Wannigan Park Committee Members
Denise Anderson, City Administrator, Frazee
Natalie Burgos, National Park Service, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Kris Carlson, Ulteig
Matt Davis, North Country Trail Association
Guy Fischer, Park and Economic Development Director, Becker County
Robert Harris, Community & Economic Development Associates
Holly Larson, National Park Service, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Don Lorsung, Community & Economic Development Associates
Hank Ludke, Frazee Economic Development Committee
Dan McLaughlin, Land Commissioner, Becker County
Michael Mencarini, National Park Service, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Trescha Mitchell, Frazee High School Teacher and Future Farmers of America Advisor
John Okeson, Becker County Commissioner
Rodger Palmer, Frazee Resident
Alex Ranz, Ulteig
Mike Sharp, Frazee City Council
Marsha Watland, Becker Soil & Water Conservation District

North Dakota State University Team
Professor Matthew Kirkwood
Alexandra Kotte
Sydney Valiquet
Wannigan Regional Park Master Plan
Public Review Draft 11-20

GENERAL TAB

Park Name: Wannigan Regional Park
GMRPTC Park District: 3
Park Type: Nature Based Park

Location Description
- Park or trail address: 11299 Chilton Road, Frazee, MN 56544
- GPS coordinates of park or trail [Filled in by system based on facility address listed.]
- Map of Park or Trail

- Facility Website
  https://frazeecity.com/
  https://www.co.becker.mn.us/dept/parks_recreation/default.aspx

Proposed Wannigan Park Drone Flyover Video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHxmQankO9s

- Lead Applicant Organization [Must be a city or county in Greater Minnesota] City of Frazee
  - Lead Contact Person: Denise Anderson
  - Lead Contact Title: Frazee City Administrator
  - Mailing address (lead applicant): 222 W. Main Ave., Frazee, MN 56544
  - Phone: 218-334-4991
  - Email: denise.anderson@frazeecity.com

- Joint Applicants [Listing of formal application partners, all must be a city or county in Greater MN]]: City of Frazee; Becker County
  - Application Resolution

City of Frazee Supporting Resolution
CITY OF FRAZEE  
BECKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA  

RESOLUTION 1209-19B  

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING WANNIGAN REGIONAL PARK APPLICATION  

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Frazee, as the Lead Applicant/Partner with Becker County has the authority to act as legal public sponsor for the application described in the Request for Designation as a Regional Park in Greater Minnesota. As Lead Applicant/Partner the City of Frazee formally supports and authorizes the submission on behalf of the partnership.  

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as Lead applicant(s)/partner(s) we are fully aware of the information provided in the application and associated responsibilities, including long-term commitments as defined in the application and related master plan and supporting information as submitted.  

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should the proposed Wannigan Regional Park receive formal designation as a Regional park or trail in Greater Minnesota by the Commission, that as lead applicant/partner the City of Frazee has the legal authority to enter into formal designation and funding agreements with the Commission for the referenced park.  

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as lead applicant applicant/partner the City of Frazee certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations associated with regional designation and any future grant funding for the respective portions of any project.  

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Frazee City Council has reviewed and approves Resolution 1209-19B supporting Wannigan Regional Park Application on December 9, 2019 and does hereby approve its adoption.
Adoption of this resolution this 9th of December 2019 by the City Council of Frazee

Vote Yes No
Ken Mosek X
Nicole Strand X
Mark Kemper X
Mike Sharp X
Mark Kemmer X

ATTEST:

<signature>
Jim Mosek, Mayor

STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF BECKER

I, the undersigned being the duly appointed and qualified Administrator for the City of Frazee, Becker County, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution passed, adopted, and approved by the City of Frazee at a meeting held December 9, 2019, as recorded in the record of proceedings.

<signature>
Drew Anderson, Administrator

Resolution 1358-19: Support For Wingers Regional Park Designation Application
BECKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION 12-19-2H

SUPPORT FOR WANNIGAN REGIONAL PARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

BE IT RESOLVED that Becker County as Joint Applicant/Partner we formally support and authorize the applicant’s submission on behalf of the partnership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as joint applicant(s)/partner(s) we are fully aware of the information provided in the application and associated responsibilities, including long-term commitments as defined in the application and related master plan and supporting information as submitted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, should the proposed Wannigan Regional Park receive formal designation as a Regional park or trail in Greater Minnesota by the Commission, that as joint applicant/partner the County has the legal authority to enter into formal designation and funding agreements with the Commission for the referenced park.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as joint applicant/partner the County will comply with all applicable laws and regulations associated with regional designation and any future grant funding for the respective portions of any project.

Duly adopted at Detroit Lakes, MN 17th day of December 2019.

ATTEST:

Mike Brethorst
Michael Brethorst
County Administrator

John Okeson
John Okeson
Board Chair

State of Minnesota )
)ss
County of Becker )

I, the undersigned being the duly appointed and qualified County Administrator for the County of Becker, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution passed, adopted, and approved by the County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held December 17th, 2019 as recorded in the record of proceedings.

Michael Brethorst
County Administrator
Other project supporters

North Country Trail Association, Frazee School District, Becker County, Detroit Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Neighbor to Neighbor Frazee EDA, Becker County EDA, Becker County Soil & Water District, Becker County Natural Resource Management, Becker County Recreational Advisory Committee, River Keepers, MN Dept. of Natural Resources, MN Dept. of Transportation, Fischer Century Farms, Frazee Community Club, Becker County Museum, Cornerstone

DESCRIPTION TAB

Regional Significance Statement—75 words max

Wannigan Regional Park will be a nature based park that will serve as a trailhead for three unique recreational trails of statewide/national significance:
1. The Otter Tail River Water Trail - a State designated canoe and kayak route;
2. The Heartland Trail Extension - a State multi-use non-motorized trail; and
3. The North Country Trail, a National hiking trail.

It will offer much needed camping, performance and gathering spaces, onsite trails and an interpretive center in a natural setting.

Classification

Natural Resource Based Regional Park Classification

Overview/Description of Park–

Park Description

Wannigan Regional Park will be located just north of the City of Frazee in Becker County, within a lake country corridor that experiences a lot of tourist traffic.

Wannigan Park will be comprised of various biomes that include hardwood and deciduous forests and prairies that will provide a beautiful and contrasting setting.

The park will act as a hub for the federal North Country National Scenic Trail (hiking); the Otter Tail River State Water Trail (canoeing/kayaking); and the Heartland State Trail (walking, biking, in line skating, and snowmobiling). The park will provide visitors with:

- Seasonal and short term campground facilities
- Picnic shelters;
- An amphitheater;
- An interpretive facility/multi use building;
- Natural and paved trails and ADA access routes;
- Canoe/kayak boat launches;
- Scenic & birdwatching viewpoints;
• Interpretive signage and informational kiosks;
• Riverbank fishing; and
• Ample preserved & restored natural areas

The Setting
This park site is surrounded by wetlands and forested areas to the northeast; agricultural land and scattered farmsteads to the northwest and north; a golf course to the east; and the Frazee Elementary & High School complex and ballfields to the south. The planned park is less than ½ mile from downtown Frazee. Frazee Elementary & High School complex is adjacent to the south. US Highway 10 is about ½ mile from the planned park. Frazee is ten miles south of Detroit Lakes, and about an hour’s drive from the Fargo/Moorhead area. Fergus Falls is about 50 miles southeast of Frazee.

User Groups To Be Served
The park will serve: campers of all types and a variety of picnicking group sizes. Trails will serve: hikers, bikers, rollerskaters, cross country skiers, snowshoers, canoeists and kayakers, and possibly snowmobilers. The interpretive center and amphitheater will serve visitors of all ages. School classes and youth groups will be able to use the building and property. The public will be able to rent out a portion of the interpretive center for private events.

Sizes of Major Planned Park Facilities
• Interpretive center building: 4000 - 6000 sf
• Two large picnic shelters: one with kitchen, both sized for 10 - 12 tables
• Two picnic shelters sized for two to four picnic tables
• Paved trails: asphalt, 10' wide with 2' level shoulders
• Access Routes to the major facilities: meet ADA regulations, hard surface, 5-6 feet wide
• RV pump out station: sized to service the onsite RV units.
• Natural surface trails: four feet wide with no shoulders
• Campground with about 140 sites (phased development)
• Restroom buildings, interpretive center and one picnic shelter will serve as emergency shelters. These will be sized to accommodate the expected number of park visitors to comply with requirements.

Programming
Programming will be offered through partnerships with local and regional organizations and will include:
• Self guided exhibits in the interpretive center and 1836 house;
• Outdoor amphitheater presentations and performances;
• Indoor and outdoor classroom space;
• Guided tours and lessons;
• Interpretive presentations and tours; and
• Service learning/stewardship through habitat restoration & maintenance.

**Total Acreage**  The total acreage proposed for purchase is 200 acres. The Ness property is 174.55 acres, and the portion of the golf course property proposed for purchase is 25 acres.

**Acquisition and Development Status**  
The proposed park consists of three parcels owned by one private property owner totaling 174.55 acres, and portions of two parcels owned by Frazee Golf, Inc. totaling approximately 25 acres. Both property owners are willing sellers for the park. The private property owner bought the parcels in about 2017 when the City started discussing the park potential of the property during public comprehensive plan discussions. The golf course owners would like to sell the portion of their property that is not used for the golf course. City staff have discussed purchasing the properties with the owners, and the owners have declared verbal asking prices. The City has kept the property owners informed of the GMRPTC timeline, and so far they have indicated a willingness to wait until permanent land acquisition funding is secured.

In July 2020 the City and County applied for purchasing assistance from the Parks & Trails Council of MN. The Council accepted the project and are willing to purchase the property and hold it for the park temporarily until a permanent funding source is secured, if necessary. The Parks & Trails Council can also advise the City and County on landowner negotiations and the purchasing process. The City and County intention is to apply for land acquisition funding through GMRPTC as soon as possible. Other funding sources such as State LCCMR/Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund funding will also be pursued.

**Regional Context**

Wannigan Regional Park will contribute both to the need for a regional park in Becker County and for a park that compliments the City of Frazee’s efforts to rebrand itself as a trail town. Proximity of the Park to Frazee allows the City and the County to utilize the existing and unique natural and cultural resources of the site (significantly the Otter Tail River), interconnecting with two trails of national/statewide significance (Heartland and North Country Trail), and to partner with the local school district to introduce nature based curriculum for students and the community.

Wannigan Park is located on the Northeast edge of Frazee. Adjacent to the old Nichols-Chisholm Lumber Co. that operated on the Ottertail State Water Trail from around 1860 – 1920. The river meanders thru the 200+ acres of the Park from a lowland grass area in the Northeast section of the Park to a covered bridge connecting parkland to the school district (elementary, middle and high school) and adjacent city ballfields. On the eastside of the Park is a 9 hole golf course with 25 acres available for seasonal campsites which will contribute
to user experience. Revenues from camping will help provide for ongoing park maintenance. A mile to the South of the Park is Fischer Century Farms, a Minnesota Land Trust, with potential to connect 5 lakes to the Otter Tail River Water trail via an old flood control system that rerouted lakes thru a WPA water canal projects in the 1930s.

As the water trail continues thru Frazee we have a State Waterfowl Refuge and to the West we have Brink Lake Restoration Project, (245+ acres), with waterfowl production and pollinator habitat. To the North of the park one and half miles along the water trail, we have county managed tax forfeited lands and a 240 acre school forest.

Wannigan Park would be the only site for the convergence of 3 trail systems, (NCTA, The Heartland, and the Ottertail State Water Trail), and also connected to a city providing year around camping and recreational opportunities.

There are no park and trail duplications within the County relative to what Wannigan Park will provide visitors. The North Country trail does go thru Tamarack National Wildlife Refuge and the southern edge of Itasca State Park, but the opportunity to route the trail thru Wannigan Park as it continues South and west (Fergus Falls and then to thru to North Dakota) is not a duplication, but rather an extension and strategic placement of the trail that will better accommodate user needs as it is threaded thru the Park and the City.

The Heartland Trail Extension when completed would connect Park Rapids to Moorhead and seeks to connect to the extent possible local cities along the way. Recent Master Plan development within Becker County show a preferred route heading south and west out of Detroit Lakes to connect into larger area lakes such as Mellissa, Sally, Pelican and Cormorant in an effort to provide an opportunity to extend the trail south to Pelican Rapids and the Perham to Pelican Rapids Trail, Maplewood State Park and the proposed Glacial Ridge Trail connecting to Fergus Falls. An additional Mountain Link Trail project (Phase 1 and 2; 4 phases total) is underway to be able to connect into the Heartland Trail from Detroit Mountain Recreation Area (downhill, xc skiing and mountain biking; City of Detroit Lakes) and Mt. View Recreation Area (equestrian, xc skiing, mountain biking; Becker County).

