

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

Date: December 29, 2021

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Guy Smith, Parks

Subject: Northwest Trail Connections Plan

File Type: Informational Report

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**BACKGROUND**

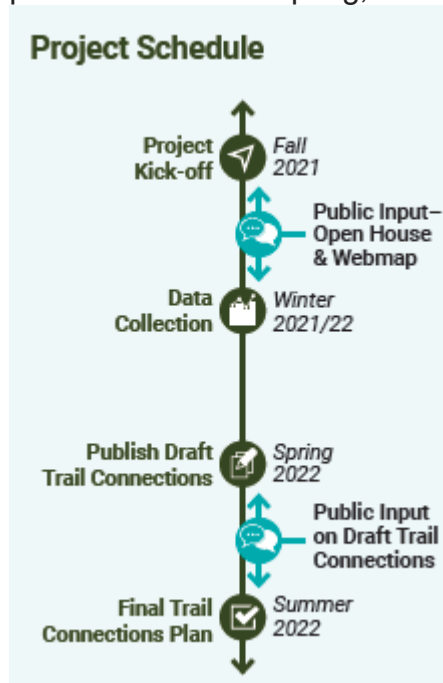
Parks has embarked on a Northwest Trail Connections planning process to address trail inequities on the Northwest side of the County. This project is funded by a Transportation Alternatives grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) with a maximum federal participation of \$49,600 and a local match minimum of \$12,400.

The 135-mile Oak Leaf Trail—a system of paved trails, park drives, and municipal streets—ties together parks and dozens of neighborhoods, villages, and cities throughout the County. The Oak Leaf Trail network is easily accessible to and heavily used by tens of thousands of Milwaukee County residents. However, many neighborhoods, particularly majority-Black neighborhoods, are not directly connected to the trail network, and, as a result, many of these residents cannot easily and safely access the trails or take advantage of the amenities they connect to.

The Northwest Trails Connections Plan will begin to address the inequitable access to trails and identify future trails and connections in northwest Milwaukee and surrounding areas. Parks is working with residents and stakeholders to better understand how to improve the trail system in the area and how to better connect residents to parks, employment and commercial areas, trails, and other nearby amenities. Public input is a cornerstone of the project with multiple methods of input available including, traditional public input meetings, an online interactive map, and in-person interactive surveys at community events and meetings in partnership with nonprofit organizations. As of November 1st, one public information meeting has been held, over 100 online surveys have been received, and the Community Advisory Committee for the plan has met once.

The final Plan will present a vision for walk and bike connectivity in northwest Milwaukee and the surrounding area and prioritize specific projects for implementation based on equity considerations, input from the public, feasibility, and other factors. Supervisors and their constituents are welcome to provide input via the online map (<https://tooledesign.github.io/NWTConnections/>) through Dec

15<sup>th</sup> and can request the project team to attend a local meeting to give an update and gather input throughout the duration of the project (parkstrails@milwaukeecountywi.gov). Project updates will be posted to the Parks Project page (<https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Parks/What-We-Do/Planning--Development>). The project schedule for 2022 is data collection including public input through winter, circulate a draft for public comment in spring, and finalize the plan in Summer 2022.



Related File No's:	20-874
Previous Action Date(s):	1-11-2021

### **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

This project aligns with many elements of the strategic plan:

1C: The consultant on the project is a woman owned business.

2A: Locating future trails in underserved areas can advance health equity.

2C: A racial equity lens was applied in the development of the project and will be applied in the ranking of proposed projects.

3A: By investing in trails in underserved areas, Milwaukee County can “Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities” by creating local opportunities for daily physical activity.

### **VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES**

Ramsey Radakovich, Operations Manager

### **PREPARED BY:**

Jessica Wineberg, Trails Coordinator

**APPROVED BY:**

Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Existing Conditions and Context Memo

cc: David Crowley, County Executive  
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office  
Sheldon Wasserman, Parks, Energy & Environment Chair, Supervisor District 3  
Steven Shea, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Vice-Chair, Supervisor District 8  
Felesia Martin, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 7  
Sylvia Ortiz-Velez, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 12  
Liz Sumner, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 1  
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk  
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services  
Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS  
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS  
Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office  
Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office  
Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk  
Ciara Miller, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller  
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB