

AGENDA

1. ROLL CALL: Beck, Erdos-Thayer, Hickman, Markfort, Rochon-Washington, Vaith, Sparks
2. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES
 - A. Minutes from 9/24 (No Meeting in October)
3. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Returning Commissioners and Commission Openings for 2025
4. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Parks Master Plan Review
5. INFORMATION ONLY
 - A. Forestry Update
6. ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES

1. **ROLL CALL: 7:05**

X Beck, _X_ Erdos-Thayer, _X_ Hickman, _X_ Sparks, _X_ Markfort,
O Rochon-Washington, _X_ Vaith

Also in attendance: Matt, Members of HRC

2. **CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

A. Minutes from 8-27-24 Meeting

- Motion to approve: Vaith
- Second: Hill

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Parks Renaming

Erdos-Thayer: Conflict of interest in name change policy doesn't apply to Commissions.

Markfort: Can names be brought back to be voted on a second time?

Erdos-Thayer: Could both names Castile Park and Shoreline Park be voted on again under re-written renaming policy? Communication for renaming? Who can fill out application? Is 5 people enough on an application?

Markfort: Timeline for feedback on updates and how does PRFC come into play.

Ben Hansen: Suggestions for updated process. Will email steps. To deliver to council.

B. LVT Fitness Court: Bazyk: Presented final items selected to go into fitness court.

Erdos-Thayer: Ensured there would be color on the equipment. Not industrial gray.

C. Sanborn Park Feedback from Meet and Greet:

Erdos-Thayer: The most comprehensive planning process for park design the city has done.

Erdos-Thayer: Community Gardens need security issues.

D. Grant for Sanborn Park Playground: Commission feedback: make sure the playground is attractive to a wide range of ages. Sanborn is the second-largest park and attracts a lot of people.

5. **INFORMATION ONLY**

A. Boo Bash at Sanborn Park 10/4/24

B. Membership Cards and rates at Robbinsdale Community Gym and Fitness Center.

MINUTES

C. Forestry Report: Bazyk: Read the Forestry report provided by Stephan Papiz.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

A. **Motioned: Erdos-Thayer**

B. **Second: Sparks**

- Meeting Adjourned at 8:31 pm

TO: Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission
PREPARED BY: Matthew Bazyk, Recreation Services Manager
DATE: November 26, 2024
RE: Returning Commissioners and Commission Openings for 2025

Background:

PRF Commissioners serve in two-year terms ending on even-numbered years.

Analysis:

All current Commissioners should submit a letter to Matt Bazyk indicating their desire to return for the 2025-2026 term or to not be considered for the position. Any Commissioners interested in returning will be presented to the City Council and Council Members will approve/appoint Commissioners from their Ward.

Recommendation:

Current Commissioners inform Matt Bazyk of their intentions for the 2025-2026 term.

Attachments:

None

TO: Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission
PREPARED BY: Matthew Bazyk, Recreation Services Manager
DATE: November 26, 2024
RE: Parks Master Plan Review

Background:

In 2024 Matt Bazyk, Recreation Services Manager, has been overseeing the development of a 10-year Parks Master Plan with the help of Bolton & Menk. This is the initial draft document they have submitted for review.

Analysis:

Review of the draft document is essential prior to adoption. Feedback from staff, the Parks Recreation and Forestry Commission and the City Council will be taken into account prior to adoption of the Parks Master Plan.

Recommendation:

PRFC review the draft document and provide feedback prior to Matt presenting the plan to the City Council on December 10th, 2024.

Attachments:

1. DRAFT PMP 11.22.24



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

PARK SYSTEM PLAN



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SYSTEM PLAN **RECOGNITION**

This park system plan could not have been created without the time, energy, and thoughtful input of the community and the following groups. Thank you to all who provided feedback and contributed to the future of Robbinsdale’s park system!

PROJECT TEAM

Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Jonathan Nelsen, PLA	Project Manager
Anna Springer, PLA	Deputy Project Manager/Lead Landscape Architect
Aus Perez	Landscape Designer
Emily Holman	Project Communication Specialist
Casey Byers, PLA	Principal-In-Charge

CITY STAFF

Matt Bazyk	Recreation Services Manager
Tim Sandvik	City Manager
Kayla Kirtz	Sustainability Coordinator
Richard McCoy	Public Works Director & City Engineer

CITY COUNCIL

Bill Blonigan	Mayor of Robbinsdale
Regan Murphy	Ward 1
Jason Greenberg	Ward 2
Mia Parisian	Ward 3
Aaron Wagner	Ward 4

PARK, RECREATION, AND FORESTRY COMMISSION

Melissa Markfort	Ward 1
Erin Sparks	Ward 2
Denise Beck	Ward 3
Damien Rochon-Washington	Ward 4
Daniel Hickman	At-Large
Michelle Vaith	At-Large
Nicholas Erdos-Thayer	At-Large

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL

xx/xx/2024

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HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This park system plan document is organized into six chapters, which include:

1. **Introduction**
2. **The Existing Conditions + Needs**
3. **The Vision + Guiding Principles**
4. **The Trends**
5. **The Recommendations**
6. **Implementation Strategies**

The plans include an inventory and analysis of all collected data; community input results; current park and recreation trends, low, medium, and high-level recommendations; and prioritized implementation strategies with high-level cost estimates for Robbinsdale's parks, trails, and open space system.

An appendix is included at the end of the plan, which contains additional maps and supporting documents, such as the community survey results and park inventory maps.

1. INTRODUCTION

- ◇ The introduction section provides a brief look into Robbinsdale's demographics and community context, as well as an overview of the planning process and purpose and past planning efforts

02: THE EXISTING CONDITIONS + NEEDS

- ◇ The existing conditions and needs section evaluates Robbinsdale's park and trail system through various lenses and outlines future park and trail needs based on feedback from the community

03: THE VISION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ◇ This section helps set the stage for what is desired by the community for the future system and what overarching ideas should help steer its future

04: THE TRENDS

- ◇ The current trends section highlights key social, demographic, and recreational trends that are impacting today's park and recreation systems to help the city maintain a responsive park system

05: THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◇ The recommendations section provides recommended actions to help attain the vision for the park and trail system
- ◇ This section acts as the backbone of the plan, building off the analysis and vision

06: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- ◇ This section outlines steps to carry out the proposed recommendations, and includes priorities, capital improvements, and funding ideas

01

INTRODUCTION

The City of Robbinsdale is home to many high-quality parks, natural spaces, and recreational areas that provide residents and visitors with ample opportunities to gather, recreate, and relax. **As Robbinsdale continues to grow and evolve, so too must its park, trail, and open space system.** Historically, the city has not had a dedicated park system plan to guide the development, maintenance, and management of its outdoor recreational spaces. As a result, the city has undertaken the development of this park system plan: a visionary document aimed at enhancing park and recreation offerings to meet the needs of future generations.

Developed in collaboration with the community, local stakeholders, and city officials, **this park system plan outlines a comprehensive approach to preserving and enhancing Robbinsdale's park system while also addressing key issues and opportunities in the city.** While the desires of Robbinsdale's existing community are essential, a changing demographic, increasing population density, and shifting recreational trends ultimately demand a forward-thinking plan that can identify opportunities while also providing a tool to prioritize how and when these opportunities are implemented.

This plan reflects a shared community vision and will serve as a blueprint for the development, maintenance, and improvement of Robbinsdale's park system over the next ten years.

THE CONTEXT

AN OVERVIEW

Robbinsdale, which was established in April of 1893, has long been praised for its vibrant landscapes, beautiful parks and lakes, and intriguing natural features. According to local legend, Andrew B. Robbins - a local entrepreneur, civil war veteran, and real estate developer - was so enamored with the agricultural beauty of the area that he couldn't get the memory out of his mind! It wasn't long before the city's population boomed and residences, businesses, and railway and manufacturing companies popped up throughout the community. Although it's located alongside Minneapolis's northwestern edge and is considered a "first-ring suburb," Robbinsdale has maintained a rural and residential feel throughout its long history that its residents have come to cherish.

Currently, Robbinsdale has a population of 14,889 people (according to 2023 U.S. Census data); however, by 2040, the city's population is expected to grow by about 12%, bringing the total population to around 16,400 people. Robbinsdale's land area is approximately 2.98 square miles, of which 2.79 square

miles is comprised of land and 0.19 square miles of water. The city is located alongside adjacent Hennepin County communities, including Crystal (to the west), Golden Valley (to the south/southwest), Minneapolis (to the east), and Brooklyn Center (to the north).

Although Robbinsdale is small in size, it has over 110 acres of varied, accessible, and interconnected parks and open spaces, as well as an extensive trail system. About 15% of the city's land is comprised of public space (212.46 acres) and open water (108.99 acres), which provides plenty of space for residents to engage in a wide variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. To best meet the ever-shifting recreational needs of the community, Robbinsdale has remained committed to enhancing its park and trail facilities (while still maintaining current levels of service) since its conception. However, with limited to no additional area available for park development, it is essential for the community to maximize the use of available parkland, coupled with partnerships and cross-border coordination to offer a diverse array of recreational offerings.

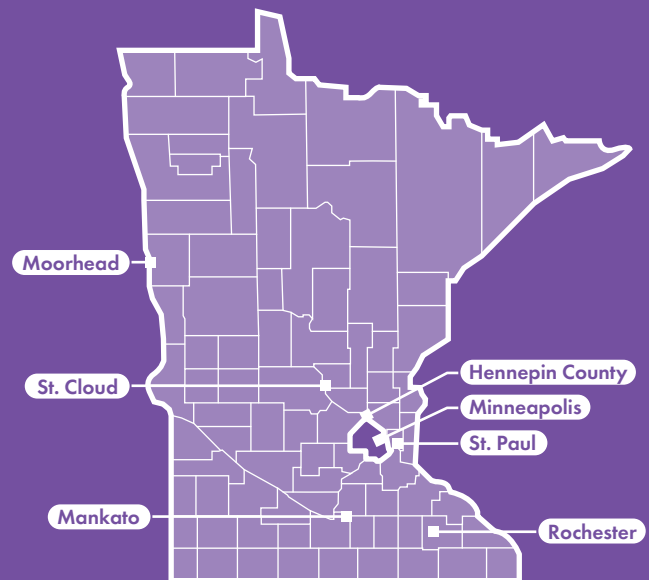


SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS

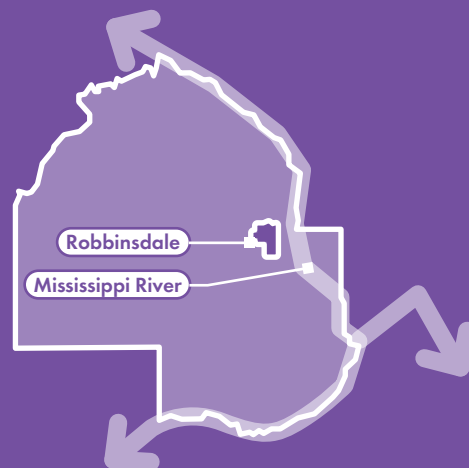
Like many other metro communities, Robbinsdale is experiencing a demographic shift that is anticipated to accelerate as plans for the future Blue Line extension come to fruition. The single-family housing stock in the community consists primarily of modest homes sought after by young families and first-time homeowners, leading to a younger demographic and more active population. Development near future light rail stations in the heart of Robbinsdale is anticipated to increase density and offer further options for young professionals and families. With these changes come shifting needs and desires related to the city's park, trail, and open space system.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

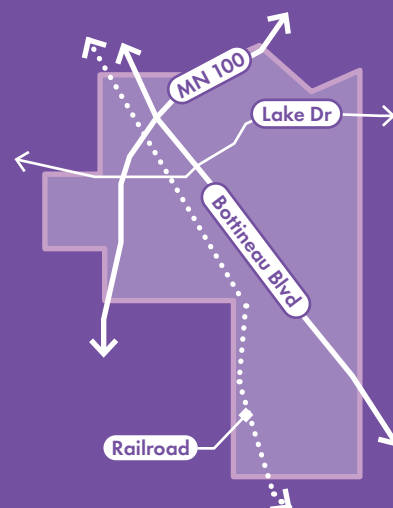
Robbinsdale is bisected by Bottineau Boulevard, Hwy 100, and railroad infrastructure. Historically, these roadways and railroads have caused barriers to park and trail access in the community. Bottineau Boulevard, established initially as a connection between Robbinsdale and North Minneapolis, has been widened over time as pressure for increased vehicular capacity arose. This widening of the roadway has turned the corridor into a significant barrier to pedestrian connectivity. As such, access to the full offering of park amenities in the community is somewhat restricted for those in "East Robbinsdale" and "West Robbinsdale. Although the Blue Line Extension Downtown Robbinsdale Station Area Plan identifies several opportunities for strengthening pedestrian connectivity across this corridor, this park system plan also provides potential solutions to enhance connectivity and accessibility throughout the community.



MINNESOTA



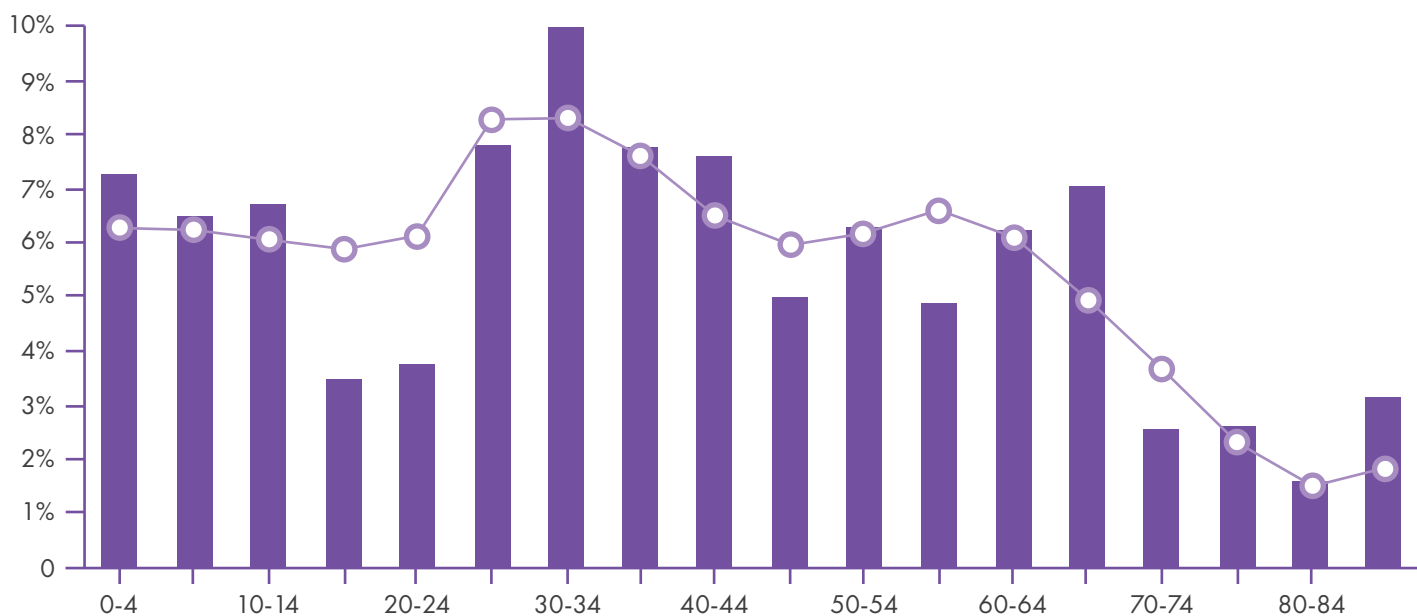
HENNEPIN COUNTY



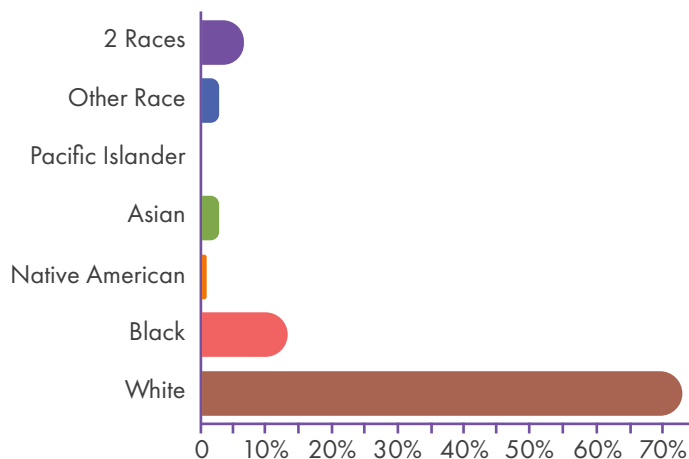
CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

THE PEOPLE

With its location in the heart of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area, the demographic make-up of Robbinsdale reflects a blend of age groups and cultural backgrounds that help to enhance the social fabric of the community. Included below are a number of metrics (based on the most recent U.S. Census Data) related to Robbinsdale's population, median age, education levels, median household income, race and ethnicity, poverty status, and more.



POPULATION BY AGE: 5-YEAR INCREMENTS (2021)



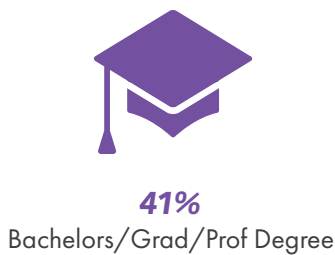
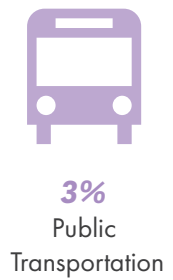
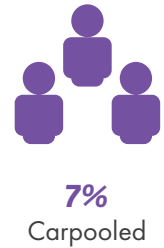
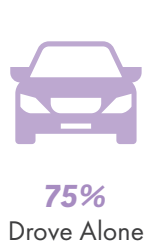
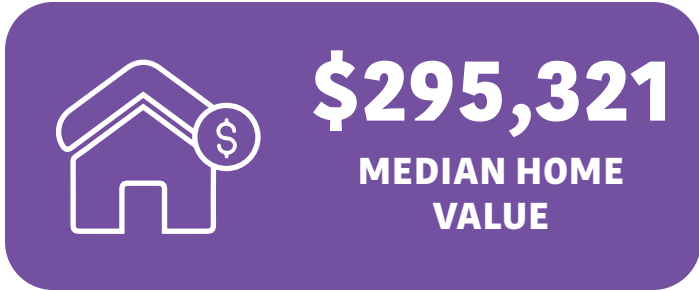
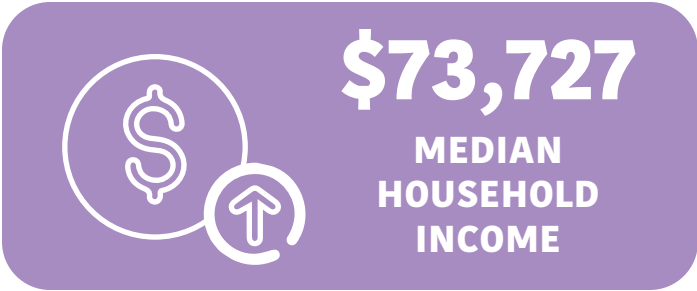
POPULATION 18+ YEARS BY RACE



14,889
TOTAL
POPULATION



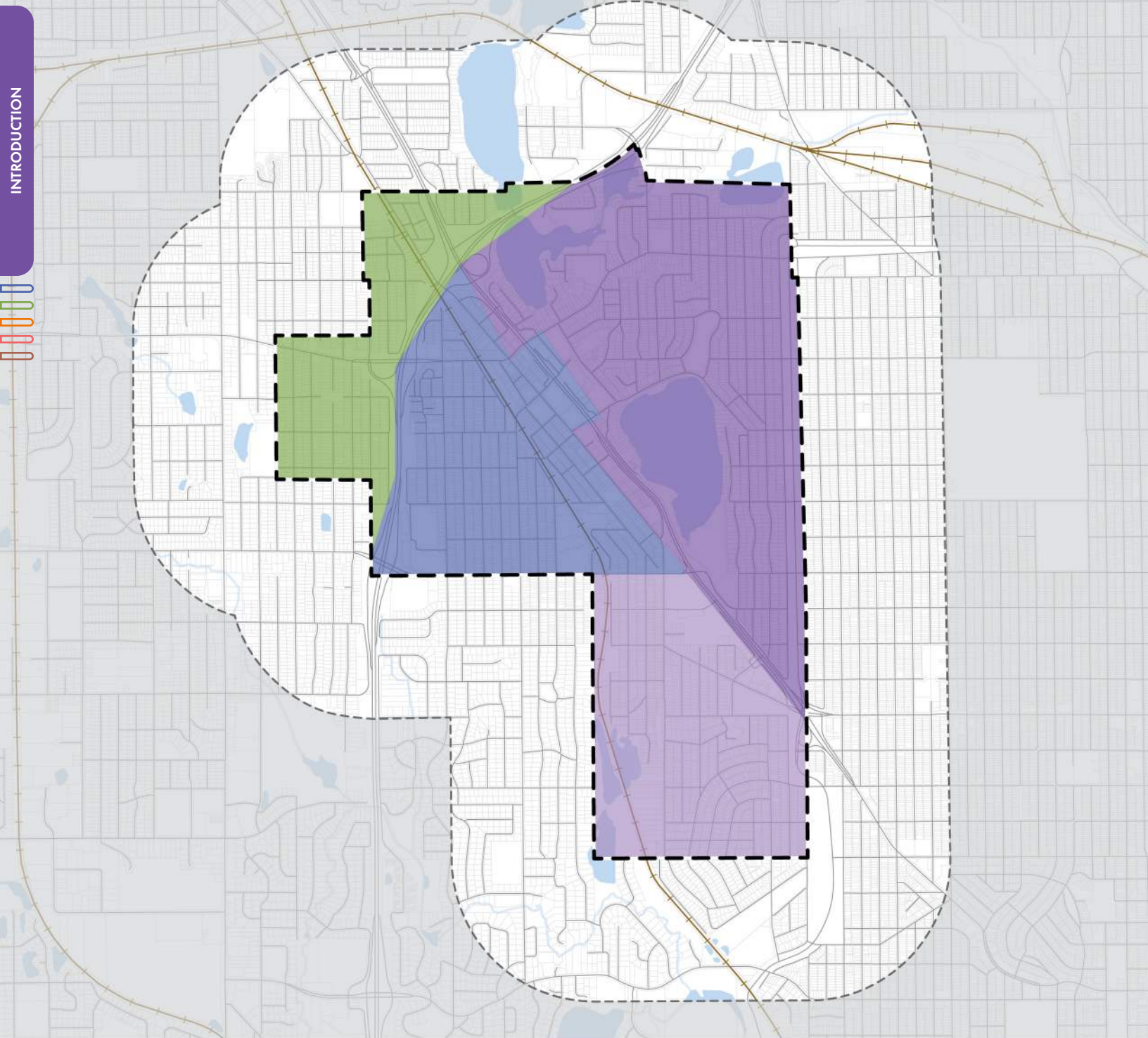
6,512
TOTAL # OF
HOUSEHOLDS



EDUCATION

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK, AGES 16+

Figure 1: Median Household Income Map



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

0 2,500 Feet



- \$83,600+
- \$70,700 - \$83,600
- \$60,500 - \$70,700
- \$46,000 - \$60,500

- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- Parcels
- Robbinsdale City Limits
- Streets
- Railroad



Community members at a city event



Local volunteer participation



Engagement event at Sanborn Park



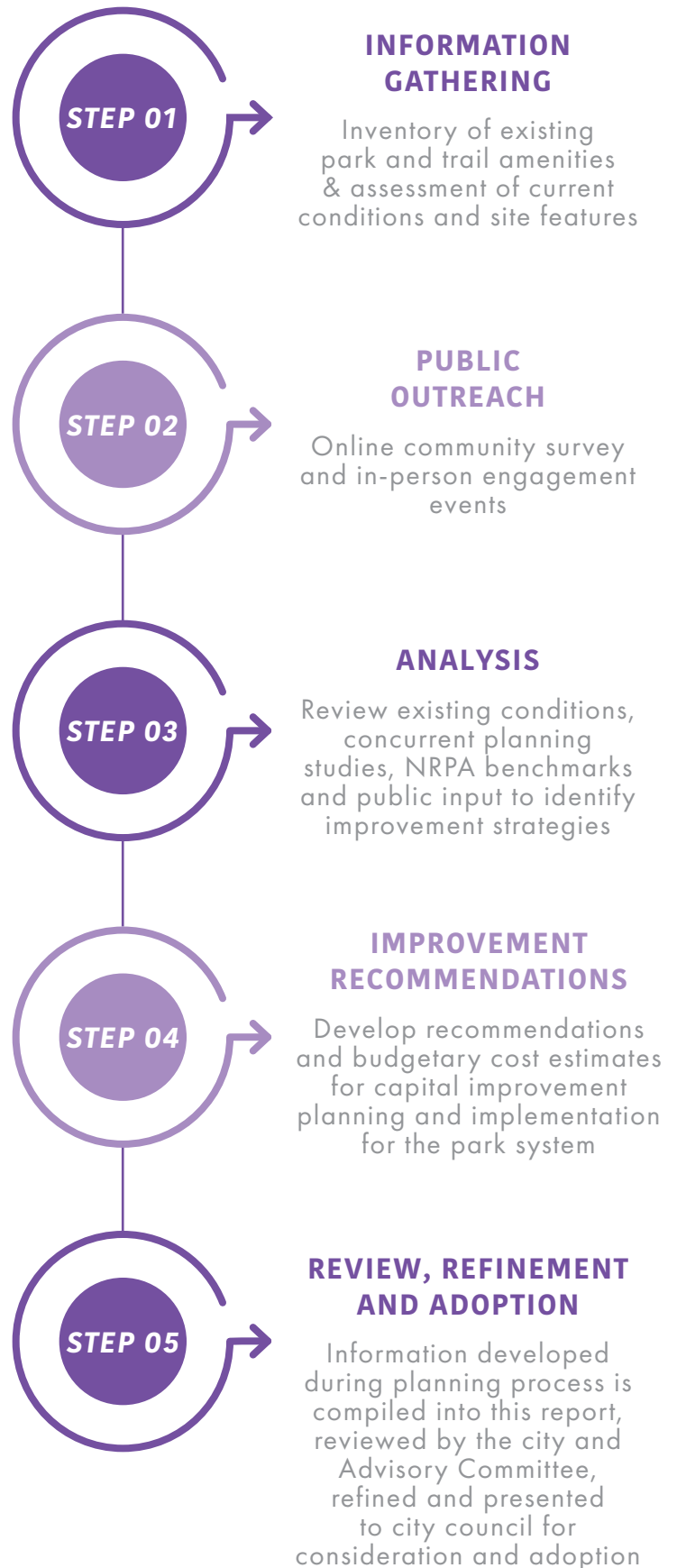
Residents attending the Pet and Wheel Parade

THE PROCESS + PURPOSE

The Robbinsdale Park System Plan, developed in collaboration with the city, local stakeholders, and community members, is meant to establish key recommendations and implementation strategies for the improvement of Robbinsdale's parks, trails, and open spaces over the next 10 years. The park system planning process began with an inventory and analysis of each city-owned park's amenities and facilities and was further informed by in-person community engagement events, meetings with city staff and the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry (PRF) Commission, and an online community survey.

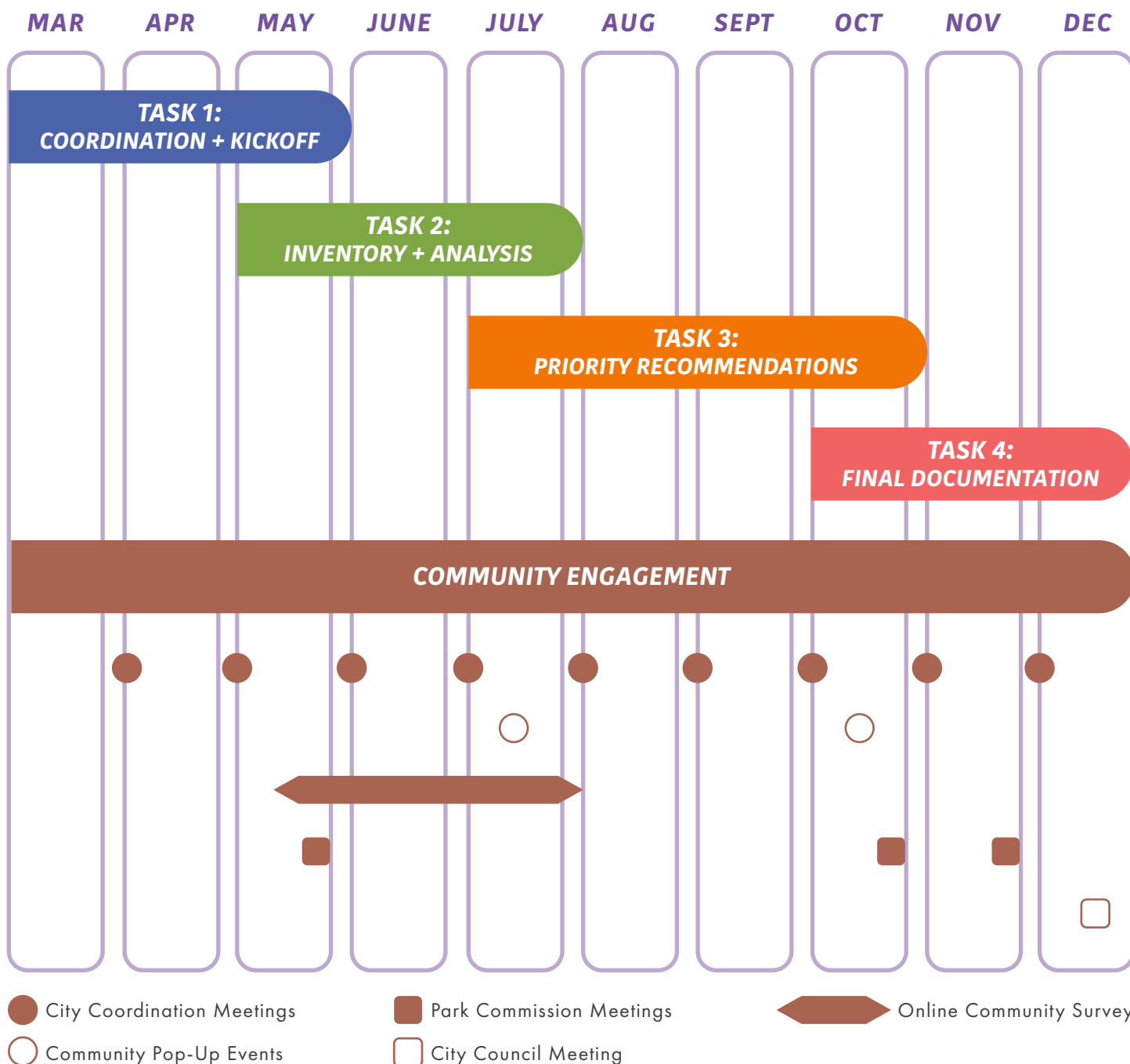
The planning team - made up of landscape architects, park planners, and community engagement specialists - had many discussions with stakeholders to uncover issues affecting the city's parks, trails, and open spaces. These conversations, facilitated by the consultant team, revealed key information about the history of each park's past improvements and existing conditions. Discussions with the PRF commission shed light on how community members use the park and trail system, as well as how changes over time have affected the city's resources.

To ensure the master plan was not only data driven and technically feasible, but also publicly supported, it was crucial to conduct a meaningful, effective, and inclusive community engagement process to ensure all stakeholders had a chance to provide their feedback and ideas. The methods used to better engage the public are discussed in the next section of this report.



THE PROJECT SCHEDULE

This park system plan was created over a ten-month long planning period. Four overall tasks, each with numerous subtasks, guided its development. Each task built upon the previous one, beginning with city coordination and an inventory of the existing system, an assessment of community needs based on a number of engagement events and stakeholder meetings, and ending with the formulation of actionable park and recreation recommendations and strategies for implementation. This structured schedule and process ensured that the plan was reflective of community input and consistent and reliable for city staff's future use.



THE PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

To gain a better understanding of the plans, reports and standards that Robbinsdale currently has, the planning team thoroughly reviewed the following documents:

- ◇ Robbinsdale City Code,
- ◇ the Robbinsdale Energy Action Plan,
- ◇ the 2014 Robbinsdale Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan,
- ◇ the Metro Blue Line Extension: Downtown Robbinsdale Station Area document,
- ◇ the 2040 Robbinsdale Comprehensive Plan

The planning team used these documents to obtain background information on the city, to understand what goals and strategies have been previously developed for the city's park and trail system, and to inform the development of the recommendations (and eventual implementation strategies) included in this plan.

Some key takeaways from the 2014 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, the Metro Blue Line Extension: Downtown Robbinsdale Station Area document, and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan include (but are not limited to):

2014 ROBBINSDALE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PLAN

Note: The 2014 Robbinsdale Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan is currently going through an update process in conjunction with the National Park Service, and will largely guide city-wide trail development and connectivity policy.

THE PURPOSE

- ◇ To provide a set of clear recommendations for improving conditions for walking and biking across Robbinsdale that can be incorporated into the work of city departments and implemented moving forward

WALKING + BIKING GOALS

- ◇ Fill gaps in the network
- ◇ Address concerns of those already walking and biking in Robbinsdale
- ◇ Link areas of low travel stress
- ◇ Update existing facilities
- ◇ Build on the existing network
- ◇ Provide key connections
- ◇ Includes routes that connect to regional, city, and local neighborhood destinations

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ◇ Improve comfort + safety
- ◇ Connect to Local + Regional Destinations
- ◇ Leverage future light rail transit investment
- ◇ Create comfortable + convenient routes for all
- ◇ Walking and biking as a base for community health and active living
- ◇ Walking and biking as a useful transportation option in Robbinsdale

WALKING + BIKING BARRIERS

- ◇ Intersections along 42nd Ave N/Lake Dr/45th Ave N/CR 9
- ◇ Bottineau Boulevard/CR 81 and 36th Ave N
- ◇ Lack of continuous connection around Crystal Lake

METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION: DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE STATION AREA DOCUMENT

THE GOALS

1. To grow the diversity of experiences, places, customers, and residents in downtown Robbinsdale while maintaining the authentic human scale of the core blocks of W Broadway Ave
2. To transform Bottineau Boulevard from a barrier between east and west Robbinsdale into a valued front door to the community
3. To ensure the introduction of LRT in Robbinsdale serves the long-term interests of residents and businesses in Robbinsdale
4. To build an efficient and amenity-rich public realm

- Enhance the safety and comfort of Bottineau Boulevard + its crossings to serve businesses and residents

◆ Development

- Encourage redevelopment on underutilized properties in order to strengthen the broader downtown and its historic core
- Establish a district parking system that simplifies access to parking spaces, allows people to park once and walk to multiple places, and effectively manages the long-term needs of parkers

◆ Place

- Create new public spaces that elevate economic value and quality of life for all who visit, live, and work in downtown
- Establish a civic campus that improves delivery of and access to public services while supporting the commercial areas of downtown

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

◆ Connectivity

- Develop local multi-modal connections to and through downtown from all parts of Robbinsdale

2040 ROBBINSDALE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PARKS + TRAILS GOALS

- ◆ Maintain current levels of service to parks and trails
- ◆ Provide varied, accessible, and interconnected open space to be used by a wide range of people
- ◆ Provide opportunities for residents to participate in a wide variety of leisure activities
- ◆ Conserve, restore, and protect the city's natural resources to ensure their ongoing availability, to support public health, and to maintain a good quality of life

PARKS + TRAILS KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ A variety of developed local and regional park facilities are available in the city
- ◆ Most city parks offer active recreational facilities
 - Regional facilities include the Three Rivers Boat Access on Twin Lake and two regional trails
- ◆ The Robbinsdale Recreation Services Department offers a variety of recreational programs for all ages

02

THE EXISTING CONDITIONS + NEEDS

To make informed and appropriate decisions that adequately address the needs of the community, a comprehensive inventory of the park system was conducted, which included the documentation of all park assets, and an evaluation of their conditions and life cycles. **A detailed analysis of the park and trail system uncovered important baseline information about the state of the city's parks**, such as their current patterns of usage, issues with safety and accessibility, and more.

The following assessment takes a closer look at the quantity, distribution, quality, and current use of amenities and facilities in Robbinsdale's park and trail system. By comparing data collected from the inventory to the standards and benchmarks set up by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the planning team was able to identify which assets to retain, which amenities and facilities may be missing from the system, and which park spaces could be transformed to accommodate other uses. Feedback obtained from the community, local stakeholders, the PRF commission, and city staff also provided critical information about the park system and its use.

Ultimately, the planning team was able to use the information gathered during the inventory and analysis process to develop potential strategies to enhance user experience, improve park functionality, and protect the community's natural resources. For more information on park improvement recommendations and implementation strategies, see Chapters 5 and 6.

THE APPROACH

For many years, Robbinsdale's parks, trails, and open spaces have been vital to maintaining the quality of life that its residents have come to cherish. Without recreational opportunities to keep community members physically active, cognitively stimulated, and socially engaged, the community would not be as happy and healthy as it currently is. To effectively leverage the variety of recreational opportunities that Robbinsdale's parks, trails, and open spaces provide, a systematic and comprehensive park system planning process is crucial. A thorough inventory of the park and trail system, an in-depth stakeholder engagement process, and a detailed visualization of the city's distribution of parks, trails, and their amenities and facilities are key to developing a well thought-out park system plan.

As part of the effort for this process, the planning team collaborated with city staff and key stakeholders to better understand each park's issues and assets; this, combined with other outreach methods, led to the development of near-term and long-range improvements for the park system (see "The Recommendations" section for more information). In addition to coordination with the city, a robust community input process (consisting of a community-wide survey and several pop-up events) created important opportunities for the public to inform the planning team and city about their aspirations for Robbinsdale's future park system. With key information gathered from stakeholders, the planning team was able to develop a series of maps, tables, and visuals that explored the distribution of and access to recreational amenities and opportunities in the city.

The ultimate goal of this park system planning process is to support the vision of a healthy, sustainable, and maintainable park and trail system and to discover creative, efficient, and long-term solutions to issues affecting those systems. To effectively guide decision-making, Robbinsdale needs a plan they can reference when deciding to take topics and considerations to the park, recreation, and forestry commission or city council for consideration.



CONTEXT SETTING

Understand the physical, economic, and social environment of the project



PROCESS

Identify the people impacted by the project and the most effective engagement strategies



ENGAGE + DESIGN

Determine community needs through an inclusive engagement process. Plan, design, and implement the project to advance these needs



ACCOUNTABILITY + TRACKING

Establish project goals that serve all stakeholders and guide decision-making



SUSTAINABLE + RESILIENT

Create an end product that is economically viable, technically feasible, publicly acceptable, and environmentally compatible

THE INVENTORY

Hennepin County, the largest and most populous county in Minnesota (of which one in five Minnesotans live) has a robust park and trail system that includes many high-quality and well-maintained recreational spaces. Robbinsdale, located in the eastern portion of the county - near Minneapolis and a handful of other bustling suburban communities - is no different. The city's parks not only provide a variety of recreational facilities, but also habitats for local wildlife, natural spaces for relaxation, and public spaces for socialization.

Robbinsdale currently has 14 parks, which include mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, a community athletic park, a park of historical significance and conservancy areas. Additionally, the city has several connections to the broader regional trail system, namely Victory Memorial Parkway Regional Trail, Crystal Lake Regional Trail, and Twin Lakes Regional Trail, which help to enhance Robbinsdale's bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

In May of 2024, the planning team, aided by members of the city's parks and public works staff, conducted an extensive inventory of Robbinsdale's park system, with a primary goal of better understanding each park's

facilities and amenities, and their current condition. This updated inventory of Robbinsdale's park system will assist city staff in better tracking the conditions of their parks, and implementing an appropriate plan and timeline for the continued maintenance and replacement of amenities and facilities in each park.

A few key takeaways from the inventory process include:

- ◇ Robbinsdale's park acreage and trail mileage meet the needs of the community; in fact, almost all of the city has access to parks or trails within a 10-15 minute walk of their home
- ◇ Park and trail connectivity is reduced by a lack of wayfinding, and unsafe pedestrian crossings on busy streets (especially along Bottineau Blvd and MN-100) and railroads
- ◇ Generally, park and trail amenities and facilities are in good condition, although some park buildings, shelters, and playground structures need updating and/or replacing



Graeser Park



Lee Park



Lakeview Terrace Park



Sanborn Park

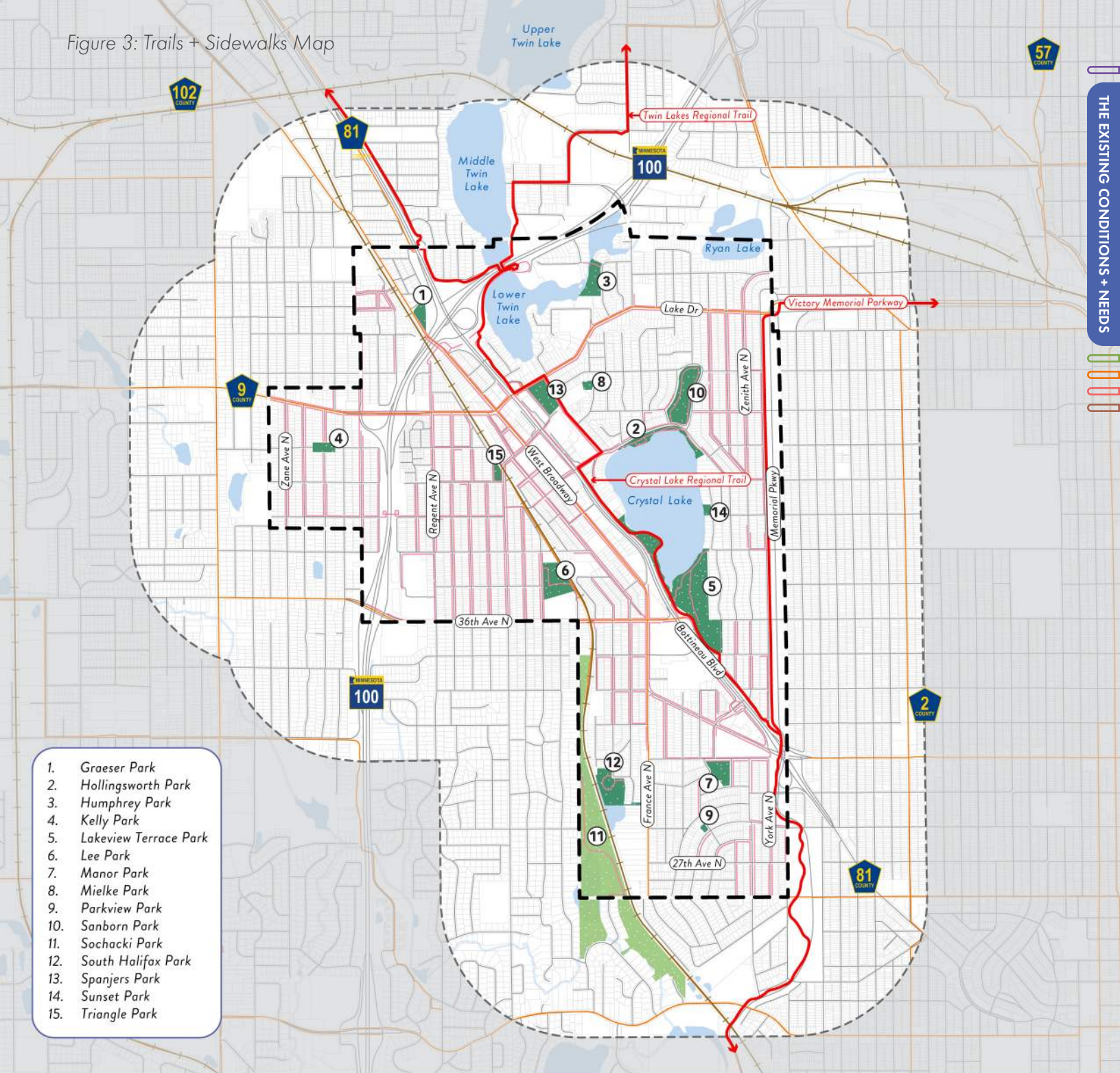
Figure 2: City + Area Parks Map



CITY + AREA PARKS



Figure 3: Trails + Sidewalks Map



EXISTING PARK TYPES

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), whose mission is “to advance parks, recreation and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people,” has developed a handful of useful tools for park and recreation agencies to reference as they maintain and enhance their park, trail, and open space systems. These tools include a standard set of park classifications, park and recreation agency benchmarks, and indoor and outdoor recreation facility standards. These standards and guidelines, which are expanded upon in the following pages, assist park and recreation agencies in comparing their community’s facilities to other agencies across the country. To better allocate resources, make more informed decisions, and have a higher likelihood of successful implementation and long-term sustainability, park and recreation agencies should incorporate these metrics into their park system planning processes.

As outlined in Robbinsdale’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan (completed in 2020), Robbinsdale’s parks fall into the following classifications:

- ◆ **Mini Parks**
 - Humphrey Park
 - Mielke Park
 - Parkview Park
 - Sunset Park
- ◆ **Neighborhood Parks**
 - Kelly Park
 - Lee Park
 - Manor Park
 - Sanborn Park
 - South Halifax Park
 - Triangle Park

- ◆ **Community Parks**
 - Hollingsworth Park
 - Lakeview Terrace Park
 - Sochacki Park
 - Spanjers Park
- ◆ **Conservancy Areas**
 - Humphrey Park
 - Sochacki Park

In 2020 (when the comprehensive plan was created), Graeser Park’s land had not yet been released to the city by MnDOT, who recently completed a three-year preservation project focused on restoration of the parks historic stone features. As a result, the park is still technically unclassified.

Sochacki Park, listed above as both a community park and conservancy area, is a rustic outdoor space comprised of upland, wetland, and woodland plant communities located in the southwestern portion of Robbinsdale. The park is operated and maintained in partnership with Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, and the Three Rivers Park District; Robbinsdale owns 36.9 acres of the park’s land, while Golden Valley owns the Rice Pond and Mary Hills Nature Area portions of the park.

The table on the following page provides additional information about each NRPA park classification’s size, service area, typical location, and purpose, as well as the classification each of Robbinsdale’s parks currently fall into. Classifying parks in this way ensures the appropriate management and conservation practices are applied based on each park’s specific purpose and unique characteristics.

Table 1: NRPA Park Classifications

* functions similarly to a neighborhood park

** functions similarly to a community park

Classification	Size (Typ.)	Service Area	Access	Purpose + Function	Robbinsdale
Park Classes Found in Robbinsdale					
Mini Park	2,500 square feet to 1 acre	1/4 mile radius	Easily accessible to neighborhood residents; can be found in urban settings, usually in or near downtown areas	Provides opportunities for recreation close to home, especially where access to larger parks is not possible; often comprised of large areas of hard surfaces	- Humphrey Park - Mielke Park - Parkview Park - Sunset Park
Neighborhood Park	>1 to 15 acres	1/4 to 1/2 mile radius; within a walkable distance to surrounding residents without any major barriers	Easily accessible to neighborhood populations with safe walking and bicycle access	Provides both active and passive recreation and information gathering spaces; responds to the need for basic recreational amenities	- Kelly Park - Lee Park - Manor Park - Sanborn Park - South Halifax Park - Triangle Park
Community Park	>15 acres	1 to 2 miles; community-wide	Accessible by foot, bike, car, and public transit; often located near natural amenities and regional trail systems	Provides a strategic location for community-wide activities that serve a broad purpose; balances active and passive recreational needs	- Hollingsworth Park - Lakeview Terrace Park - Sochacki Park - Spanjers Park
Regional Park	Up to several hundred acres; varies	Community-wide, regional, and tourist use	Can vary; often placed or centered around natural environments	Uses vary but are focused primarily on outdoor and natural resource-based recreation and learning opportunities	
Additional Park Types					
Special Use	Varies	Community-wide	Site-specific	Serves a specific community need (e.g., golf, fitness, nature education, etc.)	
Natural/Conservancy Areas	Varies	Community-wide	Placed around natural resources + amenities	Typically used for passive recreation; designed to protect environmentally-sensitive features	- Humphrey Park - Sochacki Park
Youth Athletic Park*	10 to 20 acres	Community-wide	Generally connected to trails and sidewalks; ample parking	Provides a strategic location for youth athletic fields and their associated facilities	
Community Athletic Park**	10 to 25+ acres	Community-wide	Generally connected to trails and sidewalks; ample parking	Provides a strategic location for organized athletic recreation with regulation-sized fields and their associated facilities	

Figure 4: Existing Park Classification Map



1. Graeser Park
2. Hollingsworth Park
3. Humphrey Park
4. Kelly Park
5. Lakeview Terrace Park
6. Lee Park
7. Manor Park
8. Mielke Park
9. Parkview Park
10. Sanborn Park
11. Sochacki Park
12. South Halifax Park
13. Spanjers Park
14. Sunset Park
15. Triangle Park

EXISTING PARK CLASSIFICATION MAP

0 2,500 Feet

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Community Park | | Rivers and Streams |
| | Neighborhood Park | | Streets |
| | Mini Park | | Railroad |
| | Other (Graeser Park) | | Parcels |
| | Lakes and Ponds | | Robbinsdale City Limits |

Figure 5: Proposed Park Classification Map



PROPOSED PARK CLASSIFICATION MAP



EXISTING AMENITIES + FACILITIES

After the completion of an in-depth inventory of Robbinsdale’s park, trail, and open space system, collected data was consolidated into an existing amenities and facilities chart. This chart identifies recreational assets currently available to residents in Robbinsdale, and amenities that are currently missing from the system. Although the inventory table is not entirely comprehensive, it provides a snapshot of Robbinsdale’s system-wide offerings and can be used alongside the standards and guidelines outlined in this section to assist the city in identifying what they should or should not consider adding to their park and trail system.



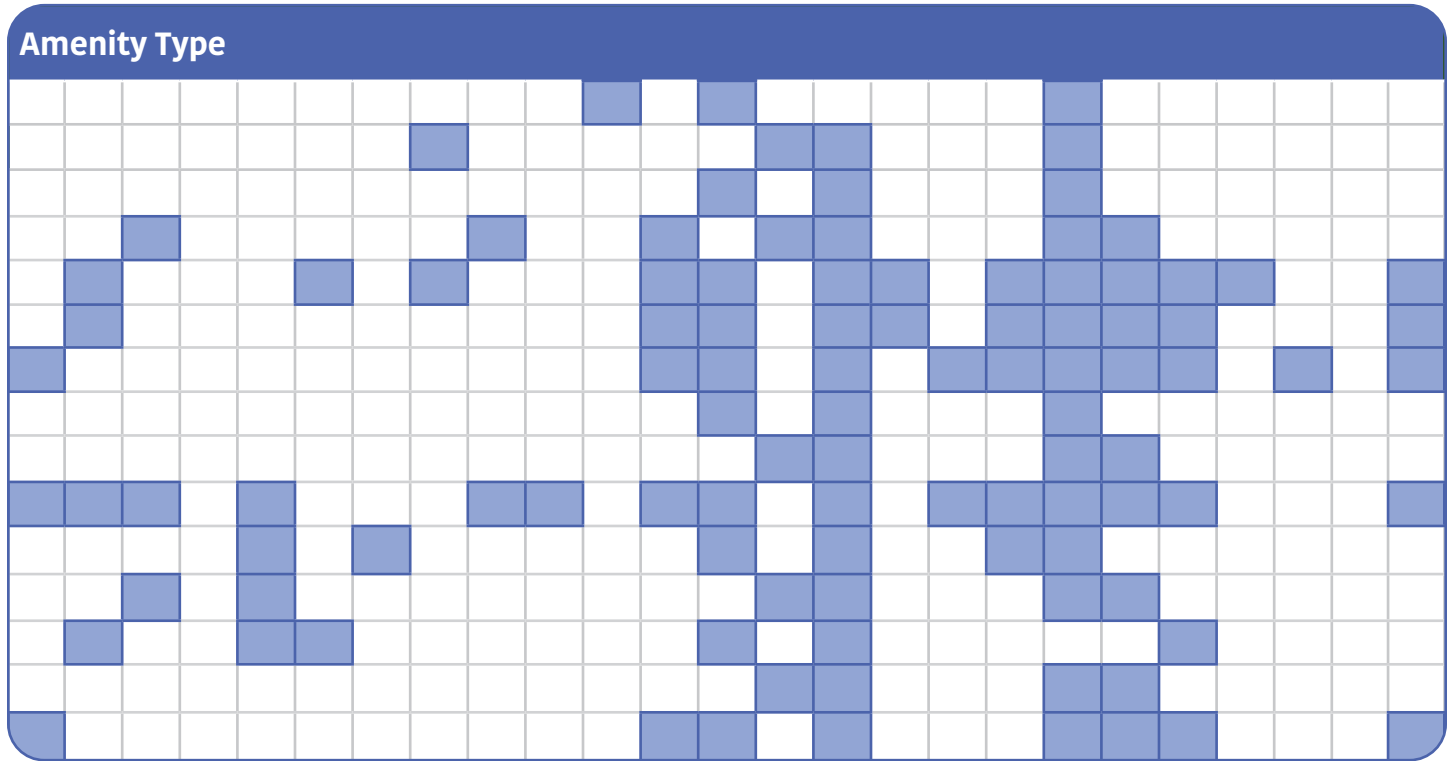
Table 2: Park and Trail System Amenities + Facilities

Park	Address	2040 Comp Plan Classification	Size (acres)
Graeser Park	W Broadway + Hwy 100	Unclassified	3.4
Hollingsworth Park	4237 Shoreline Drive	Community Park	4.4
Hubert H. Humphrey Park	4545 Halifax Ave N	Mini Park /Conservancy Area	3.8
Kelly Park	4100 Xenia Ave N	Neighborhood Park	1.7
Lakeview Terrace Park	3769 Crystal Lake Blvd	Community Park	33.9
Lee Park	3738 Lee Ave N	Neighborhood Park	2.5
Manor Park	3129 Abbott Ave N	Neighborhood Park	3.9
Mielke Park	4239 Halifax Ave N	Mini Park	0.6
Parkview Park	2765 Parkview Blvd	Mini Park	0.2
Sanborn Park	4236 Drew Ave N	Neighborhood Park	8.4
Sochacki Park	3500 June Ave N	Community Conservancy	36.9
South Halifax Park	3101 Halifax Ave N	Neighborhood Park	6.4
Spanjers Park	4511 Lake Dr	Community Playfield	4.0
Sunset Park	3901 Crystal Lake Blvd	Mini Park	0.8
Triangle Park	4001 Noble Ave N	Neighborhood Park	1.0

TOTAL: 111.9 acres

School Facilities	Address
Lakeview Elementary School Ballfield	3730 Toledo Ave N
RMS Community Gym + Fitness Center	3730 Toledo Ave N
Regional Trails	
Victory Memorial Parkway Regional Trail	
Crystal Lake Regional Trail	
Twin Lakes Regional Trail	
Bassett Creek Regional Trail	

- Ballfields (Recreational)
- Ballfields (Competitive)
- Basketball Court (Half)
- Basketball Court (Full)**
- Bike Racks/Repair Station
- Concessions Stand
- Off-Leash Dog Park
- Fishing Locations/Piers
- Horseshoe Pits
- Ice Skating/Hockey Rink
- Kiosk/Wayfinding Signage/Mapping
- Flex Field
- Off-Street Parking
- On-Street Parking
- Park Entry Signage
- Permanent Restrooms
- Pickleball/Tennis Courts
- Picnic Shelters
- Picnic Tables
- Playground Areas
- Portable Toilets
- Sledding Hills
- Splash Pad
- Volleyball Courts**
- Warming House/Perm. Park Building



* Items in red denote facilities currently absent from the park system

Gathering Spaces + Amenities

Recreation Facilities

Park Structures

EXISTING PROGRAMMING + EVENTS

EXISTING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Throughout the year, Robbinsdale hosts a variety of events to highlight the community's cultural assets and provide opportunities for residents to make connections. These community events, which include festivals, shows, exhibitions, fairs, and more, have an important role in community development and cohesion. Some of these events include (but are not limited to):

♦ Fall and Winter Events

- The Badges and Bobbers event, the annual Chamber of Commerce Meet and Greet event, and the Vehicle Fair (all in September)
- The Birdtown Boo Bash (in October)
- The annual Chamber of Commerce Holiday Tree Lighting event and the Holiday City Band Concert (both in December)
- The Fire and Ice Family Skating Party (in February)

♦ Spring and Summer Events

- The annual Chamber of Commerce Spring EGGstravaganza event (in March)
- The Arbor Day Celebration (in April)
- The Bike Rodeo and Shelley Day event (both in May)
- Movies in the Park (in June and August)
- Whiz Bang Days and the Pet and Wheel Parade (both in July)
- Wet N Wild Fun Day, National Night Out, and the Public Safety Open House (all in August)
- Lakeview Terrace Farmers Market (May-September)

More information about each of the events listed above can be found on the city's website (<https://www.robbednsdalemn.com/news/events>) or in the city's online biannual newsletter and recreation review (<https://www.robbednsdalemn.com/news/city-newsletters>). Residents can also receive email notifications about upcoming events by signing up for eNotifications (<https://www.robbednsdalemn.com/news/e-subscribe>).



Annual Holiday Tree Lighting event



Annual Whiz Bang Days event



Movies in the Park event



Birdtown Boo Bash event

ROBBINSDALE AREA SCHOOLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES

The Robbinsdale Area Schools Community Education (RASCE) program offers hundreds of classes, activities, and events to residents of all ages and walks of life in Robbinsdale, Plymouth, New Hope, Crystal, and Golden Valley. Whether it be Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes, engaging youth programming for school-age children, or adult enrichment and basic education opportunities, there are many ways to get involved or volunteer. Many of these programs are fee-based, but the RASCE organization offers scholarships and fee assistance for many of their offerings. Opportunities and activities for the community to get involved in include (but are not limited to):

♦ Early Learning Programming

- ECFE opportunities designed to help young children develop their physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social potential
- Early Childhood Special Education opportunities for children between birth and five years of age with a demonstrated developmental delay
- ECFE preschool classes (two to five day options) that serve caregivers and children 3 or 4 years old
- Early Adventures, a full-day child care program with a preschool component

♦ Youth Enrichment Programming

- Adventure Club, a before and after-school childhood program for students in kindergarten through 5th grade
- The Basement, a before and after-school childcare program for students in 6th through 8th grade
- An Aquatics Program, which offers high-quality and affordable swim lessons throughout the year
- Youth enrichments classes, camps, and activities for arts and crafts, college readiness, cooking and baking, dance, music and theater, recreation, sports, and

STEM, as well as high school enrichment classes for driver's education, ACT prep, and more

♦ Adult Enrichment Programming

- The Adult Academic Program (AAP) designed to help adults improve the educational skills needed to achieve their academic and personal goals
- GED test prep and assistance
- English language learning/ESL courses
- Adult enrichment classes and activities for arts and crafts, cooking and baking, hobbies and skills, fitness and recreation, health and wellness, lifelong learning, and windows of opportunity

The Robbinsdale Community Gym and Fitness Center (RCGFC), located at Robbinsdale Middle School, also offers a variety of activities and facilities for folks of all ages and abilities to engage in or use. The RCGFC's two gymnasiums feature basketball courts, volleyball courts, pickleball courts, badminton courts, and floor hockey goals, while the fitness center features treadmills, bicycles, stair climbers, rowing machines, ellipticals, multiple strength stations, stability and weighted balls, free weights, and benches. More information about the RCGFC's open gym schedules, rentals, memberships, and fees can be found on the city's website (<https://www.robbinsdalemn.com/services/recreation-parks-facilities/community-gym-fitness-center>).



NRPA AGENCY BENCHMARKS

To operate more efficiently, meet their community’s recreational needs, and position themselves for future success, park and recreation agencies must first understand and align themselves with the standards and guidelines that have proven effective in other communities. Fortunately, the NRPA has developed a set of park and recreation benchmarks for agencies to aspire to based on industry-wide data and best practices. These benchmarks, standards, and guidelines - which provide data on budget allocations, staffing levels, facility maintenance, program offerings, and more - allow agencies to better forecast future park and recreation needs, plan for growth, and ensure they are meeting the ever-changing needs of their communities.

Robbinsdale’s park and recreation agency should reference the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review report, which explores several top-line findings pertaining to park facilities, programming, staffing, budget, agency funding, and policies (see below for more information regarding Robbinsdale’s park and recreation agency). As mentioned in the report, it is important to note that “there is no one-size-fits-all solution for maintaining and improving a park and recreation agency,” as there are many factors (such as jurisdiction population, the unique needs of the community, and funding) that influence the development of a park and recreation agency.

Robbinsdale at a Glance:

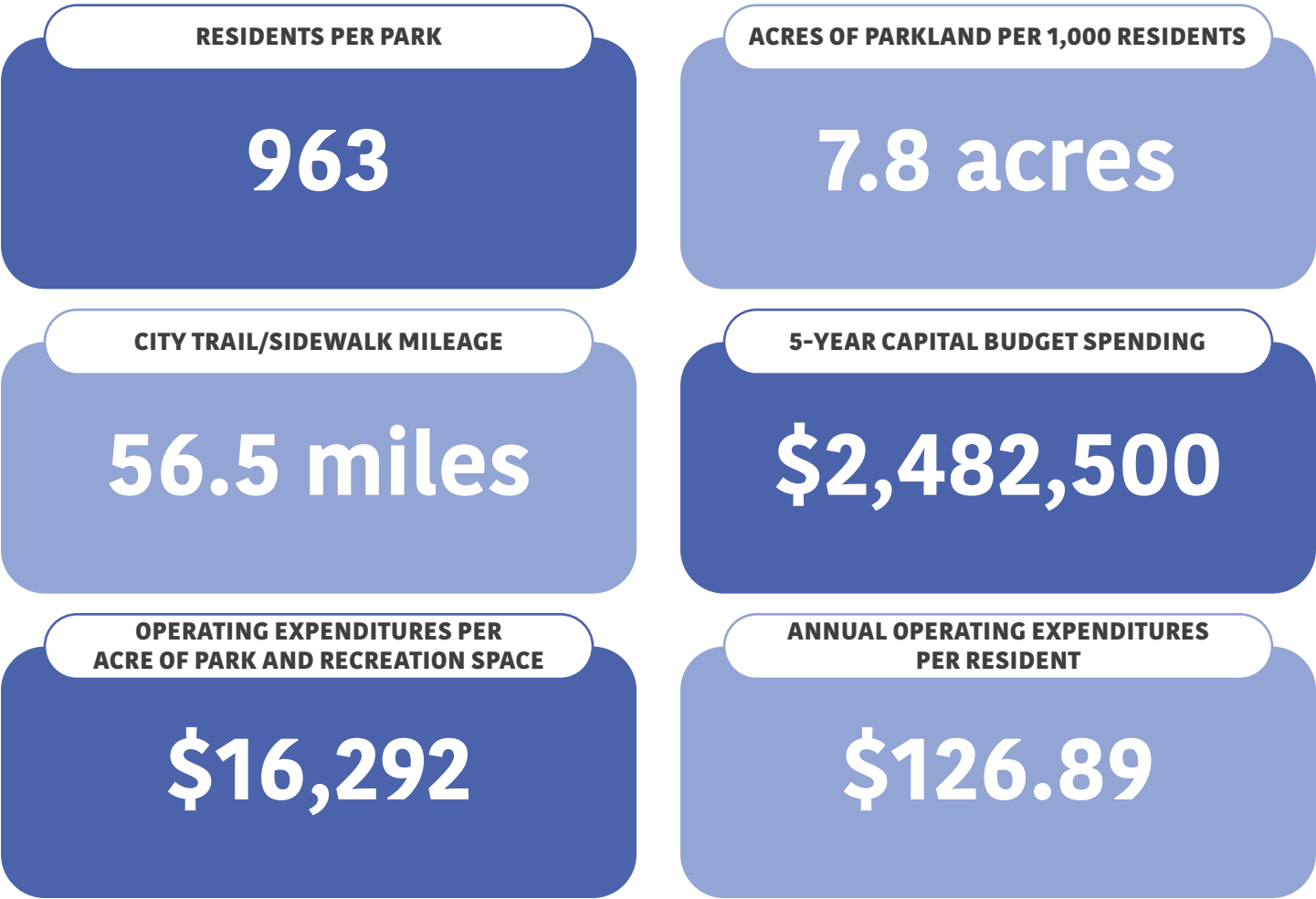


Table 3: NRPA Agency Benchmarks

NRPA Benchmark	All Park and Recreation Agencies (Median)	Park and Recreation Agencies Less Than 20,000 (Median)	Robbinsdale
Park Facilities			
Residents per park	2,386 residents	1,172 residents	993 residents
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents	10.6 acres	12.6 acres	13.3 acres
Miles of trails	16 miles	4.5 miles	56.5 miles bike way = 13.3 miles sidewalk = 43.2 miles
Staffing			
Park and recreation full-time employees per 10,000 residents	8.9 employees	13.7 employees	10 employees parks = 5 rec = 5
Budget			
Annual operating expenditures	\$6,453,357	\$1,451,763	\$1,710,676 parks = \$959,767 rec = \$750,909
Annual operating expenditures per resident	\$99.47	\$135.53	\$126.89
Operating expenditures per acre of park and recreation space	\$8,260	\$9,777	\$16,292.15
Annual operating expenditures per full-time employee	\$110,912	\$101,304	\$171,067.60
Typical percentage of operating expenditures for staffing	54%	N/A	38% parks = \$345,259 rec = \$307,630
Agency Funding			
Operating expenditures derived from general fund tax support	62%	N/A	12%
Annual revenue generated from each resident	\$22.58	\$47.71	\$59.34
Five-year capital budget spending	\$12,000,000	\$1,814,000	\$2,482,500
Targets for capital expenditures	88% for improvements 7% for acquisition	N/A	N/A
Policies			
Park and recreation agencies that ban tobacco products at their parks and facilities	4 in 5 (80%)	N/A	100%
Agencies with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion expressed in their foundational documents (e.g., vision, mission, and strategic plan documents)	77%	N/A	100%

* derived from the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review

** based on Robbinsdale's population of 14,889

SERVICE AREA + RECREATION FACILITY STANDARDS

RECREATION FACILITY SERVICE STANDARDS

Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities are an important component to any park, trail, and open space system because they provide opportunities for community members to gather, socialize, and exercise in safe and inclusive spaces. For both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, the NRPA has developed service area standards and facility guidelines to give park and recreation agencies an idea of the minimum level of service needed for convenient access to recreation facilities. As mentioned, these metrics should be considered in conjunction with other resources to best serve the needs of Robbinsdale’s unique community.

The tables included in the following pages, based on information publicly available in the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review document, provide information pertaining to:

- ◇ the median number of facilities recommended in the community (per population under 20,000 in size)
- ◇ the recommended service area of each of those facilities (measured in mile-drive or minute-walk)
- ◇ the target range and suggested quantity of each facility type
- ◇ the current facility quantity present in Robbinsdale
- ◇ the excess or deficit of each facility type based on the target range identified
- ◇ any notes that provide additional information about nearby facilities that residents of Robbinsdale have reasonable access to

A NOTE ABOUT SCHOOL FACILITIES

The City of Robbinsdale is currently served by Independent School District 281 (commonly known as Robbinsdale School District), which includes 11 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, high schools, an alternative high school, and a virtual school. However, only a few schools are located within Robbinsdale’s city limits. These include:

- ◇ Lakeview Elementary School
- ◇ Sacred Heart Catholic Church and School
- ◇ Robbinsdale Middle School

Although each of these schools offers a number of recreational amenities and facilities (including playground areas, sports courts, and flex fields), they have been excluded from service and distribution and gap analysis tables and maps, as they are not owned and maintained by the city.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◇ Robbinsdale lacks a number of indoor recreation facilities, such as aquatic centers, indoor ice arenas, and nature centers, although all of these facilities can be found in adjacent communities
- ◇ Robbinsdale offers its residents a variety of outdoor recreation facilities but is lacking specialized facilities like disc golf and regular golf courses, outdoor swimming pools, and skate parks
- ◇ Based on the median number of facilities for populations less than 20,000, Robbinsdale has an excess of competitive ballfields, flex fields, playgrounds and outdoor ice rinks

Table 4: Indoor Service Area + Recreation Facility Standards

Facility	Median Number Per Population Less Than 20,000	Service Area	Target Range	Current Number	Excess/Deficit	Notes
Indoor Facilities						
Aquatic Centers	1 per 12,500	Entire city	1 aquatic center	0	-1	- Crystal Cover Aquatic Center (in Crystal) - New Hope YMCA
Community Centers	1 per 9,000	Entire city	1 community center	1	0	- Robbindale Community Gym and Fitness Center - Crystal Community Center - New Hope YMCA - Brooklyn Center Community Center
Indoor Ice Arenas	1 per 8,000	Entire city	1 indoor ice rink	0	-1	- New Hope Ice Arena - Brooklyn Park Ice Arena - Maple Grove Ice Arena
Nature Centers	1 per 10,000	Entire city	1 nature center	0	-1	- Mary Hills Nature Center (in Golden Valley) - Carl W. Kroening Nature Center (in Minneapolis) - Mississippi Gateway Visitor Center (in Brooklyn Park) - Eastman Nature Center (in Maple Grove)
Permanent/ Semi-Permanent Restrooms	1 per 5,000	20-25 min.	3 permanent/ semi-permanent restrooms	2	-1	- Lakeview Terrace Park - Lee Park
Recreation Centers (including gyms)	1 per 9,500	Entire city	1 recreation center	1	0	- Robbinsdale Community Gym and Fitness Center - Lions Gym and Wellness Center (in Minneapolis) - Creekview Recreation Center (in Minneapolis) - New Hope YMCA - Life Time (in New Hope)
Senior Centers	1 per 14,000	Entire city	1 senior center	1	0	- Five Cities Senior Citizens - Leo Senior Healthy Life Center (in Minneapolis)

Table 5: Outdoor Service + Facility Standards

Facility	Median Number Per Population Less Than 20,000	Service Area	Target Range	Current Number	Excess/Deficit	Notes
Outdoor Facilities						
Ballfields	1 per city + 1 per 2,500 to 5,000 (recreational)	10-15 min.	4-7 recreational ballfields	3	-1 to -3	- Manor Park - Sanborn Park - Triangle Park
	1 per city + 1 per 5,000 to 10,000 (competitive)	10-15 min.	2-4 competitive ballfields	4	0 to +2	- Lakeview Terrace Park - Lee Park - Sanborn Park - Spanjers Park
Basketball Courts	1 per 4,500 (full-court)	10-15 min.	3 (full-court)	0 (full-court)	-3 (full-court)	Full basketball courts are available in adjacent communities
	1 per 3,000 (half-court)	10-15 min.	5 (half-court)	3 (half-court)	-2 (half-court)	- Kelly Park - Sanborn Park - South Halifax Park
Community Gardens	1 per 9,000	Entire city	1 community garden	2	0	3602 Lake Drive 3933 West Broadway
Disc Golf Courses	1 per 11,000	Entire city	1 disc golf course	0	-1	- Bassett Creek Disc Golf Course (in Crystal) - Sunny Side Disc Golf Course (in New Hope)
Fitness Zones/Exercise Stations	1 per 8,000	Entire city	1 fitness zone/exercise station	0	-1	
18-Hole Golf Courses	1 per 9,500	Entire city	1 18-hole golf course	0	-1	- New Hope Village Golf Course - Theodore Wirth Golf Course (in Minneapolis) - Centerbrook Golf Course (in Brooklyn Center)
Flex Fields	1 per 3,000	1-2 miles	5 flex fields	7	+2	- Kelly Park - Lakeview Terrace Park - Lee Park - Manor Park - Sanborn Park - Spanjers Park - Triangle Park
Off-Leash Dog Parks	1 per 10,000	10-15 min.	1 off-leash dog park	1	0	Sochacki Park
Outdoor Ice Rinks	1 per 8,000	10-15 min.	1-2 ice rinks	2	0 to +1	Sanborn Park (2)

Table 5: Outdoor Service + Facility Standards (Continued)

Facility	Median Number Per Population Less Than 20,000	Service Area	Target Range	Current Number	Excess/Deficit	Notes
Outdoor Facilities						
Outdoor Swimming Pools	1 per 9,500	Entire city	1 outdoor swimming pool	0	-1	- New Hope Aquatic Park - Webber Natural Swimming Pool (in Minneapolis)
Pickleball Courts	1 per 3,500	10-15 min.	4 pickleball courts	3	-1	- Manor Park (1) - Sanborn Park (2)
Playgrounds	1 per 2,000	10-15 min.	7 playgrounds	9	+2	- Kelly Park - Lakeview Terrace park - Lee Park - Manor Park - Parkview Park - Sanborn Park - South Halifax Park - Sunset Park - Triangle Park
Skate Park	1 per 11,000	Entire city	1 skate park	0	-1	- Crystal Skate Park - New Hope Skate Plaza
Sledding Hills	N/A	Entire city	1 sledding hill	1	0	Lakeview Terrace Park
Splash Pad/ Water Plaza	1 per 12,500	Entire city	1 splash pad/water plaza	1	0	Manor Park
Tennis Courts	1 per 3,000	10-15 min.	5 tennis courts	3	-2	- Manor Park (1) - Sanborn Park (2)
Volleyball Courts	1 per 9,000	20-25 min.	1 volleyball court	0	-1	- Beach volleyball courts at Theodore Wirth Regional Park - Indoor volleyball courts in Robbinsdale Community Gym and Fitness Center

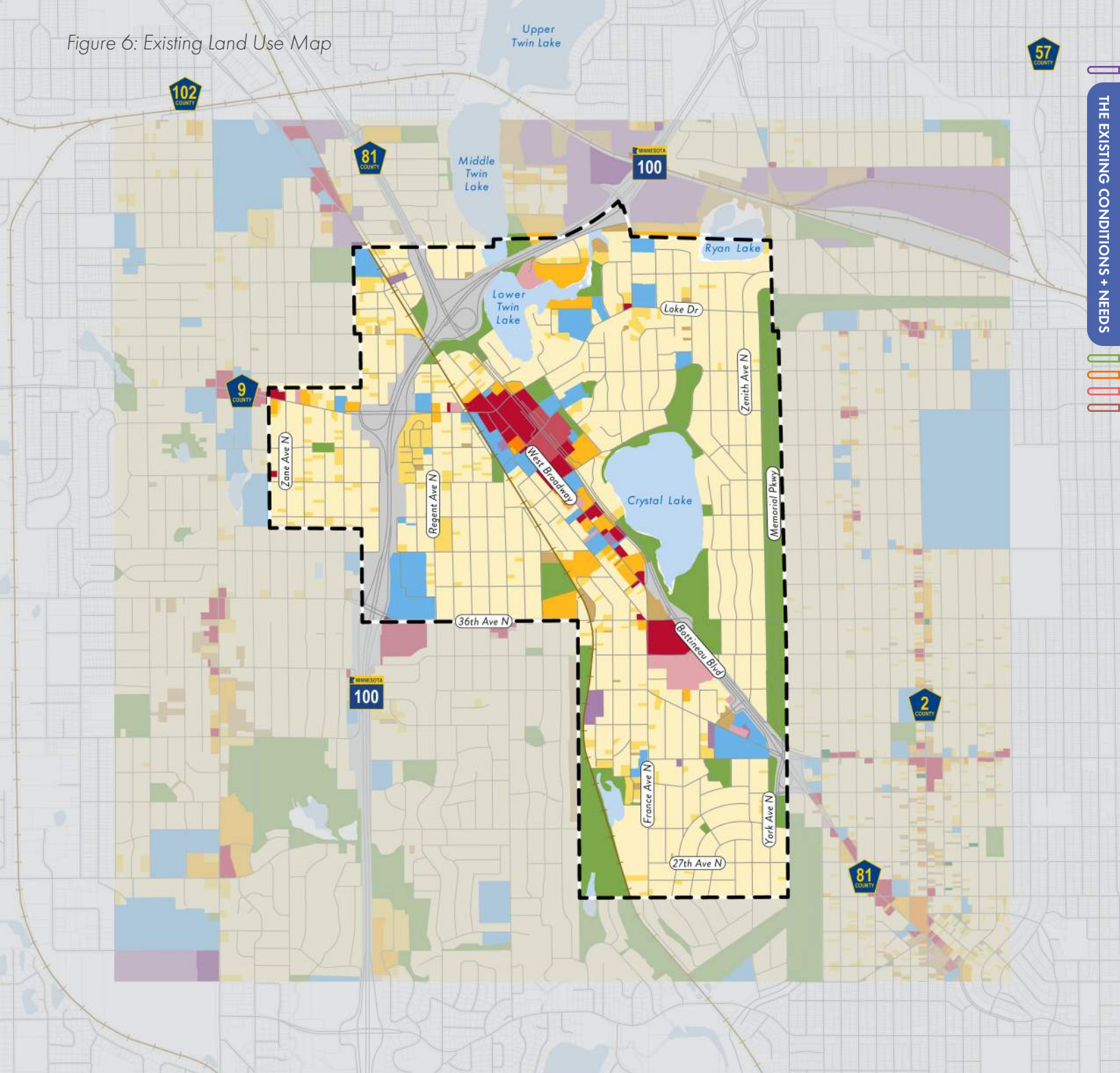
MAPPING OVERVIEW

The following pages contain a number of maps and engagement summaries that the planning team used to better understand the distribution of park and recreation elements in Empire. These maps, along with community input and stakeholder feedback, helped to identify missing links and community needs in the city's park and trail system.

The maps highlighted in this section of the report include:

- ◇ Existing Land Use Map
- ◇ Future Land Use Map
- ◇ Park Walkshed Map
- ◇ Playground Walkshed Map,
- ◇ Park Amenities Distribution Map
- ◇ Ballfields Distribution Map
- ◇ Sports Courts Distribution Map
- ◇ Fields Distribution Map
- ◇ Playground Distribution Map
- ◇ Winter Activities Distribution Map
- ◇ Water Access Distribution Map

Figure 6: Existing Land Use Map



EXISTING LAND USE

Robbinsdale City Limits

Agricultural

Park, Recreational, or Preserve

Single Family Detached

Single Family Attached

Multifamily

Mixed Use Residential

Mixed Use Commercial

Retail and Other Commercial

Office

Institutional

Mixed Use Industrial

Industrial or Utility

Major Highway/Major Railway

0 2,500 Feet



Undeveloped

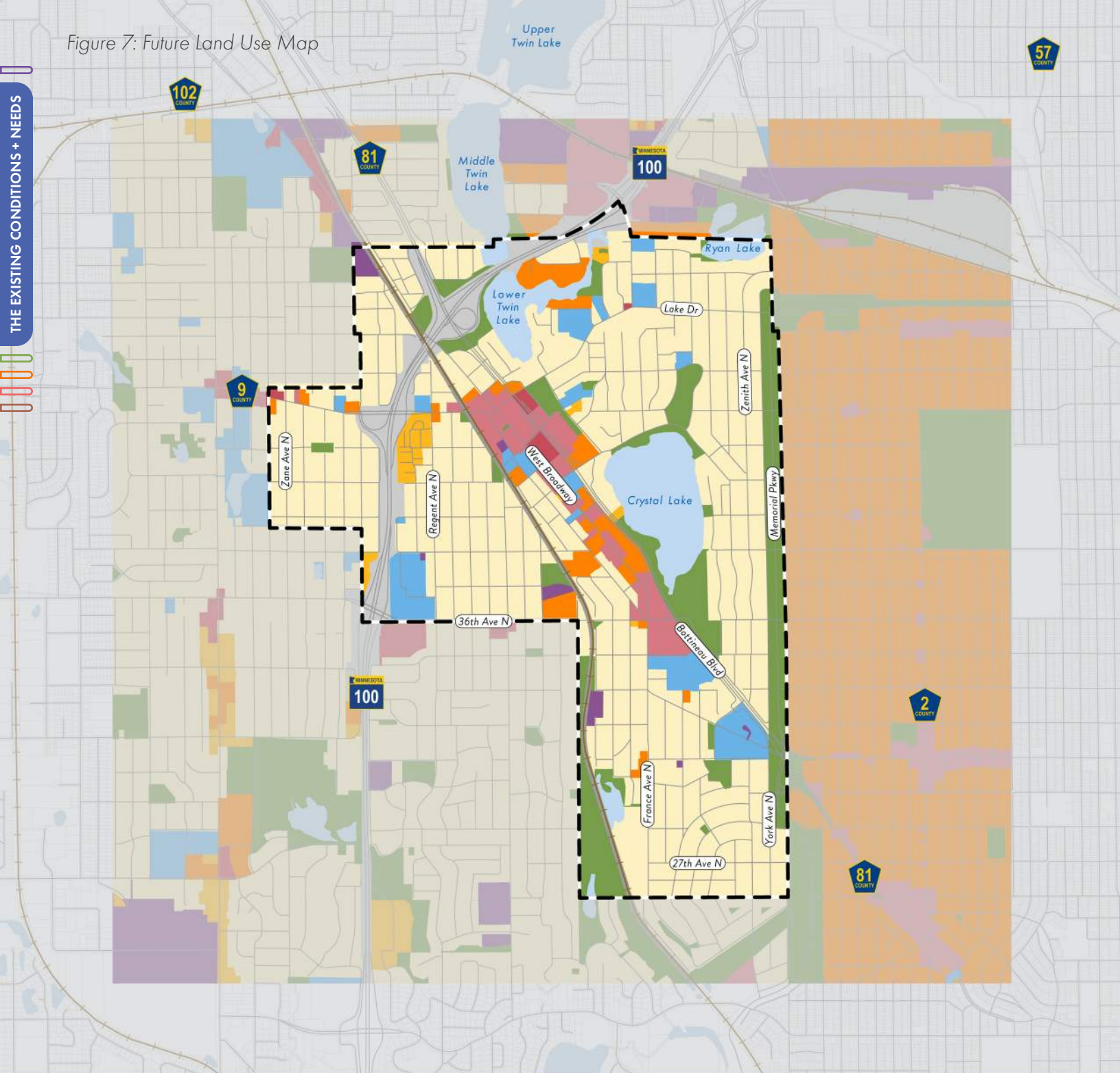
Lakes and Ponds

Rivers and Streams

Streets

Railroad

Figure 7: Future Land Use Map



FUTURE LAND USE

- Robbinsdale City Limits
- Park, Recreation, Open Space, Natural Area, Public Land
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential and Urban Neighborhood

- Commercial
- Mixed Use and Transit Oriented Development
- Institutional and Office
- Utility, Industrial, Production, and Assembly
- Railroad and Railroad Right of Way
- Transportation and Vehicular Right of Way

- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- Streets
- Railroad

0 2,500 Feet



Figure 8: Park Walkshed Map



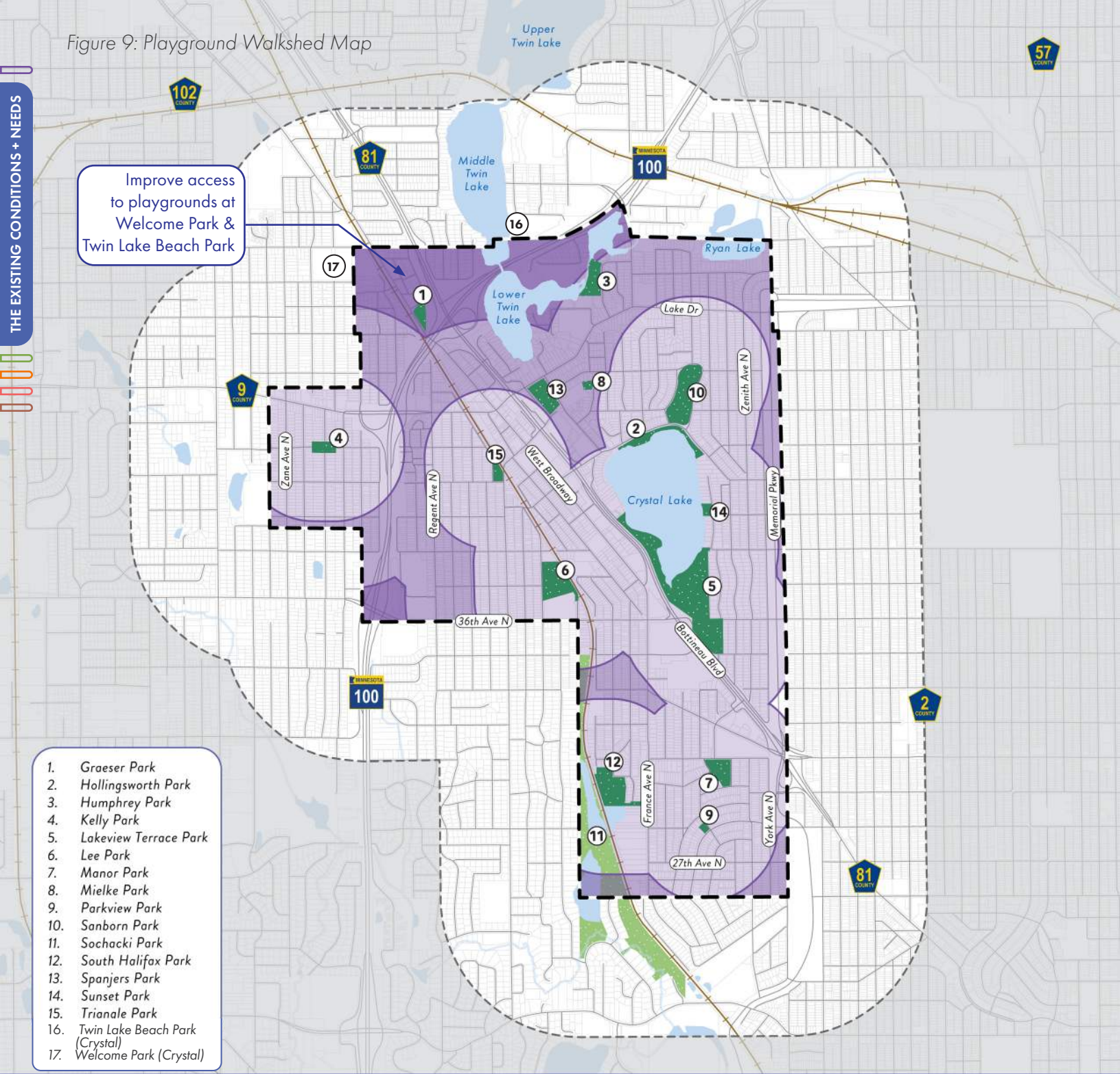
PARK WALKSHED

0 2,500 Feet



- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Robbinsdale Parks | Golden Valley Parks | Streets |
| Three Rivers Park District | New Hope Parks | Railroad |
| Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board | 5-Minute (1/4 Mile) Walkshed | Parcels |
| Brooklyn Center Parks | 10-Minute (1/2 Mile) Walkshed | Robbinsdale City Limits |
| Crystal Parks | Lakes and Ponds | Rivers and Streams |

Figure 9: Playground Walkshed Map



PLAYGROUND WALKSHED

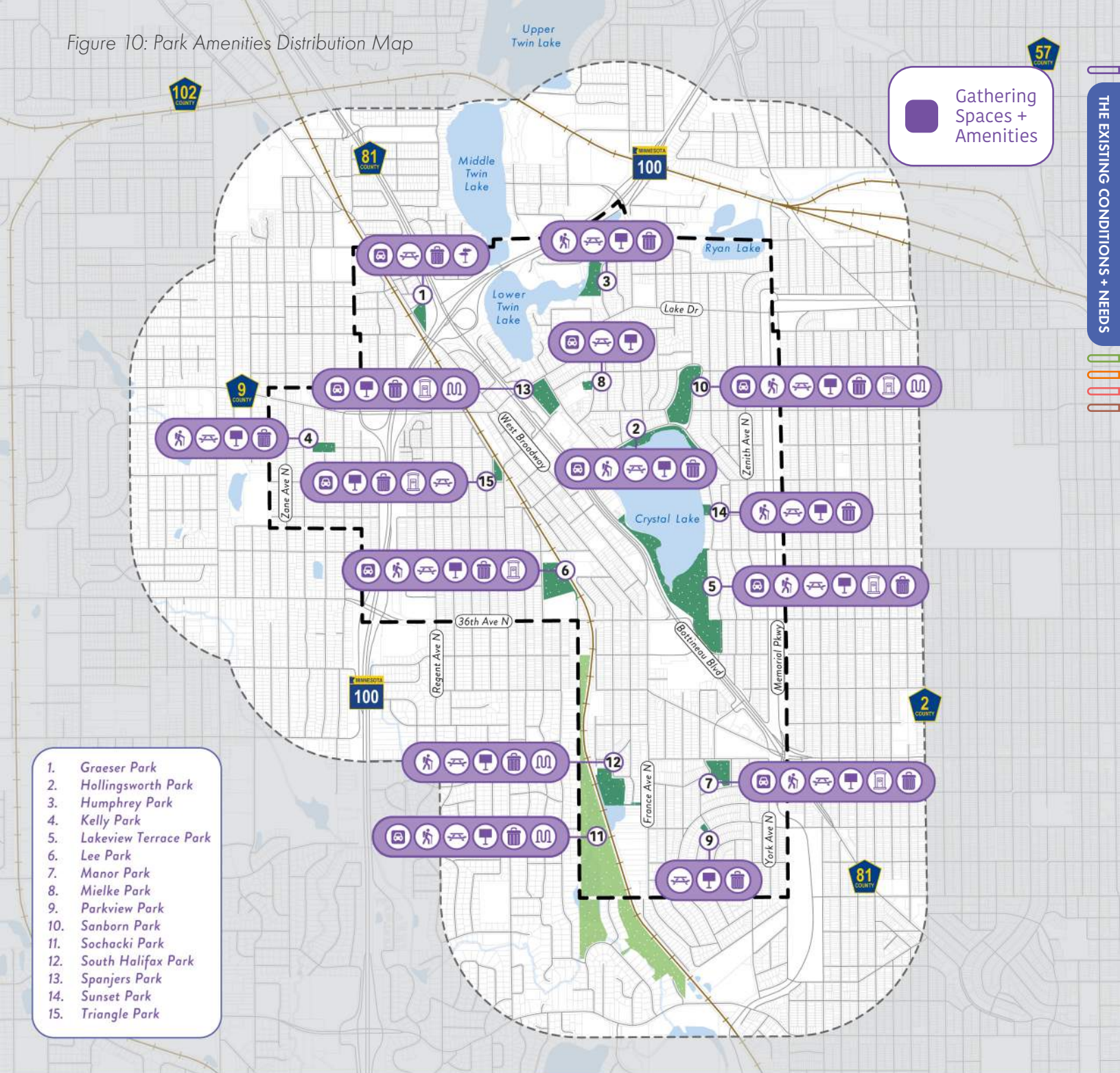
0 2,500 Feet

- Robbinsdale Parks
- Three Rivers Park District
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Brooklyn Center Parks
- Crystal Parks

- Golden Valley Parks
- New Hope Parks
- 5-Minute (1/4 Mile) Walkshed
- 10-Minute (1/2 Mile) Walkshed
- Greater than 10-Minute (1/2 Mile) Walkshed

- Streets
- Railroad
- Parcels
- Robbinsdale City Limits
- Rivers and Streams
- Lakes and Ponds

Figure 10: Park Amenities Distribution Map



PARK AMENITIES DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet

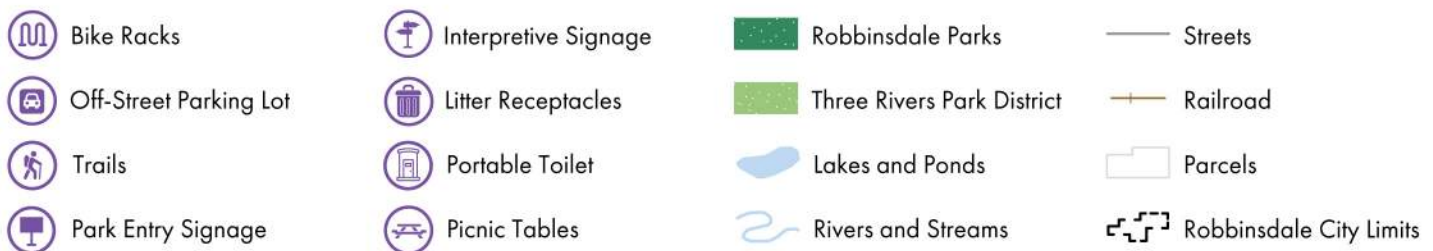
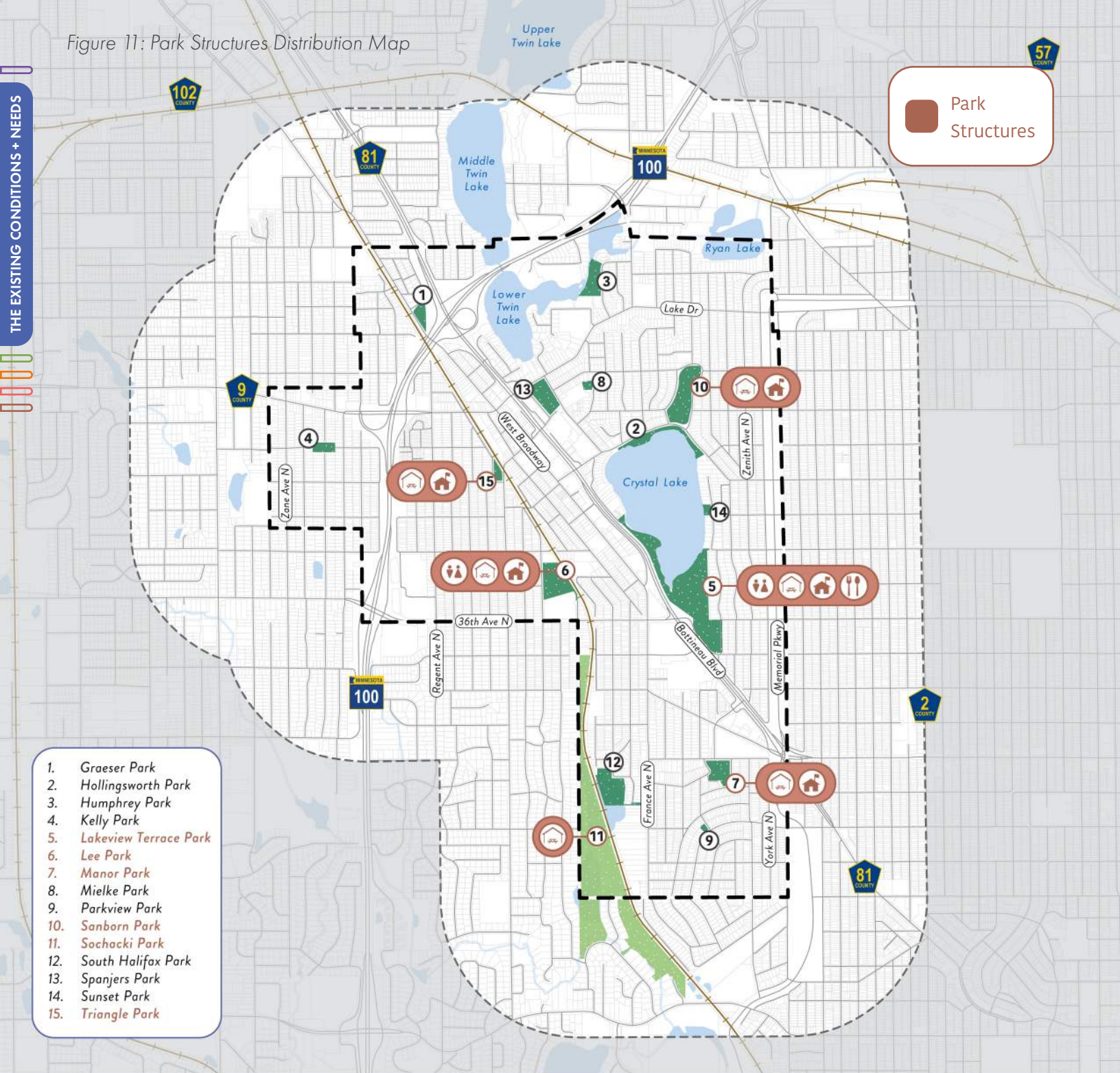


Figure 11: Park Structures Distribution Map



PARK STRUCTURES DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



- | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Concessions Stands | | Robbinsdale Parks | | Streets |
| | Permanent Restrooms | | Three Rivers Park District | | Railroad |
| | Picnic Shelters | | Lakes and Ponds | | Parcels |
| | Warming House/
Permanent Park Building | | Rivers and Streams | | Robbinsdale City Limits |

Figure 12: Ballfields Distribution Map



BALLFIELDS DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



- | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Recreation Ballfields | | Robbinsdale Parks | | Streets |
| | Competitive Ballfields | | Three Rivers Park District | | Railroad |
| | | | Lakes and Ponds | | Parcels |
| | | | Rivers and Streams | | Robbinsdale City Limits |

Figure 13: Sports Courts Distribution Map



SPORTS COURTS DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



- Basketball Court (Half-Court)
- Tennis Courts
- Pickleball Courts
- Horseshoe Pits

- Robbinsdale Parks
- Three Rivers Park District
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams

- Streets
- Railroad
- Parcels
- Robbinsdale City Limits

Figure 14: Flex Fields Distribution Map



FLEX FIELD DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



Flex Fields



Robbinsdale Parks

Streets



Three Rivers Park District

Railroad



Lakes and Ponds

Parcels

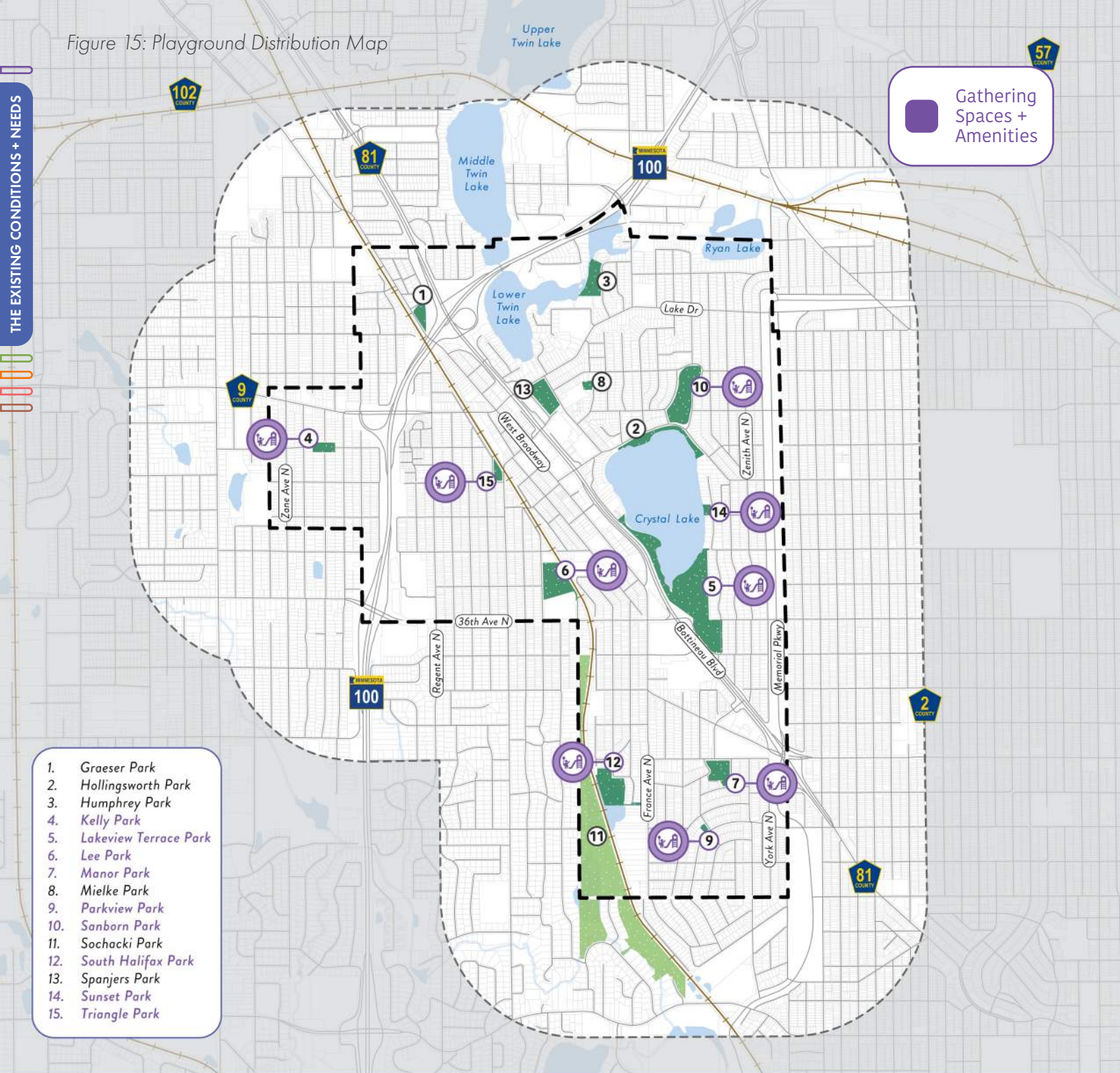


Rivers and Streams



Robbinsdale City Limits

Figure 15: Playground Distribution Map



PLAYGROUND DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



Playgrounds



Robbinsdale Parks



Streets



Three Rivers Park District



Railroad



Lakes and Ponds



Parcels



Rivers and Streams



Robbinsdale City Limits

Figure 16: Water Access Distribution Map



1. Graeser Park
2. Hollingsworth Park
3. Humphrey Park
4. Kelly Park
5. Lakeview Terrace Park
6. Lee Park
7. Manor Park
8. Mielke Park
9. Parkview Park
10. Sanborn Park
11. Sochacki Park
12. South Halifax Park
13. Spanjers Park
14. Sunset Park
15. Triangle Park

WATER ACCESS DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Public Boat Launch
Twin Lake Boat Launch
Crystal Lake Boat Launch
Sweeney Lake Boat Launch | Robbinsdale Parks | Streets |
| Public Fishing Pier
at Crystal Lake
at Ryan Lake
at Lower and Middle Twin Lake | Three Rivers Park District | Railroad |
| Splash Pad | Lakes and Ponds | Parcels |
| | Rivers and Streams | Robbinsdale City Limits |

Figure 17: Winter Activities Distribution Map



WINTER ACTIVITIES DISTRIBUTION

0 2,500 Feet



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

COORDINATION WITH THE CITY

Throughout the planning process, valuable information was gathered from city staff and the Park, Recreation and Forestry (PRF) Commission, who were able to provide local expertise on the system, highlight deficiencies in the city's recreational spaces, amenities and facilities, and help guide the outcomes and implementation strategies discussed in later sections of the report. Monthly coordination meetings with city staff, as well as three PRF commission meetings, covered a multitude of topics ranging from existing conditions in the park and trail system to the community vision, mission and guiding principles for the plan. Coordination with the city was an integral part of the overall planning process.

POP-UP EVENTS

In addition to coordination meetings with city staff and the PRF commission, two pop-up events were hosted, with one facilitated by the planning team (Whiz Bang Days) and the other facilitated by the city (The Chamber Meet + Greet). Whiz Bang Days - an annual community event that features a block party, sports activities, a parade, and even a fireworks show - was a major success, with many residents stopping by to provide their feedback on the early stages of the plan. Similarly, the Chamber Meet + Greet - an

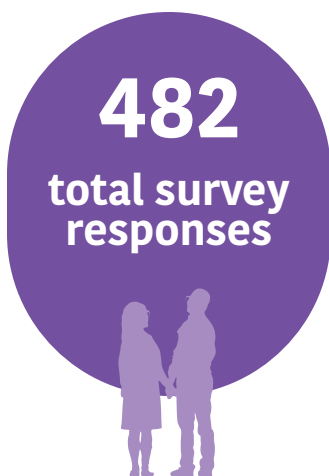
annual family-friendly event sponsored by Robbinsdale Chamber of Commerce that allows the community to learn more about local businesses and organizations - was also successful, with hundreds of residents providing feedback on concept plans for Sanborn Park as well as system-wide improvement recommendations.

THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Over the course of ten weeks, the planning team engaged the public through an accessible online community survey link. While the survey was active, city staff, the PRF commission, and the planning team spread the word throughout Robbinsdale. At the close of the survey period, nearly 500 community members had provided their feedback and thoughts. Results from this survey were especially helpful in informing the existing conditions and needs and recommendations sections of the plan, and provided the planning team insights on the needs and wants of the community regarding the future of their park and trail system.

ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

The following pages provide a brief summary of the input gathered through coordination with city staff and the PRF commission, feedback received during community pop-up events, and key takeaways from the online community survey.



THE SWOT ANALYSIS

Early in the planning process, the Park, Recreation and Forestry commission completed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of the existing park and trail system. Findings from that exercise are included below.



POP-UP #1 WHIZ BANG DAYS

PARK SYSTEM PRIORITIZATION

During the Whiz Bang Days pop-up event, community members were invited to place “fuzzies” in jars corresponding to five major park and recreation-related themes to assist the planning team in understanding their priorities. Results from the activity are listed below:

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Additional Programs, Events + Activities | 44 |
| 2 | Preservation of + Access to the Natural Environment | 39 |
| 3 | Enhanced Playgrounds + Play Features | 39 |
| 4 | Flex/Multi-Use Fields + Sport Courts | 27 |
| 5 | Better Connectivity + Accessibility | 22 |

Residents were also asked the following question: “What are your dreams for the future of Robbinsdale’s park system?” Listed below are a few of their responses.

“Updated lighting + accessible playgrounds for children with physical and sensory disabilities.”

“Updated lighting + accessible playgrounds for children with physical and sensory disabilities.”

“Keep Robbinsdale walkable by increasing trail connectivity!”

“We need more safe crossings across Bottineau Boulevard.”

“We should look into opportunities for permanent lawn games at Spanjers Park.”

THE FUTURE OF SANBORN PARK

In addition to providing feedback about the park system as a whole, residents were asked to weigh in on the future of Sanborn Park. A series of precedent images of various recreational facilities, gathering spaces and amenities, and park structures were shown as inspiration, and residents were asked to place a “sticky dot” next to their top preferences. Results from the activity are listed below:

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----|
| 1 | Free Skate Area | 29 |
| 2 | Off-Leash Dog Park | 23 |
| 3 | Community Building | 22 |
| 4 | Reconstructed Playground | 21 |
| 5 | Seasonal Warming House | 12 |
| 6 | Tennis/Pickleball Courts | 12 |
| 7 | Additional Picnic Tables | 10 |
| 8 | Covered Gathering Spaces | 7 |
| 9 | Additional Benches/Seating | 7 |
| 10 | Multi-Use Rink | 5 |
| 11 | Fitness Equipment | 3 |
| 12 | Additional Softball Field | 1 |
| 13 | Lawn Games | 1 |

When asked to provide feedback on the amenities they use, their dislikes and likes, and preferences on what should be added or removed from Sanborn Park, residents responded in the following ways:

"We should add a dog park on the north side of the park."

"We need to preserve and restore the existing park building."

"A volleyball net needs added somewhere in the park."

"The existing basketball courts needs some attention and resurfacing."

"A horseshoe tournament in Sanborn Park would be so much fun!"

"A free skate area near the existing ice rinks would be a great addition to the park."

"We need more bike trails and bike lanes near Sanborn!"

"We should replace the existing horseshoe pits with additional pickleball courts."

"The benches in the park are not very accessible, especially for older park visitors."

"Adding a band shell stage to the park would be great for community events!"

"Consider removing the ballfield on the south side of the park as it does not get used very often."

"Enhance views from the park to Crystal Lake!"

"A volleyball tournament in the park's open green space would draw in many community members!"



POP-UP #2 CHAMBER MEET + GREET

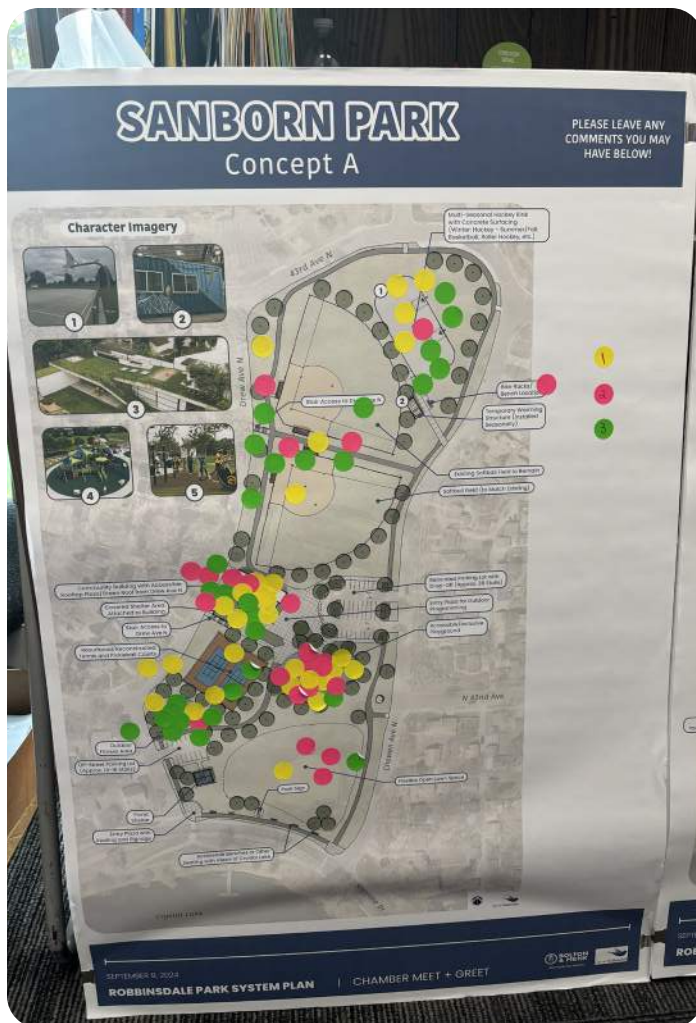
SANBORN PARK CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

As part of the planning process, the planning team was tasked with developing concept plans for Sanborn Park. The park is used often for community events, offers recreational opportunities to neighboring residents, and provides scenic views of Crystal Lake. After receiving feedback from the community, city staff, and the PRFC (parks, recreation, and forestry commission), the planning team developed two concepts for Sanborn Park, which can be found in the appendix. These concepts were shared with the community at the Chamber Meet + Greet pop-up event, where residents were asked to identify and prioritize the amenities they'd like to see in the park. Top priorities were indicated by

yellow sticky dots, medium priorities by red dots, and low priorities by green dots.

Included below are the concept boards presented at the Chamber Meeting + Greet pop-up event. There was overwhelming support for Concept B, which included amenities such as a fenced dog park; a community center building with attached outdoor shelter areas; an outdoor classroom, amphitheater, and playground space integrated into the park's western sloped edge, an ice skating/free skating location, and more.

Based on the feedback received, the planning team generated a preferred concept plan that combined features from both initial concepts. This preferred concept plan can be seen in the Recommendations section of this document.



THE SURVEY SUMMARY

SURVEY RESPONDENTS AT A GLANCE



482

total responses

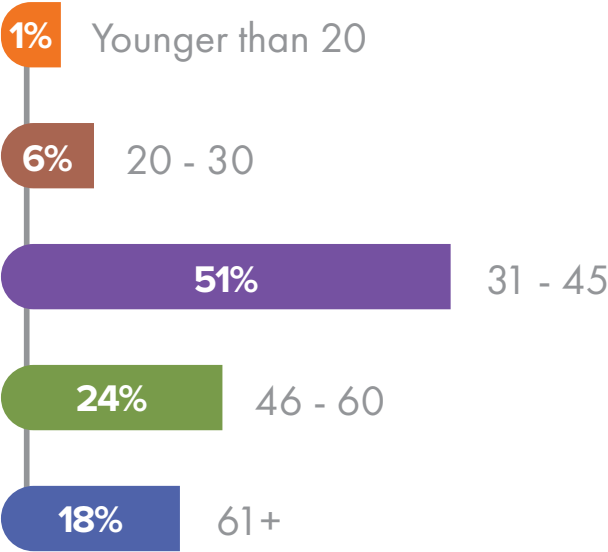
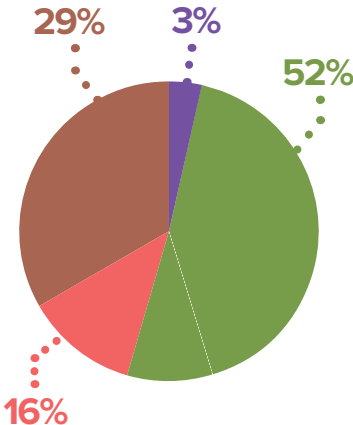
over 1,400

comment responses to survey questions

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A RESIDENT?

AGE RANGE

- <1 year
- 1–5 years
- 6–10 years
- 10+ years

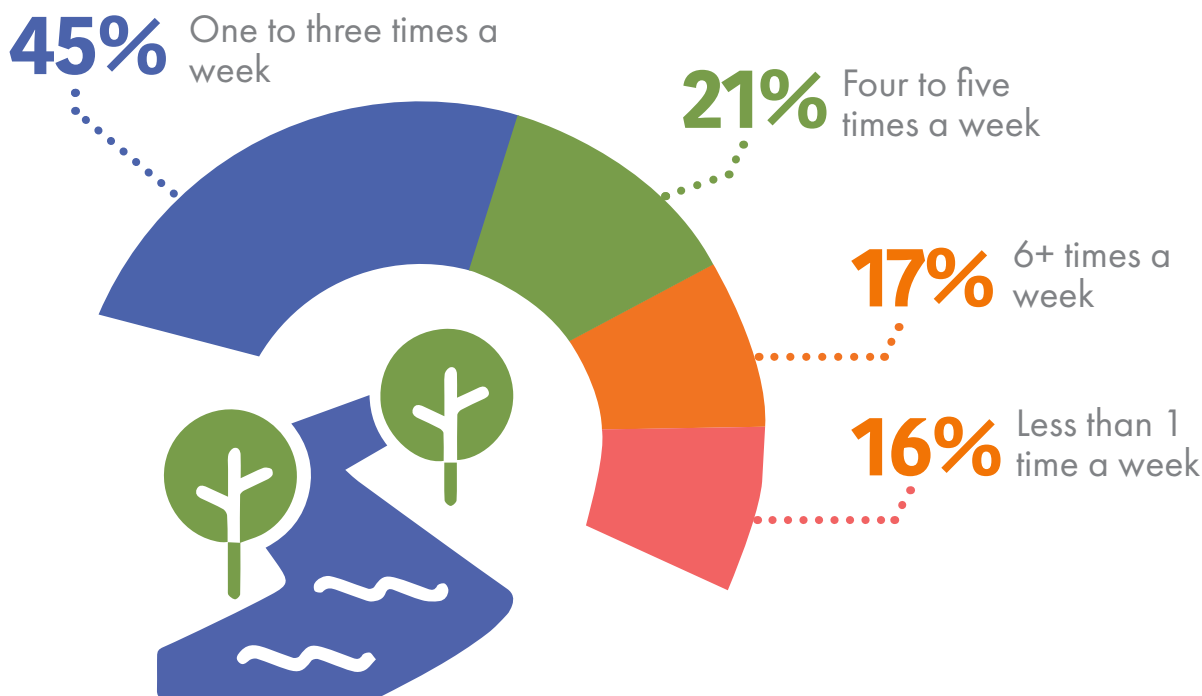


CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD



of respondents currently have children in their household or did before but do not currently

HOW OFTEN RESIDENTS USE A PARK SPACE



MOST REGULARLY VISITED PARKS



TOP 5 MOST USED AMENITIES



MOST PARTICIPATED IN ACTIVITIES + EVENTS AT EMPIRE'S PARKS + TRAILS



1st
Enjoying the outdoors



2nd
Exercising



3rd
Playing with children/
Using playgrounds



4th
Walking a dog

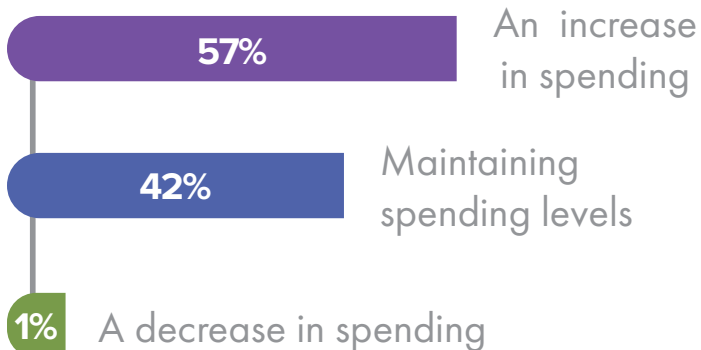


5th
Engaging in youth sports

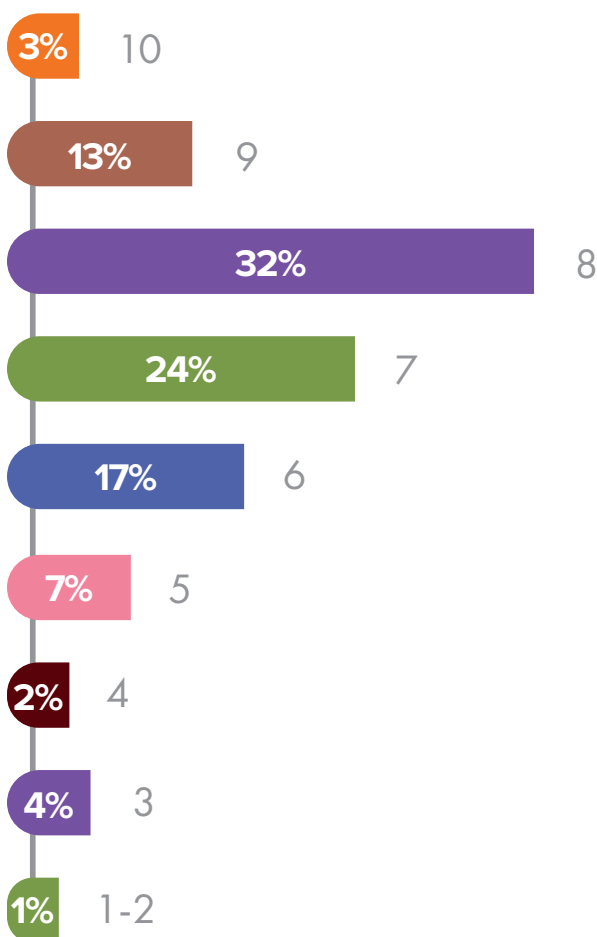
Other common activities include:

- Spending time in a "third place"
- Interacting with others in the community
- Engaging in adult sports
- Playing pickleball
- Picnicking

WHEN IT COMES TO INVESTING IN PARKS, WHICH DO YOU SUPPORT?



HOW WOULD YOU RANK ROBBINSDALE'S PARK SYSTEM?



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS + THEMES

OF COMMENTS RELATED TO...

85

THE NEED FOR PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN PARKS

79

IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN THE PARK + TRAIL SYSTEM, INCLUDING PLAY EQUIPMENT

65

INCREASED ACCESS TO NATURE/NATURAL AREAS

60

WALKING AND BIKING PATHS + THE CONNECTEDNESS OF PARKS

51

MORE BASKETBALL

46

SPLASH PAD / WADING POOL

43

DRINKING FOUNTAINS IN PARKS + ALONG TRAILS

37

GARBAGE IN THE PARKS / LACK OF CLEANLINESS

29

TENNIS/PICKLEBALL COURTS

29

TRAFFIC AND ROAD CROSSING CONCERNS

03

THE VISION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Understanding and identifying a shared vision and set of guiding principles for the future of Robbinsdale's parks and recreation system is critical to guide future improvements that fulfill the needs and desires of the community. **The vision and guiding principles help define a common goal and set of ideals that clarify where the system is aiming to go.** This chapter sets forth the vision statement and guiding principles for the system for the next 10 years, and explains how they were developed.

THE VISION

THE CITY'S MISSION STATEMENT

Over its more than 100-year history, Robbinsdale has managed to maintain its small town, rural feel, which is a vital part of the city's existing mission statement and vision for the future. Currently, **the city's mission statement**, which can be found on the city's website, is:

ROBBINSDALE... OUR HOMETOWN

- ◇ Our community of citizens and businesses - dedicated, proud and involved
- ◇ Our government - accessible, accountable, open and compassionate
- ◇ Our resources - prudently allocated and equitably provided

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Because Robbinsdale is one of the Twin Cities older suburbs, aging infrastructure and the redevelopment of aged, blighted or underutilized properties (especially near the downtown area) has been the primary focus for the city for many years. With increased population and household growth forecasted by Metropolitan Council in the near future - as well as the extension of the Blue Line from Target Field in Minneapolis through Golden Valley, Robbinsdale and Crystal - the city is preparing for major shifts in its transportation systems, residential and commercial land uses, and demographics in the near future. While the city currently has adequately-maintained park and recreation facilities, city staff will need to adapt their offerings and increase staff support to satisfy the needs of their residents.

In order to do so, an updated vision for the city's parks, trails, and open spaces needed to be developed. Below is a **vision statement** created in collaboration with the city, the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry commission, and the general public. It reads:

“Robbinsdale’s park system is an extension of each residents’ home; it is made up of many special places that are easy to get to and well-loved. The park and trail system contributes to the city’s small town feel with all the benefits of being in a big city. Parks are identifiable and distinctive, are places where people gather and connect, and are reflective of Robbinsdale’s history and culture - while also being forward-focused to accommodate changing needs.”

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Similarly, an updated set of guiding principle for Robbinsdale’s parks, trails and open spaces will provide the city with an overarching framework to help inform the development and maintenance of their recreational system. The following guiding principles help define the actions that should be taken to achieve the vision statement from the previous page. They also provide a basis for the formulation of the goals, policies and initiatives included in “The Recommendations” section of the report. **The guiding principles** for Robbinsdale’s parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation system are:

ACCESSIBLE + INCLUSIVE

Serve all residents regardless of age, physical ability, socioeconomic status, or background. After all, parks are for everyone!

ADAPTABLE

Be ready to respond to ever-changing trends in parks and recreation, as well as changes related to aging infrastructure, underutilized properties, and transportation.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIVING

Serve as a vital resource for the long-term wellbeing of the community. By educating the community about healthy living and lifestyle choices, the city can encourage people to engage in activities that support their overall health.

MAINTAINABLE

The city’s parks, trails and open spaces are maintainable and fit within a realistic operating budget.

SAFE + COMFORTABLE

Robbinsdale parks, trails and open spaces should be safe and comfortable to all users. Prioritizing safety and comfort will increase regular use of the park system and enhance community trust.

SUSTAINABLE + RESILIENT

Provide environmental, social and economic benefits to the community far into the future, and be ready to thrive with changing futures.



04

THE TRENDS

As Robbinsdale grapples with shifting demographics, an increase in population density, and a variety of community preferences, city staff and other decision makers will need to consider how facility and programming needs will be met. Park and recreation trends are always changing, can vary by region or climate, and are often impacted by social, cultural, and environmental influences.

In order to adapt to future demands, the city will need to be nimble and flexible in response to the ever-changing needs and desires of their residents. This chapter of the report explores park and recreation-related trends (listed in no particular order) and their potential implications for the future of Robbinsdale's park, trail, and open space system.

PARK + RECREATION TRENDS

To best support current and future residents - and to accurately anticipate their future needs and challenges - it is critical for park and recreation agencies to understand emerging social, recreational and demographic trends pertaining to parks, trails and open space. Understanding the trends outlined in this section of the report will assist Robbinsdale's parks department in creating spaces and programs that are relevant, inclusive and responsive to the shifting preferences and demands of their community. After all, it is the duty of park and recreation agencies to stay ahead of emerging trends and work with park and trail users, residents and partnering agencies to make decisions appropriate for their community.

Robbinsdale will see many shifts in their community in coming years, from changing demographics to land use alterations. As a result, the city has both a challenge and an opportunity to adapt and grow with its residents.

In the following pages, a number of emerging park and recreation trends are highlighted (and listed in

no particular order). Planning for these trends and maintaining flexibility in future parks, trails and open space maintenance and management will be crucial as Robbinsdale evolves.

Below is an overview of nine park and recreation trends for the city to keep in mind over the next ten years (and beyond):

1. **Dynamic Demographics**
2. **Work-Life Balance**
3. **Trending Tech**
4. **Inclusivity + Accessibility**
5. **Non-Traditional Recreation**
6. **Pickleball for All**
7. **More Barks in the Parks**
8. **The Power of Partnerships**
9. **Changes in the Climate**



DYNAMIC DEMOGRAPHICS

Across the country, community demographics - including population, age, gender, race, income, housing and more - are in a constant state of flux. Communities are quickly becoming older and more multi-cultural, and in coming years the socioeconomic, environmental and social needs of residents will be different than they once were. This is especially true for the City of Robbinsdale, where societal shifts have the community and its agencies questioning how exactly to adapt.

Many factors are contributing to Robbinsdale's demographic transformation. As mentioned in the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, "the active lifestyles and high quality of life Robbinsdale residents enjoy has increased the number of housing options and diversity of the community." The proposed LRT station, which will be placed on the western edge of the downtown area, will catalyze even more activity in the city as more and more people see Downtown as a hot-spot for shopping and leisure.

Furthermore, the Blue Line Extension LRT project is expected to stimulate the next wave of redevelopment, with many downtown areas identified as having infill redevelopment potential. The dominant use of those redevelopment areas will be mixed-use that accommodates high-density residential (and other uses), which is predicted to draw in a large amount of people looking for apartment-style housing close to the future light rail station area. The introduction of the new light rail line will also increase the number of businesses within the community from expected transit-oriented development growth.

As community demographics fluctuate, Robbinsdale's park and recreation agency will need to keep up to speed with the changes and adjust their services to better fit the people of their community.

→ by 2045

the U.S. will become a majority-minority nation, meaning all Americans will statistically become minorities, as no ethnic or racial group will compose >50% of the nation's population¹

→ from 12% to 23%

the percentage by which people aged 65 or older will increase from today to 2080²

→ 79 million people

the amount by which the U.S. population is expected to grow from 2030 to 2060³



Sources:

1. "Our Nation's Demographic Shift," NRPA
2. "Coping with the Demographic Challenge: Fewer Children and Living Longer," Social Security Office of Policy
3. "Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060," U.S. Census Bureau

TREND 2

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, the workplace has shifted quite substantially. As communities around the world went on lock-down, many employers allowed and even encouraged fully remote work. Although many employers are now requiring staff to return to the office two to three times a week, a considerable amount of the workforce still has more flexibility in their work day than they once did. As a way to get outdoors and engage in physical activity while still adhering to social distancing guidelines, many communities turned to their city's parks, trails and open spaces to recreate and relax, and they continue to do so today. As a result, public parks, plazas, and recreation facilities have become important sanctuaries of respite for people seeking refuge from the uncertainties of the outside world, which has prompted communities to expect more from their parks, such as improved amenities and facilities and enhanced maintenance and programming. Thus, park and recreation agencies

have spent the last few years adapting to the increased interest in their park and trail systems.

The idea of a four-day work has also gained traction and popularity over the last few years. At companies where a four-day work week is allowed, many employees have decided to reallocate the time they once spent commuting to activities that enhance their wellbeing and leisure time, including walking, biking, and other forms of outdoor recreation.

→ **90%**

of younger workers support flexible or remote-hybrid work options

→ **81%**

of the full-time workforce supports a four-day work week to provide more time to recreate and relax with their loved ones

→ **65%**

of employees want to continue to work from home despite firm employer conviction to bring their workforce back to the office



Source:

◇ "Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024," <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2024/january/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-for-2024/>

TREND 3

TRENDING TECH

Technological innovation, including the use of artificial intelligence, has already had a large impact on the park and recreation industry in recent years. For example, advancements to AI algorithms and AI-assisted analytics have allowed park and recreation staff to more quickly respond to shifts in park usage and public demand for information, more efficiently process data to make operations and maintenance decisions and predictions, and more accurately monitor community safety and security. Similarly, innovative technology like robotic cleaning systems, self-maintained restrooms, and other technological resources are helping park and recreation agencies maintain their parks, trails and open spaces.

Additionally, the advent of virtual reality and augmented reality technology has and will continue to transform the way the public interacts with park and recreation spaces. Virtual reality and augmented reality technology can enhance the park user experience by providing:

♦ Educational experiences:

- Educational experiences allow park goes to receive information about the plants, animals, or history relevant to the park they're visiting

♦ Navigation and wayfinding apps:

- Mobile applications help park visitors find their way through park systems by providing digital directions and navigation tips

♦ Self-guided tours:

- Through the use of smartphones or augmented reality glasses, self-guided tours provide an opportunity for park users to chart their own journey through outdoor spaces

♦ Fitness and exercise apps:

- The gamification of the park experience through scavenger hunts, fitness challenges and more creates an interesting and fun way to stay active and socialize with others

→ more than 1,000

location-aware apps can track real-time locations of parks users that may be useful to agencies who are interested in better understanding who visits their park systems

→ \$200 million

is the current value of the market for the collection and selling of location-based data relevant to park use

→ about 25

location-aware apps can track and report real-time locations on the average smartphone



Source:

- ♦ "The Power of Parks to Address Climate Change: A Special Report," <https://www.tpl.org/parks-address-climate-change-report>

TREND 4

INCLUSIVITY + ACCESSIBILITY

Adaptive, inclusive and accessible programming and facilities in parks are crucial for promoting a diverse and cohesive community. Prioritizing inclusive park programming and facilities creates opportunities for social interaction and physical activity for individuals of all abilities and backgrounds. When done so successfully, embracing diversity in recreational spaces not only encourages understanding and empathy among community members, but also helps create better-functioning and healthier community dynamics.

Historically, however, some park and recreation agencies have struggled to make their recreation spaces inclusive and accessible to *all* residents, regardless of physical or cognitive ability. To ensure residents of all abilities can participate in park programming and recreational opportunities, park and recreation agencies must increase their focus on supporting access for underrepresented groups. In order to do so, agencies should invest in:

- ♦ **Community engagement opportunities:**
 - By obtaining and evaluating input received from the community, park and recreation agencies will have a better understanding of what residents need
- ♦ **Community outreach:**
 - In order for residents to take advantage of inclusive programming and accessible facilities, they must know they exist; increased outreach to the community about park and recreation offerings should be a primary focus of all park and recreation agencies
- ♦ **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training:**
 - To ensure their programming reflects the needs and values of underrepresented groups in their communities, park and recreation agencies must be properly trained in diversity, equity and inclusion

→ 90%

of U.S. adults agree it is important that local park and recreation agencies create and provide recreation programming that is adaptive and inclusive to persons of all abilities

→ 81%

of U.S. adults want parks and recreation agencies to prioritize inclusivity and accessibility through their policies and practices

→ 1 in 3

park and recreation agencies offer adaptive and inclusive sports activities for community members to engage in

Source:

♦ "Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2023," NRPA; "Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024," NRPA



NON-TRADITIONAL RECREATION

Recreation trends generally shift based on societal changes and preferences over time. In recent years, there has been a rise in non-traditional and informal recreation in parks, trails and open spaces across the country. These opportunities are often more inclusive and appeal to a wider range of community members, which encourages participation from folks of all backgrounds, age groups and abilities. Additionally, they can be accommodated without severely impacting the limited budgets park and recreation agencies are often working with.

For those who can no longer handle higher-impact or competitive sports like football, basketball, volleyball and baseball/softball, more passive and individual sports offer a way to continue exercise and social opportunities. Passive activities like walking, biking, hiking, paddling, fishing, skating and even skiing are great options for users of all age groups, abilities and interest levels. Other informal recreation programs

include family engagement nights, seasonal festivals, karaoke or movie in the park events, “eldertainment” opportunities, games and activities for “kidults,” and partnerships with local libraries and schools.

As the popularity of non-traditional and informal recreation opportunities shift over the years, park and recreation agencies may need to reconsider their recreational offerings and adjust programming accordingly.

→ from 45% to 38%

the percentage by which the restrictions imposed by the pandemic reduced participation in youth sports

→ 91%

of U.S. adults seek park-centered entertainment and social events that allow them to mix and mingle with others

→ 4 in 5

urban park and recreation agencies partner with local schools to coordinate efforts that connect youth to nature (through coordinated after-school programs, nature-based field trips, etc.)



Source:
 ◇ “Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024,” <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2024/january/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-for-2024/>

TREND 6

PICKLEBALL FOR ALL

Over the years, pickleball has seen a massive rise in popularity; in fact, it's now the fastest-growing recreational sport in the nation, with millions of players hitting the courts each day. Pickleball is an enjoyable activity for a variety of reasons: it has a quick learning curve, making it easy for folks of all ages to engage in; it provides a healthy, easy-going and active way to socialize and recreate; and it boosts mood and mental health. However, conflicts over the noise pickleball makes is growing.

As the demand for new pickleball courts and the conversion of underutilized tennis courts continues to increase, park and recreation agencies should consider of number of factors before deciding to add or increase the amount of courts they have in their communities. Some important considerations include:

◆ **Noise:**

- Sound abatement measures and location regulations may need to be enforced to reduce the noise that travels from the courts to nearby homes
- Park and recreation agencies should remain careful and considerate when determining where to site a pickleball court

◆ **Wildlife:**

- In conservation areas or areas with high concentrations of birds, hawks, owls, ravens and eagles, pickleball may interfere with nesting and roosting locations in nearby trees due to the noise the activity produces

◆ **Comfort:**

- Court surface materials, fencing, lighting, shade structures and seating options are all important amenities that should be considered when developing a pickleball court

→ 48.3 million

or nearly 19% of the total adult population have played pickleball in the past 12 months (an increase of 35% since the last research was concluded in August 2022)

→ 34.8 years old

the average age of avid pickleball players, with more than 70% between the ages of 18 and 44

→ 600 ft + under 40 dB

the recommended distance pickleball courts should be placed away from homes + the recommended level noise should be under



Source:
◆ 2023 Association of Pickleball Professionals (APP) research highlights

MORE BARKS IN THE PARKS

Although off-leash dog parks have been a highly sought-after amenity in public parks for many years, the pandemic fueled a surge in dog ownership across the country, both in rural and urban areas. Now, off-leash dog parks are the fastest-growing type of park in America's largest cities, where it is generally difficult to find open space for owners to exercise their pups. These dog parks not only provide a safe and fenced area for dogs to socialize with other animals, but also contain a number of amenities for dogs and their owners to use, such as drinking fountains, waste disposal areas, shaded seating areas and training zones. As the future unfolds, park and recreation agencies should consider adding off-leash dog facilities and amenities in their communities to meet the demand of dog owners and their furry friends.

When designing off-leash dog parks, park and recreation agencies should consider a number of factors, including:

◆ Entry considerations:

- A potty area before entering the park helps keep the play areas cleaner for dogs and their owners
- A double-gated, self-closing area for dogs to prepare to enter or leave the park is an important addition to any dog park

◆ Dog park size considerations:

- If possible, a dog park should have areas for small dogs (less than 35 pounds) and large dogs (more than 35 pounds); an ideal size for these areas should be around 6,000 square feet for small dogs and 14,000 square feet for large dogs

◆ Dog owner considerations:

- Shade structures, adequate lighting and restroom facilities are important facilities to consider for dog owners

→ **42%**

the percent by which the number of dedicated off-leash dog parks in the U.S. increased between 2009 and 2020¹

→ **one in five**

households acquired a dog or cat since the start of the pandemic, accounting for approximately 23 million American households²

→ **45%**

of all families currently own a dog³

Sources:

1. A recent survey from the Trust for Public Land organization
2. 2023 survey by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
3. "Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024," NRPA



TREND 8

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

Typically, park and recreation agencies build, operate and maintain their park and trail systems themselves, with some assistance from local, state and federal grants and programs. However, with public investment in parks declining in recent years, insufficient funding for outdoor recreational spaces has led to a backlog of deferred park maintenance and an inability to create new park facilities and amenities for communities of all sizes. If park and recreation agencies wish to satisfy the ever-evolving needs of their communities, they must look outside of traditional funding/budget sources to effectively sustain their recreation systems. One way to do is to implement park-supportive partnerships.

Successful partnerships with public, private, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations can help ease the tension between available resources for parks and the unique needs of a community. Nevertheless, these partnerships must be carefully established and

maintained, with each partner clearly understanding the role they play in the design, development and operation of park spaces.

Below are a few ways to maximize partnership opportunities, as outlined in the incredibly useful “Successful Partnerships for Parks” document developed by the Urban Land Institute:

- Leverage real estate development to efficiently enhance park access and quality
- Fund parks by promoting or incentivizing nearby development and directing new tax revenues into park assets
- Partner to creatively engage residents and act on locally identified park needs
- Build relationships to invest in park infrastructure that advances community resilience
- Create physical, social and cultural connections that link people, parks and businesses

→ 85%

of U.S. residents identify proximity to parks, playgrounds, open space or recreation centers as an important factor in deciding where to live

→ \$1 billion

the total amount of deferred park maintenance in many large U.S. cities

→ 92%

of U.S. residents say their communities benefit from local parks



Source:

- ◇ “Successful Partnerships for Parks: Collaborative Approaches to Advance Equitable Access to Open Space,” https://americas.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Successful_Partnerships_for_Parks.pdf

CHANGES IN THE CLIMATE

Several factors contribute to the effects of climate change, including the burning of fossil fuels to generate electricity and heat, the mining of raw materials to manufacture goods, and the combustion of petroleum-based products to power cars, trucks, ships and planes. These processes release billions of metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year, which contributes to the warming of the planet and major shifts in the water cycle, weather patterns, and extreme weather events. With increased likelihood of heatwaves, droughts and floods, park and recreation agencies must develop strategies to adapt and evolve to the changing conditions the world is facing.

Fortunately, there are several ways park and recreation agencies can prepare for the effects of climate change. To curb the effects climate change will have on water resources, winter activities, and other park-related programming and activities, cities should prioritize the following:

- ◇ The implementation of green infrastructure and sustainable design practices to cool recreational spaces, absorb rainfall, protect natural resources and land buffers, and connect park and trail systems to one another
- ◇ The use of existing climate action tools and resources, such as “Climate.Park.Change.”, (a web-based platform that compiles data on the effects of climate change on park systems and provides design solutions to address those climate impacts), NRPA’s Great Urban Parks Program, and the Trust for Public Land’s Climate Smart Cities Program
- ◇ The conservation and connection of land to protect wildlife migration and reduce flooding and wildfire events

→ **85%**

of cities are currently adapting their parks and recreation facilities to address the effects of climate change

→ **20%**

of cities are actively managing parks and woodlands to sequester carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas responsible for climate change

→ **76%**

of cities are improving surfaces to reduce flooding and runoff from rain



Source:

- ◇ “The Power of Parks to Address Climate Change: A Special Report,”
<https://www.tpl.org/parks-address-climate-change-report>

05

THE

RECOMMENDATIONS

A series of recommendations have been developed based on findings from the planning process and are laid out in this chapter. The recommendations are organized into seven categories:

- Parks
- Facilities
- Programming
- Natural Resources + Sustainability
- Connectivity + Accessibility
- Operations + Maintenance

Each category contains a set or sets of goals, policies, and recommendations. These **goals** have been developed based on input from the general public, city staff, the Empire Park and Recreation Commission, and project planners. They reflect a collection of desired outcomes and are grouped by common themes and topics. **Policies** are relatively broad statements that guide the process of enacting a desired outcome. **Recommendations** are specific projects, approaches, or efforts that give detail to implementing the recommended policy.

Within this chapter, Goals, Policies, and Recommendations are presented in the following way:

GOAL 1 Desired Outcome

POLICY 1.1 Statement that guides the process of realizing a goal

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.1 Specific step to take to implement the policy

PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 1 Provide a system of high quality parks that provide all residents with access to a wide variety of park types and experiences

POLICY 1.1 Ensure all residents have access to a park or public green space within a 5-minute walk from their home to meet day-to-day, basic recreational needs

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.1 Continue to work with Robbinsdale Area Schools, exploring the opportunity to provide additional public green space at Robbinsdale Middle School to serve the adjacent neighborhood



Robbinsdale Middle School offers high-quality fields that are used often by the community

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.2 Look for opportunities to develop a public green space/park that serves the Regent Place community west of Regent Avenue N

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.3 Explore options to ensure public access to the courts, play equipment, and open lawn space at Lakeview Elementary School

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.4 Explore options to provide natural play amenities in the open area south of Humphrey Park



Natural play amenities inspire creative play

POLICY 1.2 Provide a distributed network of neighborhood parks, mini parks, and playlots that meet the day-to-day recreational and social needs of residents

RECOMMENDATION 1.2.1 Ensure neighborhood parks provide play equipment, seating, shade, litter receptacles, bike loops, an open lawn space, park entry signage, portable restrooms, and sport courts/fields where space allows and demand warrants



Trees provide shade and other benefits in parks, including noise abatement and character

RECOMMENDATION 1.2.2 Ensure playlots have play equipment, seating, shade, litter receptacles, portable restrooms, bike loops, and entry signage

RECOMMENDATION 1.2.3 Utilize mini parks to provide access to green space with unique experiences

- » Develop an installation at Mielke Mini Park, working with an artist or landscape specialist to integrate a nature-based, artistic experience



Special installations can activate otherwise underutilized park spaces

POLICY 1.3 Provide access to community parks to meet more specialized recreational needs that serve the entire community

PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

- RECOMMENDATION 1.3.1** Ensure all community parks provide seating, shade, litter and recycling receptacles, bike loops, open lawn or flexible field space, park entry signage, larger playgrounds or specialized play equipment, reservable picnic shelters with permanent restrooms, off-street parking, grills, drinking fountains, walking paths, and pedestrian lighting
- RECOMMENDATION 1.3.2** Update the classification for Lee Park from neighborhood park to community park to provide access to additional amenities on the west side of town
- » Update the existing park amenities by adding grills to the existing picnic area and additional pedestrian lighting in the park
- RECOMMENDATION 1.3.3** Update the classification for Sanborn Park from neighborhood park to community park to solidify its status as a major park and social hub in the city
- » Begin the process of implementing the recommendations outlined in the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” (see page 79) as funding and time allows
- RECOMMENDATION 1.3.4** Update the classification for Spanjers Park from community playfield to community park
- » After the softball field fence is pushed inward, utilize the extra green space for unique park features, such as permanent bag toss boards and game tables, offering equipment check out at city hall

Table 6: Proposed Park Classifications

Park	2040 Comp Plan Classification	Proposed Park Classification	Size (acres)
Graeser Park	Unclassified	Special Use Park	3.4
Hollingsworth Park	Community Park	Linear Park	4.4
Hubert H. Humphrey Park	Mini Park /Conservancy Area	Conservancy Park	3.8
Kelly Park	Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Park	1.7
Lakeview Terrace Park	Community Park	Community Park	33.9
Lee Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	2.5
Manor Park	Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Park	3.9
Mielke Park	Mini Park	Mini Park	0.6
Parkview Park	Mini Park	Playlot	0.2
Sanborn Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	8.4
Sochacki Park	Community Conservancy	Conservancy Park	36.9
South Halifax Park	Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Park	6.4
Spanjers Park	Community Playfield	Community Park	4.0
Sunset Park	Mini Park	Playlot	0.8
Triangle Park	Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Park	1.0

PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 2 Ensure city parks and their features are inclusive, safe, and well-maintained for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds

POLICY 2.1 Develop playground standards and a schedule of updates to assist in the replacement of outdated playground equipment in the park system

RECOMMENDATION 2.1.1 Replace/Update the playground equipment and swing set in South Halifax Park as it nears the end of its useful life

RECOMMENDATION 2.1.2 Replace/Update the playground equipment at Manor Park as it nears the end of its useful life

POLICY 2.2 Incorporate additional inclusive play features in the park system

RECOMMENDATION 2.2.1 Develop at least one fully inclusive playground within the city to ensure children of all abilities have a chance to recreate and socialize

» When the existing playground at Lee Park nears the end of its useful life, replace it with a fully inclusive playground

RECOMMENDATION 2.2.2 Continue to maintain the inclusive play features/playground area in Triangle Park

» In the future, consider expanding the existing playground space and adding more inclusive play features

POLICY 2.3 Install additional amenities and facilities in parks to increase safety and improve the pedestrian experience

RECOMMENDATION 2.3.1 Add updated pedestrian lighting along the walking and biking path in Spanjers Park

RECOMMENDATION 2.3.2 Establish pedestrian lighting in South Halifax Park to improve visibility in the park

RECOMMENDATION 2.3.3 Establish pedestrian lighting in Lee Park and Sanborn Park to extend use of park facilities in fall and winter

RECOMMENDATION 2.3.4 Provide more restroom facilities in parks; where a permanent restroom facility is not feasible, add a portable restroom option



Inclusive play equipment can accommodate mobility devices

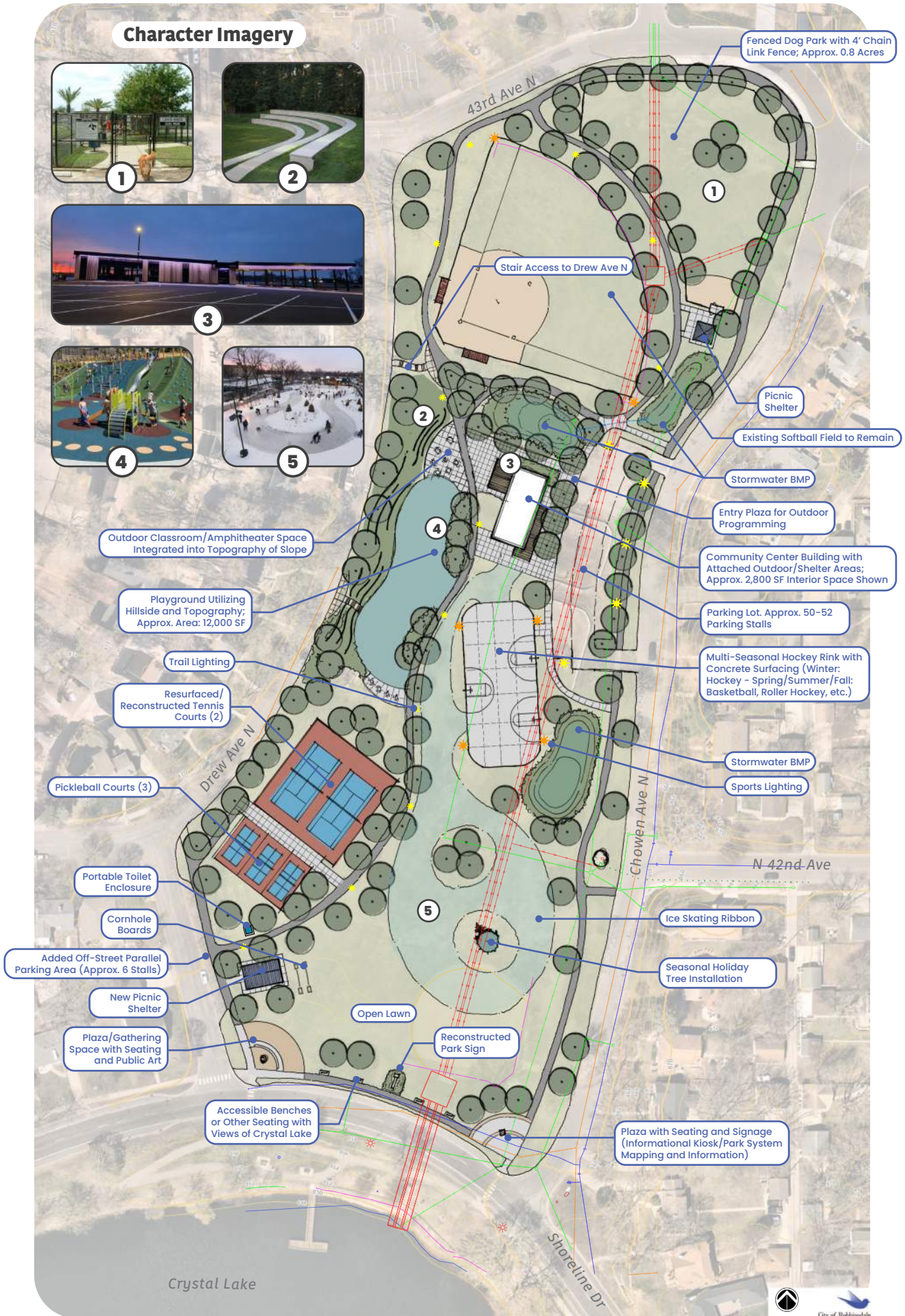


Outdoor ping pong game table



Pedestrian lighting in parks can be dark-sky compliant

Figure 18: Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan



FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 3 Build a network of improved facilities and amenities to meet the evolving recreational and athletic needs of the community

POLICY 3.1 Ensure there is an even distribution of ballfields, flex fields, and sports courts throughout the community

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.1 Determine demand for additional flex field space by checking in with athletic organizations, nearby schools, and neighboring communities

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.2 Consider providing additional pickleball courts in the park system; work with the community to better understand demand

- » Improve the condition of the pickleball and tennis courts in Sanborn Park (see the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” on page 79)
- » Consider adding more pickleball courts in Manor Park

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.3 Consider incorporating additional basketball courts (half or full) in community parks where space allows

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.4 Improve the basketball court area in South Halifax Park, working with the neighborhood to determine court size (full or half)

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.5 Explore the condition of the softball field in Triangle Park or remove and replace it with another recreational facility, such as a rectangular flex field

RECOMMENDATION 3.1.6 Determine community interest in adding sand volleyball courts to the park system

POLICY 3.2 Introduce unique recreational facilities outside of traditional athletics to the park system

RECOMMENDATION 3.2.1 Develop an off-leash dog park in Sanborn Park (see the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” on page 81)

RECOMMENDATION 3.2.2 Look for opportunities to add a disc golf course to a wooded natural area, perhaps at South Halifax Park

RECOMMENDATION 3.2.3 Incorporate another splash/water plaza in the northern half of the community, perhaps at Lee



Pickleball has risen in popularity in recent years and can be played by people of all ages



Painted basketball courts can serve as public art opportunities



Off-leash dog parks are the fastest growing type of park in the U.S.

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

or Triangle Park

- RECOMMENDATION 3.2.4** Provide additional water access points and fishing piers in Crystal Lake to promote kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding, and fishing
- RECOMMENDATION 3.2.5** Install an outdoor fitness area in Sanborn Park (see the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” on page 79)
- RECOMMENDATION 3.2.6** Conduct a community survey to determine what specialized recreational facility or facilities (e.g., a challenge course/ ninja park, skate park, permanent bag toss boards, etc.) should be added to existing parks in the future
- RECOMMENDATION 3.2.7** Explore the removal of the existing ballfield at Triangle Park and replacing it with a pump track

POLICY 3.3 Increase opportunities for winter recreation throughout the park system to create active park spaces year-round

- RECOMMENDATION 3.3.1** Identify potential locations for additional sledding hills
- » Consider utilizing the sloped edges on the western side of Sanborn Park or eastern side of Lakeview Terrace Park for sledding
- RECOMMENDATION 3.3.2** Replace the existing ice rinks in Sanborn Park with a permanent paved rink and boards for increased seasonal use (see the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” on page 79)
- RECOMMENDATION 3.3.3** Create a free skating area in Sanborn Park (see the “Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan” on page 79)
- RECOMMENDATION 3.3.4** Look for opportunities to promote snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing across the park system



Small water plazas provide a much needed reprieve from heat in hot summer months



Kayak and canoe launches make it easier for visitors to access water



Ice rinks and free skating areas create opportunities for residents to recreate during winter months

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 4 Ensure the park system has high-quality facilities to address the community's recreational needs

POLICY 4.1 Prioritize the renovation or replacement of park shelters that are not adequately serving the community

RECOMMENDATION 4.1.1 Replace the picnic shelter in Lee Park with a new, reservable shelter that has electrical access

RECOMMENDATION 4.1.2 Replace the picnic structure near the tennis courts in Manor Park with a new, reservable shelter that has electrical access

RECOMMENDATION 4.1.3 Replace the park building in Sanborn Park with a new community building that features open-air shelter areas, restrooms, storage space, and indoor community programming spaces (see the "Sanborn Park Final Concept Plan" on page 79)

RECOMMENDATION 4.1.4 Replace the old warming house in Triangle Park with a new structure that provides restrooms, reservable shelter space, and can be used for storage and other needs

POLICY 4.2 Incorporate additional shelters and shade structures throughout the system

RECOMMENDATION 4.2.1 Add a reservable shelter with electrical access to Kelly Park to provide space for local residents to host parties and cultural events



Reservable picnic shelters can be used as a means to generate revenue



Seasonal warming houses can serve as a temporary public art piece, as well as a reprieve from the cold in winter months



A new community building in Sanborn Park could be used for a variety of programming events

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 5

Introduce and prioritize programming opportunities that support the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of residents of all ages, races, abilities, and economic backgrounds

POLICY 5.1 Make sure the community is aware of all the programming and recreation opportunities available to them

RECOMMENDATION 5.1.1 Increase the marketing and promotion of events, festivals, and programming opportunities on social media, the city's website, newsletters, and other technological outlets

RECOMMENDATION 5.1.2 Place informational yard signs and laminated flyers in parks that describe the locations and dates of upcoming events

RECOMMENDATION 5.1.3 Ensure there is consistent communication between the city, nearby schools, recreation organizations, community centers, and senior centers about upcoming programming and recreation opportunities

POLICY 5.2 Provide additional recreation programs for older adults (ages 55-65) and senior citizens (ages 65+)

RECOMMENDATION 5.2.1 Introduce additional programs to engage older adults and senior citizens in physical activity, such as low-impact exercise classes, pickleball lessons, lawn bowling, and gardening

RECOMMENDATION 5.2.2 Introduce additional social programming opportunities for older adults and senior citizens, such as field trips, card and group games, and coffee talks

RECOMMENDATION 5.2.3 Introduce additional learning activities for older adults and senior citizens, such as arts and crafts classes, reading groups, nutrition and cooking classes

POLICY 5.3 Identify and advertise multi-cultural programs to attract a more diverse audience of program participants

RECOMMENDATION 5.3.1 Engage directly with minority demographic groups to identify their programming and park and recreation facility needs



It is important to engage residents of all ages in programming events



Older adults and senior citizens often use pickleball as a way to remain physically active

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY 5.4 Make recreational programming accessible to low-income families

RECOMMENDATION 5.4.1 Consider adjusting fees for specific programs based on income to ensure residents of all economic backgrounds can participate

GOAL 6 Provide programs that bring the community together and foster a sense of belonging

POLICY 6.1 Continue to facilitate community-wide events and festivals in parks and other community destinations

RECOMMENDATION 6.1.1 Continue to host the Whiz Bang Days event in Spanjers Park

RECOMMENDATION 6.1.2 Continue to host the Chamber Meet and Greet event in its usual location on West Broadway Ave

RECOMMENDATION 6.1.3 Diversify the location of the “movies in the park” event to other parks around the community

RECOMMENDATION 6.1.4 Look for opportunities to expand community events and festivals to other park locations, such as Sanborn Park, Manor Park, and Lee Park

POLICY 6.2 Expand recreation and wellness offerings

RECOMMENDATION 6.2.1 Ensure indoor community buildings provide space for drop-in fitness programs, such as zumba, yoga, and more

RECOMMENDATION 6.2.2 Continue to collaborate and coordinate event programming with adjacent communities, such as Crystal, Golden Valley, New Hope, and Brooklyn Center



Outdoor educational programming raises public awareness about sustainability



“Movies in the Park” events have been a highly successful in Hollingsworth Park



Additional space in park buildings and outdoors can be used for yoga, zumba, and more

NATURAL RESOURCES + SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 7 Implement sustainable practices to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural environment

POLICY 7.1 Prioritize ecological preservation of the city's natural resources

RECOMMENDATION 7.1.1 Develop a Natural Resources Management Plan to provide a clear understanding of best management, restoration, and preservation practices pertaining to the city's natural areas

RECOMMENDATION 7.1.2 Consider hiring a Natural Resources Manager or explore partnership opportunities to assist with the preservation of the community's ecological assets and natural areas

POLICY 7.2 Convert underutilized or hard-to-mow areas to more naturalized landscapes

RECOMMENDATION 7.2.1 In parks with a greater ecological focus, such as Humphrey Park, Mielke Park, and Sochacki Park, restore turf grasses to native grasses, forbs, and shrubs

RECOMMENDATION 7.2.2 Replant passive areas of parks that are mowed less often with a fescue mixture or pollinator blend that requires less maintenance, increases native biodiversity, and improves stormwater management

POLICY 7.3 Make sustainable improvements to park and open space operations

RECOMMENDATION 7.3.1 Reduce the use of pesticides in parks, when and where possible

RECOMMENDATION 7.3.2 Improve stormwater collection in parks through the use of rain gardens, swales, wetland areas, and other best management practices, especially in spaces where flooding often occurs

RECOMMENDATION 7.3.3 Explore opportunities to implement a compost collection system



Native prairie vegetation can replace turf grasses and provide greater aesthetic appeal



Bioswales and retention ponds are important for proper stormwater management

NATURAL RESOURCES + SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 8 Expand educational amenities and programming opportunities related to the natural environment throughout the park system

POLICY 8.1 Increase the amount of nature-based amenities throughout the community

RECOMMENDATION 8.1.1 Distribute interpretive signage about natural resources and habitats in strategic park locations to inform residents about ecological processes, pollinator gardens, and more

RECOMMENDATION 8.1.2 Add interpretive signage near stormwater pond areas and lakes to explain the harmful effects of pollutants from stormwater runoff and how best to mitigate those effects to improve water quality

RECOMMENDATION 8.1.3 Determine interest in adding a nature-based playground to the park system, perhaps at Humphrey or South Halifax Park

POLICY 8.2 Expand educational and volunteer opportunities related to the natural environment

RECOMMENDATION 8.2.1 Work with community volunteers to remove buckthorn and other invasive plant species from natural areas

RECOMMENDATION 8.2.2 Increase community awareness of the effects pests and invasive species have on natural resources and natural areas through website posting, social media outreach, newsletter features, and more

POLICY 8.3 Explore opportunities to improve water quality in the community's lakes and ponds, especially Crystal Lake

RECOMMENDATION 8.3.1 Further current water quality efforts by undertaking a comprehensive water quality and wetland management plan study



Interpretive signage can be used to educate the public about the natural environment



When possible, interpretive signage about natural resources should be located near natural features like stormwater ponds



Buckthorn can be managed and removed in a variety of ways

NATURAL RESOURCES + SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- RECOMMENDATION 8.3.2** Consider adding submerged or floating aeration systems to Crystal Lake to ensure the water is well-oxygenated and supportive of fishing and other water recreation opportunities
- RECOMMENDATION 8.3.3** Regularly test the water in Crystal Lake to identify potential issues with pH, dissolved oxygen, nutrient levels, and bacteria



Crystal Lake is a very important community asset; water quality improvements would greatly increase water recreation opportunities for residents and other park visitors

CONNECTIVITY + ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 9 Address existing accessibility concerns across the system to best meet the needs of all park users

POLICY 9.1 Address any missing pathway links to picnic shelters, playground areas, pedestrian bridges, and more in the park system

RECOMMENDATION 9.1.1 Incorporate an accessible paved pathway from the parking lot to the pedestrian bridge in Humphrey Park

RECOMMENDATION 9.1.2 Add an accessible trail loop/connection in Mielke Park

RECOMMENDATION 9.1.3 Add an accessible connection to the half basketball court in Kelly Park

RECOMMENDATION 9.1.4 Add an accessible connection to the picnic shelter near the north entrance of Sochacki Park

POLICY 9.2 Create a connected park and trail system by providing safe routes, trails, and connections within and between the community's parks and open spaces

RECOMMENDATION 9.2.1 Consult the Trail System Plan currently being developed to fill existing route, sidewalk, and trail gaps throughout the community to ensure safe and easy access from one park to another

POLICY 9.3 Improve the park and trail user experience by adding amenities at strategic locations in the system

RECOMMENDATION 9.3.1 Add bike racks in all neighborhood and community parks

RECOMMENDATION 9.3.2 Establish seating opportunities along bike loops and trails used heavily by Robbinsdale's youngest and oldest residents

RECOMMENDATION 9.3.3 Add bike repair stations in all community parks

RECOMMENDATION 9.3.4 Look for opportunities to develop trailheads/gathering spaces in community parks, especially those adjacent to regional trails



ADA accessibility in park spaces ensures people of all abilities are welcome



Bike racks and repair stations promote active transportation throughout park and trail systems



Benches should be located on or alongside accessible pathways when possible

CONNECTIVITY + ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 10 Ensure residents and park visitors have access to information about all of Robbinsdale's park and recreation offerings

POLICY 10.1 Provide a park and trail system that is easy to navigate

RECOMMENDATION 10.1.1 Develop a comprehensive wayfinding and signage plan to make navigating the park and trail system easier

RECOMMENDATION 10.1.2 Consider replacing existing park entry signage with new signage that better reflects Robbinsdale's character

RECOMMENDATION 10.1.3 Install easy-to-understand wayfinding signage and/or park and trail maps in neighborhood and community parks to help guide park visitors toward city landmarks, destinations, and park spaces

POLICY 10.2 Expand outreach and engagement to underrepresented user groups to gain a better understanding of their recreational needs

RECOMMENDATION 10.2.1 Reach out regularly to clubs, associations, volunteers, and other user groups to understand how their needs are being met and what improvements might be missing from the park and trail system

RECOMMENDATION 10.2.2 When applicable, provide information about community events, activities, and engagement opportunities in languages other than English

POLICY 10.3 Utilize the city's website to publish online park and trail wayfinding resources

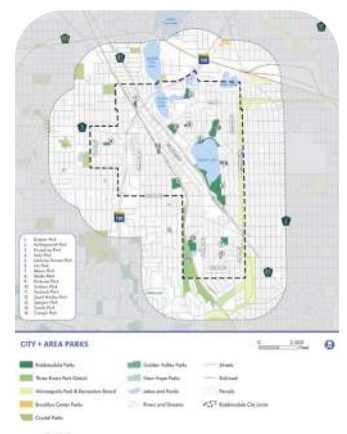
RECOMMENDATION 10.3.1 Explore the creation of an interactive park and trail map on the city's website that allows users to zoom into parks for information about amenities and their locations



Park entry and wayfinding signage assist visitors in navigating the park and trail system



Safe crossing opportunities assist residents in getting from one park to another



Interactive online park and trail maps are popular in today's technology-driven society

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 11 Maintain park, trail, and open space assets at a high level through careful and proactive planning and funding management

POLICY 11.1 Inspect all facilities and amenities in the park and trail system on a regular basis

RECOMMENDATION 11.1.1 Develop an asset management system to better track future maintenance needs, estimated life cycles, and repair schedules

- » Assess and document the conditions of all existing facilities and amenities annually
- » Develop and formalize park, trail, and open space maintenance priorities

POLICY 11.2 Utilize long-range planning tools to guide ongoing and capital investments

RECOMMENDATION 11.2.1 Continue to account for the operations and maintenance costs associated with park, trail, and open space improvements in the annual budget

RECOMMENDATION 11.2.2 Develop a deferred maintenance plan to address improvements that were not completed due to a lack of resources or funds

RECOMMENDATION 11.2.3 Determine if a consultant needs to be hired to assist in the development of park-specific long-range plans

POLICY 11.3 Explore a variety of funding opportunities to help maintain and manage the park system

RECOMMENDATION 11.3.1 Explore opportunities for additional revenue generation (e.g., reservable open-air shelter, indoor building spaces, etc.) to assist in the maintenance and replacement of park facilities

RECOMMENDATION 11.3.2 Pursue federal, state, county, and local funding opportunities and grants to assist in the management and development of park and trail spaces



Volunteers can be recruited to assist the city in the maintenance and management of park and natural spaces

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 12 Maintain and strengthen partnerships in and outside of the community to improve access to park and recreation amenities and facilities

POLICY 12.1 Explore a variety of partnership strategies for park and programming development, maintenance, and operations

RECOMMENDATION 12.1.1 Continue to partner with Hennepin County, the Three Rivers Park District, schools, and adjacent communities to meet any hard-to-fill gaps in recreation services and facility space

RECOMMENDATION 12.1.2 Explore opportunities to better inform and engage the community in the planning and design of park spaces, especially those within close proximity to parks undergoing major changes (e.g., Sanborn Park), such as door-knocking, door-hangers, signage, and more

POLICY 12.2 Develop partnerships with local artists and nearby arts organizations to promote temporary and seasonal art in parks and along trails

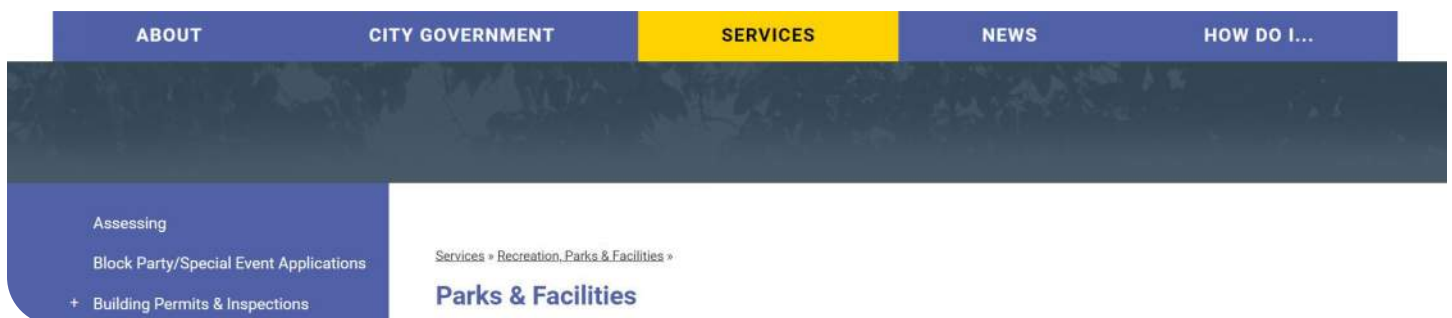
RECOMMENDATION 12.2.1 Create a process that allows local artists to loan or sell their work to the city for use as public art

RECOMMENDATION 12.2.2 Utilize public art to support the natural, cultural, and recreational character of the city

POLICY 12.3 Expand partnerships to maximize access to recreational amenities, facilities, and programming opportunities

RECOMMENDATION 12.3.1 Coordinate with schools, summer programs, and child care providers to explore opportunities to maximize access to facilities and programming for children of all ages

RECOMMENDATION 12.3.2 Reach out to North Regional and Rockford Road Libraries to determine if there are any collaborative events or programs that the city could host in Robbinsdale parks



The city's website should be used to inform the public about ongoing and upcoming park projects and how they can get involved in the process

06

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Perhaps the most important component of this park system plan is the implementation and funding strategies identified in this chapter. Without implementation strategies in place, the recommendations in Chapter 5 remain aspirational. Identifying specific steps toward implementation ensures that the vision of each improvement becomes a reality.

Due to the complexity and cost of park and recreation improvements, funding can be challenging; however, understanding potential funding sources, like grants and public and private partnerships, will allow the city to strategically allocate funds where they're needed most.

This chapter of the report is intended to provide a roadmap for the prioritization and implementation of park system and Sanborn Park-specific improvements, while still allowing flexibility for the changing needs of the community. Prioritization of recommendations is organized into three levels; included below is an overview of each level and the timeline associated with them:

High Priority Level = 1 to 3 years

Medium Priority Level = 4 to 7 years

Low Priority Level = 8+ years

AN OVERVIEW

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Over the years, Robbinsdale has worked arduously to align funding for park amenity and facility improvements, trail development, and operations and maintenance. Without a prior park system plan to reference, however, identifying potential funding resources and developing an efficient process for the implementation of park improvements has been challenging. As a result, the city is in need of an adaptable and flexible framework to help guide the development, improvement, and projected maintenance of future park, trail, and open space assets.

The information in this chapter of the report is meant to provide guidance for the planning and budgeting of park system improvements, as well as specific improvements to Sanborn Park (identified in Chapter 5). Included in the following pages is an implementation matrix that provides information about the prioritization and budgeting implications of potential park improvement recommendations; it should be understood that each project will require additional exploration and design, which will refine project extents and cost expectations.

Many factors informed the prioritization of the recommendations in this report, including community and stakeholder input, the availability of city resources (e.g., time, staff, funding, etc.), and alignment with past planning documents, among other factors. Depending on staff resources, funding, and need, some recommendations will be easier and faster to achieve, while others may warrant a long-term commitment to implement.

This plan anticipates recommendations for the park and trail system to be completed as funding is available and opportunities for public and private partnerships arise.

As is the case with many communities, funding needs for parks and open space typically exceed the capabilities of the city’s budget and often take a back seat to other infrastructure improvements that residents rely on daily. However, the completion of this plan, accompanied by high-level cost estimates, will allow the city to plan for and pursue funding to implement specific projects. It is important to remember that the implementation matrix included in the following pages is not completely set in stone and can be adjusted as the city sees fit. In the future, as city staff prepares to implement park and trail improvements, they should continue to keep residents involved and updated through social media outlets, newsletters, and the city’s website.

PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATES + FUNDING RESOURCES

The estimated costs included in this report are planning level estimates using 2024 dollars. They reflect costs for the full build-out of potential recommendations and may need to be adjusted as projects are implemented to account for inflation and the current market.

Because Robbinsdale does not have many public and private partnerships to help fund their parks and recreation-related projects, it will be important for the city to find funding opportunities at the local, county, state, and federal levels. The table included at the end of this chapter highlights possible grant funding opportunities that the city should consider pursuing to address various improvement recommendations outlined in this plan. Although there are many funding sources and grants available for the improvement of parks, trails, and open spaces, the funding resources table identifies some of the most important and relevant to the city of Robbinsdale. The list is not exhaustive, however, and the city should continue to look for additional funding options as the future unfolds.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

SANBORN PARK

As the city began the development of this park system plan, they identified Sanborn Park as an integral part of the overall system and requested the planning team take a deeper look into the possibilities for the park's future. After much engagement and coordination with the community and city, a final concept plan to guide the updating and enhancement of the park was created.

To the right are a series of tables that provide an overview of the recommendations for Sanborn Park (see Chapter 5 for more details on each recommendation). Because the estimated costs associated with these improvements exceed the money that has already been allocated in the CIP for Sanborn Park projects, it will be important for the city to identify additional funding strategies to fully realize the vision for the park.

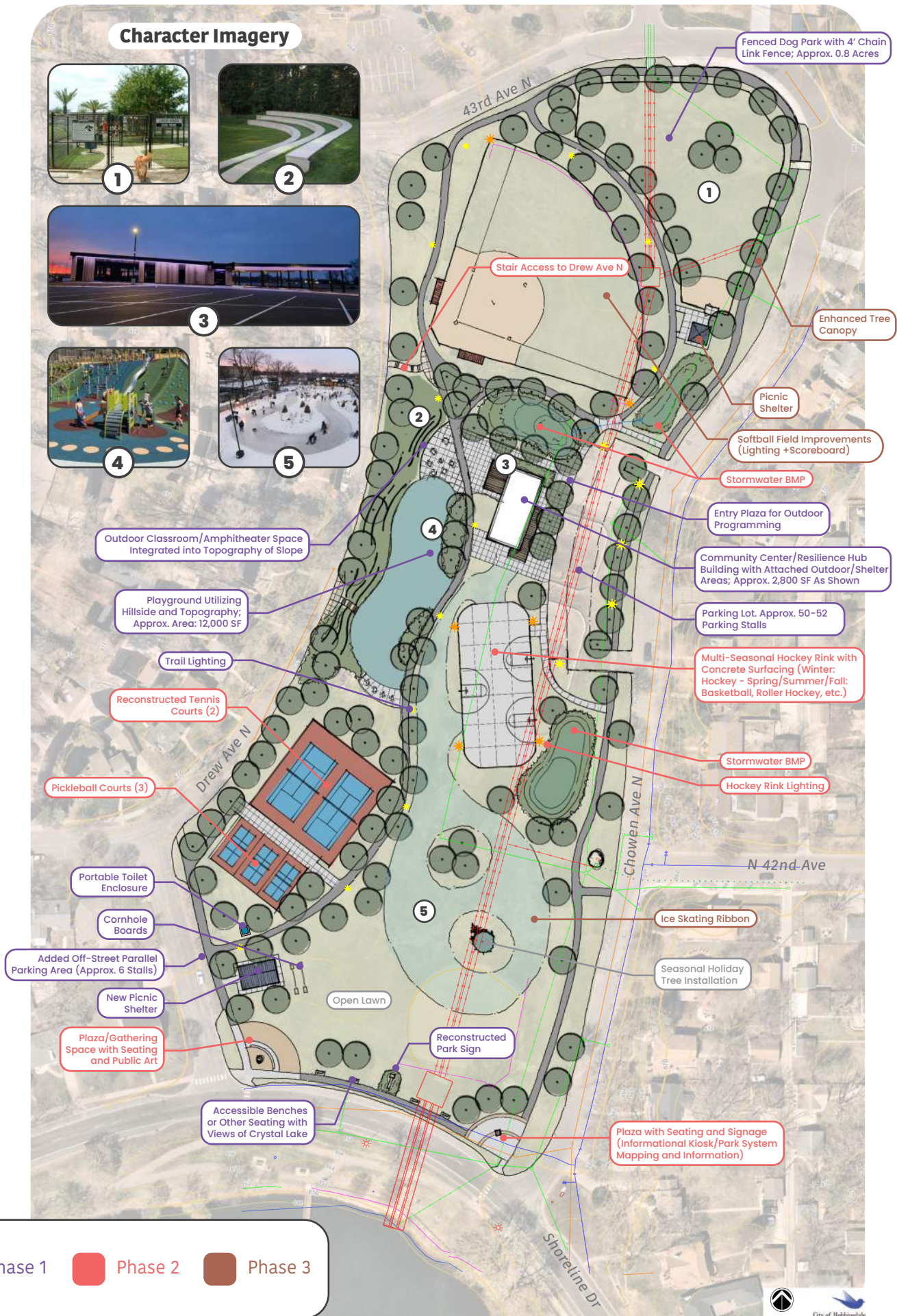
The implementation strategy for improvements to Sanborn Park has been organized into three phases. The timeline for the implementation of these phases is similar to the timeline developed for each priority level (see page 94), with Phase 1 improvements expected to take place in the next 1 to 3 years, Phase 2 improvements in the next 4 to 7 years, and Phase 3 improvements in the next 8 or more years. On the following page is an implementation phasing map that visually shows what improvements fall into each phase. In total, \$7,171,000 worth of improvements have been identified for Sanborn Park.

Identified Improvement	Estimated Cost
Phase 1	\$5,801,000
Dog Park	\$83,000
Parking Lot Reconfiguration	\$245,000
Playground	\$1,107,000
Resilience Hub Building	\$3,705,000
Existing Park Building, Trail, and Basketball Court Removal	\$144,000
New Trail Construction	\$290,000
Picnic Shelter A (Southwest Corner of Park)	\$189,000
Shoreline Drive Improvements	\$33,000
Portable Toilet Enclosure	\$5,000

Identified Improvement	Estimated Cost
Phase 2	\$1,141,000
Hockey Rink	\$582,000
Shoreline Drive Plaza A (Shoreline Dr + Drew Ave)	\$62,000
Shoreline Drive Plaza A (Shoreline Dr + Chowen Ave)	\$68,000
Pickleball Courts	\$185,000
Tennis Court Repair	\$96,000
Stair Access to Drew Ave	\$28,000
Stormwater Improvements Throughout Park	\$120,000

Identified Improvement	Estimated Cost
Phase 3	\$229,000
Pavilion B (New Shelter Near Dog Park)	\$95,000
Existing Ballfield Removal	\$10,000
Skating Ribbon	\$6,000
Tree Management	\$72,000
Softball Field Improvements	\$46,000

Figure 19: Sanborn Park Implementation Phasing Map



RECOMMENDATIONS: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The recommendations that move the city towards achieving the vision for the system are included in the following table. Planning-level, rough order of magnitude cost estimates are provided to help inform the decision making process regarding project implementation. The ranges provided do not include 'soft costs' for design and engineering, which, depending on the project, may require costs related to permitting and additional community engagement,

for example. Soft costs typically range from 10-15% of construction, and the inclusion of a 20% contingency for unanticipated factors encountered during construction is good practice.

Additional investigation into feasibility, design, engineering, land acquisition, agency coordination, and on-going operational and maintenance costs for these projects will need to be considered as they move forward.

Table 7: Park System Implementation Matrix

Policies + Recommendations	High-Level Cost Estimate	Priority Level			Notes
		Low	Med	High	
PARKS					
Policy 1.1 Ensure all residents have access to a park or public green space within a 5-minute walk from their home to meet day-to-day, basic recreational needs					
Recommendation 1.1.2 Look for opportunities to develop a public green space/ park that serves the Regent Place community west of Regent Avenue North	\$80k - \$100k			●	Approximate cost to develop a mini park
	\$200k - \$240k				Approximate cost to develop a playlot
Recommendation 1.1.4 Explore options to provide natural play amenities in the open area south of Humphrey Park	\$35k - \$100k		●		Range depends on size, level of complexity, and potential use of volunteer labor
Policy 1.2 Provide a distributed network of neighborhood parks, mini parks, and playlots that meet the day-to-day recreational and social needs of residents					
Recommendation 1.2.3 Develop an installation at Mielke Mini Park, working with an artist or landscape specialist to integrate a nature-based, artistic experience	\$15k - \$100k	●			Potential costs vary with project complexity, materials, and process
Policy 1.3 Provide access to community parks to meet more specialized recreational needs that serve the entire community					
Recommendation 1.3.2 Update the existing park amenities at Lee Park by adding grills to the existing picnic area and additional pedestrian lighting in the park	\$18k - 22k			●	Assumes two grills and 6 pedestrian lights.
Recommendation 1.3.4 Update Spanjers Park by utilize the existing green space for unique park features, such as permanent bag toss boards, game tables, and seating	\$8k - \$25k		●		Assumes the exist- ing ballfield fence is moved inwards. Costs vary based on final elements

Table 7: Park System Implementation Matrix, Continued

Policies + Recommendations	High-Level Cost Estimate	Priority Level			Notes
		Low	Med	High	
Policy 2.1 Develop playground standards and a schedule of updates to assist in the replacement of outdated playground equipment in the park system					
Recommendation 2.1.1 Replace/Update the playground equipment and swing set in South Halifax Park as it nears the end of its useful life	\$250k - \$350k		•		Current equipment installed in 2006
Recommendation 2.1.2 Replace/Update the playground equipment at Manor Park as it nears the end of its useful life	\$250k - \$350k			•	Current equipment installed in 2001
Policy 2.2 Incorporate additional inclusive play features in the park system					
Recommendation 2.2.1 When the existing playground at Lee Park nears the end of its useful life, replace it with a fully inclusive playground	\$320k - \$400k	•			Assumes accessible surface
Recommendation 2.2.2 In the future, consider expanding the existing playground space and adding more inclusive play features at Triangle Park	\$150k - \$200k	•			Assumes additional accessible play features, such as a universal merry-go-round or tower
Policy 2.3 Install additional amenities and facilities in parks to increase safety and improve the pedestrian experience					
Recommendation 2.3.1 Add updated pedestrian lighting along the walking and biking path in Spanjers Park	\$16k - \$20k		•		Assumes 6 pedestrian lights
Recommendation 2.3.2 Establish pedestrian lighting in South Halifax Park to improve visibility in the park	\$26k - \$35k			•	Assumes 10 pedestrian lights
Recommendation 2.3.3 Establish pedestrian lighting in Lee Park and Sanborn Park to extend use of park facilities in fall and winter				•	See recommendation 1.3.2 and the Sanborn Park Plan
FACILITIES					
Policy 3.1 Ensure there is an even distribution of ballfields, flex fields, and sports courts throughout the community					
Recommendation 3.1.2 Consider adding more pickleball courts in Manor Park	\$200k - \$300k	•			Assumes a bank of 4 courts
Recommendation 3.1.4 Improve the basketball court area in South Halifax Park	\$55k - \$90k			•	Assumes rebuilding the existing court, improving grading , drainage, and seating. Cost varies depending on final court sizing

Table 7: Park System Implementation Matrix, Continued

Policies + Recommendations	High-Level Cost Estimate	Priority Level			Notes
		Low	Med	High	
Recommendation 3.1.5 Explore the removal and replacement of the existing ballfield at Triangle Park with a flexible field space for recreational soccer, lacrosse, or frisbee	\$70k - \$95k			●	See recommendation 3.2.7 below.
Policy 3.2 Introduce unique recreational facilities outside of traditional athletics to the park system					
Recommendation 3.2.2 Look for opportunities to add a disc golf course to a wooded natural area, perhaps at South Halifax Park	\$30k - \$45k	●			Assumes a 9 hole course
Recommendation 3.2.3 Incorporate another splash/water plaza in the northern half of the community, perhaps at Lee or Triangle Park	\$90k - \$150k	●			Assumes ~1,000 sq ft plaza space with ground jets only
Recommendation 3.2.4 Provide additional water access points and fishing piers in Crystal Lake to promote kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding, and fishing	\$90k - \$140k		●		Explore at Lakeveiw Terrace Park and/or Sunset Park. Assumes 1 high-quality pier
Recommendation 3.2.7 Explore the removal of the existing ballfield at Triangle Park and replacing it with a pump track	\$220k - \$500k			●	Costs vary with surface materials, site, and complexity; see recommendation 3.1.5 above
Policy 4.1 Prioritize the renovation or replacement of park shelters that are not adequately serving the community					
Recommendation 4.1.1 Replace the picnic shelter in Lee Park with a new, reservable structure that has electrical access	\$85k - \$100k			●	Assumes basic 20FT x 20FT shelter
Recommendation 4.1.2 Replace the picnic structure near the tennis courts in Manor Park with a new, reservable shelter that has electrical access	\$210k - \$250k		●		Assumes a larger ~1,200 sq ft shelter. Costs vary depending on finishes
Recommendation 4.1.4 Replace the old warming house in Triangle Park with a new structure that provides restrooms, reservable shelter space, and can be used for storage and other needs, relocating it to a more central location within the park	\$250k - \$550k		●		Costs vary depending on finishes. Excludes demolition of existing building
Policy 4.2 Incorporate additional shelters and shade structures throughout the system					
Recommendation 4.2.1 Add a reservable shelter with electrical access to Kelly Park to provide space for local residents to host parties and cultural events	\$85k - \$100k		●		Assumes basic 20FT x 20FT shelter

Table 7: Park System implementation Matrix, Continued

Policies + Recommendations	High-Level Cost Estimate	Priority Level			Notes
		Low	Med	High	
NATURAL RESOURCES + SUSTAINABILITY					
Policy 7.2 Convert underutilized or hard-to-mow areas to more naturalized landscapes					
Recommendation 7.2.1 In parks with a greater ecological focus, such as Humphrey Park, Mielke Park, and Sochacki Park, restore turf grasses to native grasses, forbs, and shrubs	\$24k - \$30k		●		Assumes \$8 -\$10 / square foot, with an initial conversion of 1,000sq ft per park using plugs. Costs could be reduced using staff or volunteer labor
Policy 8.3 Explore opportunities to improve water quality in the community’s lakes and ponds, especially Crystal Lake					
Recommendation 8.3.1 Further current water quality improvement efforts by undertaking a comprehensive water quality and wetland management plan study	\$80k - \$100k			●	Cost includes consulting fee to hire qualified experts and is likely to be an inter-departmental effort within the city
CONNECTIVITY + ACCESSIBILITY					
Policy 9.1 Address any missing pathway links to picnic shelters, playground areas, pedestrian bridges, and more in the park system					
Recommendation 9.1.1 Incorporate an accessible paved pathway from the parking lot to the pedestrian bridge in Humphrey Park	\$18k - \$27k		●		Assumes 550 linear feet of 6 foot wide asphalt path on eastern edge of park. Cost varies with site preparation needs
Recommendation 9.1.2 Add an accessible trail loop/connection in Mielke ParkPark	\$11k - \$15k		●		Assumes 300 linear feet of 6 foot wide asphalt path connecting the north side of the park to the south side of the park along Halifax Ave N. Cost varies with site preparation needs
Recommendation 9.1.3 Add accessible connections to the half basketball court in Kelly Park	\$2k - \$3k			●	Assumes 30 linear feet of 6 foot wide asphalt paths. Cost varies with site preparation needs

Table 7: Park System implementation Matrix, Continued

Policies + Recommendations	High-Level Cost Estimate	Priority Level			Notes
		Low	Med	High	
Policy 10.1 Provide a park and trail system that is easy to navigate					
Recommendation 10.1.1 Develop a more comprehensive wayfinding and signage system to make navigating the park and trail system easier	\$25k - \$50k			●	Cost assumes plan development by a qualified expert and varies with level of detail
Recommendation 10.1.2 Consider replacing existing park entry signage with new signage that better reflects Robbinsdale’s character	\$83k - \$105k		●		Assumes 15 new park entry signs.
Recommendation 10.1.3 Install easy-to-understand wayfinding signage and/or park and trail maps in special use, linear, neighborhood and community parks to help guide park visitors toward city landmarks, destinations, and park spaces	\$27k - \$36k		●		Assumes 9 park wayfinding/map signs
OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE					
Policy 11.1 inspect all facilities and amenities in the park and trail system on a regular basis					
Recommendation 11.1.1 Develop an asset management system to better track future maintenance needs, estimated life cycles, and repair schedules	\$4 - \$6K / year			●	Assumes software costs that vary depending on add-on features and functionality
Totals (includes Sanborn Park improvements)					
HIGH PRIORITY	\$6.7M - \$7.4M				
MEDIUM PRIORITY	\$2.5M - \$ 2.8M				
LOW PRIORITY	\$1.0M - \$1.2M				
TOTAL	\$10.2M - \$11.4M				

FUNDING RESOURCES

Securing the funds to invest in Robbinsdale's parks and recreation system is critical to implementing this plan. Exploration and consideration of the following sources, mechanisms, and partners will be key for future implementation.

Table 8: Funding Resources

FUNDING OPTIONS		
OPTION	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
General Funds	A city's general fund is the main operating account that covers basic operating costs such as planning, police and fire services, and street and park maintenance	Money collected by the city in taxes, fines, fees, and revenues
Dedicated Tax Levy	City's can hold a referendum to levy a dedicated tax for a specific purpose. In the case of parks and recreation, the tax can fund operations, maintenance, and capital improvement projects	Property taxes
Bonding	Borrowing obligations that incur interest and require repayment at a specific date. These are typically issued to pay for larger capital projects	Annual appropriation bonds, tax abatement bonds, and revenue bonds
Local Option Sales Tax	Minnesota Statute gives cities the authority to levy a local sales tax by an election process for specific capital improvements	Sales tax addition
State Aid	Funds available to pedestrian and bicycle improvements on state aid roadways (key county highways), most beneficial during construction or reconstruction projects	State of Minnesota
Park and Trail Dedication	Land or cash in-lieu of land from new subdivision developments that must be used for new equipment or park facilities	Developers
Partnerships	Partnerships with private and/or other public entities can be in many forms, including funding, design, operations and maintenance agreements, etc.	Public or private organizations, clubs, agencies, governments, etc.
Donations	Gifts of cash, equipment, labor or others from private individuals or groups	Individuals, businesses, groups, etc..

FUNDING GRANTS		
GRANTS	DESCRIPTION OF GRANT	AGENCY
AARP Community Challenge Grant	Small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages	AARP
America Walks Community Change Grants	Awards stipends to communities for projects related to creating healthy, active, and engaged places to live, work, and play	Foundation
American Trails Trail Fund	Assists the trails community with funding to support maintenance, research, and stewardship training needs	Foundation
Bridge Investment Program	Provides funding for communities to replace, rehabilitate, and preserve bridge infrastructure	U.S. Department of Transportation
Invasive Species Eradication Funding Opportunity	Provides funding for projects that seek to eradicate invasive species (part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)	U.S. Department of the Interior/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Clean Water Funding	Provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while providing low-cost labor to eligible applicants	Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)
Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant	Provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program	Provides funding to restore, protect, or enhance prairies, wetlands, forests, or habitat for fish, game or wildlife in Minnesota	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund	Aims to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources	Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)
Federal Recreation Trail Program	Provides funding to encourage the maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Fields for Kids	Provides financial support to improve baseball and/or softball facilities for youth in the Upper Midwest and Southwest Florida	Minnesota Twins Community Fund
Fishing Pier and Shore Fishing Area Program	Joint Power Agreement with the DNR for installation, operations and maintenance	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Local Trail Connections Program	Provides funding to promote short trail connections between where people live and significant public resources	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)

FUNDING GRANTS		
GRANTS	DESCRIPTION OF GRANT	AGENCY
Minnesota Festival Support Grant Program	Provides arts experiences through festivals celebrating arts, building community, and exposure to diverse art forms	Other - Minnesota
Natural and Scenic Area Grants	Provides funding to increase, protect, and enhance natural and scenic areas	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
No Child Left Inside	Aims to support and increase efforts to expand programming that connects youth to the outdoors	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Our Town Grant Program	Supports projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes	National Endowment for the Arts
Outdoor Recreation Grant Program	Provides funding to increase and enhance outdoor recreation facilities in local and community parks throughout the state	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Parks and Trail Legacy Grant Program	Provides funding for parks and trails of regional significance outside of the seven county metropolitan area	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program	Provides funding that supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride	Other - Minnesota
The Rapid Response Fund	Provides financial resources to assess and support response actions for quick containment or eradication of newly detected species	National Park Service
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	Supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation	National Park Service
Rural Initiative Grant Fund Program	Provides funding to encourage collective and involved endeavors among citizens in rural communities	Foundation
Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grants/Safe Routes to School Planning Assistance Grants	Provides funding for the development and implementation of infrastructure projects which enable students to walk and bicycle to and from schools	Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT)
State Park Road Account Program	Provides funding to assist local governments in improving access to public recreation facilities	Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT)

TO: Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission

PREPARED BY:

DATE: November 26, 2024

RE: Forestry Update

Background:

Analysis:

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. 11.26.24 Forestry Update

Forestry Updates:

Been planting trees, mostly in boulevards to replace removed trees. Have planted 92 as of Thursday morning 21 November. Main project until either ground freezes or snow cover.

New homegrown prairie grass planting at the water treatment plant doing OK despite squirrels uprooting a few plants on occasion looking for black walnuts. Required lots of watering during our flash drought

Purchased all necessary insecticide for 2025 ash injections – to be reimbursed by DNR Grant

Went out for new tree contract bids for both removal & pruning for 2025-2026: Bratt was low bidder for pruning (our current pruner) and Precision Landscape & Tree was low bidder for removals – Precision is a new contractor but reference checks with other cities & Hennepin County indicated solid work repertoire

Sticker shock on pruning & also removals, hourly cost for pruning went up went up by 43% (\$140/hour/person) over the current \$98/hour/person 2022-2024 rate

Establishment of native prairie pollinator garden over clear well is underway – tilled & seeded on 19 November w/ erosion control

Pruning contractor (Bratt Tree) back in town – started Monday 18 November. Goal is to use up budget. Pruning ash trees along Zenith Ave south of Lowry Ave but will soon move north along West Broadway & Hubbard Avenues. Expect to prune through first 3 weeks of December then again in January

Working with MNL (Minnesota Native Landscapes) to host a native plant sale for residents. They sell 36 plant kits of 6 different species for \$54 and offer several different kits depending on the site. City simply acts as a go-between residents and MNL, with us paying for plant delivery and providing a pickup event. Likely both a spring and fall sale to gauge interest. We would probably charge \$60/kit to cover delivery and admin time

MNL (Minnesota Native Landscapes) performed 3rd site visit along Co Rd 81 medians, mostly spot spraying cool season nonnative species since little bluestem is now dormant

STS doing buckthorn removals & recutting work.

Fall tree removals now complete & sites backfilled

Will soon order seedlings for 2025 Arbor Day giveaway from Chief River Nursery

All purchased Tree Trust trees delivered to residents

Adopt-a-Park online reporting submissions trickling in

Attended Minnesota Society of Arboriculture conference on 24 October

Attended Licensed pesticide applicator renewal workshop on 4 November – Relicensed categories A&E for 2 years