Current construction of the 8 mile Heartland Trail segment from Frazee to Detroit Lakes is underway with other intercity segments of the Trail (Frazee - along Hwy 87; Detroit Lakes - along Co. Hwy 22) that will be constructed within the next two years.

The maps below depict existing/proposed trail connections and opportunities as narrated above.
Figure 2: Regional Trail Context
The map below shows the proposed Wannigan Regional Park near Frazee with two of the planned regional trails – park interconnections: the Heartland Trail and the North Country Trail.
SITE INFORMATION TAB

Facilities Listing

- Existing facilities: 0
- Proposed facilities:

  - General camping: 2 areas; each of these sites will include a restroom/shower facility (2)
  - Primitive and group camping: 1 area
  - Parking (6 sites):
    - 1 for the interpretive center, trailheads and general park use (SW corner entrance – main)
    - 1 for the main boat launch
    - 2 for picnicking and amphitheater use (East of River)
    - 1 for trail use (North entrance)
    - 1 for primitive camping & group boat launch (separate North East parcel along river)
  - Picnic Sites (4 Shelters)
  - Interpretive Center
  - Emergency Shelters as required (combined with other buildings)
  - Two canoe/kayak boat launch areas
  - Outdoor amphitheater
  - Historic house (moved to park from off site)
  - Paved and natural surface trails and ADA access routes
  - Other infrastructure (utilities, roads, sewage pump out station)

General Site Characteristics

The planned park site is vacant land that has not been used by the property owners for over a decade. It is characterized by rolling hills of scattered wooded sections interspersed with open fields that were originally prairies or were cleared long ago for pastures. Because Frazee is located at the meeting point of three major biomes, this site is a good example of the transition from coniferous and deciduous forest lands to the east to the prairies to the west. The park site displays some of each habitat.

The primary unique feature that gives the park its sense of place is the Ottertail River, which winds from the northeast corner of the park site to the southwest
corner. Of note, the Otter Tail River/trail is ranked as a high priority for the region (GMRPTC Park District 3) and is a natural, cultural, and recreational amenity/special feature that flows through the middle of the park. Large wetlands extend inland from the river, and smaller wetlands are scattered through the rest of the property. The river undulates, forming steep bends in the river with points of land in between. The riverbanks are predominately steep, up to 25 feet high in places, offering views of the river and lands beyond. Since the soil is predominantly sandy loam and sand, the soil layers can be seen from the river. This particular stretch of the State Water Trail, called the “Frazee Reach”, is great for canoeing and kayaking due to its modest stream flow, clean water, and safe depth (about five feet at the park site). The site is good for birdwatching, since it is on a major flyway through the “prairie pothole” region, and the river and wetlands provide resting and feeding areas for birds and waterfowl. A fifty foot, natural buffer along the entire river will preserve the wild character of the riverfront when viewed from the water or land.

About 47 acres of the total park site, or about one-quarter of it, is wetlands, many of them dominated by trees and shrubs, and some with emergent plants that are good for wildlife viewing. The wetlands have been avoided in the development plan, so the park will be preserving a significant number of acres of this important ecological feature. The planned trail system includes spur trails to overlooks of the river and viewpoints of the wetlands.

The former landowner gave permission to the adjacent K-12 public school to use the site for environmental education, so part of the southern end of the site has markers on it from that use. A private, very low volume gravel road that serves two farmsteads and the park property runs generally from North to South on the west side of the river. It is owned by the owner of the park site and will be purchased as part of the park. A second, private gravel road on the park site will be used as a trail. This road features a picturesque railroad boxcar that was converted to a bridge over the river by former owners. The bridge is a landmark, with sentimental value for local people, and will be retained and rehabilitated to meet regional trail standards.

The forested areas are primarily in the southeastern portion of the site and include clusters of red and white pine and white spruce, as well as deciduous stands of green ash, bur oak and white oak. The development planned for the site minimizes disturbance to the forested areas. The planned interpretive center
and interpretive outdoor signs will describe the importance of the area and the site during the logging era, and well as tell stories of environmental features.

A major feature of the developed park will be the meeting of the three significant trails: the Heartland Spur trail connecting just outside of the park with the Heartland State Trail, the North Country natural surface trail directly through the park, and the Ottertail River State Water Trail. The site will be a meeting place for a variety of types of trail users. This will also contribute to the sense of place for the park. Because the development is sensitively planned to retain the major natural features of the park by building around them, the feeling of the wide open prairie/oak savannah meeting the forest edge will be preserved.

**Site Characteristics Images Upload**

**Looking South - Wannigan Regional Park proximity to Frazee**

Looking North – Covered Bridge (to the left of the River will be West Side park entrances (No./So.), parking, camping, restrooms and interpretive center)
Main East-West Pathway (picture)

looking east from the area of the covered bridge)
The Wannigan Park concept developed about fifteen years ago and was discussed during the City of Frazee’s comprehensive planning process in 2018-19. There was much public input on the park idea during the process, and the park is included in the City Comprehensive Plan, adopted in October 2019. The Frazee Comprehensive Plan 2035 includes strategies to: “Identify and safeguard valuable natural resources and outdoor heritage through education, preservation, and conservation efforts.” In the Plan the Wannigan park site, referred to as the “Ness property”, is identified for a future park. The strategy states, “Continue to work on regional or state park designation for the Ness property.” Other Plan strategies that Wannigan Park will help implement are:

- “Develop and maintain the Otter Trail river system as a primary recreation area,”
- “increase access points for recreational uses”,
- “improve opportunities for river related recreation”,
- “Enhance preservation of native plants and habitat protection efforts for wildlife”,
- “Better connectivity between parks and trails locally and regionally”,
- “Connect to the Heartland Trail”,
- “Identify proposed regional park”,
- “Identify property for kayak/canoe storage” where local residents could rent a space to store their personal boat, and
- “Work with SHIP on a rental program for kayaks/canoes.”

The idea for the park first formed about fifteen years ago by Frazee residents. The City and County staff began to coordinate and formed a committee of City and County Staff, elected officials, and volunteer citizens. The Wannigan Park Committee began meeting monthly in November 2019. The meetings have been open to the public. In addition, the County’s RAC committee has discussed the park at several meetings during 2019-20. These meetings are advertised in advance and open to the public.

The Park Committee also conducted a twelve question online survey, which was advertised through the City and County websites and with a notice in the local utility bills. The County sponsored the survey, conducted through Survey Monkey, and the survey was open for one month in August & September 2020. The survey received 121 responses, 44% of which reside in Frazee, 25% from rural areas in Becker and Ottertail Counties, 19% in Detroit Lakes, a regional center 10 miles north of Frazee, 14% from smaller towns in the vicinity, and the remainder from elsewhere. This is considered an adequate response rate, since the population of Frazee is about 1400, and the survey had responses from the two-county surrounding area. Respondents were between 12 years old and 65+, with the most responses from 25 – 34 year-
olds (31% of respondents), then 35-44 year-olds (27%), and 45-54 year-olds (17%). The least represented in the survey were the three youngest categories, from ages 12 to 24. An encouraging sign is that 16 of the respondents said that they would like to be involved in the Wannigan Park effort and were contacted and offered participation opportunities. Highlights of the survey findings are:

1) Primary activities people would like to do in Wannigan Park are: walking (90%), picnics (73%), bicycling on paved trails (61%), camping (55%), birdwatching/nature viewing (46%), jogging/trail running (45%), attend a concert or presentation at the amphitheater (43%), solitude/personal contemplation (43%), and cross country skiing (41%).

2) Amenities that should be built at the park garnered these responses, from most requested to least requested: picnic tables, restrooms, paved trails, natural surface trails, gazebos/covered picnic shelters, parking lots, campsites for tents, campsites for RVs, outdoor amphitheater, and interpretive center.

3) 92% of respondents said that they would take an automobile to get to the park, 44% would bicycle, 33% would walk, and 24% would canoe or kayak. (7% had other answers.)

4) 48% of respondents use the North Country National Scenic Trail now, and 84% say they will sometimes or often use the trail once it is constructed and open through Frazee. 48% of respondents use the Otter Trail State Water Trail now, and 68% will use it once the new access and amenities at Wannigan Park are open. For the Heartland State Trail, 75% use it now, and 88% say they will use it when it is open through Wannigan Park.

5) When asked what type of camping should be available in the park, 82% thought tent camping was desirable, 57% wanted RV camping, 48% wanted camping for backpackers, 45% wanted camping for canoeists/kayakers, 39% for bicycle camping, 29% for rustic camper cabins, 28% for yurts or other unique shelters, and 15% for “glamping” facilities.

The Park Committee has engaged youth in the process as well. The Future Farmers of America club in Frazee and a high school class are committed to participating in Park planning activities monthly through the 2020-21 school year. The youth participated in the survey, created site design drawings of the park, and will read and comment on this park plan.

The Public Draft Wannigan Park Master Plan will be made available online for public review and comment on the City and County websites. A summary slide presentation of the plan will be available on the websites as well. A virtual open house will be held. Presentations and discussions, likely virtual, will be held with various community groups, such as the Lions Club, VFW, Sportsmen’s Club, and Frazee Area Community Club. The plan will be reviewed by the Becker County Recreational Advisory Committee (RAC) and discussed at a meeting that is open to the public. Poster sized maps of the proposed site plan will be displayed in various locations in Frazee.
• Public Involvement Support Material
See Appendix for Survey

• Regional Demographic Information

The Wannigan Park site is in Becker County, MN, on the border of the City of Frazee in Burlington Township. It is 10 miles south of Detroit Lakes, the largest city in the County, and about 1 mile north of the County’s southern border with Ottertail County. Frazee has a population of 1390, a 3% increase since 2010. Becker County has 34,423 residents, a 5.9% increase since 2010, which averages to 25 people per square mile in a county of 1315 square miles. Population estimates show a steady growth in population from 2010 to 2018, with a slight leveling off between 2018 and 2019. In fact, five counties of the seven county region around Becker experienced population growth from 2010 to 2018, with Becker showing the 2nd highest growth rate. County and Frazee City staff have also noticed increased permitting requests for residential development in recent years. This data suggests that the Wannigan Park site should be acquired soon, before it is lost to residential development. It also suggests that there will be increased demand for parks as the region’s population grows.

The median age in Becker County is 41.8, which is about in the middle of median ages in the surrounding counties. This is higher than the 37.9 median age in the US and Minnesota. Thirteen percent of the county population are age 70 or over, compared to 10% statewide. When comparing the Becker County age distribution to that of the state, Becker County has a slightly higher percentage of residents under twenty, a lower percentage of people between ages 20 and 60, and a higher percentage of people over 60 than the state as a whole. This data suggests that Wannigan Park should offer opportunities for all ages, including children, teens, and older adults.

County residents are 87% White, 8% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% Hispanic/Latino and less than 1% Black and Asian, with 3% of the population being 2 or more races. The American Indian population in the county is significant; the state as a whole only has about 1.1% American Indian residents. A portion of the White Earth Reservation is in northern Becker County. While the main part of the Reservation is about 50 miles from Frazee, there are scattered tracts of Tribal land in between, with the closest parcels about ten miles away. Wannigan Regional Park intends on recognizing the American Indian history of the area in the planned interpretive center and will be conducting an archaeological survey prior to development to ensure no archaeological artifacts are disturbed. The Park Committee is seeking input on regional park design from tribal members. While the non-white population is small in the County, this may grow with the projected growth in minority populations within the US in general. Wannigan Park is being designed to offer a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities to appeal to and serve the needs of a diverse array of interests.
Serving a Regional Population
Otter Tail County, south of Becker, includes the regional center of Fergus Falls, and has a population of 57,992, about 50 miles from Frazee. Clay County, west of Becker, has 62,801 residents, and includes Moorhead, MN, part of the Fargo/Moorhead metropolitan area. The Fargo/Moorhead area has grown by 34% between 2000 and 2015 to 233,836, and is a major cultural, retail, health care, educational and industrial center. In fact, the Fargo area has had the fastest-escalating residential land prices in the Upper Midwest, rising 74% from 2012 to 2017. At about an hour’s drive from the Wannigan Park site, the Fargo/Moorhead area residents are expected to make up a large portion of park visitors. The area has two universities and a private college and is home to one of Microsoft’s biggest corporate campuses outside the Seattle area. The per capita gross domestic product is close behind Minneapolis/St. Paul’s.

Some of the population growth in Clay and western Becker Counties may be people who work in Fargo/Moorhead but want to live in a more rural area in Minnesota and find cheaper housing and land prices there. Only 58% of Becker County residents work in the same city or place as they live. A great part of the appeal of Becker County are the lakes and forests—a different ecosystem from the prairies around Fargo/Moorhead. Furthermore, there are 209,949 residents in the eight Minnesota counties surrounding the Wannigan Park site. These residents are within about a 15 minutes to 1 hour drive of the park site, so will also be served by the park.

