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City of Bayfield  
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814

**RESOLUTION #**  
Adopting the City of Bayfield  
Outdoor Recreation Plan

WHEREAS: the City of Bayfield wishes to provide quality park facilities and a variety of recreational opportunities and experiences to meet the needs of the community's residents and increasing tourist population.

WHEREAS: the City of Bayfield has developed this Outdoor Recreation Plan to guide management and improvement of parks, trails, and open spaces for recreational purposes.

WHEREAS: the City of Bayfield has developed this Outdoor Recreation Plan in order to be eligible for Wisconsin DNR and other funding during a five year period between 2021 - 2026.

WHEREAS: the City of Bayfield staff and the Parks and Recreation Committee coordinate with Bayfield School representatives to support a cooperative plan that reflects the District's needs for outdoor recreation and environmental development on an ongoing basis.

WHEREAS: the City of Bayfield's parks, trails, and recreational opportunities contribute toward a healthy and desirable community for residents and visitors.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Parks and Recreational Committee is hereby adopting the proposed objectives for our city's parks and recreational areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution adopting the Outdoor Recreational Plan for the City of Bayfield is recognized and approved by the City Council on the motion of \_\_\_\_\_ seconded by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021..

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City of Bayfield  
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814

# Outdoor Recreation Plan

## 2021 - 2026

Prepared & Approved by the City of Bayfield Parks & Recreation Committee  
P.O. Box 1170  
Bayfield, WI 54814  
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## I. INTRODUCTION

Resting on the shore of Lake Superior, the City of Bayfield is blessed with a collection of outstanding public parks, trails, and open spaces that enable residents and visitors to enjoy our beautiful natural setting and rich history. These public places are community assets that provide special experiences and add value to our tourist and residential economy. To ensure that these assets receive the attention and support they deserve, the Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) has been developed to guide management and improvement for the next five years. The plan enables the City to set priorities as well as pursue additional resources such as grant funding, donations, and volunteer assistance from outside entities.

The Plan discusses existing parks and priorities, proposed additional parks, implementation strategies, and the budget/resources needed for implementation. The Plan also supports the City's recently adopted Health in All Policies Resolution #573:

*“Resolving it shall be the policy of the City of Bayfield to apply a Health in All Policies approach to its own operations and decision-making, including policy development and implementation, budgeting, and delivery of services.”*

As a general practice, priority is first placed on maintaining existing parks and facilities. Each spring requires clean-up and summer preparations, most of which is done by the Public Works crew plus assistance from volunteers. Proposed improvements and expansion of City parks and facilities are listed in order of relative priority within each park section. These proposals would occur as additional funding, volunteer labor, and other resources become available. Maintenance and expansion should consider the following:

- Protecting slopes, fragile soils, wooded areas, and changing climate conditions;
- Keeping Bayfield a Tree City and Bird City;
- Incorporating “green” standards to facilities and operations, for example: water and energy conservation, green infrastructure, waste minimization, and recycled/environmentally-friendly materials;
- Enhancing accessibility for senior citizens as well as people with disabilities, including access to water-related recreation;
- Planning and implementing actions with climate and coastal resilience in mind;
- Supporting the Comprehensive Plan and community interest in urban agriculture and community gardens, including possible addition of such on City park lands;
- Incorporating ADA accessibility where appropriate and feasible.

This Outdoor Recreation Plan was developed based upon revision of the previous plan dated 2015 – 2019. This revision has incorporated actions identified in the City's 2019 Comprehensive Plan (Comp. Plan) as well as relevant actions from the Waterfront Plan (2003). The draft ORP revision was prepared by the City Parks and Recreation Committee with input from City staff. The draft was made available to the City Plan Commission and for public review in February and March of 2021. Based upon feedback, the Committee finalized the plan and recommended it to the City Council for adoption. This Plan is reviewed annually to provide input into the budget and to develop an annual work plan.

## II. EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

### 1. BIG RAVINE PRESERVE (132 acres +/-) (includes Gil Larsen Nature Trail)

This is the City's largest park, providing access to remarkable open space and recreational opportunities within the City limits. In 1942, a summer rainstorm caused



two of Bayfield's larger ravines to flood the downtown area causing extensive property damage. The City of Bayfield subsequently purchased 120 acres which includes much of the Big Ravine in order to protect its watershed. The City also owns approximately 12+ acres along the lower end of the Ravine, both in the bottom and on the east and west benches above the Ravine, thereby enabling access to the Ravine on the east and west sides.

The soils in this area are extremely fragile, and a 1997 report by the local USDA soil conservationist recommended that the land be utilized for recreation and forestry so that it can continue to provide flood control for the city below. This report also recommended acquisition of the 40-acres on the Ravine's west side to extend protection of the ravine from development upstream. Since then, these 40 acres on the west as well as another 40 acres adjacent to Meyers-Olson Rd. on the north end were acquired and placed in public ownership of the Town of Bayfield. They are permanently protected by conservation easements held by the Landmark Conservancy. A plan was developed in 2015 by the Conservancy to provide guidance for recreational use and conservation of these parcels.

