



A Case For A Healthy Park And Recreation System!

Neenah Rotary
November 18, 2010

Amanda Geiser, Recreation Supervisor &
Michael Kading, Director of Park and Recreation
Town of Menasha – Park and Recreation Department

Why?

- ❑ Provides Public Health Benefits
- ❑ Provides Social Benefits
- ❑ Provides Environmental Benefits
- ❑ Provides Economic Benefits



Provides Public Health Benefits

Center for Disease Control (CDC) studies indicate...

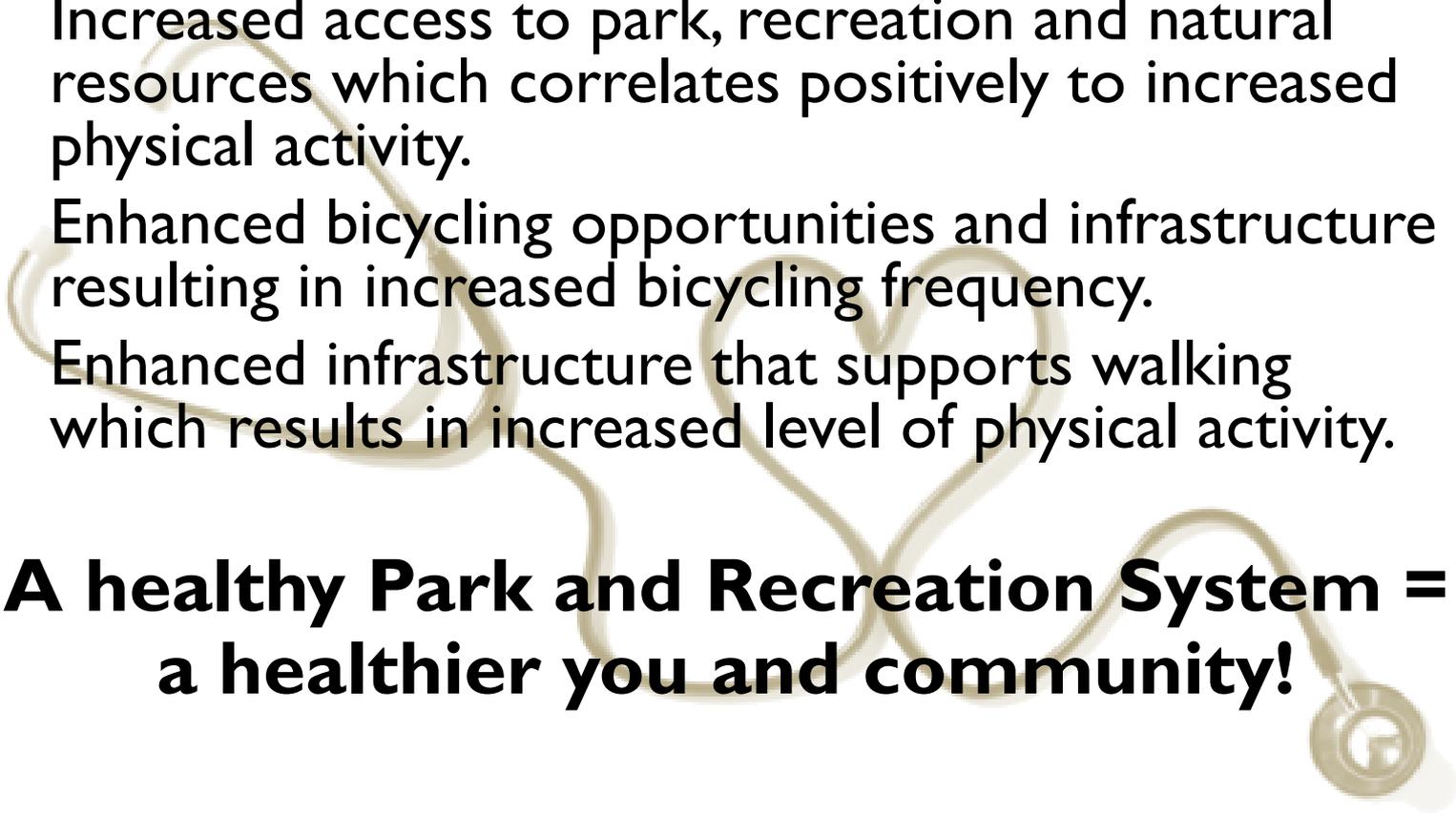
- ❖ 66% of US adults and 20% US children are obese or overweight
- ❖ Between 1980 –2004 obesity prevalence doubled among US adults
- ❖ Health risks related to obesity - heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancers and strokes
- ❖ \$117 Billion in health care costs are attributed to obesity

