

TOWN OF
**WINONA
LAKE**

PARKS & RECREATION

Five-Year Master Plan
2021-2026



Town of Winona Lake
5 -Year Master Park and Recreation Plan
2021-2026



A Comprehensive Master Plan by the Winona Lake Park
Board and Winona Lake Park and Recreation Department

Winona Park and Recreation Department
1590 Park Ave
Winona Lake, IN 46590
www.winonalake.net

Table of Contents

Definition of Planning Area	4
Purpose/Overview	4
Goals	5
Park Department Information	6, 7, 8
Natural Resources	9, 10, 11
Man Made and Historical	11, 12, 13
Social and Economic Factors	14, 15
Accessibility and Universal Design	14-17
Public Participation	18-22
Needs Assessment	23, 24, 25
Existing Winona Lake Parks and Facilities Maps	26-30
Priority and Action Schedule	31, 32, 33
Works Cited	34
Assurance of Accessibility and Compliance	35
Resolution Adopting Master Plan	36
Additional Attachments	37-56

Definition of Planning Area

The planning area for the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department is the same as the service area. The service area for the Town of Winona Lake does not stop at the city limit; it includes the adjacent city of Warsaw and a buffer of rural land that extends approximately six miles from the town center. Past public input and user surveys have indicated that the Town of Winona Lake has a significant number of users from the rural population, even if those users do not contribute directly to the taxes gathered from the town residents to support recreation. Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department remains committed to making our facilities and services available to anyone, regardless of resident status, ability to pay, or physical/mental ability.

Master Plan Purpose/Overview

The Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department undertook this master planning process in order to update the previous five-year master plan. The plan was prepared to ensure that the Parks Department continues to work to prioritize current community park and recreational needs, responsibly maintain and enhance the natural and man-made recreation resources of the town, assure that the greatest benefit is achieved from each dollar spent, and explore multiple funding opportunities. This plan update will help Board members and staff establish the current baseline, their future desired state, and create a structure to achieve goals, and to monitor accomplishments.

The proposed recommendations serve as a guide for the development of recreational resources and amenities for the next five years and prioritize improvements to the park facilities and recreation programs that will most benefit the Town of Winona Lake.

Specifically, the five-year master plan will do the following:

- Gather feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders, residents and park users
- Set achievable goals and objectives that reflect current issues, challenges and opportunities as they relate to the current park system
- Inventory and evaluate the physical condition of existing parks and amenities
- Inventory and evaluate existing parks and recreation programming
- Provide a guide for the development of park and recreation amenities and programs that reflects the interest and needs of the community
- Expand opportunities to obtain funding for the park system amenities and programming

Master Plan Goals

Goals and Objectives

- Of the Master Plan:
 - Serve as a planning document to guide the operations of the Town of Winona Lake parks system
 - Serve as a supporting document to secure funding for proposed projects
- Of the Park Board:
 - To promote the park system
 - To enhance the current park system by supporting the Parks Director and open communication with the Town Council
 - To research and seek out grant and financial avenues to meet the goals of the master plan
- Of the Parks and Recreation Department:
 - Identify opportunities to add or expand parks and recreation programs and amenities
 - Utilize the knowledge gained during the implementation of virtual programming due to COVID-19 to expand programming to year-round
 - Elicit the input and support of the citizens of Winona Lake and surrounding communities
 - Expand upon the current Winona Lake Limitless Park playground by completion of the phases defined in the previous master plan
 - Continue to offer access to our parks at no cost
 - Continue to keep the cost of programs and services as low as possible

Park Board / Department Information

Community Name: Town of Winona Lake
Community's Home County: Kosciusko County
Address: 1590 Park Avenue
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Phone: 574.267.2310
Fax: 574.267.4793
Year Plan Created: 2020

Plan Author Information

Name: Holly Hummitch
Address: 1590 Park Avenue, Winona Lake, IN
Phone Number: (574) 267-2310
Email: winonalakepark@gmail.com

The Winona Lake Park Board Information

The Park Board was first created in the early 1970's and was re-established in 1993 according to the requirements of Indiana Code 36-10-3. Winona Lake has a five-member board that serves staggered four-year terms.

Matt Goebel, President
2704 Faunn St
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Email: matt@veritasprofessional.com
Political affiliation: Independent
Term: Expires 01.01.2025

Jeremy Mullins, Vice President
5 Stone Camp Trail
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Email: jmullins@warsawschools.org
Political affiliation: Independent
Term: School Board Appointment. Expires 01.01.2023

Oxana Mullins, Secretary
5 Stone Camp Trail
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Email: oxana.d86@gmail.com
Political affiliation: Republican
Term: Expires 01.01.2022

Kristie Maiers, Grant Writing & Fundraising
2794 E. Turnberry Rd.
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Email: kmaiers@aol.com
Political affiliation: Republican
Term: Expires 01.01.2024

Meghan Smith, Community Outreach & Fundraising
1706 S. St. Andrews Rd. E.
Winona Lake, IN 46590
Email: meghan.f.smith@comcast.net
Political affiliation: Independent
Term: Expires 01.01.2023

Paid staff of the Winona Lake Park Department

Park Department Director
Holly Hummitch
916 E Main St.
Warsaw, IN 46580
574.253.2181
hummitch@yahoo.com
Hired: December 29, 2008

Park Department Information and Facility Information

Winona Lake Park

1590 Park Avenue

Winona Lake, IN 46590

Approximate # of acres: 10.26 acres

Major facilities/amenities on the site: Playground, Splash Pad, Restroom facilities, Grass baseball field, Sand volleyball courts, Tennis courts, Fire pit, Beach, Pier, Covered shelter, Charcoal grills.

Bibler Park

Faunn Street, Southtown Estates Addition

Approximate # of acres: 1 acre

Major facilities/amenities on the site: Playground, Pond, Covered shelter, Charcoal grill.

Chestnut Street Park

Chestnut Street, Winona Lake

Approximate # of acres: 3.64 acres

Major facilities/amenities on the site: Open green space, Charcoal grill, Picnic table seating, wooded area.

Natural Features and Landscape

Winona Lake's parks include Winona Lake Park and Bibler Park both located in areas that have an abundance of natural features that allow the public to connect with nature.

Winona Lake Park

There are over 100 lakes in Kosciusko County and Winona Lake Park is located on the shores of Winona Lake which has a publicly accessible beach and pier which allow for the public's enjoyment and observation of the natural resources of the 562-acre recreational lake. Winona Lake is in the Walnut Creek watershed. This watershed also consists of Pike and Center lakes, located in the neighboring city of Warsaw. This watershed flows into the larger Tippecanoe watershed. (Dr. Nate Bosch, Director of Environmental Science, Grace College, Winona Lake)

Winona Lake is tested by the Health Department weekly and has been found to be one of the cleaner lakes in the area in the count of E-coli and has always measured lower than the levels of detection in the area of blue green algae toxins. (www.water.grace.edu) According to Nate Bosch, Director of Environmental Sciences at Winona Lake's Grace College, Winona Lake and Cherry Creek (the main stream feeding Winona Lake) are examples of healthy stream and lake ecosystems with an abundance of aquatic insect and fish species. It is because of this healthy ecosystem that public comes to Winona Lake Park's pier and beach to fish, swim, and boat.

Winona Lake Shoreline Project

Winona Lake is in the Walnut Creek watershed. This watershed flows into the larger Tippecanoe watershed. The Winona Lake Park and Recreation Department partnered with The Watershed Foundation (TWF) in 2019 to implement a Healthy Shoreline Initiative. This project focused on the three main elements: shoreline stabilization featuring glacial stones, a buffer of native plants to further reduce erosion and deter geese, and the public education about the hazards associated with feeding waterfowl. The purpose of the organization is to provide local leadership for developing and carrying out a plan for the orderly conservation, development, and wise use of the natural resources, thereby improving the quality of life for all the people living in the area.

The Watershed Foundation, along with community partners, installed 500' of healthy shoreline along the lakeside boundary of park grounds. Students from neighboring Jefferson and Washington elementary schools were also involved in the planting process as a portion of their STEM activities. Interpretive signage depicting the healthy shoreline initiative and its focus is located on park grounds as an educational element for the public. TWF's Executive Director Lyn Crighton shared, "It was amazing to see the community come together with 15 different partner organizations and hundreds of volunteers of all ages in support."

The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams collaborated with TWF on their restoration project by studying conditions in the park before, during, and after the work occurred. The Lilly Center research team surveyed for goose droppings across the grassy portion of the park. Goose droppings offer an understanding of whether or not geese are spending time there, and are also the main concern for the health of the lake and those who recreate in it. The Lilly Center found significantly fewer droppings (56%) along the shoreline after the restoration than there were before. "As the plants continue to establish themselves along the shoreline, we hope to see these results continue each year," said Adrienne Daeger, research program specialist at the Lilly Center. "And we hope that Winona Lake, the park, and our community benefit greatly!" (The Watershed Foundation, The Current)

Bibler Park

Bibler Park is located on the shores of Lake John and while there is no beach, public seating allows for fishing and wildlife viewing of the lake which boasts a wetlands and abundance of fish, bird and insect species. On some days the public might also be able to view some of Winona Lake's urban deer population walking through or the turtles crawling out of the wetland onto the shore of Bibler park.

Forest and Wildlife Resources

The Town of Winona Lake has two large mature forest tracts that contain Beech-Maple and Oak-Hickory tree communities. The broader county and region are dominated by agricultural land. The Winona Lake Limitless Park, Bibler Park and Chestnut Street Park have mature shade trees and many different local floras throughout to enjoy. In 2010, a tree program was established by the Winona Lake Tree Commission, (re)PLANT Winona. The Town of Winona Lake will split the cost of (up to two) trees to purchase and plant with a current homeowner as a way to leave a legacy for future residents and (re)plant trees in our neighborhoods.

The wildlife found in and around the parks include but are not limited to birds such as gulls, swans, bald eagles, American coots but also include several species of fish, wetland animals and urban wildlife.

Additionally, Winona Lake Park is an access point to the Lake City Greenway, a multi-use trail that connects Warsaw, Winona Lake and Kosciusko County to the amenities of the area. Specifically, the Heritage Trail is the portion of the Lake City Greenway beginning from Winona Lake Park provides universal accessibility into a historic forested area largely composed of hickory oak trees providing the public with the ability to enjoy the natural forested area that was in the area prior to development.

According to Nathan Bosch, Director of the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams, "The Town and Park have seen many nature-related changes over the last five years. There has been extensive reductions in the invasive Japanese Barberry plants by Grace College which are known to harbor ticks which can carry lyme disease." Invasive species around Winona Lake challenge economic growth, public health, and recreational opportunities. Species of specific concern currently are the overpopulation of white-tailed deer as well as the common presence of Japanese barberry plants in local forested and urban areas. (Imagine Winona Lake, 27)

The Lilly Center has organized logjam removal in Cherry Creek, as well as numerous educational programs for community members and K-12 students through natural areas in the Town. "We have sampled stream locations throughout the Town and surrounding areas, documenting small flooding events and identifying nutrients entering Winona Lake which cause weeds and algae to grow in the lake," Dr. Bosch shared. Continuous stream sensors were installed in 2019 which allow the Lilly Center and residents to track water flow and temperatures every hour of the day. The Lilly Center samples the lake weekly each summer and watch for algae toxins, chemical spills, any other issues in order to keep residents safe and healthy. In addition, oxygen levels in the lake to benefit fish living are monitored as well. The Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams has been a valuable asset to the Winona Lake Park and the Town of Winona Lake.

Man-Made, Historical, and Cultural

Man-Made

Warsaw and Winona Lake sit astride US Highway 30, which eventually connects with State Road 15 approximately 5 miles to the north. The notable man-made features in the area are located in the neighboring City of Warsaw. As the headquarters location for three of the world's five largest orthopedic medical device companies and home to a host of related firms, Warsaw reflects the global, technological nature of its principal industry and its effects pour over into Winona Lake. Additionally, in Warsaw, a diversified group of employers surround the nucleus of the orthopedic industry including several industrial parks and a municipal airport. The combination of an unprecedented concentration of world-class medical device companies and the natural beauty of Winona Lake adjacent to Warsaw make the area truly unique.

Since 2011, the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department has made great strides to provide improvements to Winona Lake Park. In 2015, a splash pad with shade covering was opened. This new addition brought an increase in park patrons; therefore a new parking lot was added in the fall of 2015 as well. Year-round universally accessible restrooms were completed in December of 2019 providing restroom access through the winter months. With activity along the Greenway through all seasons, heated restrooms in the winter were a necessity. Seating and shade are the most

requested amenities from visitors. Additional permanent picnic table seating and a cantilever shade structure was installed in June 2020.

The Winona Lake Limitless Park playground renovation has been divided into 4 sub-phases which will be completed as funding provides. The initial Phase 1 was completed through a Community Build in April 2016 and includes a complete renovation of the main play structure to an inclusive piece of play equipment. The remaining 3 phases will include the implementation of sensory nodes, new swing structures, additional play equipment and landscape barriers between the neighboring lake and parking lots.

In May 2019, The Watershed Foundation (TWF) brought together community partners to implement an integrated solution to health and safety concerns at Winona Lake Limitless Park – the Shoreline Project. “The old seawall was removed, and glacial stones were installed along 500 feet of shoreline to slow wave action. Cherry Creek’s stream banks were stabilized and a buffer of native shrubs and plants were incorporated along the stream and the shoreline to discourage geese activity, among other benefits. In addition, TWF launched a public education campaign that included hands-on activities and signage throughout the park, informing residents and visitors about healthy shorelines and encouraging clean water behaviors, such as not feeding waterfowl.”

Winona Lake Limitless Park Timeline of Development:

2011 – Idea of Winona Lake Limitless Park developed

2012/2013 – Planning and fundraising

May 2014 – Groundbreaking – K21 Splash Pad at Winona Lake Limitless Park

May 2015 – K21 Splash Pad at Winona Lake Limitless Park Grand Opening

Fall 2015 – Additional Parking added adjacent to K21 Splash Pad at Winona Lake Limitless Park

April 2016 – Community Build – Phase 1 of Winona Lake Limitless Park Playground

July 2016 – Ribbon Cutting for Phase 1 of Winona Lake Limitless Park Playground

May 2019 – Shoreline Project – Winona Lake Limitless Park Lakefront

December 2019 – Grand Opening of UA Family Restrooms at K21 Splash Pad at Winona Lake Limitless Park

June 2020 – Addition of Seating and Shade Structure at Winona Lake Limitless Park Playground

One of the wonderful gems of our community is our Greenway system. The current Greenway is approximately 3 miles long and connects the neighborhoods on the south side of the lake through a rolling paved trail system that brings you into the Winona Lake Limitless Park. This Greenway also heads from Winona Lake Limitless Park to the northeast section of our community encompassing the Grace College campus. The Greenway in 2021 will continue from the campus area to the east out to the future “Town Center”. This is currently broken into phases. The first of which is out to bid with completion of the new extensions to be completed in 2021 and 2022. Once completed, this section will connect 7 additional neighborhoods (over 400 homes) and the newly created “Town Center” with the Winona Lake Limitless Park.

Historical

Winona Lake was incorporated as a town on June 2, 1913 and is best known for the lake it is named after and built on. "A lake in the shape of a flying eagle is etched into the lands of northern Indiana, where the Potawatomi Indians once dwelled in the early 1800s. Appropriately, the tribe referred to the body of water as Eagle Lake." (Disbro, 7) The name was later changed to "Winona" because of Dr. Solomon Dickey, a leader of the Presbyterian Church and his former connection with the town Winona near Bass Lake in Starke County. Dr. Dickey purchased a piece of land, a corporation known as The Winona Assembly was formed and the first Bible conference was held in the summer of 1895. (Grill and White, 7).

Winona Lake is the home of Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary. It is the home of former preacher and professional baseball player, Billy Sunday. Christian musician and preacher, Homer Rodeheaver, made Winona Lake his home from 1912 until his death in 1955. "Homer Rodeheaver, Billy Sunday and Billy Graham created waves from Winona Lake that rippled through the world." (Disbro, 7)

The Winona School of Professional Photography was started in 1912 (as the Indiana School of Photography) and was operated by the [Professional Photographers of America](#) (PPA) until its move to Chicago (Mount Prospect) in 1988. Famous photographers from around the world taught there during summer-only classes. The now defunct Winona College was founded here and the Winona Lake School of Theology was located here from 1920 to 1970. Winona Lake was also home to the headquarters of The Free Methodist Church until it moved its offices to Indianapolis in 1990.

"Once again a bustling village, Winona Lake will steal the heart." (Disbro, 7)

Cultural

Winona Lake has always supported a strong artistic community and once a summer retreat in the Chautauqua tradition, its downtown has been revived as a lakeside village of shops, galleries and eateries called The Village at Winona. Each year Winona Lake Village hosts several different art festivals including the Winona Art Fair, Canal Days, Oktoberfest, Jazz Festival, and Village Tree Lighting. Additionally, Winona Lake Parks host traditional events such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt, 4th of July celebration, Winona Lake Family Fest, and a holiday event for families called KringleFest along with numerous recreational events every year.

Social and Economic Factors

Total Community Population: 4,936

Community member median age: 30.6 years

Percentage of community living at or below poverty level: 12.6%

Percentage of community under the age of 5: 6.9%

Percentage of community over the age of 65: 12.71%

Percentage of community members over the age of 5 with a disability: 17% of Warsaw School System (Winona Lake specific statistic is unavailable)

Breakdown of community by race:

- %White: 93.54%
- %Black or African American: 1.0%
- %American Indian and Alaska Native: 0.73%
- %Asian: 1.02%
- %Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 0.0%
- %Some Other Race: 2.58%
- %Two or more Races: 1.14%

Median Household Income: \$63,157

Overall Poverty Rate: 8.81%

Largest Employers in Community: Grace College, ABC Industries, Zimmer Incorporated, Lake City Bank, Sym Financial

The Town of Winona Lake's demographics have changed and continue to change as our community grows. We are seeing an overall increase in assessed value and a demand for homes. Homes in Winona Lake sell quickly and generally higher than the asking price. Because of the demand of the local orthopedic industry, families want to live in Winona Lake because of the quality of life amenities. "We established a new subdivision 3 years ago with 33 lots and they are all sold; homes occupy most of these lots already. The new Raccoon Run subdivision will have 138 single family homes that will bring around \$35 million dollars in assessed value in the next 5-10 years. Additionally, another subdivision being developed this year will have 35 new homes." Craig Allebach, Town Manager.

Up until 2019, the Town of Winona Lake had no debt. The Town is now helping to pay off the Stonehenge Golf Course and have recently been approved for revenue bonds which will help extend the water lines to the Raccoon Run subdivision. In addition, it will all help fund the one mile extension of Greenway connecting to the existing Greenway. When the Town annexed the new Raccoon Run subdivision, a new Residential Tax Increment Financing District was also created. This district extends from Raccoon Run all the way to and including the park. "This way we can fund

projects in the future that may be needed in the park with TIF dollars." Craig Allebach, Town Manager. We have, we are, and we will continue to grow our tax base to fund projects and our tax base, including annexations, mainly to the east.

Winona Lake Park Board recognizes that we must continue to offer access to our parks at no cost and any services or programs at as low as possible. Currently, any specific donations received during the annual Winona Lake Family Fest are directed into a scholarship fund and are granted per request for participants who cannot afford the minimal summer programming fees.

Winona Lake Park Board is committed to continually improving the recreational activities and park services available while recognizing that the median age of the population in Winona Lake is 30.6 reflecting the growing demographic of young families that are moving into this area.

Accessibility and Universal Design

The Winona Lake Park Board and the Town of Winona Lake remain committed to providing facilities and services for all, regardless of their status, ability to pay, or physical/mental ability. Thus, no person shall, on the basis of ability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.

With the implementation of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, effective March 15, 2012, the Town of Winona Lake and Winona Lake Park board have taken these revised regulations as the standards of minimum requirements in our park board master plan future considerations of constructing new or altering existing facilities. Specifically, we plan to exceed the guidelines by continuing to incorporate the universal design concept in areas where possible to provide access to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life.

The Town of Winona Lake and Winona Lake Park Board designated Craig Allebach as the ADA compliance coordinator for ensuring the compliance with all federal accessibility law guidelines for federally-assisted park and recreation programs and activities. In addition, Craig Allebach will provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of handicap by the Town of Winona Lake's adopted grievance procedures.

Craig Allebach

Town Manager, townmanager@winonalake.net, (574)269.5112

The public may contact Craig Allebach (listed above) or the Parks Director (Holly Hummitch, listed as author) with any question regarding our accessible facilities programs and services in Winona Lake Parks via email or phone both found on Winona Lake's website, phone book or kiosk outside of Winona Lake Town Hall.

Current Accessibility

Winona Lake Park Board has joined the Town of Winona Lake in a self-evaluation of service areas, including Winona Lake Park, Chestnut Street Park and Bibler Park, to determine which actions need to be taken in order to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This self-inspection has been completed by Gene Seiman, Town of Winona Lake building inspector.

The programs and facilities in our park system that are currently accessible include, but are not limited to:

- Parking lots
- The majority of walkways and paths
- Shelters
- Pier at Winona Lake Park
- Senior Center at Winona Lake Park
- Tennis courts
- Heritage Greenway

The programs and facilities in our park system that are currently under evaluation, with scheduled upgrades to improve accessibility, include:

- Winona Lake Park play area
- Winona Lake beach
- Winona Lake Park bath houses

Proposed Accessibility

The Winona Lake Park Board has been working alongside the Town Winona Lake to renovate the current Winona Lake playground into Winona Lake Limitless Park. This park includes a universally accessible play area, splash pad, and new universally accessible bath houses, providing recreation to the greatest number of people possible.

Extensive work has gone into the planning, with age-appropriate play equipment that has safe and accessible surfacing underneath it, and accessible routes to the parking lots and other amenities in our parks.

The current estimate for completion of Winona Lake Limitless Park is \$862,000. Funds are expected to come from grants and donations. The Priorities and Action Schedule in the final draft of the 5 Year Master Plan will present a proposed timeline for completion of this facility redesign/redevelopment.

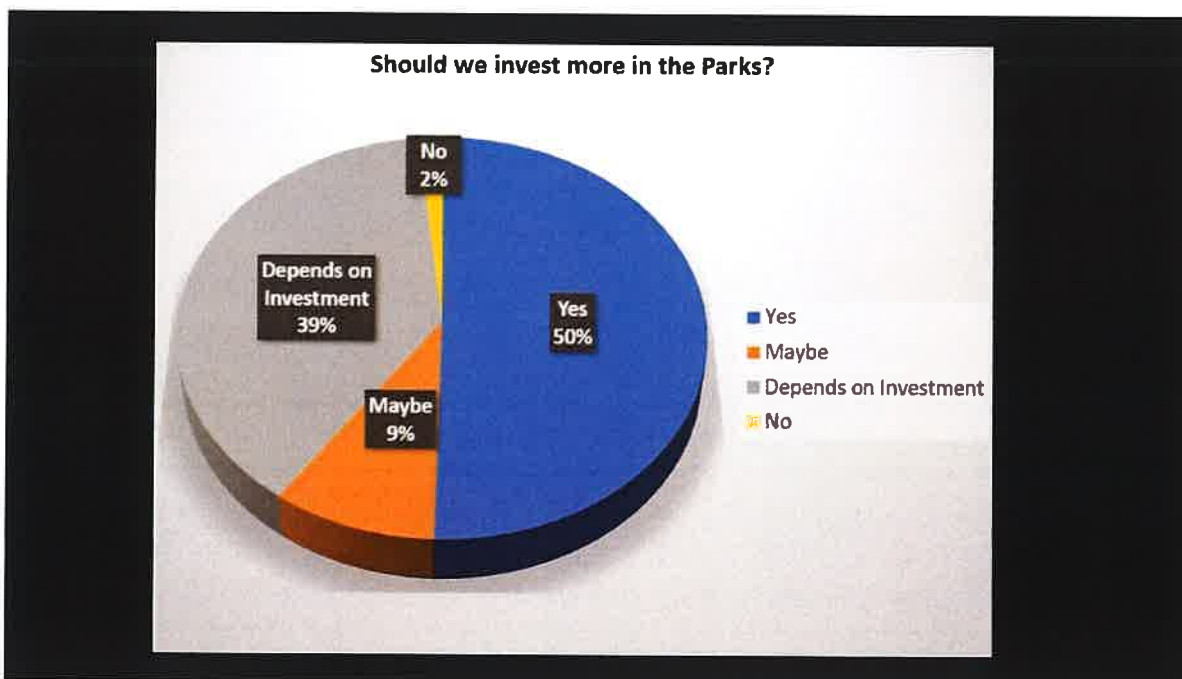
Public Participation

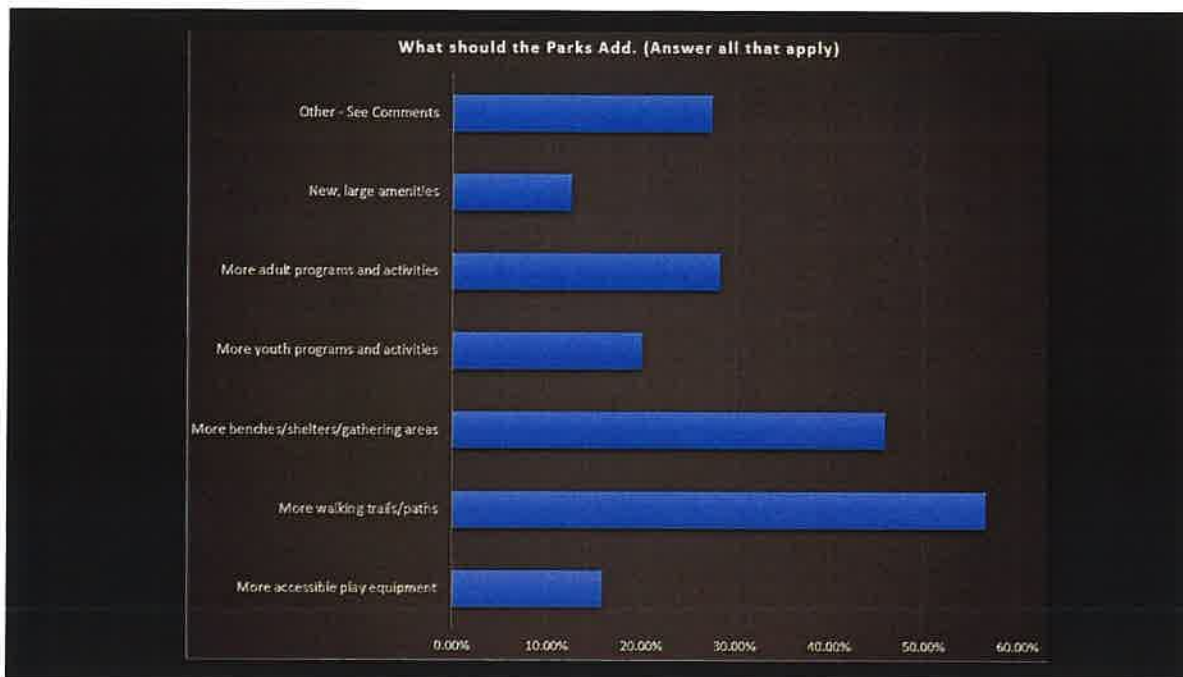
Public Surveys

The Winona Lake Park Board created a short survey for distribution to residents of Winona Lake and surrounding communities. The survey consisted of 21 questions and was available via digital and paper format. It was publicized via the Town website, Town and Park Facebook pages through a SurveyMonkey link. Notification of the survey was also posted in the annual wastewater booklets distributed to residents of Winona Lake at the beginning of the year.

The survey was open from December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021. The numbers and summary of the responses were:

- There were 131 completed surveys.





Comments from Question 16

What should the Parks add?

Accessible equipment for adults; more benches; special needs exercise programs; Add things to tumbler park; Bench on Roy St Trailhead; bike bath from trailhead to Winona Beach to keep kids and walkers safe
Adult classes

Adult painting class

Affordable daily rentals for groups such as scrapbookers. Add some new play items to tumbler park as well.

Bigger parking lot

Craft and game days for kids

Dog park and pet activities

Event center

Extend Greenway to Heritage Lake Park & Stonehenge. STAT

For teens

Greenways to link neighborhoods and greenway.

Group picnic area

Horse shoes or shuffleboard

Inclusive Teenage sports programs

More shade to help prevent skin cancers

New building for events. It would be great to have the ice rink in this space

Comments from Question 16

What should the Parks add?

Not necessarily "more," but would rather improve the quality of what already exists.

outdoor pool, more splash pads

Pickle ball courts, outdoor pool recreation area

Pickle ball courts, swimming pool at Stonehenge

Please connect Heritage Lake Park & Lexington Manor to the trails!

Pool

Pool or pickle ball courts

Ports potties blended into trails

Possible something also geared towards Teenagers once a month. Not much for them to do in the community

Safe sidewalk on Pierceton road to get to the trails

Some small tables for 2 or 3 people near the lake

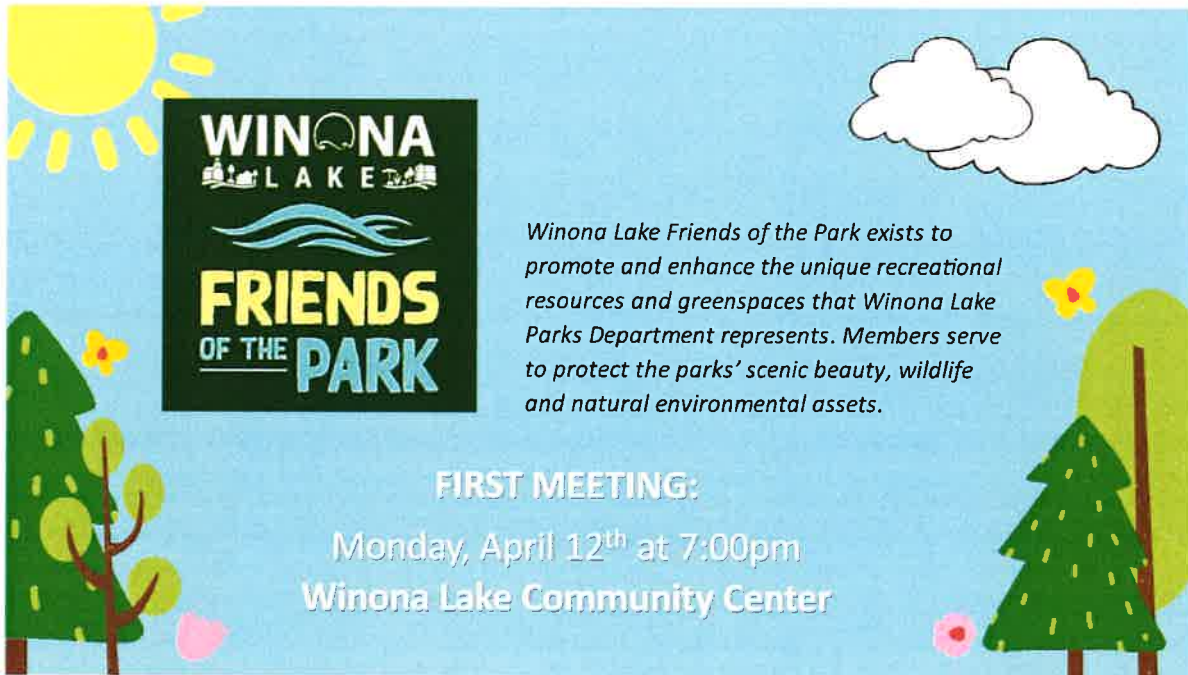
Swimming pool

The park is Awesome

Trail expansion to Lexington Manor/Heritage Lake Park/Stonehenge

Volleyball Courts

Volleyball courts grass



A colorful poster for the Winona Lake Friends of the Park. The background is light blue with a yellow sun in the top left, white clouds in the top right, and green trees with yellow flowers at the bottom. The central logo features the text "WINONA LAKE" in white on a dark green background, with a stylized blue wave below it, and "FRIENDS OF THE PARK" in yellow and blue below that. To the right of the logo, a paragraph of text describes the organization's purpose. At the bottom, the details for the first meeting are listed.

WINONA LAKE
FRIENDS OF THE PARK

Winona Lake Friends of the Park exists to promote and enhance the unique recreational resources and greenspaces that Winona Lake Parks Department represents. Members serve to protect the parks' scenic beauty, wildlife and natural environmental assets.

FIRST MEETING:
Monday, April 12th at 7:00pm
Winona Lake Community Center

Public Meetings

Winona Lake Park Board held a public participation meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2021. The meeting was held in person at the Winona Lake Community Center and online via Zoom. Notice of the meeting was advertised via the following:

- News release in the local online newspaper, The Times Union
- News release in local online news source, Ink Free News
- Postings at the Winona Lake Park office and Winona Lake Town Hall
- Postings at several shops in the Village at Winona:
 - Boathouse Restaurant
 - RocketFizz
 - Light Rail
 - Trailhouse

The public in attendance included a local journalist and 7 town residents, not including the Town Manager and Park Board members. The public in attendance via Zoom included another local journalist and 8 residents.

The public input was as follows:

Question: What is the new proposed path for the trails?

Answer: A copy of the map was provided to show/explain the path.

Question: From the action schedule, it looks like the boat rental launch is going to happen in 2024. Where are people launching from now? Can the debris in the water by the concrete pad be cleaned out for a safer launch?

Answer: Currently there are three places to launch your kayaks, paddle boats and paddle boards – the concrete pad by the beach, the sand bar and right next to the boat rentals. We will look into clearing out debris from the water.

Question: Does the park office provide any form of educational material when leasing the kayaks, paddle boats, and paddle boards? Boat safety and etiquette? Will the new boat launch be for bigger boats too?

Answer: No, the new launch will only accommodate kayaks, paddle boats, and paddle boards. Currently we do not have any educational material.

Question: Is there a plan to have more shade structures in the park and/or beach area? How about sunscreen dispensers?

Answer: The sunscreen dispenser is a great idea! We will work on having it available for this summer season. We will discuss more shade structures in the near future.

Question: What is the timing for the new trails' completion?

Answer: Bids are going to be accepted on March 11, 2021. Once the plan is ready to move forward, we're looking at 2-3 months to complete. Currently looking at different feasibility studies to connect Winona Lake trails with Warsaw, and have new paths from Roy Street to Eisenhower Elementary School.

Additionally, articles summarizing the public input meeting were written by local news outlets, Times Union and Ink Free News.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Town of Winona Lake's population by the most recent US Census is 4,910 and has 11.26 acres of local park and recreation land.

An essential component of park master planning is the needs assessment. The needs assessment brings together the information and data gathered through the earlier stages of the planning process to identify a path forward for the agency. The needs assessment is valuable because it allows for consideration of the needs of Winona Lake and its residents.

The Winona Lake Park and Recreation Department has used two methods to identify recommendations: Level of Service (LOS) and Issue Analysis.

Level of Service (LOS) Standards for Parks and Open Space: The 1996 *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* state that "we must realize an open space standard is not so much an exemplary measure to be used in some form of comparison or judgment of adequacy or accomplishment, but is an expression of a community consensus of what constitutes an acceptable level of service."

This method requires an assessment of existing facilities, public input and the ability to measure and prioritize needs. LOS has allowed Winona Lake Park and Recreation Department to establish what is best for our citizens, what we can afford, and how to strategically plan for the cost of needed facilities.

Issue Analysis: This analysis identifies needs and problems and discusses options for their resolution. The issue analysis will be used to ensure that key stakeholders and the public's opinions, as well as policy and social trends, are accounted for. The issues were placed in a priority order based on financial and other constraints, then turned into a coherent priority and action plan. Together, these two components of the needs assessment will help identify potential gaps in the system and ensure a sustainable future for the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department

Generally, findings from public input were consistent, identifying an appreciation for existing facilities and programs.

The following list identifies needs and wants of the community and park board that should be considered in order to improve the delivery of parks and recreation facilities programs and services:

- A. Aging Community Center – Although the Town has a viable asset of having a community-senior center in our park to host a range of activities from small group meetings, summer programs, and social clubs to larger community events, the center is dated and deteriorating. The placement of the facility is often a complaint by the elderly given the bit

of walking distance from the parking lot to the front door. Additionally, the community center was built on a flood plain and experiences frequent flooding. This has accelerated the center's deterioration and many dollars have gone towards repairing the foundation. While the center is large and great to host events and programs, it is dated and does not have the desired amenities for the youth-teens and young adults to have a place to hang out.

- B. Wheelchair Accessible Beach Launch – Renovation of the current concrete pad adjacent to Winona Lake beach/swim area would provide a concrete ramp for direct water access for wheelchairs. This amenity would be groundbreaking for Kosciusko County.
- C. Sunscreen Stations – During the public input meeting held on March 9, 2021, a resident made the suggestion of the implementation of sunscreen dispensers in the immediate park/beach areas. A partnership with Goshen Hospital, located in Goshen, Indiana was formed and a sponsorship enables 3 sunscreen stations to be purchased and will be installed prior to the summer season.

The following list identifies projects the park board plans to implement based on community need and funding:

- A. Sidewalk Extension with Footwash - Landscape barrier between the current playground and beach area with a connecting sidewalk from the west side of playground to the splash pad. A footwash will be installed between the beach and splash pad area.
 - a. During the pandemic and summer of 2020, we saw an extreme increase in usage of the splash pad. Hours were extended beyond our normal time frame to accommodate for the number of residents using the facility. The Winona Lake Limitless Park and splash pad served as an outlet for community members to escape the chaos of the pandemic and resume a sense of 'normalcy' and enjoy the amenities our park has to offer.
- B. Bibler Park – Bibler park usage has increased and the age of the current play structure is outdated. Implementation of a new playground structure, surfacing and playground border.
- C. Winona Lake Limitless Park – Completion of the playground. Planning, re-design, and implementation/renovation to an entirely universally accessible playground.
- D. Block Restroom Facility – Re-design/remodel of current restroom facility to go beyond ADA standards and include individual family restrooms.
- E. Outdoor Shelter – Addition of an outdoor covered shelter to meet the demand of facility use by park patrons.
- F. Boat Launch – A safe, handicap accessible, boat launch for boat rentals and park patrons.

Dream Project

Winona Lake Limitless Park

"Where fun has no limits"

It is the dream of The Winona Lake Park and Recreation Department to complete the final phases of the renovation of Winona Lake Limitless Park. The project is a complete renovation of the entire Winona Lake Park into a fully universally accessible green space, splash pad and playground that goes above and beyond ADA standards.

EXISTING WINONA LAKE PARKS AND FACILITIES

Winona Lake Limitless Park



Winona Lake Limitless Park – Playground



K21 Splash Pad at Winona Lake Limitless Park



Bibler Park



Greenway/Trail Connection
Winona Lake Limitless Park/Bibler Park



1. Winona Lake Limitless Park
2. Greenway/Trail Connection from Winona Lake Limitless Park to Bibler Park
3. Bibler Park

PRIORITY AND ACTION SCHEDULE

2020

- Purchase of 20 picnic tables (frames and lumber)
- Revamp 4-bay swingset and spinnerbowl with
 - 2 Tot seats
 - UA Expression Swing
 - Adaptive Swing Seat
 - Sensory Wave Spinning Seat

2021

- ALN Sign Frame Design and Installation
- Hand Sanitizer Stations – WLLP/Bibler
- Landscape & Re-Seed - WLLP
- Border – WLLP Playground
- Signage – WLLP & Bibler
- Boat Purchases – Rentals
 - Paddleboat(s)
 - Kayak(s)
 - Paddleboard(s)
- Volleyball Courts – reconstruction, new posts/nets/sand - WLLP
- Sidewalk extension along beach perimeter to splash pad, addition of foot wash - WLLP
- Art implementation project - WLLP

2021/2022

- *Addition of outdoor shelter – WLLP*
- Hammock Station – WLLP
- *Bibler Park – new play structure, surfacing, border*
- *Bibler Park – Addition of new concrete pad/basketball goal and/or new soccer goal*

2021/2022 (cont.)

- *Pickleball Courts – WLLP*
- *Planning, Re-design & Implementation/Renovation of Playground to UAP – Final Phases - WLLP*
- *Re-Design/Remodel of Current Block Restroom Facility - WLLP*

2022

- Resurface concrete – K21 Splash Pad
- Update grills – WLLP/Bibler Park/Chestnut Street
- Complete WLLP Dedication

2023

- *Music Playground - WLLP*
- *UA Beach – Wheelchair Accessible*
 - *Addition of "Beach Friendly" Wheelchair*

2024

- *Outdoor "City" Gym – WLLP*
- Boat Rental Launch/Pier

2025

- Re-Surfacing of Tennis/Basketball Courts-WLLP
- *Bike Skills Park – Cherry Creek - WLLP*

2025-Beyond

- *Community Center Facility*
- *FULL Day Camp Summer Programming*
- Additional Pier

**Italic* items: Funded through potential grants, donations, partnerships.

WLLP – Winona Lake Limitless Park

UA – Universally Accessible

UAP – Universally Accessible Playground

PRIORITY AND ACTION SCHEDULE

<u>Year</u>	<u>Site of Work</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Potential Source of Funds</u>
2020	WLLP	Purchase of 20 Picnic Tables	\$100/table X 20 tables = \$2000	Current appropriated budget capital line
2020	WLLP	Revamp 4-bay Swingset & Spinnerbowl with (2)Tot Seats (1)UA Expression Swing (1)Adaptive Swing Seat (1)Sensory Wave Spinning Seat	\$592 \$1952 \$499 \$1132	Current appropriated budget capital line
2020/2021	WLLP	ALN Sign Frame Design & Installation	\$450	Current appropriated budget
2021	WLLP/Bibler Park	Hand Sanitizer Stations	\$2941	Appropriated budget
2021	WLLP	Landscape & Re-Seed	TBD	Appropriated budget
2021	WLLP	Border – Playground	TBD	Appropriated budget
2021	WLLP/Bibler Park	Signage – Uniformity & Location	TBD – Out for quote	Capital budget
2021	WLLP	Boat Purchases	TBD	Capital budget
2021	WLLP	Reconstruction of Volleyball Courts	TBD *Potential in-kind project	Capital budget
2021	WLLP	Sidewalk Extension to Splash Pad w/ Foot Wash	TBD – Out for quote	Capital budget
2021	WLLP	Art Implementation Project	\$1200 or \$12/hr Intern	Appropriated budget
2021-2022	WLLP	Addition of Outdoor Shelter	TBD	Donations, Capital Budget
2021-2022	WLLP	Hammock Station	TBD	Capital budget
2021-2022	Bibler Park	New Playground Structure/Surfacing/Border	TBD	Grant GameTime 50% match (Fall '21)