Frazee’s median household income is $50,238, which represents a 52% growth rate since 2010. Median household income in Becker County was $59,278 in 2018, and 11.1% of residents lived in poverty. From 2017-18, the total number of people employed in the county rose 3.5%. In contrast, the median household income in the Fargo/Moorhead area is $62,820, and the median in Minnesota is $70,315, and $83,698 in the Twin Cities. Considering this data, Wannigan Park is being developed to offer low cost recreational opportunities, such as camping, hiking and biking, and low cost or free programming is planned.

Becker County already draws visitors from the entire state of Minnesota and beyond to its lakes, forests and amenities. Seasonal homes surround lakeshores in the area. Visitors to the county are predominately from the nearby Fargo Moorhead Area and North Dakota in general (responsible for approximately 65% outstate visitation and 2nd summer homes). The population of the County roughly doubles in the Spring-Fall months and there is a heavy use of available lakes, parks and rivers. Wannigan Park will add amenities to entice current visitors to stay longer in the area, and, as the hub for the North Country, Heartland and Otter Tail Water Trails, is expected to draw state and national visitors as well.

Demographic Support Material Upload

See Appendix for US Census Data
• **Public Health Values**
  o Promotes Physical Activity
  o Promotes Healthy Lifestyle
  o Connects People to the Outdoors
  o Enhances Mental Health
  o Encourages Social Interaction

In an online survey conducted in August/September 2020, 121 respondents from Frazee and surrounding area in Becker and Ottertail Counties rated the five public health values on a scale from 1 (not important) to 10 (extremely important). Of these five values, respondents valued “enhancing mental health” highest, with an average score of 8.70, and 58% of respondents gave this value a 9 or 10 rating. “Connects People to the Outdoors” ranked second with an average score of 8.67, where 66% of respondents gave the value a 9 or 10 score. This value also received the most “10—extremely important” ratings with 52%. Next was “Promotes Healthy Lifestyles”, with an average rating of 8.30, then “Promotes Physical Activity” with a 8.27 average score, and least important was “Encouraging Social Interaction” with an average score of 7.36. It is interesting to note that this survey was taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, when indoor activities, large gatherings, and travel has been restricted. Parks and trails around the state and nation have seen significant increases in visitation. This may explain why connecting to the outdoors and the mental health benefits of the outdoors are appreciated at this time.

**Public Health Values Additional Information**

Wannigan Park will help meet all of the public health values listed above. It will connect people to the outdoors by providing a destination that can serve as a base for exploring the Heartland, North Country and Otter Tail River trails. It will promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles by offering a convenient trailhead with camping facilities to explore the three state & national trails, where people can participate in a variety of physical activities. Wannigan Park will enhance mental health by offering on-site natural and hard surface trails and other recreational facilities in a natural setting. Research has shown that being in nature positively impacts mental health, especially the sound of birds, the views and sounds of water, and green vegetation. Wannigan Park, by retaining and restoring native habitat and through its location on the Otter Tail River, will offer all three of these features. Finally, the Park will encourage social interaction through its interpretive center, which will draw people to learn about the area’s history and nature. Programming will also be offered, such as interpretive walks as well as more active programs to explore the trails, which will bring people with similar interests together. Amphitheater programs, such as presentations and concerts, will likewise encourage social interaction.

• **Public Health Values Support Material Upload**

  See the answers to question 6, p. 7-9 of the Wannigan Park Survey in the Appendix.
Economic Development/Tourism Opportunities

The Frazee Comprehensive Plan 2035, adopted in October 2019, includes a goal to “retain and increase the number of visitors that come to Frazee.” Strategies include: “Continue to leverage trails and trail development to promote Frazee as a trail town”, “Encourage development that promotes and enhances tourism” and “Leverage the Trail Town model of economic development.” The development of Wannigan Park will help the City achieve this goal.

Becker County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 includes an economic development goal to “Manage public lands to support the growth of recreation and tourism through sustainable natural resource management.” The public lands goal is: “Becker County will manage its administered lands for a diversity of uses that sustain the County’s environmental, economic, and community value for future generations.” The trails goal is: “Becker County will develop and maintain recreational trail systems throughout the County.” A strategy is: “Support the creation of permanent non-motorized trails in the County and work with other local, Tribal, State, and Federal agencies to create regional, non-motorized trail systems.”

According to the 2010 American Community Survey, the largest employment sectors in the county are: Management, business, science & arts with 29% of the employed population, sales and office occupations with 25%, then service occupations with 17%. The industries with the most workers in the county are: Educational service, and health care and social assistance with 23% of employees. Manufacturing and retail trade ties for 2nd with 13.5% of the county’s employees each. Construction is 4th with 9%, and the arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation & food services is 5th with 7.5% (1173 employees).

Becker County’s median household income is $59,278, which is higher than most surrounding counties, but lower than the Minnesota median of $68,411. The County’s July 2020 unemployment rate was 5.7%, much lower than the US rate of 10.2%, and lower than the 10.6% County rate in January 2010.

Becker County is the fourth highest in gross tourism sales for the northwest region. The county brings in nearly $72 million in gross sales and $4.5 million in sales tax.

Approximately 31% of households in Becker County are seasonal homes. Key reasons people buy vacation homes in Becker County were peacefulness (63 percent), scenic beauty (57 percent), water quality (48 percent), family ties to area (33 percent), proximity to family (33 percent) and proximity to recreational amenities (32 percent).

Seasonal households spend an average of $120 a month in groceries and liquor, $74 in dining and bars, $74 in gas, $95 in home maintenance, $75 in entertainment and recreation, and $1,066 in construction and remodeling.

In a University of Minnesota Tourism Center study done in 2004, specific to Becker County visitors, 27 percent of tourists from outside the County were from the Minnesota metro area.
North Dakota visitors and non-metro Minnesota visitors each made up 23 percent. The remaining visitors reported were from Iowa and other locations in the United States (6 percent each), Nebraska, Illinois and Indiana (3 percent each), Wisconsin and South Dakota (2 percent each) and local and Canada (1 percent each).

A 2007 University of Minnesota Tourism Center survey showed that 85 percent of tourists are repeat visitors. The primary reason they come to this area is for pleasure or recreation (43 percent). Other reasons included combined business and pleasure (10 percent) and festivals or special events and visiting friends or relatives (8 percent each).

- Economic Development/Tourism Opportunities Support Material Upload

- Recreational Trends Information

Recreational trends have not been researched at the regional, multi-county level in west central Minnesota, so regional trends must be surmised from national and statewide data and some local information. Nationally, the Outdoor Industry Association annually quantifies the outdoor recreation trends. Their “2020 Forecasting Report” identifies the main societal trends affecting outdoor recreation as:

1) Rise of Millennials and aging Boomers
2) Urban migration
3) Obesity
4) Heightened attention on health; and
5) Hispanic/Latino growth.

It identifies that the outdoor recreation participation has reduced by 2% in the last ten years. The overall number of outings has reduced by 7.4% from 2018-19, and youth outdoor outings reduced by 1.4% in the past three years. However, female participation increased 3.2% from 2018-19, and Hispanic participation is stronger. They found that people tend to recreate within 1 to 10 miles from their home. Participation is skewed male; the mean age is 36.2, and outdoor participants tend to be educated with above average household incomes. The most popular outdoor recreation activities nationally in 2019 were: running, jogging, trail running, fishing, and biking (road, mountain and BMX). By ethnicity, outdoor recreation participation rates are highest for Asian/Pacific Islanders, then Whites, Hispanics, then African Americans, but 49.5% of Americans did not participate in outdoor recreation at all. They reported that people are getting outdoors less. Some positive national trends include: slightly more participation by women in outdoor recreation, and more participation in car camping, backpacking, BMX biking, kayaking, sailing, stand up paddleboards, and wildlife viewing. It must be noted that this study was conducted before the COVID-19 restrictions were put in place in Spring 2020.

Within Minnesota, a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) “2019 State Trail Visitor Study” found that trail visitors were older, had higher incomes and had higher
educational attainment and were more often identified as white compared to the MN adult population. 70% of State Trail users were aged 45 or older. The trail users surveyed suggested better surface conditions, better maintenance of the overgrowth and debris along the trail, cleaner and more bathrooms, more water fountains, and more trail mile markers as ways to improve trails. The median distance of trail outings were 20 miles for cyclists and 3 miles for walkers. The closest State Trails to the Wannigan Park site are the Heartland and Paul Bunyan. The Heartland, measured in Nevis, MN, had an average daily traffic (ADT) of 132, and the Paul Bunyan, measured in Brainerd, had 122. Some segments near population centers had over 500 (ADT). The summer months of June, July and August accounted for 63% of use, and the shoulder seasons of Spring and Fall represented 29% of trail use. The permanent trail traffic counters on the Heartland Trail in Nevis, MN showed a 263 ADT in summer, with 347 ADT on summer weekends and holidays. Trail users were 74% bicyclists and 26% walkers. The Paul Bunyan trail counter in Brainerd showed 189 ADT in summer, with a 227 ADT on summer weekends/holidays. Trail users were 59% bicyclists and 42% pedestrians.

In a 2019 Ottertail County Summer/Fall Visitor Profile by the University of Minnesota, the most frequent activities of visitors were: dining out, shopping, local festivals, golfing, hiking, state parks and sightseeing. Favorite activities were: lake activities, fishing, and boating. Biking and camping were popular in summer. There was a need indicated for kid-friendly activities. In a 2019 Bemidji Visitor Profile, visiting friends and family was the top reason for coming to the area. Most frequent activities of visitors were: dining out, sightseeing, visiting friends and relatives, scenic byways, and Itasca State Park. Favorite activities were lake/waterfront/beach activities. Major draws were lakes, fishing, state parks, boating, biking, and hiking. Shopping, restaurants and breweries were also mentioned as tourist draws. This suggests that the proposal to develop Wannigan Park with camping and trails will match with visitor interests in the area. It also suggests that developing water access should also be a draw. Providing for fishing on the river will also attract tourists.

In 2016 the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) identified recreational trends and themes in their Strategic Plan. They suggest that novelty will entice users, and quality keeps them returning. They recommend creating vibrant regional parks and trails through siting them in high quality settings that are well positioned and using high quality design.

In the Spring of 2020, everything changed. When restrictions were put on gatherings and indoor activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, park and trail managers from all over the country started noticing huge surges in outdoor recreation participation. With many people out of work or isolated at home, more people felt the need to get outdoors for their health. Members of the Minnesota Park and Recreation Association reported great increases in park and trail use all over the State. Campgrounds have been at capacity, the Boundary Waters received soaring permit requests, and retailers sold out of outdoor recreation and camping gear. Camping has especially boomed, as people look for safer lodging options than hotels, motels and resorts. Cities closed streets to motorized vehicles to make more room for walkers. No data is yet available on the surge in outdoor activity in west central Minnesota around the
Wannigan Park site. It appears that people are valuing outdoor recreation opportunities more. It will be interesting to see whether long term participation rates continue at higher levels after the pandemic is over. It could be that people will form habits that they choose to continue after life returns to “normal.” It could also be that more people are trying activities, such as camping or bicycling, and decide that they enjoy the new activity and continue the activity after the pandemic.

In seeking to anticipate trends the County and its cities have been actively planning (over the last 14 years) to expand trail opportunities and park infrastructure to accommodate current and anticipated future recreation and nature based needs. As referenced in the Economic Development Section we know people are moving to or visiting our area with recreation in mind. We know that walking and biking are popular and in need of infrastructure support. The County has had no major State/Federal Trails until the advent of the North Country Trail and the Heartland Trail. Implementation/development for both trails are ongoing. It is difficult to subscribe a trend to trail development when the network itself takes decades to develop. What we do know is that recreation and the need/demand for recreational opportunity and related infrastructure in the County continues to grow as does our population and visitors to our area. Becker County is a rural area seeing steady growth and there is a consensus, a trend that has developed into strategies, that seeks to provide more recreational amenities, and to strategically link communities in order to create more livability and resiliency within the local economy, which is strongly tourism based, and which attracts people to Becker County to live, work and play.

Additional regional trail context is provided by the County Master Trail Plan completed in late 2019 and note the North Country Trail (purple) and the Heartland Trail (red) below in Fig. 2. In particular, the Heartland Trail is an arterial trail and so various routing options are provided as we continue to vet routes that maximize the opportunity for community linkage and use.