The Big Ravine Preserve includes the Gil Larsen Nature Trail where the community, tourists and the school all make good use of the large ravine that opens onto Washington Avenue at the upper end of Broad Street. Years ago, this unique ecosystem was developed into a nature trail and outdoor laboratory for the school and its use continues to increase. The trail ends approximately .5 miles up the Ravine. The boardwalks, benches, scenic overlooks and rest areas were constructed in 1984 by the WCC. The Gil Larsen Nature Trail is open and accommodating to most but is not accessible to people with physical limitations due to the creek crossings and rough terrain. In 2020 - 2021, several improvements were implemented at the trailhead, including new steps, improved path and signage, additional interpretive signage, a native pollinator plant garden, and a bench. The view of the historic Iron Bridge is an important feature that was cleared in 2020 and should be maintained.

Along the west side of the ravine, a system of trails was established for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, and a soccer field was established in 1999. These trails are primarily accessed from the West Rim Trailhead by the baseball field by the school, the Hilltop Trailhead by the soccer field, and Martin Rd. in the Town.

The East Rim Trail provides non-motorized opportunities year-round, with permission granted by Old Orchard Meadows, the Finn family, and the Erickson family for a public trail. This trail was historically used by snowmobiles, connecting the City of Bayfield with a larger count-wide snowmobile trail system. However, private landowners closed their property to motorized use, thereby blocking snowmobile travel along this trail. In 2020, a parking area was constructed at the north end of the East Rim Trail on Meyers-Olson Rd. and the non-motorized trail was re-routed and improved to address very wet sections that had been historically difficult to travel in the winter and spring. This made the trail significantly more accessible.

This Big Ravine Preserve has been used for recreation purposes for many years, and the results of the 2001 Bayfield Community Survey indicated that people strongly support this continued use of the land. In 2003 a committee commissioned by the City produced “The 120-acre management plan” that included these key recommendations for trail expansion, land conservation, and improved access:

1. Conservation values should be the guiding principles when making decisions that affect this property.
2. Recreational uses should be the primary focus of development.
3. The West side of the Ravine should be reserved for silent sports. The existing trails should be connected to the nature trail (Gil Larsen) in the bottom and to the trails on the East side, if possible. *These connections were completed in 2020-2021* The East side should preserve the snowmobile trail and develop a network of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, skiing to those comparable across the Ravine, and look for ways to connect those trails. *As long as private landowners prohibit snowmobile use, this historic use will not be possible. Trail connections and loops were added in 2020.*
4. The Regional Context of this land should always be kept in mind. Planning in and around the area should be done in cooperation with the Town and County of Bayfield; trails should be connected with existing larger systems in the area and public access should be provided from a number of locations. *This has been embraced by the Bayfield Area Trails Committee and is addressed under the “Trails” section of this plan.*

In 2020 - 2021, with support from outside funding from several sources, the City Parks and Recreation Committee constructed the recommended trail connections between the Gil Larsen Trail in the bottom and the East and West side trails, thereby substantially expanding trail opportunities for the community and visitors (see attached map). These included the Iron Bridge connector, Sweeny Switchback, Pine Bluff, and Hemlock Heights. New public information and signage installed at trailheads and along the trails included new kiosks at Hilltop and West Rim trailheads, and maps and directional signs at trail intersections. Most of this was accomplished by community volunteers led by a professional trail building contractor. This community effort renewed interest in the Big Ravine trails as well as the broader Bayfield Area Trails network vision.

### **Maintenance:**

- Maintain existing trails and signage.
- Gil Larsen Nature Trail: repair and maintain the existing amenities (walkways, signs, benches, overlooks). Priority should be placed on reconstructing the uppermost section of boardwalk above the waterfall, including a railing. Manage use to protect the slopes from trampling and erosion.
- Maintain the viewshed/corridor of the historic Iron Bridge from the Gil Larsen Trailhead and Washington Ave.
- Clean up and dispose of the scrap metal piled at Sweeny Ave. maintenance area.

### **Proposed Improvements:**

- Consider possible additions to the trail network and signage, such as:
  - Further extend the Gil Larsen Trail up the bottom.
  - Construct a connecting trail from the parking area on the east side of the school to the Ravine bottom.
  - Add loops on the east and west sides.
  - Consider clearing one or two vistas of the Lake view. Factor in cost of maintenance and environmental impacts when some views are already available.
- Rehabilitate areas damaged by human activity, including the hillside below the school and other areas identified in the contract report “Big Ravine Erosion Control and Restoration Plan.”
- Work with the Town to address trails, public access, land conservation through easements and acquisition, public information, invasive species control, and watershed protection. Consider if this would be best accomplished through a plan that revises and expands the City’s 120-acre plan to include all of the above-listed elements as well as Town-owned lands.
- Per the Comp. Plan Action, establish conservation easements on City Lands in the Big Ravine and other lands zoned as Conservancy (W-1) lands.
- Where the trails cross private property, secure landowner permissions and ultimately permanent access via trail easements and/or land acquisition.
- Consider working with the school to develop an outdoor classroom and/or environmental education facilities.

2. **COOPER HILL PARK** (.01 acres): This is a small neighborhood park located at the corner of South Seventh Street and Manypenny Avenue. This park was established due to the water corridor running underneath this location. In 2008 the park was re-built, once again following the design and oversight of Learning Structures. It incorporates unique designs which portray the City’s Train History. It provides a playground area for tots and for older children, and also a small stage for neighborhood plays. Consideration was given to installing a gate to contain small children, but pinching concerns precluded this action.



