

Dodge County Land Resources & Parks Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Dodge County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Bill Ehlenbeck, Director

DATE: January 21, 2022

RE: LRP Projects for ARPA Funding

I am submitting project proposals for 2 major Land Resources and Parks Department projects for your consideration. The Gold Star Memorial Trail – Phase 3 and Park Boundary Expansion at Ledge and Astico Parks. These projects have significant legacy type impacts which are well aligned for ARPA funding.

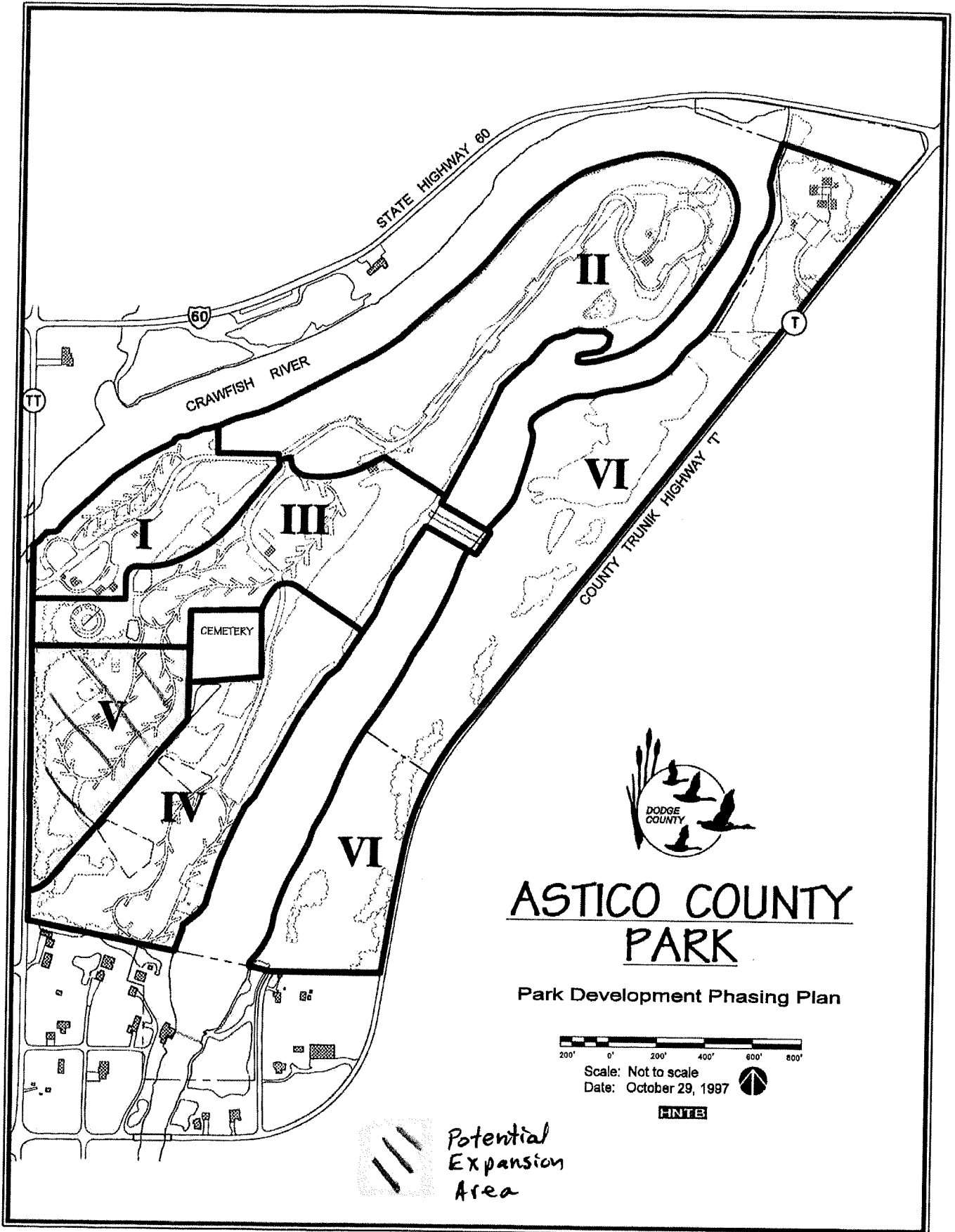
Additionally, I have a number of other smaller type projects with less significant impact but still important. The vault toilet projects can be utilized as filler projects if any ARPA funds remain uncommitted by the end of 2024. These projects can be committed to and developed on a short timeline. The other projects are much larger and require more lead time but can be submitted in more detail for consideration if funds remain available.

