

TOWN OF VERONA
Natural and Recreational Areas Plan
2018-2023

*Prepared by the
Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Committee
and the
Town of Verona Plan Commission*

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Plan 2018-2022 is an update to the original 2001-2005 Plan and the 2006-2011, and 2012-2017 updates. This Plan identifies the natural areas and features that the Town of Verona seeks to preserve for the benefit of its citizens, present and future. This Plan also establishes goals and policies to help the Town Board make decisions to achieve that end.

The recommendations put forth in this Plan should be re-examined annually and completely reviewed at the end of the Planning period in order to determine how well the Town has achieved its goals. Future Planning efforts should build on the recommendations made in this Plan.

1.1 PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS PLAN

This plan has three core purposes:

1. Identify the natural areas the Town of Verona seeks to preserve.
 - a) Allow for additional lands town property owners have requested for inclusion to natural areas for conservation.
 - b) Allow for the removal of previously identified land in the Town Open Space Parks Commission Plan which is now the Natural and Recreational Areas Committee Plan at the request of individual Town property owners.
2. Facilitate the acquisition of land and development rights from willing sellers.
3. Foster new and innovative partnerships with other units of government and community organizations to support land acquisition and park and trail development projects. Facilitate the acquisition of land and development restrictions from willing sellers.

Areas designated for preservation or recreation development on the Town's Natural and Recreational Areas Map are intended to indicate which properties and trail routes the Town is most interested in protecting in cooperation with willing property owners. These designations will not necessarily be used by the Town to prevent development as permitted by the Town of Verona Comprehensive Plan, but they should be considered by other jurisdictions with review authority on land use or subdivision applications.

1.2 HISTORY OF THE NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL AREAS COMMITTEE

The Open Space and Parks Commission (OSPC) was formed in 2000 through the vision of Town Chair Steve Sheets and under the leadership of Bruce Allison, the first chairman of the Commission. The first OSPC Plan was approved by the Town Board in 2001. It outlined the unique natural areas of the Verona area and provided a vision for years to come.

During the OSPC's first five years of existence, the Commission was able to make a difference in many areas of our community. The Commission's initial accomplishment was to facilitate the Town's first dedicated public open space. The OSPC with the leadership of Commission member Kathleen McCormick, the Friends of Goose Lake, Dane County Parks, and the Urban Open Space Foundation acquired and deeded to the Town of Verona a small parcel of land as permanent open space in the Goose Lake neighborhood. As a result of this achievement, the Capital Community Citizens Organization presented the OSPC with their Orchid Award.

As part of the OSPC's goal of education, OSPC partnered with Dane County Parks, The Natural Heritage Land Trust, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association, and Capital Water Trails to help establish the Upper Sugar River Resource Area. The goal is to create awareness of our unique natural areas, which are currently under pressure as the neighboring municipalities encroach into the area.

The OSPC was also instrumental in collaboration with Dane County Parks in establishing the Scheidegger County Forest. This 73.4 acre wooded parcel was identified in the OSPC plan, then acquired and designated a County Forest by Dane County Parks in 2002. All of this was made possible through the generosity of Walter Scheidegger.

The OSPC (especially Commission member Bill Keen) has also worked with Capital Water Trails to establish the Upper Sugar River Water Trail. This water trail can now be accessed from a number of road crossings and is navigable to the Town of Verona's southern border and beyond.

The Open Space and Parks Commission became the Natural and Recreational Areas Committee (NRAC) in February of 2016. The membership is nominated by the Town Chair and approved by the Town Board for two-year terms. The Committee is scheduled to meet once a month. The Committee provides review and comment on land use change applications as requested. It establishes priorities and goals of the Plan through building partnerships with other organizations and provides updates, information, and recommendations to the Plan Commission and Town Board as needed.

1.3 NEEDS ANALYSIS

The Town of Verona is very fortunate to have within its boundaries a wealth of unique natural areas. These are listed in detail in section 4.2, and include a school forest, a county forest, two large county parks, a water trail, a national scenic hiking trail, a state bike trail, and several other "natural" or "wildlife" areas.

The Verona area is experiencing rapid growth and development which may directly impact these natural areas and their environmental quality. The Town, as of the 2010 census, had 1954 residents, but it is projected to grow by several hundred residents or more in the next 20 years (Wisconsin Department of Administration). There are currently 730 "housing units" in the Town, and in 2017-18 alone, four new "condo-developments" were approved, adding almost 100 new units. In addition, the Fitchburg-Verona area population (roughly includes the Verona Area School District) is projected to grow (over the 2010 census) 25% by 2030, and almost 35% by 2040.

Preserving valuable natural areas such as open space or park lands has been a priority for the Town residents and is part of Verona's reputation as a desirable community. The Town of Verona's population of almost 2000 residents is currently (2010 census) about 32% under 25, 38% 25-55, and 30% over 55, with about 95% of the residents self-identified as white or Caucasian. A 2017 survey (appendix G) of all the households in the Town of Verona, in preparation for a new Comprehensive Plan, assessed residents' opinions about "using tax dollars or zoning regulations" to preserve or promote open space and parks. There was overall very strong support for this. Top areas (80% "encourage or strongly encourage") included "environmental/wildlife preservation", "preservation of large (>40 acres) wooded areas", and "preservation of the Sugar River Watershed". A close second (70% "encourage or strongly encourage") included "connecting the Ice Age Trail", "bicycle and walking trails" and "preserving farmland". Developing more "recreational facilities" got strong support from 50% of the respondents.

On the same survey, there were 59 comments made in the "other comments" section. Analysis showed 45% of these were about limiting or regulating development and keeping the "rural character" of the town, 20 % were about road upkeep and traffic concerns, 20% were about promoting open space and parks, wildlife and the environment, 10% about limiting taxes, and 5 % other subjects.

Town of Verona residents clearly feel fortunate to have so many natural and recreational areas nearby, but also clearly feel that increased population and development in the near future will threaten those resources. They want the Town to protect what is there currently and even to promote or protect more areas, and to try to connect trails across areas to improve access. The Town's Natural and Recreational Areas Committee (NRAC) is tasked with promoting and protecting our natural areas, and working with County, State, and National officials to accomplish that.

1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

The Natural and Recreational Areas Committee and its members meet regularly with individuals and organizations to gather information relevant to its mission and this Plan. The following individuals and their respective organizations have contributed key information that has been incorporated into this Plan:

- Chris James, Dane County Parks Planner
- Laura Hicklin, Dane County Director of Land and Water Resources
- Dave Walker, Parks Director, City of Verona

The Natural and Recreational Areas Committee also referred to the following documents in preparing this Plan:

- *Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin (2018-2023)*
- *2016-2021 City of Verona Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
- *2018-2022 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
- *Town of Verona Open Space and Parks Commission Plan 2012-2017*

A core value of this Plan is the formation and strengthening of working relationships with the Dane County Parks Department, the City of Verona, and various non-profit organizations such as the Groundswell Conservancy, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association (USRWA), the Ice Age Trail Alliance, and other organizations. The Natural and Recreational Areas Committee believes that leveraging existing relationships and ongoing activities is the best way to maximize the potential benefit for the Town of Verona.

CHAPTER 2 NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL AREAS COMMITTEE MISSION

The mission of the Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Committee is:

To identify, protect, and preserve natural and recreational areas in the Town of Verona for the purpose of ecological health, recreation, and enjoyment by present and future generations.

We will accomplish this mission by:

- Careful planning, education, acquisition (where feasible with the support of alternative funding sources), development, and stewardship
- Forming partnerships with Town residents and land owners, as well as non-profit organizations, and government agencies
- Following the guidelines identified in the *Town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, this Plan, and the Town of Verona *Vision Statement and Guiding Principles* that will be an appendix to Chapter 1 of the updated *Town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan*
- Providing environmental education programs and volunteer opportunities to Verona area residents of all ages

CHAPTER 3 TOWN OF VERONA NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL AREA COMMITTEE GOALS

Goals in this Plan are intended to be both broad and visionary. They are not time-specific but serve to guide the direction of the Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Committee in carrying out its mission. The six primary natural and recreational areas goals are to:

1. Provide sufficient open space, park land, and recreational opportunities to meet the growing demand of Verona area residents without adversely affecting existing natural areas.
2. Preserve for posterity the characteristics and diversity of the cultural, historical resources and natural areas of the Town of Verona.
3. Protect lakes, rivers and streams, including shorelines, wetlands, high infiltration areas and associated vegetative buffers to maintain high water quality, manage water quantity, and sustain water-related recreation throughout the Township.
4. Leverage the efforts of other entities to maximize the benefits for Town residents, including Dane County, the City of Verona, and other neighboring communities, and private or non-profit organizations.
5. Recognize and respect the landowners who have been the stewards of the land, in many cases for generations.
6. Identify shared concerns and work toward mutual goals.

CHAPTER 4 GENERAL PRIORITIES & POLICIES

This Plan identifies priorities and policies to provide a framework for accomplishing the Town's natural and recreational areas goals. These priorities and policies were adapted from the priorities and policies set forth in the

Parks & Open Space Plan for Dane County 2018-2023, and are organized according to the categories in that document.

“Priorities” identify desired end results that should be prioritized whenever a preservation opportunity or land development proposal arises. It should be noted that conservation easement and land acquisition, development and management decisions are often based on opportunity, partnerships and willing sellers rather than priority; hence, prime opportunities, if presented should be given timely consideration even though they may not be included in this section.

“Policies” are statements that provide guidance for future Town Planning, development, management, and land acquisition decision-making processes.

This plan incorporates four maps – the Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Map (Exhibit A), FEMA Floodplain Map (Exhibit B), Dane County 2018-2023 Parks and Open Space Map (Exhibit C, Town of Verona Detail), and a Parking and Access to Public Lands Map (Exhibit D).

4.1 RECREATION PARKS AND TRAILS

Priorities

1. Establish a Verona-wide bicycle-pedestrian trail system that connects neighboring communities and subdivisions with other public parks and regional trail systems. This supports a Dane County priority on off-road regional bicycle-pedestrian trail projects, especially trails close to major population centers or through areas targeted for development that are adjacent to urban areas, which can serve both commuter and recreation needs.
2. Complete the Ice Age National Scenic Trail through Verona in collaboration with Dane County Parks, the City of Verona, the National Park Service, the WDNR, and Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation.
3. Consider expansion of public land and public-access conservation easements to meet growing demands for trails and recreation.

Policies

1. Give preference to the creation and preservation of recreation areas that serve multiple uses and users, including both Town and non-Town residents.
2. Locate new recreation parks close to, but isolated from, large population centers on lands that provide for year round multiple recreation uses with diverse natural areas. Ideally, natural features such as rugged topography, water or wetlands will provide separation from urban areas.
3. Seek partnerships with other recreation groups, including private, non-profit organizations that have a regional user base; and give preference to projects that include such partnerships.
4. Seek alternative sources of revenue to fund trail acquisition and increasing costs for operation, maintenance and development.

4.2 EXISTING NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

The following section details some of the important natural and recreational resources in the Town and Dane County. The information comes from a variety of resources including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Dane County Land and Water Conservation Department, and Wisconsin Historical Society. Throughout Dane County’s public input process, trails were the most frequently requested recreation facility addition to the park system. Development of additional trails is also consistent with providing future recreation opportunities for the forecasted aging population of Dane County. The Town of Verona supports the County’s efforts to provide regionally significant recreational water, bicycle-pedestrian, equestrian and snowmobile trails.

Priorities Identified in the Dane County Land and Water Management Plan <https://lcd-lwr.dane-county.gov/documents/Reports/lwrmp2008.pdf>

1. Identify goals, objectives and actions to implement through partnerships with agencies, landowners, watershed and groups, and citizens.

2. Maintain agricultural lands for long-term production
3. Manage crop nutrients in an economic and environmentally sound manner
4. Protect and enhance in-stream, riparian, wetland, and upland habitat
5. Protect and improve the quality of groundwater in Dane County
6. Implement all applicable Dane County erosion and stormwater management (ECSM) policies and programs throughout the County
7. Partner with and involve citizens on soil and water conservation initiatives in rural and urban areas

Policies

1. Utilize the resources available in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Land Legacy Report <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/landlegacy/>
2. Reference the information for the Sugar River Wetlands available through the Wisconsin State Natural Areas Program website <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=299>
3. Reference the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan (2018-2023) <https://parks-lwr.dcountyofdane.com/Information/Planning-Development/Parks-Open-Space-Plan>
4. Continue to inventory the natural and recreational areas and their important features within the Town of Verona:
 - a. Jackson Madison School Forest (Fritz Rd): This 307-acre, primarily wooded area is located on an unglaciated, hilly terrain in Southwestern part of the Town. Public land owners of the Madison School Forest are the Madison Metropolitan School District, Friends of the Madison School Forest and WDNR. Within this Forest is the Olson Oak Wood State Natural Area (No. 157), which is a southern dry forest with remnants of pre-settlement days. Additionally, the area contains the Jerome Jones Pine Plantation and a prairie. Nearly, 300 species of vascular plants can be found in the area and 40 species of birds use this area as a breeding site. This includes four state-threatened species: Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*), and Kentucky (*Oporornis formosus*), cerulean (*Dendroica cerulea*), and hooded warblers (*Wilsonia citrina*). It is included in the *Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan* to provide eligibility for State Stewardship and County Conservation Fund grant dollars for future acquisition of contiguous parcels from willing sellers as they become available. The Friends, WDNR, and Nature Conservancy will continue to be the lead agencies on all acquisition, management, and maintenance efforts for this project area.
 - b. Managed forests: Properties under this classification are private forests and woodlots that are/or have been enrolled in the State of Wisconsin Managed Forest Law program and are actively managed by Dane County. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) is a landowner incentive program that encourages sustainable forestry on private woodlands by reducing and deferring property taxes. A variety of forest management practices are utilized to grow healthy forests and provide timber for revenue, using sustainable harvest practices. A forest management Plan that meets State requirements and County approval is prepared for all County-owned forests and woodlots before any timber harvest takes place. Benefits of registering properties into State forestry programs include: free trees from state forest nurseries, technical assistance from state foresters and eligibility for educational assistance from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

These lands also provide nature-based recreation as a secondary use of the site. Trail development through these properties should be coordinated with timber harvest. Hunting is also considered if sufficient acreage is available and if compatible with forest use and ecology. It was enacted in 1985 and replaced the Woodland Tax Law and the Forest Crop Law. It is the only forest tax law that is open to enrollment. Land enrolled in the MFL program must be managed according to a plan agreed to by the landowner and WDNR. The MFL programs do provide for both 'open' and 'closed' enrollment. Public access would be available to enrolled properties with the 'open' designation. The number of acres and location of properties, depending on the program the lands

are enrolled in, may change each year at the option of the landowner and the approval of the Wisconsin WDNR. The Town of Verona, office of the Clerk has a master listing of properties with the MFL designation and is updated each year by WDNR.

