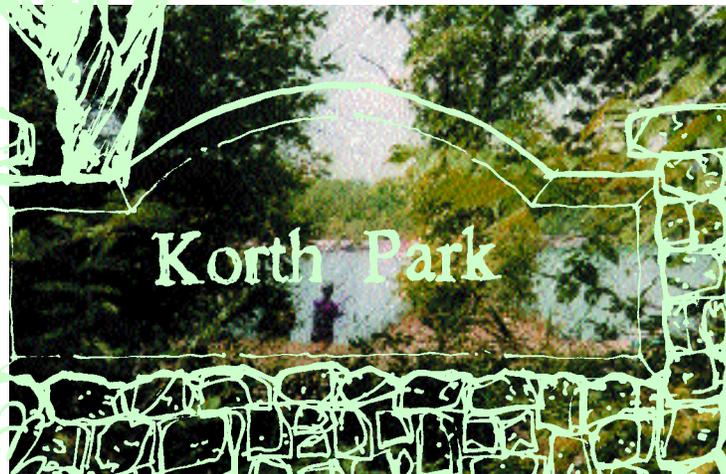




KORTH PARK MASTER PLAN

Lake Mills, Wisconsin

Adopted by Jefferson County Parks
February 13, 2001



Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc.

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The Korth Park Master Plan was prepared for the Jefferson County Parks Committee. Decisions and preliminary approvals were made by the Korth Park Steering Committee and Jefferson County Park Committee and staff. We appreciate the input and guidance of the following individuals in the development of this Master Plan.

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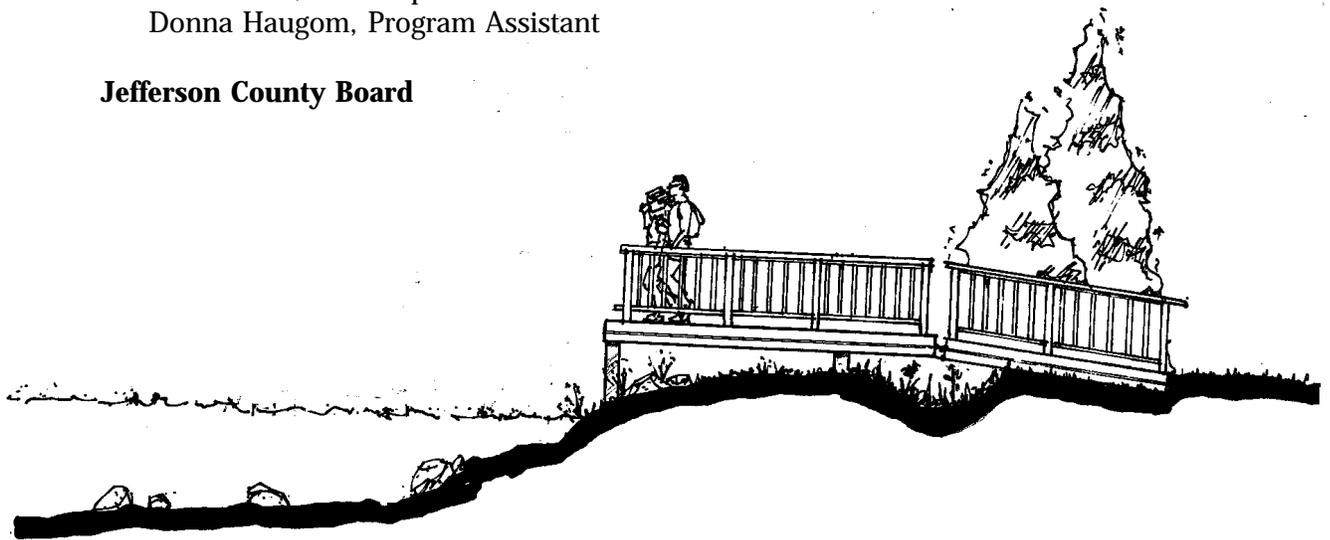
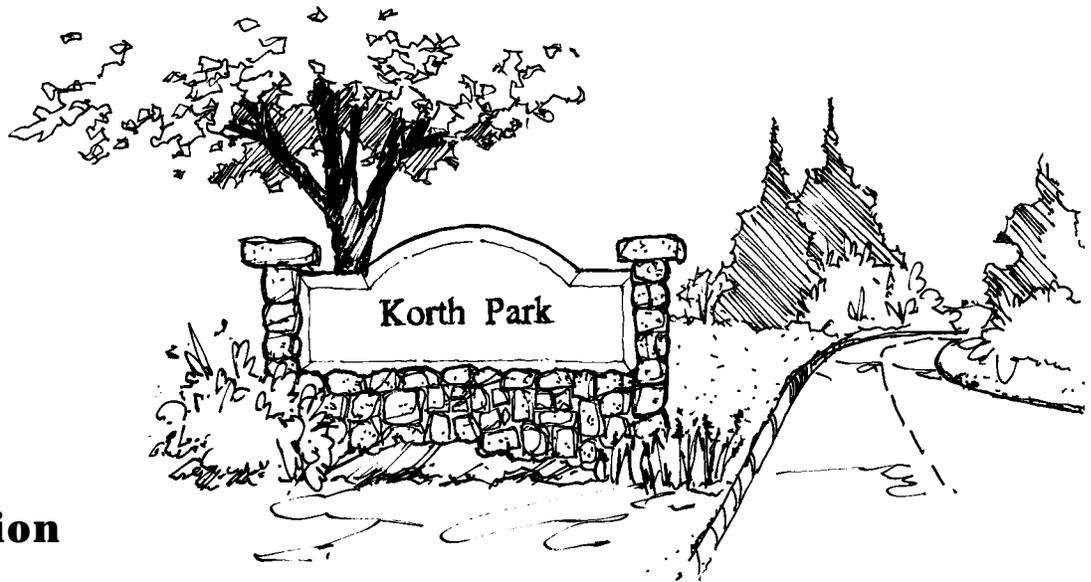


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Introduction

Vision Statement

Korth County Park will provide an opportunity for education, for recreation and for the enjoyment of Rock Lake in a restored native landscape setting. Educational opportunities will emphasize landscape ecology, cultural history, water quality and land management practices. Recreational amenities will provide low impact access for a variety of users to the site and lakeshore for year-round enjoyment. Views both to Rock Lake and from the lake will be preserved and enhanced through careful design and facility placement. Native landscape restoration will enhance the park's educational and recreational opportunities by providing wildlife habitat, seasonal character and water quality improvement.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Korth Park Master Plan is to provide a comprehensive guide to development of the park and to integrate the new park into the existing context of the region.

The northwest corner of Jefferson County is currently home to two county parks, Rock Lake Park (23 acres) and Rock River (4 acres). Korth County Park, with its 1300 linear feet of shoreline on Rock Lake and 89 acres of land, will be a welcome addition to the county park system. This plan records the planning process and provides a logical phasing plan for the long-term development of the park.