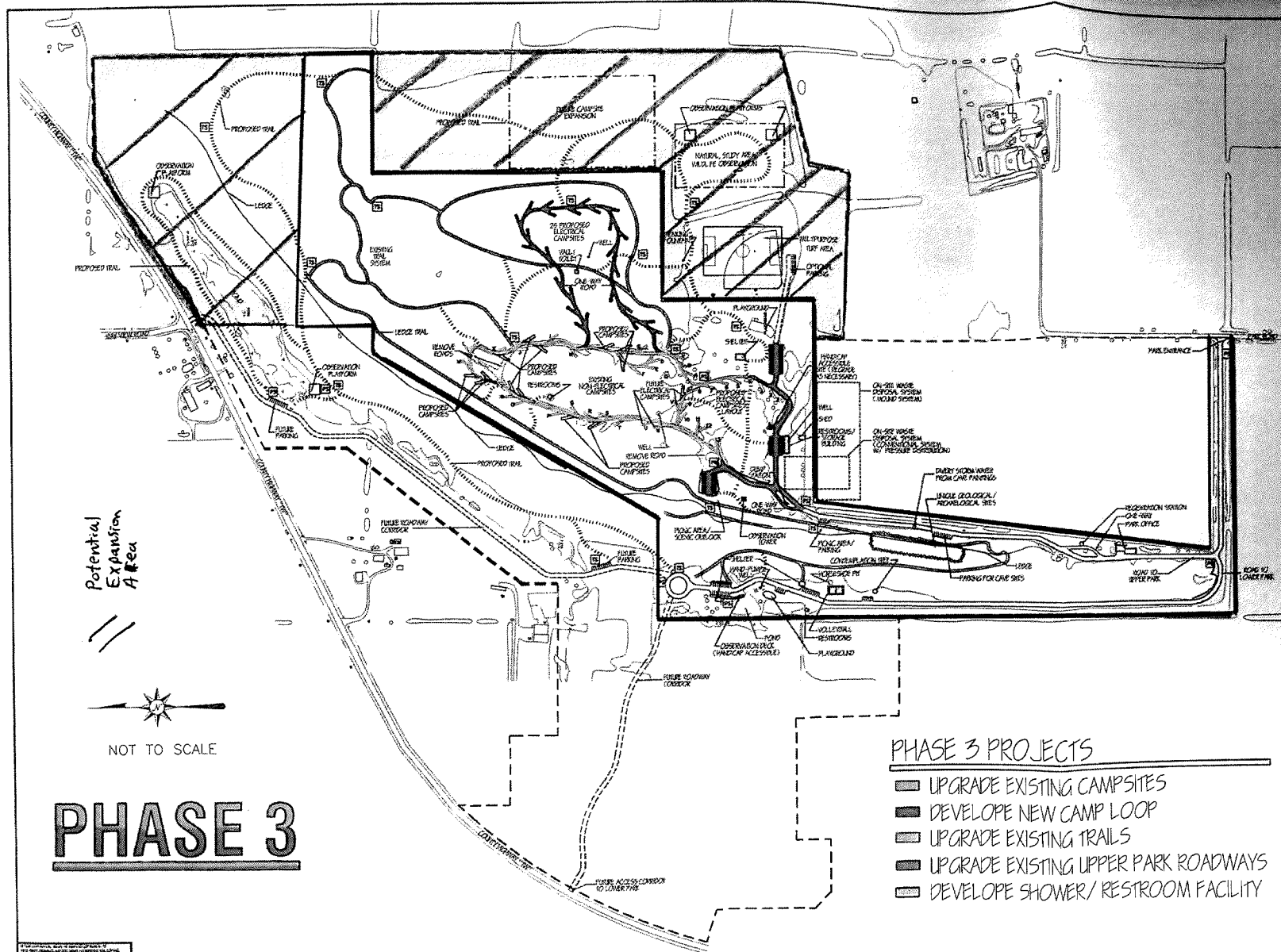
A list of other projects that should be eligible for ARPA funding are itemized below:

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	COMMENT
Harnischfeger North End Vault Toilet	\$65,000	
Astico Park East Side Vault Toilet	\$60,000	
Harnischfeger Park Clubhouse Expansion	\$300,000	Plans not yet developed
Harnischfeger Park Gazebo/Band shell	\$60,000	Enhancement for Fallfest activities, additional rental facility
Nitschke Mounds Park – West Side Development and Mounds Education Enhancement Education	\$50,000 - \$500,000	Plans not yet developed
Replace Remaining Vault Toilets	\$400,000	6 units remaining to be replaced (4 at Astico and 2 at Ledge)
Replace and Add Drinking Fountains with Bottle Fillers	\$50,000	(Astico: 3, Ledge: 2, Harnischfeger: 3, Derge: 1)

Please reach out to me with any questions or for additional information.

ARPA FUNDING REQUEST	
PROJECT	PARK EXPANSION - LEDGE AND ASTICO PARKS
SUBMITTER	Land Resources & Parks Department Bill Ehlenbeck – Director: behlenbeck@co.dodge.wi.us ; 920-386-3960
COST ESTIMATE	Astico Park (11 acres) - \$100,000 estimate (1 owner) Ledge Park (~70 acres) - \$630,000 estimate (5 different owners)
SUMMARY / DESCRIPTION	Acquire additional land adjacent to Astico and Ledge County Parks to expand boundaries and recreational opportunities.
PROBLEM / NEED ADDRESSED	The County Parks have seen large increases in use in recent years and even greater pressure on available park facilities has resulted from the pandemic. This is a similar trend around the country – more people are seeking more outdoor experiences and activities in parks and trails since the onset of the pandemic. Day use such as trails use and picnics have seen the greatest visitation increases and camping which was already at a high demand has increased to a point where it is near impossible to get a campsite on weekends through most of the summer unless reserved weeks in advance. It is no longer just the holiday weekends that are sold out. Many campers were turned away in 2021 due to lack of availability. Vehicle entrance counts saw a 35% increase from 2019 to 2020. The Master Plans for both of these parks have recommended certain adjacent properties that should be acquired for expansion of recreational facilities or preservation and protection of park boundaries and character.
IMPLEMENTATION / FEASIBILITY	Astico Park acquisition involves an 11 acre field surrounded by park property and a cemetery. The 1997 Master Plan identifies the property as a potential campsite expansion area with an open play area. The need for open play areas and more campsites is still a need. Additionally this is a key property to protect the future character and use of the park. Landowner interest to sell and sufficient funding are needed for this project. Ledge Park acquisition involves roughly 70 acres of mostly woodlands, some wetland/pond area and some open fields. The Master Plan identifies the properties for trails expansion and open play areas. Landowner interest to sell and sufficient funding are needed for this project.
SHORT / LONG TERM VALUE BENEFIT	Much like the original park acquisitions and additions to the parks over the years, the new acquisitions would provide immediate availability value to current park visitors while ensuring the property will remain available for future generations.





