

Park Properties Concept Study

May 2025



Prepared for:

Village of DeForest
120 S Stevenson St,
DeForest, WI 53532



Purpose of Study

In April/May of 2025, the Village of DeForest retained Parkitecture + Planning, LLC to study seven park and open space properties in the Village for potential development options. The Village completed a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan in late 2024 which identified these properties as priority opportunities to enhance the Village-wide system. Improving some/all of these properties will increase the recreational offerings for community residents and help to satisfy the growing population and demand for open space. Public review and feedback on these concept options will help determine the preferred design direction for each site prior final design/engineering and implementation. The final result may be a selection of the concepts as drawn, or a hybrid of ideas/arrangements from the concept options. The following properties were assessed as part of this study.

Dale Jenkins Park is located on Bear Tree Parkway and is currently partially developed. The first phase of improvements included a soccer field, multi-use trail, playground, and sledding hill, and is approximately 3.4 acres in size.

Nelson Court Special Use Park is located at the northern terminus of Nelson Court. The parcel is currently unimproved, but some understory clearing of invasive vegetation has recently taken place. The site contains a mixture of wooded uplands and riparian lowlands and is bounded by the Yahara River on two sides. The parcel is approximately 6.4 acres in size.

North Industrial Special Use Park is located near the intersection of N. Stevenson Street and E Yahara Road. Site access is shared with the Village Dog Park. The site is currently open land adjacent to the Yahara River corridor and much of the parcel is lowlands. The parcel is approximately 7.3 acres in size.

River Turn Park is located in the Rivers Turn Subdivision and can be accessed from Stonecrop Way and Bluestem Trail. The property is currently unimproved open space and is adjacent to the regional stormwater management pond to the south. A multi-use trail from the west is currently stubbed in for future connectivity. The parcel is approximately 1.5 acres in size.

Shane O'Donnell Park is located between River Road and Griffin Way. Improvements on this property include a multi-use path connection and small playground. The parcel is approximately 1.8 acres in size.

Conservancy Commons Park is an existing community park that was originally developed in the mid/late 2000s. Existing park amenities include a flow through splashpad, playground, shelter, restrooms, multi-sport field, and walking paths. The parcel is approximately 3.0 acres in size.

The **Parcel Adjacent to Ziggy Field** is a remnant parcel sandwiched between a privately operated baseball field, and multi-family housing development. The parcel is approximately 0.8 acres in size.

The following list outlines the opportunities/recommendations assembled for each site. Two site Concept Plans per site (1 for Dale Jenkins, 3 for Conservancy Commons) and Opinion of Probable Cost (OPC) are included in the study as appendices.

Recommendations:

A. Dale Jenkins Park

Recommended improvements to this park are intended to supplement the phase 1 amenities and largely follows the previously adopted concept plan with adjustments for location, scale, and connectivity.

1. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab. It is recommended to include power and a light.
2. Construct a small 2-4 stall restroom building for park patron usage. This could be a precast modular pre-plumbed structure or block building. As an alternative, this park could continue to function with a porta-potty, but a wooden screen fence should be erected to enhance the visual character from the adjacent street and homes.
3. Expand the existing playground with equipment aimed at ages 2-5. The current equipment is not appealing to the younger age group.
4. Install outdoor concrete yard games such as “bags” or table tennis. These amenities exist in the downtown area adjacent to Village Hall and are used on a regular basis.
5. Install required utility laterals to service a new restroom building. These can be connected to Village mainlines in Bear Tree Parkway.
6. Construct concrete sidewalk connections to the playground area from the multi-use pathway within the park to promote ADA access.

B. Nelson Court Special Use Park

Recommended improvements to this park will provide public access to conservancy/nature-based recreation lands, and potentially to the Yahara River. Both concepts contain similar recommendations but vary in the arrangement and intensity of development.

1. Construct a small parking lot at the terminus of Nelson Court. Approximately 15-18 stalls would be possible.
2. Construct a restroom building to provide a comfort station for park visitors. 2 stalls and a mechanical chase/storage room is appropriate. This could be a precast modular structure or block built building.
3. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab.
4. Install a loop system pathway to provide ADA accessible access throughout the property. Surfacing is proposed to be a crushed limestone aggregate with polymetric binder additive for stabilization.
5. Construct a small overlook providing view corridors into the Yahara channel for wildlife viewing and creating a place of rest.