2021-2022	Bibler Park	Addition of new concrete pad/basketball goal and/or soccer goal	BBall Goal (\$2000) Other – TBD	Capital budget Grant
2021-2022	WLLP	Pickleball Court	Town of Winona Lake Project	Grant(s)
2021-2022	WLLP	Planning, Re-design & Implementation/Renovation of Playground to UAP	TBD	Grant(s), Private foundations, Government funds
2021-2022	WLLP	Re-Design/Remodel of Current Block Restroom Facility	TBD	Grant, Private foundations, Town funds
2022	K21 Splash Pad @ WLLP	Resurface Concrete	TBD	Adjusted park budget
2022	WLLP/Bibler Park/Chestnut	Update/Replace Grills	TBD	Capital budget
2022	WLLP	Complete Limitless Park Dedication	TBD	Adjusted park budget
2023	WLLP	Music Playground	TBD	Grant(s), donations
2023	WLLP	UA Beach – Wheelchair Accessible "Beach Friendly" Wheelchair	TBD	Grant(s), Private foundations
2024	WLLP	Outdoor "City" Gym	TBD	Grant(s)
2024	WLLP	Boat Rental Launch/Pier	TBD	Capital budget
2025	WLLP	Re-Surfacing Tennis & Basketball Courts	TBD	Capital budget
2025	WLLP	Bike Skills Park	TBD	Grant(s), Private foundations, Partnerships
2025 – Beyond	WLLP	Community Center Facility	TBD	Grant(s), Private foundations, Government funds
2025 – Beyond	WLLP	FULL Day Camp Summer Programming	TBD	Grant(s), Adjusted park budget
2025 – Beyond	WLLP	Additional Pier	TBD	Capital budget, adjusted park budget

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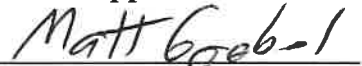
www.amazon.com/Winona-100-Third-Wave-Rising/dp/0884692841

**ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH: ARCHITECTURAL
BARRIERS ACT OF 1968 (As Amended); SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION
ACT OF 1973 (As Amended); AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (As Amended)**


The Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department (Applicant) has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

SIGNATURE 

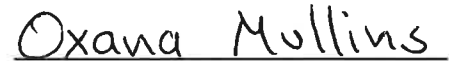
Applicant President



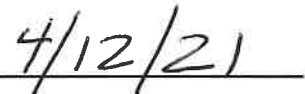
(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE 

Applicant Secretary



(Secretary's printed name)

DATE 

RESOLUTION 2021-03 /
A Resolution Adopting a Five-Year Master Plan
for the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department

WHEREAS, the public interest requires the creation and adoption of a Master Plan for the Winona Lake Parks; and

WHEREAS, the Five-Year Master Plan previously adopted has expired.

WHEREAS, the Master Plan controls and guides the development and management of the park in accordance with the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods and the community, recognizes the limitations and constraints of the lands within the park, and provides for the improvements suited to and appropriate for the park and the surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest and necessary that the management and current future development of the park shall conform to the adopted Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Board has reviewed and adopted the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Board has recommended that the Winona Lake Town Council adopt the Master Plan;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WINONA LAKE, that the Master Plan for the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department is hereby approved upon passage of this resolution.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE, seconded and adopted by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays, the foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of March 2021.

AYE

NAY

Absent - sick

Rick Swaim, President

Dennis Duncan
Dennis Duncan, Vice President

James Lancaster
James Lancaster, Council Member

Heather James
Heather James, Council Member

James Zachary
James Zachary, Council Member

ATTEST: Kent Adams
Kent Adams, Clerk-Treasurer
Town of Winona Lake

Rick Swaim, President

Dennis Duncan, Vice President

James Lancaster, Council Member

Heather James, Council Member

James Zachary, Council Member

WAIVER

Political Requirements Upon Park Board Members

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-10-3-4(b) provides that not more than two (2) of the four (4) members to be appointed to the Park Board by the Town Council, may be affiliated with the same political party except as provided by Section 4.1 of said Chapter, and

WHEREAS, the said Section 4.1 permits a Town Council to waive any requirement that a member of the Town Park Board is to be affiliated with a political party and to waive the requirement that not more than two (2) of the four (4) members of the Council be affiliated with the same political party if the waiver is necessary due to the absence of persons who would satisfy all of the requirement and who are willing to serve on the Town Park Board, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to I.C. 36-10-3-4.1, such a waiver requires approval by a majority vote of the Town Council as an act of the Council and does not need to be adopted by an Ordinance or Resolution, and

WHEREAS, I.C. 36-10-3-5 provides that members serve an appointment for a four (4) year term.

WHEREAS, pursuant to I.C. 36-10-3-5(f) if a vacancy occurs, the appointing authority shall appoint a person to serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. Upon expiration of a term or vacancy occurring, a reevaluation of the Park Board's political affiliation's shall be made in consideration of a new appointment, and if appropriate an updated waiver considered.

WHEREAS, a waiver of the political requirements is necessary due to the absence of persons who are willing to serve on the Town Park Board who would also satisfy the requirements that not more than two (2) members can be affiliated with the same political party or any requirement that any member must be affiliated with a political party,

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS DETERMINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WINONA LAKE AS FOLLOWS: That any requirement that a Town Park Board member must be affiliated with a political party to serve on the Board and the requirement that not more than two (2) of the four (4) members of the Town Park Board appointed by the Town Council be affiliated with the same political party are hereby waived for the reason that the waiver is necessary due to the absence of persons willing to serve who would satisfy those political requirements. Upon expiration of a term of member, such waiver shall be reevaluated.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE, seconded and adopted by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays, the foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of March, 2021.

AYE

Absent - Sick

Rick Swaim, President

Dennis Duncan, Vice President

James Lancaster, Council Member

Heather James, Council Member

James Zachary, Council Member

ATTEST: _____
Kent Adams

Kent Adams, Clerk-Treasurer
Town of Winona Lake

NAY

Rick Swaim, President

Dennis Duncan, Vice President

James Lancaster, Council Member

Heather James, Council Member

James Zachary, Council Member

**TOWN OF WINONA LAKE PARK BOARD
AGREEMENT
AND
GRANT OF LIMITED AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, Town of Winona Lake Park Board (hereinafter called "Park Board") with the understanding of the Town Council of the Town of Winona Lake, Indiana (hereinafter called "Town Council") is continuously exploring the possibility of developing additional Park resources and amenities within the Town as a part of the Park System of the Park Board, and

WHEREAS, the Park Board does not have independent taxing authority and therefore, except for gifts and other revenue received by the Park Board, it depends on funding from the Town of Winona Lake, Indiana through the Town Council, and

WHEREAS, the Park Board has been very active in efforts focused on the continued development of additional Park resources and amenities, and

WHEREAS, the Park Board understands that if grants are sought or a fundraising program is desired, and if the Town Council or the Park Board is to be responsible for or associated with the grant or fundraising program in any way, financially or otherwise, then the Town Council would need to specifically consider whether to approve such a fundraising effort or grant application before such action is taken. Upon approval by the Town Council, the Town Council would provide necessary funds for said fundraising program or state and local grant.

WHEREAS, the Park Board and Town Council desire the Park Board to have the authority to gather information that may be available to aide the Park Board and the Town Council in its considerations of grants or a fundraising program,

NOW THEREFORE it is agreed by and between the Park Board and the Town Council as follows:

1. Identity of Current Representatives of the Parties:
 - a. Park Board: Matt Goebel, Park Board President, Jeremy Mullins, Park Board Vice President, Oxana Mullins, Park Board Secretary, Kristie Malers, Park Board Grant Focus, Meghan Smith, Park Board, Fundraising and Marketing Focus, and Holly Hummitch, Parks Director, Project Coordinator
 - b. Town Council: Rick Swaim, President, Dennis Duncan, Vice-President, James Lancaster, Council Member, Heather James, Council Member, James Zachary, Council Member
 - c. Other Town Representatives:
2. Park Board Roles and Responsibilities regarding Grants and Fundraising:
 - a. Kristie Maiers and Holly Hummitch: Grant Focus, writing, and obtainment including but not limited to information requirements, conditions, process and costs for each grant and report of findings to Town Council.
 - b. Holly Hummitch and Meghan Smith: Fundraising and Marketing Focus
3. Authority and Limitations of the Park Board with Respect to the Town:

- a. Authority: Subject to the limitations set forth hereunder, the Town Council now grants the Park board with the authority to act on the behalf of the Town of Winona Lake in meeting with others, making inquiries and gathering information that is directly related to fundraising and grants as laid out in paragraph 2 above.
- b. Limitations upon Authority Granted: The Park Board does not have any authority to bind the Town to any obligation financial or otherwise without the approval of the Town Council.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF THE PARTIES HAVE PLACED THEIR HANDS HERETO THE
16th DAY OF MARCH 2021:

WINONA LAKE PARK BOARD

By: Holly Hummitch
Holly Hummitch, Park Director

WINONA LAKE TOWN COUNCIL

By: Absent - Sick
Rick Swaim, President

By: Dennis Duncan
Dennis Duncan, Vice-President

By: James Lancaster
James Lancaster, Council Member

By: Heather James
Heather James, Council Member

By: James Zachary
James Zachary, Council Member

ATTEST:

Kent Adams
Kent Adams, Clerk-Treasurer
Town of Winona Lake



1310 Park Ave., P.O. Box 338
Winona Lake, Indiana 46590
(574) 267-7581
Fax (574) 267-4793
www.winonalake.net

April 13, 2021

Holly,

Rick Swaim, Council President was absent from the March 16th, 2021 Council Meeting. Please find a copy of the Resolution 2021-03-1, Waiver Political Requirements Upon Park Board Members and Town of Winona Lake Park Board Agreement and Grant of Limited Authority.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Renier".

Laurie Renier

Deputy Clerk Treasurer

[Home](#)

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Public Input Meeting, March 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Winona Lake Senior Center

POSTED ON FEBRUARY 22, 2017 - 11:58AM

Winona Lake Parks & Recreation is having a required public input meeting for the master plan on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Winona Lake Senior Center, 1590 Park Ave., Winona Lake.

Winona Lake Parks Department is hosting a public meeting to discuss its five-year Master Plan 2021-2026.

Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and sustainability of park land and recreational amenities in the town.

The meeting will be at 8 p.m. March 9 at Winona Lake Senior Center, 1580 Park Ave. The meeting will take place both in person and via Zoom online conferencing. The Zoom invitation will be published the day prior to the event.



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Winona Lake to hold public meeting for parks five-year master plan

By Nick Doran February 8, 2021



(Photo Supplied / Winona Lake Town Council)

Winona Lake Parks Department is hosting a public meeting to discuss its five-year Master Plan 2021-2026.

Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and sustainability of park land and recreational amenities in the town.

The meeting will be at 6 p.m. March 9 at Winona Lake Senior Center, 1590 Park Ave. The meeting will take place both in person and via Zoom online conferencing. The Zoom invitation will be published at www.winonalake.net the day before the event.

TRAVEL

Winona Lake to hold public meeting for parks five-year master plan

By NewsNowWarsaw.com | 14d



(Photo Supplied / Winona Lake Town Council) Winona Lake Parks Department is hosting a public meeting to discuss its five-year Master Plan 2021-2026. Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and sustainability of park land and recreational amenities in the town. The meeting will be at...

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News Now Warsaw | 14d



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Winona Lake Parks Department is hosting a public meeting to discuss its five-year Master Plan 2021-2026. Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and sustainability of park land and recreational amenities in the town. The meeting will be at 6 p.m. March...

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Public Meeting For Winona Parks' Five-Year Plan Scheduled March 9 At Senior Center

Sunday, February 7, 2021 5:03 PM

WINONA LAKE – Winona Lake Parks Department is hosting a public meeting to discuss its five-year Master Plan 2021-2026.

Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and sustainability of park land and recreational amenities in the town.

The meeting will be at 6 p.m. March 9 at Winona Lake Senior Center, 1590 Park Ave. The meeting will take place both in person and via Zoom online conferencing. The Zoom invitation will be published at www.winonalake.net the day before the event.

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Please fill out the form below to submit a comment.

* indicates a required field

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A comment must be approved by our staff before it will displayed on the website.

SUBMIT

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March 9, 2021

Minutes From The Winona Lake Park Public Meeting

Meeting started at 6:10 in person at the Community Center & on Zoom.

- Welcome everyone to the meeting
- Thank you for taking the time to attend
- Our goal is to present the master plan for the next five years
- Agenda review
- Introduction of the board members
- Winona Lake Limitless Park Timeline of Development:
 - 2011-2013 — Idea of Winona Lake Limitless Park developed. Fundraising began
 - 2014 — Groundbreaking for K21 Splash Pad
 - 2015 — Grand Opening of the Splash pad & new parking lot
 - 2016 — Community Build – Phase 1 of Winona Lake Limitless Park Playground
 - 2019 — Shoreline Project with the Watershed Foundation. Grand Opening of year-round UA Family Restrooms
 - 2020 — Addition of Seating and Shade Structure
- **Planning for the future:**
 - Currently there are three parks that fall under the Winona Lake Parks umbrella: Winona Lake Limitless Park, Bibler Park & Chestnut Street Park
 - Only 1 person in the audience knew about Bibler Park
 - Highlighting the priority and action schedule
- **Survey Highlights:**
 - Everyone agrees that our parks are wonderful and Holly does a great job!
 - People want to know more about what's going on
 - Extend the greenway
 - Invest more money in the parks!
 - Does the audience know what the capital budget is for the parks? Only \$11,000!
 - More funds are needed to complete the plan

- **Questions from the audience:**

Question: What is the new proposed path for the trails?

Answer: a copy of the map was provided to explain/show the path.

Question: From the action schedule it looks like the boat rental launch is going to happen in 2024. Where are people launching from now? Can the debris in the water by the concrete pad be cleared out for a safer launch?

Answer: currently there are three places to launch your kayaks, paddle boats, & paddle boards - the concrete pad by the beach, the sand bar, and right next to the boat rentals. Will look into clearing out the debris from the water.

Question: Does the park office provide any form of educational material when leasing the kayaks, paddle boats, & paddle boards? Boat safety & etiquette? Will the new boat launch be for bigger boats too?

Answer: No, the new launch will only accommodate kayaks, paddle boats, & paddle boards. Currently we don't provide any educational material.

Question: Is there a plan to have more shade structure in the park and/or beach area? How about sunscreen dispenser?

Answer: the sunscreen dispenser is a great idea, and we will work on having it available for this summer season. Will discuss more shade structures for the near future.

Question: what is the timing for the new trails' completion?

Answer: bids are going to be accepted on March 11, 2021. Once the plan is ready to move forward we're looking at 2-3 month to complete. Currently looking at different feasibility studies to connect Winona Lake trails with Warsaw, and have a new paths from Roy Street to Eisenhower Elementary School.

• **Friends of the park group:**

Looking for advocates, volunteers, cheerleaders to help us make our wishlist a reality! The first meeting is scheduled to take place on April 12th at 7:00pm at the Community Center.

Public meeting ended at 6:40

Matt made the motion to send the Master Plan to the town council. Kristie seconded.

Please Sign in Below

You May Keep Your Pen

Name	Phone	Email
Kristie Maters	269 80066399	Kmatters@aol.com
Meghan Smith	306-6674	Meghan.f.smith@comcast.net
Matt Goebel	765-760-2158	
Brian Witt	268-6224	briangwitt@gmail.com
Kathy Gill	527-4287	kathygill6@gmail.com
Mimi Geringer		mimi.geringer@comcast.net
Jan Nelson	574-268-0445	nelsonjva@comcast.net
Jerry Nelson	"	"
Leah Sander		leah.sander@intfreewill.com
Donny & Cindy Hepler	574-267-6368	



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5-Year Master Plan For Winona Parks Presented To Public

Amanda Bridgman, Staff Writer

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 10:23 PM

WINONA LAKE - A public meeting was held Tuesday for the Winona Lake Parks and Recreation Department's five-year master plan.

The master plan is for projects this year through 2026.

