



Chapter 5

Parks and Trails



5 | Parks and Trails

Chanhassen's Park and Recreation System is a source of community identity and pride that greatly contributes to residents' quality of life. The city has historically and will continue to place a strong emphasis on parks and recreation. In the 2016 National Citizen Survey, residents indicated that they highly value Recreation and Wellness opportunities in Chanhassen and ranked the city's health and wellness, recreational and fitness opportunities, and preventive health services to be higher than other communities across the country. The survey also indicated that 9 out of 10 residents frequently make use of the city's wide array of recreational opportunities.

The Park and Recreation section of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan provides an overview and analysis of the city's existing system, identifies goals and policies that will guide park and recreation decision making over the next 20 years, and establishes key initiatives that will complete and enhance the current system. Chanhassen's Parks and Recreation System Plan is a separate document that provides a more detailed overview of where the city's park system currently stands and how it will evolve into the future. The System Plan can be accessed from the city's website.

















By the Numbers

- » 12 community events
- » 250 park programs offered
- » 1,373 watercraft rentals
- » 5,123 ice rink visitors
- » More than 7,900 senior center participants
- » 15,000 group picnic participants
- » 24,400 swimmers at Lake Ann

System at a glance

Over 900 acres of city-owned parks, preserves, and open space
30 community & neighborhood parks
14 preserves & 1 special use park
Almost 80 miles of trails.

Facilities

-  24 PLAYGROUND AREAS
-  17 PICNIC SHELTERS
-  5 SWIMMING BEACHES
-  15 TENNIS COURTS
-  10 PICKLEBALL COURTS
-  28 DIAMOND FIELDS
-  22 RECTANGULAR FIELDS
-  19 BASKETBALL COURTS
-  5 SLEDDING HILLS
-  4 SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS
-  1 SKATE PARK
-  1 DISC GOLF COURSE
-  1 GARDEN PLOT SITE
-  7 DOCKS & 3 FISHING PIERS
-  5 OUTDOOR HOCKEY RINKS & 4 PLEASURE RINKS
-  1 DOG PARK (IN PARTNERSHIP)
-  1 RECREATION CENTER

5.1 | System History

Chanhassen's parks and recreation system is the result of almost 50 years of planning and city and citizen commitment. In addition to adding parks and trails to the system in conjunction with development, the community has supported major park improvement initiatives throughout the years.

Three major bond referendums over the system's history have allowed for major parks and recreation improvements. The first bond referendum for parks was passed in 1969, resulting in the acquisition of Lake Ann Park, the beginning of the neighborhood park system; and the preservation of community character that is enjoyed by residents to this day. 1988 saw the second bond referendum, which funded phase two of Lake Ann Park as well as the purchase of park land in the southern half of the city. Another referendum was passed in 1996, resulting in improvements in 18 parks system-wide; the construction of Bandimere Park; the reconstruction of City Center Park; preservation of over 40 acres of open space; and 7 miles of new community trails.

5.2 | System Components

Today, the city's park and recreation needs are met by a combination of city parks; city trails and sidewalks; school district facilities; private facilities; recreation programs; as well as non-city amenities including regional parks and trails and facilities in surrounding communities.

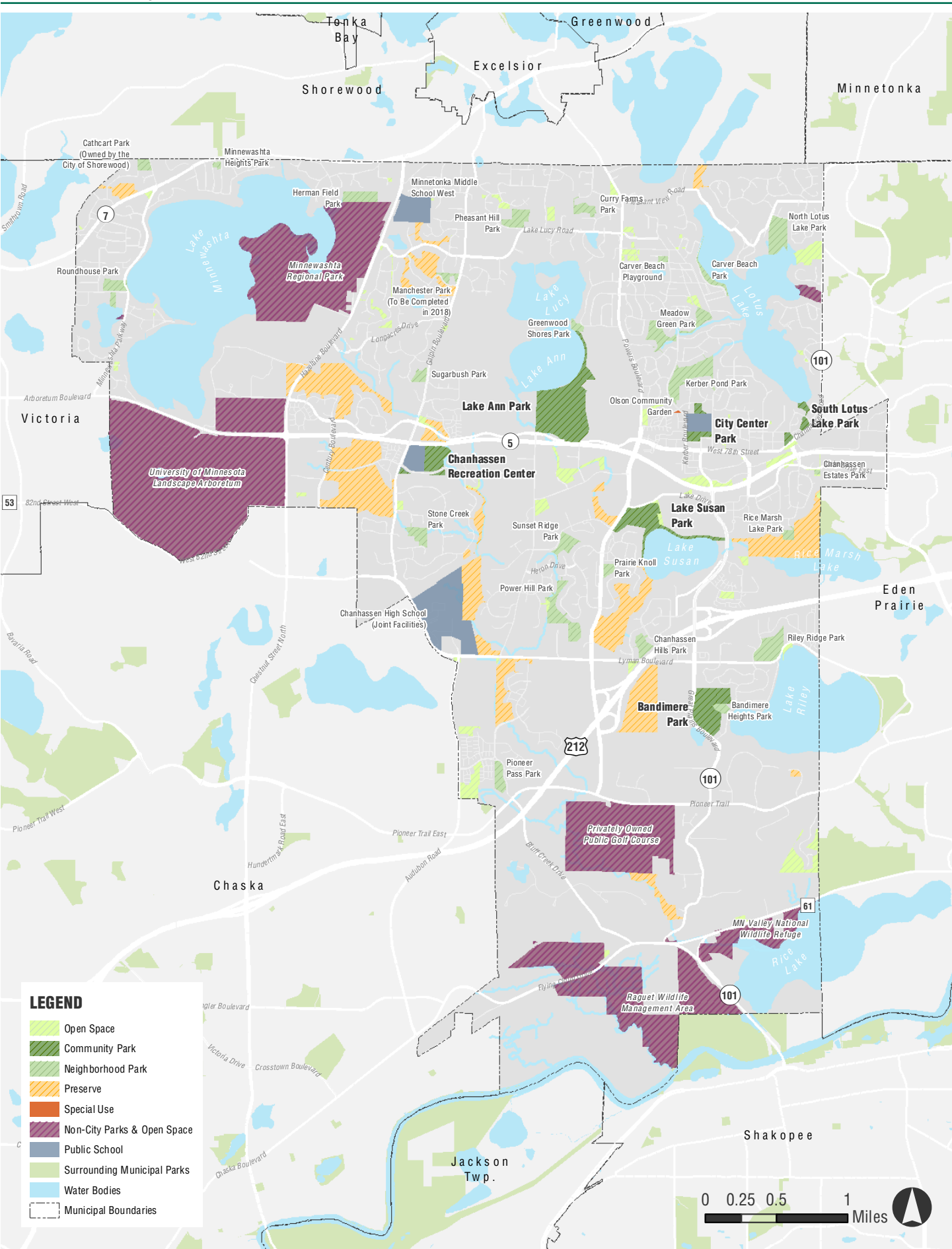
Park Classification

Park classifications are used to ensure that a park and recreation system has sufficient diversity and geographic distribution to serve various neighborhood and community needs. Chanhassen's 30 parks comprise 888 acres of city land, providing 36 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. These parks fall into four classifications: community parks, neighborhood parks, special use parks, and preserves.

