



City of Oak Park Heights, Minnesota  
**2008 COMPREHENSIVE  
PARK & TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN**



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

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The Oak Park Heights Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2008, indicates that an update to the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan will be completed in 2008. The Comprehensive Plan included park inventory information and goals and policies as a separate chapter, but it specifies that a complete update of the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan would be completed as a follow up to the overall planning process.

This Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan is built on the foundation created with the first Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail System Plan of 1995, and the 1999 Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan. In 1995 and 1999, the City was growing quickly and the 1998 Comprehensive Plan indicated a large area of potential annexation. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that the community is almost completely developed and anticipates that there will be little, if any, expansion of the City limits in coming years. The population growth and number of households is expected to grow slightly to just over 5,000 persons and remain stable. It is expected that the City's population will continue to age, especially with the large numbers of elderly housing units. In recognition of the demographics of the community, this plan seeks to provide opportunities for recreation for all ages.

The first section of the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan is a description and summary of the background inventory that provides the basis for the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan. The Inventory is followed by a chapter containing park and trail issues identified for each park and area of the City. The Issues Identification chapter contains more general constraints and opportunities the City faces in the implementation of its park and trail system. The Recreation System Policies chapter contains policies that reflect the community's general treatment of its recreational services and provide more detailed guidance on park and trail development standards. The Trail Facilities Master Plan chapter identifies trail routes that are part of the City's recreational facilities improvement plan. The Park Facilities Master Plan follows the policies and provides the direction and recommendations for park and trail planning and development. The Planning and Design Guidelines and Standards follow for parks and trails. Implementation is the final chapter of the Comprehensive Park and Trail Plan.

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Provide recreational facilities for all ages and areas of Oak Park Heights and link all parts of Oak Park Heights internally as well as to neighboring communities by a safe and convenient multi-use trail system.

**MISSION  
STATEMENT**

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

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## INTRODUCTION

The first step in determining the needs of the City's recreational system is the identification of the existing conditions. Population and household projections will be reviewed, as well as school enrollment for those facilities that serve Oak Park Heights. This will provide a balance of information for park and trail planning purposes.

The existing park and trail facilities were identified through site inspections by City staff, Park Commission members, and planning consultants. This identification process included location, size and physical amenities of the facility in question, as well as the condition and level of development of the facility, both of which may affect eventual use of the park or trail sites. The items inventoried for each facility were gathered with the goal of being able to place the parks and trails in the context of a system of recreational opportunities. The base line data provided in this effort helps the City to understand how its park and trail facilities fit together, and provides the information necessary to identify gaps or areas of need.

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The City of Oak Park Heights has had steady population growth since 1970. The expanding residential and commercial sectors as well as the attractiveness of the community in its location in the St. Croix River Valley has resulted in the growth. By 2010, the community will be over 5,000 people with modest growth projected hereafter. Household and population growth of the community from 1970 to 2006 is found in the following table.

## POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

HOUSEHOLD AND POPULATION GROWTH OAK PARK HEIGHTS					
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2006
Population	1,238	2,591	3,486	3,957	4,676
Households	372	955	1,322	1,528	2,008
Household Size	3.33	2.71	2.63	2.25	2.06
Source: U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, Metropolitan Council					

The numbers above reflect the national and state trends of smaller household size. With limited residential available, the expected population will continue to grow but at a much slower rate.

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

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The Metropolitan Council, in its 2030 Regional Development Framework, has projected population, household and employment forecasts. These forecasts are accepted by the City as the basis for growth through 2030 and are found as follows:

## Population, Household, and Employment Projections

POPULATION, HOUSEHOLDS AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS OAK PARK HEIGHTS				
	2000 Census	2010	2020	2030
Population	3,957	5,500	5,400	5,700
Households	1,528	2,180	2,300	2,500
Employment	2,713	3,900	4,500	5,100
Source: U.S. Census 2000, Metropolitan Council				

As indicated above, the City will exceed 5,000 persons by the end of the decade. Once the City nears approximately 5,500 people, the population will likely level off. The 2020 population projection is expected to drop slightly and then increase to 5,700 by 2030. With no additional residential land available, it is expected the City's population will likely stabilize between 5,500 and 5,700 people. The household projections show a steady increase to 2,500 by the year 2030. The increase in households versus the stable population levels is due to the ongoing trend of lower household size. The City will experience limited infill development which will increase the number of households but likely not to the extent projected by the Metropolitan Council.

Employment numbers are also projected to increase to a total of 5,100 by 2030. This again may be optimistic with the limited land available for future commercial development.

The following table illustrates Oak Park Heights' population by age group. The table utilizes information from the 1990 and 2000 Census. In 1990, the labor force (ages 19-39) represented the largest age group, at 37.01 percent. In 2000 this age group (ages 18-54) was again the City's largest, accounting for 34.72 percent of the total population. At 25.33 percent in 1990, the next largest age group for this Census year was school age children. In 2000, the second largest age group was the labor force (ages 40-59), at 27.21 percent. The retired age group represented 12.4 percent of the total population in 1990, and 12.83 percent in 2000. **It is expected that the retired age group will become the fastest growing segment of the population in the coming decade.** Changes in the demographics of the City and surrounding area will have significant planning implications for the future.

## Age Characteristics

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

OAK PARK HEIGHTS POPULATION GROWTH BY AGE GROUP					
Age Group	1990	1990%		2000	2000%
<b>School Age</b>					
Under 18	883	25.33		863	21.80
<b>Labor Force</b>					
19-39	1,290	37.01		1,374	34.72
40-59	771	22.12		1,076	27.21
60-64	110	3.16		136	3.44
Sub-Total	3,054	87.62	Sub-Total	3,449	87.16
<b>Retired</b>					
65-69	124	3.56		122	3.08
70-79	183	5.25		225	5.68
80+	125	3.59		161	4.07
Sub-Total	432	12.4	Sub-Total	508	12.83
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,486</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>3,957</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000/Minnesota State Demographer					

The City of Oak Park Heights is entirely within Independent School District 834 (ISD 834). The current, past, and projected enrollments for ISD 834 schools are as follows:

## School Enrollment

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS							
Stillwater Area Schools				October 1, 2008 - 2012			
Oct. 1	K-6	7-9	10-12	K-12	Migration	K-12	Change
2000	4,724	2,245	2,277	9,246			
2001	4,760	2,208	2,332	9,300	161	-107	54
2002	4,692	2,245	2,340	9,277	139	-162	-23
2003	4,695	2,225	2,325	9,245	176	-208	-32
2004	4,518	2,175	2,338	9,031	6	-220	-214
2005	4,474	2,146	2,377	8,997	149	-183	-34
2006	4,431	2,149	2,390	8,970	211	-238	-27
2007	4,486	2,101	2,336	8,923	181	-228	-47
2008	4,456	2,085	2,308	8,850	142	-215	-73
2009	4,452	2,083	2,298	8,833	165	-182	-17
2010	4,469	2,070	2,246	8,785	173	-221	-48
2011	4,431	2,029	2,231	8,691	142	-236	-94
2012	4,353	2,008	2,214	8,575	105	-221	-117
Source: Stillwater Area School District 834							

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

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The projections indicate a decrease in enrollment for District 834 for each of the next five years. This could be influenced the other way if the housing market rebounds in the next few years. The decrease in the population for people under 18 years of age will have an impact on the need for recreational programming and facilities required for this age group.

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The City of Oak Park Heights contains five established parks. The parks vary in size, location, and service. Parks play an important role not only in their overall recreational benefit to the residents of Oak Park Heights but as a crucial destination point directly related to the establishment of trails. All are interrelated and each portion from the park land itself all the way down to a single picnic table or start of a trail plays an important role in completing a recreational link, therefore adding to the comprehensive system.

## EXISTING PARKS

**Valley View Park** is the largest park within the City and is intended as a City-wide passive park for hikers, picnics and nature. It is viewed by the City as a very unique and positive amenity in the community given its dense vegetation, variation in topography, wetlands, and array of existing and potential uses. The park is an important link between the east portion of the City and Osgood Avenue (via its entrance drive, and/or through Brekke Heights or Valley View Estates residential subdivisions). Adjacent to the Valley View Park is the Allen S. King Plant ash disposal facility. Xcel Energy has closed portions of the disposal facility and created a trail system within the site. The City will continue to work with Xcel Energy to create a possible recreational facility when the disposal site is closed by 2010.

**Brekke Park** is a high quality, intensively utilized City park intended as an active area for field games and a playground area for toddler age and older. It is located adjacent to State of Minnesota land controlled by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and serves as a community playfield for residents in the south central portion of the City, primarily between Osgood and Oakgreen Avenues. The City will continue to work with the DNR to allow utilization of the property for open space and trails. In 2007, the City purchased the property at 5502 Osgood Avenue, adjacent to Brekke Park. The City will include plans for the new park land in its complete update of the Park and Trail Plan in 2008.

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

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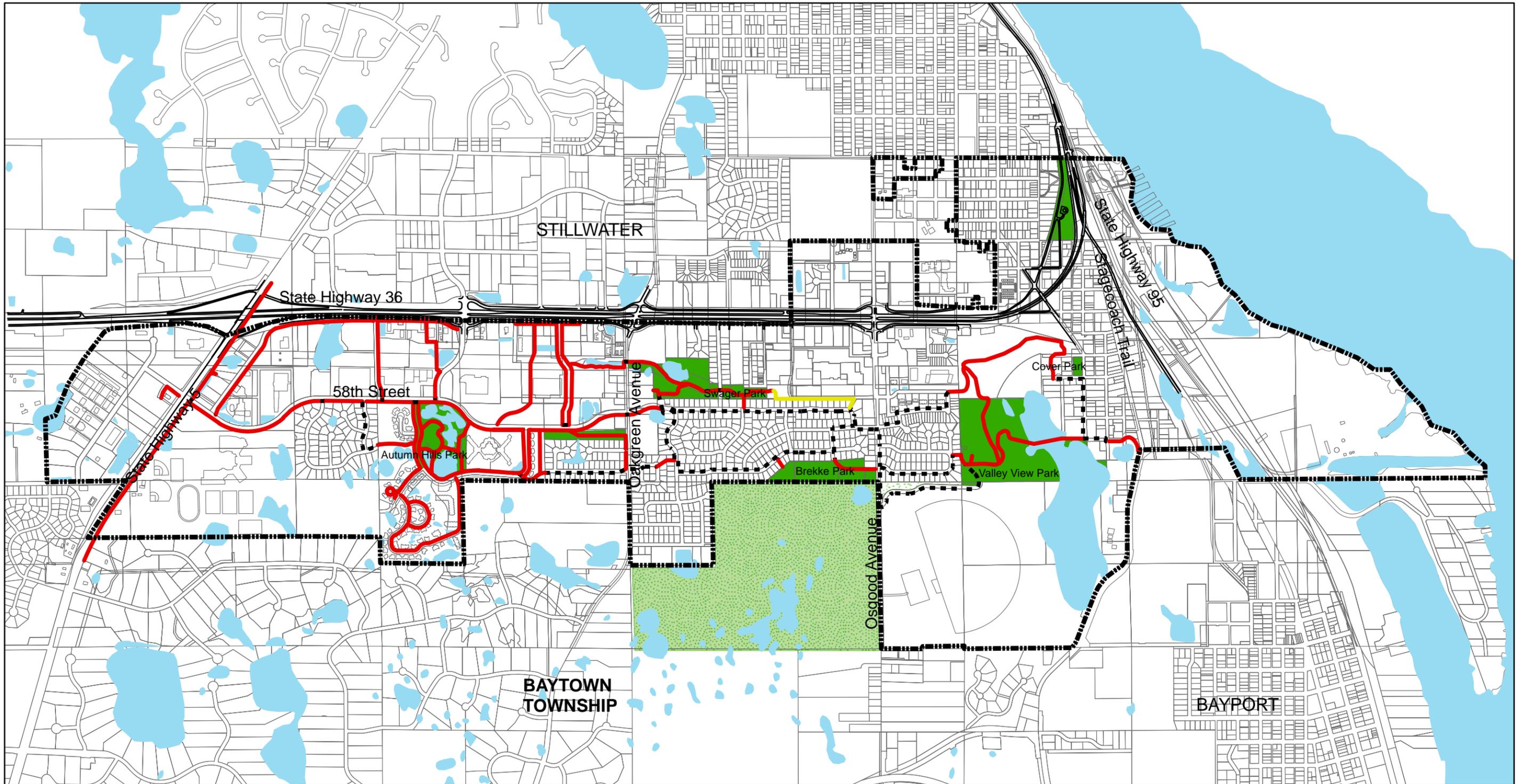
**Swager Park** serves as a neighborhood playground along the linear park system. The park is fairly centralized within the community and is located within a Xcel Energy easement. A trail has been constructed within the easement from just east of Swager Park, through the City to Highway 5.

