
General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Last Update

21 Feb 2020 09:47:45

Park or Trail Name

Hok-Si-La Park

District

6

Location Description

Hok-Si-La Park, 2500 Highway 61 Boulevard, Lake City, Minnesota, 55041.

Located within the City of Lake City, MN. 15 miles South of Red Wing, MN; 15 miles North of Wabasha, MN; 30 miles Northeast of Rochester, MN.

Hok-Si-La Park is located at the Southeastern corner of Goodhue County, and is entirely within the City limits of the City of Lake City. Geographically, Hok-Si-La Park is located along the Mississippi River, near the start of Lake Pepin, a naturally occurring lake, or wide spot on the Mississippi River. Land and vehicular access to the Park is achieved from Highway 61, although the park is accessible by boat from the Mississippi River/Lake Pepin. Highway 61 is known as the Great River Road, and is a National Scenic Byway that follows the banks of the Mississippi through the Lake City area.

Regionally, it is located in Southeastern Minnesota's bluff country. The bluffs around Lake City forms a very distinct and well defined natural boundary of the community, and frame Lake Pepin. Across the river from Lake City is the state of Wisconsin, a boat trip from Hok Si La Park to Stockholm, Wisconsin, is a little over a mile. The nearest bridges to Wisconsin are located in either Red Wing, MN or Wabasha, MN.

Park/Trail Address

2500 Highway 61 Boulevard

City

Lake City

Park/Trail State

Minnesota

Zip

55041

Latitude

44.46662112

Longitude

-92.28858948

Map of Park/Trail

Description: Park Boundaries / Existing

[Hok Si La Park Master Plan - Existing Conditions MapUPDATED_0b572b.pdf](#)

Facility Website

<http://www.hoksilapark.org/>

Organization

City of Lake City

Lead Contact Person

Megan Smith

Title

Planning and Community Development Director

Mailing Address

205 W Center Street

City

Lake City

State

Minnesota

Zip

55041

Phone

6513456807

Email

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Joint Applicants**Joint Applicant #1**

City of Lake City

Joint Applicant #2**Joint Applicant #3****Joint Applicant #4****Other project supporters**

Description

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Regional Significance Statement

Hok-Si-La Park is an existing, natural park located along the shores of Lake Pepin, the largest naturally occurring Lake on the Mississippi River. This unique waterfront location provides one of a kind opportunities to explore Lake Pepin, views of the Mississippi River, the bluffs of Southeast Minnesota, and the river's floodplain forests. Features within the park, such as it's campgrounds, walking trails, and bird habitat, cannot be found elsewhere.

Classification

Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Hok-Si-La Park is the City's largest and most naturally diverse park in the City of Lake City's park system. It contains over 250 acres, and the Park's natural features and amenities have helped make it a destination.

The City supports the Park by hiring a full time park manager, and part time seasonal staff. There is a City commitment to maintain the natural and scenic beauty of Hok-Si-La Park, and also ensure the use of the park reaches its highest and best potential as a premier access point to Lake Pepin.

Since the park is City owned, entrance to Hok-Si-La Park is free, and open to the public year-round. There is a charge for camping, and for rental of any of the park buildings, but the majority of the Park and its features are available for anyone to use. Because the Park is City owned, any major investments require use of the City's general budget, which is limited each year. The Park does generate revenue, although significant capital improvements, such as the sleep or camper cabins that will soon be installed, took years of dedication, planning, and commitment by the City.

Users of the Park are varied, and include residents, community visitors, school groups, 4-H clubs, family reunions, birthday parties, weddings, company picnics, service organizations, church groups, and outdoor organizations. The campground attracts users from a largest geographic area, including all 50 states, although the primary visitors are from an area within 100 miles of the Park.

Lake Pepin is the largest naturally occurring lake on the Mississippi River. As a stand alone feature, Lake Pepin is spectacular, but when you add in the scenic quality of the bluffs that surround the Lake, it is a place like no other in Minnesota. The river bluffs were carved out by the glaciers and are a dramatic scenic feature that can only be found in a very specific area of southeastern Minnesota.