SITE MASTER PLAN PROJECT
 PHASE 3 PROJECTS

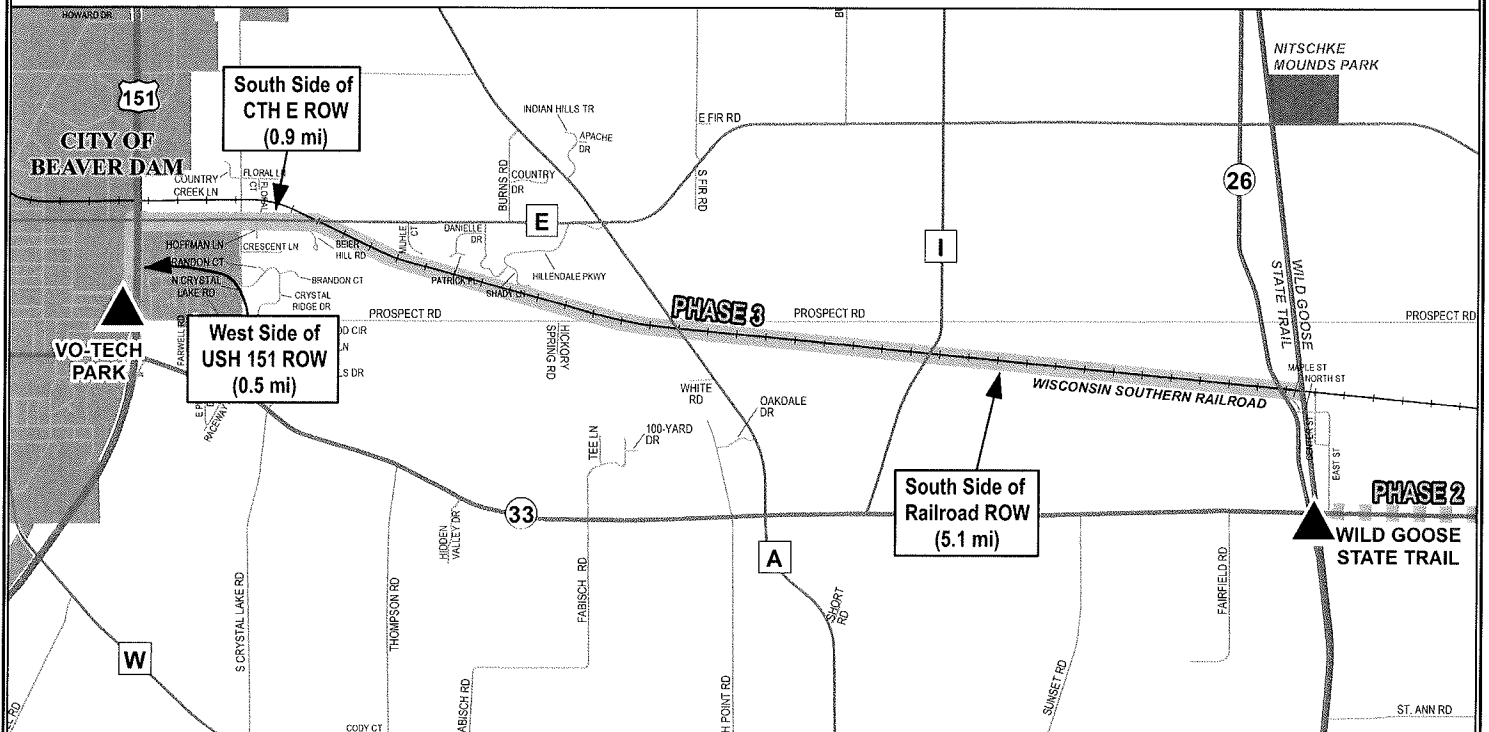
DODGE COUNTY LEDGE PARK
 DODGE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

