



was a station agent at Tracy for the Chicago Northwester Railroad. During the great depression, Mr. Howard Bussard administered federal relief funds to pay a crew of unemployed men for the labor needed to create a park. Two log cabins were built, a ball diamond cleared, picnic tables built, and a swimming pool made. Mr. Frank Swain was hired as a caretaker. He planted many flower beds and kept the park mowed, and clean. On May 30, 1935 a crowd of 5,000 attended the dedication of Garvin Park. The park was visited by hundreds during the next years. Unfortunately, spring floods destroyed much of the hard work that was done. Funds ran low and soon the area reverted to its wild state. However, in 1967 the Lyon County Board, together with the Park Advisory Board, levied local funds to match state and federal grants to enlarge Garvin Park by 490 acres and to develop recreational facilities. Today, the 748 park receives several thousand annual visits. Garvin Park stands out among the prairies of Southwester Minnesota. The large stand of bur oak along the river is a majestic sight in an area of corn and beans. The deep ravine and the Cottonwood River bottoms provide people with an escape from the relentless flat land of the area. The area is unique and provides for a quality outdoor recreational experience, it draws people from a large radius across Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota to use the park. Garvin Park has hosted weddings, nature and portrait photographers, Rad Run Adventure race, Easter EGGstravaganza event, Amateur Radio field day, big screen movies, snowshoeing, horseback trail rides, annual bird surveys, geocaching, family reunions, graduation celebrations, and much more. Garvin Park includes 5 picnic shelters, a warming house, 5 restroom facilities, 1 shower facility, 4 playgrounds, 47 electric campsites, and 8 non-electric tent sites. The park consists of 4 miles of hiking, 9 miles of horse riding, 1.5 miles of cross country skiing, and 1.5 miles of snowmobiling trails, an observation tower, and a dedicated campground for horseback riders; includes 17 sites. The park also holds a 9-hole Frisbee Golf Course for visitors to use.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
  - Land Acquisition
    - Status:
    - Percentage of Land Acquired: 90
  - Development Status
    - No Development
    - Some Development, but more Proposed
      - New Facilities Proposed
      - Existing Facilities to be Upgraded
    - Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park
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Existing Facility List	Proposed Facility List
Electric campsites, Tent only sites, Frisbee Golf Course Historical Sign Baseball Field Warming House, Picknicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Horseback Riding Trails (natural), Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas, Frisbee Golf Course	Environmental Center

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: No Master Plan is Available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

No Master Plan Available at this time.

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: A broad range of recreational activities are available at Garvin Park; nearly all attract individuals and groups interested in having a high quality outdoor recreational experience and connecting to the landscape and wildlife. Garvin Park provides various recreational activities which include; bird-watching, horseback riding trails, large picnic shelters; which allows large group gatherings, hunting, hiking, running, bike trail riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, sledding, and a 9-hole Frisbee golf course. Garvin Park highlights one of few river valley scenes in our area; it is without a doubt our most diverse scenic topography in the area. Garvin Park provides an extremely unique bird-watching experience, there are less than ten similar bird-watching locations within Southwest Minnesota. The Horse Camp consists of 17 campsites, data collected from the 2014 camping season shows 237 registered campers showing the vast amount of people this unique campground brings in. The horse trails in Garvin Park are extremely unique compared to those of Camden Park, which is located in Lyon County. Garvin Park trails take the rider through the heart of the park through and along the river, allowing for a high-quality recreational experience and setting. Garvin Park has hosted various programs and special events to connect people to the outdoors and provide them with a unique and high-quality outdoor recreational experience that isn't found in other parks in Southwest Minnesota. There were 250 attendees at the 1st Annual Easter Egg-stravaganza held at Garvin Park in 2013, and 750 attendees at the 2nd Annual event held in 2014. Nestled in the woods at the top of the old tubing hill, the Garvin Park Warming House provides a vista view of the park; making this a great location in any season for gatherings.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: Southwest Minnesota is mainly farmland, however Garvin Park stands out and provides a deeply wooded scene near the Cottonwood River. Woodlands and prairies are vitally important to the history of Minnesota's landscape. Garvin Park consists of both habitats which support a diverse community of plants and

wildflowers including; the snow trillium and wildlife; including migrating insect-eating birds and local woodland nesting species. Garvin Park is the heart of the Cottonwood River in Lyon County. Almost 1000 acres of riparian woodland reside along the growing Cottonwood River nested into the remnant prairie landscape. This rich mix of topography offers deep valley's for dense, woodland-loving species like Wild Turkey, Eastern Screech-Owl, Black-belled Cuckoo, and Eastern Towhee. As part of the Minnesota River Valley Birding Trail, Garvin Park provides excellent bird habitat for woodland species such as Swainson's Hawk and Spotted Towhee. Rarities such as Summer Tanager and Blue Grosbeak make Garvin Park a worthwhile birding visit.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Garvin Park is a destination park; located in the southeast corner of Lyon County, with close proximity to Murray and Redwood Counties. Visitors travel to this park in southwest Minnesota to enjoy the unique landscape and to utilize the rivers and outdoor recreational areas. Many of these activities are scarce within Lyon County and Southwestern Minnesota with only Camden State Park offering similar opportunities for recreation on a large scale and on public property. In 2014 registered campers traveled to Garvin Park from 109 different locations with 32 percent of them traveling 50 miles or more. Marshall has moved forward with the development of the Regional Amateur Sports Center, having the potential to attract both in- and out-of-state sports visitors that will generate tourism to this region. Garvin Park truly is a destination park with its historical landmarks and structures, rich history and wildlife habitats, and offers a wide array of amenities.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: Hiking, bird-watching, picnicking, horseback-riding, disc golfing, snowshoeing, crosscountry skiing, snowmobiling, hunting and sledding are currently the most popular recreational offerings at Garvin Park. The trails border and often cut through the heart of river bottom to maximize access to the most scenic locations. Because of this, hiking, horseback-riding and bird-watching are premium activities that are provided by the park setting. Garvin Park also offers various naturalist and outdoor events to connect people to the outdoors. Regional differences and commonalities were examined in a 2006 Minnesota DNR facility adequacy survey of Minnesota residents. That survey resulted in Minnesotans saying swimming facilities, wildlife and nature observation areas, shore fishing facilities, and sledding hills were perceived to be in short supply. Garvin Park fills that gap by providing a sledding hill that stands out among the area that is most commonly found to be flat farm land. Garvin Park provides shoreline fishing along the Cottonwood River and various trails throughout the park that offer nature and wildlife observation areas. The 9-hole Frisbee golf course is one of two courses found in Lyon County. Garvin Park has hosted various programs and special events to help those who are new to the park understand and enjoy it. Providing these programs and special events has allowed us to connect people to the outdoors and fills that gap in southwest Minnesota. Garvin Park has been the site of various scouting activities and service projects.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Other	Garvin Park Brochure
Location Map	undefined
site_characteristic_images	settlers log cabin
site_characteristic_images	Park Lodge
site_characteristic_images	Ball Field
site_characteristic_images	Main Playground
site_characteristic_images	Disc Golf Start
site_characteristic_images	Snow trillium
site_characteristic_images	Cottonwood River
criteria_1_photos	oak leaf in river