6. Install playscape nodes with natural material play equipment and surfacing. This type of playscape is very appropriate in this special use park setting and will provide a unique amenity within the village.
7. Continue to improve the woodland area health by invasive species removal and selective clearing/thinning.
8. Install a pedestrian scale bridge over the Yahara River to connect the new internal trail system with the existing bike path along Stevenson Street.
9. Create a cleared area in the middle of the property for sunlight penetration and ecosystem regeneration.

C. North Industrial Special Use Park

Recommended improvements to this park will provide public access to conservancy/nature-based recreation lands, and potentially to the Yahara River. Both concepts contain similar recommendations but vary in the arrangement and intensity of development.

1. Construct a pathway system to connect the vehicular parking with the proposed amenities in the northern half of the site. The pathway is envisioned to be crushed limestone aggregate with polymetric binder additive for stabilization.
2. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab.
3. Construct a bicycle pump/skills track made of earthen materials. It is important to note that earthwork on this site should balance (no import or export).
4. Construct a gravel service drive to allow for Village staff to access the parcel from E Yahara Road.
5. Begin planting of a Village owned tree nursery. This can provide a steady supply of urban forestry replacement trees, as well as an opportunity to provide public education on tree varieties and proper arboriculture care.
6. Construct additional vehicular parking to supplement the existing stall availability for the dog park. Approximately 30 stalls would be possible.
7. Install a metal gate to control access into the tree nursery area from E Yahara Road.
8. Construct a small picnic node to serve both the new improved day use area (pump track) as well as the existing dog park use area.
9. Construct a small overlook providing view corridors into the Yahara channel for wildlife viewing and creating a place of rest. This area contains a natural spring that helps to feed the Yahara River (NI-2).
10. Construct a stormwater management area in the northwest corner of the parcel to address runoff before entering the Yahara watershed.

D. River Turn Park

Recommended improvements to this park will provide public access to this unimproved open space with the developing neighborhood and provide walkable access to

recreational amenities. Both concepts contain similar recommendations but vary in the arrangement and intensity of development.

1. Continue the multi-use pathway through the park and establish a connection to Stonecrop Way on the east side of the parcel. This will enhance connectivity within the neighborhood.
2. Grade and seed a large flat open space suitable for multi-sport recreational programming. This area is not large enough to accommodate age groups other than youth. The open space will also likely be used by residents interested in activities such as frisbee, pick up family soccer, etc.
3. Install a playground with equipment suitable for ages 2-12. Surfacing could be Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF), synthetic turf, or poured in place rubber (PIP).
4. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab. It is recommended to include power and a light.
5. Construct an asphaltic sport court. This could be lined to accommodate tennis, basketball or potentially pickleball. Multi-sport courts do have limitations and are not appealing to serious tennis/pickleball players due to the overlapping striping, removable nets, etc.
6. Install landscape enhancements to improve aesthetics, promote wildlife, and provide natural screening from the adjacent homes.
7. Install fencing around the sport courts to prevent unwanted ball trespass.
8. Install earthen berm between the proposed courts and the existing stormwater management pond.

E. Shane O'Donnell Park

Recommended improvements to this park will supplement the existing park amenities and provide an enhanced recreational offering to community residents. Both concepts contain similar recommendations but vary in the arrangement and intensity of development.

1. Construct sidewalk connections within the park to provide access to the newly proposed amenities.
2. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab. It is recommended to include power and a light.
3. Construct an asphalt basketball court. This amenity is lacking within the village system.
4. Construct a two court pickleball facility. This should be fully fenced with gates at each entrance.
5. Grade and seed a large flat open space suitable for multi-sport recreational programming. This area is not large enough to accommodate age groups other than youth. The open space will also likely be used by residents interested in activities such as frisbee, pick up family soccer, etc.
6. Install a drinking fountain to provide potable water to park patrons. The location is central to all amenities (existing and proposed).

7. Install a bike repair station along the existing pathway. This proposed location will reuse an existing concrete slab.