A large portion of Hok-Si-La Park is forested floodplain, and contains the unique vegetation that can survive flooding and standing water. Specifically, trees including the Cottonwood and Silver Maple thrive in this environment. Aside from the forest and the floodplain, Hok-Si-La Park is a bird watching paradise. The Mississippi River is a migratory flyway, and the number and variety of birds that can be observed in the Park is one of the primary draws for visitors. Bald eagles thrive over Lake Pepin, and the Park has been known to be a nesting location for this majestic national bird, who build their nests in the canopy of the cottonwood trees.

Total Acreage or Mileage

250

Acquisition and Development Status

Existing Park or Trail

Existing Park

100%

Development status

Some development, but more proposed

Facility Listing

This section provides an overview of existing and proposed site facilities and general site characteristics .

Existing Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Non-electric campsites
- Group campsites
- Tent only sites
- Camper Cabins

- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Swimming

Proposed Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Non-electric campsites
- Group campsites
- Tent only sites
- Camper Cabins

- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Swimming

-
- Lake Access for power boats
 - Canoeing Facilities
 - Visitor Center
 - Play areas, with an outdoor theme
 - Restrooms/sanitation building
 - Roads and Parking Areas

- Lake Access for power boats
- Canoeing Facilities
- Fishing Piers
- Visitor Center
- Nature Center/Interpretation Trails
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Climbing (natural/man-made)
- Restrooms/sanitation building
- Roads and Parking Areas

Proposed Facilities Other Information

A regional bike trail, the Mississippi Blufflands State Trail, is in the planning stage that would connect the community of Red Wing to Lake City. Hok Si La Park would be integrated into this plan, with either a bike trail into the park, or a trail head or bicycling staging facility located nearby.

General Site Characteristics

Approximately half of Hok-Si-La Park is floodplain forest. The City is committed to protecting the biodiversity, and natural resources value of this land. Varying water levels and standing water make it difficult to reach many of these areas.

Site characteristics upload

Description: Group Campsite G2

[Ho-Si-La 34_1f01d3.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Access point to beach.

[Resized_20200326_104837_1cbbc7.jpeg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Dining hall/events center

[20200326_125736_3b8944.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Shelters

[shelters_677326.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: cabins 7,8,9 in progress

[401500485_651120007225775_7316322152534720446_n_65977c.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: cabin example

[cabin_25f018.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: cabin interior

[396711528_644473231223786_7473996791537016257_n_9d097e.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: cabin interior

[396715939_644473134557129_4095303055316228808_n_342f66.jpg](#)

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:

Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

Hok-Si_La Park Master Plan

[Hok Si La Park Master Plan_3cd59d.pdf](#)

Additional Supportive Information:

The plan was adopted in June City Council meeting, after being recommended for adoption by the City's Streets and Parks Commission. The City has not obtained estimates on any specific projects.

Classification Details

Natural Resource Based Regional Park Classification.

Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

The City of Lake City has several city owned parks, although none of them contain the natural look, feel, and experience of Hok Si La Park. The distinguishing characteristic of Hok Si La Park that set it apart from other parks in the community and the region is that it provides an authentic outdoor experience and access to Lake Pepin. When the City purchased the Park in 1973 from the Boy Scouts, who had been using it as a Boy Scout Camp, a commitment was made to protect the undeveloped and untouched natural experience that the Boy Scouts had cared for. In the years since then, the City has maintained the park without any significant alterations. Hok Si La Park is located just over a mile from downtown Lake City, but the experience is much different than the City's developed parks due primarily to the size and natural environment. Hok Si La Park is a destination because of the connection visitors feel to the Park. This experience is different for everyone, but common feedback that the City receives about the Park is that it provides visitors with access to Lake Pepin. When driving along the Great River Road, the Mississippi River and Lake Pepin are prominent visual features, but getting access to the Lake is more difficult since the Highway 61 right of way and private property abut a large portion of the Lake. The Park provides an opportunity for residents and visitors to access to the Lake, and the Lake is the high quality recreational amenity.

Criteria #1 Images

Group site GO family camping.