**Maintenance:**

- Maintain signage.
- Maintain the proper amounts of absorbing material on the ground surface; periodically check and provide maintenance of fencing, playground equipment, and sand.
- Weed control is a challenge that should be addressed.

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Plantings to improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the park could possibly be added and maintained by neighborhood volunteers.
- Develop and equipment replacement plan, including obtaining outside funding.

**3. DALRYMPLE CAMPGROUND**

(14.54 acres): This campground is located 1/4 mile north of the City of Bayfield on the slope along Lake Superior's shoreline. Encompassing the second largest City park, it is a heavily wooded area, with very deep ravines, wonderful views of the Apostle Islands, and a primitive trail that provides access to the water. The park has a rustic appearance and caters to tenting and small camper users, rather than to people using very large RVs. There are 30 campsites, with electricity to 70% of the sites. There are no shower facilities at the campground; however, showers are available at the Bayfield Rec.



Center with the purchase of a day pass. This highly popular campground generates substantial fees, adding income to the City's general fund (over \$70,000 in 2020). Therefore, maintaining, improving and expanding the campground is a top priority. Because of the rough terrain, installing improvements is challenging and often expensive. In the spring of 2009, the two restrooms' pit toilets were replaced with new ADA compliant concrete structures and vault systems. The access road is deteriorating; stormwater runoff is contributing to its decline.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain fencing, picnic tables, signage, trails, and other amenities; control encroaching vegetation.
- Complete electrical upgrades/underground installation.
- Maintain and upgrade restrooms to contemporary environmental standards (e.g. composting).

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Add more sites (with picnic tables, fire rings, etc.)
- Improve/renovate the existing road, including managing runoff.
- Walking trail to Bayfield with bridges, lake access opportunities
- Monitor shoreline and stabilize, if possible
- Add a storage structure/area for supplies
- Consider upgrading restroom and shower facilities. This could potentially include indoor or outdoor showers, flush toilets, and changing rooms utilizing solar energy.

4. **EAST DOCK PARK** (.03 acres):

This park is located at the corner of First Street and Wilson Avenue near the Coast Guard station. It is on the shore of Lake Superior and offers a picnic area with a covered shelter, a number of tables and park benches. It has a lot of open space, with a volleyball court, a large playground area. In 2019 new restrooms with “green” utilities were constructed. Many special events are held here, and it is used by residents and tourists alike. There is always a slight breeze coming off the Lake which makes this park a popular place during the



hot summer months. In 2003, community volunteers, under the supervision and direction of Learning Structures renovated this playground into a one-of-a-kind park. The park provides play zones for different ages and hosts historic structures like the “Ferry” and “Sea Monster”. Maintenance of these new structures and continually providing the proper absorption material beneath are priorities. In association with the harbor improvement project of 2020 - 2022, actions were implemented to protect the shoreline from high lake levels. This park also adjoins the L.E. Building administered by the Harbor Commission.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain all signage, facilities, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, shelter, and grills.

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Consider adding interpretive signage, for example on lumbering history and Henry Wachsmuth (who donated the land to the City).
- Coordinate with the Harbor Commission if they consider changes to the use of the L.E. Building that could affect this park or create new recreational opportunities. This could possibly include a public accessible launch transfer system like the one at the new Saxon Harbor marina funded by Wisconsin Coastal Management Program.
- Plant trees and shrubs, especially shade trees near the playground area.
- Develop an equipment replacement strategy, including obtaining supplemental funding and the option of taking a phased approach as needed.
- Windbreaks near the existing picnic shelter.

5. **FISHING PIER:** In 1998 a public fishing pier was built adjacent to the East Dock Park.

Maintenance of this pier falls under the purview of the Harbor Commission. It provides handicap access from designated parking sites nearby. The fishing pier consists of a wood deck over rock filled wood cribs. Along the shoreline side of the pier is ample seating, on the lake side there is space for at least 20 anglers along the railing, with openings for disabled anglers. The pier, its walkway and the parking area are lit for security and safety by a period lamp post.



**6. HALVOR REITEN PARK (BROAD STREET BEACH, DOCK L) (1 acre):** This beach-oriented park is located at the south end of Broad Street in an old boat-building and lumber-milling area of the shoreline. It consists of a swimming beach area, benches, picnic shelter, and an open grassy area. A storage building near the park entrance provides a storage area for equipment, but is slated to be moved to a different City property. This also once served as a warming shed for an ice-skating rink. The skating rink was abandoned due to the relatively low use levels and the cost and maintenance challenges. In 2006, the City of Bayfield obtained ownership of the property commonly known as “Dock L”. The property was cleared of the hazardous debris, the dock was rebuilt, benches were installed and a walkway through the park was installed. In 2014 a new stormwater retention system was constructed, including a large rain garden and beach nourishment, grading and shaping of additional parking to the beach. A wooden dock that had been installed along the edge of the old dock/land spit was destroyed by high water and storms in 2018. In 2019, large rip rap rock was installed to protect this old dock/land spit to allow for continued foot access to the dock at the end. In the past a lifeguard was onsite during busy times; but due to funding limitations, there is no lifeguard and swimming occurs “at your own risk.” The water quality is monitored for bacteria in the summer by the County for public health purposes.



**Maintenance:**

- Maintain all signs and facilities, including repair/replacement of the benches;
- Repair the dock;
- Paint the historic boat at the park entrance;

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Post sign prohibiting fires;
- Install concrete pad under picnic shelter;
- Install sustainable walkway/boardwalk on top of land spit to the dock at the end;
- Maintain and/or reconstruct the stormwater retention system/green infrastructure;
- Implement low-maintenance plantings to enhance aesthetics and resilience;

- If any adjacent shoreline property became available the City should consider obtaining in an effort to increase the beach and provide more public access to Lake Superior.

7. **JAKE'S ISLAND VIEW PARK** (.05 acres): This is a small triangle park located on the extreme east end of Manypenny Avenue. It overlooks Lake Superior and the Bayfield Marina, and is visible from both the Lake and the downtown district. The small park contains a bike rack, benches, and a variety of plants and shrubs. The asphalt path that goes through the park connects with the Memorial Park Annex along the Waterfront Walking Corridor adjoining the harbor. A portion of this pathway is allowed under an agreement with the condominium association.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain and replace plantings as needed (e.g. trees, shrubs and flowers).

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Per the Comp. Plan and Waterfront Plan, add a “platform” overlooking the harbor.
- Add a sign or memorial bench with the story behind “Jake’s Island View Park” name.
- Establish a designated handicap accessible parking space for access to the waterfront walking path.

8. **KORSEBERG PARK** (.01 acres): This is a very small but prominent area on the north side of Highway 13 (at the sharp bend in the road) when entering the city from the south. It is named for Alfred Korseberg who once lived at this location. The park overlooks Lake Superior, with spectacular views of Madeline Island and Long Island. The park is owned by Bayfield County, but maintained by the City of Bayfield. The City should coordinate with the County to cover the cost of improvements.

**Maintenance:**

- Update benches

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Install a sign with the name to signify this as a public park;
- The City will continue to try to formally acquire this land from Bayfield County.

9. **MEMORIAL PARK and MEMORIAL PARK ANNEX** (.02 acres): The Memorial Park Annex is a small park providing a "scenic overlook" along the Waterfront Walking Corridor. Adjacent to Memorial Park, which is owned by the Bayfield Civic League, this area is used by thousands of residents and tourists during the summer months. The asphalt Waterfront Walk pathway travels through this park along the harbor, connecting the Bayfield Pavilion to the Turning Point Fountain Park and East Dock Park. From its benches there are wonderful views of



Madeline Island, the Bayfield marina and harbor. The trees, plantings, park benches and old street lights make this park unique. The City mows, maintains, and provides water and sewer for this entire Memorial Park complex.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain and improve plantings such as trees and shrubs.

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Rehabilitate the city owned paved walking path to improve the slope by the gazebo, level the surface, and widen sections where needed. In conjunction, consider adding a platform at Jake's park and establishing handicap access at the First St. access.
- Add directional and interpretive signage.
- New benches.
- The City should pursue right of first refusal for ownership of Memorial Park should the Civic League ever disband or consider selling this irreplaceable park.

10. **RAIN GARDENS:** There are several rain gardens dispersed on various City properties that have been installed to capture stormwater runoff and protect water quality in Lake Superior. These can also provide desirable plants for pollinator insects and birds. These rain gardens are located at Halvor Reiten Park, the grounds in front of the Courthouse, and near the Black Hawk boat launch and start of the Brownstone Trail. Others may be added as opportunities arise. Because the rain gardens are not clearly assigned to a City committee, and they are a natural asset, they are included in this plan. These need regular maintenance that may be provided by community volunteers.

**Maintenance:**

- Conduct annual maintenance.
- Train community volunteers to monitor and maintain the rain gardens.

11. **RESTROOMS AT WASHINGTON AVE. & FRONT STREET:** This is one of the three restrooms in the City of Bayfield. It is located at Front Street and Washington Avenue near the ferry dock. The others are at East Dock Park and the Blackhawk boat ramp (under purview of the Harbor Commission). All are heavily used because Bayfield is a tourist community. They are ADA compliant.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain and replace old fixtures, incorporating "green" standards to the greatest extent feasible (water conservation, reduce electrical needs and paper usage, etc.)
- Continue efforts to incorporate "green" standards (water conservation, reduce electrical needs, reduce paper usage, etc.).

12. **TURNING POINT FOUNTAIN PARK:** In 2001, the City of Bayfield Common Council adopted the 2001-2021 Comprehensive Plan. It represents the hopes and desires of all those who choose to call Bayfield their home. One very important area of concern identified in the Comprehensive Plan was the lack of a clear plan for our waterfront and the rules and regulations to implement such a plan. In accordance, the City developed the 2003 Waterfront Plan. The objective of this project was to maintain the community's maritime historical character, while allowing for creative development plans, including parks. In the past, the City was known as the "Fountain City", and this committee supported that idea of having fountains in parks.