Community Parks

Community Parks provide opportunities for city-wide recreation and typically serve a 1-2 mile area. They emphasize active recreation by providing amenities like ball fields and soccer/football fields. Chanhassen's six community parks are distributed throughout the city and most residents live within an easy drive or bike-ride. There is an anticipated shortfall in community park land after the year 2020. Since most of the new residential growth is anticipated to occur in two areas; south of Lyman Boulevard and on the west side of Lake Ann, it makes sense to look for new community parks in these areas. Chanhassen currently has six Community Parks, including Bandimere Park, City Center Park, Lake Ann Park, Lake Susan Park, South Lotus Lake Park, and the Chanhassen Recreation Center.

FIGURE 5-1 | City Park Distribution



Neighborhood Parks

The goal of neighborhood parks is to provide informal recreational opportunities close to where people live. Chanhassen operates under the standard that all residents should be within walking distance, or a half mile, of a neighborhood park. The walking distance must also be free of major barriers like major roads or water bodies to count as adequate. Because community parks often act as neighborhood parks for the people living in close proximity, a half mile radius is applied to both neighborhood and community parks to identify any gaps in service.

There are 23 Neighborhood Parks distributed throughout Chanhassen, 22 of which are city owned and operated. Cathcart Park is located within Shorewood, but acts as a neighborhood park for residents north of Lake Minnewashta.

Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks are used to identify park facilities and amenities that target a specific user group and are not associated with an existing park. Olson Community Garden is the city's only Special Use Park, and is an extremely popular amenity in the community.

Preserves

Preserves function to protect the city's high-quality natural space, and usually involve minimal low-impact development at most. The city currently owns almost 800 acres of open space protected throughout Chanhassen's fourteen preserves. These acres encompass a large portion of the Bluff Creek Corridor, as well as other treasured wetland and woodland areas.

5.3 | Programming

The City of Chanhassen offers a range of recreation and social programs for all ages. These currently include crafts, dance, and sports for preschool aged children; crafts, sports, self-defense, ski and snowboards, and dance programs for youth; programs serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families; fitness and sports programs for adults; community-wide events that occur annually; and educational programs, swimming, clubs, field trips, meal and driving programs for seniors.

According to the Chanhassen Community Questionnaire, community events are the most popular type of programming offered by the city. Annual events hosted by the city and supported by area businesses include February Festival, Easter Egg / Candy Hunt, Arbor Day Celebration, July 4th Celebration, Fire Department Open House, Halloween Party, and Tree Lighting Ceremony. While these events are well-attended, there continues to be an interest for additional events throughout the year.

The city has good working relationships with recreation groups and associations, who do a good job of providing a variety of programs. The city provides introductory level athletic programming for very young children (under 6) and team, league athletics (softball) for adults. There is a desire from some residents that the young athletic programming be improved in terms of structure and coaching. Additionally, interest has been expressed for more, older youth and adult programming in arts, fitness, and outdoor education. There is also desire from many residents for the city to provide programming, such as aquatics, to meet the needs of those who can't afford private facilities, such as Lifetime Fitness.

5.4 | Trails

Chanhassen's 76 miles of city trails have been identified as the most popular facility provided in the community. This city-wide system helps connect neighborhoods to parks, schools, commercial and civic destinations, and adjacent communities. The city is committed to providing pedestrians and cyclists with safe crossings of major

roadways, and today there is a pedestrian bridge over Highway 5 as well as several underpasses city-wide. Natural surface trails are present in Fox Woods Preserve, and desire has been expressed to expand this network to create more low-impact connections between residents and natural areas.

Several regional trails connect Chanhassen to surrounding communities and destinations, including the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail to the north and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail to the south which has a parking area and trail head area off of Bluff Creek Drive. Both of these trail corridors are owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA). A cooperative agreement between HCRRA and Three Rivers Park District allows the corridors to be used for recreational purposes. Figure 5.2 displays the city's existing system of trails and sidewalks. Additionally, the Metropolitan Council has shown regional trail search corridors along Highway 101, Highway 41, Highway 5, CSAH 61, and the Twin City and Western Rail Corridor.

5.5 | Notable Facilities

RECREATION CENTER

The Chanhassen Recreation Center provides the community with year-round indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. The Recreation Center is a focal point for many of the city's community events and recreation activities and programs. The staff at the Recreation Center takes pride in providing a fun and friendly atmosphere for people of all ages at an affordable price. Facilities at the Recreation Center include a gymnasium, fitness room, aerobics/dance studios, five meeting rooms, and outdoor ball fields, tennis and pickleball courts, and hockey/inline skating rinks. Due to the popularity of the programs (especially dance) and the lack of meeting space throughout the community, the Recreation Center is often completely rented out.

Senior Center

Chanhassen's Senior Center is a popular and highly utilized amenity for retirees, and is centrally located within the City Hall. The Senior Center provides senior programming including woodcarving, field trips, art and education classes, health and wellness programs, and card playing.

Nutrition

The CAP Agency Senior Nutrition Program provides nutrition options to Chanhassen seniors age 60+. Through congregate dining, seniors enjoy hot, nutritious meals Monday through Friday at 11:30 am at the Senior Center. Home delivery of meals is also provided. Friendly volunteers will deliver hot, nutritious meals right to resident's door. This service is available Monday-Friday to seniors who are considered homebound, those recovering from surgery, or more long-term purposes. Menus include gluten-free, low-sodium, or reduced-calorie dessert options.

Act on Alzheimer's

In 2015, Chanhassen began the initiative to become an ACT on Alzheimer's community. There are more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease. These numbers are set to soar as the baby boomers continue to enter the age of greatest risk for Alzheimer's disease. The projected growth of Alzheimer's has created a public health crisis and Minnesota is taking action.

In 2009, the Alzheimer's Association and our advocates led legislation to create a State Government Alzheimer's Disease Plan for Minnesota, which launched the formation of Act on Alzheimer's. With over 60 nonprofit, governmental, and private sector organizations, Act on Alzheimer's serves as a volunteer-driven, statewide collaboration who are preparing Minnesota for the impacts of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. We have come together – community members, health care providers, government officials, caregivers, people with Alzheimer's, academics, and businesses – to better support individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their families.

