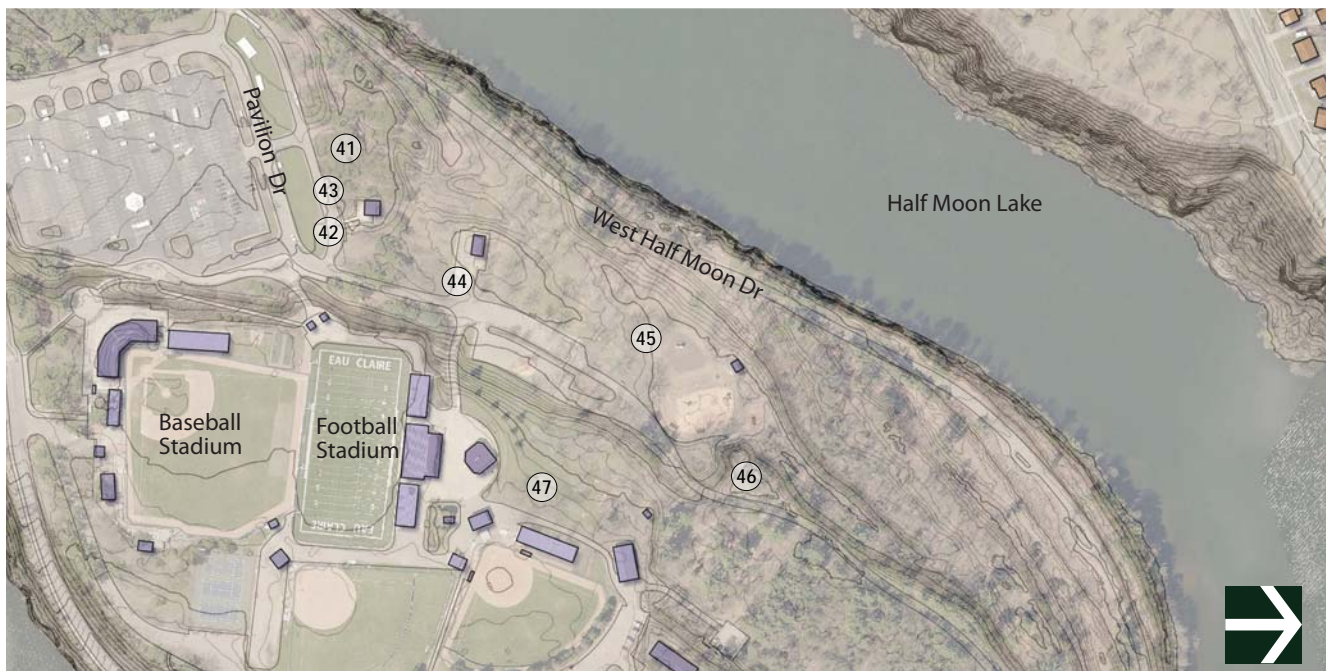
## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.8 Main Picnic Area and Playground

On the west side of the park, there are two shelters, the Pine and Oak Pavilions, and a large open area filled with picnic tables. Both pavilions are in good condition and have electricity. There are two larger power pedestals between the Pine Pavilion parking and the main sports complex parking. The picnic grounds are significant in size and offer a setting for very large or multiple gatherings. The tables not under the open-air shelters are found in 3 locations. A pine forest at the Pine Pavilion creates a well-shaded picnic zone with direct access to a parking lot on the south edge. A more open but somewhat shaded area extends around the Oak Pavilion. A large open space adjacent to the football stadium and across Pavilion Drive from the Oak Pavilion is another woodland with several picnic tables.

The main park playground is located next to the Oak Pavilion picnic grounds. The playground was updated in 2018 and is contains equipment for varying age groups and is wheelchair accessible. The play surface is poured-in-place rubber and a 3-foot tall fence surrounds the playground. Older slides built into a created hillside are located at the north end of the playground. A small restroom is located on the west side of the playground. The restroom is constructed of concrete block and has a newer asphalt shingle roof. A parking lot is located between the playground and the Oak Pavilion for users of both areas as well as the picnic area on the east side of Pavilion Drive.

A large restroom building is located near both the Pine and Oak Pavilions. The structure is concrete block and in good condition . A concrete walk connects to a small parking area. Accessible connection to the restrooms from the pavilions is by way of Pavilion Drive and the Pine Pavilion parking lane.



Map 1.8 Main Picnic Area and Playground



# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.49 Pine Pavilion



1.50 Restroom building near Pine Pavilion



1.51 Picnic table on concrete pad near restroom building



1.52 Oak Pavilion



1.53 Main playground at Carson Park



1.54 Hillside slide at playground



1.55 Picnic area on hill near the concessions at the football field

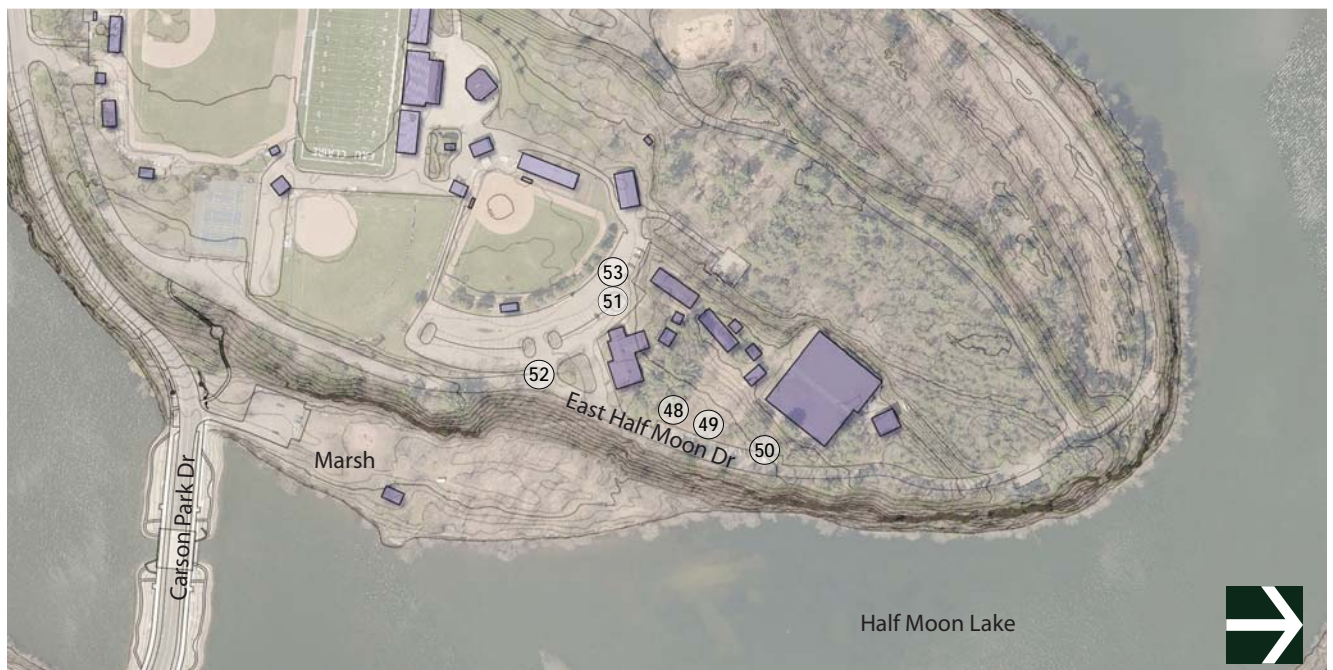
# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## 1.9 Cultural Zone

There are two museums in Carson Park, the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp and Chippewa Valley Museum. The facilities are adjacent to each other and make up a small village setting. A split rail fence separates the museum grounds providing a demarcation of each facility.

The Paul Bunyan Logging Camp first opened in 1934. The site portrays a historic logging camp with seven authentic buildings found in the Eau Claire area. The buildings are set within a mix of trees and maintain lawn. The visitor center and offices are served by a small parking lot. The camp buildings connect with an accessible sidewalk from the visitor center. There is a picnic table and bench in the Camp area.

The Chippewa Valley Museum has a larger visitor building with three outbuildings. The outbuildings are a period ice cream parlor, one-room Sunnyview School (est. 1882) and the Anderson Log House (est. 1866). The outbuildings are near to each other and the main museum building. There is an asphalt path connecting to the school, and dirt path to the Anderson House. Benches are in a few places along the path. The main museum building has an accessible ramp, but the outbuildings are limited by wooden step access. Bicycle loops are near steps to the main museum building. There are a few parking stalls close to the museum along East Half Moon Drive.



Map 1.9 Cultural Zone





1.56 Paul Bunyan Logging Camp and Chippewa Valley Museum split rail fence separation



1.57 Chippewa Valley Museum



1.58 Bike loops at Chippewa Valley Museum entrance



1.59 Paul Bunyan Logging Camp from parking lot



1.60 Paul Bunyan and Blue statues



1.61 Carson Park maintenance building

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## 1.10 Upland Woods at Point

At the north end of the park, the tip of the peninsula is a mixed woodland of deciduous and pine forest. Subdivided by Pavilion Drive, this area of the park is the most undeveloped. Pavilion Drive provides the only access through this woodland. There are no formal trails or paths.

This area is at the highest elevation in the park, with Pavilion Drive following the center of the plateau. The topography steeply falls 10 to 15-feet toward the west to an area of open vegetation with very little canopy near West Half Moon Drive.