Out of this came the idea to re-develop the "Turning Point" element at First Street and Wilson Avenue into a new park area. The project includes the construction of a portion of the missing Waterfront Walking Corridor allowing users to traverse alongside of Lake Superior, the construction of new fully ADA compliant restroom facility to



replace old restrooms, addition of a safe trail spur so users can safely access the highly used East Dock Park, and a new area for public outdoor recreation with the construction of a new park area featuring a fountain donated by Mary Rice. The 1989 fountain constructed and designed by Ray Jacobson was previously used at the Clubhouse on Madeline Island, then became the focal point of Turning Point Fountain Park. With funding from Wisconsin Coastal Management, Department of Natural Resources, LRIP, Outdoor Recreation Grant, Xcel, taxpayers, and hours of dedication from committee volunteers, the Turning Point Project was completed in 2018.

The park currently features an illuminated fountain, a bench with a solar-powered charging station, attractive plantings, and interpretive markers to introduce visitors to Bayfield's past and follow in the path of those who have walked here before, people who originated, settled, fished, sawed, steamed and built along the shores of Lake Superior. This impressive new facility has added operating costs (electricity and water) to an already strained budget. Funding and maintaining annual operations is top priority.

**Maintenance:**

- Maintain the fountain and surrounding grounds (perhaps with volunteers).
- Explore options for funding the cost of operations (electricity and water).

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Install more benches, including possibly in memoriam.
- Possible additional interpretive and/or directional signs.

13. **WASHINGTON AVENUE LAKE ACCESS:** At the easternmost end of Washington Ave., there is public lakeshore access where people can walk, launch non-motorized watercraft (e.g. kayaks, paddle boards), and enjoy the Lake. It is very popular, especially for people who are waiting to take the ferry boat to Madeline Island or in conjunction with a walk around the City.

Land ownership here is complex. The City owns an 80 foot right of way down to the water at the end of Washington Ave.; Madeline Island Ferry Lines (MIFL) owns the property to the north of that right of way; and the City owns the land north of the MIFL property. This northernmost property is leased to the kayak outfitting

business (Trek and Trail) for purposes of kayak launching and training. The ordinary high-water mark, not the waters edge, establishes the geographical boundary of the public trust. The ordinary high-water mark is the point on the bank or shore where the water, by its presence, wave action or flow, leaves a distinct mark on the shore or bank that is indicated by erosion, destruction of vegetation, changes from aquatic to terrestrial vegetation, or other characteristics.



Currently the City's land is not managed as a swimming beach, and swimming is discouraged due to conflicts with watercraft, including those launched by the outfitters. Swimming is encouraged/redirected to

Halvor-Reiten Park. The water quality is monitored for bacteria in the summer by the County for public health purposes. Traffic flow and parking congestion can be an issue during busy times; especially if people are trying to launch kayaks. Kayak trailers can be very problematic.

There is one bench beneath a large willow tree. Regular clean-up of trash and debris is needed for safety and aesthetic purposes. While the Public Works crew carries out some of this work, it can be supplemented by the PRC member who has adopted this site along with volunteer assistance. Because of the complex land ownership and congestion issues, it is critical that the PRC work cooperatively with adjoining land owners, lessees, and the Public Works Director to maintain and improve public recreation opportunities and efficient traffic flow.

#### **Maintenance:**

- Continue to allow and support use of east of Washington Avenue for Ice Road Access.
- Clean debris from sand and add sand as needed.

#### **Proposed Improvements:** Most recommended improvements came from the 2003 Waterfront Plan:

- Continue to allow mixed usage, including swimming and non-motorized watercraft.
- Install signage that indicates public uses, including allowed uses at the beach: swimming (at your own risk – no lifeguard), kayak staging and launching area, small motorized motor craft allowed. Please be respectful to all users.
- Add information about the historic "Ferry District."
- Clarify boundary lines for public access.
- Consider access to city owned land on both sides of the sluiceway, including the option of erecting a bridge over the sluice way, north of public restrooms on Washington Avenue.
- Develop land north of sluice way into usable park land.
- Create a defined walking area that makes a connection to the waterfront walking corridor (west of sand, in berm area if possible).
- Investigate the possibility of obtaining more land for parking.

14. **WATERFRONT WALKING CORRIDOR:** Bayfield is a very interesting city. Although it is small, consisting of only one square mile, it has a quaint fishing village atmosphere with pleasant parks, pathways along Lake Superior, and many historical buildings. Its hillsides offer spectacular views of the Lake and the Apostle Islands. In 2015 a waterfront walking corridor with interpretive signage was developed, linking many special "points of interest" in our historic community. It starts at the head of the Brownstone Trail at 3<sup>rd</sup> St and Wilson Ave., heading east along the shore, then north to Front St and Washington Ave. This corridor travels through and directly connects three park units: 1) Turning Point Fountain; 2) Jake's Island View Park; 3) Memorial Park Annex.

**Proposed Improvements:**

- Revise and implement a cohesive wayfinding and interpretive sign plan to create a uniform identity, connect parks and trails, and guide users.
- Add more rest/seating areas
- Add a waterfront look-out area on 2nd Street.
- Per the Comp. Plan, establish a walkway on the north half of Front Street between Rittenhouse and Washington; adjoining the ferry parking lot. This could possibly be accomplished by moving parking to the west side of Front St. and establishing a sidewalk along the east side. The first step would be to design the re-route followed by a second step of construction.

**III. PARKS NOT MANAGED BY THE CITY**

1. **FOUNTAIN PARK:** This park is located at the south "entrance" to the City along state Highway 13. It includes a large "BAYFIELD" sign with date of the City's establishment of 1856, a large fountain, flower gardens, and paved pathways around the perimeter. It is owned and managed by the Bayfield Heritage Association.
2. **HILLSIDE PARK:** This park is located northwest of the Bayfield School and includes three separate areas: a ballpark, parking lot and community garden all at different levels on the hillside. It is maintained by the school under a lease with the City. The ballpark occupies the top of the hill and is probably one of the most scenic in all of northern Wisconsin. While attending a game one can view Lake Superior, Madeline Island, Long Island, Chequamegon Bay and Bayfield itself. It is used by both the community and school. Facilities include bleachers and dugouts, steps to the parking area, and a handicap accessible walkway along the first base side. The entire field is surrounded by a four-foot high chain link fence. A restroom building is located down the hill from the bleachers. This facility was built by the school and is maintained by the school (except for turning the water service on in the spring and off in the fall, which is done by the City).

The parking lot is located just below the ballpark. This facility is used by both the community and the school. It is large enough to park about 25 cars, and has two basketball hoops, one at each end of the lot. In the future, the school will be making more use of the parking lot during the academic year. East of the parking lot is an educational area which the school utilizes as a school community garden and recently installed a High Tunnel greenhouse.

### **Proposed Improvements:**

- Consider this location for a community garden if the opportunity becomes available.
3. **SKATEBOARD PARK:** The Bayfield School District created a skateboard park next to the Bayfield Area Recreation Center at 140 South Broad Street. This area provides a safe area for skateboarding activities. This is maintained primarily by volunteers with Recreation and Fitness Resources at the Recreation Center. RFR carries the insurance which is paid for through donations. Should the Center need expanding, this skateboard park may need to be moved elsewhere.
  4. **SOUTH PLAYGROUND (.02 acres):** This playground is owned and maintained by the Bayfield School District and is located just below the Bayfield School. It provides several large pieces of play equipment and is utilized mostly by the elementary school children.
  5. **SOCCER FIELD:** In 1999, a group of citizens organized to build a youth soccer field on top of the old landfill site in the northwest corner of the city. This area is located at the end of Hilltop Road and is within the 120 acres of Big Ravine Preserve. Utilizing grants from Wisconsin DNR and a local bank, an area was leveled, planted in grass, and a large playing field created. The field has been utilized for soccer and other activities since the spring of 2000; it is maintained by the school under a lease agreement with the City. This location also serves as the Hilltop Trailhead to the west side of the Big Ravine Preserve.

### **Proposed Improvements:**

- A parking area could be designated for events on the athletic fields and also provide remote visitor parking for downtown events.
- Hilltop Road, the access road needs to be widened and the surface needs to be improved.
- A running track might also be built around the perimeter of the soccer field.
- An additional practice field could be added.

## **IV. PROPOSED ADDITIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES:**

1. **CATHOLIC HILL PARK:** There are no public parks or playgrounds located in this part of the city which is bounded by Broad Street and Wing Avenue (Highway 13) between Washington Avenue and North Limits Road. Some discussion about developing one has begun. The goal would be to provide a safe setting with a combined park and playground, so that small children living here would not have to travel such long distances to reach other city facilities. Because of the lack of city-owned property here, the first step would be to locate and purchase a suitable area to develop. Such neighborhood parks (such as our Cooper Hill Park), need not be very large, but still are used often and enjoyed by people living near them.
2. **DOG PARK:** During the 2021 Outdoor Recreation Plan revision, a public comment suggested possibly adding a public dog park as a proposed additional park. The Parks and Recreation Committee discussed this concept, noting the potential location in the area near the soccer field at the top of Hilltop Road. Several people on the Committee had knowledge and experience with dog parks. Based upon these perspectives, several concerns were brought forward, including: the need for additional infrastructure such as

fencing; managing dog waste; potential conflicts between dogs (and dog owners); liability; and possible conflict with current uses such as the soccer field maintained by the school. Several of these issues would require additional investment and ongoing maintenance. The Committee concluded that this would not be a priority due the lack of financial and labor capacity. The Committee also concluded that a dog park could be offered on private land.