[Ho-Si-La 37_45d460.jpg](#)

Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape

The Mississippi River Bluffs and Lake Pepin are highly significant natural resources. Lake Pepin is the largest Lake on the Mississippi River, and many visitors to the Park do not realize it is part of the Mississippi River. Lake Pepin is both a recreational lake and a functional part of the Mississippi River economy. The Lake is used for fishing, and is also the most popular sailing lake in Minnesota; Lake City operates the largest sailboat Marina on the Mississippi. On any given summer day, the mixture of uses and people and using the Lake is unlike anywhere else in Minnesota. The bluffs surrounding Lake Pepin add to the spectacular visual significance of the area. Although the bluffs continue through southeastern Minnesota, they are well defined when they surround a large body of water like Lake Pepin. In addition to the bluffs and Lake Pepin, the forest covered acreage is one of the few undeveloped and natural public spaces on all of Lake Pepin. This forest provides great habitat for all types of wildlife, although the migratory bird and bald eagle habitat are particularly unique. Hok Si Pa Park is one of the only public parks along Lake Pepin that has retained its natural landscape due to its size variety of features.

Criteria #2 Images

beach summer weekend
[pond pictures 059_f10715.jpg](#)

Well-located and Connected to Serve a Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Lake City is 35 miles from Rochester, MN and 15 miles from Red Wing, MN. Both communities are growing and expanding, and according to campground data collected by the Park Manager of Hok Si La, the Park's primary draw area is within 100 miles of Lake City, which includes western Wisconsin and the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. Lake City has an existing, and thriving tourism economy, The City, the Lake City Chamber of Commerce, and the Lake City Tourism Bureau have partnered in a number of ways to promote tourism in the community. One of the events that is becoming a signature event for Lake City is Tour de Pepin, which is a 72-mile bike tour around the Lake, with additional loops added. This past June, the event drew 830 people to Lake City in one weekend for biking alone. The Lake City Marina is the largest marina on the Mississippi River, and it draws in a significant number of people, particularly people from the region who keep boats in the Marina, but live elsewhere, such as the Twin Cities or Rochester. The community's existing events and other amenities all contribute to making Lake City a destination, and Hok Si La Park is a substantial part of that regional tourism economy.

Criteria #3 Images

regional connections
[regional context map 51315f_a725e2.pdf](#)

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Hok Si La Park fills a recreational gap because it provides access to Lake Pepin with a variety of park amenities that appeal to different user groups. Features of the park include the items described below, some of which are not found elsewhere in the region, particularly in one centralized area. Tent camping is one of the longest standing, and most utilized features of the park; efforts have been made to ensure that the tent camping experience is representative of camping in Minnesota's outdoors. The dining hall and screen shelters are often rented for daily use by groups and families. Sand volleyball, a basketball court, horseshoe pits, and playground equipment are the sport recreational features of the Park; mowed hiking trails throughout are used in the winter for cross country skiing. A unique A-Frame chapel with wood benches is tucked under the pine trees in the Park. This is a popular spot for reflection and meditation, and can be rented for weddings. A small interpretive center with old photos, park history, and wildlife facts is open to the public. The Hok Si La Park swimming beach is used by campers, but also day visors to the Park. It is one of the only maintained natural river sand beaches in Lake City and popular for families. Boaters on the Mississippi often pull up on the sandy shores and beach the boat for a day of picnicking and fun in the sun.

The City has partnered with the MnDNR to operate a public boat landing on the north side of the park.

Criteria #4 Images

Gaps in recreational opportunities

[Regional significant oportunities 51b90c.docx](#)

Criteria #4 Images

Governors fishing opener 2024

[Lake City 2024 GFO Proposal 34d23d.pdf](#)

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Additional Attachment	Resolution 2024	Resolution 24-008_6ac7ca.pdf
Additional Attachment	MASTERPLAN COUNCIL APPROVED	HoksiLa_Masterplan2023_b24f6c.pdf
Location Map	Aerial Map of Hok Si La Park	1435671703424-Hok Si La Aerial Map.jpg
Master Plan	Hok Si La Park Revitalization Report and Summary (1999)	1435671795957-Hok Si La Park Revitalization Report and Summary.pdf
Additional Attachment	Gardener's Club volunteers	IMG_1219_b17212.JPG
Other	Hok Si La Site Map with proposed sleep cabin location	1435672067932-Hok-Si-La Park Site Map - Proposed.pdf
Other	Park acquisition documents (1973)	1435672364181-Hok Si La

	between the Boy Scouts and the City containing, history, use regulations, environmental information, and description of the property	Aquisition Docs.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Regional Context Map	regional context map_ 51315f.pdf
Existing Master Plan	Hok-Si_La Park Master Plan	Hok Si La Park Master Plan_3cd59d.pdf
Site Map Upload	Existing Conditions Site Map	Existing Conditions Site Map_56a80e.pdf
Site Map Upload	Existing Conditions close up	existing conditions_29006b.pdf
Programming Plan Upload	Programing Use by Season	Programing Use by season_c4bdaa.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Survey Results Info graphic	Hok Si La Infographic Final Draft_11.5.18_75eed0.pdf
Additional Attachment	April 2001 Flood	2001 Apr 15 flood water at Hok Si La_2bf236.jpeg
Additional Attachment	Summer at the Park	2002 Aug Hok Si La Park 01_e1236f.JPG
Additional Attachment	2019 Beach Use	20190629_152516_d70359.jpg
Additional Attachment	Bike Repair Station	Bike Tune Up Install hok Si La_72d3c5.jpg
Additional Attachment	Bald Eagle Nest	Eagles at Hok Si La 1_982f95.JPG
Additional Attachment	Baby Eagle	Eagles at Hok Si La 3_f4dfa6.JPG
Additional Attachment	Office/Interpretive Center	office_(1)_aee34c.jpg
Additional Attachment	flooding 2019	flooding 2019 entrance_56e2cc.jpg
Additional Attachment	Flooding at Boat Launch	flooding 2019_f55098.jpg
Additional Attachment	Beach overlook	Hok Si La 1_b79134.JPG
Additional Attachment	picnic overlook	Hok Si La 2_971c45.JPG
Additional Attachment	Beach	Hok Si La Beach_11808a.JPG
Additional Attachment	Beach with Bluffs	Hok Si La Beach with Bluffs_7bb47d.JPG
Additional Attachment	Camping	Hok Si La Camping_a6ba08.JPG
Additional Attachment	Chapel	Hok Si La Chapel_7278a0.JPG
Additional Attachment	Green space sleeping cabins.	6R2A2939ps_a9d8df.jpg
Additional Attachment	Hiking Trails	Hok Si La Hiking Trails 2010 M.Smith_40bc8a.JPG

Additional Attachment	Campsite	hok si la new edited_d3b258.jpg
Additional Attachment	screened shelters	Hok Si La Screened Shelters ee2564.JPG
Additional Attachment	New Camper Cabin	IMG_2529_0015d1.JPG
Additional Attachment	Working with baby eagle	IMG_Eagle shot_177289.JPG
Additional Attachment	Paddleboat at Hok Si La	Pearl at Hok-si-la_f9a4f4.JPG
Additional Attachment	playground	playground_b8848d.jpg
Additional Attachment	dining hall	Resized_20190622_114039(1)_d8d1dc.jpeg
Additional Attachment	screened shelters summer	screened shelter area_2a4c16.JPG
Additional Attachment	entry road spring	spring flood conditions at entry road_7dcfe7.jpg
Additional Attachment	parking lot flooding	spring flooding 2019_242a05.jpg
Additional Attachment	winter conditions	winter condtions_c36fb1.JPG
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Development and Implementation Plan	Development Plan_7a06a8.pdf
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Group site GO family camping.	Ho-Si-La 37_45d460.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	beach summer weekend	pond pictures 059_f10715.jpg
Outreach Marketing Plan Upload	Rack Card for general distribution. Leads guest to website & social media.	hok si la rack card proof_2b4393.pdf
Site Characteristics Upload	Group Campsite G2	Ho-Si-La 34_1f01d3.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Access point to beach.	Resized_20200326_104837_1cbbc7.jpeg
Site Characteristics Upload	Dining hall/events center	20200326_125736_3b8944.jpg
Development Feature Upload		IMG_0326.jpg_shelter_62dcd6.jpg
Development Feature Upload		1825_6e4c17.jpg
Joint Org Responsibilities Upload	DNR perpetuity agreement	DNR-Lake City_HSL_Boat_Landing_Agreement_-_Signed_bf49d0.pdf
Development Feature Upload		iPaddlePort_2018_34d295.pdf
Development Feature Upload		2022_iPaddlePort_Specifications_and_Information_4ff96e.pdf
Development Feature Upload		eco-design-6-sided-kiosk-28x42-outdoor-freestanding-information-message-boards_c00ebc.pdf
Natural Resource Based3 Upload	regional connections	regional context map_51315f_a725e2.pdf

Additional Attachment	Interior of Sleeping Cabins	13268037_787297648067376_3203603791690490594_o_77c2c0.jpg
Additional Attachment	Shelter interiors	20200326_130216_7b7c7b.jpg
Development Feature Upload		33_f84c0b.pdf
Public Health Values Upload	MN Department of Health link	sep2021_obesity_brief[1]_ffeaa4.pdf
Recreational Trends Upload	Bike Tourism Trend	Bike_Tourism_Opportunities_13c182.docx
Economic Development Tourism Upload	Economic impact of green space	Economy-Handout-web_edc5f8.pdf
Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Gaps in recreational opportunities	Regional_significant_oportunities_51b90c.docx
Additional Attachment	Park Entrance Road	IMG_1902_742cf1.JPG
Additional Attachment	Entrance Sign	IMG_2409_a4337d.JPG
Additional Attachment	Hearth & Home Fireplace Donation Hall	IMG_2664_502f1e.JPG
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Development Feature Upload		83979963_1777390179058113_3090002233853476864_n_(2)_d26591.jpg
Additional Attachment	Grooming cross country ski trails.	IMG_1840_e8616c.JPG
Recreational Trends Upload	Nesting Great Horned owl Nestlings	Owls_(2_of_1)_4ab135.jpg
Development Feature Upload		Master_Naturalist_59ecef.jpg
Additional Attachment	Interior hall	Hall_2021_b4eefb.jpg
User Metrics Research Plan Upload	Tourism dollars	TourismFactSheet_2020_FINAL_tcm1135-419901_5b63e2.pdf
Outreach Marketing Plan Upload	Master Naturalist Program	Master_Naturalist_4f89c8.jpg
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Sustainable usage.	Park_activities_6c7270.docx
Ad Phasing Plan Upload	Utility Upgrade	Hok_Si_La_Park_Trunk_Utility_Extension_Feasibility_Review_with_Attachments_20211202_0a1f5d.pdf
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	implementation2	Picture2_820b5b.jpg
Maintenance Operations Budget	Budget 2024	2024_Street-Parks-HSL_Operatin

Upload		g_Budget_001_6a5299.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	opportunities and impacts	CAP_IMP_30_Yrs_9dfbf2.pdf
Classification Criteria4 Upload	Governors fishing opener 2024	Lake_City_2024_GFO_Proposal_34d23d.pdf
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	Implementation1	Picture1_fb14dd.jpg
Gis Shape File	na	
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Opportunities	Physical_Improvements_Dunn_(002)_969c4a.pdf
User Metrics Research Plan Upload	Explore MN	Summer_2023_Traveler_Plans_Survey_Findings_-_Friday_1130_tcm11135-574380_f0b4a3.pdf
User Metrics Research Plan Upload	Explore MN	Q2_2023_Travel_Indicators_Visitior_Trends_Report_-_Final_tcm1135-587186_f84593.pdf
Additional Attachment	Winter Use of 3 Cabins	Coversheet_3e9f73.pdf
Site Characteristics Upload	Shelters	shelters_677326.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	cabins 7,8,9 in progress	401500485_651120007225775_7316322152534720446_n_65977c.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	cabin example	cabin_25f018.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	cabin interior	396711528_644473231223786_7473996791537016257_n_9d097e.jpg
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Development Feature Upload		Your_paragraph_text_64689d.jpg
Maintenance Operations Plan Upload	2023 budget	Picture4_f937fd.jpg
Programming Plan Upload	APPROVED MASTERPLAN 2023	HoksiLa_Masterplan2023_015f18.pdf
Park Trail Map	Park Boundaries / Existing	Hok_Si_La_Park_Master_Plan_-_Existing_Conditions_MapUPDATE_D_0b572b.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan	Costs and Impacts	GMRP_Master_Plan_Implementat

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Development Acquisition Plan
Upload

2015-23 Capital Budget snapshot

[15-23Cap_improvements_7a8406.pdf](#)

Development Acquisition Plan
Upload

2015-23 budget snapshot

[15-23Budget_705a7e.pdf](#)