NON-CITY FACILITIES

There are several non-city recreation facilities located in Chanhassen. The locations of these facilities are highlighted in purple in Figure 5-1.

Schools (ISD 276 & 112)

The public schools in Chanhassen partner with the city to offer facilities for public use outside of school hours. The city has agreements for shared use at Chanhassen High School for school athletic fields. Bluff Creek Elementary School shares facilities with Chanhassen Recreation Center, while Chanhassen Elementary School shares facilities with City Center Park. While there is not a specific shared use agreement, Minnetonka Middle School West's facilities assist in addressing needs for surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Lake Minnewashta Regional Park

This 340 acre Regional Park on the east side of Lake Minnewashta is owned and operated by Carver County with support from the Metropolitan Council. Facilities include lake access, a fishing pier, picnicking, sand volleyball, a swimming beach, and trails. A new off-leash dog area was established in partnership with Carver County, the City of Chanhassen, and the City of Shorewood Parks Foundation. A vehicle entry fee is required; however, the park is free for those who arrive on foot or by bike.

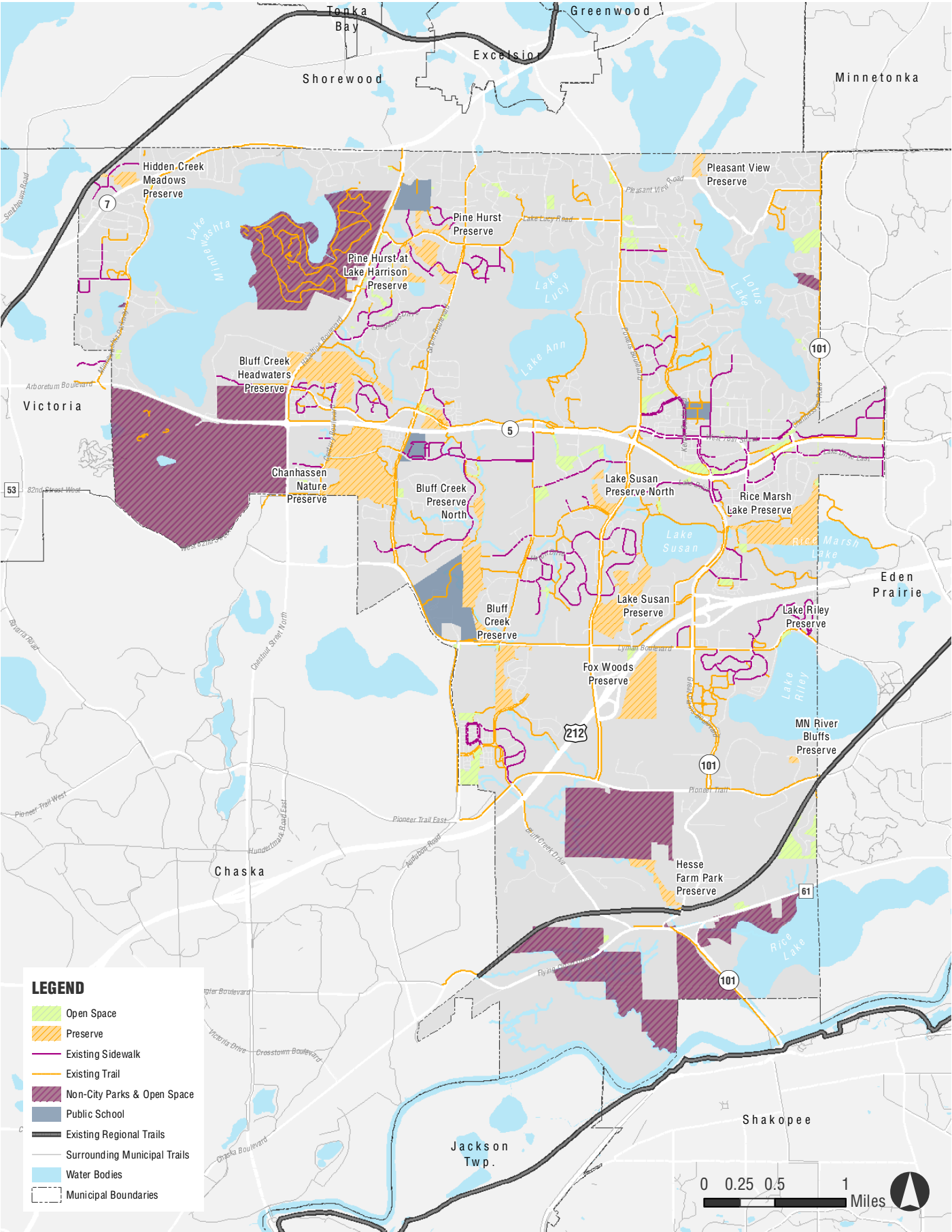
Camp Tanadoona

Camp Tanadoona was started by the Minneapolis Camp Fire Girls in 1924 and consists of 63 acres of land on Lake Minnewashta, south of Lake Minnewashta Regional Park. Today the camp serves both boys and girls and offers overnight and day camps.

MN DNR Lands

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources protects several areas of land within Chanhassen. An eight acre parcel on the east side of Lotus Lake is preserved as open space. The DNR also owns 106 acres of the 600-acre Seminary Fen wetlands complex in southern Chanhassen, which contains a Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) that encompasses 73 acres and protects a rare calcareous fen and threatened plant species. The remaining 33 acres were allotted to the adjacent Raguet WMA. Finally, the DNR owns public land surrounding Lake St. Joe, which is just south of Roundhouse Park in northwest Chanhassen.

FIGURE 5-2 | Trails, Sidewalks, and Open Space



Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

There are approximately 60 acres of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge within the city. The refuge was established in 1976 to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife species. Today the refuge is comprised of 14,000 acres stretching 45 miles from Fort Snelling State Park to Belle Plain, Minnesota. While some areas of the refuge have trails and interpretive signs, there are no public recreation facilities in Chanhassen.

Raguet Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

The Raguet Wildlife Management Area encompasses 270 acres, 190 of which are located in Chanhassen. The WMA is entirely within the floodplain of the Minnesota River. Natural communities include floodplain forest, wetland areas, and grassland. The management emphasis is maintaining and improving habitat for wetland species. The only public recreation access is for hunting.

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is a 1,000 acre facility, 675 acres of which are located in western Chanhassen. The Arboretum is a unit of the University of Minnesota and is a public botanical garden and an education and research institution. It features display gardens and exhibits, model landscapes, restored native landscapes, plant research plots as well as extensive plant collections, and hiking and cross country skiing trails. Educational offerings include children's programs, family activities, adult education, therapeutic horticulture, and the Anderson Horticultural Library. The Arboretum hosts several public festivals every year as well. A fee is required for use.