One recreational area in the County where we see an important state level trend/opportunity is with the recreational use/restoration of rivers. Both DNR and MNDOT are very aware of the opportunities of rivers relative to projects that they undertake. The Otter Tail River Water Trail will be accommodated in a current MNDOT project to modify the bridge spanning the Otter Tail River at Hwy 87 in order to improve recreation for canoe and kayak. MNDNR is purchasing land adjacent to the Straight River to protect the river habitat- temperature/trout population and act as a buffer and provide more recreational access. Likewise, DNR and the Pelican River Watershed will be removing numerous dams between Detroit Lakes and Pelican Rapids (Bucs Mill Dam and Pelican Rapids Dam) to improve fish passage and provide recreational opportunities (fishing, canoe/kayaking and potential walking/bike trail alongside river within the City of Pelican Rapids). As referenced previously, rivers are a high priority recreational experience that has been identified for District 3 with resultant efforts aimed at maximizing their utility for fish passage and recreation opportunities.

- Recreational Trends Support Material Upload
See the Appendix for the MNDNR “2019 Minnesota State Trail Visitor Study” and the “2020 Forecasting Report” from the Outdoor Industry Association.
1. Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience
Frazee lies in a unique part of MN where the 3 major biomes: prairie, deciduous and coniferous forests are close together. The park site includes some of each landscape. The site is highly scenic with a gently rolling mix of open prairie & forests with the Frazee Reach of the Ottertail River running through the center. The park includes wetlands to attract wildlife & is on a major migratory bird flyway. The site is ideal for environmental & historical interpretation & education: on the edge of the pine forest, Frazee was a center for milling.

There are 3 trails of statewide/national significance that will intersect with the park: The Heartland State Trail (bike/pedestrian/snowmobile), The North Country National Scenic Trail (walking/hiking), and the Otter Tail River State Water Trail (canoe/kayaking). Each of these 3 trails offer distinct recreational experiences. The park will also include: a campground for tents to RVs, shower/restrooms, an interpretive center, public canoe/kayak access, and natural and hard surface, accessible trails open to non-motorized uses. An outdoor amphitheater is also being considered. Winter use of trails within the park or specific purpose trails could accommodate winter bikes, walking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. As the Otter Tail River seldom freezes in winter there will be open water opportunities for fishing along the river.
2. **Preserves a Regionally Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape**

The meandering Frazee Reach runs through the center of the park, a regional crown jewel for water quality & recreation providing moderate current, frequent accesses and high water quality. The depth of the river is approximately 6 feet deep, with the riverbed easily discerned when looking down at the moving water. The eastern portion of the park has never been disturbed, including some rare native prairie and forested wetland. Scattered forested areas add variety. Former pasture has restoration potential for butterflies; a butterfly habitat is 1 mile away. The 200 acre site will allow for protection of sensitive areas and development of non-sensitive areas for recreational use.
Scattered forested areas within park

Looking East, morning – Otter Tail River segment within Wannigan Park
3. **Well-located and Connected to Serve a Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination**

Wannigan Regional Park is on the northern border of Frazee, a growing city 10 miles east of Detroit Lakes, which is the regions county seat with 9,200 people and also Vergas which lies to the south and the City of Perham which lies 10 miles to the east. Becker Co. (where the Park is situated) has a population in excess of 34,000 people and is a major tourist destination, as is Ottertail Co. which is located directly south of Frazee. Becker County's population roughly doubles during tourist season. Fargo/Moorhead (pop. 245,000) is 50 miles away, an easy afternoon trip. An estimated 65% of tourists that vacation in Becker County are from the Fargo/Moorhead area and North Dakota more generally. The Park will be accessible from local communities & neighborhoods via the North Country hiking trail & the Heartland State Trail, biking or walking from Moorhead or even from Park Rapids, Bemidji, Walker or even Brainerd. It will also be accessible by canoe/kayak via the Otter Tail River. Importantly Frazee’s proximity to the Park and trails will be an important factor in its use as evidence suggests that convenience and access are strong correlative factors to gauge frequency of use.

4. **Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region**

Wannigan Regional Park will provide a connection point for 3 trails of regional/state significance. The Otter Tail River State Water Trail that flows through the park is viewed as an emerging recreational opportunity as increasing recreational use of local rivers is among the highest recreational priorities for our region. Additionally, MNDOT is revamping its Hwy 87 bridge that spans the Otter Tail River (as part of road/sidewalk reconstruction that will incorporate the
Heartland Trail through town) to better enable canoe and kayak use of the River. The "Frazee Reach" that starts north of Frazee and Hwy 34 and extends south of Frazee and Hwy 10 is considered one of the premier recreational segments of the Otter Tail River.

The nearest state or regional park & campground with a natural setting and of this size is Maplewood State Park, 20 miles to the southwest. In a previous study developed by the DNR, they concluded that there is a need for an additional regional park within Becker County to meet related park/recreational capacity-needs. Wannigan Regional Park will be closer to the Detroit Lakes & Fargo/Moorhead regional centers & will be a hub for 3 national/state trails. Northwest MN is the region with the fewest state trail miles, so Wannigan Regional Park, serving as a major trailhead for all 3 trails as they develop, will fill a significant gap in trail recreation in the region.
DEVELOPMENT/ACQUISITION TAB
Development Plan Overview

The overall development plan is to purchase the planned Wannigan Park site, which is comprised of 3 Parcels owned by a private individual that total 175 acres, and portions of two parcels that are part of the golf course, owned by Frazee Golf Inc. that totals 25 acres. After acquisition, invasive species removal and habitat restoration will begin on areas that will remain natural and will continue in phases as funding allows. For park development, a consulting team will be hired to complete a site plan, engineering drawings and permitting. All proposed features will meet regional design and applicable accessibility standards. The first phase of development will include the seasonal and short-term camping areas, the canoe/kayak access & amenities, picnic shelters, rehabilitation of the existing trail bridge, and trail development. The interpretive center building will be Phase 2, and the outdoor amphitheater will be Phase 3, along with the movement of an historic 1836 house from Tamarack Wildlife Refuge to Wannigan Park. The acquisition and complete development are expected to take 10 years.

The only existing structure on the site is the bridge over the Ottertail River. It was constructed by a previous landowner from a railroad car and is several decades old. It needs a structural assessment and likely renovations to improve it to safe conditions for non-motorized trail traffic. In addition, there are three narrow gravel roads on the property. One leads from County Road 29 on the west side of the site east into the park. This road is on City property and accesses some private properties as well as the park site. There is also a north-south gravel road on the Ness property (park site) that intersects with the road mentioned above. This is a private road within the park site, but also accesses two neighboring properties. A third gravel road exists that starts at Chilton Road, east of the Ottertail River and between the Ness property and the existing golf course property. The road runs west across the Ottertail River via the railroad car bridge to meet up with the two other gravel roads on the property west of the river. This is a private road belonging to the current property owner and will be used as a trail when the property is converted to a park.

Development Plan Items/Images Upload

Development Plan Images Upload
LEGEND
- Park Boundary
- Topography
- Lakes & Streams
- Hydric Soils
- Streambank Buffer
- Wetlands

Amphitheater
Hard Surface Patio
Picnic Shelters
Removable Picnic Tables
Parking Lots

Camping
- RV–Seasonal
- RV–Short Term
- Tent Camping
- Primitive & Group Camping
- Restroom/Shower/Shelter

Trails
- Paved Trails
- North Country National Scenic Trail
- Natural Surface Trails
- Boardwalk
- Trailhead Area

Park Roads
- Canoe/Kayak Launch Area
- Interpretive Center
- 1836 House
- Observation Points/Overlooks
- Shore Fishing Areas

*Note: Elements are not to scale
See Appendix for higher resolution version of Concept Plan

Existing bridge over the Ottertail river, made from a railroad boxcar
Looking southwest from the east side of the Ottertail River

Forest area on Wannigan Park site
Acquisition Plan Overview

• Acquisition Plan

Opportunities:
The proposed Wannigan park site is on four parcels of land that have not yet been acquired. The access road to the site from the west is on a narrow strip of City and School District owned land between County Road 29 and the park site. One private landowner owns three parcels, and Frazee Golf Inc. owns one parcel. Both entities are willing sellers and are eager to sell. Acquisition should be pursued as soon as possible. The Ness property owner has stated that he will sell the property for the park but wants to see progress made on park development. His stated alternative is to develop the property for single family homes. The golf course owners are also ready to sell an undeveloped portion of their parcel, which is the western portion of the golf course property, along Chilton Road. All of the properties are zoned for Agriculture, however, and fall under the County’s jurisdiction for zoning. Current owners would need to apply for zoning changes if they want to plat and develop at higher densities. The acquisition plan is to acquire all of the park site parcels at once, due to the eagerness of the property owners to sell, and the threat of loss of the property to residential or commercial development. The City and County will purchase the property through their new Cooperative Agreement, which will be reviewed by the City Council and County Commission at the same time as this Master Plan, and is attached.

In Summer 2019 the City applied to the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota (PTCM) for assistance with land acquisition. The application was accepted, and PTCM has committed to assisting the City and County with the land acquisition process. Most significantly, PTCM also agrees to provide temporary funding to acquire the park site if the landowners insist upon earlier acquisition than the City & County can raise funds through other means, including a GMRPTC grant. The PTCM funds would need to be paid back to them at such time as a permanent funding source is found.

Constraints
One current land issue is the question of archaeological resources on the site. The southern end of the site is thought to have been part of the sawmill and logging activities in the early days of Frazee, although the sawmill itself was on
the adjacent property to the south. In addition, a hill exists that has a slight possibility of being an Indian mound. The State Archaeologist was consulted, and she believes that the hill is too large to be a mound. Nevertheless, the City of Frazee has obtained a MN Historical Society grant to conduct a Phase 1 archaeological study on the site, which will be undertaken in late 2020/early 2021, to find out if further archaeological studies are warranted. If further studies are needed, funding will be pursued for them through the MN Historical Society, and the master plan and site plan will be revised to protect any archaeological resources.

The park site includes several wetlands, in which development should be avoided due to State and Federal law. A 50 foot wide buffer on each side of the Ottertail River is required by State law. No development is to take place within the buffer. These environmental constraints are considered to be assets that contribute to the natural beauty of the site for park visitors to appreciate. The Master Plan avoids development in these areas. The site is large enough to accommodate all of the desired elements as well as to avoid developing in environmentally sensitive areas, and to maintain additional natural areas as well.

**Acquisition Costs**

The owner of the most land, Mr. Ness, bought the property in 2017 for a purported price of $550,000. He bought it after the City made public its intention to buy the parcels for a park during their Comprehensive Plan discussions. The owner has asked for $780,000 plus the cost of the property taxes since he bought the land. The taxable market value is $228,000, according to the County property records. No appraisal has been done that is publicly available.

The owners of the parcel that is part of the golf course have not named an asking price. The estimated land value on the County property tax records is $69,700. Land in the area is reportedly selling for about $3000 per acre at present, for a total estimated value and anticipated cost of $75,000.

**Acquisition Plan Items/Images Upload**

See Appendix for Draft City/County Cooperative Agreement to Develop, Maintain and Operate Wannigan Park
Old logs from sand dam

Looking south from existing road/trail east of the river. Area planned for trails. picnic shelter sites in background.
Development Features

Development Feature #1: short term camping
Two campground areas are proposed in the northern and western sections of the park on the west side of the river. This area is currently and primarily pastureland with some small forested areas. The camp sites will be developed on the pastureland, and the forested areas will be retained. The site will be a mix of RV sites with electric and water hook-ups, and tent sites without hook ups. A few unique shelters for tenting will be offered that are based on the Ojibwe “wigwam” design. This will meet the growing demand for unique camping experiences. The City & County will work with the local White Earth Band of Ojibwe to create an authentic design with durable and sustainable materials. There are examples of teepees available in public and commercial campgrounds, but no examples of wigwams for camping have been found. This will be a truly unique experience that can be made educational as well.

For the RV camping, the spots will have back in spots based on the campground research done. Each back-in spot will have a separate car space in case they would like to detach their car from the RV (If they brought one). These spots will be spread out enough to have vegetative screening between them for extra privacy and to make sure it is a comfortable environment for each camping space. Another element at each RV spot is a free space for recreational activities like having a grill, fire pit or any other wants from the campers using the spaces. The vehicular circulation for the RV camping road is simple, making sure that it is one-way traffic so the back-in spaces are easy to get into and out of. Picnic tables will be added in the middle of the RV road loops in case campers wanted to enjoy some more group activities with other campers. Again, these are still surrounded with vegetation for privacy and a more wilderness look.

The tenting areas will be separated from the RV areas to reduce noise for the tent campers. Part of the tenting area will be cart-in, with a common parking lot for the tenters. This design also reduces noise and increases privacy for tent campers. The sites will be spaced to meet the minimum MN Department of Health (MDH) standards and will be spaced farther apart with vegetative screening placed between sites, where possible, to meet campers’ preference for privacy. The tent
camping sites include a space for a tent, parking and a fire pit. Walking trails connect tent campsites to accessible family restrooms and showers. All campsites are connected to the park’s road for easy access. The sites will be rented on a nightly basis. Camper restrooms with running water, toilets, and hot showers will be provided within the required maximum distance by the MDH. The interpretive center (described below) will also serve as the campground office. A pump out station will also be built on site. The campground will be on the north and west side of the private existing north-south entrance road, separated from the primary day use area. Wetlands within the campground area will be preserved. Gravel access roads are included in the plan.

The campground development will be phased. A portion of the seasonal, primitive, tent and RV short term sites will be developed with the majority of the park facilities in the Phase 1 development. Need for additional campsites will be assessed based on demand, management capacity, etc., and may be added to the park in development phases 2 or 3, or may be added in future years.

**Development Feature Support Material**

Development Feature #1 support material:

**Development Feature #2: Seasonal Camping**

The parcel west of Chilton Road that is currently part of the golf course property will be developed for seasonal camping. There is high demand in Minnesota for this type of campsite, in which RV sites with electric, water and sometimes sanitary sewer hook-ups are rented for an entire season. This will be a source of steady income for the City & County, which can help cover maintenance costs for the entire Park. On this parcel, sites will be spaced to allow some privacy. The design will selectively remove trees to provide camping sites. This area will be accessed from Chilton Road, and will be separated from the day use area by the road. No restroom buildings will be necessary in this area because each unit will have its own hook-ups.

Development Feature #2 support material:
Development Feature #3: Canoe/Kayak River Access & Camping
On the east side of the river in the northeast corner of the park is a 16.8 acre parcel at the northern end of Chilton Road that is separated from the main portion of the park by two farmsteads. It is primarily cleared pastureland with wetlands on the west and northeast ends, and scattered tree groves. This parcel will be developed for a canoe/kayak public access and campground. The campsites will be tent only, intended for overnight paddlers on the Ottertail River State Water Trail as well as group, primitive camping. A canoe/kayak river access area will be placed in the north central portion of the park to avoid wetlands and steep slopes. The access point will be developed minimally, with a temporary boat storage and landing area, since it will not be the primary public access in the park. A gravel access road will lead from the end of Chilton Road to the river access, with a circular turn-around for boat trailers. A small parking lot for water trail users and group campers will be developed near the entrance to the site, and will include spots for vehicles with boat trailers. Campsites will be distributed on the pastureland. Trees and shrubs will be added between sites for shade and vegetative screening. A portion of this area will be designed and available for group camping with advance reservations. This will be a primitive camping area, with water spigots and outhouses/portable toilets. Group camping spots include locations for multiple tents, parking spaces and a fire pit. Group campsites also include walking trails that connect to the restrooms. Campers will have access to the restrooms in the main short-term camping area, however, by walking or driving to them. Demand for this type of camping will be monitored after development, and the addition of modern utilities may be added to upgrade the area if demand warrants it.

Development Feature #3 Support Material:

Development Feature #4: Trails
Both natural surface and hard surface trails will be developed in the park. The hard surface, paved trails will meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for accessibility and DNR guidelines. The Heartland State Trail segment from Detroit Lakes to Frazee is funded in the 2020 State Bonding bill and will enter Frazee from the northeast along State Highway 87, which becomes Lake St. N. through downtown Frazee. A connecting trail spur will be built to link Wannigan Park to the Heartland Trail. It will be an on-street route on low volume
roads from the Heartland Trail to the main park entrance at County Road 29 north of the high school on the west side of the park. A paved trail will be built along the entrance road into the park going east. Within the park the trail link connecting to the Heartland Trail will continue east along the existing gravel road, which will be converted into a non-motorized trail. The trail link will follow the gravel road east across the river on the existing covered bridge to Chilton Road, then will turn south on Chilton Road on-street to connect with the Heartland Trail again. Chilton is a very low volume gravel road that serves only one farmstead and the park. The Heartland Spur trail will be paved, 10 feet wide, with level shoulders. Within the park a paved loop trail will be developed that encircles the day use and campground areas on the west side of the river. This asphalt trail will be ten feet wide with two feet wide level shoulders and will meet the grade requirements for accessible trails, with most of the trail under 5% slope. The loop trail will pass wetlands, the 1836 house, the high point of the park with a view of the river and will follow the river. It will provide access to some of the interesting natural features of the park while avoiding development on environmentally sensitive areas. Hard surface accessible “outdoor recreation access routes” will be developed where required from parking areas to the main activity areas of the park, such as picnic shelters and the amphitheater, to provide internal circulation and meet ADA guidelines. The hard surface trails will be open to bicyclists, walkers, roller skaters, and people using assistive motorized devices.

A natural surface trail system will also be developed in the park. The North Country National Scenic Trail will be aligned through the park, from the northern boundary at 120th St. south past wetlands to the park’s high point, then will follow the top of the steep bank of the river, past the covered bridge, staying on the west side of the river, to exit the park at North River Drive near the School District’s ballfields. It will pass the Interpretive Center/day use area, which will serve as the trailhead, with water, restrooms and parking available. The North Country National Scenic Trail is open to hikers. This trail will be constructed by the North Country National Scenic Trail Association and National Park Service unit as a separate integrated project.

A system of connected natural surface trail loops will also be developed on the east side of the river, accessed from the North Country Trail via the Heartland Spur trail across the covered bridge. The natural surface trail will meander north and south of the Heartland spur west of the river to a high point, through forested
areas and past wetlands. Short spur trails will provide access to scenic views and shore fishing locations. The natural surface loop trails will be open to pedestrians only; no mountain biking or horseback riding will be allowed (they are accommodated in other parks in the vicinity.)

In winter both cross country skiing and/or snowshoeing/hiking trails will be created from a combination of the hard surface and natural surface trails to make a looped system. Snowmobiling may be allowed on some trails based on need.

Development Feature #4 Support Material:

East Bridge entrance. This bridge is a landmark in the area and will be refurbished for safety. The existing old road across it will be converted to a paved trail.

**Development Feature #5: Canoe/Kayak Public River Access**
The primary public river access site will be in the day use area on the west side of the river, south of the covered bridge. Due to steep riverbanks and sharp river bends, the best location will be immediately south of the existing bridge, along a straight section of river. If this site does not prove feasible upon further investigation, a second optional location is along the straight section before the southernmost river bend on the property. The access will be a carry-in launch for non-motorized canoes and kayaks only. The access will include a hard surface (likely gravel) road from the park entrance road off of County Road 29 to the
canoe/kayak launch area. The road will include a turnaround large enough for cars and trucks with trailers. It will include ample cleared area along the river front for staging groups of canoes/kayaks, and provide for aquatic invasive boat cleaning for those taken out. Parking will be provided for cars as well as some spaces for vehicles with boat trailers. This and all parking lots will meet ADA accessibility guidelines. The launch site will include a kiosk with river maps, a park map, relevant watercraft safety information, aquatic invasive species information, and interpretive information about the river. Racks for seasonal storage of private canoes and kayaks may be installed near the launch area in the future, for rent by the season, if there is sufficient demand. Water and restrooms will be available at the nearby interpretive center. A portable toilet or permanent outhouse may be added at the access at a later date, depending on demand. The access will be a natural surface, since backing a trailer with large boats will not be necessary. It will be located at a site with a gradual slope to the water, a gradual drop-off in the water, and a sandy river bottom, if possible. The selected location includes an existing concrete retaining wall, which helps stabilize the riverbank. It will be located on a straight section of river so paddlers taking out or putting in can be seen by those on the river, and collisions can be avoided. A straight section is also better for giving paddlers time to get settled in their boat after launching before they need to maneuver around a river bend, where they may get swept to shore or into other boats if they are not paying attention.

Note that there is a constraint in the river about 1 mile south of the park where it goes under the East Main Bridge and currently requires a portage around a stormwater pipe that spans the river directly south of the bridge. The City is working on solving this issue. In the meantime, before the access is opened a hazard warning signs will be installed up and down river from the pipe, and a portage will be developed and signed. Paddling downriver from the northeast and taking out at Frazee will be encouraged.

Development Feature #5 Support Material:
Looking south from bridge at main canoe/kayak launch area. Shore fishing areas in background.
Looking South from bridge at canoe/kayak launch area & in background shore fishing area

View looking east from west park entrance. Area planned for an access road to the canoe/kayak launch, and trails. The site for a water trail trailhead with parking, information kiosks and launch area is in the background.
Development Feature #6: Picnic Areas
The picnic area will be in the southeast section of the park, accessed from Chilton Road. Parking will be on the north side of the existing gravel road, close to Chilton Road. Two larger shelters that will hold 10 to 12 tables. The one closest to the road will include a small kitchen and attached restrooms. Two smaller picnic shelters will be built in this area as well, which will hold two to four tables. Outdoor Recreation Access Routes that meet ADA guidelines will be built from the parking area to the shelters. Single picnic tables will be scattered farther from the parking area. Because a 50 ft. buffer along each side of the river is required by the State, only removable picnic tables will be placed within the buffer in already cleared areas.

Development Feature #6 Support Material:

Looking southeast from bridge toward Chilton Road. Area planned for picnic shelters, amphitheater and trails.

Development Feature #7: Interpretive Center
• The interpretive center will be developed at the eastern end of the park entrance road off of County Road 29, on the west side of the river. The building will include exhibits, a meeting area for classes and presentations, the campground office/registration, and a small kitchen. It will include a fireplace, and seating area which may serve as a warming area in the
winter. A small separate warming hut building may be considered as an alternative. Public restrooms will be accessible from inside and outside, so that they can be left open when the building is closed. Part of the building will be available for the public to rent for special events. A small sales area may be included for camping necessities and gifts. Proceeds would go to offset maintenance and habitat restoration costs of the park. Kayak and/or canoe rentals offered from the interpretive center will also be considered, based on demand, likely with a private vendor. The interpretive center would have enough space to hold about 100 people and would be about 4,000 – 6,000 square feet. The City and County will work with the County Historical Society and the White Earth Band of Ojibwe to develop the exhibits. Leasing space for food trucks during high demand times in the interpretive center parking lot area will be considered, with private operators. The interpretive center is a Phase 2 development priority.

Interpretive themes include the following and will be explored through exhibits and programming:

- Overview of the Park: facilities & activities available and safety information;
- Native American and logging/settlement history in the area;
- Early European settlement habitation, lifestyle and travel;
- Forest and Prairie as resources:
  - Logging, river rafting and sawmills
  - Farming in the early days;
- Ottertail River and its many uses, and environmental characteristics & benefits;
- Movement to modern day habitation, lifestyle and travel;
- Waterfowl prairie pothole flyway and the importance of conservation lands; and
- Conservation and future use of the land and river:
  - Habitat restoration on site, including adaptations for climate change; and
  - Pollinators.

These themes will be explored in indoor exhibits as well as outdoor wayside exhibits at key sites within the park.
Development Feature #7 Support Material:

Looking east at Wannigan west entrance toward interpretive center site in background right

Development Feature #8: Amphitheater:
An amphitheater for presentations, performances, movies and concerts will be developed on the east side of the river in the southern section accessible by vehicle from Chilton Road. A hill with a natural slope exists south of the existing gravel road, between the road and the river. This area will include a covered stage with electricity and some ADA accessible seating and locations for people with wheelchairs. The remaining seating will be informal, for people to bring their own blankets or chairs. An accessible outdoor recreation access route will lead from the parking lot to the amphitheater. The amphitheater is a Phase 3 or long term project.

Development Feature #8 Support Material:
Amphitheater site, east side of river

**Development Feature #9: 1836 House**
The oldest house in Becker County, built in 1836, now stands within Tamarack National Wildlife Refuge. Refuge staff and the County are considering moving the building out of the Refuge. This regional park with its planned interpretive center that will describe the early settlement history of the area is a logical location. The exact location is yet to be determined. This is a Phase 3 or long term project. The location of the house would be in the northern section off of 120th St. as referenced in the site plan. The house will be furnished with period furniture and open for public viewing during some of the interpretive center’s open hours. An interpretive wayside exhibit will be placed outside of the building to describe the significance of the house for viewing when the building is closed. The City and County will coordinate with the County Historical Society to develop the exhibits. The move of this house to the park is a long term/Phase 3 project.

Development Feature #9 Support Material:

**Development Feature #10: Trailside interpretive signs**
In addition to the interpretive center, interpretive signs or “wayside exhibits” are planned to be placed along trails and access routes at significant locations, such as overlooks, noteworthy natural features, and outside of the 1836 house or
archaeological features, when appropriate. The interpretive themes will follow those listed under #7: Interpretive Center. The City and County will coordinate with subject matter experts to create the materials for the signs, and will use durable, vandal and fire resistant materials for the signs. Trailside interpretive signs will be developed at the same time as the interpretive center, so are part of the Phase 2 project.