Parks and Recreation Board President Matt Goble highlighted several of the projects. Those include purchasing boats such as paddleboats, kayaks and paddleboards after an increased amount of people are using the Winona Lake Limitless Park since the splash pad was installed in May 2015. A sidewalk extension along the beach perimeter to the splash pad with the addition of a foot is also planned for 2021 with the boat purchases.

In 2021-22, upgrades to Bibler Park are planned with new play structures, surfacing, border and a new concrete pad and basketball goal or a new soccer goal.

In 2024, the plan includes adding a boat rental launch and pier near the Senior Center, 1590 Park Ave., where the canoe rentals are.

And in 2025, a bike skills park is planned near Cherry Creek at the Winona Lake Limitless Park.

Currently, Parks and Recreation Director Holly Hummitch has \$11,000 to work with from the capital budget. One citizen said she's "floored" about the quality of the parks with that low of a budget.

Surveys sent out to residents of Winona Lake came back, with Goble reporting that nearly everyone said they are supportive of the parks and happy with the cleanliness.

A complete plan can be found at winonalake.net. Once approved and finalized, the strategic plan will be used to guide the future development and substantiality of park land and recreational amenities in the town.

Meghan Smith also spoke about a newly formed group called Winona Lake's Friends of the Park. The group's first meeting will be at 7 p.m. April 12 at the Senior Center, where people interested can come and learn about what's expected of volunteers.

"We're looking to build a community of advocates and volunteers ... to help this five-year plan wish list become a reality," Smith said.

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The Winona Lake Park Board invited people to hear about its five-year plan at a meeting on Tuesday, March 9, at the Winona Lake Senior Center. InkFreeNews photo by Leah Sander.

By Leah Sander
InkFreeNews

WINONA LAKE — The Winona Lake Park Board has approved its five-year plan.

At a meeting on Tuesday, March 9, at the Winona Lake Senior Center, the board approved its 2021-26 master plan. It's to go next before the Winona Lake Town Council for approval.

The plan then goes to the state. It's necessary to apply for grants for the parks.

Before the vote Tuesday, the board shared in person and via Zoom the details of that plan with the public.

One of the upcoming projects is adding items to Bibler Park, located at Faunn Street. The board plans to add a new play structure and a new concrete pad/basketball goal and/or new soccer goal in 2021/22.

This year, the board plans to buy more paddleboats, kayaks and paddleboards for people to rent. In 2024, it hopes to add a public boat rental launch/pie for small boats to Winona Lake Limitless Park.

A bike skills park is being planned for 2025.

The full list of items may be found [here](#). The master plan as it stands now may be found [here](#).

Trail extension

A question that came up during the meeting was about extending the town's trail system. As that's a town project and not a parks project, Town Manager Craig Allebach shared the details.

The plan is to add more segments to the trail system to extend it from the Grace College athletic fields to CR 250E and along Pierceton Road.

"Bids will be accepted on Thursday at 2 o'clock for an extension that goes from Miller Field to Christ Covenant Church and then Christ Covenant Church has built a playground and pavilion out there and they're currently kind of finishing things up," said Allebach.

A map of the proposed extensions may be viewed below.

Friends of the Park

The board also brought up at the meeting the new Friends of the Park group.

Park Department Director Holly Hummitch told InkFreeNews the department has never had such a group before that she can recall.

"Really we're hoping to build a community of advocates and volunteers to both kind of be our cheerleaders, people wranglers, but also ideas people for how we can be creative and implement this five-year plan going forward," said Board Member Meghan Smith of the group.

Anyone is welcome to come to the first meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, April 12, at the Winona Lake Community Center, 1590 Park Ave. People may also email Smith at meghan.f.smith@comcast.net for more information.

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This aerial map done by A&Z Engineering of Fort Wayne shows several planned trail extensions in Winona Lake, including those depicted in red and blue. For reference, the Grace College athletic fields are in the top left corner and the road running diagonally through the map is Pierceton Road.

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WINONA LAKE PARK GOOSE STUDY RESULTS

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

A recent report suggests changes made at Winona Lake Limitless Park are improving both water quality and safety conditions for visitors.

In 2017, The Watershed Foundation (TWF) brought together community partners to implement an integrated solution to health and safety concerns at Winona Lake Limitless Park. Problems included a crumbling seawall, diminishing water quality caused by shoreline erosion, and public health risks posed by an overabundance of goose droppings. TWF's integrated approach included **engineering a healthier shoreline, engaging and**



TWF Executive Director Lyn Crighton sharing the interpretive display that explains the Healthy Shoreline Initiative project undertaken at Winona Lake Limitless Park

educating the public, and conducting research to quantify any resulting improvements.

TWF's Executive Director Lyn Crighton shared, "Although all of our projects benefit the community by reducing pollution and protecting water quality in our lakes and rivers, this one was extra special. It was amazing to see the community come together with 15 different partner organizations and hundreds of volunteers of all ages in support."

The work began in early 2019. The old seawall was removed, and glacial stones were installed along 500' of shoreline to slow wave action. Cherry Creek's streambanks were stabilized, and a buffer of native shrubs and plants was incorporated along the stream and the shoreline to discourage geese activity, among other benefits. In addition, TWF launched a public education campaign that included hands-on activities and signage throughout the park, informing residents and visitors about healthy shorelines and encouraging clean water behaviors, such as not feeding waterfowl.

Among other positive outcomes of the project, there has been a notable reduction in goose activity. A recent report from a three-year study conducted by the Lilly Center helps quantify the impact.

The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams collaborated with TWF on their restoration project by studying conditions in the park before, during, and after the work occurred. The Lilly Center research team surveyed



for goose droppings across the grassy portion of the park. Goose droppings offer an understanding of whether or not geese are spending time there, and are also the main concern for the health of the lake and those who recreate in it. The Lilly Center found **significantly fewer droppings (56%) along the shoreline** after the restoration than there were before. “As the plants continue to establish themselves along the shoreline, we hope to see these results continue each year,” said Adrienne Daeger, research program specialist at the Lilly Center. “And we hope that Winona Lake, the park, and our community benefit greatly!”

The native plant buffer installed along the shoreline of Winona Lake two years ago has many benefits including reducing erosion and helping reduce the goose population (and poop) by more than 50%.

TWF is grateful to the many organizations and individuals who were involved in this project along the way! Thank you to all who continue to do their part for water quality by making simple, everyday choices like picking up pet waste and not feeding waterfowl.

Evaluation of the Ecological Impact of a Shoreline Restoration
Winona Lake Park Goose Study

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Evaluation of the Ecological Impact of a
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Winona Lake Park Goose Study
Report





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Report Shows Improving Conditions At Winona Park

Staff Report

Monday, March 1, 2021 10:29 PM

A recent report suggests changes made at Winona Lake Limitless Park are improving both water quality and safety conditions for visitors.

In 2017, The Watershed Foundation (TWF) brought together community partners to implement an integrated solution to health and safety concerns at Winona Lake Limitless Park, according to a news release from TWF. Problems included a crumbling seawall, diminishing water quality caused by shoreline erosion and public health risks posed by an overabundance of goose droppings. TWF's integrated approach included engineering a healthier shoreline, engaging and educating the public and conducting research to quantify any resulting improvements.



TWF Executive Director Lyn Crighton said, "Although all of our projects benefit the community by reducing pollution and protecting water quality in our lakes and rivers, this one was extra special. It was amazing to see the community come together with 15 different partner organizations and hundreds of volunteers of all ages in support."

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"As the plants continue to establish themselves along the shoreline, we hope to see these results continue each year," said Adrienne Daeger, research program specialist at the Lilly Center. "And we hope that Winona Lake, the park, and our community benefit greatly!"

TWF is grateful to the many organizations and individuals who were involved in this project along the way, the release states.

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The Watershed Foundation Executive Director Lyn Crighton stands by the interpretive display that explains the Healthy Shoreline Initiative project undertaken at Winona Lake Limitless Park. Photos provided.

News Release

WINONA LAKE — A recent report suggests changes made at Winona Lake Limitless Park are improving both water quality and safety conditions for visitors

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Winona Lake Friends of the Parks committee was initiated to foster greater community involvement in the ongoing activities and future development of Winona Lake Parks. Friends of the Parks Committee members give their time on a volunteer basis and do not vote on Park issues.

Mission

Winona Lake Friends of the Park exists to promote and enhance the unique recreational resources and greenspaces that Winona Lake Parks Department represents. Members serve to protect the parks' scenic beauty, wildlife and natural environmental assets.

FIRST MEETING:

Monday, April 12th at 7:00pm
Winona Lake Community Center
1590 Park Ave., Winona Lake

Questions? Email meghan.f.smith@comcast.net



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