Map 1.10 Upland Woodland at Point

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.62 Pullout parking along West Halfmoon Drive



1.63 Parking at the point of the peninsula



1.64 View of Half Moon Beach from point



1.65 Intersection of Pavilion and Half Moon Drive



1.66 Picnic area and parking at point

## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.11 Birch Lakeside

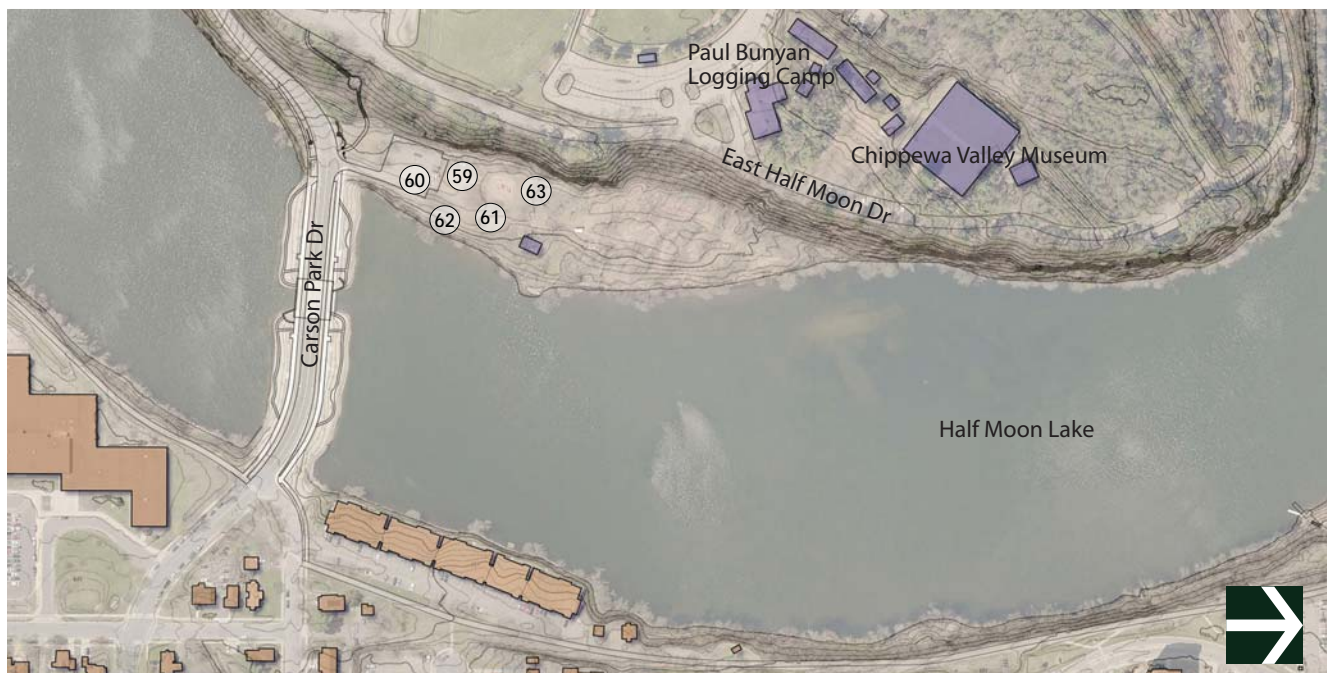
The Birch Pavilion and related amenities are located near the causeway on a low flat area just a few feet above Half Moon Lake's water level. The pavilion is small, with room for 8 to 10 picnic tables. The structure is older and in fair conditions. There is electrical service at the pavilion.

A small parking lot with direct access to Carson Park Drive serves the area. The pavement is cracked and in fair to poor condition. Several worn footpaths connect to the shelter, but there are no paved paths other than a recently installed concrete walk to a portable restroom. The portable restroom is the only facility at the site.

A small play structure is located between the parking and shelter. The play structure is older but in good condition. The surface material is mulch and a single bench is located on one side.

Several picnic tables sprinkle the site. There is a remnant concrete pad with a fixed bench and picnic table along the shoreline. The concrete is in fair condition. There are several portable trash receptacles on-site as well.

There is a spectacular stone outcrop forming the bluff line on the west side of the Birch Pavilion site. A newly constructed step system connects the lower area to the upper portion of the park near the tennis courts. The steps are constructed of prefabricated concrete with a small plaza near the mid-point in which there is seat wall for rest at an overlook to the lake.



Map 1.11 Birch Pavilion

# 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



1.67 Birch Pavilion parking lot



1.68 Access from parking to Birch Pavilion



1.69 Birch Pavilion



1.70 Bench and picnic table along Half Moon Lake



1.71 Playground at Birch Pavilion

## 1.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 1.12 Halfmoon Beach

The beach is located across Half Moon Lake from the main park on the east side of the lake. There is a gravel parking lot with drainage issues visible from rut scouring. The topography slopes steeply to the lake on at the edge of the parking lot. There are wood bollards to protect vehicles from encroaching on the hillside.

The beach house is built into the hillside with access on the beach side. The building is constructed of concrete block and in fair condition. A set of concrete steps and a short walk connect to a rooftop deck with a picnic table and views of the beach and lake. The lower level and beach are accessed by several worn footpaths and an asphalt/gravel service road. The service road has severe drainage issues and in poor condition. A very steep stone wall, with an approximately 3:1 slope, separates the service drive from the building.

The beach is holding sand and is in good condition. The swimming area slope is gradual and extends well into the lake, providing a large usable area. There is a new bench overlooking the beach at about mid-slope. The bench is accessed with a mown path that extends southward until connecting with the Chippewa River State Trail at the park boundary.



Map 1.12 Halfmoon Beach





1.72 Sevice road/boat lauch at Halfmoon Beach



1.73 Halfmoon Beach and restroom building



1.74 Halfmoon Beach gravel parking lot



1.75 Service access north west of Halfmoon Beach





# 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



## 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

There were 3 phases for the development of the Master Plan for Carson Park. Phase I Inventory and Analysis consisted of collecting data about the history park and examining current site conditions. Phase II Concept Development was the first look at potential improvements to the park. And, Phase III Master Plan and Report was the culmination of planning and review.

At the outset of the project there were 3 identified groups to guide the planning process and act as a sounding board for ideas. The groups were a master plan advisory committee, an athletic user group and staff members from the City of Eau Claire. In each phase of the project, meetings were held with each group.

### 2.1 Carson Park Master Plan Advisory Committee

An advisory committee was created from community members to provide oversight to the master planning of Carson Park. The committee members were from facility within the park as well as surrounding neighborhood representatives. The Carson Park Master Plan Advisory Committee members:

Paul Wiese	EC Horseshoe Club
Carrie Ronnondar	Chippewa Valley Museum
Allyson Deering	Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum
Gordon Well	Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum
Dave Peterson	Chippewa Valley Railroad
Trevor Wittner	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Ned Noel	Sustainability Advisory Committee
Ryan Petrie	Plan/Landmark Commission
Lauren Lierman	Historic Randall Park Neighborhood
Reid Sollberger	Historic Randall Park Neighborhood
Helen Smilar	Historic Randall Park Neighborhood
Bob Von Haden	Buffington Neighborhood
Penny Von Haden	Buffington Neighborhood
Steve Duffenbach	Half Moon Lake Task Force
Susan Kaul	Half Moon Lake Task Force
Christine Schaaf	Half Moon Lake Task Force
Tiffany Weiss	Special Events
Will Fantle	Upper West Side

The initial advisory committee meeting was held on October 1, 2020. The meeting addressed the existing conditions of Carson Park and provided an oversight of the environmental factors including slopes, flood hazards, wind and utility analysis.

The committee members were asked 3 question during a listening session for an overarching question: What does Carson Park look like in 25 years? The 3 additional questions were:

- What amenities are added or improved?
- Is anything removed?



- What is one thing that will make Carson Park “Great”?

The responses collected during the meeting were used as background data for the creation of concept plans for the park.

A second meeting was held on December 8, 2020 where a presentation of the concepts for Carson Park were discussed with the advisory committee. The committee provided comments which were incorporated into the Draft Master Plan where applicable.

On January 26, 2021, the final advisory committee meeting for the Master Plan was held. The Draft Master Plan was presented with a follow up question and answer session. Again, feedback from the advisory group was carried forward into the Final Master Plan.

### 2.2 Athletic User’s Group

The athletic user’s group consisted of departments from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Memorial, Regis, and North High Schools, the Cavaliers and Express Baseball organizations.

Dan Schumacher	UWEC Athletic Director
Andy Jepsen	UWEC Director of Recreation and Sport Operations
Wesley Beschorner	UWEC Football
Kevin Thompson	EC Memorial Athletic Director
Mike Sinz	EC Memorial Football
Dan Roehl	EC Memorial Baseball
Brad Chapman	EC Memorial Softball
Jon Jarocki	EC Regis Athletic Director
Bryant Brenner	EC Regis Football
Andy Niese	EC Regis Baseball
Jim Deignan	EC Regis Softball
Mike Pernsteiner	EC North Athletic Director
Bob Johnson	EC North Baseball
Andy Jarzynski	EC North Football
Tom Bernhardt	EC North Softball
Karen Johannes	Immanuel Athletic Director
Mark Fannes	American Legion Baseball
Matt Miller	EC Cavaliers Baseball
Randy Millis	EC Cavaliers Baseball
Dale Varsho	EC Express Baseball
Jacob Servais	EC Express Baseball

The initial meeting for the athletic user’s group was held on October 19, 21, and 22 due to varying schools and organization and size of the group. The group focused on the athletic fields, football, baseball, and



## 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

softball, in their discussions. The group discussed how the complex is currently used and what issues are occurring with the facility.

The second athletic user’s group meeting was held on December 10, 2020. The concept plans for the sport complex area of the park were presented. The group provided feedback on like and dislikes of the configuration of the fields. The consensus layout was carried forward into the Draft Master Plan.

The third athletic user’s group meeting was held on January 20, 2021. The Draft Master Plan for the sports complex was presented to the group for final feedback. At the meeting the future development of UWEC football stadium was discussed and to how its development may affect the field at Carson Park.

## 2.3 City of Eau Claire Staff

The leadership from the staff at the City of Eau Claire met as a group for the Master Plan effort. These City staff group members group were:

Steve Plaza	Parks/Forestry Manager - Project Manager
Dawn Comte	Recreation Manager
John Lofgren	Community Services Park Supervisor
Steve Roscoe	Community Services Park Supervisor
Dave Solberg	Engineering Director
Aaron White	Economic Development Director
Scott Allen	Community Development Director
Chad Hoyord	Deputy Police Chief
Chris Bell	Fire Chief
Al Bertrang	Deputy Fire Chief
Renee Tyler	Community Services Director

A kickoff with staff on July 2, 2020, that covered the goals and objectives, schedule, and process for the project. This meeting was followed up with an initial project meeting on October 1, 2020 to go over the site background information, as with the other groups, that was collected during the fall.