- c. Scheidegger Forest County Park (Range Trail): This 80-acre managed forest is woodland property comprised primarily of Oak and Hickory. This park offers a mile-long hiking trail, a shelter which can be reserved, restroom, and drinking fountain. Local wood was used to construct the shelter, kiosk, and bathroom. This forest property was acquired through a generous donation from Walter R. Scheidegger in 2001. The land was formerly the Abraham's Shooting Range for the Dane County Sheriff's Department. In 2005 Dane County Parks requested assistance from the WDNR to complete a Forest Stewardship Management Plan for the Scheidegger Forest and enrolled the property in the State Community Forest program. The Plan was completed in December 2005 and takes into consideration the property objectives outlined in the *Dane County Park and Open Space Plan*. Dane County Parks is also working on preparing a master plan for the property.
- d. Prairie Moraine County Park (Highway PB): This 160-acre park features the Johnstown Moraine and a portion of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. A scenic view from the crest of the moraine (one of the best examples of a terminal moraine in southern Wisconsin) offers an opportunity to see a restored oak savanna and surrounding landscape. Part of the park (half) is an extremely popular off-leash dog exercise area.
- e. Badger Prairie County Park (Highway PB and US Highway 151): This recreational area is east of the City of Verona and has a shelter, sports fields, a mountain bike trail, a playground, an 8-acre dog exercise area, a large restored tall grass prairie and an aero-modeling field. It provides access to the Military Ridge State Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.
- f. Sugar River Watershed and Trail: The Sugar River is part of the Sugar-Pecatonica River basin which drains approximately 1,860 square miles in southwestern Wisconsin. The Sugar River flows into the Pecatonica River 5 miles south of the state line in Illinois. The Pecatonica joins the Rock River flowing towards the Mississippi. The Upper Sugar River Watershed Association (<http://uppersugar.org/>) provides leadership for programs to improve the watershed. The upper Sugar River watershed includes drainage for 109,404 acres and 115 stream miles. The Association has completed a plan, and has begun implementing the plan for fighting invasive aquatic species (<http://usrwa.org/wp-content/uploads/USREWA-AIS-Strategic-Plan-February-2014.pdf>). The Sugar River is a main factor in determining the rural character of the Town and as such all efforts should be made to preserve this natural resource. Currently, it is used for recreation including boating and fishing. The NRAC works with Capitol Water Trails Ltd., which has been spearheading most of the water trail development efforts in Dane County. More information on the extent of water trail development in the Verona area, public access points, and detailed trail maps can be found at the Capitol Water Trails website (www.capitolwatertrails.org), email cwt@capitolwatertrails.org or by calling 608-223-0995.

Long-term, cumulative effects of urbanization on water quality and in-stream habitat of the upper reaches of the Sugar River are a major concern of DNR staff. The tools and responsibility for addressing long-term management of Sugar River water quality rests with Dane County and the municipalities in the watershed. It is conceivable that if the present rapid urban growth in this area continues unchecked, water quality, fisheries and in-stream habitat may be significantly degraded as a result of lowered groundwater base flow to the river.

The entire stretch of the Sugar River within this watershed is classified as Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) under the State's anti-degradation rules: NR 102 and NR 207.

- g. Badger Mill Creek Watershed: Badger Mill Creek is a tributary to the Sugar River near Verona. This project area includes wetlands and adjacent upland buffer lands along the lower stretch of Badger Mill Creek. The perennial reach of the stream begins in a wetland west of Goose Lake between Madison and Verona. At one time, water quality in the creek was rated poor due to

inadequately treated municipal and industrial wastewater discharged to it. Since 1978, these discharges have been eliminated or diverted. As a result, water quality and in-stream habitat have improved. The stream has been reclassified from supporting a limited forage fishery to supporting a warm water forage fishery (Marshall, 1989). Trout have been found in the stream below Verona. New Zealand mud snails, an invasive species, have been found in Badger Mill Creek. Efforts to slow the spread of these snails must be maintained. Stormwater planning for this area should include addressing the reduction of peak runoff rates from existing developed areas as well as keeping runoff rates from future developments at the pre-development runoff rate. The WDNR is currently looking at reclassifying Badger Mill Creek as a “cool water fishery,” indicating it does have the potential to sustain some trout populations. It is currently designated a Tier II stream, meaning that it has one or more of the following attributes or designations:

- Warm water streams that may exhibit sensitivity to development or have the ability to be restored or enhanced through management actions.
- Streams within the boundary of an approved Dane County Resource Protection Area Plan.
- Streams identified in WDNR Basin Plans with “high” or “medium” designations for habitat improvement.

Dane County takes more of a leadership role in restoration efforts and landowner contacts on Tier I streams, while non-profits and local units of government are expected to work on Tier II streams, with Dane County providing financial assistance through the Conservation Grant Fund program. In addition to biological considerations, the County may investigate increasing public fishing access through acquisition of permanent easements on these streams. Dane County works with local non-profit groups, such as Trout Unlimited and the Dane County Conservation League, to identify which streams offer the highest fishing potential and may benefit from increased public access.

- h. Sugar River Wetlands State Natural Area: Sugar River Wetlands (No. 299) was designated in 1996 as a significant natural area, covering approximately 266 acres within the Upper Sugar River Watershed. The wetlands contain the most diverse fishery within the southern portion of State and harbors numerous rare plant and animal species
<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=299> .
- i. Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor: The Johnstown Moraine runs from the Northwest to the Southeast of the Town of Verona. There are seven miles of completed trail in this corridor. Parts of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail exist along this moraine; however, two gaps remain. One of these gaps runs from the corner of Mid Town Road and Shady Oak Lane and along the moraine to Woods Road to the east. This part of the moraine has some of the most spectacular glacial terrain in the Town. The glacier left behind kettle holes and Richardson’s cave. The other area where a gap exists is from the Prairie Moraine County Park southeast along the moraine to Sunset Drive. In 2018, the Town approved a condominium plat named Deer Haven Estates, which will add a significant addition to filling this gap. The City of Verona and the Town of Verona have made a commitment to work towards completing the Ice Age National Scenic Trail in their respective jurisdictions. The Town Natural and Recreational Areas Committee members will identify terminal moraines, kettle ponds and other significant glacial features in an effort to protect when possible, throughout the Town. The Ice Age Trail corridor incorporates many of these features. The Town should make efforts to protect this corridor and encourage completion of the Ice Age Trail.
- j. Ice Age Junction Natural Resource Area: This project area includes Ice Age Trail corridor lands north and south of Badger Prairie County Park and the park itself. The Ice Age Trail Junction Area was the result of a 1991 proposal that called for a wider Ice Age Trail corridor in the Verona-Madison area to encompass key resource and scenic features associated with the trail. In 1992, the

Dane County Park Commission established an intergovernmental advisory committee composed of the Town of Verona, City of Verona, Dane County Board, Dane County Executive, and the Park Commission to create a project Plan for the area that was adopted by the County Board in 1993.