Golf Courses

There are three privately owned Golf Courses within the City of Chanhassen, all located south of Pioneer Trail. Bluff Creek Golf Course is a 228 acre 18 hole course, Hall Greens is a 45 acre 9 hole course, and the Golf Zone is approximately 100 acres just north of the Raguet WMA and includes an all-weather driving range, putting and chipping greens, a 9 hole course, and a 18 hole putting course.

5.6 | Trends

In order to keep pace with the demands of a growing population, the City of Chanhassen needs to consider how the dynamic nature of technologies, trends, cultures, and activities will affect facility and programming needs. By building flexibility into the city's recreation and park facilities by considering the implications of trends, Chanhassen will be able to adapt quickly and efficiently in order to meet these new demands.

The following trends are relevant to the future of Chanhassen's parks and recreation:

- » Desire to create more memorable experiences
- » Increased importance of 'place'
- » Desire for conservation & natural connections
- » Demand for green alternatives
- » More transient
- » Pinched government budgets
- » Increased interest in aging actively
- » Engaging new generations
- » Increased interest in weight loss & active living
- » Rise in informal adult recreation versus league participation
- » Popularity of new & nontraditional sports
- » Demand for group fitness events & races
- » Need for convenience
- » Increasingly anxious about safety

5.7 | Needs Assessment Key Findings

To understand the state of Chanhassen's Park and Recreation System, the system planning process involved conducting a critical evaluation of the city's existing conditions, peer communities, national standards and trends, best practices, and community input. These analyses identified current and future needs and desires, which subsequently guided the development of guiding principles and goals, policies, and initiatives that work together to guide the future of the system.

The evaluation process included:

- » Meetings with the City Staff, Advisory Committee, Park Board, and the City Council
- » Two phases of community input to gather feedback on existing conditions and future desires
 - Seven Community Pop-Up Events
 - Athletic Association Stakeholder Meeting
 - Senior Stakeholder Meeting
 - Three Online Community Questionnaires
 - Two Online Social PinPoint Maps
 - Community Open House
- » Evaluation of the entire system of parks, trails, natural resources, connectivity, programs, and facilities including an update of the Park System Inventory
- » Demographic analysis
- » Evaluation of current park classification system and standards
- » Evaluation of service areas, future growth, and development needs
- » Identification of issues and opportunities at a system-wide level
- » Comparison of existing supply, quality, and distribution of features and facilities to national standards and to peer communities
- » Evaluation of emerging trends influencing future needs of the system

The following are key findings that summarize what was learned throughout the needs assessment process.

Parks

- » Chanhassen's 30 parks provide about 36 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which exceeds the national standards as well as that of surrounding communities. With the expected population growth of over 10,000 new residents in the next 10 to 20 years, the city should continue to look into expanding the number and distribution of parks as opportunities arise. Emphasis should be placed on currently underserved areas, as well as future areas anticipated to be developed with medium and high density housing.
- » Partnerships with school district have contributed positively to availability of facilities and efficiency of operations.
- » At existing parks, user amenities like lighting, benches, grills, wifi, and permanent restrooms were suggested as potential improvements

Facilities

- » Chanhassen currently provides a diverse, well-distributed range of park and recreation facilities.
- » The amount of playgrounds in Chanhassen is consistent with that of surrounding communities, and is within an acceptable range for anticipated population growth.
- » A desire of the community identified in the engagement process was for the inclusion of natural playscapes, which are play areas either made with natural materials or made to look like nature. The incorporation of natural playscapes can be addressed through replacements, upgrades, and when new construction occurs.

- » The city has sufficient traditional athletic facilities, like diamond fields (baseball, softball) and rectangular fields (soccer, football, lacrosse), for both current and projected population figures. However, an analysis of field sizes finds that many of the existing diamond and rectangular fields are not large enough for adult games so ensuring a mix of field sizes is an important consideration moving forward. Future development should consider how to serve areas in the north, south, and west not otherwise served by non-city facilities.
- » During the community engagement process, residents expressed a desire for amenities that improve the quality of their playing and viewing experience. This includes lighting, permanent restrooms, and seating.
- » Informal sport facilities, like tennis, basketball, sand volleyball, pickleball, and open fields, are well-distributed throughout the community.
- » While the amount of aquatic facilities is on par with those of surrounding communities, all of the facilities are beaches. The community has expressed a strong desire for additional aquatic facilities like an outdoor pool, an indoor pool, and splash pads.
- » The Recreation Center and Senior Center provide year-round, indoor recreation opportunities. Community input has indicated that the current facilities are not sufficient. Residents desire a signature recreation facility that provides indoor facilities like a running/walking track, a larger fitness center, an indoor/outdoor pool, meeting spaces, family activities, and additional fitness classes. Additionally, interest was expressed in improving the Senior Center by expanding awareness and adding more active recreation offerings, fitness facilities and meeting spaces.
- » A key focus over the next 20 years should be the maintenance and replacement of aging facilities.

Preserves and Open Space

- » Most residents are happy with the amount of perceived natural open space throughout the city and many would support additional preservation.
- » While the vistas created by open space are valued, desire was also expressed for increased access so users could better experience natural areas, particularly around Lake Ann and within the Bluff Creek Corridor.

Trails

- » Chanhassen's 76 miles of trails have been identified as the most popular facility provided in the community.
- » Safe crossings were a topic discussed throughout the system planning process. Currently the city has a pedestrian bridge over Highway 5 as well as more than ten underpasses city-wide.
- » In addition to safe crossings, trail users requested additional amenities to improve their trail riding experience. These requests include benches, wayfinding, and lighting to enhance safety and extend year-round use.
- » Currently there are natural surface trails in Fox Woods Preserve, Carver Beach Park, Lake Ann Park, Carver Pond Park, and Stone Creek Park. Community members expressed a desire for additional natural surface trails, particularly as a way to further explore natural areas, whether in preserves or parks.

Programming

- » The City of Chanhassen offers a range of recreation and social programs for all ages. There is a desire from some residents that the young athletic programming be improved in terms of structure and coaching. Additionally, interest has been expressed for more older youth and adult programming in arts, fitness, and outdoor education. There is also desire from many residents for the city to provide more programming, such as aquatics, to meet the needs of those who prefer public recreation programs.
- » According to the online system-wide questionnaire performed in Fall of 2016, community events are the most popular type of programming offered by the city. While these events are well-attended, there continues to be an interest for additional events throughout the year.
- » The city has good working relationships with recreation groups and associations, who do a good job of providing a variety of programs

- » Improved amenities that support events, like picnic shelters with amenities to support food preparation, would help encourage existing and future programming.

Management and Operations

- » There are concerns about deferred maintenance issues, especially in small neighborhood parks (playgrounds, basketball courts, hockey rinks).
- » Concerns also existing surrounding the maintenance of natural resources and lake water quality.
- » Ongoing investments will be required to maintain the quality of the existing system into the future.

5.8 | System Plan

The system plan recommendations were drafted based on the findings from the needs assessment, peer community and national standards analysis, community input, review of the previous Comprehensive Plan, Advisory Committee discussions, and meetings with city staff. The recommendations are organized into goals, policies, and strategies. Goals are broad statements that describe the desired long-term outcomes needed for the system's guiding principles to be achieved. The next level, policies, are statements that will guide city decision-making to achieve the goals. Policies are followed by initiatives, which describe the specific actions or steps that need to be taken. To support and further clarify the initiatives, maps have also been attached to illustrate recommendations relative to parks, facilities, preserves, and trails. A set of precedent imagery has also been prepared to help illustrate what some of the proposed new facilities may look like.

Vision & Guiding Principles

As the City of Chanhassen develops and changes over the course of the next 20 years, its Parks and Recreation System must likewise evolve. New opportunities will present themselves, as will new challenges. Sustaining a desirable park and recreation system through this evolution will require a set of guiding principles based on the community's shared vision.

These guiding principles provide an over-arching framework that informs the development of specific goals, policies, and initiatives. They are also a tool for future decision-making, serving as a yardstick to measure the results of this plan and the appropriateness of future initiatives.

Stewardship

Stewardship is one of the hallmarks of Chanhassen's Parks and Recreation System. An extensive network of preserves gives residents the opportunity to explore and learn about Chanhassen's rich web of natural resources. Greater awareness of Chanhassen's prairies, wetlands, lakes, rivers, forests, and wildlife has led to a greater understanding of the role those resources play in making the community a great place. Chanhassen's citizens have embraced their role as stewards of their city's natural resources. They understand the need to conserve Chanhassen's natural resources so they will continue to enrich future generations, and they advocate continuing to incorporate sustainability practices such as sustainable design, native plant diversity, and ecological maintenance into the system's planning and daily operations.

Connectivity

Connectedness is at the heart of Chanhassen's Parks and Recreation System. The system itself is connected; its parks, preserves, and trails knitted together to create a network of recreation and open spaces that reaches every corner of the community. This network connects residents, neighborhoods, and destinations to one another, strengthening the community and enabling all to enjoy safe, easy, and convenient travel throughout the community and to neighboring cities. Likewise the system's facilities and programs not only connect residents to one another, but they also connect residents to the outdoors and to Chanhassen's wealth of natural resources.

Engagement

Chanhassen's Parks and Recreation system welcomes residents of all ages and all abilities, enabling them to lead active, healthy lives in which they engage with the outdoors, with art and culture, and with one another. Partnerships with private entities, neighborhood and community organizations, athletic associations, user groups, businesses and schools have created a sense of shared ownership and pride across segments of the community, leading to active participation in system planning, operation, and maintenance. The system's high quality facilities and programs are a source of community pride that inspire life-long discovery, learning and socializing.

Adaptable

As Chanhassen has evolved, becoming a larger, more economically and culturally diverse community, its Parks and Recreation System remains adaptable in the way it responds to new needs and challenges and dynamic in its ability to deliver high-quality programs, facilities and services. Increased partnerships with groups, organizations, and businesses representing all segments of the community have resulted in new and diverse sources of funding and an infusion of new ideas, energy and enthusiasm. These partnerships have increased the system's versatility, enabling staff and volunteers to adjust to lifestyle changes, respond to new trends, and enhance the system's quality and efficiency.

Goals & Policies

The System Plan's goals and policies are high-level statements intended to guide city decision-making over the next 20 years. The six goals represent the desired long-term outcomes of Chanhassen's System Plan, and were prepared as depictions of how the Parks and Recreation System will function when the guiding principles are achieved. To guide city decision-makers, the general characteristics of each goal are described by a series of policies.

In the System Plan hierarchy, goals are the highest level and are numbered 1-6, while policies are numbered 1.1, 1.2., etc. so it is clear to which goal a specific policy relates.

Goal 1.

Provide a comprehensive system of park, recreation and open space facilities to serve active and passive needs.

- 1.1. Provide a system that includes neighborhood parks, community parks, preserves and special use parks based on the standards outlined in Table 6-1.
- 1.2. Ensure residents have convenient access to park and recreation facilities at the neighborhood and community park level by ensuring all residents are within a ½ mile of a neighborhood park and 2 miles of a community park.
- 1.3. Provide a mix of athletic complexes with user amenities to meet the needs of recreational, league and tournament play.
- 1.4. Provide user amenities as appropriate for the type of park.
 - 1.4.1. To serve local users walking or biking to their neighborhood park, provide user amenities like benches, bike racks, shade trees, trash and recycling receptacles and seasonal restrooms.
 - 1.4.2. To serve community and regional users, provide at community parks amenities like benches, picnic tables, bike racks, information kiosks, shelters, permanent restrooms, trash and recycling receptacles and access to technology.
- 1.5. Balance the use of park and recreational facilities for local needs with events, tournaments, gatherings and programming.
- 1.6. Support year-round recreation through a mixture of indoor and outdoor facilities.
- 1.7. Explore opportunities to expand the number and quality of the community's preserves to protect natural areas that are ecologically sensitive or representative of the city's natural heritage.
- 1.8. Provide areas for small and large group community gathering through the distribution of shelters in neighborhood and community parks.
- 1.9. Seek opportunities to distribute separated, 2 to 5 year old playgrounds throughout the community.

FIGURE 5-3 | Regional Trail Search Corridors

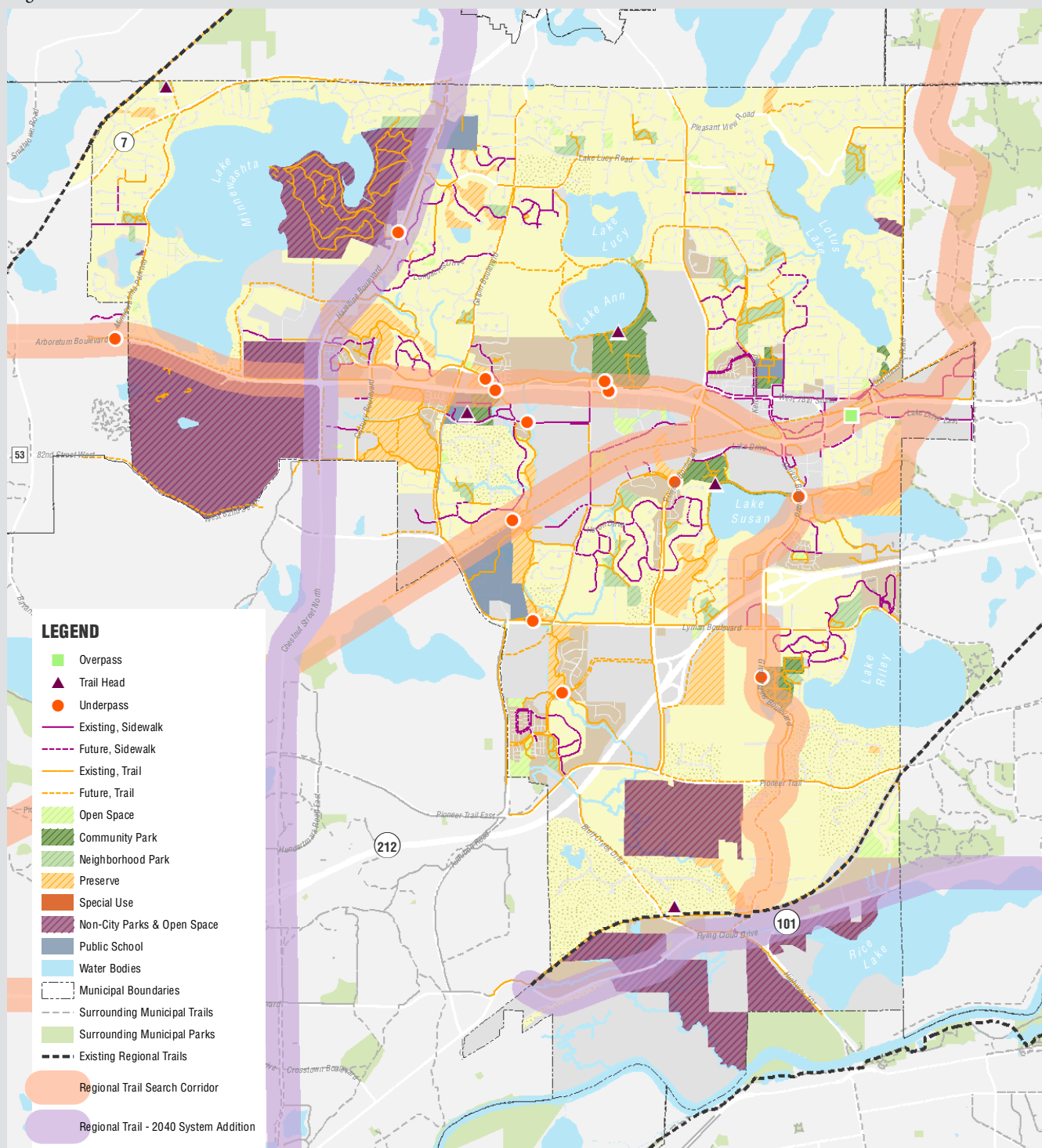
2040 Regional Trail Search Corridors

The Metropolitan Council has established general search corridors for new regional trails or extensions of existing regional trails. These cor-

ridors were designated in order to create connections between regional parks and trails. The map below displays regional trail search corridors that intersect with the City of Chanhassen. While corridors have been identified, the specific align-

ment of the regional trails will still need to be determined through a planning process led by the regional park implementing agency.

Regional Search Corridors



Goal 2.

Maintain a comprehensive and easily navigable trail and sidewalk system that connects neighborhoods to park and recreation facilities, schools, community destinations and other communities.

- 2.1. Prioritize the elimination of trail gaps based on safety, connectivity and cost.
- 2.2. Create trails within preserves.
- 2.3. Improve the trail user experience through improved maintenance, wayfinding and amenities (i.e. benches, trash cans, etc.) in neighborhoods to enhance connections to surrounding amenities.
- 2.4. Establish trails and sidewalks as a key transportation network in new development.
- 2.5. Explore opportunities to expand the trail and sidewalk system through neighborhoods to enhance connections to surrounding amenities.
- 2.6. Prioritize the construction of grade-separated crossings of roads for trails based on safety, demand and need warrants.
- 2.7. Preserve vacated or abandoned right-of-way for trail purposes.
- 2.8. Collaborate with local and regional agencies on the establishment of regional trails.
- 2.9. Partner with surrounding communities to create inter-community trail connections that enables users to travel to surrounding communities and regional trails without having to 'jump' between different trails and sidewalks.

Goal 3.

Ensure all residents have the opportunity to participate in recreation, education, cultural, and arts activities.

- 3.1. Strive to offer a diversity of programs at a variety of times to serve all age groups.
- 3.2. Explore art, culture and nature based programming and partnerships to serve non-athletic community needs.
- 3.3. Program and support partners' events to draw residents to park and recreation facilities.
- 3.4. Encourage, partner with, and support existing associations, clubs and groups to fill programming gaps that the city cannot fill.
- 3.5. Expand partnerships with local schools to serve community needs.

Goal 4.

Be a leader in environmental sustainability.

- 4.1. Preserve remaining natural areas as opportunities arise.
- 4.2. Support park users' efforts by offering recycling and/or composting.
- 4.3. Manage the use of pesticides within parks.
- 4.4. Explore opportunities to convert existing turf areas to native plantings.
- 4.5. Reduce impacts on lakes, waterways, and groundwater by incorporating stormwater best practices in park and facility design.
- 4.6. Use sustainable building practices when developing, expanding or renovating facilities.
- 4.7. Improve energy efficiency when renovating or constructing new facilities.
- 4.8. Use native trees/shrubs planted in appropriate locations to conserve energy.
- 4.9. Raise public awareness of the importance of sustainability and the city's efforts through social media, interpretation, and educational programming.

Goal 5.

Proactively plan for a high quality, efficient parks and recreation system that meets community needs.

- 5.1. Encourage parks to be defining features of neighborhoods through the placement of parks in a visible location and the establishment of connecting trails and sidewalks.
- 5.2. Encourage participation by neighborhoods, community groups and local artists in the planning for and development of park and recreation facilities. Identify locations for unique features or improvements to avoid a system of "cookie cutter" parks.
- 5.3. Enhance users' experiences through well-designed exterior environments/places that give consideration to how all members of the public can engage in these spaces in different ways (educational, cultural performance, artistic, etc.), how places can be interconnected throughout the community, and how lighting contributes to inviting spaces. As part of design process, seek opportunities to use artist-created park features rather than standard catalog pieces.

- 5.4. Encourage the use of the park system for performance art, temporary art installations and public art.
- 5.5. Explore opportunities to reconfigure or improve efficiencies within existing parks to serve identified community needs.
- 5.6. Maintain and routinely review field management plan to ensure high quality fields through rotational resting of fields based on a schedule/ level of use and postponement of use during and after significant rain events.
- 5.7. Continue strong partnership and communication with local associations, clubs, and other organizations to ensure facilities are meeting their needs.
- 5.8. Integrate trails into the planning and design process for public improvements and land development.
- 5.9. Design parks and facilities to address active and passive needs while giving consideration to the environmental context, surrounding land uses, and future maintenance and operational needs.
- 5.10. Establish and routinely update a sustainable operations, maintenance and replacement schedule for all parks and facilities with particular attention on playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, pickleball courts, shelters, etc.
- 5.11. Collaborate with Engineering Department on trail pavement management program.
- 5.12. Explore partnership opportunities for capital improvement costs and life-cycle system costs.
- 5.13. Maintain current management of fields as demand continues to increase.
 - 5.13.1. Rotational resting of fields based on a schedule/level of use.
 - 5.13.2. Postponement of use during and after significant rain events.
- 5.14. Continue to support the stated goal of parks in Chanhassen to reasonably meet city needs and promote a sense of community:
 - 5.14.1. Expand the capacity of the athletic facilities through improvements and efficiencies within existing community parks.

Goal 6.

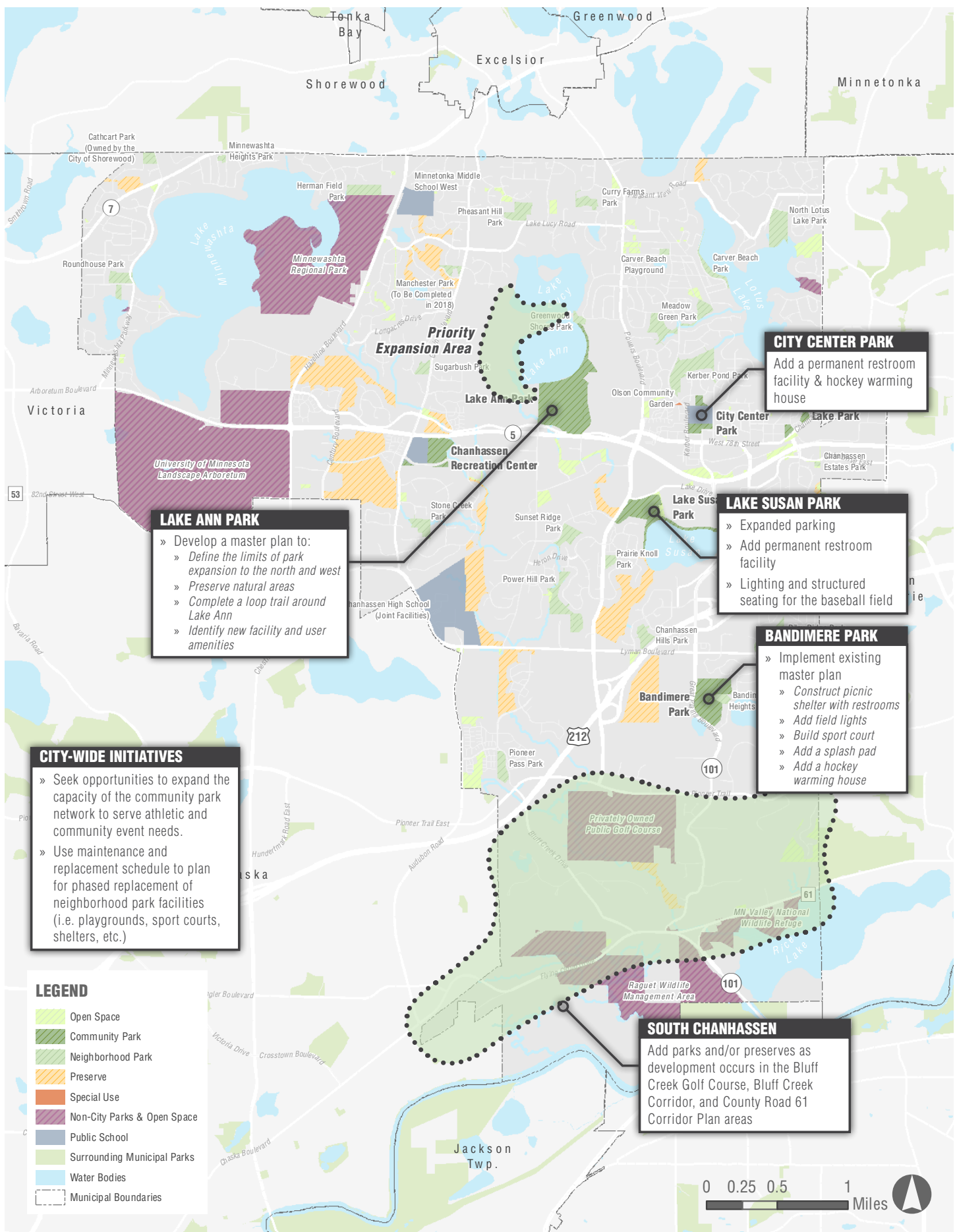
Implement strategies to increase the city's capacity to maintain and expand the parks and recreation system.

- 6.1. Identify and expand partnerships with area recreation associations, clubs and groups; local businesses; private organizations; neighborhood groups; and other public agencies.
- 6.2. Utilize our facilities to capitalize on opportunities to generate revenue.
- 6.3. Evaluate options to expand the use of volunteers to support park operations and programming.
- 6.4. Explore seeking voter approval to issue bonds or levy a tax to expand or support the needs of the park and recreation facilities and system.
- 6.5. Encourage property owners interested in donating or granting conservation easements on their land.
- 6.6. Support the creation of a non-profit parks and recreation foundation.

TABLE 5-1 | City Park Classifications

Classification	Use	Service Area	Size (Typical)	Examples
Community	Provides facilities serving the community with programmed, active recreation areas and access to natural areas. May serve regional visitors, although not as primary function.	Community wide in strategic, consolidated locations at a few sites	15 to 100 acres	Lake Ann Park, Bandimere Park
Neighborhood	Primary recreation facility to meet the day-to-day needs of neighborhoods. Provides active recreation and informal gathering spaces for families and groups of neighbors. Fields are sized for practice/youth games.	1/2 mile radius, free of major barriers such as highways or waterways	<15 acres	North Lotus Lake Park, Pioneer Pass Park
Preserve	Areas focused on the provision of natural environments, passive recreation, and ecological education.	Community & Regional Draw	Centered around natural resources and amenities	Fox Woods Preserve, Bluff Creek Preserve
Special Use	Areas primarily serving a single-use activity.	Community & Regional Draw	Site specific	Olson Community Garden

FIGURE 5-4 | Park Initiatives



5.9 | Initiatives

Initiatives are specific actions or steps that are recommended for implementation. Initiatives are organized by the topic areas of parks, facilities, trails, preserves, programming, and operations. The System Plan is the guiding document relative to city Initiatives for the Parks and Recreation System. Prioritization of the initiatives separated the actions in the time frames of short term, long term, and ongoing. The plan remains flexible so that all initiatives will occur as opportunities arise.