The second meeting with staff was a presentation of the concepts and general discussion of the feedback received from the public survey and other group meetings. The meeting was held on December 10, 2020. Staff commented on the concept plans and gave feedback based on potential new and or expanded uses in the park. Maintenance of the facility was also discussed.

A third meeting was held on February 5, 2021 to provided final guidance from staff for the Final Master Plan. The meeting covered information gathered from the advisory committee, athletic user’s group, and public survey for staff recommendations. These recommendations were included in the Draft Master Plan which was presented at a Community Meeting.



### 2.4 Public Survey and Community Meeting

An online public survey was conducted from July 16 to August 2, 2020. There were 2,077 respondents to the survey. There were 11 questions in the survey. The survey included 2 questions that had comment boxes in which people could leave an extended response. The survey results are on the following pages. Questions 9 and 10 were where a longer response was available. The results are shown in the form of word search which shows the most common response as larger text to lesser, shown in smaller text.

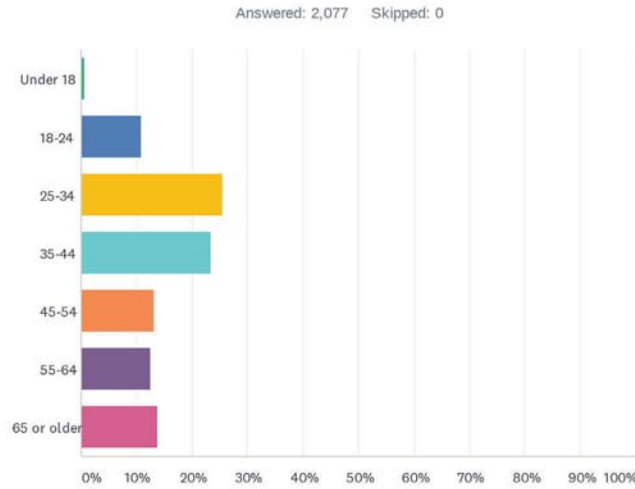
The Draft Master Plan was presented at an open Community Meeting on December 17, 2020. The meeting was open for public comments. Several attendees make recommendations and expressed concern for certain aspects of the plan. Those comments were incorporated into the Final Master Plan where applicable. These four stakeholder groups as well as input from the community provided an open engagement from varying parties to help form a cohesive and comprehensive Master Plan for Carson Park.



## 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

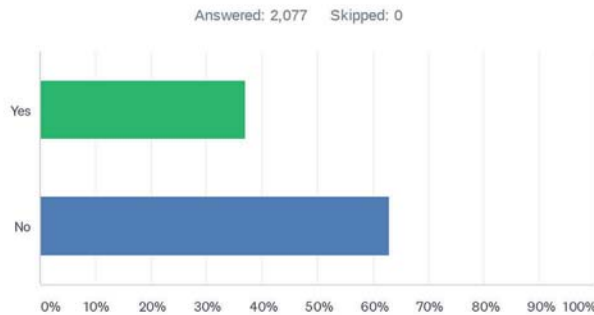
### Public Survey Results

#### Question 1 - What is your age?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.67%	14
18-24	10.93%	227
25-34	25.61%	532
35-44	23.50%	488
45-54	13.10%	272
55-64	12.47%	259
65 or older	13.72%	285
TOTAL		2,077

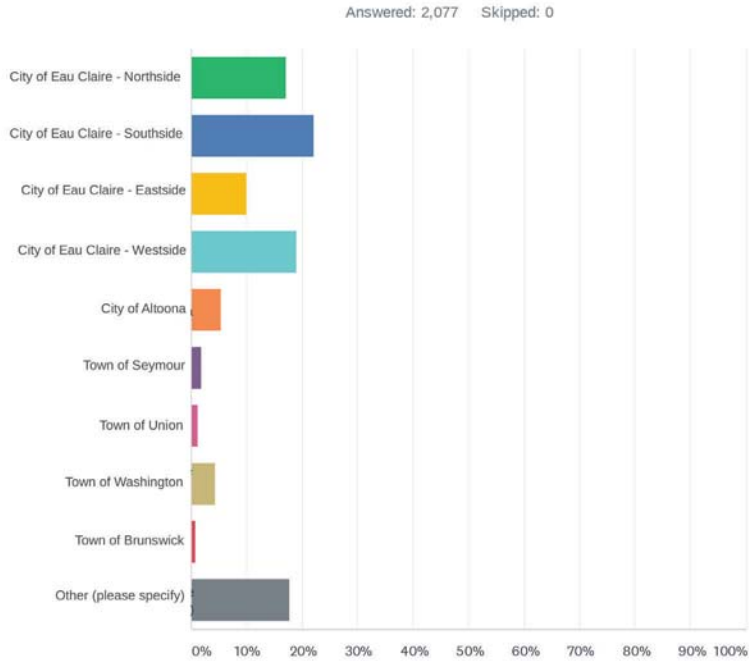
#### Question 2 - Do you have any children living in your home that are under the age of 18?



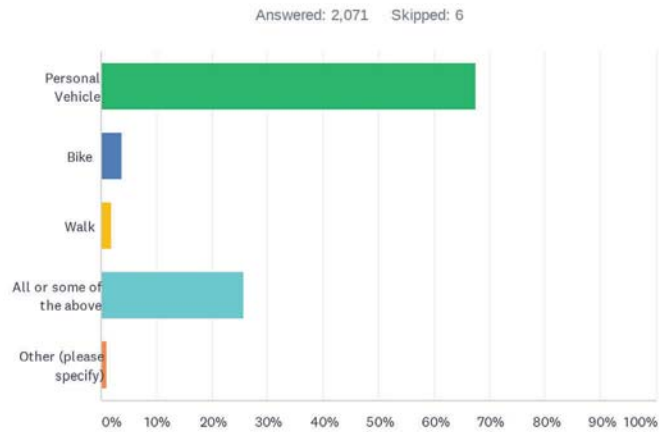
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	36.98%	768
No	63.02%	1,309
TOTAL		2,077



Question 3 - Where do you live?



Question 4 - If you visit Carson Park, how do you get there?

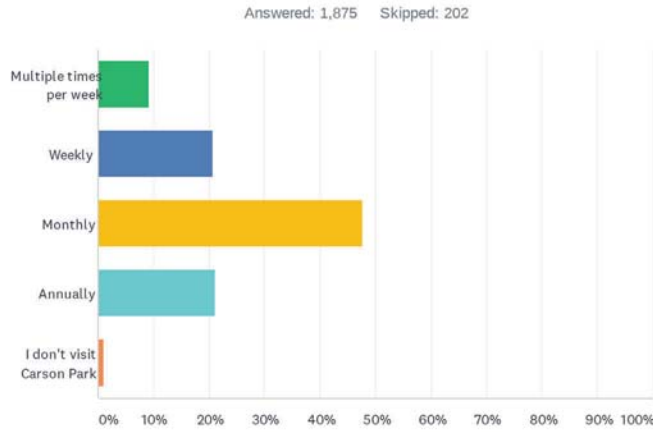


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Personal Vehicle	67.60%	1,400
Bike	3.67%	76
Walk	1.88%	39
All or some of the above	25.78%	534
Other (please specify)	1.06%	22
TOTAL		2,071



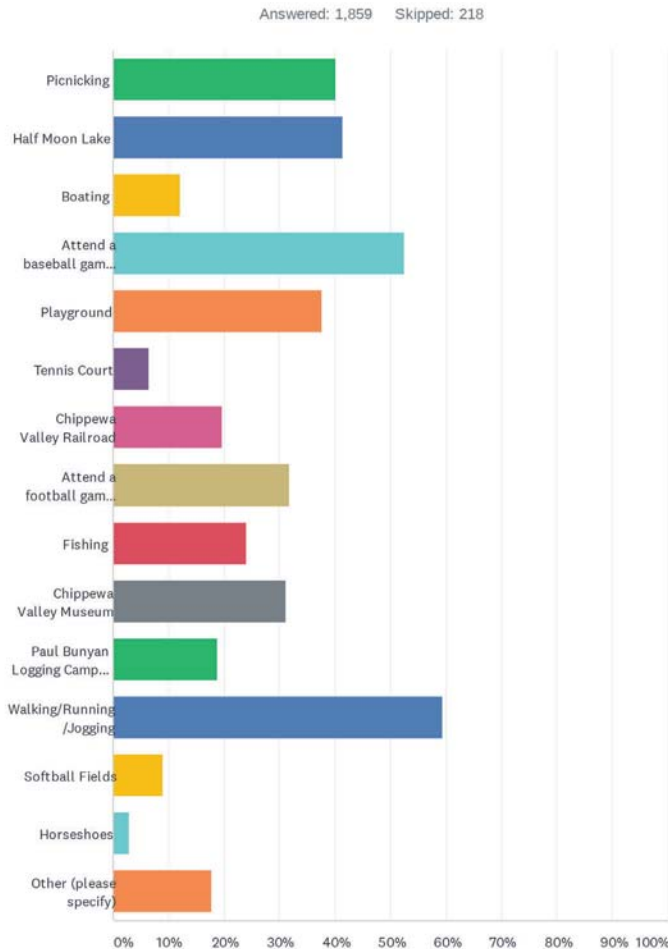
## 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### Question 5 - How often do you visit Carson Park?



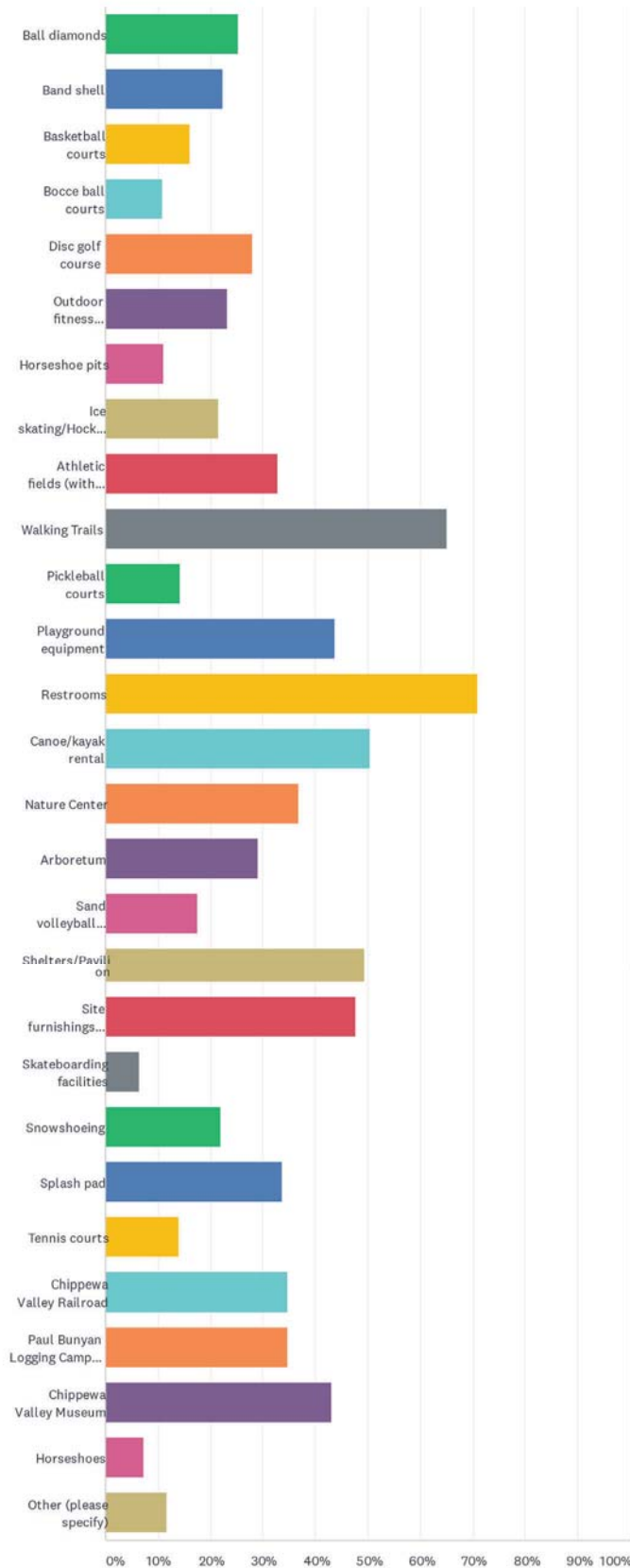
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Multiple times per week	9.23%	173
Weekly	20.75%	389
Monthly	47.79%	896
Annually	21.17%	397
I don't visit Carson Park	1.07%	20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,875</b>

### Question 6 - Why do you visit Carson Park? (Choose as many as apply)



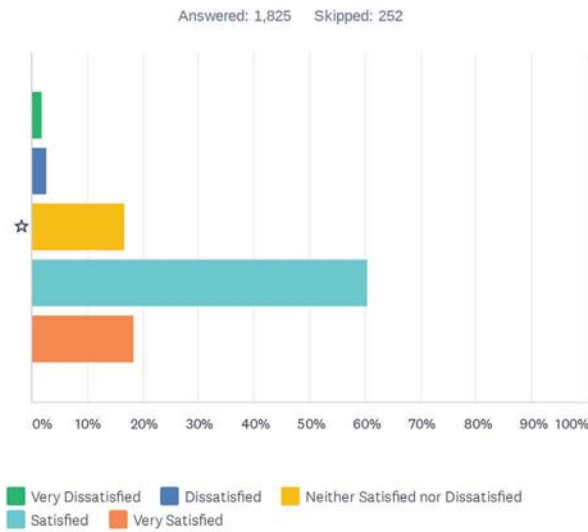
Question 7 - Which of the following amenities, existing or potential, would you like to include in the Carson Park Master Plan? (Only select the amenities you prefer)

Answered: 1,875 Skipped: 202



## 2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Question 8 - Please rate your overall satisfaction with the current amenities offered at Carson Park.



	VERY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	1.86% 34	2.63% 48	16.66% 304	60.49% 1,104	18.36% 335	1,825	3.91

Question 9 - What is your favorite thing about Carson Park?

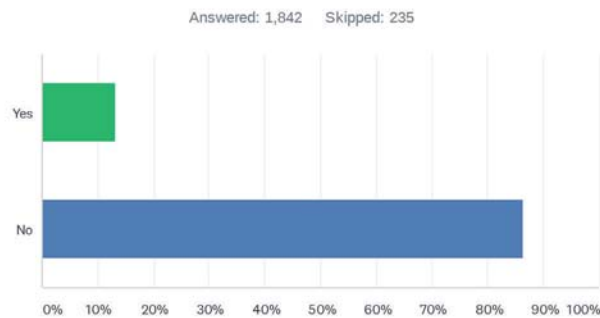
good relaxing new playground events place walking paths natural trees water  
 views well Valley Museum look Express games kids ball fields  
 great place picnic playground kids Eau Claire unique great many  
 baseball games still fishing big space able Baseball  
 natural setting feel surrounding moon lake children location  
 green space walking trails open space trails Memories  
 Half Moon picnic areas walking games  
 museums peaceful trees clean park see  
 playground woods nature much area railroad  
 love football games lake sports baseball stadium  
 ball park history lots beautiful things city size S variety  
 natural beauty train beauty used Chippewa Valley time  
 water one activities playground equipment quiet baseball football  
 baseball field close going always Carson Park kayaking large community  
 nice Braun Bay middle city roads enjoy access scenery everything football field  
 family



**Question 10 - When visiting parks in different areas, what amenities have you seen that could be brought to Carson Park?**

canoe kayak volleyball courts etc Better restrooms options zoo biking trails signs sure  
 rented SNOWSHOE bike natural boat rental make ice rink kayak canoe around  
 amenities way canoe rental museums nature center cleaner places Carson  
 playground swimming winter beach bathrooms parking lot walking  
 baseball stadium N large None different Carson Park city  
 restrooms Kayak launch golf course great  
 walking trails water feature better Half Moon park  
 food trucks Splash pad concession stand  
 Disc golf Basketball courts area run trails pool water  
 gardens kayak rental new nice big need picnic tables think  
 outdoor fitness outdoor activities rentals food facilities events also along  
 nature course hiking trails awesome use one band shell nature trails  
 Eau Claire Nothing lake concerts walking paths space updated station love keep  
 maybe Irvine Park see don t many River Prairie

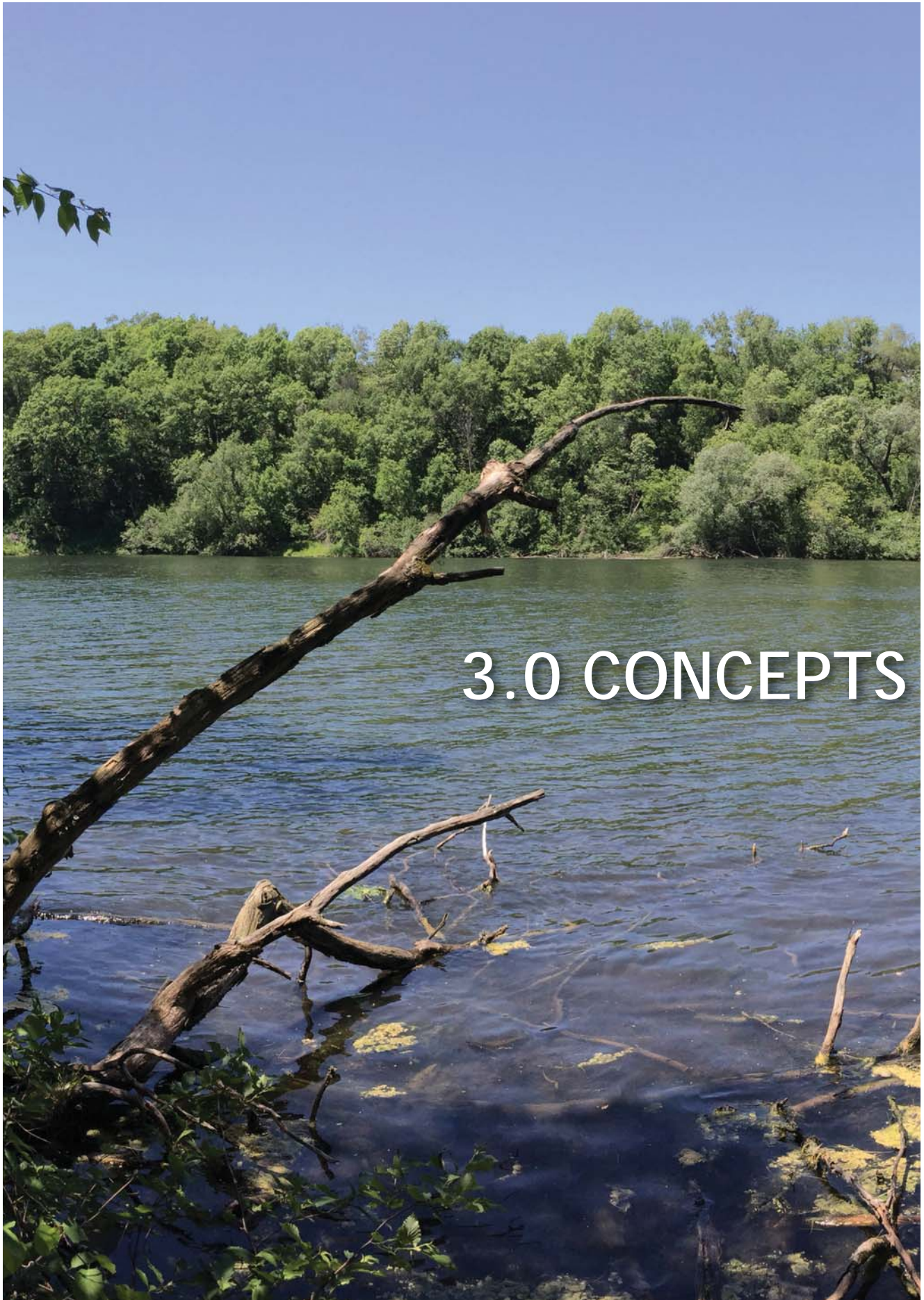
**Question 11 - Do you have any concerns about safety or accessibility in Carson Park?**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	13.08% 241
No	86.48% 1,593
TOTAL	1,842







# 3.0 CONCEPTS



### 3.0 CONCEPTS

After the first round of meetings with stakeholders and the public survey results, information was gathered to form a basis for design considerations. The concept phase resulted in 2 plans. The athletic fields and courts as referred to as the sports complex, was presented separately complexity of the uses in contrast with the passiveness of the overall park.