Korth Park was identified as one of the top "Potential Park Sites" in the 1998 *Jefferson County Park Site Feasibility Study*, by Margaret Burlingham. Many opportunities became apparent as a result of this preliminary investigation, including:

- Protection of the Rock Lake shoreline and Korth Bay where bulrush beds provide valuable aquatic habitat
- Preservation of the historic Korth family home (circa 1850) and barn (circa 1900)
- Restoration of native prairie

- Possible protection of pre-historic Native American remnants
- Preservation of the 250 year-old oak woods
- Provision of needed passive recreational opportunities including trails and informal play area
- Provision of outstanding views of Rock Lake
- Potential acquisition of adjacent land that would link up with DNR land to the south
- Trail connection to the Glacial Drumlin Trail
- Potential interpretive paths for natural and historical education and research

Recognizing these opportunities, and with the help of a \$200,000 Lake Protection Grant and a \$257,000 Stewardship Grant, the 89 acre Korth Farm site was added to the existing 16 county parks in January 2000. (The 58 acre Dorothy Carnes County Park, located on the shores of Rose Lake was also added.) In May 2000, Schreiber/Anderson Associates entered into a contract with the County to provide planning services for Korth Park.

At the first public meeting, a request was made that we invoke the spirit of Aldo Leopold in our master planning efforts and the eventual development of Korth County Park. Leopold's respect and reverence for the land has driven the decisions made by the steering committee and will continue to inspire Jefferson County residents as the master plan becomes a reality over time.



“When we see land as a community to which we belong,
we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

Planning Process

Preparation of the plan includes the following steps:

- Review of available background information and community planning documents
- Inventory and analysis of park site conditions and facilities
- Assessment of community recreation needs incorporating public input, as well as input from local and county officials
- Formulation of design alternatives
- Refinement of the selected design and preparation of accompanying narrative
- Preparation of a phased implementation plan and cost estimate
- Incorporation of the Master Plan into this report

Overview of Planning Activities

Project start-up included an initial meeting with park staff to discuss the planning process, key player and representative contact information, a Public Process Plan and the schedule for all meetings and due dates. Start-up also involved the formation of the steering committee with members chosen for their affiliation with relevant organizations. Active steering committee participation is vital to the overall success of the planning efforts and to the future implementation of the plan.

The needs of the county and local community were assessed, based on survey information, trends and demographics. Several site visits by SAA staff, combined with research of related documents provided an accurate site inventory. The Jefferson County Land Information Department provided valuable base maps for the inventory and design aspects of the project. An analysis of the opportunities and constraints of the site was generated.

The community involvement and visioning stage of the planning process is the single most important element to the success of a project. Through community involvement, support and momentum for the project is generated. Initial public meetings are the most critical, because they set the stage for the rest of the project. At the Korth Park public meetings, opportunities and constraints were presented and feedback was generated to formulate the preliminary vision statement and program for the park. Steering committee meetings finalized the vision statement and program used for the generation of three Preliminary Master Plans by SAA landscape architects. In total, there were five steering committee meetings and three public meetings prior to presentation of the Preliminary Master Plan to the Jefferson County Park Committee and Jefferson County Board.

The three original concept Master Plans synthesized regional and local needs, opportunities and constraints, along with stakeholder and steering committee interests into park plans based on SAA's philosophy of the three E's of park planning: Education, Entertainment and Environment. The concept of the three E's stems from the realization that successful park master plans must account for more than capital, maintenance and life cycle costs. As public spaces, they must engage and motivate support and participation. Final recommendations must represent a living plan that can guide a park into the future, inspiring landscapes that are accessible, sustainable, environmentally responsible, connected to the community and highly valued by users. As such, each design concept gives consideration to:

1. Soils, landscape/vegetation management, and existing and long-term restoration opportunities;
2. Views, archeological and historical significance;
3. Facility locations, utility needs and maintenance issues.

Each of the alternatives and subsequent refinements were presented at various steering committee and public meetings in order to select a final Master Plan.

Along with the final Master Plan, this Master Plan Report was generated to highlight and summarize the Master Plan design process employed by SAA for Korth Park. The Plan and Report were presented to the steering committee, Jefferson County Parks Committee and general public for final review. Changes were then incorporated for adoption by the County Board. See Appendix A for the meeting schedule summary.



Korth family and farm circa late 1960s

Site Inventory and Analysis

Site inventory is the process of fact finding about the site using maps, aerial photography and on-site investigation. The inventory for Korth Park includes the following data:

- Man made elements, such as existing buildings, drives, walkways and utilities
- Regional or off-site factors that affect the site
- Natural elements, such as soils, topography and vegetation
- Perceptual characteristics such as views to or from the site, spatial patterns, forms and textures, and general impressions

The inventory information was analyzed to help determine the suitability, capacity and opportunity for park development. The analysis map is included in Appendix B.

Existing Use and Facilities

The Korth Family has farmed the property for the past 120 years. The family house, once known as “The English Mansion”, was built in the 1850’s of Watertown brick. The house is to be transferred to another site by Ayers prior to March 1, 2001. Other buildings on the site include the barn, built in the early 1900s, which provides much character to the site and several outbuildings of varying condition. Besides the agricultural lands used for dairy farming, approximately 8 acres are wooded and 3 acres are wetland.

Archeological Significance

Records indicate 50 pre-historic Indian mounds were located on site, later explored by Stephen Peet, who may have removed many skeletons. Although mounds are no longer apparent, the area is still considered to be archeologically significant, according to Bob Birmingham of the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Mr. Birmingham recommends an archeological survey be performed prior to park development.

Regional Analysis

Korth Park has several potential access points. All originate off of CTH S, a north/south road just to the west of the site.

Cedar Lane is a cul-de-sac serving several homes directly north of the park. It is paved and 22 feet wide with no curb or storm sewer. Sanitary sewer runs under the road. Korth Lane is an old farm drive that has been paved and currently serves four residences. It is a narrow road, approximately 16'-18' paved and has no utilities associated with it. It enters the park from the west side.

Elm Point Road serves a number of homes along the southwest shore of Rock Lake. The road forms part of the southern boundary of the park. It is a 24' wide paved road with sanitary sewer under sections of it. All roads providing potential access points to the park are town roads.

The Glacial Drumlin Trail passes about 1,000' south of the park. This east/west state owned recreation trail runs from Waukesha to Cottage Grove. A connection to Madison is in the planning stages.

The Rock Lake watershed is 7,870 acres (12 square miles) in area, with 56% cropland, 22% wetland (primarily the area south of Rock Lake) and 6% urban land with strong growth potential. The remaining acreage is wooded, open water, pastures or quarry.

Korth Park is located on the southwestern shore of the 1,371-acre Rock Lake. The lake's maximum depth is 56 feet, with a mean depth of 16 feet. Korth Bay was above water until the dam was built in 1865, which raised the lake elevation by 10 feet. Fish species are diverse and include panfish and gamefish such as northern pike, large and small mouth bass and walleye. On the east side of Rock Lake is the City of Lake Mills. Views across the lake, both to the City from Korth Park and back to the Park from the City are stunning and should be preserved. All of the shoreline except the southwest shore of the lake is developed with homes and cottages. The park is bordered by residential subdivisions to the north and south. Buried sanitary sewers connect to the southern subdivisions through the park along the shoreline.

Three large public boat ramps and two smaller boat landings provide access to Rock Lake (Rock Lake Park, Sandy Beach and Elm Point). There are several other locations from which one can launch smaller boats, canoes and kayaks. Camping is available at Sandhill Station Campground, one mile south of the intersection of CTH A and Mud Lake Road.