- k. Military Ridge State Trail: This is a 40-mile trail in Iowa and Dane counties that connects Dodgeville and Madison by way of a military route dating back to 1855. Much of the trail uses the former Chicago and North Western Railroad corridor. The trail enters the Town near the northwest corner at County Highway PD, passes through the City of Verona before going towards the Goose Lake area, into Fitchburg, and thereafter into Madison, where it connects with the Capital City State Trail. (go to www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/parks/specific/militaryridge/pdfs/mrtmap04.pdf for a downloadable trail map) This trail supports a variety of uses, including hiking, biking, jogging, and snowmobiling on parts of the trail. A State Trail Pass is required.
- l. Goose Lake: This is a shallow 12-acre lake with low water quality; it is located in the northeast section of the Town between U.S. Highway 18/151 and Fitchrona Rd. The Goose Lake Open Space Area is an open space created as an out lot of the Pleasant Acres II plat. This area was acquired by the Town through a cooperative funding effort between the “Friends of Goose Lake”, Dane County Parks and the Urban Open Space Foundation. The property is currently maintained by the Friends of Goose Lake, under the direction of Dane County Parks. Due to the limited access, this low impact, passive recreational area is preserved for uses such as walking and cross country skiing. The Friends group has 5 mowers who are assigned to mow portions of the trails throughout the open area and the County-owned parkland which surrounds the Goose Lake Open Space Area. This mowing effort includes keeping the access point through the Goose Lake outlot open.
- m. Richardson’s Cave: This cave is on private property in the northern part of the Town.
- n. Johnstown Moraine: This terminal moraine represents the maximum advance of the last glacier that started to melt away about 15,000 years ago. Moraines are ridges pushed up by rock and soil moved by a mass of ice. At the edge of the glacier, this mass of rock and soil was deposited. It is estimated that the glacier was about 80 feet thick at its edge and over 500 feet thick over Madison. (www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC3XW8T_johnstown-moraine-at-prairie-moraine-county-park?guid=c0511f74-c0be-43e4-84e6-a2e380c7050e).
- o. Savanna Oak Prairie: This restored oak savanna and prairie is on private land, but available for public viewing. It is located near County Highway PD and Timber Lane.
- p. Falk-Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area: This 375-acre wildlife area is open to the public for hunting (all types) and other activities such as fishing, hiking, canoeing, kayaking and cross country skiing.
- q. Leopold-Riley Game Cooperative: A portion of this 1800-acre hunting cooperative is situated in the Town of Verona. This project area seeks to preserve the remaining natural resources and rural landscape within the original boundary designated by the noted conservationist Aldo Leopold. In 1931 Aldo Leopold formed a cooperative for the purpose of providing its members a place to hunt. The area encompassed all or part of 11 farms, or about 1800 acres, mostly in the Town of Springdale, but also extending into the Towns of Verona and Cross Plains. Within the reserve boundary were croplands, pastures, oak savanna, woods, cattail marsh, sedge meadow, springs and spring ponds, and the Sugar River. Historically, the Chicago and North Western Railroad track ran through Riley on the way between Madison and Mount Horeb, the railroad right of way is now the Military Ridge State bike trail. This project area seeks to preserve within Dane County the remaining natural resources and rural landscape within the original boundary designated by Leopold.

- r. Sugar River Natural Resource Area: The Sugar River Natural Resource Area (SRNRA) lies just west of the City of Verona, primarily in the Town of Verona, and includes a segment of the Military Ridge State Trail. It is one of the largest continuous wetland complexes along the boundary of the driftless area in western Dane County. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) are the primary public land owners in this project area. In 2018, Dane County acquired 60 acres just west of State Highway 69 on the Zeigler farm and is presently designated as a natural resource area.

4.3 NATURAL RESOURCE CONCERNS

Priorities

1. Protect groundwater. Groundwater is the only source of drinking water in the Town of Verona. It is a critical resource, not only because it is used by residents as their source of water, but also because rivers, streams, and other surface water depends on it for recharge. Groundwater contamination is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near ground surface, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table.
2. Protect stream corridors. The majority of the Town of Verona is within the Upper Sugar River Watershed with small portions in the West Branch Sugar River Watershed. Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District discharges treated wastewater into Badger Mill Creek in the Town of Verona. Mt. Horeb also discharges into the Sugar River (west branch). A major water resource concern is the diversion of groundwater from the Sugar River basin to the Lower Rock River basin. This is the result of the City of Madison groundwater pumpage on the City's southwest side for public water supply and subsequent treatment of wastewater at the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Nine Springs facility. A regional groundwater study, The Badger Mill Creek Effluent Return Project (1993), summarized in Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Collection System Evaluation from 2008, found that groundwater needed to be replenished. Since 1998, 3 million gallons have been put back in Badger Mill Creek every day. In 2008, Montgomery and Associates authored a major report titled **Resource Assessment and Development Analysis for the Upper Sugar River and Badger Mill Creek Southwest of Verona**, which gave guidelines for development in this area.
3. Floodplain management. Benefits of floodplain management are the reduction and filtration of sediments into area surface waters, storage of floodwaters during regional storms, habitat for fish and wildlife, and reductions in direct and indirect costs due to floods. The 100-year flood plain is shown on Map. 7.1. Section 87.30, Wisconsin Statutes, requires that each county, city, village and town shall zone, by ordinance, all lands subject to flooding. Chapter NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code requires all communities to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances within their respective jurisdictions to regulate all floodplains where serious flood damage may occur. In 1981, the then Town of Fitchburg commissioned a storm water evaluation and alternative management study; the study by Carl C. Crane, Inc. Consulting Engineers resulted in an engineering report for the construction of a storm sewer system in the Town of Verona and then Town of Fitchburg to service the Goose Lake Tributary Storm Drainage Basin. Residents and businesses in both communities that benefitted from the structures were specially assessed to cover costs. Copies of each study are available for review at the Town of Verona Hall. Flooding frequency, impact, and details of events are listed in the Town of Verona annex to the Dane County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan that was adopted on September 28, 2017.
4. Wetland protection. As is the case statewide, Dane County has experienced a decline in the number and quality of wetlands. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recommends that wetlands within the Upper Sugar River Watershed (the Planning Area's main watershed) should be protected because only a small percentage of the wetlands in this region are of high quality.
5. Grasslands, prairies, and savannas protection. Original grasslands, prairies, and savannas have a distinctive historical legacy in our Town, and should be preserved for their beauty and cultural value.
6. Preservation of threatened or endangered species. While the conservation of plants, animals and their habitat should be considered for all species, this is particularly important for rare or declining species. The presence of one or more rare species and natural communities in an area can be an indication of an area's

ecological importance and should prompt attention to conservation and restoration needs. Both the state and federal governments prepare their own separate lists of such plant and animal species, but do so working in cooperation with one another. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Endangered Resources Bureau monitors endangered, threatened, and special concern species and maintains the state's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) database; these data are exempt from the open records law due to their sensitive nature.

7. Cooperative Preservation Efforts to Create Greenways. The fragmentation of important natural resources negatively affects wildlife populations. Maintaining and restoring greenway connections ensures that wildlife habitats remain robust. Acquire (by funding through partnerships) additional natural areas acreage that increases overall size and connectivity to existing natural areas.
8. Properly manage forests and woodlands. Under good management, woodlands can serve a variety of beneficial functions. In addition to contributing to clean air and water and regulating surface water runoff, the woodlands contribute to the maintenance of a diversity of plant and animal life in association with human life.

The pre-settlement vegetation was predominantly oak opening in both the glaciated and unglaciated regions of the Town. Oak openings differ from oak woods in that the trees are rather widely and evenly spaced so that sufficient sunlight reaches the ground to sustain the undergrowth of prairie grasses and forbs. Following settlement of the area, fires were largely suppressed allowing woody plants to invade the oak openings to eventually form oak woods. Recognizing the important natural functions of oak openings, continued efforts should be made to protect these areas.

Woodlands are present throughout the Town. Most wooded areas are small (< 40 acres), although there are notable exceptions: Jackson Madison School Forest, Scheidegger Forest County Park, Prairie Moraine County Park, and sections of the Johnstown Moraine. Wooded areas contribute to the rural nature of the Town.