For this report, the concepts and master plan are rotated 90 degrees with the north to the right side of all plan images.

#### 3.1 Concept A

In Concept A the Braun's Bay area improvements address parking and access to Half Moon Lake. In the public survey there was a high level of interest in providing Kayak/canoe rental in the park. In this concept the rental was shown at Braun's Bay with access to the water with a new ADA pier and the existing launch. Accessible walks to the shelters, benches and picnic tables improved connections for all.

A new trail system was introduced in the marshy area at the south end of the park. This underutilized area is a good location to add trails to the park which ranked high in the public survey. The trail connects Lakeshore Park to the upper bluff at the Chippewa Valley Railroad drive. A formalized picnic area is shown at the bluff overlooking the marsh area.

An area south of the Horseshoe Courts was damaged by storm winds recently. Many trees were removed and an open landscape is prevalent. The concept shows a new shelter with parking and tables along walks adds more opportunity for picnicking in the park. The trail is expanded in this area to connect to other parts of the park and create a circulating system.

In Concept A, Pavilion Drive ends at the parking lot for the Oak Pavilion and main park playground. The elimination of the northern half of Pavilion Drive reduces vehicular circulation through the center of the park and opens the woodland to more pedestrian trails. Other walks and trails are added in and around the Pine and Oak Pavilions and the playground.

The northern end of the peninsula more trails are added and improved parking in small pulloff lots are shown to meet access opportunities while maintaining the natural feel of the woodland and lake bluff edge. Trails continue through the woodlands and linkup with the Chippewa Valley Museum and Paul Bunyan Logging Camp.

The Birch Pavilion parking lot and connection to the shelter were improved in Concept A. The parking lot is reconfigure to more efficiently use the space. The walks are shown to connect to the shelter, new fishing piers and other amenities to extend accessibility.

At Halfmoon Beach, the concept addresses the gravel parking lot with a paved and more efficiently striped lot. An accessible connection from parking down the hillside to the beach is shown on the west side of the lot. Consideration was given to renovating and improving the existing beach restroom building.

#### 3.2 Concept B

Carson Park is a tremendous facility and provides a wealth of recreational value to the citizens of Eau Claire.





**CONCEPT PLAN  
OPTION A**

**LEGEND**

- ① ADA Kayak/Canoe Launch
- ② Braun's Bay Boat Landing
- ③ Kayak/Canoe Rental
- ④ Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- ⑤ Braun's Bay Pavilion
- ⑥ Marsh Walk
- ⑦ Marsh Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑧ Proposed Picnic Area
- ⑨ Horseshoe Courts
- ⑩ Chippewa Valley Railroad
- ⑪ Main Parking Lot
- ⑫ Pine Pavilion Picnic Area
- ⑬ Oak Pavilion Picnic Area
- ⑭ Main Park Playground
- ⑮ Half Moon Lake Access Trails
- ⑯ Beach Overlook
- ⑰ Beach Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑱ Chippewa Valley Museum
- ⑲ Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- ⑳ Birch Playground
- ㉑ Birch Pavilion Picnic Area
- ㉒ Fishing Piers
- ㉓ Trail at Lakeshore Park
- ㉔ Half Moon Beach
- P Parking
- S Service
- Restrooms
- Picnic Areas
- Trails



Map 3.1 Concept A

Master Plan 2020  
Carson Park





Map 3.2 Concept B

### CONCEPT PLAN OPTION B

#### LEGEND

- ① ADA Kayak/Canoe Launch
- ② Braun's Bay Boat Landing
- ③ Kayak/Canoe Rental
- ④ Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- ⑤ Braun's Bay Pavilion
- ⑥ Marsh Walk
- ⑦ Marsh Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑧ Proposed Picnic Area
- ⑨ Horseshoe Courts
- ⑩ Chippewa Valley Railroad
- ⑪ Main Parking Lot
- ⑫ Pine Pavilion Picnic Area
- ⑬ Oak Pavilion Picnic Area
- ⑭ Main Park Playground
- ⑮ Half Moon Lake Access Trails
- ⑯ Beach Overlook
- ⑰ Beach Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑱ Chippewa Valley Museum
- ⑲ Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- ⑳ Birch Playground
- ㉑ Birch Pavilion Picnic Area
- ㉒ Fishing Piers
- ㉓ Trail at Lakeshore Park
- ㉔ Half Moon Beach
- P Parking
- S Service
- Restrooms
- Picnic Areas
- Trails



Master Plan 2020  
Carson Park



It became apparent after gathering input that the master plan would introduce subtle modifications to the existing facility. The overarching theme for improvements was found to be trails and providing more opportunities for walk in pedestrian friendly zones and not on park roads.

Concept B is similar to A with subtle changes in some areas. For the kayak/canoe rental, the facility was move from Braun's Bay in Concept A to the Birch Pavilion area in Concept B. These two sites plus Halfmoon Beach all have direct access to the lake and are best suited for this added amenity.

The marsh trail is similar in B to A. The concepts show the trail through the woodland with the notion that the implemented trail will need to be field located to protect trees and to be in dryer areas as much as possible.

At the open area near the Horseshoe Courts a picnic area with small pulloff parking is shown in Concept B. Trails extend through this area and connect with other planned trails in the park.

The northern end of the peninsula is similar in the concepts with subtle changes in the location of trails and parking.

In Concept B the Birch Pavilion site has an additional walk and stair system that connects the lower area of the shelter to the museums. The playground near the parking lot is shown as a Nature Base area with play being on natural elements. Fishing and kayak/canoe piers are shown in this area as with Concept A. Halfmoon Beach parking and beach access is similarly shown in Concept B but with the addition of a new open air shelter midway down the trail. Again, improvements are suggested for the existing beach restroom building.

### 3.3 Sports Complex

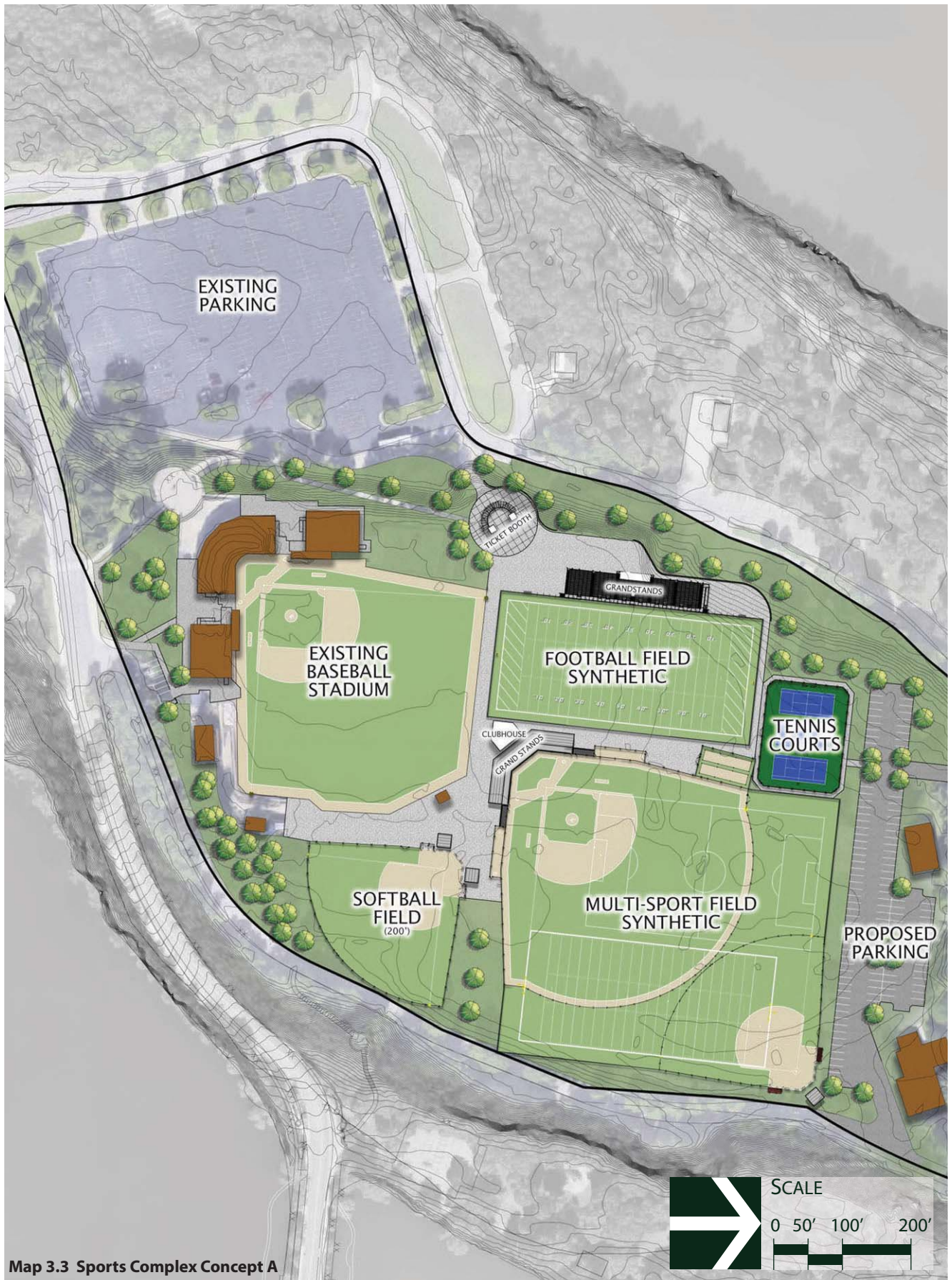
The complex consist of the Carson Park Baseball and Football fields, tennis courts and softball fields. The introduction of a multi-sport field creates a flexible complex that provides more opportunities at the park. All of the fields are proposed to have synthetic turf. This was driven by the athletic stakeholder group discussion. The amount of use proposed for the fields would make it almost impossible to maintain natural turf.

The concepts for the sports complex show the Carson Park Baseball Field as a maintain, historic feature of the park. The proposed improvement currently underway to the stadium are show in the concepts. All of the fields and court sports are shown orient in the best direction for sun angles.

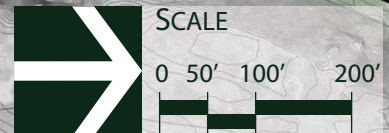
Both plans are centered around a central pedestrian spine that creates a promenade and flexibles space in the complex. A new concession and restroom facility is shown at the center of the promenadt behind the grandstand of the baseball field of the multi-sport field.

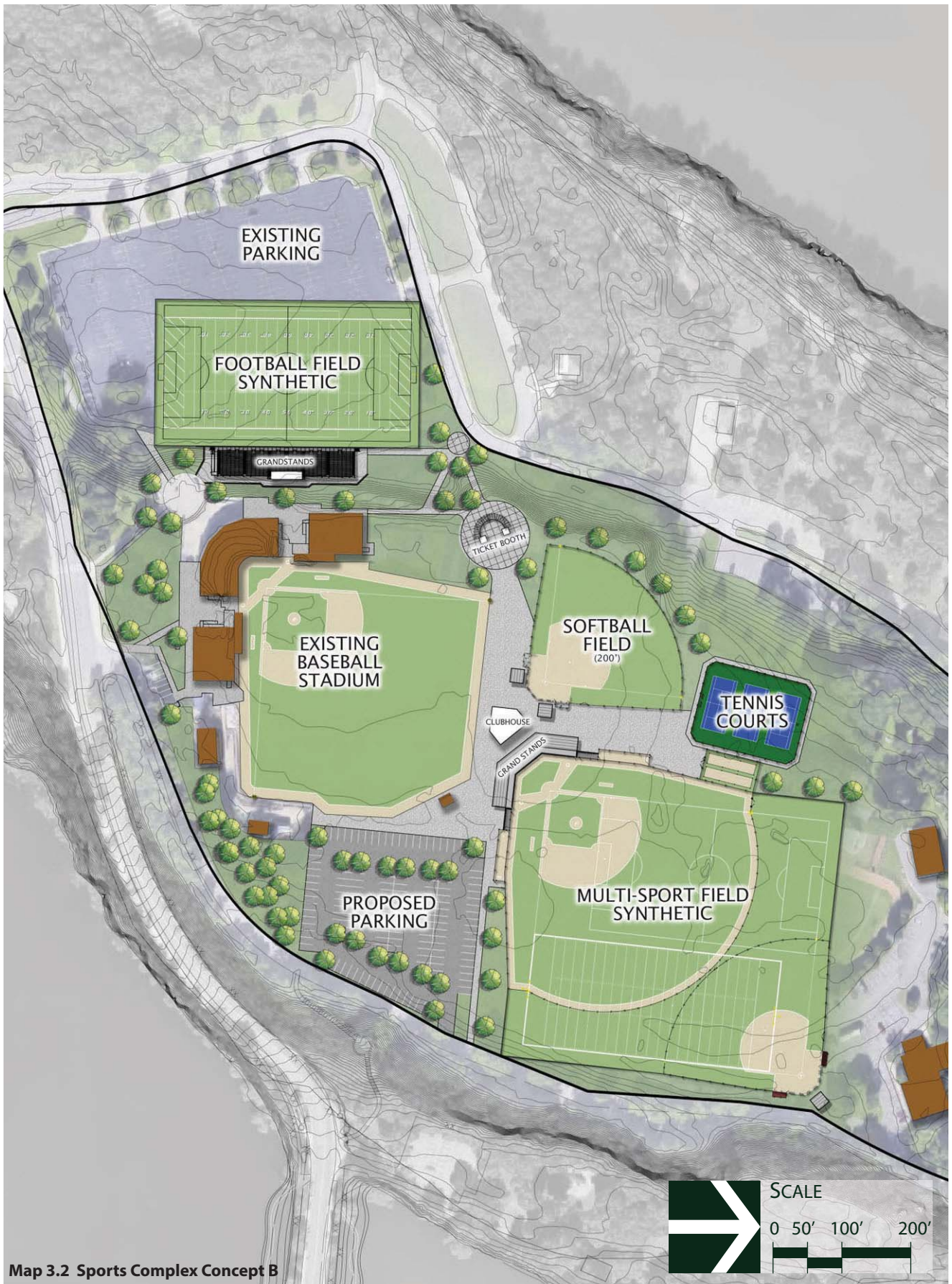
The football field is shown in differing locations. The field is shown in the main central parking lot on one concept to utilize the hillside and orient the field appropriately. The affected parking is move to the site of the existing tennis courts to maintain stall counts and provide barrier free and more direct access all of the fields and courts.





Map 3.3 Sports Complex Concept A





Map 3.2 Sports Complex Concept B





# 4.0 MASTER PLAN



## 4.0 MASTER PLAN

### 4.1 Overall Plan

The second round of meetings with stakeholders was held after a presentation of the concept was given to the general community. Feedback was received and documented from the presentation and meetings and evaluated for the draft master plan. The preferred ideas from the concepts were carried forward into a draft master plan. At the completion of the third round of stakeholder meetings, the draft was refined into the final master plan.

As described in Chapter 1 – Existing Conditions, the park was broken into areas to illustrate specific site enhancements better and view easier-to-read enlarged plans. The use area descriptions begin at the top of the master plan or west side of the park.

There are overarching recommendations in the master plan for future improvements to the park. The breakdown of the areas provides a list of improvements and/or recommendations.

Connectivity with added trail systems was the number one desired improvement from the public survey responses. Trails are added in the plan connecting uses throughout the park. The actual pavement material is not identified at the master plan level. However, these trails could be concrete, asphalt, crushed stone, or other permeable materials. The trails are shown as 6 feet wide, but varying widths are described in some areas where minimal disturbances are preferred, or wider paths are required for multi-use.

The larger parking lots in the master plan are shown with added linear landscape (green) islands between parking bays. The plan recommends adding bioswales wherever possible to treat and retain on-site stormwater runoff from parking lots and paved areas. The bioswales would act as sedimentation basins to limit the effects of runoff to Half Moon Lake.



4.1 Bioswale in the interior of a parking lot



4.2 Bioswale on edge of a parking lot

Some existing site uses are not part of the master plan. The Chippewa Valley Museum, Paul Bunyan Logging Camp, and the Chippewa Valley Railroad have been incorporated into the master plan in their current configurations with perimeter improvements as appropriate with park plans. Some of the parking for those



**LEGEND**

- ① ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier
- ② Braun's Bay Boat Landing
- ③ Vault Restroom
- ④ Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- ⑤ Braun's Bay Pavilion
- ⑥ Gathering Node
- ⑦ Marsh Walk
- ⑧ Marsh Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑨ Proposed Picnic Area
- ⑩ Horseshoe Courts
- ⑪ Chippewa Valley Railroad
- ⑫ New Pine Pavilion
- ⑬ Oak Pavilion
- ⑭ New Pavilion/Restroom
- ⑮ Main Park Playground
- ⑯ Main Football/Soccer Field
- ⑰ Carson Park Baseball Field
- ⑱ Softball Field
- ⑲ Tennis Courts
- ⑳ Multi-Sport Field
- ㉑ Half Moon Lake Access Trails
- ㉒ Beach Overlook/Picnic Area
- ㉓ Chippewa Valley Museum
- ㉔ Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- ㉕ Birch Playground
- ㉖ Birch Pavilion
- ㉗ Steps/Trail to Museums
- ㉘ Fishing Piers
- ㉙ Halfmoon Beach
- ㉚ Kayak/Canoe Rental
- ㉛ ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier
- ㉜ Trail at Lakeshore Park



Master Plan 2020  
Carson Park



facilities are included in the plan. The existing park maintenance building is left in place since its location is central and the structure is in good condition.



4.3 Aerial view of Carson Park Master Plan

Base image courtesy of Google Earth

The plan identifies vault restrooms in place of the portable toilets in lower areas of the park. The vault system is a concrete containment unit that is placed underground, they can be cast-in-place or precast. The structure for the restroom can also be premanufactured and delivered to the site. This type of restroom can be located near the floodplain and/or areas with limited sewer connections.







4.4 Vault restroom section



4.5 Vault restroom structure

# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

## 4.2 Braun's Bay

LEGEND	KEY
① ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier	Ⓟ Parking
② Braun's Bay Boat Landing	Ⓢ Service
③ Vault Restroom	 Restrooms
④ Braun's Bay Fishing Pier	 Picnic Areas
⑤ Braun's Bay Pavilion	 Trails
⑥ Gathering Node	 Multi-use Path



## 1 – ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier

- a) Add 10 perpendicular parking stalls with access to new pier.
- b) Add kayak/canoe storage racks for rent to boaters.
- c) Add bike loops near kayak/canoe storage racks.

## 2 – Braun's Beach Boat Landing

- a) Upgrade existing boat landing pavement.
- b) Provided more kayak/canoe rental racks across the access road from landing.
- c) Add 2 to 3 parallel parking stalls for loading and unloading personal kayaks and canoes.
- d) Provide on-site stormwater management in landscape island at the access road circle.

## 3 – Vault Restroom

- a) Remove portable toilet and replace with a vault restroom structure.
- b) Reconfigure the parking lot to better serve the existing pier and access to the shelter.
- c) Add bike loops at the end of the parking lot near the vault restroom and trail.

## 4 – Braun's Bay Fishing Pier

- a) Add a paved walk from parking to the pier.
- b) Provide an ADA picnic table and walk from parking and pier.

## 5 – Braun's Bay Pavilion

- a) Replace the existing shelter structure with a new pavilion.
- b) Create an architectural vocabulary (or style guide) for all-new park structures.
- c) Provide accessible trails to the pavilion and to other features.
- d) Add ADA benches and picnic table north of pavilion.

## 6 – Gathering Node

- a) Add an accessible area for a larger group, such as a small wedding party, to gather at the tip of the Braun's Bay peninsula.
- b) Provide an accessible trail to the gathering node.
- c) Create views of Half Moon Lake from the node and add landscaping aesthetics and shade.