Development Feature #10 Support Material:

Development Feature #11: Trailhead Features
The park will include trailhead elements for the Heartland State Trail, the North County National Scenic Trail, and the Ottertail River State Water Trail. The primary trailhead for the land trails will be near the interpretive center in the day use area in the southwest end of the park. The interpretive center will include restrooms and water fountains available from the outside of the building when the interpretive center is closed. Parking for trail users will be included in the parking areas for the interpretive center and boat ramp. They will include parking for vehicles with trailers, and will be available for longer term parking for those trail users who are leaving on multi-day trips. The trailhead for the land trails will be separated from but near the interpretive center, and will include a kiosk with trail maps and information, a bicycle fix-it station, bike racks, benches, and a water fountain. Until the interpretive center is built, portable toilets will be provided at the trailhead. People will have the option of using the indoor restrooms in the campground as well. The trailhead for the water trail will be at the primary public river access described in #5 above. Trailhead elements will be developed when the trails are developed as part of Phase 1.

Development Feature #11 Support Material:

Development Feature #12: Emergency Shelters
Emergency shelters will be built in the park as required by law. The Interpretive Center will be built to meet shelter specifications to provide shelter in the southwest portion of the park. The restroom/shower/laundry building at the short term campground would also be built to meet shelter requirements if required by law. One of the large picnic shelters on the east side of the river will be built to shelter amphitheater users, seasonal campers and picnickers on that
side of the river. If necessary, a fourth shelter will be built at the primitive/group campground. Exact shelter provision will be finalized during the design phase of the park.
IMPLEMENTATION TAB

- Implementation Plan [Describe proposed acquisition and development strategy, including general statement about implementation priorities.]

The acquisition and development strategy will entail one acquisition phase and three development phases.

Acquisition:

1. Purchase the four parcels for the park, approximately 215 acres, by 2022. Acquisition costs will be based on accepted appraisal practices, and the acquisition process will conform to the State of Minnesota’s public property acquisition appraisal practices, if State funding is used.

2. Phase 1 Development—2022-2026: Design, engineering, permitting and construction. Elements in this phase include seasonal and short term campgrounds, canoe/kayak river access/boat launches & primitive camping, trailheads, hard and natural surface trails, and picnic shelters and areas.

3. Phase 2 Development—2027-2029: Design/engineering, permitting and construction. Elements in this phase include the interpretive center and outdoor interpretive signs.

4. Phase 3 Development—2030-2031: Design, permitting and construction. Elements in this phase include the amphitheater and moving the 1836 house to the park.

Summarize Acquisition and Development Costs to Date

While negotiations have taken place between the City and the two landowners, prices and timelines have not been agreed upon. Both landowners are willing sellers. Staff and Economic Development Authority Board members have done the negotiations so far, at no cost to the City beyond Staff salaries. Both the City and County have invested time into the planning process for the park by staff, Council/Commission members, Board members and volunteers. No expenditures have yet been made on acquisition and development.
Investments to Date from Various Sources

• Investments to Date from Various Sources
  o Parks and Trails Legacy Funding
    ▪ Acquisition 0
    ▪ Development 0
    ▪ Total 0
  o Local and Other Funding Sources
    ▪ Local Funding 0
    ▪ Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund 0
    ▪ Other Funding 0
    ▪ Total 0
  o Grant Total Investments to Date – All Sources Listed Above 0

  o Non-Parks and Trails Legacy Funding
    ▪ Arts & Cultural Heritage Legacy $10,000 for archaeological survey
    ▪ Clean Water Legacy Funding 0
    ▪ Outdoor Heritage Legacy Funding 0
  o Local and Other Funding Sources
    ▪ Local Funding 0
    ▪ Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund 0
    ▪ Other Funding $10,000
    ▪ Total $10,000
  o Grant Total Investments to Date – All Sources Listed Above $10,000

Acquisition and Development Cost Projections

• Acquisition and Development Cost Projections [Describe projected costs for acquisition and development in narrative form. (Cost tables or spreadsheets should be uploaded under cost estimates support information.) Note that acquisition costs must be based on accepted appraisal practices. Note also that the Commission may, at its discretion, reject or not act upon funding requests due to inadequate information or inconsistencies with the information provided here. Future formal funding requests for acquisition must conform to state of Minnesota public property acquisition appraisal practices.]

Acquisition Costs
Purchase price, landowner 1: $785,000
Appraisal fees: $5000
Other fees:  $10,000
Total Purchase, 175 acres:  $800,000?

Purchase price, landowner 2:  25 ac @ $3000/ac = $75,000
Appraisal Fees:  $1000
Other fees:  $ 1500
Total Purchase, 25acres:  $ 77,500

TOTAL ACQUISITION COSTS:  $877,500

**Development Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance Road &amp; Utility Extension</td>
<td>$ 1,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Extension, North RV Sites &amp; Campground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, Sewer &amp; Electric Extension</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Extension</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road &amp; Utility Extension, South RV Sites &amp; Campground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, Elec &amp; Sewer</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Extension</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Tent Campground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel Road Access</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathhouse</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South RV Sites (30 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel Road Access &amp; minor grading</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities (picnic tables &amp; fire rings)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Hook Ups (water/electric)</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumping &amp; Filling Station</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Tent Campground (30 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel Road Access</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities (picnic tables &amp; fire rings)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathhouse</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North RV Sites (25 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel Road Access</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Hookups (water &amp; electric)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dump &amp; Filling Station</td>
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<td>Amenities (picnic tables &amp; fire rings)</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Tent Campground (30 sites)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gravel Access Road &amp; minor grading</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathhouse</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities (picnic tables &amp; fire rings)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal Campground (25 sites)</td>
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<td>Gravel Access Road &amp; minor grading</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well &amp; Septic System</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Hookups (water, sewer &amp; electric)</td>
<td>360,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Amenities (picnic tables & fire rings)
- Primitive Camping Area
  - Water Spigots & Site Preparation: $50,000
- Paved Multi Use Trail (4 miles @ $150,000/mile): $600,000
- Natural Surface Trail (5 miles @ $20,000/mile): $100,000

### Interpretive Center
- Building: TBD
- Parking Lot: $425,000

### Amphitheater & Picnic Shelters
- Stage/Seating: TBD
- Picnic Shelters: TBD
- Entrance Road: $200,000
- Parking Lots (2): $360,000

### Natural Surface Trails

### Miscellaneous Items
- Wayfinding Signs, Information Kiosks, Interpretive Sign: $25,000
- Picnic Shelters, 2 Large (10-12 tables): $60,000
- Picnic Shelters, 2 Small (2-4 tables): $20,000
- Moveable Picnic Tables (8): $4,000

### 1836 House Moving & Site Preparation
- House Moving: $20,000
- Site Preparation: $10,000

### DEVELOPMENT TOTAL
- $6,914,000

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**Cost Estimate Support Information Upload**

See Appendix for Cost Estimate Detail

**Acquisition and Development Phasing Plan**

**Acquisition and Development Phasing Plan**

1. **Acquisition**: Purchase the land described above and depicted on the map for the park, approximately 200 acres, by 2022. The Parks & Trails Council of MN has agreed to assist with the land purchase negotiations, and, if necessary, to purchase the properties and hold them temporarily, to be reimbursed later when permanent funding is secured. The City & County intends to apply for GMRPTC Legacy funding and LCCMR funding for land...
acquisition in 2021, for 2022 dollars. If the landowners demand that the purchase take place sooner, then the Parks & Trails Council will purchase it for the park. If permanent funding is not obtained in the 2021 solicitation, then the City and County will continue to apply in subsequent years until permanent funding is obtained. A fundraising committee has been set up by the City to raise matching funds, described in more detail below.

2. Phase 1 Development—2022-2026:
   a. Design, Engineering and Permitting: The City and County will contract with a consultant to complete the design phase of the project. The site plan will include details for all Phase 1 development and will leave space for the Phases 2 and 3 development elements. Site design may begin once acquisition is committed.
   b. Construction: Elements in this phase include some of the seasonal and short term campgrounds, canoe/kayak river access/boat launches & primitive camping, trailheads, hard and natural surface trails, and picnic shelters and areas.

3. Phase 2 Development—2027-2029: Elements in this phase include the interpretive center and outdoor interpretive signs. Additional campsites may be added based on cost/benefit analysis.

4. Phase 3 Development—2030-2031: Elements in this phase include the amphitheater and moving the 1836 house to the park. Additional campsites will be added based on cost/benefit analysis.

- Phasing Plan Support Information Upload

**Cost Projections for Implementation Plan**
- Cost Projections for Implementation Plan [Insert total projected costs for implementing all phases of the plan. Do not include any investments to-date (as otherwise accounted for on this page).]
  o Acquisition [Provide cost projection for future acquisition using best available land value information. Future funding application will require a qualified appraisal.]

  **TOTAL ACQUISITION COSTS:** $877,500

- Development [Provide cost projection for future development based on a master plan-level evaluation.]

  **DEVELOPMENT TOTAL** $6,914,000

  o Projected Total $7,791,500
OPERATIONAL PLAN TAB

Joint Organizations Responsibilities

A Cooperative agreement between Becker County and Frazee has been created to develop, maintain and operate Wannigan Regional Park. The Cooperative Agreement lays out the general intent to work together and enter into a long-term agreement with the GMRPTC to acquire lands and develop, maintain and operate the Park over time (20 years) with the overall aim of providing a high quality outdoor recreational experience for visitors to the park.

Joint Organizational Responsibilities will center around the development, maintenance and operation of the Park as both entities will be engaged in ongoing discussions and decision making.

The City of Frazee and Becker County will utilize the Frazee EDA as an organizational umbrella that will provide administrative oversight and allow a forum for applicable County/City staff interface with the EDA/its meetings as appropriate. Land Acquisition, Trail Development, City Utilities, Facility Development and Educational Programming all would fall under the Frazee EDA’s Wannigan Park project. However, the Frazee EDA will not act in a vacuum as each party must work within a City/County decisional framework providing further review and approval processes for all phases of development (acquisition, projects, related expenditures and grant requests), ongoing maintenance and operations. The City Council and County Board will weigh in jointly on Wannigan Park projects, maintenance and operational needs.

Per its proximity to the Park, Frazee will develop the utility infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity) to the Park from the City limits to the West Side of the Park. Additionally, Frazee is looking to work closely with the local High School to provide educational programming geared to students and adults.

Maintenance/Operations Plan

It is estimated that ongoing maintenance and operations at the site will cost approximately $75,000- $100,000 per year. This number takes into account the need for one park manager and one part time FTE campground manager(s)/caretaker(s) to perform ongoing maintenance within the park which would include: caring for and cleaning park facilities, camping areas, parking areas, bathroom and shower areas, trail areas and basic maintenance and repair to keep the park operational and in good working condition. A security system should be considered.

Seasonal Park Manager (1,040 hrs.; $25,000); Assist with Park operations and maintenance; coordinate Park activities, events, and projects. Work with the Frazee EDA and related
stakeholders to provide updates on park operations/maintenance related activities. Provide oversight of Campground Manager.

Seasonal Caretaker/Campground Manager Position (1,040 hrs.; $25,000)

Important to the ongoing operation and maintenance of the park will be revenue derived primarily through camping. Camping Revenues from May – September (150 days) for Nightly, Weekly or Seasonal camping for Tents/Primitive sites (#80 sites @ $14/day) and RV sites (80 Sites @ $28/day is estimated at $504,000 at full capacity and $252,000 at 50% capacity.

Potential Revenue Sources
- Shuttle Services is needed ($25/shuttle) ~$500
- Outdoor Theater ~$500
- Gift Shop ~$2000.00
- Picnic Shelters:~$500/summer

Maintenance/Operations Strategies:
Strategy 1: Build and manage a volunteer corps for Wannigan Park to assist with programming, stewardship and other operations.

Strategy 2: Create a “Friends of Wannigan Park” organization to help fundraiser and support park development, programming and operations.

Strategy 3: Work closely with the business community to determine opportunities for coordinating park related services and operations with the help of the private/non profit sectors.

Strategy 4: Develop a marketing plan for Wannigan Park to ensure that people are aware of its existence, the amenities and recreational opportunities that it provides.

Ecological/Land Resources Plan

General Overview of Property
The proposed site for Wannigan Park is located north of the City of Frazee and comprises approximately 170 acres that the city is exploring acquisition of over a phased timeline. The proposed site sits within the 2,000 square miles of the Otter Trail River watershed. The Ecological Classification System developed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources classifies three ecological provinces within Becker County: Laurentian Mixed Forest, Eastern Broadleaf Forest, and Prairie Parkland. Within the Eastern Broadleaf Forest province, the Wannigan Park property would be classified within the Minnesota and & NE Iowa Morainal Section and the (222M) and the Hardwood Hills (222Ma) Subsection.1

1 https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecs/index.html
While the park will offer new possibilities for outdoor recreation amenities it is also an opportunity for preserving open space and conserving important natural resources. In Frazee’s Comprehensive Plan for 2035 the city stated “quality of life in Frazee is tied to the natural and historic features of the area. Wetlands, open space, river, and lakes comprise much of the city’s area. Natural resources play a part in the city’s public wealth and should be managed as any other asset.”