9. Work in cooperation with partners to obtain access to as many natural resources as possible.
10. Reclamation of non-metallic quarries. There are no known metallic mineral resource deposits in the Town. However, there are dolomite stone quarries and gravel quarries in the Town. The active quarrying sites are on the southwest corner of Highway PD and Northern Lights and another at State Highway 69 and Riverside Road. The site on Highway 69 had been on the east side of the road, but will soon move to the west side. There are no approved but inactive quarry sites in the Town of Verona. Because of the glacial geology of the Town, there are known aggregate deposits in the flood plain outwash from the Wisconsin Glacier. Additional hard dolomite stone underlines hills in the Town.
11. Protect significant glacial remnants. The town has an excellent section of the terminal moraine and many kettle ponds left over from the Wisconsin Glacier. Efforts should be made to preserve as many significant glacial features as possible.
12. Control runoff into Goose Lake and other area ponds and non-draining kettle features.
13. Conservation of highly productive soils for agricultural use. Prime soils have been diminished in part by erosion, coverage by buildings, roads, and other structures, as well as subdivided and/or access severely limited so contiguity required for farming is no longer practicable.
14. Examine revenue sources and impacts on tax base for natural areas and lands identified for conservation.

Policies

1. Promote the restoration of the soil overburden where fractured bedrock is exposed and educate the public regarding susceptible areas. The Town will work to protect and improve the quality of surface and groundwater within its boundaries. Ground water quality can be impacted by excessive use of road salt, fertilizers and pesticides, poor management of animal wastes and failure of septic systems. The most

common non-point source (NPS) pollutants are sediment (e.g. from erosion and construction) and nutrients (e.g. from farming and lawn care). Areas that are most susceptible to contaminating groundwater by NPS pollution include:

- An area within 250 feet of a private well
 - An area within the Shoreland Zone (300 feet from streams; 1,000 feet from rivers and lakes)
 - An area within a delineated wetland or floodplain
 - An area where the soil depth to groundwater or bedrock is less than 2 feet
 - An area where there is an open gravel pit
2. Continue to advocate for the preservation of natural stream corridors, allowing the natural meander to return to beds that have been straightened, reinforcement of stream banks, and the removal of undesirable trees along streambanks that include Box Elders. Promote stabilizing stream banks, shorelines and other areas of erosion through coordinated planning efforts on publicly-owned lands, working jointly with adjacent property owners as necessary, to ensure permanent stabilization.
 3. Floods are Wisconsin's most common natural disaster and therefore require sound land use plans to minimize their effects. The Town and adjacent municipalities should adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances within their respective jurisdictions to regulate all floodplains where serious flood damage may occur. The Town, through coordination with Dane County, will protect floodplains from development, damaging storm water runoff, and degradation in order to avoid future drainage and flooding problems, retain them as essential components of the hydrologic system, and maintain their value as wildlife habitat and points of natural beauty.
 4. Continue to advocate for the protection and preservation of wetlands from residential, commercial, or industrial development. Generally, limitations on development are due to the erosive character, high compressibility and instability, low bearing capacity, and high shrink-swell potential of wetland soils, as well as the associated high water table. If these limitations are ignored in land use planning and development, these limitations may result in flooding, wet basements, unstable foundations, failing pavement, and excessive infiltration of clear water into sanitary sewers. The Town will discourage placement of buildings on sites that have sensitive environmental areas such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, lakes, woodlands, and native grasses in order to protect the benefits and functions they provide.
 - a. The Town shall require these natural resource features to be depicted on all site plans and preliminary plats to facilitate preservation of natural resources.
 - b. The Town shall direct all development to comply with Federal, State (i.e. WI statutes, Section 29.145), and County (i.e. Dane County Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance – Chapter 14) regulations.

Over 50% of wetlands in Dane County have been drained and are no longer a component part of the natural ecosystem. Approximately 36,000 acres were reported lost between 1901 and 1936. Between 1939 and 1961 the Wisconsin Conservation Department listed 22,678 wetland acres lost. Recent estimates using GIS indicate a total loss of 66,728 acres, or 56% of the original wetland acreage. The Town, through coordination with Dane County, will protect wetlands from development, damaging storm water runoff, and degradation in order to avoid future drainage and flooding problems, retain them as essential components of the hydrologic system, and maintain their value as wildlife habitat and points of natural beauty. Acquire buffer lands to Town water and wetland areas to reduce flooding and enhance water quality.

5. The Town will encourage the preservation, restoration, and management of native or restored grasslands, prairies, and savannas on private and public lands, especially on open land adjacent to waterways and on sloping areas.
6. Continue to educate the public regarding what they can do to assist in the protection of threatened or endangered species that includes promoting methods to limit invasive plants (see list 1) within the Town. The Town will discourage placement of buildings on sites that have documented threatened and endangered species (WI Statutes, Section 29.145). The Town supports all levels of government and private entities in efforts to restore and improve disturbed or degraded natural features (i.e. wetlands, floodplains,

streams, lakes, steep slopes, woodlands and native grasslands) and areas needed to support local wildlife. The Town will limit fragmentation of important natural resources and attempt to connect wildlife habitats to maintain robust viable wildlife populations.

7. Plan and implement greenway connections that enhance non-motorized public access from population centers to existing public lands and regional trails. The Town supports all levels of government and private entities in preserving and acquiring natural features, combating invasive species, especially those within identified environmental corridors (i.e. Upper Sugar River Watershed and the Ice Age Trail Corridor), for appropriate public use and protection, consistent with other objectives and policies of the Town. Partnering with the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association, Ice Age Trail Alliance (Town of Verona became an Ice Age Trail Community), Capitol Water Trails and Groundswell Conservancy (formerly Natural Heritage Land Trust) to help in these efforts, the Town has shown its commitment to preservation of natural features within its boundaries. Where possible, the Town will limit fragmentation of important natural resources and attempt to connect wildlife habitats to maintain robust viable wildlife populations. The Town supports all levels of government in efforts to reduce global warming.
8. Woodlands should be maintained for their total values; for scenery, wildlife habitat, open space, education, recreation, and air and water quality protection. The Town will promote the management and preservation of existing woodlands as wildlife habitat, as an economic land use, as an erosion control measure, and as a means of preserving the open space character of the township. The Town will protect woodlands from degradation and destruction by inappropriate development and uses by:
 - a. Encouraging the minimum removal of trees for all building sites.
 - b. Requiring property owners with land in a formal managed forest program (DNR) to continuing to meet minimum program requirements.
 - c. Protecting woodlands from indiscriminate burning, but encouraging the use of prescribed burning to promote oak regeneration where desirable.
 - d. Encourage the restoration of Oak Openings, which are an oak-dominated savanna community in which there is less than 50% tree canopy coverage and more than one tree per acre. Historically, Oak Openings were very abundant and occurred on wet-mesic to dry sites. Today, very few examples of this type exist.
9. Plan, implement and partner on projects that provide environmentally sensitive access to Dane County lakes, streams and rivers, including water-based trails and shore fishing. Encourage low-impact nature-based recreational development and use of natural areas that include overlook areas for natural and scenic views. Consider both working and non-working farm lands as a complementary component of natural areas.
10. Active quarries in the Town of Verona will eventually become depleted at which time the sites will need to be reclaimed; this should be consistent with land use goals for the Town.
11. Identify and protect terminal moraine, kettle ponds, and other significant glacial features when possible, throughout the Town. The Ice Age Trail corridor incorporates many of these features. The Town should make efforts to protect this corridor and encourage completion of the Ice Age Trail.
12. Enhance water quality by determining the best methodology to control silt, chemicals, salt, and other contaminants into water features. Consequently, implement best methods and practices to continue to improve water quality. Seek out partnerships with adjacent municipalities, State services, local residents, and volunteer groups such as the Friends of Goose Lake.
13. Encourage conservation subdivisions, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights or other methods which allow for controlled growth while maintaining contiguity of and access to arable lands.
14. If and when development is proposed in a natural area or lands identified for conservation consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, work with the property owner or owners to ensure that open space preserved within the development serves the goals of this Plan. This applies especially to the protection of

sensitive features, contiguity with other existing or planned open space, and trail connectivity. Isolated pockets of open space are not consistent with this Plan and should be discouraged. Where advantageous, promote alternative land lease, rental or sustainable resource management practices that could generate revenues for future operation, maintenance and development of natural areas. Removal of lands from development should be weighed by the Town against the possible impact upon the owners of taxable Town properties.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

As the Verona area continues to develop, the Town will face increased pressures for adequate open space, park land, and recreational opportunities. This Plan offers priorities, guidelines and recommendations for dealing with those challenges. Increasing public outreach, fostering additional partnerships, and leveraging the ongoing activities of partnering organizations will be critical to maintaining the existing natural areas and features that Verona residents equate with a continued high-quality of life.