F. Conservancy Commons Park

Recommended improvements to this park will replace as well as supplement the existing park amenities and provide an enhanced recreational offering to community residents. Both concepts contain similar recommendations but vary in the arrangement and intensity of development.

1. Install a supplemental playground area below the existing stone retaining wall. The topographical change can be used as an asset for hill slides, etc. Equipment should be selected to complement the existing playground structures, with the understanding that the existing equipment lifespan will expire in the near future. At such time, the entire playground area (old and new) could be re-designed holistically. Concept 3 provides an alternate playground expansion area in the northeast corner of the existing playground area.
2. Replace the existing splashpad features and concrete in the existing footprint. Concept 1 illustrates an opportunity to integrate in-ground lighting and glow towers to provide an evening experience for splashpad users within the existing footprint. Concept 2 utilizes natural prairie themed spray features to tie into the larger theme of Conservancy Place neighborhood. This option positions the wetdeck area to the side of the main pathway to allow for better connectivity within the park. Concept 3 proposes a combination of a small aquatic play structure and ground sprays. This option also realigns the path and splashpad areas. All three options would operate on a flow through basis (similar to the existing system).
3. Install a new metal cabinet to house the splashpad mechanical system (manifold, meter, etc). This would allow for shorter pipe supply lines, less head loss, and a repurposing of the current mechanical room for storage, or a dedicated changing room for splashpad patrons.
4. Construct natural stone steps or “perrons” to allow for connectivity between the new lower playground area and existing upper play area.

G. Parcel Adjacent to Ziggy Field

Recommended improvements to this parcel will provide a new amenity adjacent to an existing private baseball field. There are benefits to both the operators of Ziggy Field and the Village of having these adjacencies. Ziggy operators gain a recreational attraction for their patrons especially those with younger/older siblings engaged in a baseball game, and the Village is able to utilize shared parking for the proposed improvements without additional costs. This site is very small with significant grade changes. These conditions will make construction difficult, but at the same time does offer opportunity to create an interesting landscape/earthform treatment and integrated park environment.

1. Construct a concrete skatepark with features for users of all abilities and skill levels. Shaded seating should be included for user comfort.
2. Install a playground with equipment suitable for ages 2-12. Surfacing could be Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF), synthetic turf, or poured in place rubber (PIP).

This location lends itself to a two-tiered play area with landscape stone walls and vegetation interspersed for a unique play experience. The grade change on this site should be used as an advantage if possible.

3. Construct an open air shelter to provide shaded seating, picnic opportunities, and small gathering space. This should be a metal frame structure with hard roof and concrete slab. It is recommended to include power and a light.
4. Construct retaining walls to help overcome the significant topographical change on this site. Walls will be needed at multiple locations throughout the park to provide terraced flat space.
5. Integrate the topographical change into the playscape to offer hill play for slides and climbing features.
6. Install landscape screening along the property lines to help soften the view from the residential areas to the north.
7. Install fencing as needed along the walls for safety and to control access from Pederson Crossing Blvd.
8. Install stairs as needed to connect use areas and terraced levels within the park.
9. Concept 1 illustrates a sidewalk connection to the residential sidewalk network to the north. This should be discussed with the current property owner prior to installation.

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

Estimates of likely construction costs (2025 dollars) have been assembled for each concept and variation. These projections are high level and are based on unit pricing from recent bid projects with similar elements in the Dane County area. A 10% contingency has been included in the totals, but other soft costs (A/E fees, permit costs, geotechnical borings, and topographical surveys, etc) should be factored into any capital budget forecasting. As design continues, and the concepts are refined, the opinions of probable cost (OPC) should be updated to maintain a current understanding of the likely financial impacts for each project. In some cases, the recommendations/improvements could be phased over time.

Appendices

Dale Jenkins Park (DJ)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plan

Shane O'Donnell Park (SO)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans

Nelson Court Special Use Park (NC)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans

Conservancy Commons Park (CC)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans
- D. 3-D Renderings

North Industrial Special Use Park (NI)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans

Parcel Adjacent to Ziggy Field (ZP)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans

River Turn Park (RT)

- A. Existing Site Conditions
- B. Existing Site Photos
- C. Site Concept Plans

Opinions of Probable Cost