Understanding the natural resources and environmental features at the Wannigan Park site can help city planners, stakeholders, and local residents understand the value of preserving this area for future generations.

Existing Conditions

Soil Types

The planned Wannigan Park area is in an area of sand and sandy loam soils on a glacial outwash plain near the Ottertail River valley. Soils tend to be well-drained sandy soils with hydric soils present in the riparian zone along the river and in emergent wetland areas. The upland soils are generally suitable for development, except in areas where slope results in erodibility. The hydric soil areas are generally unsuitable for development due to water table and wetness. Soil types within the park boundary include: (See attached Soil Map)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map Unit</th>
<th>Soil Name</th>
<th>Acres in Area</th>
<th>Percent of Area</th>
<th>Hydric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1250C</td>
<td>Abbeylake-Verndale complex</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 to 12 percent slopes</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1C</td>
<td>Eagleview and Menahga soils</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 to 15 percent slopes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>753D</td>
<td>Abbeylake loamy sand</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 to 20 percent slopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1113</td>
<td>Haslie, Seelyville and Cathro</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ponded, 0 to 1 percent slopes</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1111 &amp; 1136</td>
<td>Nidaros muck</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1131B</td>
<td>Verndale-Abbeylake complex</td>
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<tr>
<td>1015 &amp; 1027</td>
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<tr>
<td>753E</td>
<td>Abbeylake loamy sand</td>
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<td>1.1%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 to 20 percent slopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://frazeecity.com/
Water and Wetlands

The Frazee area has five nearby lakes (Albertson, Brink, Gebo, Town, and Trieglaff) with Albertson, Brink, and Town Lake all being fed into by the Otter Tail River. The total surface area of these five lakes combined is 314.93 acres and all are protected and characterized as healthy warm-water aquatic communities. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has mapped out three freshwater ponds, one riverine area, five freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, and four freshwater emergent wetlands within the planned park area. The National Wetland Inventory classifies wetlands within the Wannigan Park area as PEM1C, which can be generalized as dominated by trees and shrubs with persistent vegetation present for most of the growing season and with seasonal standing water.

Vegetation Survey

Pre-settlement vegetation of the Hardwood Hills Ecological Subsection included landscapes characterized by maple-basswood forests interspersed with oak savannas, tallgrass prairies, and oak forests. “Irregular topography and presence of numerous lakes and wetlands provided a partial barrier to fire, resulting in woodland or forest rather than prairie vegetation” in addition to a mosaic of tallgrass prairie, aspen-oak land, and oak openings or savanna. Agricultural production and farming have been major land uses while wetlands and lakes provide various types of wildlife habitat. Some upland forests remain, particularly adjacent to lakes or on steep landscapes. Most of the Wannigan Park area is cleared grassland while small strands of wooded acres are interspersed throughout. Common tree species observed in these wooded areas include Green Ash, Burr Oak, White Oak, White Pine, Red Pine, and White Spruce. In the Habitat Management plan for the Detroit Lakes, the area is described as an ecotone “between the tallgrass prairies and deciduous forests in the eastern (and portions of the southern) District”. This type of ecosystem was highly influenced by fire and the glacially deposited soils and may be more open air with larger trees and a tallgrass prairie understory or they may have denser shrub understories, closer to a chaparral type ecosystem. Within that understory, sedges and forest forbs may also be found.

An inventory in the Fall, 2020 indicated the majority of the grass and forb community is non-native and dominated by smooth brome. Most of the area west of the river has been cultivated in the past and used for row crops – recently it has been used for grass/alfalfa hay. There is not much evidence onsite or in historic imagery that the area east of the river was ever cultivated, but it has been grazed heavily in the past and it is not a diverse plant community. Native grasses and forbs identified this year include Switch grass (Panicum virgatum L.), Canada goldenrod (Solidago altissima L., S. canadensis L.), Cattails, Common milkweed (Asclepia syriaca L.), Big bluestem (Andropogon gerardii Vitman), Heath aster (Symphyotrichum ericoides L.), Horesetail spp. (Equisetum spp. L.), Evening primrose (Oenothera biennis L.), Gray goldenrod (Solidago nemoralis Aiton), Sky-blue aster (Symphyotrichum oolentangiense (Riddell) G.L. Nesom), Gumweed (Grindelia squarrosa (Pursh) Dunal), Daisy fleabane (Erigeron strigosus

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3 https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html
4 https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/location/CN3AT4DEC5HJVSQPC4DXXML/resources#wetlands
5 https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecs/index.html
6 https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecs/index.html
7 https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/132341
Muhl. ex. Willd.), Hyssop (Agastache foeniculum (Pursh) Kuntze), Vetch ssp. (Vicia ssp. L., Bergamot (Monarda fistulosa L.), and Harebell (Campanula rotundifolia L.).

Nonnative grasses and forbs identified during the survey include Smooth brome (Bromus inermis Leyss.), Reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea L.), Cattail ssp. (Typha angustifolia L., Typha x glauca Godr.), Sweet clovers (Melilotus ssp. L.), Blue flax (Linum lewisii Pursh), Red clover (Trifolium pratense L.), Common Mullein (Verbascum thapsus L.), Alfalfa (Medicago sativa L.), Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis L.), Goatsbeard (Tragopogon dubius Scop.), Leafy spurge (Euphorbia esula L.), and Knapweed species (Centaurea spp. L.).

Invasive Species

The Becker County Soil and Water Conservation District where County Agricultural Inspector (CAI) is placed lists 23 plant species that are prohibited noxious weeds which should be eradicated or controlled according to Minnesota state statutes. The CAI enforces the Minnesota Noxious Weed Law and works with all landowners on control management practices. The planned Wannigan Park area has been part of Becker County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) since 2006. Burlington Township, Section 26, has known infestations of Spotted Knapweed and Leafy Spurge. Section 26 has been part of both the CWMA Cost-Share program with landowners from 2008 to present and is also part of the biological control program for both Leafy Spurge and Spotted Knapweed control. The area is part of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Grant Program in Meadow Knapweed region which was found on State Highway 34. The site has been inventoried and both Spotted Knapweed and Leafy Spurge are mapped in scattered locations along the roadway and the southwest corner of the proposed site.

Eradicate List: Black Swallow-wort (Cynachum loisea Kartesz & Grandhi), Brown Knapweed (Centaurea jacea L.), Diffuse Knapweed (Centaurea diffusaL.), Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica Thunb.), Palmer Amaranth (Amaranthus palmeri S. Watson), Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima (Mill.)Swingle), Yellow Starthistle Centaurea (solstitialis L.), Grecian Foxglove (Digitalis lanata Ehrh.), Oriental Bittersweet (Celastrus orbiculatus Thunb), Japanese Hops (Humulus japonicas Siebold & Zucc.), Dalmation Toadflax (Linaria dalmatica (L.) Mill.), Common Teasel (Dispsacus fullonum L.), Cut-leaved Teasel (Dispsacus laciniatus L.), Giant Hogweed (Heracleum mantegazzianum), Meadow Knapweed (Centaurea xmoncktonii), and Poison Hemlock (Conium maculatum).

Control List: Bohemian Knotweed (Polygonum x bohemicum), Leafy Spurge (Euphorbia esula L.), Canada Thistle (Cirsium arvense L. Scop), Plumeless Thistle (Carduus acanthoides L.), Common barberry (Berberis vulgaris L.), Purple Loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria L.), Wild Parsnip (Pastinaca sativa L.), Common Tansy (Tanacetum vulgare L.), Spotted Knapweed (Centaurea stoebe L. ssp. Micranthos [Gugler] Hayek), Narrowleaf Bittercress (Cardamine impatiens L.), Giant Knotweed (Polygonum sachalinese), Japanese Knotweed (Polygonum cuspodatum), Absinthe Wormwood (Artemesia absinthium, Horary Alyssum (Berteroa incana), Houndstongue (Cynoglossum officianale L.), Orange Hawkweed (Hieracium aurantiacum), Yellow Hawkweed (Hieracium caespitosum), and Non-Native Phragmites (Phragmites australis (Cav.) Trin ex Steud. ssp. australis).

Wildlife Survey
In Becker County, only two federally-listed species are known to occur: the gray wolf (Canis lupus) and northern long-eared bat (Myotis septentrionalis; USFWS 2019). The gray wolf, a threatened species, is found both as a transient and resident of the County. The northern long-eared bat, in the very northeast corner of the County, uses maternity roost trees in spring and summer. No known northern long-eared bats are present in the proposed park area.

During the 2012 Detroit Lakes Birding Festival approximately 52 bird species were observed near the Wannigan Park site. These included some species listed by the State of Minnesota as birds of special concern, such as Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus), and Threatened Species such as the Trumpeter Swan (Cygnus buccinator). Bald Eagles, once listed on the Federal Endangered Species list, may be protected by the Bald & Golden Eagle Protection Act. The prairie to woodland ecological transition area in Becker County contains both grasslands and forested habitat for various wildlife. Expanding this habitat would improve nesting and feeding areas for multiple bird species.

Throughout Minnesota, there are Wildlife Action Networks with scores determining how viable they are. The Frazee area’s score ranges from low-medium to medium-high. With mainly aquatic but also some terrestrial types of networks, the Frazee area is shown to have populations of Species of Greatest Conservation Needs despite there being no Conservation Focus Areas nearby. The number of Species of Greatest Conservation Needs ranges between one and five species. According to Minnesota’s Wildlife Action Plan for 2015-2025, the taxonomic groups of greatest concern are mussels and reptiles, whereas those of least concern are bees and leafhoppers. Overall, while the approximate total number of species in Minnesota is greater than 2,124, there are 210 state and/or federally listed species. In contrast, the Wildlife Action Plan has determined that there are 346 species of Greatest Conservation Need, resulting in an estimated 16% of the total species of Minnesota needing conservation action.

**County Zoning**

**Land Parcel Zoning.** There are three complete parcels and a portion of two additional parcels that comprise the proposed area for Wannigan Park. They are Becker County parcels 030237003, 030234000, 030239001, 030227001, and 03225000. Four of the parcels are currently zoned as Agricultural Districts and one of the golf course parcels is zoned Commercial. Becker County Parcel Information sheets list the acreage for the privately owned parcels by the following land types: pasture (70.22 acres), tillable (50.69 acres), woodlot (44.49 acres), waste (11.75 acres), and marsh (1.73 acres). The golf course parcels, of which only a portion is proposed for park land, includes 53.3 acres of woodlot, 3.5 acres of waste land, and 7.6 acres of pasture.

**Stream Buffer Compliance.** The Minnesota state legislature signed Minnesota Statute 103F.48 (commonly known as the “Buffer Law”) into effect in June of 2015 with the goal of enhancing the protection of waters and riparian zones. Master planning documents for Wannigan Park will need to take this regulation into account when planning recreation amenity areas and

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9 [http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/](http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/)
10 [https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bippicture/mnwag/mndnr_wildlife_action_network_description.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bippicture/mnwag/mndnr_wildlife_action_network_description.pdf)
future land use. The Becker Soil and Water Conservation District describes these buffers as “riparian filter strips adjacent to a stream, river, lake or wetland that help filter out phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment” and which are important conservation practices for helping to maintain water quality.\textsuperscript{11} The current Buffer Zone regulation requires buffers with an average 50-foot width and a minimum 30 feet of perennial vegetation adjacent to public waters. Any trail or recreation improvements within Wannigan Park should be planned for outside the 50-foot buffer of the Otter Tail River in order to protect sensitive riparian areas.

**Land Management Strategic Goals**

Goal 1: Adopt practices from the Becker County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMW) Plan to remove invasive species and improve native plant establishment.

Objective 1.1: Conduct a comprehensive inventory of invasive species within the park.

Objective 1.2: Develop a prioritized plan for removal of invasive species.

Goal 2: Restore Natural Spaces to the presettlement oak savannah/tallgrass prairie habitats to improve wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity.

Objective 2.1: Protect natural areas within 50 ft. of the Otter Tail River

Objective 2.2: Protect wetlands areas within the park boundary

Objective 2.3: Enhance and develop natural areas with native plants and pollinators

Goal 3: Develop a long-term management plan for ongoing stewardship.

Objective 3.1: Complete a Cooperative Agreement between the City of Frazee and Becker County to determine roles, responsibilities, and commitments pertaining to natural resource conservation.

Objective 3.2: Partner with Becker County Soil and Water Conservation District to identify complementary natural resource conservation priorities and collaboration opportunities.