The initiatives included in the System Plan are summarized by category below: and shown on the maps on the following page:

Parks

- » Maintain Lake Ann Park as the premier community park
- » Add amenities to Bandimere, City Center, and Lake Susan Community Parks
- » Use a maintenance and replacement schedule to keep neighborhood park facilities up to date
- » Seek opportunities to expand the park network to serve changing community needs and preserve natural amenities.

Facilities

- » Identify and construct a year-round signature recreation facility in the community
- » Add a destination splash pad at a community park
- » Establish an interpretative center with outdoor lab space and nature-based play
- » Add community-scale nature play at a community park and unstructured nature play throughout the community as appropriate
- » Improve user amenities at existing facilities
- » Explore opportunities for a second community garden
- » Implement recommendations of the Athletic Fields Study

Trails

- » Address trail gaps and trail crossing safety issues
- » Work with partner agencies to reopen Minnesota River Bluff LRT Regional Trail
- » Complete trail connection to Minnesota River
- » Increase maps and wayfinding to identify loops, distances, and destinations
- » Provide more user amenities
- » Expand the number of natural surface trails
- » Explore opportunities to add trailheads
- » Initiate a single-track mountain bike trail study

Preserves

- » Continue to preserve sensitive lands within the Bluff Creek Corridor
- » Collaborate with other agencies to protect the Seminary Fen
- » Collaborate with other agencies to protect the Minnesota River Valley
- » Expand marketing & wayfinding
- » Expand opportunities to interact with and explore nature
- » Identify & protect natural areas that link parks, preserves, & destinations
- » Develop natural resource management plan

Programming

- » Continue to host at least 5 major community events
- » Expand informal, year-round events & nature-based programs
- » Collaborate with new & existing partner organizations to provide events & programming
- » Establish an Event Management Plan
- » Annually assess pricing structure

Operations

- » Use System Plan as basis for budgeting & Capital Improvement Plan
- » Incorporate sustainable design & maintenance practices to make Chanhassen a model
- » Consider a tobacco use policy
- » Communicate benefits of parks and recreation
- » Establish formal review process for program/event development

It is estimated that the priorities identified will cost \$70 to \$83 million to implement.

FIGURE 5-5 | Facility Initiatives

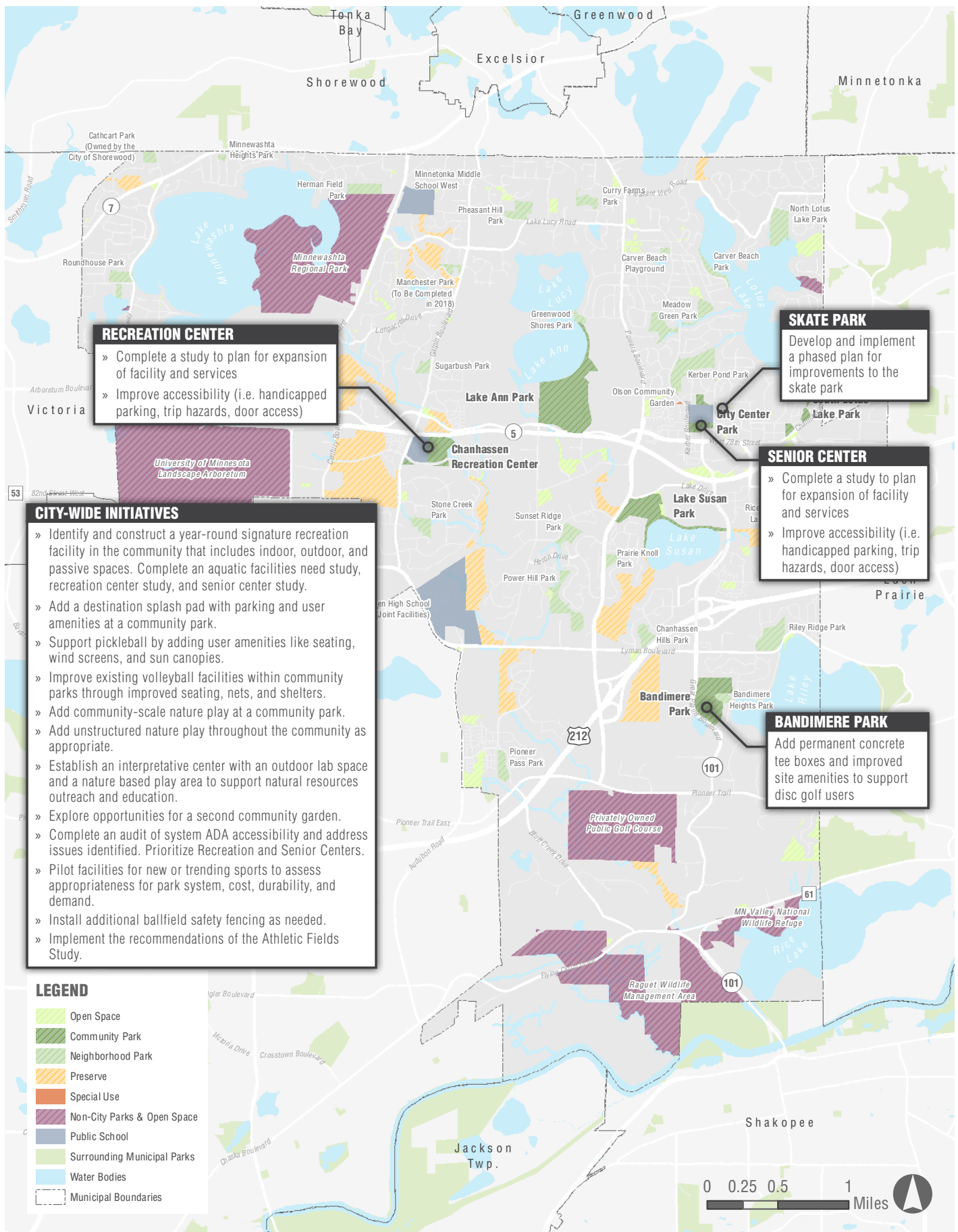


FIGURE 5-6 | Trail Initiatives