The Town of Verona recommends supporting and working with partner organizations in their efforts to:

- Establish a trail system in Badger Prairie County Park
- Expand Prairie Moraine County Park and Madison School Forest
- Maintain Town-owned space to preserve and restore the area to a natural state and control invasive species
- Promote and maintain the Upper Sugar River water trail
- Promote and maintain regional bicycle-pedestrian trails throughout the Town of Verona
- Inform local land owners of the importance of the Ice Age Trail and direct willing land owners in the Ice Age National Trail Natural Resource Area and Sugar River (NRA) to agents who have expertise in conservation easement options and trail development
- Raise awareness of the importance of the Badger Mill Creek and the Upper Sugar River as critical natural resources
- Help organize a “Friends of Scheidegger Forest” volunteer group to assist with ongoing management efforts
- Enroll property owners to protect and manage the Town’s private forests and woodlands, especially for parcels within designated Natural Areas

Possible Goals for the Next Five Years:

Write grants to support educational programs that are open to the public/host workshops at the Town Hall that are open to the public at little or no cost to the Town. Possible topics:

1. Prairies
 - a. Resources for establishing a prairie
 - i. Soil preparation, sources of seed, controlling invasive species until established
 - ii. Safety when performing a controlled burn
 - iii. Increase pollinator habitats
2. Barns
 - a. Local history that includes the styles and functions
 - b. Preservation that includes an updated use beyond the original purpose
3. Streambank Preservation
 - a. Tree and invasive species removal/stabilizing the banks once those roots are gone
 - b. Installation of wing dams, outfalls, and other structures to foster the support of aquatic species
 - c. Establishing access points for fishing
 - d. For straightened sections, promote the natural meander

4. Driftless History
 - a. Pre-civilization to modern times
 - b. The impact of geological forces upon living things
5. Conservation Trusts
 - a. Legal requirements and possible costs to establish
 - b. Tax benefits
 - c. Ability to continue to own the land, reside on the portion developed, and farm the land or lease the land for farming in perpetuity
 - d. The benefit for Century farm owners who don't have children willing to carry on the tradition: the land will always be tied to the multi-generational owners as an enduring legacy

Identify Low-Lying Areas in the Town to Return to a Freshwater Marsh to Achieve the Following Goals:

1. Improve stormwater management for a large area
2. Improve wildlife habitat
3. Enlarge the riparian zone around regional waterways
4. Improve local ground and surface water quality
5. Improved recharge of the aquifer
6. Passive recreation resource

Identify Rocky/Hilly Unproductive Soils for Potential Reforestation to Achieve the Following Goals:

1. Improve wildlife habitat
2. Improve air quality
3. Erosion control
4. Improved watershed
5. Passive recreation resource

Continue to educate the public regarding what they can do to assist in the protection of threatened or endangered species that includes promoting methods to limit invasive plants (see list 1) within the Town.

APPENDIX A

LIST 1 INVASIVE SPECIES

1. Honeysuckle
2. Buckthorn
3. Autumn Olive
4. Wild Parsnip
5. Sweet Clovers
6. Oriental Bittersweet
7. Spotted Knapweed
8. Crown Vetch
9. Garlic Mustard
10. Reed Canary Grass

Exhibit A Town of Verona Natural and Recreational Areas Map

Town of Verona
Dane County, Wisconsin

December 2018

- Public Lands**
- Recreation Parks
 - State and Federal Lands
 - Natural Resource Area
 - Natural Wildlife Area
 - Hunting Easement
- Forests**
- Public Forest
 - Managed Forest, Closed to the Public
- Trails (Land and Water)**
- Proposed Trails
 - Snowmobile Trails
 - Existing Water Trails
 - Ice Age National Scenic Trail
 - Ice Age Trail Corridor
- Regional Development Plan**
- Municipalities
- FEMA Floodplains**
- 100 Year Floodplain

Points of Interest

1. Jackson Madison School Forest
2. Scheidegger County Forest
3. Prairie Moraine County Park
4. Badger Prairie County Park
5. Sugar River Watershed*
6. Badger Mill Creek Watershed
7. Sugar River Wetlands State Natural Area
8. Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor
9. Military Ridge State Trail
10. Goose Lake
11. Richardson's Cave
12. Johnstown Moraine
13. Savanna Oak Prairie
14. Wildlife Areas
15. Leopold-Riley Game Cooperative
16. Sugar River Natural Area
17. Upper Sugar River Canoe Trail
18. Verona Area School District Lands

*100% of the Town of Verona is in this watershed



Notes:

Water Trails have landing sites at Country View Road, Valley Road, and Riverside Road.
Many parcels near or adjacent to the Upper Sugar River Open Space Corridor are high priority for conservation and may be eligible for grant funding.
This map was created using the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2018-2023 as the foundation.

Miles

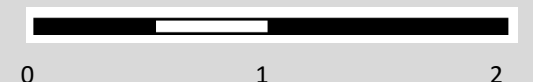




Exhibit B Town of Verona Floodplains

Town of Verona
Dane County, Wisconsin



December 2018

LEGEND




Municipalities

-  City of Madison
-  City of Verona

FEMA Floodplains

-  100 Year Floodplain
-  500 Year Floodplain

Other

-  Parcels
-  Rivers and Creeks
-  Lakes and Ponds

Sources:

- Dane County Land Information Office
- FEMA GIS Database



Miles

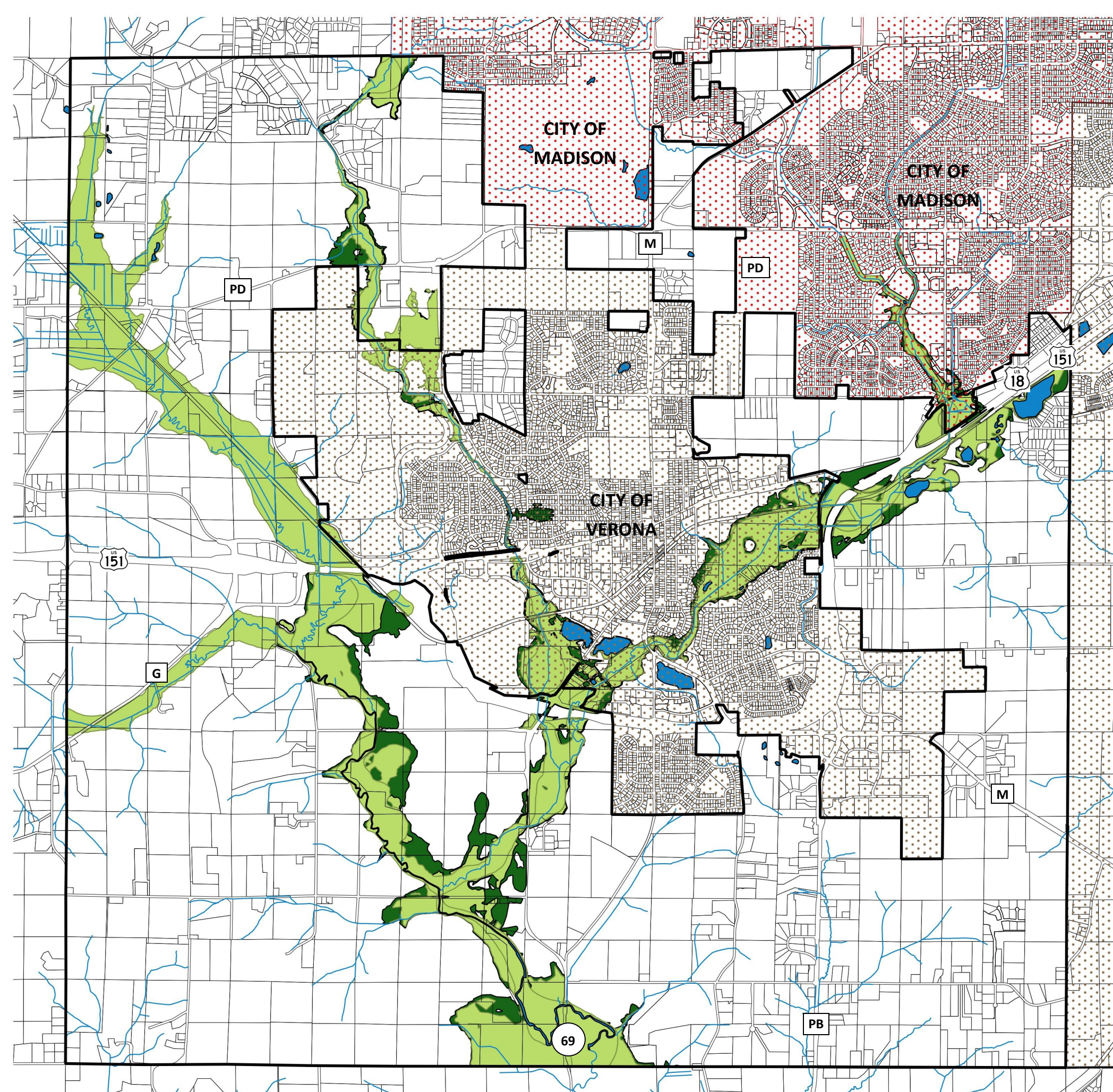
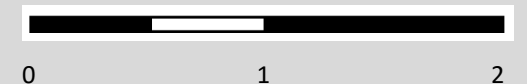


Exhibit C Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan 2018-2023

Town of Verona Dane County, Wisconsin

This map shows the Town of Verona portion of the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan Map. It represents Dane County Planning efforts and is for reference purposes only.

Dane County Parks System

- Recreation Park
- Natural Resource Area
- Wildlife Area
- Hunting Easement
- Forest
- Conservation Easement

Dane County Natural Resource Area Project Areas

- Natural Resource Area Boundary (NRAB)
- Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor

Reference Layers

- Ice Age Trail
- Existing Shared-Use Bicycle Pedestrian Trails
- Proposed Shared-Use Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails*
- Existing Water Trails
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Creeks
- DNR Public Lands
- Municipalities

*Proposed trails are very conceptual and should not be interpreted as the actual future route. Additional planning would be necessary for determining the trail alignment.

Sources:

- Dane County Land Information Office
- Dane County Land and Water Resources Department
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Ice Age Trail Alliance
- MSA Professional Services

Miles

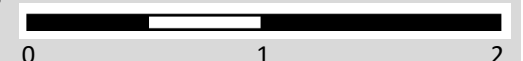


Exhibit D
Town of Verona
Parking and Access to Public Lands

Town of Verona
Dane County, Wisconsin

December 2018

LEGEND

Municipalities

- City of Madison
- City of Verona

Other

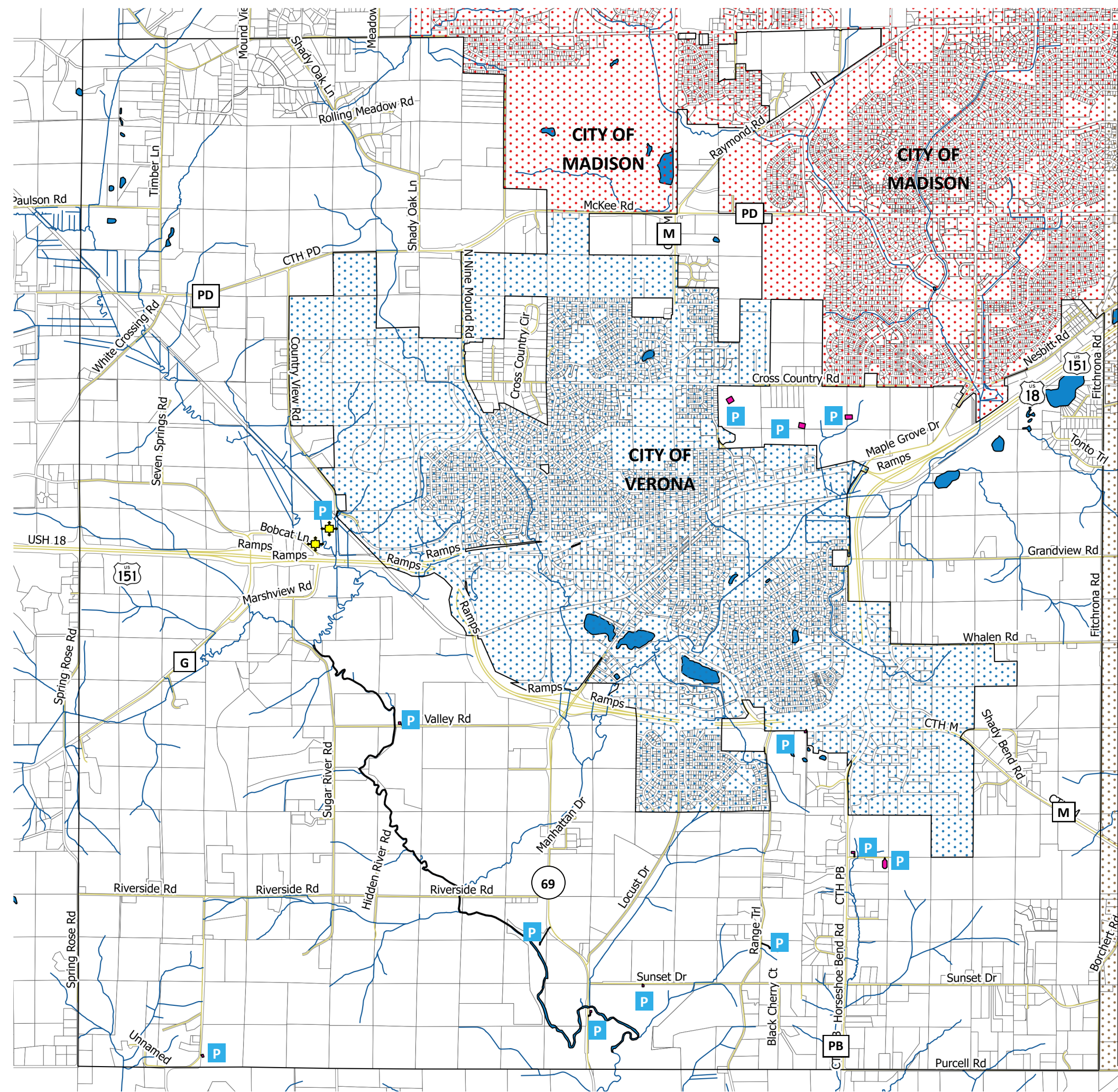
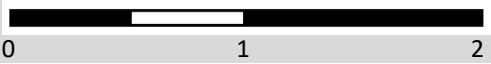
- Public Parking
- Public Access
- Parcels
- Rivers and Creeks
- Lakes and Ponds