Lake Vegetation

According to an inventory performed by R. A. Smith and Associates, Inc. in 1994, the near shore area along the park's eastern edge maintains a high quality stand of Yellow and White Water Lily. Valuable species of vegetation found further out in Korth Bay include bulrush, clasping leaf pondweed, Illinois pondweed, sago pondweed, and wild celery. Because of their significance to the vitality of the lake's fish population as a crucial spawning and feeding ground, the WDNR has designated Korth Bay as a "sensitive area". Therefore, the area is protected from aquatic herbicide application and placement of piers, marinas, sand beds, dredging and any other lakebed activity within the designated sensitive area requires DNR approval.

Along with the "sensitive areas", boating regulations exist to protect the crucial aquatic plants in the bay from the impact of motorized watercraft. The entire bay has been designated as a "slow-no-wake" zone. Motorized watercraft are prohibited from creating a wake within 150 feet of shore and 100 feet from the zone identified by the buoys.

The Rock Lake Planning Grant Study, conducted by R. A. Smith and Associates, Inc. in 1995, recommended that the number of "slow-no-wake" buoys be increased to a frequency of every 250 feet. In addition, the study recommended that a 50-foot wide navigational channel be demarcated throughout the bay. According to the R. A. Smith report, compliance with the channel limitations would be voluntary.

Soils Analysis

Soils range from loamy upland to mucky lowlands along the shore and wetland. With the exception of the steeper slopes that range from 12 to 20% and the wetland soils, the soils are somewhat suitable for accessible trails and development. However, because much of the agricultural land is prone to erosion due to its proximity to Rock Lake, it is believed that this land has contributed to run-off pollution by allowing herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers into the lake.

Drainage Analysis

Slopes are mostly rolling from the west to east, where the park meets the lake. Elevation varies from 890 to 827 feet with the 63-foot drop occurring over a relatively short distance. There are two main drainage courses that lead to the lake with wet soil at the end of each. In winter, an ice shelf forms that typically backs up water into these low areas. At the northern end of the park a small existing wetland feeds a stream that feeds Rock Lake. During heavy storms plumes of runoff that contribute to algae blooms have been observed at the outlet of this stream. It is believed that breaking up the field tile upstream from the wetland and expanding the wetland may help to mediate this condition.



Vegetation Analysis

Much of the site is actively farmed as agricultural land. However, the wooded land in the northern most portion of the site contains mature, spreading bur and white oaks that may be up to 250 years old, providing evidence that the site is a savanna/prairie relic (Burlingham, 1998). The wooded area of the property is a prime candidate for restoration to its original native plant community. The area of wet soils in the northern portion of the site is currently home to many wetland species. The quality and diversity of this area could be improved with vegetative management. The wet soils area near the southern shoreline, although currently in cropland, presents another opportunity for wetland restoration. The east facing slope and the second hill and valley west of the house site, currently in cropland, present an opportunity for prairie restoration.

A recent plant inventory of the shoreline reveals a vegetation community that is consistent with that of a lakeshore native plant community. Dominant trees include boxelder, cottonwood, elm, basswood and silver maple. There is one

specimen burr oak located on the south end of the property. Shrubs include redosier dogwood, gray dogwood, american plum, ribes species, and raspberry. Numerous trees are host to thick woody vines, most likely wild grape, virginia creeper or poison ivy. The ground layer is mostly native and agricultural grasses with some opportunistic forbs.

Sanitary Sewer

A sanitary sewer easement containing a force main runs through the eastern edge of the park, beginning at the Cedar Lane cul du sac and exiting the park at the southeast corner onto Elm Point Road. The homes in the subdivision south of Rock Lake are served by the sanitary district. Korth County Park is within the service area of the sanitary district and also within the "Phase One" service area, however, the existing Korth home is not hooked up to the sanitary sewer. Due to sanitary district policy, future development in the park will need to be hooked up to the force main. There is an impact fee for hooking up to the system. In September 2000 the residential fee was set at \$1,385. The park restrooms will likely have more of an impact on the system than a residence, so a fee will have to be negotiated when the park restrooms are designed and the exact number of toilets and fixtures are determined.

Public Participation

Public participation is an important element in master plan development. It helps identify park and recreation issues and needs, and stimulates public involvement while generating support and understanding for proposed projects.

Input for the Korth Park Master Plan was provided through three public meetings and five meetings with the steering committee. Meeting times and locations were advertised in local newspapers and on local radio stations. For a list of meeting dates and locations, see Appendix A.

Summary of Comments

The steering committee and general public generated the following list to create the vision statement. The design of Korth Park will be guided by these concepts:

- Prairie/oak savannah restoration
- Trails/interpretation, unpaved hiking and cross country skiing
- Shoreline restoration
- Historic land uses - farm use, Native American use
- Canoe/kayak access may be desirable
- Parking lot and pier potential problem
- No motor boats
- Major access from Elm Point Road should be considered
- Reforestation of woodlands and wetland
- Park should connect to the Glacial Drumlin Trail
- Paved maintenance road is needed
- Park shelter and educational center is needed
- Reconstruct the Indian mounds
- No overnight camping
- Preservation of views
- Provide park elements in a limited way
- Regional draw will be educational and views
- No active long-term farming should take place
- Red barn is an important landmark and should be incorporated in shelter design

In addition, when asked to describe Korth Park after development with several words, the steering committee groups listed the following:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| - natural | - pristine | - panoramic |
| - quiet | - educational | - beautiful |
| - rejuvenating | - fun | - peaceful |

These comments and ideas have been incorporated into the final master plan for Korth Park.

Master Plan Options and Recommendations

Korth County Park Program List of Suggested Activities and Facilities

The following list, derived from the preceding analysis and steering committee, public and county staff input, form the basis for the design of Korth County Park:

- Picnic areas
- Views of and access to Rock Lake by foot
- Hiking and cross country ski trails surfaced with limestone screenings or mowed grass
- Parking
- Outdoor classroom/education
- Limit landing opportunities for canoes and kayaks
- Playground
- Open play-field for informal play
- Restrooms and drinking water available
- Large shelter, size to be determined
- A few small shelters, size to be determined
- Sledding
- Glacial Drumlin Trail connection
- Service yard and maintenance storage shed
- Buffer neighboring residences
- Native vegetation restoration
- Improve Rock Lake water quality
- Interpretive signage
- Provide lookouts to view lake and surrounding country side
- Minimize maintenance
- ADA accessibility
- Shoreline vegetation restoration

Design Issues

Several design issues were discussed extensively during the development of the master plan. The issues are listed here to record the options considered during the planning process. The resolution of each issue is discussed in the Master Plan Recommendations section of this report.

Main Shelter Building Location Options

Three locations for the shelter were considered: the Korth home site, the corn field south of the Korth home and east of the access drive, and the existing barn site.

The home site provides 360-degree views of the rural landscape surrounding the park. The site has established landscape around its perimeter and the lawn area between the barn and the house has good picnic area potential. This site is closest to the proposed parking area. The lake view is not as dramatic as the view from the barn site.



The cornfield south of the home site could be developed with minimal disruption. The site is further from the proposed parking area than the home site. It has similar views of the lake and surrounding countryside to the house site.