4.6 Accessible kayak/canoe launch



4.7 Kayak/canoe rack



4.8 Example of a gathering node

# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

## 4.3 Marsh Walk

- |                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>LEGEND</b>                | <b>KEY</b>       |
| ⑦ Marsh Walk                 | Ⓟ Parking        |
| ⑧ Marsh Overlook Picnic Area | Ⓢ Service        |
|                              | ♿ Restrooms      |
|                              | ⌘ Picnic Areas   |
|                              | 🚶 Trails         |
|                              | 🚲 Multi-use Path |



Map 4.3 Marsh Walk





7 – Marsh Walk

- a) Use natural materials for the walk such as crushed stone fines.
- b) Locate the walk “in the field” to minimize effects on existing trees.
- c) Remove invasive species and locate the walk in those areas.
- d) Keep the walk minimal with a maximum of 5 feet in width.
- e) Add boardwalks where the ground is wet and not solid.
- f) Remove invasive species and locate the walk in those areas.

8 – Marsh Overlook Picnic Area

- a) Add parallel parking stalls along the Chippewa Valley Railroad access road.
- b) Add an ADA stall with paved connection to an ADA picnic table.
- c) Add picnic tables in the grass area at the tip of the bluff.
- d) Selective prune vegetation to open views to the lower marsh and Half Moon Lake.
- e) Add bike loops to the site.



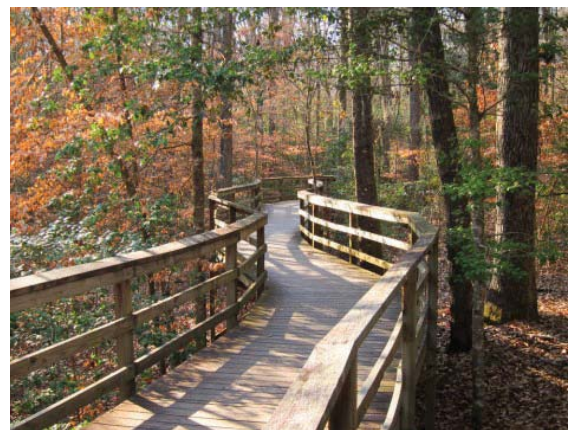
4.9 Crushed stone path



4.10 Binder course path



4.11 Low profile boardwalk



4.12 Boardwalk with handrailing



# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

## 4.4 Horseshoe Court and Picnic Area

- | LEGEND                     | KEY            |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| ⑨ Proposed Picnic Area     | Ⓟ Parking      |
| ⑩ Horseshoe Courts         | Ⓢ Service      |
| ⑪ Chippewa Valley Railroad | Restrooms      |
|                            | Picnic Areas   |
|                            | Trails         |
|                            | Multi-use Path |



Map 4.4 Horseshoe Courts



## 9 – Proposed Picnic Area

- a) Add an open-air picnic shelter
- b) Provide a small parking lot for users.
- c) Add trail connections to the Chippewa Valley Railroad site extending north toward the Pine Pavilion.
- d) Add accessible picnic tables and benches to the site.
- e) Maintain a grass area around the shelter for lawn play.
- f) Provide on-site stormwater management for parking lot.
- g) Add bike loops near walk to new shelter.

## 10 – Horseshoe Courts

- a) Improve the existing parking lot
- b) Update the concessions/restroom building and incorporate the park vocabulary for the structure.
- c) Provide post or post brackets for a movable canopy structure over a portion of the courts.

## 11 – Chippewa Valley Railroad

- a) Add a trail connecting to the marsh walk and Railroad site.



4.13 Picnic shelter example







4.14 Portable clear span tent structure



4.0 MASTER PLAN

4.5 Pavilions, Picnic, and Main Playground

- | LEGEND                   | KEY  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 12 New Pine Pavilion     | P Parking  |
| 13 Oak Pavilion          | S Service  |
| 14 New Pavilion/Restroom |  Restrooms      |
| 15 Main Park Playground  |  Picnic Areas   |
|                          |  Trails         |
|                          |  Multi-use Path |



## 12 – New Pine Pavilion

- a) Remove existing picnic shelter.
- b) Relocate a new pavilion.
- c) Add facilities for men, women, and all gender restroom and changing station to the pavilion.
- d) Selective prune vegetation to open views of Half Moon Lake.
- e) Create a new parking lot in the location of the existing restroom building along Pavilion Drive.
- f) Provide an accessible trail system from parking and other neighboring pavilions.
- g) Add ADA accessible picnic tables and benches.
- h) Add bike loops along the walk at the relocated parking lot.

## 13 – Oak Pavilion

- a) Maintain and update the Oak Pavilion structure.
- b) Provide an accessible trail system from parking and other neighboring pavilions.
- c) Add ADA accessible picnic tables and benches.

## 14 – New Pavilion/Restroom

- a) Add a new pavilion with restroom near the main park playground
- b) Add facilities for men, women, and all gender restroom and changing station to the pavilion.
- c) Provide an accessible trail system from parking, other neighboring pavilions, and the main park playground.
- d) Terminate Pavilion Drive at the parking lot and expand the number of stalls for the 3 pavilions.
- e) Provide a trail connection to the sport complex.
- f) Add bike loops along the walk near the new pavilion.

## 15 – Main Park Playground

- a) Remove existing restroom on the west side of the play area.
- b) Connect to trail system.
- c) Add bike loops near playground.



4.15 Picnic shelter with restrooms example



4.16 Picnic shelter with restrooms example

# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

## 4.6 Sports Complex



## 16 – Main Football and Soccer Stadium

- a) Use synthetic turf with football and 225'x300' soccer striping.
- b) Provide access to the proposed concession/restroom.
- c) Add facilities for men, women, and all-gender restroom and changing stations to the pavilion.
- d) Ornamental exterior/security vinyl fencing.
- e) Create an entrance vestibule with a promenade from the north to the Hank Aaron Plaza.
- f) Proposed grandstands on the east side of the football field set back into the hillside
  - i. Press-box and Concessions building would be at the Carson Park Baseball Stadium finish grade, retaining wall surrounding grandstands, entering grandstands from central access at rear and dropping to field grade approximately 6'-10' below Baseball Stadium finish grade. Maintain the architectural vocabulary of new grandstands with the historic stadium.
- b) Replace the remaining existing parking lot with an improved layout, including bioswale islands.
- c) Add bike loops along the multi-use trail connection at the football field.



4.17 Grandstand built in a hillside



4.18 Synthetic turf football/soccer field at Regis HS

## 17 – Carson Park Baseball Stadium

- a) Proposed upgrades to grandstands, storage, and dugouts.
- b) Field and existing seating areas to remain.
- c) Provide access to parking bays to the Southwest and Northeast.
- d) Replace the existing tennis courts with a parking lot at grade with the grandstand to provide ADA access to the Stadium and upper level of the football field. Add bioswales to the parking lot.
- e) Add bike loops along the walk at the east entrance to the Baseball Stadium.

## 18 – Softball Field

- a) Proposed Natural Turf 200' Softball Field
- b) Northwest orientation to provide suitable limiting sun issues.
- c) Located with home plate parallel with the Multi-Sport Field provides for a great location for a pavilion and centralized plaza space.

## 19 – Tennis Courts

- a) Add four tennis courts that are flexible to change to basketball or pickleball.
- b) Rotate courts north to south to improve orientation and add wind-screening on the prevailing





4.19 Sport court with tennis, pickleball and basketball

windward side.

- c) Provide access to Softball/Multi-Sport Field pavilion and plaza.
- d) Provide direct access to parking lots to the west and north.
- e) Add bike loops between the parking lot and tennis courts.

20 – Multi-Sport Field

- a) Add a multi-use Pavilion located at a centralized location between Softball, Baseball, Tennis Courts, and Multi-Sport Field. Include press-box, concessions, and restrooms.
- b) Add facilities for men, women, and all-gender restroom and changing stations to the pavilion.
- c) Reorient the parking lot to align with Multi-Sport Field and provide shared stalls with the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp.
- d) Add bike loops along walks near Multi-Sport Field.

Baseball Field

- e) Preferred northeast orientation. This provides not only correct orientation but also positions the stadium to use the shared pavilion.
- f) Temporary outfield fencing, pre-positioned outfield posts and bases located in synthetic field with turf cover.
- g) Foul line and backstop fencing will be permanent. Locate and orient to not interfere with other sporting events outside if set for baseball.
- h) 500-1000 seat grandstands with masonry dugouts, (2) bullpens, and batting cages
- i) Access to adjacent parking to parking lots at the southeast and north.





4.20 Multisport field example

Practice Soccer & Football Field

- j) Large enough synthetic area to provide a full-size football field and a 195' x 330' soccer field overlapping the softball and baseball outfields.

Softball Field

- k) Southwest orientation is proficient for early games.
- l) Located opposite of baseball stadium to keep overall Synthetic Field as small and as cost-efficient as possible.
- m) Foul line and backstop fencing will be permanent. Locate and orient to not interfere with other sporting events outside of softball.



4.21 Synthetic turf baseball field



4.22 Synthetic turf infield and baselines

4.0 MASTER PLAN

4.7 Museums and Peninsula Point



## 21 – Half Moon Lake Access Trails

- a) Replace footpaths with crushed fines paths and concrete or stone step blocks to the lake edge.
- b) Replace existing benches with new.
- c) Add ADA bench pads where possible.
- d) Remove pullout parking along the east side of West Half Moon Drive.
- e) Add parking with ADA stalls on the west side of the Drive.
- f) Add a trail system to the east of the Drive to connect to the new trail system.
- g) Remove Pavilion Drive and replace it with a 10-foot to 12-foot wide multi-use path.

## 22 – Beach Overlook/Picnic Area

- a) Provide improved parking stall markings
- b) Add accessible benches and paths at the west overlook parking.
- c) Add accessible picnic table and path at the east picnic area at the top of the bluff.
- d) Selectively prune vegetation to open views to Half Moon Lake.

## 23 – Chippewa Valley Museum

- a) Reconfigure perpendicular parking stalls and add a landscaped island to break up linear parking.
- b) Add trails to connect with the overall park trail system.
- c) Add a trail through the woods to the multi-use path to provide access to woodlands.
- d) Add bike loops along the walk.

## 24 – Paul Bunyan Logging Camp

- a) Reorient the parking lot to align with Multi-Sport Field and provide shared stalls with the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp.
- b) Relocate statues to fit with the new parking lot configuration.