Sources:

- Dane County Land Information Office
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Ice Age Trail Alliance
- MSA Professional Services



Miles



Resolution 2019-1

**A Resolution to Approve an Update of the Town of Verona
Natural and Recreational Areas Plan 2018 - 2023**

WHEREAS, The Town of Verona Open Space and Parks Plan and Map 2001-2005 was adopted on February 5, 2001, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Verona Open Space and Parks Plan was updated in 2006 with an Open Space and Parks Map that was included in the Town of Verona Comprehensive Plan, adopted on October 3, 2006 by Resolution 2006-03, as an appendix for the provision of background information, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Verona Open Space and Parks Plan directs that the "Plan" be examined annually in order to determine how well the Town has achieved its goals, and

WHEREAS, the Open Space and Parks Commission approved updates to the Open Space and Parks Plan for 2012-2017 by Resolution 2011-A on July 13, 2011, and

WHEREAS the qualified electorate voted to authorize the Town Board to disband the Open Space and Parks Commission at their Annual Town Budget Hearing and Special Town Meeting held on November 17, 2015 and replace it with a committee, and

WHEREAS the Town Board authorized the creation of the Natural and Recreational Areas Committee on February 2, 2016 by Resolution 2016-1; and

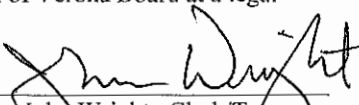
WHEREAS, the Natural and Recreational Areas Committee has worked in cooperation with the Ice Age Trail Alliance, Dane County Parks Division, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association, and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Verona Board approve the attached updated Plan that reflects and is consistent with Chapter 7 of the updated and adopted Town of Verona Comprehensive Plan and the Dane County Park Plan, for 2018-2023.

ADOPTED by the Town of Verona Board on this 9th day of April, 2019


Mark Geller, Chair

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Town of Verona Board at a legal meeting on April 9, 2019.


John Wright, Clerk/Treasurer
Dated 4/09/2019

2017 Comprehensive Plan Survey Related to Open Space Issues

To what degree should the Town promote or discourage action in each of the following areas by using property tax dollars or zoning regulations (1 for discourage, 5 for strongly encourage)?

Environmental/wildlife preservation - 1(1 responses), 2 (2 responses), 3 (10 responses), 4 (12 responses), 5 (37 responses)

Farmland preservation - 1(2 responses), 2 (1 responses), 3 (14 responses), 4 (18 responses), 5 (27 responses)

Recreational facilities - 1(5 responses), 2 (6 responses), 3 (20 responses), 4 (17 responses), 5 (14 responses)

Connecting portions of the Ice Age Trail - 1(3 responses), 2 (2 responses), 3 (13 responses), 4 (15 responses), 5 (29 responses)

Preservation of the Sugar River Watershed - 1(0 responses), 2 (5 responses), 3 (8 responses), 4 (14 responses), 5 (35 responses)

Preservation of large wooded areas (>40 acres) - 1(2 responses), 2 (2 responses), 3 (7 responses), 4 (19 responses), 5 (32 responses)

Bicycle and walking trails - 1(3 responses), 2 (4 responses), 3 (11 responses), 4 (12 responses), 5 (32 responses)

Other – Discourage summer camps, keep open spaces, limit use of weapons/guns in residential areas, and encourage no shooting in residential areas.

What other concerns do you have for the Town in the coming years?

Annexation of town land; large high-density commercial or residential developments

Being overrun with apartment complexes and subdivisions

Cost of maintaining roads used heavily by commuters driving through

Dangerous (fast) driving by commuters on side roads

Decrease in underground water quality due to loss of natural filtering through gravel deposits loss of wildlife due to loss of contiguous habitats (e.g., prairie, field windrows, and woodlots)

Development that will destroy rural environment and natural, wooded areas

Do not allow large residential and commercial building

Do not let the Town become like the development of Mid Town Rd; limit the growth of Epic. Epic blasting caused us and others to have to dig new wells on Shady Oak area.

Giving in to Developers for Condos for extra tax revenue

Housing growth, losing the rural feel of the town

How to allow development and maintain rural character

Increased pressure to approve more residential development - concern about the fate of farm land currently owned by residents facing (or already reached) retirement age.

Large rural commercial development

Large urban style developments like the PAN proposal (see above comment).

Loss of small town feel and fear of the natural state being lost due to development

No Development. Get rid of Epic

None

Not being able to develop my property to maximize its value

Over-development that gets away from the town feel, cookie-cutter subdivisions

Parks, community places with a sense of "place" and uniqueness so the area doesn't become one big suburban homogenized area or lose character

Please stop all the multi-family development

Poor planning

Protection from annexation

Regulate noise, light and environmental impact to neighbors

Regulating what we can do with our land and keep taxes down

Road maintenance is important. Bicycle traffic is heavy and dangerous at times. Keep owner-occupied

Homes and not so many rentals

Taxes going up

That taxes will become too high for school and local services that we will not be able to stay in our home. Town hall should be available for a small fee for residences. Carpet a big mistake, should have had a full kitchen

The influence of the Cities of Madison and Verona upon Town development

The town seems to be taking a proactive approach to wise and long sighted development.

These Questions are a concern

Too many 'tan towns'; if we develop farm fields, develop recreation and open space too

Too much traffic

Town becoming fragmented as land is annexed into cities

Town preservation

Town should preserve old farm buildings; preserve rural character, more trees

Traffic

Traffic and noise pollution

Transportation systems remain adequate for development

Trashy looking businesses; too much traffic

Uncontrolled growth of Veridian-style neighborhoods, large corporate farming or livestock operations,

Forced land use for power lines, etc.

Other Comments

Discourage large summer camps with 258 screaming, chanting kids all summer long

Do not let city of Madison or City of Verona annex the Shady Oak area

Favor minimum 2 acres for residences

Get rid of view tax because not fair a view is not tangible and by opinion only!

Having too many laws and ordinances

More funds need to be spent on roads

Reduce speed limit on many Town Roads to 35 mph

Encourage developments that preserve open spaces

Keep development away from the roads so that there is still a rural feel when you drive on the Town roads

Prefer slow, well planned growth

Progress means growth; limit growth to preserve wildlife habitat and minimize environmental impact

Clean water, organic farming, non-polluting practices must be a priority

Small businesses-like restaurants/coffee shops would be nice too

Thank you for maintaining the rural character of the Town of Verona

We live in one of the last beautiful areas. Please keep it as it is. We will support no future commercial development. Thank you on behalf of our woods.

While we don't currently live in the town we are planning to build on our lot in the town within the next year.



October 21, 2019

Town of Verona
c/o John Wright
7669 CO HWY PD
Verona, WI 53593

Subject: Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2018-2023

Dear Mr. Wright:

I received the Town's updated **Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2018-2023**. According to Town resolution #2019-1, dated April 9, 2019, the plan was approved and adopted, as well, revisions to the Needs Analysis section were accepted per Natural and Recreation Area Committee meeting minutes dated Oct. 16, 2019.

You are therefore advised that the Town's eligibility to apply for available outdoor recreation grants, administered by the Department of Natural Resources, is extended until **December 31, 2023**.

Please note that this eligibility is no assurance of grant funding for any particular project for which you may submit a request for grant assistance, and matching grant assistance will be limited to those recommendations supported in the approved Plan. Also, any project sponsors shall be responsible for keeping us advised regarding any formal changes(s) to the approved Plan that may result in a grant project application.

The Town of Verona is commended for its continued awareness of the need for regional outdoor recreation planning. Please contact me at (608)275-3218, if you have questions regarding your eligibility status or available grant programs.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Housley
Community Services Specialist
BUREAU OF COMMUNITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE