

October 4, 2016

Score Two Points for Livability

La Crescent, MN sits in the southeast corner of the state and hugs the west bank of the Mississippi River. Although it dubs itself, 'The Apple Capital of Minnesota" the city takes its recreation as seriously as its apples. Recently, two major new recreational facilities have added to the livability of La Crescent.

The Wagon Wheel Trail has been a long time coming. Originally the route of a mid-1800's trail that connected to the ferry crossing the river to La Crosse, WI, it's now a multi-use recreational trail that, in part runs adjacent to the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.



The Wagon Wheel Trail provides a vital regional link between the Wisconsin and Minnesota trail systems.

For more than 20 years the City has been guiding this project through approval after approval and the trail is the result of cooperation between an almost endless list of affected agencies. The Minnesota Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife, the Army Corps of Engineers... Even the US Coast Guard had something to say about the trail!

The most important agency has been the entire La Crescent community who has solidly supported it from the outset. Now that it's finished, it's enjoying year-round use from skiers, walkers, hikers and bikers who are anxiously awaiting completion of Phase 2.

In the meantime, they're also enjoying a round at the three new tennis courts in Frank

J. Kistler Memorial Park. The old courts had deteriorated to the point where they had to be removed. But, working with a grant from the US Tennis Association, WHKS engineers developed a post-tensioned concrete design that will stand up to both time and Minnesota winters.



One of the three courts makes use of low-mast lighting to evenly illuminate the court for nighttime play while minimizing light pollution and spill to neighboring properties.

Within a week of the dedication, almost five dozen of La Crescent's future generation had signed up for tennis lessons. As City Administrator Bill Waller said,

"A majority of the time, it's used. Isn't that what we want?"