The barn site has the most expansive and commanding views of the lake. Due to topographic change the views of the rural scenery west of the site are less commanding, but views to the south are good. The homes on Cedar Lane are most visible from the barn site. This site is further from the proposed parking lot than the home site. A combination walkway/access road would have to be provided to allow for deliveries to the shelter.

Main Shelter Building Programming Options

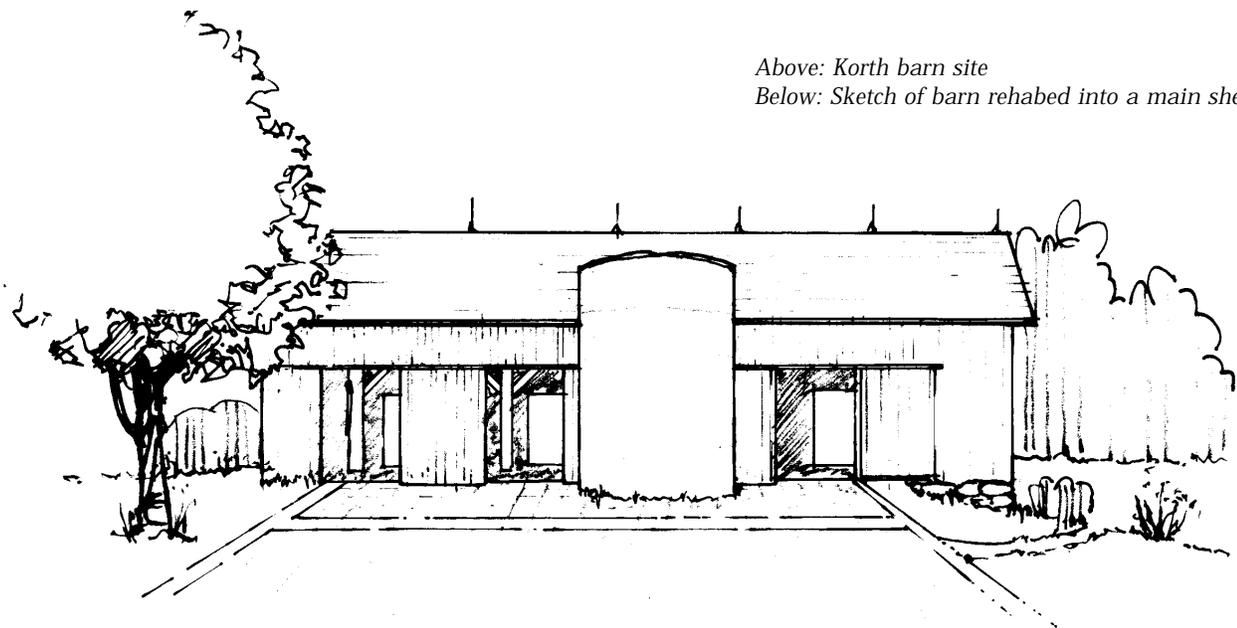
Programming for the main shelter was discussed at several steering committee and public meetings. Options ranged from a simple open sided shelter that would be suitable during the warm months for family outings or small company picnics, to a large partially enclosed building that could be used year round for large gatherings. The larger option could provide classroom and meeting space perhaps with a small kitchen. Restrooms could be integrated into the building or provided in a separate building. Either building type could be managed on a reservation/rental basis.

Main Shelter Building Options

The fate of the barn was discussed extensively during the planning process. The steering committee expressed interest in exploring the possible reuse of the barn as the main shelter building. The barn was built in two halves at the turn of the century. The heavy timber construction and traditional stone foundation are distinctive and tell a story of agricultural development in the county. If

Above: Korth barn site

Below: Sketch of barn rehabed into a main shelter



retained on the site, the barn would add a distinctive character element and provide an historical landmark on the farm and on the lakeshore.

Red, wooden barns, once a ubiquitous feature of the Wisconsin landscape are fast disappearing. Barn preservation groups such as “Barn N.O.W” may be willing to assist the County in preserving and reusing the barn. Contact information for Barn N.O.W. is included in Appendix C. A cursory review of the structural integrity of the building indicates that it is in solid condition. A feasibility study will be necessary to determine the potential for reuse of the barn.

A second option is to remove the barn and incorporate salvaged material from the barn into the new shelter structure. If a new building is constructed, a site 50 to 100 feet south of the existing barn should be considered. The steering committee agreed that the shelter at or near the barn site should be the hub of the park. They also felt that whether the barn is reused or a new shelter is built, the shelter needs to be a significant and architecturally pleasing building. For the time being, the best answer may be to discuss what is needed to stabilize the barn at this time.

Rock Lake Access

It is necessary to provide access to Rock Lake because with 1,300 feet of shoreline, visitors to the park will certainly attempt to reach the lake. The permissible level of lake access and how to discourage undesirable uses was discussed at length with the steering committee and the public.

As mentioned earlier, due to the high quality aquatic habitat in Korth Bay, the WDNR has designated the bay as a “sensitive area”. Therefore, activities such as aquatic herbicide application, the placement of piers, marinas, sand beds and dredging require WDNR approval. Boat piers are not recommended by this master plan due to concerns that increased boat traffic will damage the bay habitat. No motor boat access will be allowed to the park and educational efforts will have to be taken in order to make sure the public is aware of this policy. A Town of Lake Mills ordinance would need to be passed in order to implement a no-motor zone a certain distance from shore. The bay is also used extensively by migrating bird populations two times of the year. From late March to early April and late September through November, migrating birds may be disturbed by hikers along the lakeshore.



Example of possible Rock Lake overlook

Vehicular Access

There are three vehicular access points available on the site: Cedar Lane, Korth Lane and Elm Point Road. Access to the park from Korth Lane and Elm Point Rd was reviewed. Korth Lane provides a dramatic and sudden view of the lake at the crest of the second hill entering the park from the west. Korth Lane from the west property line, east into the site is on park property. West of the west property line, the road is on a 45' easement. The town currently maintains the road because of the existing residences and would continue maintenance as long as the road accesses those residences. The existing road is 16-18' wide and should be improved to 24' wide as a main park access. Any widening of the road at the CTH "S" intersection should occur to the south of the existing lane and provide a buffer between the realigned road and the existing residence.

The alternative access off Elm Point Road has a less dramatic view of the lake. The proposed entrance is located on the plan to provide a clear view of traffic on Elm Point Road. If Elm Point Road is selected as the access road, the steering committee feels it is important to locate the road on the western edge of the park property to limit the divisional nature of the road.

Cedar Lane is a cul-de-sac at the northeast corner of the site. Cedar Lane was not considered for vehicular access due to its indirect route through the subdivision to the park. Further, it does not offer good views of the lake as you enter the park. However, a bicycle and pedestrian connection to the park from Cedar Lane is important to serve the existing residences and to help recreate the historical circular walking route around the lake.

Water Quality Improvements through Erosion and Run Off Control

The Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department received a grant to implement management practices to help improve and protect water quality by reducing runoff into the lake. Locally known as the Rock Lake Priority Project, it is part of a statewide program called the Wisconsin Priority Watershed Program. Korth Park can play a role in achieving the goal of improved water quality through native vegetation restoration, wetland improvements and the creation of shoreland buffer areas.