Objective 3.3: Identify opportunities for residents, community groups, and stakeholder organizations to support the ongoing restoration and stewardship.

Objective 3.4: Identify natural resource planning considerations from the appendix that are priorities for short-term, mid-range, and long-term planning.

**Annual Routine Maintenance and Operations Cost Total**

$75,000 - $100,000/Year

\textsuperscript{11} [https://www.co.becker.mn.us/dept/soil_water/programs.aspx](https://www.co.becker.mn.us/dept/soil_water/programs.aspx)
PROGRAMMING PLAN TAB

- **Programming**

Programming is an important part of the vision for Wannigan Park. It is envisioned that informal and more formal educational and recreational programming will connect park visitors to the history and natural resources of the area, and to the park itself. Exposing people to the outdoor environment, then educating them about what they’re experiencing are steps in building an active community of stewards who will help care for the park. Because of the variety of outdoor recreation facilities planned for the park and the natural and historic setting, many types of programs are possible for the general visitor and for formal school classes. The amphitheater will provide space for presentations about the park themes: area history and natural resources. The amphitheater will also be used for concerts and other entertainment. These events will likely be organized by other business and organizations, and the space will be rented for the event. The interpretive center and 1836 will offer exhibits for self-guided learning. The interpretive center will also include a group gathering space for indoor presentations. Interpretive signs at key locations along the park trails will offer additional education on the park themes. Picnic shelters as well as the public portions of the interpretive center will be rented for private events. Programming will be offered through a combination of volunteers who are trained and organized through the Friends of Wannigan Park, fee for service activities provided by the Friends or the City/County, and private businesses.

**Formal Education/Programming:** The park is located adjacent to Frazee Elementary and High Schools, so outdoor classes in the park will be within walking distance. The City will work with the High School teachers to develop outdoor lessons. Actually, the park site has been used for many years already as an outdoor classroom, in an arrangement with the former private landowner. Students have built birdhouses, and location markers already exist identifying interesting natural resources for learning. The Agriculture teacher and Future Farmers of America (FFA) leader is already involved in Wannigan park planning and has engaged students and FFA members in activities related to the master plan development. They are ready to help with habitat restoration and other park improvement projects once the site is acquired.

Another opportunity is for physical education classes to use the park. Frazee High School already has enough snowshoes for a large group to use, but they do not get much use now. PE classes could introduce students to the lifelong sports of snowshoeing, cross country skiing, bicycling, hiking, and canoeing/kayaking to encourage healthy, active lifestyles. Outdoor natural classroom settings do not need to be limited to science and PE classes. The outdoors can be inspiring settings for English, art and other subjects as well. Lessons created with Frazee high school can be shared with other area schools, and field trips to the park from other schools will also be encouraged.
Informal Education/Programming: For informal education for park visitors, kiosks, maps and volunteers will provide an overview of the park, especially during the first year. In-person presentations and guided tours or walks will be offered on the park themes through volunteers. Concerts and theatrical entertainment will be provided in the amphitheater through a partnerships with arts and community organizations (see lists below.) Lessons in canoeing, kayaking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing will be offered periodically through volunteers recruited from recreational and community clubs.

Partnership Opportunities for Recreational Activities:

Partnership Opportunities for Educational & Stewardship Activities:
Becker County Historical Society, MN Historical Society, local amateur historians, Master Naturalists (MnDNR), Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Freshwater Society, Land Stewardship Project, MN Association for Environmental Education, MN Native Plant Society, The Prairie Enthusiasts, Audubon Society, MN Tree Trust, Tamarack Wildlife Refuge, Becker County Soil & Water Department.

Partnership Opportunities for Volunteer Recruitment:
Local clubs, including Lions Club, Sportsman’s Club, Veterans Associations, Future Farmers of America, 4-H Clubs, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Boy and Girl Scouts, high school sports teams and service clubs, and the organizations listed above. Seasonal residents/cabin owners in the area are often overlooked source for volunteers and fundraising. Lake associations are a way to reach seasonal residents: Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations.

Programming Goal:
Provide opportunities for park visitors to enjoy outdoor recreation and learn about the natural landscape and history of the area, in order to encourage healthy, active lifestyles; to educate people about nature, history and their connections to them; and to build a stewardship ethic.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with Frazee High School and other schools in the area to provide formal outdoor classroom experiences at the park.
Action 1A: Continue the partnership with Frazee High School to develop and encourage outdoor classroom activities at the park.
Action 1B: Provide indoor and outdoor classroom space and amenities to accommodate school groups, as seen in the development plan
Strategy 2: Coordinate with community clubs in Frazee and Becker County, and recreational clubs statewide to recruit and train volunteers for programming activities in the park.

Action 2A: Work with local clubs, such as the Sportsman’s Club, Lions Club, Veterans Associations, Future Farmers of America local chapter, and the 4-H Club, as well as state- and regionally-based organizations to recruit park volunteers and create programs.

Strategy 3: Create both recreational and educational informal programming to take place at the park.

Action 3A: Develop a canoe and kayak rental program to be operated through a part of the interpretive center.

Action 3B: Offer snowshoes in the winter on loan

Action 3C: Offer canoeing, kayaking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing lessons to encourage people to try new outdoor activities.

Action 3D: Offer indoor and outdoor presentations about the park themes to park visitors, utilizing the amphitheater and interpretive center.

Action 3E: Offer guided outdoor educational activities, such as guided hikes, tours of the 1836 house, or guided paddles to expand visitors’ knowledge of and interest in the park and area. These would be offered through a combination of private businesses, by the City/County as a fee for service, or for free to park visitors.

Action 3F: Create a shuttle service for bicyclists and canoes/kayaks to give visitors the option of a one way ride/paddle. This could be an entrepreneurial opportunity for a local business, or provided by the City/County as a fee for service.

Action 3G: Coordinate with partners to offer concerts and theater entertainment at the amphitheater as a way of drawing people to the park, providing a community service, and as a source of revenue to offset park operations costs.

- **Programming Support Material**

- **Annual Programming Cost**

The park is not developed yet, so there is no current cost for programming.

- **Annual Revenues from Programming and Fees/Charges**

The park is not developed, so there are no current revenues. Projected revenues are as follows:

Canoe/Kayak Rental: $800/year ($20/day for 1 rental 2 days/week May – Sept.)
Shuttle Services: $500/year (20 trips @ $25/trip)
Amphitheater Events: $500/year
See operations plan for additional revenues.

Due to the anticipated funding sources for the park acquisition and development being government grants, any revenues from the site must be used for a public purpose. The revenues will be used to fund the park’s operations, management, and long term facility upkeep.

**Outreach and Marketing Plan**

Because the park is in the planning stage, the outreach has been limited. The project concept received attention in the City of Frazee during its comprehensive planning process in 2019. The only current outreach is the Becker County Parks and Frazee City websites, which include brief information about the park project. The park survey conducted in Summer 2020 was advertised on these websites and through the City of Frazee’s utility bills. The survey received 121 responses, including 16 respondents who wanted to keep informed of the project’s progress.

After the Master Plan process, the outreach and marketing efforts for the park will include marketing through tourism organizations, web presence, social media, and printed material through local, regional, and statewide media. Some specific free or low cost marketing outlets include: Chamber of Commerce Board, City and County websites, Explore Minnesota, and using the local schools to help promote the park and conduct volunteer activities. A possible marketing slogan is: “Three Trails, Four Seasons of Adventure.”

Outreach and Marketing Goal 1: Promote the concept of Wannigan Park to potential funders, volunteers and supporters to create a strong coalition of supporters for the development of the park.

**Strategy 1: Develop public support for the Wannigan Park development project**

**Action 1A:** Enlarge the Wannigan Park Committee to recruit more people who are willing to be actively engaged and have needed skills. Set up subcommittees and match skills with needs.

**Action 1B:** Engage the sixteen people who responded to the park survey in Summer 2020 that they were interested in being involved.

**Action 1C:** Increase web and other social media presence of the park development activities and keep them updated.

**Action 1D:** Increase partnerships with local, regional and state organizations and businesses that can assist in implementing the Master Plan.

**Action 1E:** Develop a video promoting park development to display on social media.

**Action 1F:** Provide press releases and marketing material to traditional media: local newspapers, television, radio, and tourism bureau printed materials such as annual magazines.
Action 1G: Since word of mouth is an important method of communication in this area, provide presentations and project updates to local and regional clubs and groups.

Strategy 2: Develop political and governmental support for the park development project.

Action 2A: Inform local government officials and state and federal legislators about the project, invite them to significant events, and keep them informed.

Action 2B: Join the Parks & Trails Council of MN’s Friends Group, and participate in legislative activities promoting parks and trails in the state.

Action 2C: Inform key state and regional government staff who deal with parks and trails issues about the project and keep them informed.

Outreach and Marketing Goal 2: Promote Wannigan Park to local and regional residents as well as to statewide and national/international audiences through a variety of media in order to increase awareness and use of the park once it is developed.

Strategy 1: Use traditional, newer, and unique promotional methods to promote the park.

Action 1A: Host on site events to build awareness at of the park, including an opening celebration.

Action 1B: Continue to keep legislators, government officials and key government staff informed of happenings at Wannigan Park.

Action 1C: Use social media and traditional media to update and inform the public about activities at the park.

Action 1D: Use tourism materials produced by others, such as travel blogs, Explore Minnesota website, campground and trail directories, and local and regional tourism bureau marketing to promote the park.

Action 1E: Consider partnering with the Heartland Trail, the Ottertail River Water Trail or the North Country Trail to offer an annual ride, walk or paddle event to build broader awareness of the park. It could be a fundraiser to support park operations or programming.

- Outreach and Marketing Support Upload

- User Metrics and Research Plan

As the park develops it will be important to find out what is happening in the park. Since the park will be a major trailhead for three important trails, trail use surveys can also provide useful data. Research and surveying are necessary to find out who is using the park and why, where they come from, and how well the park serves their needs. This information can be used to:

- determine management priorities for the park, such as maintenance and signage needs,
- determine amenities desired
• determine whether the park is having the intended positive impacts on residents health, and on the tourism economy
• help regional and statewide organizations promote park development and funding
• help other park friends groups document regional park needs
• help document park and trail benefits and use when applying for park or trail grants
• include in local and regional comprehensive plans

A variety of types of park user surveys can be done: in-person surveys, trail counts by automatic counters or by volunteer surveyors, online surveys, etc. To gauge the percentage of residents or visitors are using the trail, surveys can be done: at lodging establishments, in residents utility bills, at community meetings and events, etc. To gauge the economic benefits, surveys can be done through the Chambers of Commerce, tourism bureaus, or other business organizations. Surveys of local businesses can estimate local park-related spending. Trail data would be gathered in coordination with the trail management agencies/organizations.

**Park & trail usage questions may include:**

- Number of park/trail users
- Day/time/season of use
- Types of use: camping, paddling, event watching, interpretive center learning, bicycling, runners, walking, etc.
- Distance travelled to get to park
- Frequency of use
- Reasons for park/trail use
- Likes/dislikes about the park/trail
- Amenities desired
- Adequacy of maintenance
- Number of days staying in area for overnight trips
- Relative importance of park/trail for visiting the area
- Amount spent in local area on park/trail related trips
- Location of origin for visitors
- Distances travelled on the trails per day, per trip
- Ages of park/trail users

As Wannigan Park develops the City and County, in coordination with trail and other partners, will periodically conduct user counts and/or surveys, and economic studies. The Board will participate in surveys conducted by the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission and other regional or statewide trail or tourism organizations.

**User Metrics and Research Goals, Strategies and Actions:**

**User Metrics & Research Goal:** Evaluate park use and impacts periodically to: 1) assist in managing the park to accommodate park user needs, and 2) to demonstrate the positive park impacts in order to promote the park and encourage funding.

**Strategy 1:** The City/County will participate in surveys conducted or requested by the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, upon request.
Strategy 2: The City/County will conduct park use surveys or counts periodically, at least every five years, and adjust management strategies accordingly.

  Action 2.1: Conduct park user counts using automatic counters on park entrance roads and internal park trails.
  Action 2.2: Utilize annual picnic shelter permitting, event revenue, and campground use data to assess park management success and adjust management accordingly.
  Action 2.3: Conduct park user surveys periodically, either in person or through social media or other means, to assess more detailed information about park users.
  Action 2.4: Complete a report after park user surveys are completed, and assess management practices to consider the findings, altering practices as necessary.
  Action 2.5: Distribute the report to regional and statewide park management organizations for use in studies and reports to encourage regional park development and funding.

Strategy 3: Conduct surveys periodically of local & regional governments and residents to assess attitudes toward the park by the general population

  Action 3.1: Conduct periodic surveys of the general population through local government surveys, local government Council/Board meetings or the like, and adjust park management policies accordingly, such as marketing and promotions.

- User Metrics and Research Support Upload