ARPA FUNDING REQUEST																																										
PROJECT	GOLD STAR MEMORIAL TRAIL – PHASE 3																																									
SUBMITTER	Land Resources & Parks Department Bill Ehlenbeck – Director: behlenbeck@co.dodge.wi.us; 920-386-3960																																									
COST ESTIMATE	PHASE 3 (Wild Goose Trail to Beaver Dam) – \$4.2 million (current priority for ARPA funding) PHASE 2B (Horicon to Wild Goose Trail) - \$1.4 million (potential future ARPA funding request) PHASE 5 (Horicon Marsh) - \$50,000 - \$250,000 (potential future ARPA funding request)																																									
SUMMARY / DESCRIPTION	Roughly 10 miles remain to be designed and constructed in order to complete the original Gold Star Memorial Trail concept of a 14 mile bicycle and pedestrian trail connection between Mayville, Horicon, Beaver Dam (and Juneau via the Wild Goose Trail). The Trail will mostly consist of a 10' wide asphalt paved path separated from vehicular traffic, creating a safer active transportation and recreational use corridor for all ages and physical abilities. At this time, only Phase 3 is requested for ARPA funding. Phase 3 is designated to follow the railroad corridor from the Wild Goose Trail in Minnesota Junction to County Road E just east of Beaver Dam. The route then follows County Road E/Burnett Street into the City of Beaver Dam connecting with Moraine Park and Beaver Dam High School. The trailhead will be either VoTech Park to the south or Patrick Parker Conley Park to the north. The Phases of the Gold Star Memorial Trail are identified below. The 3 remaining Phases that need funding commitments to proceed are shaded. <table><tr><th>PHASE</th><th>SEGMENT</th><th>MILES</th><th>STATUS</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Mayville to Horicon Marsh Visitor Center</td><td>2.1</td><td>Completed/Opened in 2019</td></tr><tr><td>2A</td><td>City of Horicon (Whitty Park to West Washington St. Business District – City Limits)</td><td>1</td><td>Planned in 2022 by City of Horicon</td></tr><tr><td>2B</td><td>Horicon City Limits to Wild Goose State Trail</td><td>2.2</td><td>Federal TAP Grant Appl Pending</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Wild Goose State Trail to City of Beaver Dam</td><td>6.5</td><td>Future project – awaiting funding</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>City of Horicon (Horicon Marsh to Whitty Park)</td><td>1.3</td><td>Completed/Opened in 2019</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Horicon Marsh Connection (City of Horicon to Horicon Marsh Visitor Center)</td><td>1.3</td><td>Future project – awaiting planning, DNR review/approval and funding</td></tr></table>			PHASE	SEGMENT	MILES	STATUS	1	Mayville to Horicon Marsh Visitor Center	2.1	Completed/Opened in 2019	2A	City of Horicon (Whitty Park to West Washington St. Business District – City Limits)	1	Planned in 2022 by City of Horicon	2B	Horicon City Limits to Wild Goose State Trail	2.2	Federal TAP Grant Appl Pending	3	Wild Goose State Trail to City of Beaver Dam	6.5	Future project – awaiting funding	4	City of Horicon (Horicon Marsh to Whitty Park)	1.3	Completed/Opened in 2019	5	Horicon Marsh Connection (City of Horicon to Horicon Marsh Visitor Center)	1.3	Future project – awaiting planning, DNR review/approval and funding											
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PROBLEM / NEED ADDRESSED	There has long been a need to have safe bike and pedestrian facilities for active transportation, recreation, healthy lifestyles, nature-based tourism attraction and general improved quality of life. These types of facilities have been identified as priorities, policies or recommendations in plans adopted by Dodge County (Comprehensive Plan, Bike and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, Outdoor Rec and Open Space Plan) and have been incorporated into plans and visions of local communities. The Covid pandemic has further highlighted the healthy lifestyles need and demand. The Gold Star Memorial Trail – Phase 1 experienced a nearly 66% increase in use from 2019 to 2020. (April – December). This is a similar trend around the country – more people are seeking more outdoor experiences and activities in trails and parks since the onset of the pandemic. The Phase 2B and Phase 3 projects in particular will provide the community residents and visitors of Beaver Dam and Horicon with safer bike/pedestrian access into and out of their communities for all ages and physical abilities. Similar to reports around the country, a massive increase in use of trails in 2020 in reaction to the pandemic was experienced and documented through our counters. Wild Goose Trail (Hwy 60): 96.4% increase in use from 2019 to 2020 (April - July). 8,987 counts in 2020: 4,576 counts in 2019 Gold Star Trail (East end): 65.7% increase in use from 2019 to 2020 (April - December) 7,973 counts in 2020: 4,811 counts in 2019 <table><caption>GOLD STAR MEMORIAL TRAIL - EAST END TRAIL COUNTS 2019 vs 2020</caption><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>2019 Count (approx.)</th><th>2020 Count (approx.)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Jan</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Feb</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Mar</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Apr</td><td>100</td><td>1000</td></tr><tr><td>May</td><td>200</td><td>1500</td></tr><tr><td>Jun</td><td>300</td><td>1800</td></tr><tr><td>Jul</td><td>400</td><td>1600</td></tr><tr><td>Aug</td><td>300</td><td>1200</td></tr><tr><td>Sep</td><td>200</td><td>1000</td></tr><tr><td>Oct</td><td>100</td><td>800</td></tr><tr><td>Nov</td><td>50</td><td>400</td></tr><tr><td>Dec</td><td>20</td><td>100</td></tr></tbody></table> E-bikes (electric bikes) are becoming increasingly popular nationwide and will lead to an even greater need for safer bike and pedestrian facilities. E-bikes allow someone of any age and physical condition to ride and enjoy the outdoors with less stress and exertion and allows for greater distances to be travelled. Especially as our population ages, there will be an increasing need for facilities that encourage and help achieve healthier lives and travel between our communities by means other than cars.			Month	2019 Count (approx.)	2020 Count (approx.)	Jan	0	0	Feb	0	0	Mar	0	0	Apr	100	1000	May	200	1500	Jun	300	1800	Jul	400	1600	Aug	300	1200	Sep	200	1000	Oct	100	800	Nov	50	400	Dec	20	100
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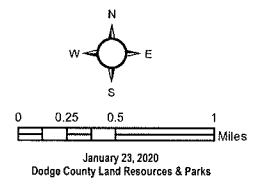
IMPLEMENTATION / FEASIBILITY / SUPPORT	The Gold Star Memorial Trail thus far has exemplified what a strong coalition of local citizens, business leaders, municipalities and Dodge County can accomplish together. This successful public-private partnership, including key fundraising and support from local Gold Star Families and the Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc., resulted in the completion of Phase 1 and Phase 4 in 2019 (3.4 miles), as well as statewide recognition and interest. This partnership and success with Phase 1 & 4 has paved the way for reaching the goal of completing the entire 14 mile Gold Star Memorial Trail and connecting key communities in the heart of Dodge County. Other nearby communities have expressed interest in eventually connecting to the trail as well. PHASE 3: - Priority for ARPA funding: If ARPA funds are committed to Phase 3, then project design and engineering could commence immediately in 2022. Trail design will identify any needed easements and approval for use of rail right of way would be sought from WI Department of Transportation (WISDOT) (<i>preliminary discussions with WISDOT have taken place regarding feasibility of rail right of way use</i>). Upon securing easements and corridor approval, bidding and construction could commence. Construction could be completed by 2024. The size and cost of this project might make it unattainable without ARPA funds or without lengthy fundraising campaigns and/or future County funding commitments (Sales Tax or other options). Without ARPA funds, the Phase 3 connection to Beaver Dam will be pushed further to the future after completion of Phase 2B. <i>Phase 2B is currently being submitted for a Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant for 80% of design and development costs. However, ARPA funds cannot be used as local match, so at this time ARPA funding is not being requested for Phase 2B. If the project is not selected for the TAP grant this Spring/Summer, ARPA funds would then be needed/requested at that time in order to move the project forward.</i> <i>PHASE 5 through Horicon Marsh will likely utilize existing trails and not result in added facilities only a change in uses, therefore eligibility for ARPA funding is unclear. ARPA funding is not being requested for Phase 5 at this time.</i>
SHORT / LONG TERM VALUE BENEFIT	This project has received significant support as a public-private partnership and is viewed as an important investment in Dodge County's future. The GSMT has immediate value as an active transportation route, healthy lifestyle infrastructure, recreational tourism and economic development asset and offers quality of life enhancements. A completed trail will eventually be woven into the fabric of our communities enjoyed for generations who will appreciate that this investment was made much like our current residents and visitors appreciate the Wild Goose Trail and our parks. This project is primed for success due to its outstanding local support, noteworthy connectivity, and ability to synchronize with regional multi-modal efforts. There have been extensive endorsements from local communities, local businesses, service organizations, schools, youth groups, and legislators. Additionally, the memorial aspect of this facility for our fallen service members provides deeper significance to the trail on a local, state and federal level. It serves as a happy place to help remember our local heroes who gave all and the sacrifices made by their families.
OTHER	See dodgeparks.com or goldstarmemorialtrailwi.org/ for additional trail resources and information.



GOLD STAR MEMORIAL TRAIL HORICON TO BEAVER DAM CONCEPT PHASE 3 - WILD GOOSE STATE TRAIL TO BEAVER DAM



▲ TRAILHEADS --- Existing or Proposed
GSMT PHASE 3 ROUTE CONCEPT (6.5 MILES) --- Wild Goose State Trail to Vo-Tech Park-Beaver Dam



January 23, 2020
Dodge County Land Resources & Parks