Path Surfacing and Expected Uses

Different path surfaces were considered for use in the park, including asphalt, limestone screenings, wood chips and mowed lawn. The expected uses for the park trails are hiking, cross-country skiing, walking with strollers and the use of wheelchairs. Bicycles can be expected on some of the paths as a connection to the Glacial Drumlin trail has been requested. The surface types considered and their advantages and disadvantages are discussed in the table below.

Path Surface	Acceptable Uses	Advantages	Disadvantages
ASPHALT	Hiking, biking, wheelchairs, strollers, in line skates	If installed properly, it is a low maintenance surface. It is an "all weather" surface if plowed.	It is expensive to install, it encourages high-speed travel by cyclists, and it appears "unnatural" in the environment.
LIMESTONE SCREENINGS	Hiking, biking, wheelchairs and strollers	It is relatively inexpensive to install, it is an accessible surface except when very wet.	This surface requires regular maintenance every year or two depending on conditions.
WOOD CHIPS	Hiking, strollers	This surface is relatively inexpensive to install, helps make the trails walkable in wet weather, and appears natural.	It is not as accessible as the surfaces mentioned above. Can be labor intensive to maintain.
MOWED LAWN	Hiking, strollers, adventuresome bikers	Very inexpensive to install and maintain, looks good in a natural environment. This surface is easy to convert to a winter cross-country ski trail.	This is the least accessible surface of those listed. The trails will not be usable during some weather conditions.

The Fate of the Other Existing Buildings

In addition to the barn, the Korth property has several other existing buildings including the Korth home, a single car garage, wooden machine shed, metal pole building, calf barn and corn crib. The Korth home was discussed in the purchase agreement. It was agreed at that time that the family would be allowed to move the home off site sometime before March 31, 2001. If this proves to be unfeasible, the steering committee would like to consider selling the house for its salvage value. The cream city brick and limestone details at the doors and windows would be worth the effort to a salvage company.

The wood frame machine shed and corncrib were considered for reuse during the design process. The machine shed was considered for classroom and workshop space. The corn crib was considered to be a "farming relic" with possibilities as a picnic shelter but the steering committee decided to demolish these two buildings as well as the calf barn and the single car garage.

The metal pole building is in excellent condition and could be used to store vegetation restoration equipment and other maintenance storage needs. If it is decided that the building is no longer needed once the park is established, it may be demolished.

Future Additional Acquisition

The property located south of Korth Lane was the topic of much discussion during the planning process. The steering committee and the public would like to see the Korth property developed for passive uses such as picnics, hiking, bird watching, education and vegetation restoration. At the same time, they realize there is a need for active use facilities in the Lake Mills area. It is the consensus of those involved in the planning process that the 40 plus acres located south of Korth Lane would be an excellent addition to Korth Park and would provide an excellent location for active use facilities. At the August 24, 2000 public meeting, strong support was indicated for this acquisition.

Alternative Evaluation

Three preliminary concept plans were presented to the steering committee and public on August 24, 2000 to help the steering committee explore possibilities for the park. The plans were purposefully more tightly focused to encourage discussion of park program priorities.

One plan addressed strictly restoration, another recreation, and the third examined educational opportunities. The steering committee combined all three elements into two concept plans presented to the public on August 24, 2000. See Appendix E for the concept plans.

The Restoration and Recreation Concept Plan focused on restoration with more acres devoted to native plant communities. Recreation opportunities were included in the option in the form of trails, a large open picnic area, other limited open lawn and picnic areas, and three small open picnic shelters. Access was provided via Korth Lane and access to the Glacial Drumlin Trail was provided along an 8' wide bike/pedestrian path connecting to Elm Point Rd. Lake access was limited to a short boardwalk and pull in area for canoes and kayaks.

The Recreation and Restoration Concept Plan provided additional open lawn areas for recreation, expanded picnicking opportunities, several small open picnic shelters and an enclosed year round shelter building. Access to the park and access to the Glacial Drumlin Trail was provided off of Elm Point Rd. Lake access was enhanced by a small "lake house", a small open shelter on the shore, and a small pier for aquatic studies and canoe landing. Both options had an extensive trail system, a council ring for an outdoor classroom and a building for classroom and equipment storage.

Master Plan Recommendations

By combining the best features of the various concept plans and incorporating public and steering committee comments, SAA developed a final master plan for Korth County Park. The final master plan illustrates the site character in detail and portrays the nature of the vegetation restoration efforts, as well as the extent of the passive recreation areas and the proposed support facilities. The main design features in the master plan are discussed and illustrated below.

Transportation Issues

The main access to the park will be Korth Lane leading to the main parking lot located just north of the barn and just over the crest of the hill on the west slope of the hill. This location will "hide" the cars from the lake view. Korth lane will need to be widened to 24 feet with a 2-foot shoulder. This report recommends that Korth Lane be adjusted southward to create a perpendicular intersection with CTH "S" and to separate the entrance from the existing residence. Additional trees and shrubs will be needed to screen the park entrance from the residence. The private home located at the curve in Korth Lane will be served by a relocated driveway to offer some buffer between the park and the private property. Two smaller parking lots will be installed to serve the smaller picnic areas and shelters, one lot on Korth and one on Elm Point. To ease maintenance and provide for more efficient parking, all parking lots will have asphalt surfacing.

An accessible parking stall at the end of Cedar Lane will provide the only barrier free route to Rock Lake due to the hill sloping away from the lake to the west.

Pedestrian and bike paths will provide over 2 miles of hiking and biking opportunities throughout the park and through the various restored native plant communities. The master plan indicates the general vicinity of the trails and the proposed connections and flow. The actual final location of the trails should be staked in the field to avoid large trees and to find the most suitable terrain. The trails will be built with the gentlest slopes possible to provide accessibility and avoid future erosion problems.

Bicycle access to the park will be mainly from Elm Point Rd. and Cedar Lane. When the connection to the Glacial Drumlin Trail is made, trail users will be able to approach the park from the south and gain access to the main shelter area or continue through to Cedar Lane. Bicycles are also allowed on Korth Lane and could access the park from CTH "S".

Vegetation Restoration

Vegetation restoration efforts will be the most time consuming activity in the development of Korth County Park, but also the most rewarding. In terms of water quality improvements, bird and animal habit, and aesthetic enjoyment, a diversity of vegetation communities has many advantages. As mentioned above, the majority of the land is in crops or farmyard use at this time. This use has led to a lack of vegetative diversity on the site and erosion problems, particularly in the drainage courses and the barnyard area. Transforming the farm fields to woods and prairies will take time and during the conversion, certain fields will remain in cropland. The immediate goal should be to deal with apparent erosion areas around the barn and to begin the best management practices in the overall management of the farm fields with the tenant farmer.



Prairie restoration will involve a gradation from wetland prairie communities to mesic and dry prairie communities depending on the specific location within the park.

Woodland restoration will consist of the various types of woodlands found in Jefferson County at the time of white settlement. These include mesic, xeric and lowland forests. Shoreland vegetation restoration will consist of plants native to southern Wisconsin lakeshores (much of what is there now is native to Wisconsin) but more diversity will help with water quality and habitat improvement. Additional shoreline improvements include increasing the width of the buffer, removing exotic species and erosion abatement. See Appendix F for an existing lakeshore plant list.