3. **OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION LANDS:** There may be benefits and needs for designating and/or acquiring more land under City ownership for conservation and open space for the purposes of environmental conservation/protection, recreational use, and public access. This could include designating them W-1 Conservancy District lands as well as establishing conservation easements on these lands. For example, beginning in 1996, several homes were built where 10th Street was extended north to Sweeny Avenue, and a sewer main installed. The city's Comprehensive Plan could designate the land north of the municipal wellhead as a conservancy area because it includes a steep ravine which was identified in the 1997 soil report as an area of fragile soils which should be kept in its natural state for reasons of flood control. Other such situations may arise as development expands and public interest in recreational use grows. These situations will be considered by the PRC and addressed through a public process under the purview of the Plan Commission and City Council.
4. **PICKLEBALL COURTS:** Some members of the community have expressed interest in installing pickleball courts. No location has been identified yet. This could be pursued by Recreation and Fitness Resources as well.
5. **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WAYFINDING:** Per the Comp. Plan, implement a wayfinding system to facilitate public information and access to parks, trails (trailheads), and the lake. This may be primarily through online information with minimal on-the-ground signage. This could serve as the foundation for implementing a more comprehensive wayfinding system identified in the Comp. Plan. This would include a style manual for signs and maps, as well as location of a few select sign locations. Also, include getting parks, trails, trailheads, and lake access on google maps so anyone can find and navigate to these features.
6. **SECOND DISTRICT PARK:** One of the goals of the Bayfield Parks and Recreation Department is to have a suitable park/playground in every city district. This proposed park/playground would be located north of Washington Avenue between 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street where the city expects more development in the coming years. This area consists of heavily wooded sites high-on-a-hillside (overlooking beautiful Lake Superior). There is, at present, no park or playground in this district.
7. **TRAILS NETWORK:** Per the Comp. Plan: continue participation in the Bayfield Area Trails System (BATS) Committee to develop and implement a unified trails system of all types of motorized and non-motorized trails among the City, Town, County, and Red Cliff. This would include identifying and prioritizing linkages between existing trails networks (e.g. Big Ravine to orchards and Fire Tower Hill), providing public information and access, and developing capacity to maintain trails.



**Proposed Improvements:**

- Per the Waterfront Plan, develop a trail to connect Washington Ave. to Dalrymple Park along the lakefront. Coordinate with the Town of Bayfield, Brickyard Creek, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and private landowners to potentially develop a trail connecting The City of Bayfield to Red Cliff.
- Brownstone Trail: Per the Comp. Plan, work cooperatively with the Landmark Conservancy and the Town of Bayfield to restore the Brownstone Trail. This would include supporting the pursuit of funding and other resources.
- Develop a master map and plan for trails within the City limits. This would help to fill in the BATs trails network plan.
- Where the trails cross private property, secure permanent access via trail easements and/or land acquisition.
- Establish a bike trail, with signage, where people can bicycle in and around the city with strategically placed bike racks.

**V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

The greatest challenge to implementing the plan is the very limited budget and staff capacity to do anything beyond basic maintenance and clean-up of parks which is primarily done by the City's Public Works Department (PWD). The City's budget has not been able to keep pace with increasing demands and operating costs; this has impacted all City operations, including Parks. As a result, deferred maintenance needs, such as peeling paint, deteriorating fences and boardwalks, and encroaching vegetation, have accumulated over the years.

First, to facilitate effective use of limited City resources and to strive to address the most compelling needs, the Parks and Recreation Committee (PRC) will produce an annual accomplishments report and a prioritized budget, based upon the Outdoor Recreation Plan, for consideration by the City Council in the annual budget cycle in August/September. This will identify basic needs to be addressed via the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funds, grants and donations, and priority unfunded needs. After budget approval, the PRC will develop an annual work plan to be carried out by PWD plus volunteers or other partners in the field season (spring through fall)..

Beyond maximizing City budgets, implementation of this ORP will primarily rely upon marshalling additional financial resources and human capital through:

- Donations and grants;
- Human capital through volunteerism, internships, and scholarships;
- Leveraging partnerships with the Town of Bayfield, Red Cliff Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa, Bayfield School, Recreation and Fitness Resources, Bayfield Heritage Association, Northland College and others.
- Communication and outreach via websites, social media, and the Bayfield Chamber and Visitor Bureau Chamber Blast.

The PRC should spearhead efforts to expand City capacity. Through this annual process, the PRC will also identify priority improvements or expansions that could be addressed by outside sources. The PRC has demonstrated that such a model of volunteerism, outside funding, and expanded communication can be successful. For example, in the spring of 2019, the Parks and Recreation Committee (PRC) sponsored volunteer work days to address deferred maintenance issues and to assist with spreading wood chips at East Dock

and Cooper Hill Parks. Then, in 2020, the Parks and Recreation Committee members each adopted one or more parks in order to monitor conditions, conduct simple clean-up and maintenance, and communicate larger needs to the PWD. Also, in 2020, significant trail construction and maintenance projects in the Big Ravine Park were accomplished thanks to grant funding combined with community volunteer interest.