4.23 Natural stone rip-rap shoreline stabilization 4.24 Natural stone steps and crushed stone trail along a shoreline

# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

## 4.8 Birch Lakeside



25 – Birch Playground

- a) Organize parking to utilize the current space more appropriately.
- b) Add ADA stalls on east side of the lot.
- c) Add a vault restroom near ADA parking stalls.
- d) Provide trails to the playground.
- e) Replace the play structures with a nature-based playground.
- f) Add bike loops to trail near playground

26 – Birch Pavilion

- a) Replace the existing shelter structure with a new pavilion.
- b) Create a vocabulary for all new park structures.
- c) Provide accessible trails to the pavilion and to other features.
- d) Add ADA benches and picnic table north of pavilion.

27 – Steps/Trail to Museums

- a) Add steps on the north end of the Birch Pavilion site to connect with the museum complex. Use the existing steps at the south end of the site near Carson Park Drive for context.

28 – Fishing Piers

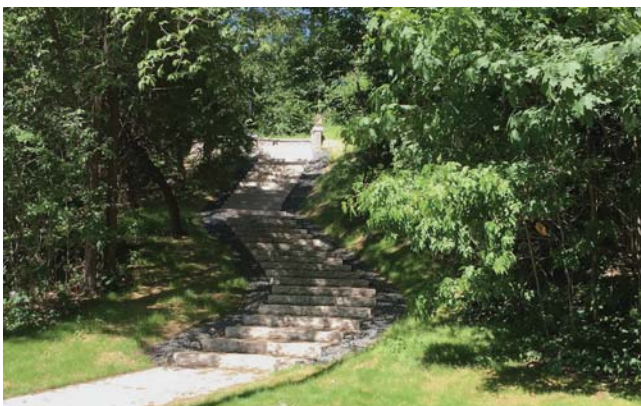
- b) Add one to two fishing piers with connections to the trail system.
- c) Provided accessible fishing opportunities.



4.25 Nature based playground



4.26 Picnic shelter example



4.27 Existing steps near Carson Park Drive at Birch Pavilion



4.28 Fishing pier



# 4.0 MASTER PLAN

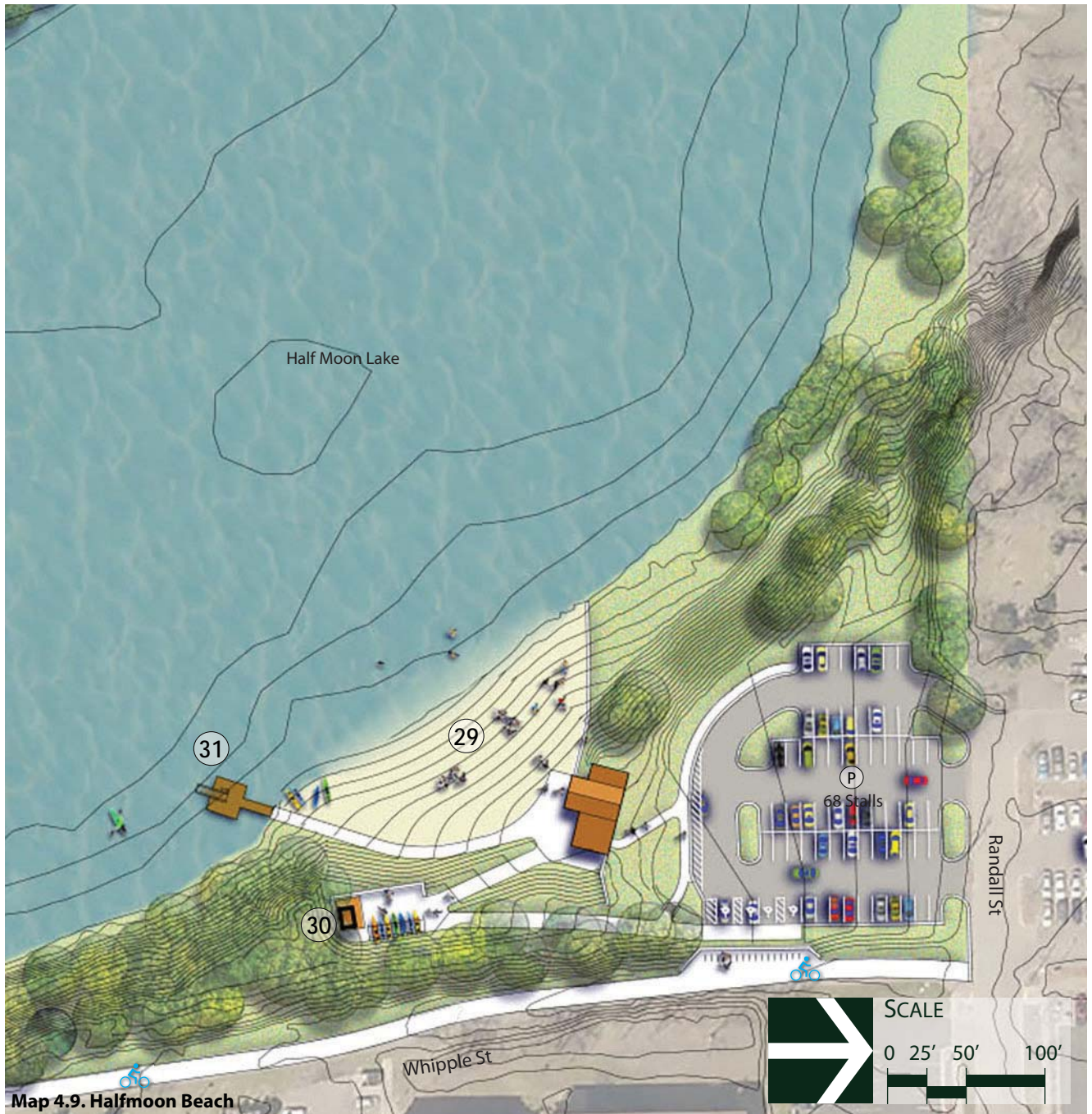
## 4.9 Halfmoon Beach

### LEGEND

- ②9 Halfmoon Beach
- ③0 Kayak/Canoe Rental
- ③1 ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier

### KEY

- Ⓟ Parking
- Ⓢ Service
- Restrooms
- Picnic Areas
- Trails
- Multi-use Path



Map 4.9. Halfmoon Beach



29 – Halfmoon Beach

- a) Add a paved parking lot with typical dimensioned stalls.
- b) Provide accessible parking stalls with walk connect to the beach.
- c) Create a new 10-foot-wide paved walk from the parking at a maximum 5% slope to the beach. Utilize existing topography and a mid-level plateau to achieve an accessible route.
- d) Renovate or replace the beach restroom building. Utilize the roof patio of the existing structure, if renovated, to create an open-air pavilion.
- e) Use the architectural vocabulary established for new park structure in for the renovation or replacement of the restroom building.
- f) Add a paved edge around the beach to contain sand and limit migration.
- g) Add bike loops along the Chippewa River Trail with a connection to the walk to the beach.

30 – Kayak/Canoe Rental

- a) Provide a larger paved area at the mid-level plateau to locate a small premanufactured booth for a vendor to operate rentals.
- b) Add space for a kayak/canoe/paddleboard storage rack for rental.

31 – ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier

- a) Remove the existing pier.
- b) Add an ADA launch pier and new access 10-foot-wide walk to beach restroom building.



4.29 Renovated beach house with rooftop shelter



4.30 Renovated beach house with ground shelter



4.31 Kayak/canoe rental shed with storage rack



4.32 ADA kayak/canoe launch

## 4.0 MASTER PLAN

### 4.10 Mile Loop Trail System

Many communities that are updating their parks with master plan projects have received the same feedback from the public to add more walks and trails. As an outcome of this request, measurable trails have become popular additions.

A measurable mile loop provides a trail system that participants can use to monitor their exercise regimen. A mile is 5,260 lineal feet in length. The mile loop trail can include markers indicating periodic distances such as 500 feet increments.

The mile loop trail at Carson Park could have multiple trailhead locations. The loop passes by 3 parking lots, all of which could be identified as start points. Near the proposed shelter with restrooms south of the main park playground is a good location if on trailhead is desired for the system.

Beginning at the new shelter and moving clockwise the mile loop trail is located along the parking lot, then parallel with Pavilion Drive to the proposed parking lot north of the relocated football field. From that point the trail moves into with pine forest toward the new Pine Pavilion. At the pavilion the trail extends parallel with West Half Moon Drive in the woodlands and open fields. Views of Half Moon Lake are present along the trail location. Once at the northern tip of the peninsula the trail rises a short incline to the Chippewa Valley Museum. From there the trail turn at the proposed parking lot between the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp and multi-sport field. At the west end of the parking lot the trail runs down the hillside back to the new pavilion at the main park playground.

The mile loop trail provides the opportunity to experience many unique aspects of the park. The trail meanders through the major picnic area, through woodlands, linking to the museums and cultural areas, to extend past active sports amenities. The topography changes throughout the trail provide a mild challenge for the average walker.





Map 4.10 Mile Loop Trail System

LEGEND

- ① ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier
- ② Braun's Bay Boat Landing
- ③ Vault Restroom
- ④ Braun's Bay Fishing Pier
- ⑤ Braun's Bay Pavilion
- ⑥ Gathering Node
- ⑦ Marsh Walk
- ⑧ Marsh Overlook Picnic Area
- ⑨ Proposed Picnic Area
- ⑩ Horseshoe Courts
- ⑪ Chippewa Valley Railroad
- ⑫ New Pine Pavilion
- ⑬ Oak Pavilion
- ⑭ New Pavilion/Restroom
- ⑮ Main Park Playground
- ⑯ Main Football/Soccer Field
- ⑰ Carson Park Baseball Field
- ⑱ Softball Field
- ⑲ Tennis Courts
- ⑳ Multi-Sport Field
- ㉑ Half Moon Lake Access Trails
- ㉒ Beach Overlook/Picnic Area
- ㉓ Chippewa Valley Museum
- ㉔ Paul Bunyan Logging Camp
- ㉕ Birch Playground
- ㉖ Birch Pavilion
- ㉗ Steps/Trail to Museums
- ㉘ Fishing Piers
- ㉙ Halfmoon Beach
- ㉚ Kayak/Canoe Rental
- ㉛ ADA Kayak/Canoe Pier
- ㉜ Trail at Lakeshore Park



Master Plan 2020  
Carson Park







# Carson Park Master Plan 2021