Open lawn areas planted with Kentucky blue grass are planned to surround each picnic shelter and will allow recreational activities such as informal game playing, Frisbee throwing and kite flying.



Left and right: Shelter examples

Support Facilities

The large shelter will be the focus of the entire park. The steering committee would like to see this building include an open sided picnic area, restrooms, drinking water and public phone, meeting rooms, interpretive space, and maintenance storage areas. Exact programming and location decisions have not been made during this master planning process pending the outcome of future feasibility studies regarding the reuse of the barn. Three small open sided picnic shelters will provide additional picnicking and gathering spaces for smaller, less formal gatherings. These are scattered throughout the park in wooded and open locations and will not have restrooms or water. All shelter buildings will have electricity.

Utilities

Electricity lines within the park will be buried, including the main service lines into and out of the park. This is necessary due to WDNR development guidelines.

The park site is within the sanitary sewer district but the farmhouse is not currently hooked up to the sanitary sewer. Any new facilities will have to be attached to the system via the force main that crosses the site north to south just west of the lakeshore. The impact fee for connecting to the system will depend on the number of toilets and sinks in the restrooms and the amount of use they receive.

Future Acquisitions

A connection to the Glacial Drumlin Trail is extremely important to both the park and the trail. Trail users will be able to stop for a picnic or a look at the lake. Park users can leave their cars behind and explore the City of Lake Mills, Aztalan State Park, the Rock River and other highlights along the Glacial Drumlin Trail. In addition, the residents of Lake Mills can make use of the connection to create a pleasant and scenic circle tour around Rock Lake. The connection can be accomplished with an acquisition or an easement and should be located on high/dry land just adjacent to the wetland. The trail would then act as a buffer to protect the wetland from farm field runoff and as a transportation facility.

Both the public and the steering committee expressed strong support for the purchase of an additional 43.2 acres just west of the southern 1/2 of the park. The land is currently a farm field, relatively flat, devoid of woody vegetation and appears well drained. This property would be an excellent addition to the park for a number of reasons. The park currently lacks “exposure” along a public highway which makes it difficult to locate and can take away from its presence as a “public place”. The additional land would provide frontage along CTH “S” which would increase its exposure. Further, the land is suitable for more active recreation development. The parcel could be developed with some active sports fields and possibly additional asphalt trail for in-line skating. Since providing active use recreation facilities is usually a local park function, perhaps the county, town and City of Lake Mills could partner in the acquisition and development efforts. It is the consensus of those involved in the planning process that the 40 plus acres located south of Korth Lane would be an excellent addition to Korth Park. At the August 24, 2000 public meeting, unanimous support was indicated for the acquisition.

Treatment of Korth Bay

As mentioned earlier, Korth Bay is home to a diverse community of aquatic plant species. The bay provides food and habitat to the aquatic animal life of Rock Lake. Because of the significance of the bay to the vitality of the lake’s fish population as a crucial spawning and feeding ground, the WDNR has designated Korth Bay as a “sensitive area”. Therefore, the area is protected from aquatic herbicide application. Also, placement of piers, marinas, sand beds, dredging or any other lakebed activity within the designated sensitive area requires DNR approval. To help further protect the bay from motor boat traffic this master plan recommends the marking of boat channels to direct traffic and limit damage to the bulrush beds. Additional buoys should also be considered to help boaters identify the limits of the bay and the no wake zone. There will be no motorboat access to the park from the Bay.

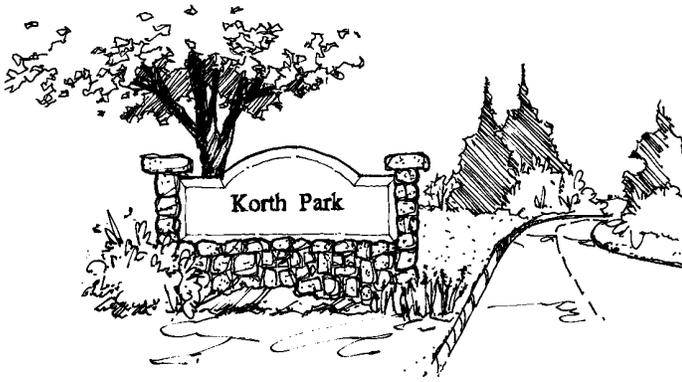
Two wood deck overlooks will be installed along the lakeshore. The general locations shown on the master plan have been selected because of existing breaks in the vegetation. When it is time to install the overlooks, an expert on the bay via a field visit should select the specific locations.

Boat piers in the bay were considered during the planning process. However, the steering committee decided against the piers due to potential damage to the bay by increased boat traffic.

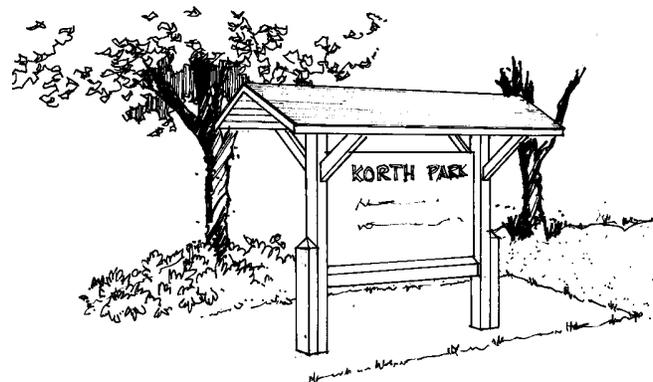
Signage

Korth County Park will require several types of signs to assist visitors in the enjoyment of the park (see sketches on page 20). Entry signs will be needed at the Korth Lane, Cedar Lane and the Elm Point Road entry points. The Korth Lane entrance is considered the main entrance and should have the largest sign. Interpretive signs will be necessary for the many stories the park has to tell, such as its use by Native Americans, its life as an active farm after settlement, and the ongoing vegetative restoration efforts.

Regulatory and wayfinding signs will help visitors use the park with the least impact on the land and disturbance to other users. Materials used for the signs should be carefully considered to provide continuity with other signs and elements within the park. Temporary signs should be placed seasonally to alert visitors to the importance of Korth Park as a stopover point during waterfowl migration. These signs should indicate the importance of leaving the birds undisturbed.