Provides Public Health Benefits

The CDC, based upon the review of 108 studies, recommends...

1. Increased access to park, recreation and natural resources which correlates positively to increased physical activity.
2. Enhanced bicycling opportunities and infrastructure resulting in increased bicycling frequency.
3. Enhanced infrastructure that supports walking which results in increased level of physical activity.

**A healthy Park and Recreation System =
a healthier you and community!**



Provides Social Benefits

- Reduce crime
- Develop community cohesion
- A place to play, grow and learn
- A place to create memories



Provides Social Benefits

It costs approximately \$30,000 to incarcerate a juvenile offender each year...what could a park and recreation department do with \$30,000?

We could give a child the opportunity to...

- ❖ Play tennis for the summer - **\$50**
- ❖ Attend Kiddie Camp (8wks) - **\$38**
- ❖ Attend 5 Family Entertainment Shows – **free**
- ❖ Create Memories @ Daddy Daughter Winter Formal - **\$32**
- ❖ Participate in 25 wks of dance instruction - **\$75**
- ❖ Take 8 nature classes - **\$128**
- ❖ Attend 4 different special events - **\$15**
- ❖ Play 10 wks of soccer - **\$32**
- ❖ Learn to golf - **\$35**
- ❖ Attend Safety School - **\$18**



All this for \$432 and a refund to you of \$29,577!

A healthy Park and Recreation System = a healthier you, a happy child and cohesive community!

Provides Environmental Benefits

- Controls storm water runoff and flooding
- Pollution abatement and cooling
- Increased water quality
- Habitat protection



Provides Environmental Benefits

The US Forest Service estimates that one tree, within its 50 year life span

- ❖ Generates - \$31,250 worth of oxygen
- ❖ Generates - \$62,000 worth of pollution control
- ❖ Recycles - \$37,500 worth of water
- ❖ Controls - \$31,250 worth of soil erosion
- ❖ \$162,000/tree x 1,161 trees = \$188,082,000 worth of benefit

**A healthy Park and Recreation System =
a healthier you and environment!**

Provides Economic Benefits

- Attracting tourists
- Attracting and retaining businesses and knowledge based workers
- Enhancing real estate values
- Reducing taxes



Provides Economic Benefits

State of Michigan Case Study

Teresa Penbrooke, GreenPlay, LLC

- ❖ 8+ yrs ago...economic down turn
- ❖ 3 communities chose to maintain quality of life services – Canton, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor
- ❖ Other communities cut quality of life services

What have we learned?

A healthy Park and Recreation System = a healthier you and local economy!

Ending thought...



How many children run and play in a park; how many people gain better health through a fitness class or using the trails; how many are able to relieve stress by walking, running or biking a trail; how many saw an eagle for the first time; how many learned a new skill or made a new friend – we do not know – and honestly, we'll never know.

But I do know that as each day passes, some child plays in our parks; folks register for our programs; others walk, run or bike our trail system (even in the dead of winter); many attend the Daddy-Daughter Winter Formal and make the memory of a life-time both for daughter and dad. These successes truly cannot be measured, but occur each day throughout the Town of Menasha – Park and Recreation System.

Planting a tree...leave a legacy