**Implementation Goals:**

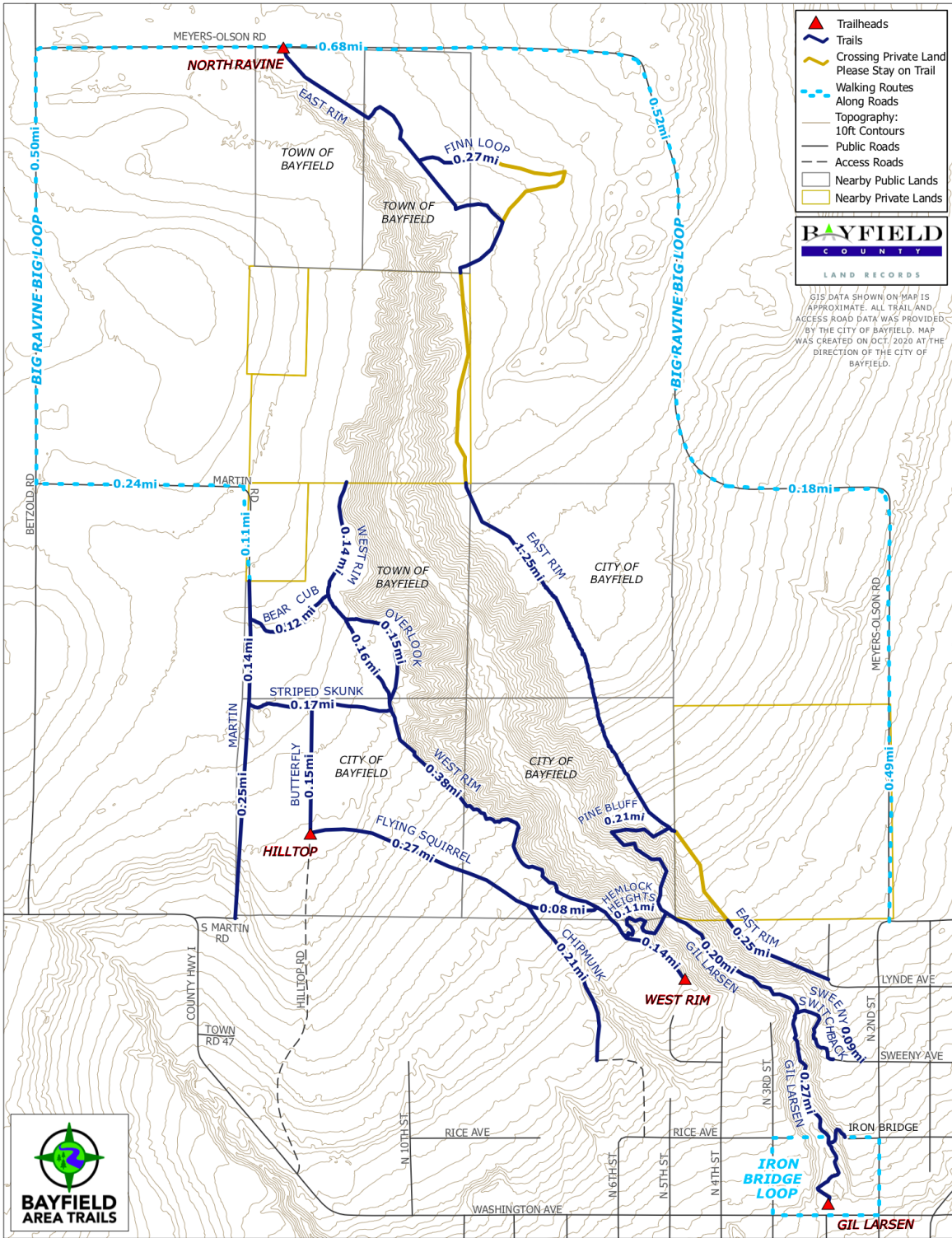
- Per the Comp. Plan, explore the potential to establish a seasonal staff and/or internship position(s) for parks and trails maintenance. Possibly fund this position through grants and/or fees in cooperation with BATS partners. By 2025, have at least one sustainably funded seasonal staff/intern position in place for parks and trails maintenance (this is from the Comp. Plan)
- Establish a standard volunteer program and process, including policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities, documentation, project plans, annual calendar, etc.
- Explore options and procedures for accepting donations for Parks and Recreation projects.

**Annual Implementation Table:** Following is an example table to be completed in the winter/spring of each year to guide park maintenance and improvements and administration of funds. One-year and five-year budgets will be developed in August/September in accordance with City standard operating practices.

Priority: (H,M,L)	Description	Resources Needed	Cost Budget	Target Completion Date
	<b><i>BIG RAVINE PRESERVE</i></b>			
	<b><i>COOPER HILL PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>DALRYMPLE CAMPGROUND</i></b>			
	<b><i>EAST DOCK PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>HALVOR REITEN PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>JAKE’S ISLAND VIEW PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>KORSEBERG PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>MEMORIAL PARK ANNEX</i></b>			
	<b><i>RESTROOMS – FRONT ST.</i></b>			
	<b><i>TURNING POINT FOUNTAIN PARK</i></b>			
	<b><i>WASHINGTON AVE. LAKE ACCESS</i></b>			
	<b><i>WATERFRONT WALKING CORRIDOR</i></b>			



# BIG RAVINE TRAILS



## **SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND INFORMATION**

### Funding Sources:

- Bayfield Community Education Foundation
- Bayfield County Health Infrastructure Grants
- Department of Natural Resources
  - Recreational Trails Program
  - Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Grant Programs
- Duluth-Superior Area Community Foundation
- Great Lakes Initiatives
- Wisconsin Coastal Management Program

### Human Capital:

- Community volunteers
- Internships & projects via Northland College
- Master Gardeners (U.W. Extension)
- Scholarships
- Wisconsin Industrial and Technical College

### References

- City of Bayfield Comprehensive Plan (2019-2029)
- City of Bayfield Waterfront Plan (2003)
- City of Bayfield 120-Acre Plan (2003)
- County Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Town of Bayfield Comprehensive Plan