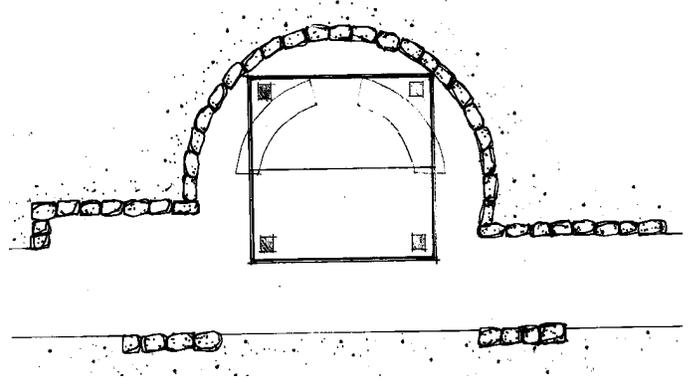
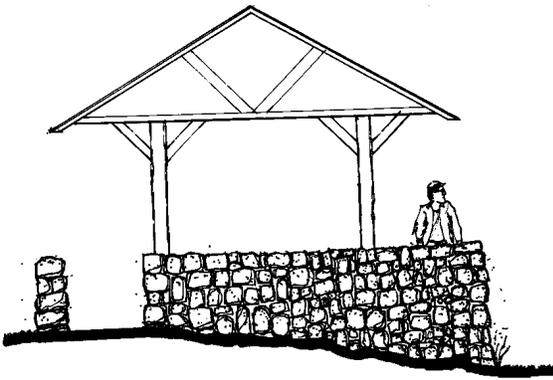
PARK IDENTIFICATION SIGN



INFORMATION KIOSK

Recreational Opportunities

- Open lawn areas are provided in the immediate vicinity of the picnic shelters to allow room for informal games of kickball or softball, kite flying, Frisbee tossing, etc.
- A small playground will be installed near the large shelter. The playground will serve families using the large shelter for picnics and neighbors walking to the park on a summer's evening with small children will enjoy the equipment. Bicyclists visiting the park from the Glacial Drumlin Trail with children in tow will appreciate the diversion and an opportunity to let the children stretch their legs.
- The extensive network of trails in the park provides hiking and cross-country skiing opportunities. Close to 2.5 miles of trails are planned with a variety of surfaces ranging from asphalt and limestone to mown grass and boardwalks. People use hiking trails for many reasons such as bird and wild life watching, exercising, dog walking, or just getting to a particular location such as an overlook or the council ring. The trails also serve as a fire break to help control the prescribed burning necessary to a healthy prairie plant community.
- A sledding hill will be "installed" by simply mowing the prairie grasses at the end of fall each year to clear an east facing slope. The mowed area should be close to the main parking lot to allow easy access.
- The master plan calls for four independent picnicking areas. The main picnic area will be associated with the large shelter. This area will supply grills, tables, shade trees, excellent views of the lake, short grass play areas, a playground, parking, restrooms and water. The smaller picnic areas will provide small open sided shelters and everything listed above except the play equipment, rest rooms and water. The separate picnic areas allow for many functions to occur at once in the park without interfering with each other. The large shelter and perhaps one of the small shelters could be available on a rental basis, while the other small shelters could be available on a "first come, first serve basis".
- Overlooks provide opportunities to view the lake and surrounding countryside from the car or on foot.
- A council ring is planned for next to the large, "open grown" oak located just east of the barn. This will be an excellent location for classroom discussions, family gatherings, or club meetings. It will consist of a 25 to 30 foot diameter limestone seating wall ring, with grass or limestone pavers for the floor and possibly a fire ring in the center.

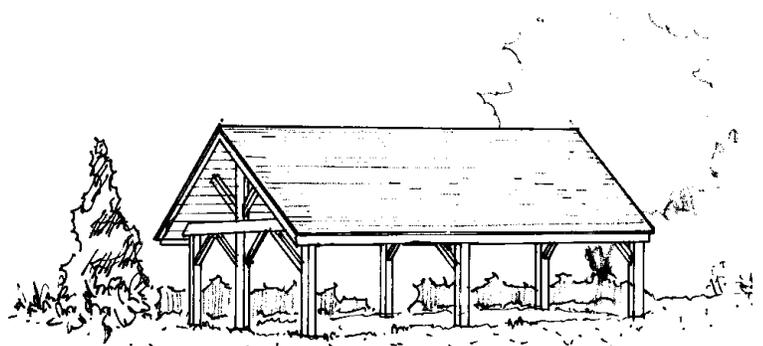


Overlook: Perspective and plan views

- Hands on restoration opportunities will abound as the vegetation restoration efforts will take years and many hours of volunteer labor to accomplish. At each of the three public meetings held during the planning process various members of the public expressed a great deal of interest in helping with this, as well as other aspects of the park development.
- Bird watching, star gazing and general enjoyment of nature is another recreational opportunity offered by Korth Park.
- Education opportunities for local school groups, 4H clubs, boy and girl scout troops will be abundant at Korth Park. The vegetation restoration efforts, boardwalks, interpretive signs and information kiosks are just some of the many projects clubs and school groups can get involved in developing. These “hands on” projects present tremendous learning experiences for the children and adults involved.



Council Ring



Picnic shelter

Implementation and Phasing Plan

The implementation plan for Korth Park outlines an ordered program of facility development. The proposed park program is divided into phases that reflect each facility's relative development priority. Specific site construction activities are identified and organized to facilitate an ordered site development. See Appendix 'E' for a detailed cost estimate. The cost given is in year 2000 dollars and is for construction work only; it does not include design and engineering costs.

Philosophical Basis for the Phasing Plan

Several concepts guided the park development priority list. They included both Facility Development Issues and Operational Issues.

Facility Issues

- The top priority is to get the park “up and running” as soon as possible. This includes having a parking lot and a short trail system through an establishing prairie and the drive-in overlook installed as soon as possible. This will generate interest and support for continued development.
- Begin vegetative restoration efforts in a piecemeal fashion, but as soon as possible. The landscape proposed for this park will take a long time to become established.
- Rent the farm fields for cropland until the restoration effort on each individual field is ready to begin. During the interim between the land purchase and the vegetative restoration efforts, work with the farmers to implement best management practices to improve the water quality of Rock Lake. Both a conservation plan subsequent conservation practices need to be implemented while the land is rented as cropland. The plan and practices should be coordinated with the Land and Water Conservation Department.
- Buffer tree planting should occur in the early phases so trees can establish themselves before the number of people visiting the park increases. The cost estimate included in Appendix F is categorized by work type.
- Budget estimates for later phases in the development process should include increases to account for inflation.

Operational Issues

- The Korth County Park Master Plan provides an outline and a vision for the development of the park. Many decisions will need to be made during the phased development of the park to make the vision a reality. A “Friends of Korth Park” group or a subcommittee to the County Park Board would be an effective means of providing a constant effort toward park development and a constant vision.
- Pursue grant funding through the Priority Watershed Program, Stewardship, LAWCON and other available sources.
- Partner with local groups and individuals to garner volunteer efforts. Groups such as the boy or girl scouts, local historical society, gardening clubs, birding clubs, 4-H, service groups and school children can play a big role in the development of the park.

Phasing Plan

Phase One

- Remove various buildings, grade and seed foundation areas
- Future barn use deliberation and determination
- Investigate Glacial Drumlin Trail connection
- Begin wetland restoration work in the southeast corner of the park to help water quality
- Begin forest management on north end of the property
- Install trail from north cul de sac to Elmpoint Road, the Rock Lake Loop
- Install shelter in wooded area
- Begin shoreline restoration
- Trees for neighborhood buffer at north end
- Farm remainder of farm fields
- Erosion abatement on east side of barn
- Park Dedication Ceremony
- Lay out upper parking lot and automobile overlook, remove trees and other debris
- Install entrance sign along Korth Lane

Phase Two

- Bury overhead utilities
- Install northwest parking lot and small shelter
- Install Savanna Loop trail to near the top of the western hill
- Install the 50 car parking lot on top of eastern hill
- Continue wetland and begin prairie restoration work
- Install one overlook on the Rock Lake Trail
- Plant trees to buffer SE neighbors

Phase Three

- Improve Korth Lane
- Plant trees along Korth Lane
- Plant prairie west of old home site
- Install trails through the woods
- Prepare interpretive plan
- Install directional sign on CTH 'S'
- Continue wetland, woodland, and prairie restoration work

(Phase Three continued)

- Gravel Medley Loop
- Install Glacial Drumlin trail connection
- Maximize trail development
- Continue shoreline restoration work

Phase Four

- Build main shelter or remodel the barn, install play equipment and picnic area
- Mow in remaining Savanna Loop Trail
- Continue tree planting efforts
- Install additional benches along the trails
- Begin to install interpretive signs
- Pave Korth Lane, parking lot, and overlook
- Continue restoration effort of woodland, prairie, and wetland
- Install second lakeshore overlook

Phase Five

- Install prairie south of existing tractor road
- Install boardwalks through the wetlands
- Install open lawn, shelter sign, and parking lot on Elm Point
- Continue restoration efforts

Phase Six

- Install Prairie Loop
- Gravel connector trail through park
- Continue vegetation restoration efforts

Funding Options

The need for public support and funding is essential to implementing a park master plan. To achieve public support, overall community awareness of the park's unique recreational opportunities and benefits must be cultivated. Once achieved, public support translates into political support in the budgeting process and increases the chance for private funding support.

Federal funding assistance, once the mainstay of major park development, was substantially reduced in the 1990s, leaving capital appropriations and bonding as the major sources of public funding. However, new federal funding programs are being developed. The Conservation and Restoration Act promises to restore the federal role in local park development, but the details are not yet available.

Public Funding Programs

1. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Stewardship Program
The Stewardship Program was created in 1989 by the Wisconsin Legislature and provides for a 10 year, \$250 million fund to enhance the state's outdoor recreational resources. Up to 50% of the cost of proposed projects is paid for by the state with the remaining share paid by the local government in cash or in kind services. The second 10-year round of Stewardship funding is underway. However, rules and grant guidelines are still being developed. Contact the Southern District Office for details.
2. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Lake Planning Grant
The county would be eligible for 75% (up to \$10,000 for any single project) of the cost of planning for the collection and analysis of information needed to manage lakes. Statewide, projects are ranked according to:
 1. the amount of public use/access
 2. the degree to which the project will provide local decision-making in the formation of a strategy to enhance or maintain the lake's water quality
 3. the degree to which the project enhances knowledge of the lake's water quality
 4. the degree to which the project will enhance the lake's watershed
 5. the degree to which the project compliments the use of other community funds for the project and other lake management efforts
 6. the level of support from other management units for the project and whether the project is the first one for the lake
3. Cost Sharing of Best Management Practices through the Rock Lake Priority Project, Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD)
 - Shoreline Buffers (70%)
 - Shoreline Habitat Restoration (70%)
 - Streambank Shaping and Seeding (70%)
 - Other Shoreline Protection (70%)
 - Wetland Restoration (70%)

Other Public Assistance

1. Urban Forestry Grants

These are 50% cost share grants (cash or in kind services) that range from \$1000 to \$25,000. The program is designed to improve a community's capacity to manage its trees. Projects that help preserve, protect, expand or improve the urban forest are also considered. More information is available from a DNR representative. The grant program requires an "Intent to Apply" form be submitted; this is usually due June 30 of each year.

2. Wisconsin Conservation Corps (WCC)

The WCC is a state agency that employs 18-25 year olds to implement conservation and community development projects across the state. The cost of labor is free but project sponsors are required to provide tools, equipment and materials to complete the project. Any unit of government or nonprofit organization can be a sponsor. Contact Larry Corsi, the WCC Projects Coordinator at 30 W. Mifflin, Suite 406, Madison, WI; (608) 266-7730.

3. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)

A role of the ACE is to provide earthwork assistance for public projects while providing and practice for their crews. Their work may consist of stripping topsoil, balancing cut and fill, topsoil placement and finish grading. They provide the manpower and equipment that are necessary, while the municipality furnishes the necessary fuels and other materials. For more information, contact the ACE at Army Corps 961 Engin. Bn., 5326 W. Silver Spring Dr., Milwaukee, WI; (414) 438-6229.

Private Funding Sources

1. Private Grants

A comprehensive listing of private funds available for a wide variety of purposes can be found in the Foundation Directory, published annually by the Foundation Center, New York. An excellent source for information on environmental grant funding is Environmental Grantmaking Foundations published by Resources for Global Sustainability, Inc., Rochester, New York.

2. Business/Corporate Sponsorship

Many businesses are interested in bettering the communities they work in, enhancing public relations and promoting their products. Financing park projects as well as providing promotional materials such as t-shirts and brochures gives the business positive visibility.

3. Nonprofit Corporations

A "Friends of Korth County Park" nonprofit organization, comprised of individuals willing to donate their technical, business or financial expertise to help develop and manage the park could be established as an umbrella group to promote and assist the development of the park in general. A group could also be formed to help with a specific aspect of the park, such as interpreting the farmhouse. According to the DNR's Friends Group Handbook, these groups can provide and coordinate volunteer services, provide financial support for projects, and raise money through membership fees, donations, sales and special events. Nonprofit organizations are also eligible to receive most government and private grants.

4. Local Interest Group Contribution
Labor and monetary contributions from service groups, softball or other athletic leagues, scouts and other organizations can be solicited for park projects such as maintenance, planting and maintenance of floral beds and construction projects. “Adopt-A-Park” programs are a structured way of obtaining long term commitments from organizations or individuals.
5. Fundraising Events
Fundraising drives and benefits, festivals, art fairs, outdoor concerts or plays, flea markets, etc. are ways to raise money to develop and maintain park facilities. Gift catalogs that list amenities and construction items are a useful method for soliciting donations that allows the contributor to purchase a specific park feature for commemorative or other purposes.
6. Tree Planting Promotions
Arbor Day, Adopt-a-tree, memorial trees and business gift trees are ways to implement and maintain landscape improvements.

Building Public Support

The following strategies for achieving public support focus on creating awareness of the unique recreational opportunities to be found at Korth County Park.

1. Visibility campaigns
“People for Parks” and “Adopt a Park” programs can introduce people to the activities and benefits of a new park facility.
2. Neighborhood and special interest group briefings
Periodic meetings with neighborhood and special interest groups, such as the Rock Lake Improvement Association, acquaint them with the scope of the proposed park development, the intended development schedule and the important role their active support will have on the park’s development.
3. Media coverage
Furnish local media resources with information on the park planning process, master plans, park graphics, development priorities, construction progress and available recreation facilities.
4. Special events
Encourage local organizational use of the park site for their special events and sponsor special events to draw attention to the new park facilities.
5. Promotional materials
Throughout the planning and implementation phases of the park’s development, promotional materials (plans, sketches, facility and activity lists, or photos of completed facilities in use) should be available to potential park sponsors. Brochures are useful for promotion and fundraising.



Conclusion

With the purchase of the Korth Park property, the Jefferson County Board has made a commitment to preserving open space, views and wildlife habitat, and a piece of the rich history of Jefferson County. The site master plan and report signify the beginning of the long but rewarding process of landscape restoration and park development. If the County works to harness the energy and enthusiasm expressed for this park during the planning stage, the development process should proceed smoothly and lead to the creation of a highly valued site that celebrates and preserves the natural beauty of Jefferson County.