**Cover Park** is the oldest and smallest park in the City and provides an active area for residents in the Village of Oak Park Heights neighborhoods who are otherwise somewhat segregated from the north and western portions of the City.

**Autumn Hills Park and Haase Recreational Area** serves as a neighborhood park and is surrounded by the Boutwells Landing senior community. The park serves as a focal point for residents from all areas of the City with the large play equipment area and the new park shelter with restrooms constructed in 2007. The recreational area features trails, utilities and natural areas adjacent to the Autumn Hills neighborhood and the Environmental Learning Center of the Stillwater Area High School.

On the following page is a list of the existing park components for each of the five City parks.

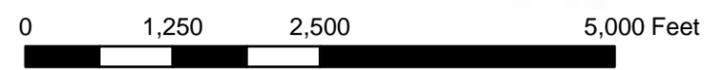
The map on a following page indicates the existing park and trail system. Efforts in recent years have been to complete the connections between parks and throughout the community. Additionally, as part of all residential and commercial development, new sidewalk and trail connections have been added.



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**Parks & Bikeways**

- Municipal - Separated Off Street Trail
- Municipal - On Street Trail Route
- Other (Private)
- City Parks
- Regional Parks
- Open Space
- Water
- City Limits



**City of Oak Park Heights  
 Park & Trail Plan**

EXISTING

**Park & Trail System**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
 The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 October, 2008.

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

EXISTING PARK COMPONENTS					
	Valley View Park	Brekke Park	Swager Park	Cover Park	Autumn Hills Park
Size	65 acres	13 acres	1.4 acres	1 acre	24 acres
Picnic Shelter	✓ with restrooms ADA access	✓ with restrooms ADA access	✓ portable restrooms	✓ with restrooms ADA access	✓ with restrooms ADA access
Baseball/Softball		✓			
Hockey Rink		✓ year round skating		✓ free skate	
Warming House		✓ with shelter ADA access		✓ ADA access	✓ with shelter ADA access
Basketball Court		✓	✓	✓	
Tennis Courts			✓		
Soccer/Open Field		✓ youth only, Fall			
Play Set	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Swing Set	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spring Animal	✓				
Horseshoe Pit	✓				
Grills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Picnic Tables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bench/Seat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bike Rack/Stand	✓	✓		✓	✓
Trail/Path Connection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Treed Area or Shaded Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disc Golf Course		✓			
Sledding	✓				
Source: City of Oak Park Heights					

# PARK AND TRAIL INVENTORY

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Maps of each of the parks indicating existing conditions is found on the following pages.

## PARK MAPS

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A number of new trail connections have been constructed in Oak Park Heights over the past few years to provide important linkages between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and parks. In 1995, when the Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail System Plan was completed, the only trail routes available were a few sidewalks located in the area adjacent to the City of Stillwater and limited trail connections to existing parks. In the last 13 years, the City has developed an off-and on-street trail system that enables the pedestrian or bicyclist to move safely throughout the City. There are many linkages and crossings that must still be addressed.

## EXISTING TRAILS

In the last few years, the City has focused on providing a complete east/west trail system throughout the entire community. In 2008, the City completed a linkage through Brekke Park to Osgood Avenue. Additionally, a link was made from 58<sup>th</sup> Street North to the existing trails within Valley View Park and the Xcel Fly Ash Reclamation Area. Currently, the trail system in Oak Park Heights includes 10.58 miles of municipal separated, off-street trails; 4.04 miles of municipal on-street trail routes; 5.86 miles of State trails; and .29 miles of private trails.

The City will continue to focus on making linkages, especially with development and redevelopment projects. North/south connections, especially along Oakgreen and Osgood Avenues, as well as crosswalks on or under these roadways, will also be considered.

The Existing Parks and Bikeways Map on a previous page indicates the system current as of Fall of 2008.

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The map on a following page indicates the planned trail systems for surrounding communities. The City of Oak Park Heights will continue to work with these jurisdictions in providing linkages between communities.

## REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS



**City of Oak Park Heights  
Park & Trail Plan**

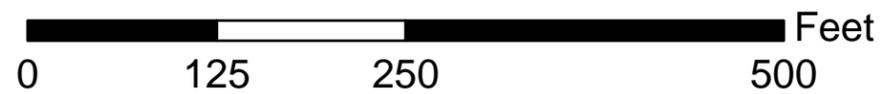
EXISTING

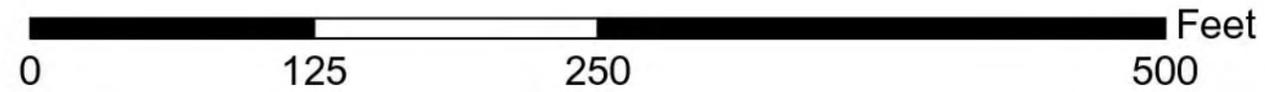
**Valley View Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
Northwest Associated Consultants,  
October, 2008.



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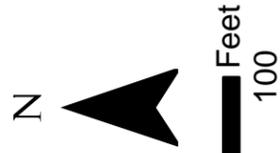


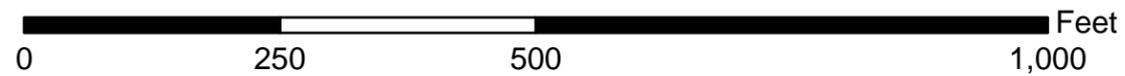


**City of Oak Park Heights  
Park & Trail Plan**

EXISTING  
**Cover Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
Northwest Associated Consultants.  
September, 2008.



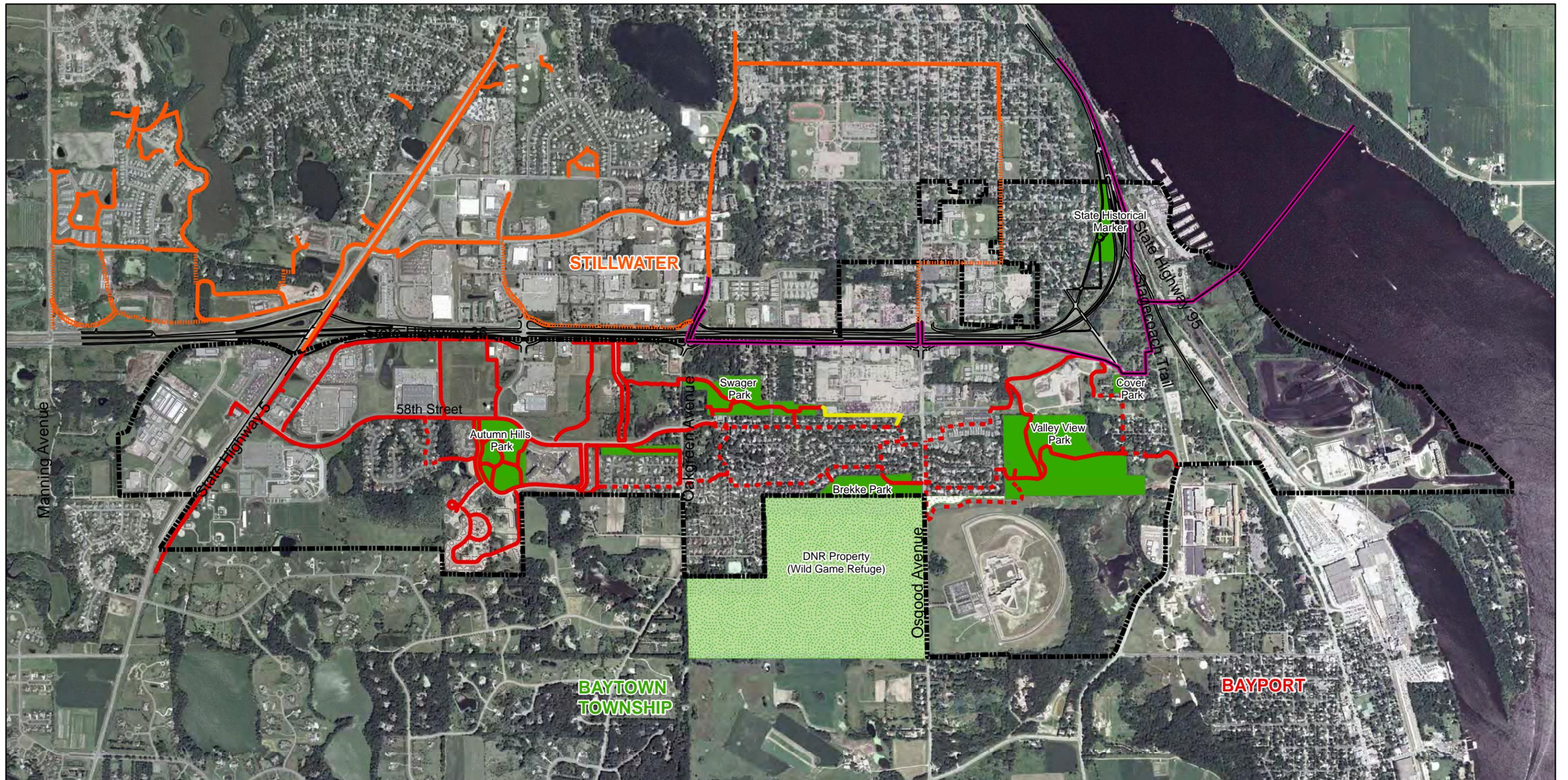


**City of Oak Park Heights  
Park & Trail Plan**

EXISTING

**Autumn Hills Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
Northwest Associated Consultants.  
December, 2008.



<b>Existing Parks/Open Space</b>	<b>Bikeways/Trails w/in City Limits</b>	<b>Regional Trails - Existing</b>
City Park	Municipal - Separated Off Street Trail	City of Stillwater Trail
Regional Park	Municipal - On Street Trail Route	Baytown Township Trail
Open Space	State	<b>Regional Trails - Future</b>
City Limits	Other	City of Stillwater Trail
		MnDOT Future Trail

0      1,750      3,500      7,000 Feet



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## City of Oak Park Heights Park & Trail Plan

### Regional Connections

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
 The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 December, 2008.

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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## INTRODUCTION

The Parks Commission discussed issues relating to existing parks and trails in meetings on August 18, 2008, September 15, 2008, and October 20, 2008. The following is a summary of issues raised by the Parks Commission and staff.

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- ▶ Provide opportunities for all ages to participate in lifetime fitness through the use of trails, tennis courts, cross-county skiing, and other activities.
- ▶ Develop recreational and environmental education programs to familiarize people with the parks.
- ▶ Decide if and how coordination with the recreational needs of the County, athletic associations, civic groups, etc. can be accomplished.
- ▶ Create Oak Park Heights monument signs with plantings welcoming visitors to the City.
- ▶ Year-round parking at parks and indoor recreational facilities are needed.
- ▶ Plan for parks as a unified system with consistent hours of operation.
- ▶ Determine whether existing and proposed park areas are desired for year-round or seasonal usage and what effect this will have on park facilities and design.
- ▶ Discuss how park and playground buildings can be constructed to be compatible with surrounding urban or rural activities in regard to scale, design, color, setbacks, and materials.
- ▶ Define the means by which park development can minimize impacts on adjacent properties, i.e., off-street parking, screening, landscaping, setbacks, etc.
- ▶ Continue to explore joint park use with Oak Park Elementary and adjacent facilities.
- ▶ Link all parks within the City through a system of trails.
- ▶ Identify in what park situations lighting would be appropriate or necessary. It is possible that this may only be accomplished as plans for each park or trail are established.

## GENERAL PARK ISSUES

- 
- ▶ Welcome the public to the park with an inviting landscaped entry.
  - ▶ Identify park boundaries and aid visitors in locating picnic and trail facilities with improved signage.
  - ▶ Allow safe access to the lower area of the park with an improved trail system.
  - ▶ Work with the Minnesota Department of Corrections on access on the north side of their property to connect the entrance road to the trail system.

## VALLEY VIEW PARK

## ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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- ▶ Update the existing playground equipment including providing new swings and slide.
  - ▶ Develop recreation and environmental education programs that would familiarize people with the park.
- VALLEY VIEW  
PARK  
(continued)**
- 

- ▶ Obtain a commitment from Xcel Energy on potential development of active and passive facilities within the A.S. King Plant ash disposal facility. Potential improvements could include:
    - a. Pavilion and Picnic Shelters
    - b. Amphitheater with Terraced Seating
    - c. Additional Trails
    - d. Observation Platform
    - e. Formal Gardens
    - f. Parking Areas
    - g. Playfields
- MOELTER /  
XCEL  
PROPERTY**
- 

- ▶ Explore expansion and improvements to the existing Brekke Park picnic shelter.
  - ▶ Develop a Summer skateboard course on the concrete surface of the hockey rink.
  - ▶ Promote the disc golf course as an additional new amenity in the park.
  - ▶ Explore potential sale of a portion of the property along Osgood Avenue for single family purposes.
  - ▶ Work with Washington County on construction of a tunnel under Osgood Avenue to provide safe access from Brekke Park to the trail and park system to the east.
  - ▶ Consider the development of a parking lot on the property adjacent to Osgood Avenue.
  - ▶ Develop a park shelter/gazebo on the property adjacent to Osgood Avenue.
  - ▶ Improve and update play equipment.
  - ▶ Install additional facilities in the eastern portion of the park including a picnic shelter, landforms, tricycle raceway and plantings.
  - ▶ Consider a trail with an east/west orientation along the existing parking lot and edge of the park.
  - ▶ Consider purchase, if available for sale, of the DNR managed property to the south of Brekke Park.
- BREKKE  
PARK**
-

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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- ▶ Consider the park as a linear park segment within the trail system, rather than a destination in itself.
- ▶ Create a landscape plan that provides additional trees and shrubs in the developed park area.
- ▶ Provide benches, picnic tables within the park.
- ▶ Plant prairie grass/native trees in that area to the west of the developed park area, and including the area west of Oldfield Avenue.
- ▶ Research and install non-conductive play stations within the park.
- ▶ Provide exercise stations within this area.
- ▶ Consider constructing permanent restroom structure.
- ▶ Install tree/fence screening along the northern boundary of the park.
- ▶ Consider eventual removal or replacement of fence as needed along the south boundary of park with neighborhood involvement.
- ▶ Provide lighting along trail and at the crosswalk at Oldfield Avenue.
- ▶ The City shall take park land dedication for potential redevelopment area north of Swager Park.

## SWAGER PARK

- 
- ▶ Upgrades to building or new construction.
  - ▶ Improve/enlarge parking lot.
  - ▶ Maintain/improve perennial planting slope.
  - ▶ Repair hockey boards.
  - ▶ Consider integrating Cover Park with Moelter/Xcel Property.

## COVER PARK

- 
- ▶ Provide a tot lot for ages five and under.
  - ▶ Make all recreational facilities equipment disability accessible.
  - ▶ Develop an amphitheater area to the north of the park shelter.
  - ▶ Provide irrigation for grass and tree plantings within the park.
  - ▶ Provide a small interactive water feature.
  - ▶ Add bike racks near the park shelter.
  - ▶ Provide connections to the Boutwells Historic Village area to the south of the park and explore programs and cross-utilization of both facilities.

## AUTUMN HILLS PARK and HAASE RECREATIONAL AREA

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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## GENERAL TRAIL ISSUES

- ▶ Restore prairie areas where possible along the trail system.
- ▶ Construct educational environmental kiosks and signs at Valley View Park, by City Hall, at Autumn Hills Park, and in other appropriate locations along the east/west trail corridor.
- ▶ Provide benches, resting areas, picnic tables, water fountains, and exercise courses along trails.
- ▶ Complete the striping of the southern edge of the Andersen Office Building parking lot with a trail lane and stripe a crosswalk over Osgood with signage between Osgood and Valley View Park.
- ▶ Separate active (or motorized) uses from passive (walking) use on City trail systems. Study whether certain motorized vehicles for elderly or disabled individuals may be allowed on the trail system.
- ▶ Improve trail signage where necessary to (1) denote the type of trail; (2) to give direction as to where they lead; and (3) to warn vehicles of trail crossings, on-street routes, etc. for safety purposes.
- ▶ Look at options and locations for lighting of trail corridors.
- ▶ Assure that all new trail construction is disability accessible.
- ▶ The size of trails involves two factors: width and length. The minimum recommended width for multi-use trails is eight feet, although it is beneficial in many situations to provide increased width depending upon the use and location. The length of trails should be varied to provide choices for users.
- ▶ The location of trails within the community may be constructed in one of three general ways: 1) on street, separated by a painted line, 2) off-street, but parallel to the road surface like a sidewalk, or 3) completely separated from the road and not necessarily parallel to it.
- ▶ Work with the City Engineer to define the right-of-way widths that are necessary to establish trails along designated roadways; for instances: an eight foot trail necessitates, at a minimum, a 20 foot easement and 10 foot level bench (construction) area. Many times additional temporary easement areas are needed to grade surrounding areas.
- ▶ Consider developing cross-country trails throughout the City.

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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- ▶ Link Oak Park Heights to Stillwater and Bayport by way of Mn/DOT's proposed trail on Highway 95.
- ▶ Provide interconnections with the Stillwater trail system whenever possible.
- ▶ Link Sunnyside to Mn/DOT's trail.
- ▶ Link Sunnyside to the bluff area by way of Lookout Trail.
- ▶ Find a way to link Lookout Trail to the west.
- ▶ Link the homes west of Osgood Avenue to the south and east and define the best trail routes along both sides of Osgood Avenue to a point north of Highway 36 (possibly 62<sup>nd</sup> Street).
- ▶ Provide access from the homes north of 62<sup>nd</sup> Street and east of Osgood Avenue to the area south of Highway 36.

## **NORTHERN OAK PARK HEIGHTS TRAIL ISSUES**

- 
- ▶ Mn/DOT shall provide a bike trail along the south side of Highway 36 from Osgood Avenue to Peller Avenue.
  - ▶ Provide trails on both sides of Osgood Avenue through the City.
  - ▶ Provide access for those residents east of Osgood Avenue to safely cross Osgood Avenue and access the mall, Swager Park, and Brekke Park.
  - ▶ Define where the designated crosswalk(s) should be south of Highway 36 on Osgood Avenue.
  - ▶ Provide linkages and trails throughout the A.S. King Plant ash disposal facility once it is capped.
  - ▶ Provide interconnection with the Bayport trail system whenever possible.

## **EASTERN OAK PARK HEIGHTS TRAIL ISSUES**

- 
- ▶ Continue to work with Andersen on an off-street trail on the south side of their parking lot.
  - ▶ Provide trails on both sides of Oakgreen Avenue.
  - ▶ Connect the Pondview Condominiums at the southwest corner of Highway 36 and Oakgreen Avenue to the rest of the trail system.
  - ▶ Provide safe crossings on Oakgreen Avenue.

## **OAKGREEN TO OSGOOD TRAIL ISSUES**

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

---

- ▶ Provide a trail on the north side of 58<sup>th</sup> Street from Oakgreen Avenue west to Memorial Avenue.
- ▶ Connect the Highway 36 frontage road to 58<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of Menard's.
- ▶ Complete interconnections between the commercial and residential areas to the 58<sup>th</sup> Street trail and the Xcel easements trail system.
- ▶ Link Baytown Township with the Oak Park Heights trail system.
- ▶ Provide interconnection with the Lake Elmo trail system wherever possible.

## WESTERN OAK PARK HEIGHTS TRAIL ISSUES

- 
- ▶ Define where trails should be along the entire length of Highway 36 frontage roads.
  - ▶ Cooperate with Mn/DOT to provide adequate crosswalks across Highway 36 to link with the Oak Park Heights and Stillwater trail systems.

## FRONTAGE ROADS/ HIGHWAY 36 TRAIL ISSUES

- 
- ▶ Identify a planning process for review and update of the Park and Trail Plan. Review may occur yearly, for instance, and comprehensive update of the plan may occur every five years. Future park and trail needs should be evaluated regularly by the Parks Commission in comparison to the plan.
  - ▶ Define the means by which public participation can be a regular part of the planning process (meetings, surveys, etc.).
  - ▶ Discuss the means by which to implement park/trail facilities (i.e., policies versus ordinances).
  - ▶ Determine under what circumstances volunteer efforts would or could be utilized to expand the City's recreational elements.
  - ▶ Consider including a map of the City park and trail areas, along with proposed routes, within a newsletter on a yearly basis to make citizens more aware of recreational opportunities.
  - ▶ Determine if and where the establishment of user fees may be appropriate.

## PLANNING ISSUES

# ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

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- ▶ Identify the acquisition means for parks/trails (i.e., dedication, purchase, eminent domain, donation) when each system is appropriate and what will be the priority process.
- ▶ Define the minimum width necessary for park access within a subdivision when located between two lots, as well as the screening/buffering and maintenance requirements.
- ▶ Discuss sources of funds to be utilized for acquisition of park and trail elements, i.e., dedication monies, capital improvement program, bond issuance, grant programs, etc.
- ▶ Establish who is responsible for establishment of approved park or trail areas within subdivisions (developer or City).

## ACQUISITION ISSUES

- 
- ▶ Discuss what amount of maintenance is possible at the current staff level and at what point additional staff persons would be needed to maintain the recreational system as it grows.
  - ▶ Define ways in which to minimize park and trail costs, i.e., construction of trails in conjunction with roadway improvements or at time of subdivision.
  - ▶ Develop a policy on snow removal from trails. A plan for removal should be coordinated with the Public Works Department which identifies high priority trails which demand immediate snow removal attention and those that are given attention only when time allows.
  - ▶ Determine if certain trails should not be maintained in the Winter but be promoted for cross-country ski use.

## DEVELOPMENT/ MAINTENANCE ISSUES

# GOALS AND POLICIES

---

## INTRODUCTION

Goals and policies reflect the community's direction as it relates to its recreation system and provides more detailed guidance on park and trail development. Park and trail goals and policies were developed through an analysis of the issues identified in the Issues Identification phase of the process. Additionally, the policies were adopted to reflect the community's direction in land use growth and the resulting need for additional park land and facilities.

As with any policy plan, it is important to read the statements together rather than as disjointed declarations. Although conceptual development may leave the map out of date, it is expected that policies are more enduring.

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- ▶ Protect, preserve and improve environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources in all parks and trail corridor areas.
  - ▶ Establish and maintain recreation facilities that maximize participation and overcome physical or economic limitations which may prevent equal opportunity, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, or place of residence.
  - ▶ Plan and maintain an attractive and diverse system of parks that address the park needs of all segments of the community.
  - ▶ Provide linkages within Oak Park Heights as well as to neighboring communities and regional systems by a safe and convenient multi-use trail/sidewalk system.
- 

## SYSTEM GOALS

- ▶ Develop an ongoing planning process for the establishment of parks and trails which responds to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Policies as well as those identified herein.
  - ▶ Identify present and future park/trail needs on a regular basis for evaluation by the Park Commission and City Council.
  - ▶ Review the established park/trail plans on a yearly basis to ensure that needs and priorities are up to date.
- 

## SYSTEM POLICIES

# GOALS AND POLICIES

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- ▶ Prepare a master plan for each component of the park/trail system to be used as the basis for development.
- ▶ Promote public participation in the planning process via the Park Commission hosting forums for open discussion of issues, by newsletter, and the City's website.
- ▶ Identify the means by which to implement park/trail administration and operations (i.e., by the Park Commission and City Council policies, procedures, and ordinances).

## SYSTEM POLICIES (continued)

- 
- ▶ Create and maintain an attractive, diverse, and interesting system of urban parks/trails.
  - ▶ Create a City-wide park and trail system designed to minimize conflicts between pedestrians and motor vehicles.
  - ▶ Minimize park and trail construction costs by constructing trails in conjunction with State, County, and City street improvements.
  - ▶ Work with Mn/DOT on trail/sidewalk connections and construction as part of the St. Croix River Crossing and Highway 36 improvements.
  - ▶ Parks and trails are constructed on a priority basis, according to capital improvement plan/available funds with the trail priorities as follows:
    - Trails along major streets which focus on pedestrian and bicycle safety and which provide direct access to City/regional destinations and parks.
    - Trails that will serve the most intensely used areas.
    - Trail construction within existing parks and upon municipal property.
    - Trail inclusion within new park/subdivision development.
    - Completion of links between existing trails and other communities.
  - ▶ Park priorities may be:
    - Establishment of parks in undeveloped areas or newer parts of the City.
    - Creation of neighborhood and community-wide parks.
    - Upgrade/improve upon existing park equipment.
  - ▶ Utilize utility rights-of-way for trails or linear parks.
  - ▶ Encourage the private sector to provide recreational opportunities/facilities.
  - ▶ Provide support facilities in conjunction with trail development.
  - ▶ Fully organize and outline new recreation programs prior to initiation and implementation.
  - ▶ Determine where the establishment of user fees is appropriate to combat recreation costs.
  - ▶ Determine under what circumstances unsolicited gifts and donations will be accepted if they are free of obligations or potential future impacts.

## PROGRAMMING/ DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

## GOALS AND POLICIES

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- ▶ Determine under what circumstances volunteer efforts will be utilized to expand the City's recreational elements.
- ▶ Active use recreation areas should be designed for year-round use with an established system of maintenance.
- ▶ Park and playground buildings should be compatible with surrounding urban or rural activities with regard to scale, design, color, setbacks, and materials.
- ▶ Park and trail development should minimize impacts on adjacent properties through provisions for, but not limited to:
  - Adequate off-street parking.
  - Appropriate orientation and location of buildings and activity areas.
  - Screening, buffering, and landscaping.
  - Adequate setbacks and physical separation.
- ▶ Coordinate facility development with the needs of community residents, Parks Commission services, athletic associations, civic groups, etc.
- ▶ Maximize park accessibility by City residents to best serve the area.
- ▶ Coordinate yearly park events.
- ▶ Consider the long term costs of maintenance and operation in a facility's design and development.
- ▶ Preserve existing physical site amenities (natural or man-made) and encourage the establishment of new site amenities when planning and developing park areas.

### PROGRAMMING/ DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (continued)

- 
- ▶ Establish park and trail facilities which provide recreational as well as functional uses.
  - ▶ Provide varying types of trails to be used as the basis of planning and development for the multiple use trail system, defined as a comprehensive trail system for the integration of a variety of compatible non-motorized trail uses (pedestrian, bicycles, roller skating, cross country skiing, etc.).
  - ▶ Grades of trails should not exceed five percent to ensure disability accessibility or eight to ten percent for all others.
  - ▶ Design and construct trails according to the standards established by the National Park and Recreation Association, the State Department of Transportation, and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (see Trail Design Standards attached herein).
  - ▶ The inclusion of environmental sensitive areas (river frontage, native prairie, bluffs, unique vegetative associations, etc.) into park or trail facilities should be considered to contribute to the overall recreation system.

### FACILITY PURPOSE AND DESIGN POLICIES

## GOALS AND POLICIES

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- ▶ Land for parks will be acquired, planned and developed according to the Park Classification System contained herein which specify the appropriate sizes, locations, service areas and equipment to best serve the City.
- ▶ Prior to the development of each park area, a design plan will be prepared which shows the types, locations and sizes of proposed facilities and estimated costs.
- ▶ Prior to the development of each park area, a design plan will be prepared which shows the types, locations and sizes of proposed facilities and estimated costs.
- ▶ Park facilities and buildings should be compatible with surrounding urban or rural activities with regard to scale, design, color, setbacks, and materials.
- ▶ Maximize park accessibility by City residents to best serve the area in which the facility is located by requiring either vehicular or pedestrian access to both (depending on the size and classification of park).
- ▶ Potentially develop dual-use corridors incorporating bicycle and pedestrian corridors with ski touring or sledding routes during the snow season.
- ▶ Maintain all trails in good repair and ensure that designated trail segments are kept open and clear of snow throughout the year unless designated as winter use trails.
- ▶ Consideration shall be given to safety, visibility, and emergency access into parks when acquiring land or planning for their development.
- ▶ Develop a policy for motorized vehicle use in City parks or on trail areas.
- ▶ Bicycles shall only be allowed upon paved surfaces within the City as designated by ordinance. Mountain biking is allowed on trails designated for this purpose.
- ▶ Develop, and update as needed, policies for mountain bike and in-line skate usage.
- ▶ Define the types of parks which exist and are to be established in the City and develop policies for each (see Park Design Standards herein).

**FACILITY  
PURPOSE AND  
DESIGN  
POLICIES  
(continued)**

## GOALS AND POLICIES

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- ▶ Acquire park/trail facilities to satisfy the recreational and transportation needs of the residents on both a neighborhood and community-wide basis.
- ▶ Identify means for park/trail acquisition, i.e., dedication, purchase, eminent domain, donation.
- ▶ Identify means for establishment of park/trail facilities within subdivisions, i.e., outlots, easements, etc.
- ▶ Ensure that the proper right-of-way widths are dedicated for sidewalks and trails during the subdivision process (see development standards contained herein).
- ▶ Identify sources of funds to be utilized for acquisition, i.e., trail dedication fund, capital improvement program, bond issuance, grant programs, etc.
- ▶ Establish who is responsible for park/trail construction within subdivisions.
- ▶ Determine to what extent wetlands, drainageways, floodplain areas, etc. should be accepted as part of park and trail dedication within subdivisions.
- ▶ Besides the standard programs and facilities typically recognized by the City, consideration should be given to the following areas:
  - Areas for nature preservation.
  - Cultural enrichment.
  - Facilities for the disabled.
  - Public activity areas and facilities in employment centers.
  - Organized sports and recreational activities.
  - Teen programs and facilities.
  - Senior citizen programs and facilities.

### ACQUISITION POLICIES

- 
- ▶ Provide for the efficient maintenance and operation of clean, orderly, controlled, safe, and attractive parks and trailways. Park maintenance and operation shall safeguard the physical condition of trailways from deterioration or damage due to weather, vandalism, or other natural or human causes.
  - ▶ Develop a clear and concise system of park and trail graphics and signage that direct people along trails and into parks to specific points of interest.
  - ▶ Define specific park and trail safety rules.

### MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION POLICIES

## GOALS AND POLICIES

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- ▶ Develop ways in which to promote citizen interest and involvement in the City's park and trail system.
- ▶ Continue to update and distribute the pamphlet that shows the trail routes, parks, service and public facilities.
- ▶ Monitor characteristics of use, safety, and other factors periodically throughout the park and trail system.
- ▶ Provide facilities/services to all residents of the community.
- ▶ Develop ways to organize community recreation programs and facilities to maximize participation and overcome physical or economic limitations which may prevent equal opportunity, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, or place of residence.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY ISSUES POLICIES**

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

The Oak Park Heights Master Park and Trail Plan is intended to provide guidance to the City for continued development and improvements of the City's park, trail and walkway system. The park facilities master plan provides lists of improvements for the existing parks and identifies recreational facilities that could be added throughout the community.

The trail portion of the plan indicates components that can be made to increase connections with neighboring cities and provides an overall plan for off-street and on-street trails that will connect all parts of the City. The trail system should not only ensure public access to community amenities, but will also provide recreational opportunities for all age groups and safer access throughout the City. The trail system, in connection with regional and local trail systems that are in place or planned, could be used as a marketing tool for the community as well as to bring visitors to Oak Park Heights.

The Master Park and Trail Plan is based upon information gathered and analyzed in the Inventory, Issues Identification, and Goals and Policies sections of the plan. The following paragraphs detail the park, trail and walkway plans for the community to pursue in the next 10 years.

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## PARKS PLANS

Valley View Park is valued for its dense vegetation, variation in topography, and wetlands. The master plan proposes to maintain and enhance the natural aesthetics of the park. Improvements to the park focus on making the park more visible in the community and St. Croix Valley, more accessible, and as a continued resource for environmental education.

### VALLEY VIEW PARK

The proposed improvements to the park, as listed below, will maintain and update the facilities that are already present. Creating a more inviting entry with landscaping will more clearly identify the park at its entrance on Osgood Avenue. Once people enter the park, signage identifying park boundaries and facilities could aid visitors in locating picnic areas and trails. Currently, many people are unaware of the lower portion of the park due to lack of signage and the physical separation from the upper portion of the park. The amount of recreational area will increase substantially in this area when Xcel closes and caps the A.S. King Plant Ash Landfill in 2011. Additional discussion of that area is as follows.

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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A list of potential improvements to Valley View Park is as follows. A map of the improvements is found on a following page.

## VALLEY VIEW PARK (continued)

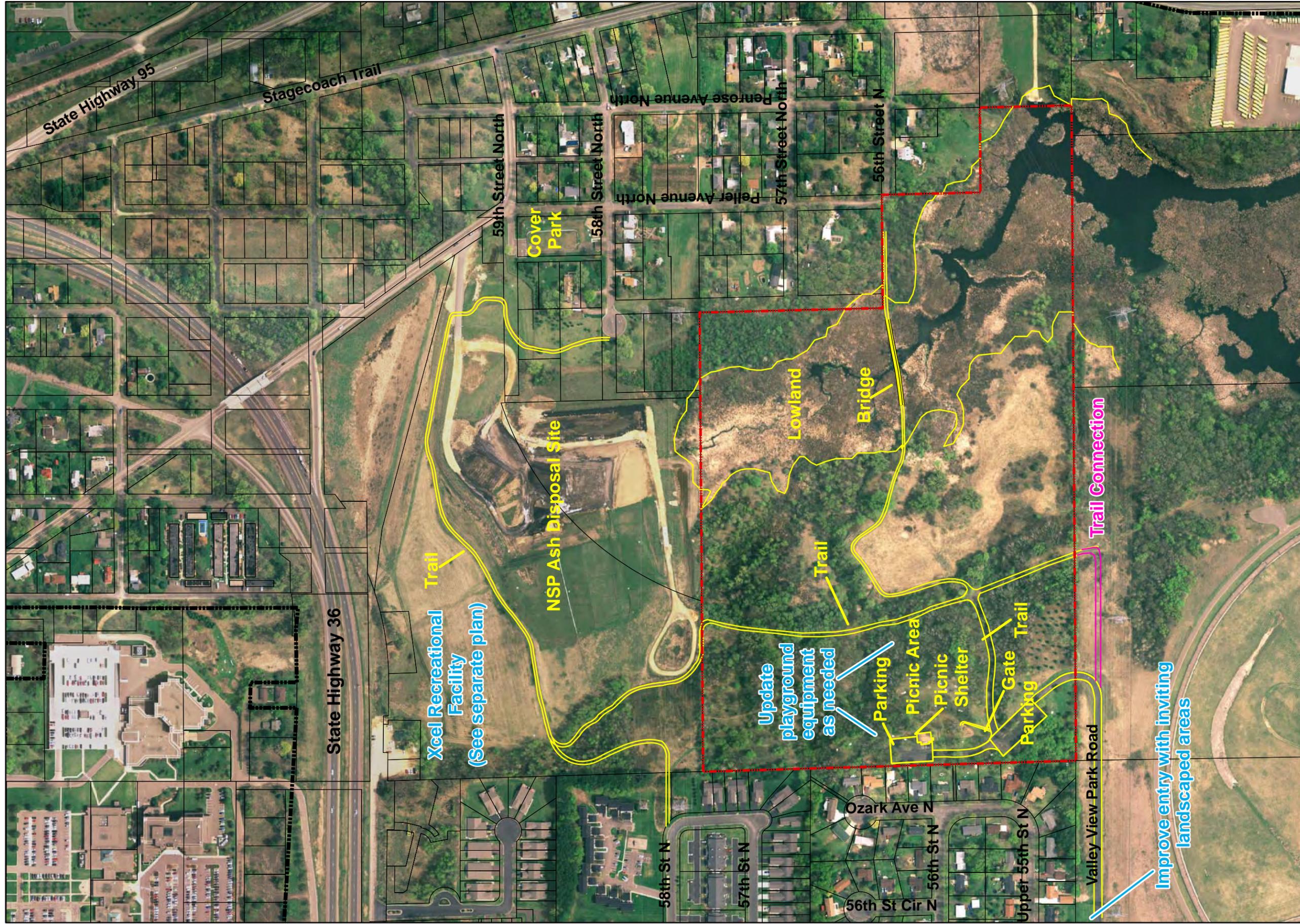
1. Create an inviting landscaped entry into the park.
  2. Work with Washington County on providing a pedestrian tunnel under Osgood Avenue to provide access from Brekke Park to the entrance of Valley View Park.
  3. Work with the Minnesota Department of Corrections on access through the north side of their property to connect the entrance road to the trail system.
  4. Upgrade/maintain the park shelter and playground equipment including the swings and slide, as needed.
  5. Provide signage to create a better understanding of the amenities of the park and how to access them.
- 

The area directly to the north of Valley View Park and south of Highway 36 contains the A.S. King Plant Ash Landfill. Under the current permit, the landfill will be closed and capped by 2011. A system of trails that are open to the public already connect the open area with the neighborhoods to the west, Valley View Park to the south, and to Cover Park and the neighborhoods to the east.

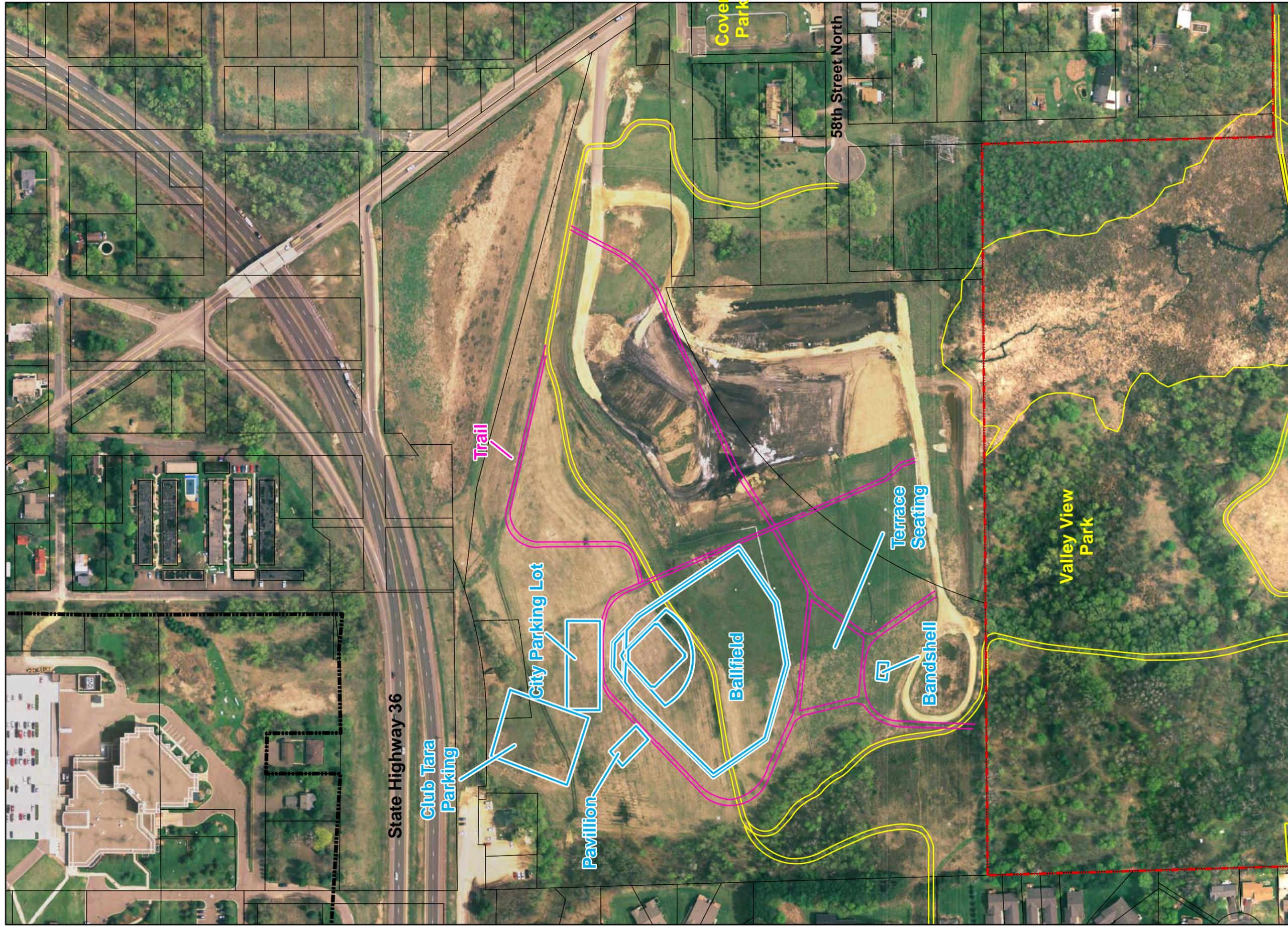
## MOELTER / XCEL PROPERTY

Xcel has agreed to work with the City on the development of a recreational area in the northwest portion of the site. This would be interconnected with new trails to provide access from all areas of the City. To date, the final plan of the recreational area has not been agreed to by the City and Xcel. The plan on a following page indicates the improvements that have been discussed. A summary of the improvements is as follows:

1. Pavilion/picnic shelters.
2. Parking areas for pavilion and Club Tara.
3. Playfields for soccer, baseball, and softball.
4. Amphitheater with terraced seating.
5. Additional trails.
6. Formal garden areas.

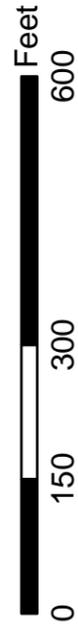


		<b>City of Oak Park Heights</b> <b>Park &amp; Trail Plan</b> PROPOSED PLAN <b>Valley View Park</b>	
<b>Existing Park Elements</b> Trails (Yellow line) Features (Yellow outline) Boundary (Red dashed line)	<b>Proposed Park Elements</b> Trails (Pink line) Features (Blue outline)	0 250 500 1,000 <b>Feet</b>	N 
		Source: Bonestroo Engineering, The City of Oak Park Heights, & Northwest Associated Consultants, December, 2008.	
		Page 31	



**Existing Park Elements Proposed Park Elements**

- Features
- Features
- Trail
- Trail
- Boundary



**City of Oak Park Heights**

**Park & Trail Plan**

PROPOSED PLAN

**Moelter/Xcel Property**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
Northwest Associated Consultants.  
January, 2009.



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# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

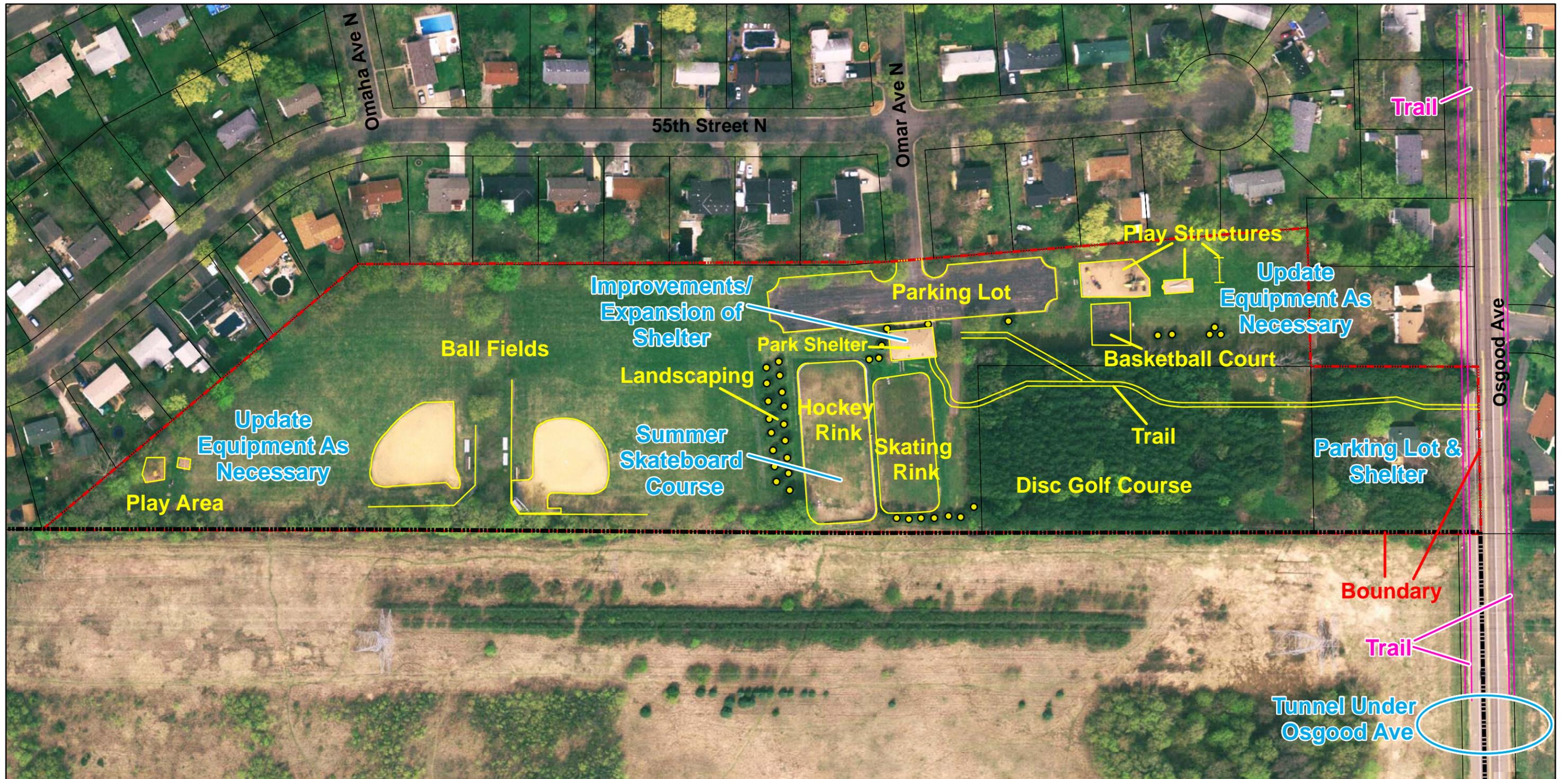
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## BREKKE PARK

Brekke Park is used extensively for field games and as a playground for toddler age and older children. The proposed master plan proposes maintenance and minor improvements to the existing park as well as highlights plans for the new park area between Brekke Park and Osgood Avenue. Previous park plans included proposals for expansion of passive and active recreational uses on the DNR managed land south of the park. If the land becomes available for purchase, the City would consider acquiring it for recreational open space uses.

The map on the following page indicates the planned improvements. A summary of the improvements is as follows:

1. Study potential replacement or improvements to the existing picnic shelter.
2. Develop a Summer skateboard course on the concrete surface of the hockey rink.
3. Install additional facilities in the eastern portion of the park including a picnic shelter, landforms, tricycle raceway, and plantings.
4. Upgrade existing play equipment as necessary.
5. Work with Washington County on construction of a pedestrian tunnel under Osgood Avenue to provide safe access from Brekke Park to Valley View Park and the neighborhoods to the east.
6. Consider the development of a parking lot, picnic shelter/gazebo on the property adjacent to Osgood Avenue.
7. Consider sale of extra property on a portion of the property along Osgood Avenue for single family residential purposes.

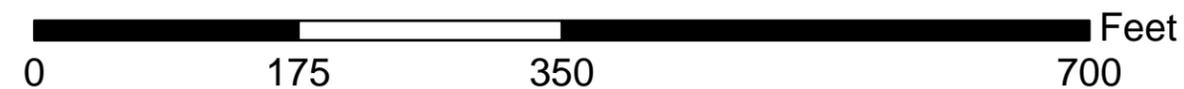


**Existing Park Elements**

- Features
- Trail
- Boundary

**Proposed Park Elements**

- Features
- Trail



**City of Oak Park Heights**



**NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.**

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**City of Oak Park Heights  
Park & Trail Plan**

PROPOSED PLAN

**Brekke Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
 The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 January, 2009.

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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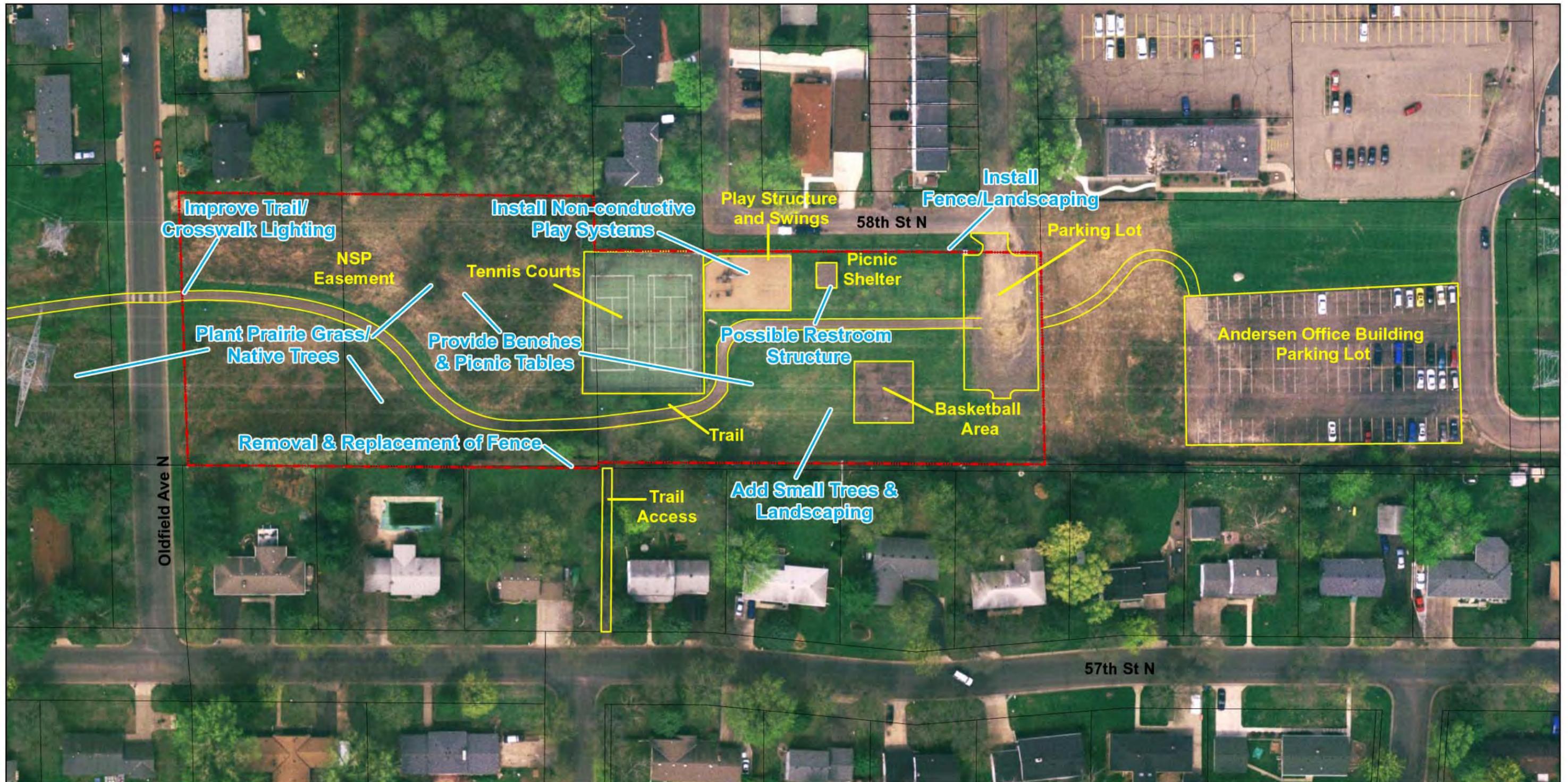
Swager Park serves as a linear neighborhood playground along a trail that is within an Xcel power line easement. The trail is now completed from Oldfield Avenue to the Anderson office building parking lot.

## SWAGER PARK

Overall the main objective for this park is to keep it well maintained and serve the surrounding neighborhood. The City has considered a permanent restroom structure in the park and that continues with this plan. Adding more trees, prairie grass plantings, and improved fencing/screening for the adjacent neighborhoods is also a priority.

The map on the following page indicates the proposed improvements. A summary of those improvements is found as follows:

1. Consider constructing a permanent restroom structure.
2. Provide more benches and picnic tables in the park.
3. Develop a landscape plan that provides additional trees and shrubs in the developed park area.
4. Plant prairie grass/native trees in that area to the west of the developed park, and the area west of Oldfield Avenue.
5. Research and install non-conductive play structures in the park.
6. Provide exercise stations along the trail.
7. Provide fence/landscaping as a screen along the northern boundary of the park.
8. Consider eventual removal and possible replacement of the fence as needed along the south boundary of the park. The neighborhood shall be involved.
9. Provide lighting along the trail at the crosswalk at Oldfield Avenue.
10. The City would require park land dedication for the potential redevelopment area north of Swager Park.



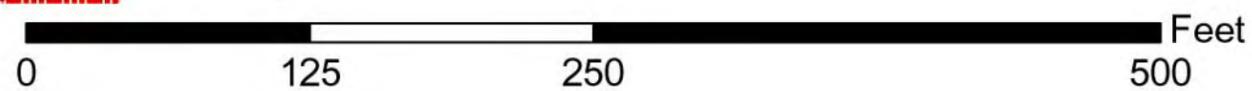
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**Existing Park Elements**

- Trail
- Features
- Boundary

**Proposed Park Elements**

- Trail
- Features



**City of Oak Park Heights  
 Park & Trail Plan**

PROPOSED PLAN

**Swager Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
 The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 January, 2009.

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

---

Cover Park is the smallest park in the City and provides an active area for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. Improvements to the park are constrained by the small supply of open space available at the site. The existing warming house for the hockey rink could be expanded or rebuilt to serve as year round restrooms and even allow for a covered picnic area. Due to the proximity to the Xcel property, combining this park with the Moelter/Xcel Property may be an option for the City to consider. The map on the following page indicates the planned improvements. A listing of these improvements is as follows:

## COVER PARK

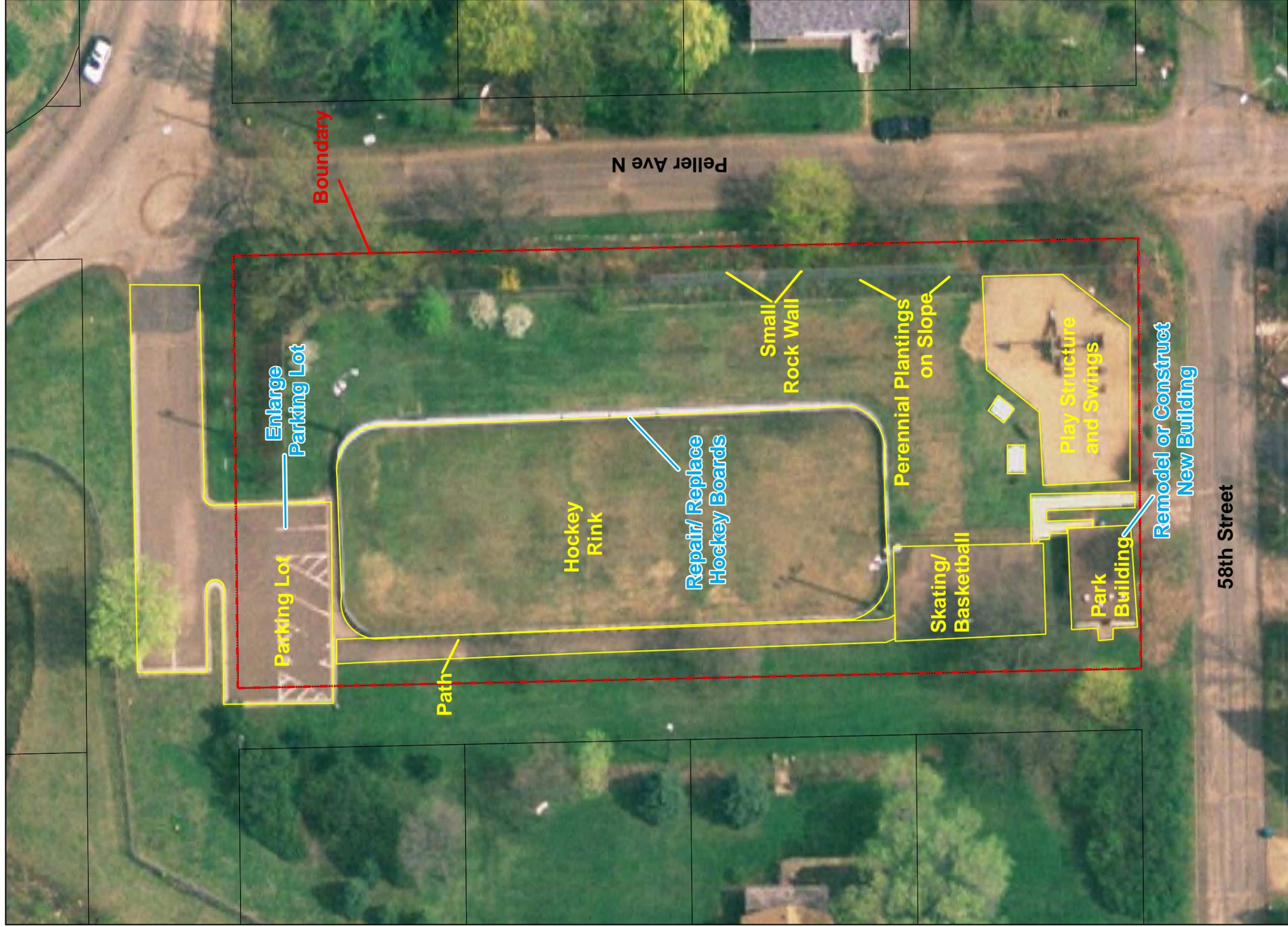
1. Upgrade and expand the building or construct new. Add covered picnic area and year round restrooms.
2. Improve and enlarge the existing parking lot.
3. Maintain and improve the existing perennial plant slope on the east side of the park.
4. Maintain and repair the hockey boards.
5. Consider integrating the park with the Moelter/Xcel Property.

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Autumn Hills Park and Haase Recreational Area serve as a neighborhood park and open space that is surrounded by the Boutwells Landing senior community. With completion of the new park shelter and restrooms in 2007, much of the major improvements are completed at this park. The City has identified additional projects to complete the park and to provide recreational programs and cross utilization of the facilities at Boutwells Landing. The map on a following page indicates the planned improvements. A listing of these improvements is as follows:

## AUTUMN HILLS PARK and HAASE RECREATIONAL AREA

1. Provide a tot lot for ages five and under.
2. Make all recreational facilities and equipment disability accessible.
3. Develop an amphitheater area to the north of the park shelter.
4. Provide a small interactive water feature.
5. Add bike racks near the park shelters.
6. Provide irrigation for grass and tree plantings in the park.
7. Provide connection to the Boutwells Landing facilities including the Historic Village area to the south of the park to include programs and cross utilization of both facilities.



**Existing Park Elements**    **Proposed Park Elements**

Features   
  Features

Boundary



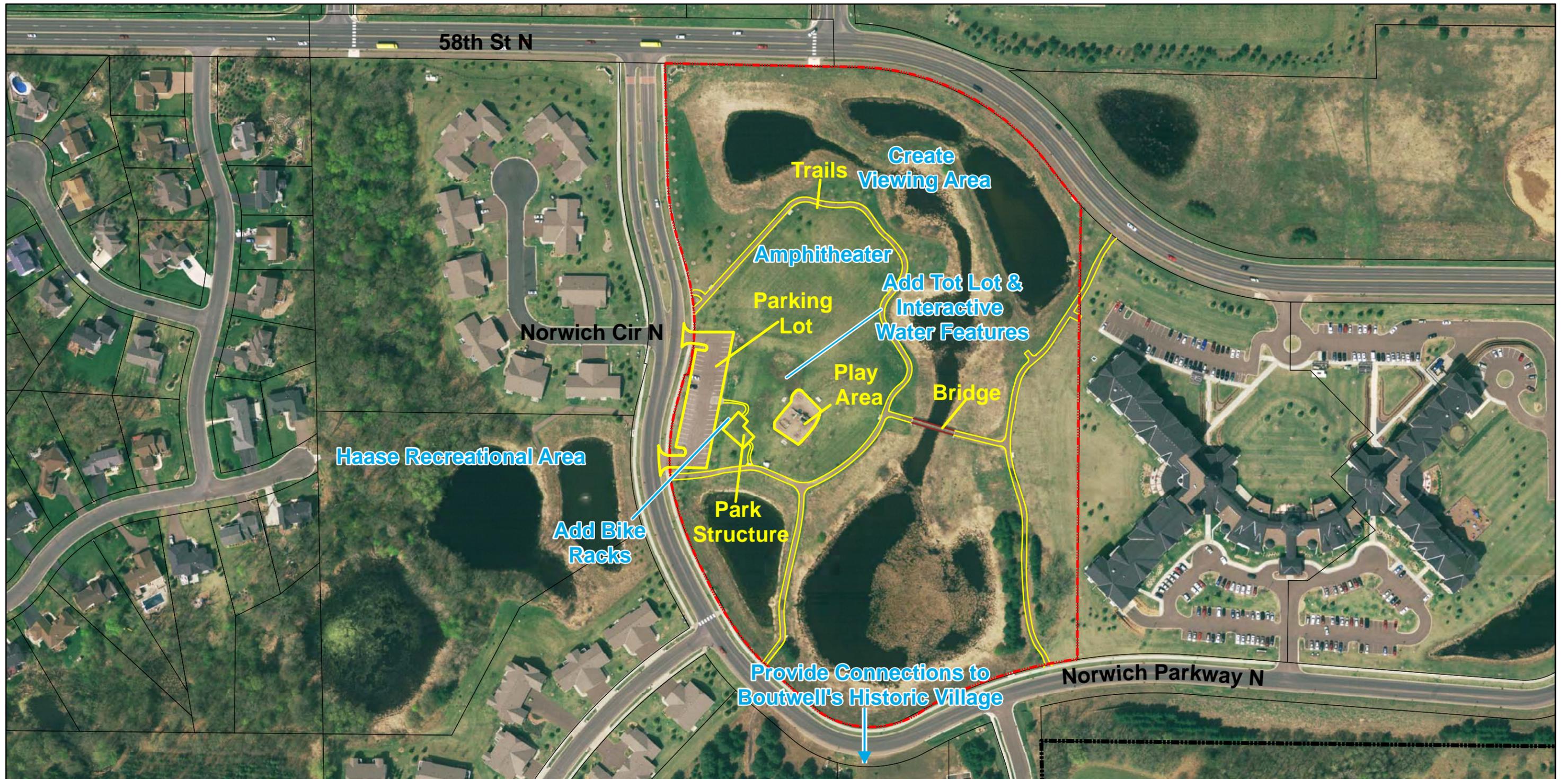
**City of Oak Park Heights  
Park & Trail Plan**

PROPOSED PLAN  
**Cover Park**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
Northwest Associated Consultants.  
December, 2008.



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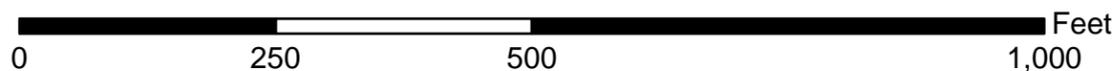


**Existing Park Elements**

-  Features
-  Trails
-  Boundary

**Proposed Park Elements**

-  Features
-  Trails



# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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## PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The park lands within Oak Park Heights should be planned under a park classification system as part of a proposed Master Park and Trail Plan. Using the identification system to program the level of development for each of the parks will assist the City in planning for and scheduling the funding for completion of the facilities. Also, planning for types of park facilities and open space will maximize the use of park dedication funds.

A park classification system is intended to serve as a guide to planning, not as a blueprint. Sometimes more than one component may occur within the same site, particularly with regard to a specialized use within a larger park. Based upon national standards, a park system, at minimum, should be comprised of a core system of park lands with a total of approximately 10 acres of open space for 1,000 population. The City of Oak Park Heights offers more than 22 acres of park land for 1,000 population, a major benefit to the residents of the community. A listing and short description of park classifications is as follows:

Neighborhood Playground	
Use	Designed to provide mainly passive activities with some active short-term activities
Service Area	Neighborhood size of 1,000 to 5,000 persons, within ¼ to ½ mile
Population Served	Focus upon ages 5 to 15, with informal recreation for groups of all ages
Desirable Size	1 to 5 acres
Acres/1,000 Population	1.0 – 2.0 acres
Site Characteristics	Open space for spontaneous play, play areas for both pre-school and school age children, multiple-use paved areas, limited field games, small court games, ice rinks, within easy walking/biking distance
Existing Playgrounds	Swagger and Cover Parks

Neighborhood Parks	
Use	Area for designated active and passive recreation areas
Service Area	½ to 1 mile radius to serve a population of up to 5,000 persons (a large neighborhood)
Population Served	Focus upon ages 5 and over with emphasis upon ages 5 through 18
Desirable Size	5 to 10 acres
Acres/1,000 Population	1.5 – 2.0 acres
Site Characteristics	Suited for multi-use recreation development, easily accessible to neighborhood population, geographically centered with safe walking and bike access, may include school facilities
Existing Parks	Autumn Hills Park

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

Community Playfields	
Use	A large recreation area with primarily athletic facilities designed to serve older children and adults
Service Area	1 to 1½ miles for urban areas/unlimited for rural communities, a minimum of one per community up to 30,000 maximum population
Population Served	All persons with focus upon ages over 20
Desirable Size	10 to 25 acres
Acres/1,000 Population	2.0 – 5.0 acres
Site Characteristics	Athletic complex including lighting court and field games, community center or indoor recreation facility, swimming pool, ice rink, capacity for special events, must include support elements such as rest rooms, drinking water, parking and lighting
Existing Playfields	Brekke Park

Community Parks	
Use	Area of diverse environmental quality which may include areas suited to intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes, as well as passive type areas, depends largely upon the site location, suitability and community need
Service Area	Several neighborhoods, 1 to 4 mile radius for urban areas/unlimited for rural communities
Population Served	All ages, toddler to retiree, entire community for cities up to 25,000
Desirable Size	20 to 35+ acres
Acres/1,000 Population	5.0 – 10.0 acres
Site Characteristics	Provides for a combination of intensive and non-intensive development ranging from play equipment to trails, may include natural features, such as water bodies or forested land, must include support elements such as rest rooms, drinking water, parking and lighting
Existing Parks	Valley View Park, Moelter/Xcel Property in conjunction with Valley View will also be a community park

Natural / Conservancy Areas	
Use	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreational use as a secondary objective
Service Area	No applicable standard
Desirable Size	Sufficient to protect the resource and accommodate recreational uses
Acres/1,000 Population	Variable
Site Characteristics	Variable, depending upon the resource being protected
Existing Parks	Valley View (portions of this park are left in a natural state)

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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Schools	
Use	Facilities developed in association with schools which are intended for children's educational and recreational instruction, which on a secondary basis, provide opportunities for community residents, this shared usage is positive in that it allows for daytime usage by students, evening, weekend, and summer usage by all
Schools	Oak Park Elementary (in Stillwater), Stillwater Area High School, and the Environmental Learning Center
Facilities	<p>Oak Park Elementary has three small baseball fields, a field that is sometimes used for soccer, a small basketball court, and a playground.</p> <p>Stillwater Area High School has facilities for softball, baseball, football, soccer, tennis and track.</p> <p>The Environmental Learning Center provides educational training regarding environmental topics.</p>

# MASTER PARK AND TRAIL PLAN

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## REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

The map on the following page indicates the regional park and trail systems in Washington County that surround Oak Park Heights. The City will work with Washington County and Mn/DOT in providing trail connections from the City's system of trails. The City will also look to provide trail connections and encourage the development of the Minnesota Zephyr rail line into a trail that would connect Oak Park Heights to Stillwater.

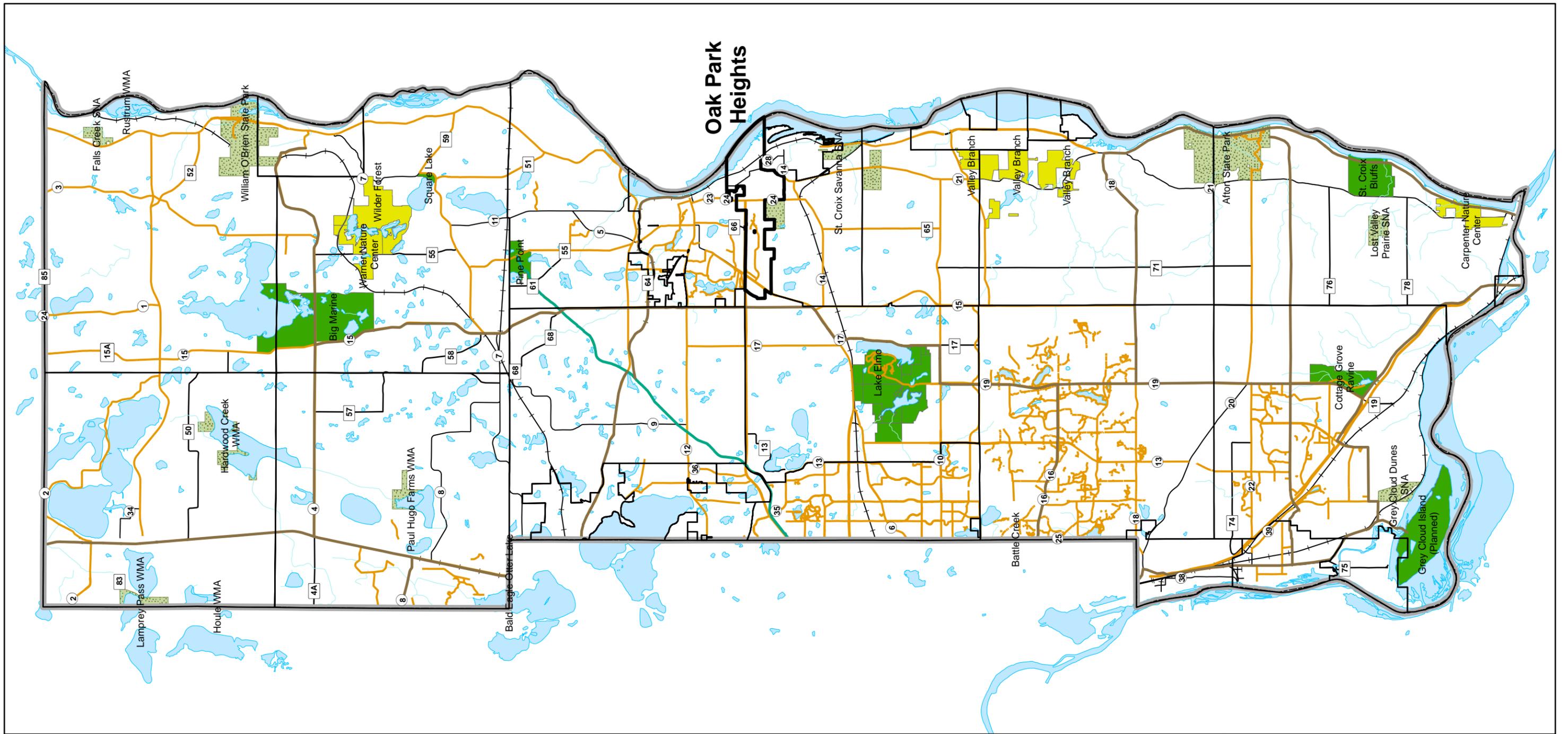
## TRAILS

The Proposed Parks and Trails Map has been created as part of the update to the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan. The Issues Identification process indicated that there is a strong desire to continue the interconnection of neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas, public facilities, and parks. City staff has indicated that trails will be added as part of any City street projects, where possible, and as part of new and redeveloped commercial projects. The City will also work with Mn/DOT and Washington County on roadway upgrade projects, especially as it relates to the St. Croix River Crossing and Highway 36 improvements for trail development. The City has represented proposed Mn/DOT trails as a result of the St. Croix River Crossing on the Proposed Park and Trails Map. By including this information the City does not imply any approvals to Mn/DOT or in any way endorse their plans.

The trail plan will provide for the interconnection of neighborhoods, parks, schools and commercial areas. Emphasis shall be placed on a trail system that connects all areas of the community and interconnects to regional trail systems. The map on a following page indicates the existing and proposed trail system that includes both on-street and separated segments.

Development of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian trail system plan as part of a park and trail system plan for the community should incorporate the following:

1. Include trail routes within and interconnections to the areas planned for annexation.
2. Connections to and linking neighborhoods with the commercial and industrial/ business park areas of the City.
3. Trail routes along major streets that have the most direct access to primary pedestrian destinations.
4. Where trails will connect neighborhoods to schools.
5. Where trails will serve commuter destinations.
6. Where trails lead to parks, playfields and other recreational facilities.
7. Where trails will link together separate portions of the sidewalks and trail systems with each other.
8. Where trails provide access to future regional trails.



# Oak Park Heights



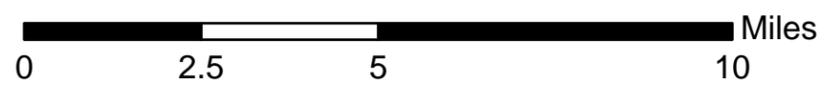
**NAC** NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.  
 4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55422  
 Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2561 planners@nacplanning.com

## Existing Parks & Open Space

- Regional Parks
- State Parks
- Private Non-Profit Parks

## Bikeways & Regional Trails

- Regional Trails (Existing and Planned)
- State Trails
- Bikeways

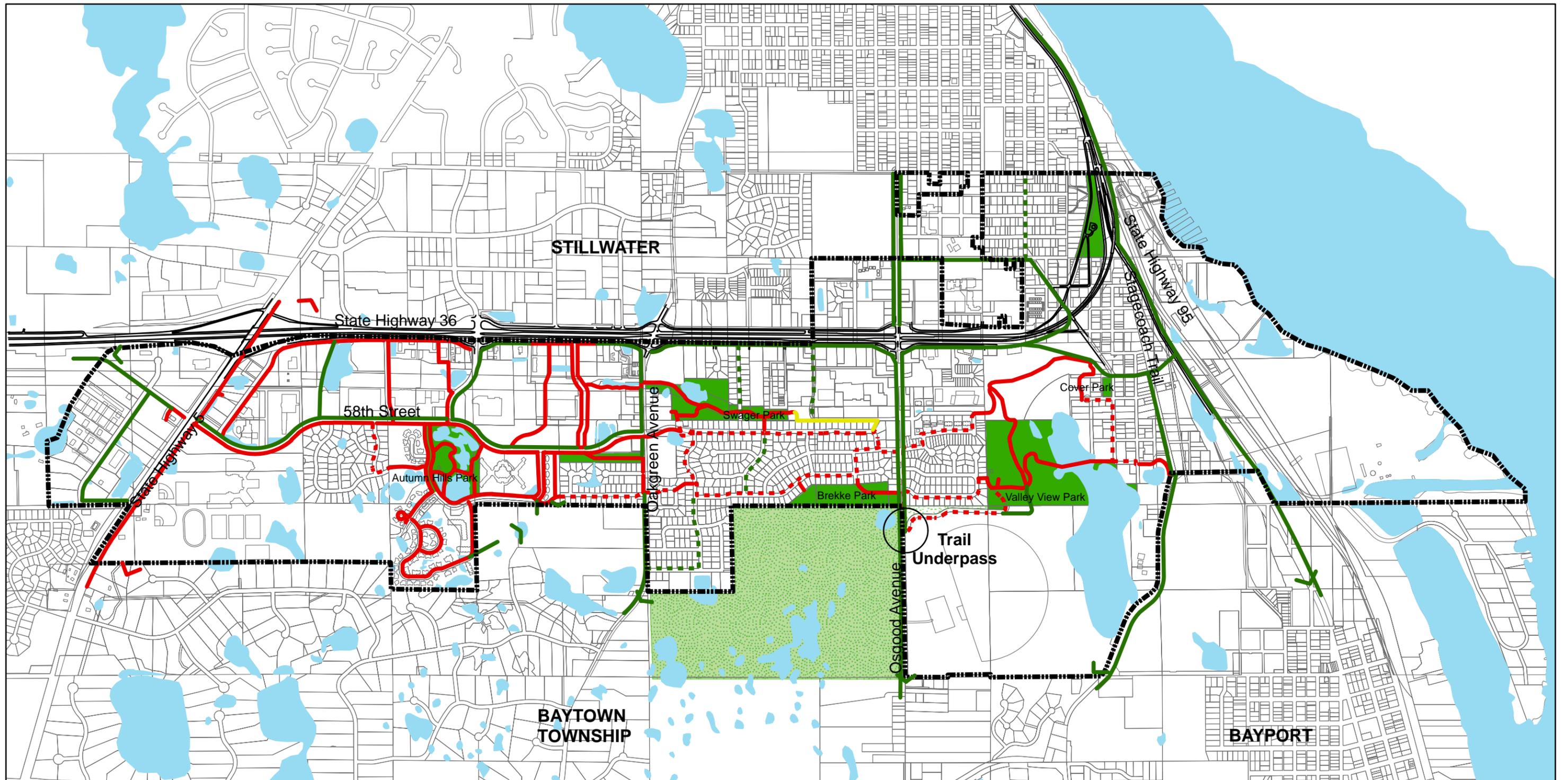


## City of Oak Park Heights Park & Trail Plan

EXISTING

### Washington County Parks, Trails, & Open Space

Sources: Metropolitan Council - [www.datafinder.com](http://www.datafinder.com),  
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.  
 December, 2008.

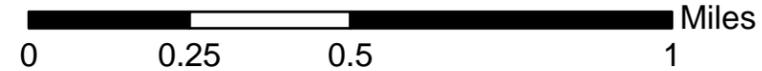


**Parks & Bikeways**

- Existing - Separated Off Street Trail
- - - Existing - On Street Trail Route
- Proposed - Separated Off Street Trail
- - - Proposed - On Street Trail Route
- Other (Private)
- City Parks
- Regional Parks
- Open Space
- Water
- City Limits



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**City of Oak Park Heights  
 Park & Trail Plan**

**Proposed Parks & Trails Map**

Source: Bonestroo Engineering,  
 The City of Oak Park Heights, &  
 Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 December, 2008.

# IMPLEMENTATION

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The final phase of the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan establishes a process of projecting park and trail improvements, setting priorities, and scheduling for their provision and financing over a period of time. This process produces a long-range guide for recreation and requires that the City look toward the future to anticipate capital expenditures and to provide revenues to meet them. This section does not take the place of a capital improvements plan in that precise costs are beyond the scope of this document, however, the City must continue to update its five year priority list, analyzing the financial situation, and obtaining cost estimates for the desired improvements.

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For the most part, it is this plan's intention to provide parks and trails which will not burden the City with high acquisition and construction costs. Land and right-of-way for trail construction will be acquired as part of the dedication process of a subdivision or as an improvement to be included as roads are built or upgraded wherever possible. Due to the obstacles that may arise through acquisition of a trail right-of-way, the Comprehensive Park and Trail System Plan provides only a general layout of trail routes and proposed park locations which may be altered at the time of actual acquisition and development.

## **PARK AND TRAIL DEDICATION FEES**

The City has created a formula contained within the Subdivision Ordinance that provides an equitable system of park dedication based upon the provisions of State Statutes. This plan does not foresee the need for additional park land. Of the vacant land supply in the City, most has been subdivided and the park dedication has been paid. There are a limited number of land parcels where a park dedication will need to be paid.

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Financing the park and trail improvements will be an ongoing challenge for the City. The acquisition and development of the park and trail system will not occur without adequate funding and taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. The financing of the park and trail system will occur one of two ways – either by raising revenue or incurring debt. Revenues provide the means to make investments in the park system and can be saved to finance improvements. Borrowing money provides upfront funding and pledges to repay the debt. A brief description of potential funding sources is provided as follows:

## **OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS**

# IMPLEMENTATION

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## **Property Taxes**

The City has the ability to raise property taxes to help to pay for the park and trail system. The use of property tax may be limited by overall financial management of the City or by State imposed levy limitations.

## **OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS (continued)**

## **Special Assessments**

The ability of a city to levy assessments for park improvements is governed by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429. This statute defines eligible park improvements as “acquire, improve and equip parks, open space areas, playgrounds, and recreational facilities within or without the corporate limits.” A special assessment represents the portion of a park improvement costs levied against benefiting properties. The special assessment tool must be reviewed carefully to identify whether historic park dedication fees have been collected and applied to the benefiting properties to ensure that owners are not charged twice for park and trail improvements. Also, an analysis would need to be done to identify which properties receive benefit from the park and trail improvement as there must be a rational nexus between the charge and benefit received. The typical method would be to levy an equal assessment on each benefiting parcel. The assessment could be for all or any portion of the improvements. At least 20 percent of the costs of the improvement must be assessed to gain the authority to issue bonds. If less than 100 percent of the costs are assessed, then park dedication fees, property taxes, or other available revenues would be needed to pay back the debt.

## **Referendum – Voter Approved Bonds**

The City may place a referendum on voter ballots for consideration by the public to support park and trail improvements. Voter approved debt service levies are spread on the market value of property. This funding mechanism is typically utilized for major improvements such as a community center, athletic complex or to acquire high amenity park and recreation areas.

## **Grants**

The City should continue to apply for available grants for development of its Park and Trail System Plan through agencies such as, but not limited to, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Washington County, and any other agencies.

# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Private Donations

The City should establish a list of facilities that can be provided to the public, charitable institutions, on the City website, etc., identifying park and trail needs and the process the public can use to donate revenue or equipment. Additionally, the Park Commission could proactively contact private foundations such as The Trust for Public Land, 1,000 Friends of Minnesota, McKnight Foundation, Metro Greenways, and others to identify potential funding sources for the community park and trail system.

## OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS (continued)

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Capital improvements programming provides an instrument for carrying out the objectives and recommendations of the Oak Park Heights and Trail System Plan. Through prioritization of five year capital needs for the City's park and recreational facilities and identifying the amount of money available to finance the improvements during this period, the City will be able to determine which improvements are necessary in terms of their ability to pay. The capital improvement program (CIP) is a flexible process, in that as the social, physical and financial conditions change within the City, the priority of the scheduled projects may also change. In response to the changes in the City, the CIP must be an ongoing process. Each year the CIP should be re-evaluated for consistency with the plan, current recreational needs, and fiscal condition of the City. The Parks Commission has previously developed CIPs for park and trail development. A copy of the *2009-2013 Anticipated Capital Improvements for Parks* is found in Appendix B.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The following process should be utilized by the Parks Commission when reviewing potential park capital improvement projects:

1. Establish a five year priority list of park/trail capital improvements that reflects current and projected recreation demands. Annually review and revise the five year priority list to reflect current demand and needs.
2. Analyze the City's current financial situation.
3. Obtain up-to-date cost estimates for high priority items.
4. Develop project descriptions and plans for the desired improvements which include proposed scheduling and phasing.
5. Make copies available of the CIP for public inspection prior to the City Council's presentation of the annual budget at the required public hearing.
6. Begin the process over again following approval of the CIP and the beginning of another calendar year.

## IMPLEMENTATION

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It is recommended that a specific annual CIP review schedule be established for the review of potential park/trail projects. This will enable persons who wish to request consideration of new items to present their position in ample time to change the CIP, if necessary, in a manner consistent with community needs and reducing or eliminating financial commitments being made for projects which might not proceed to the final construction stage in the event that they are deleted or moved back on the priority list.

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### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS (continued)

An important aspect of park and trail development is user knowledge of the recreational facilities. To promote the use of the community recreational system, the City should provide informational material to residents as the facilities are implemented. A newsletter and map mailed to each household is probably the best means by which to accomplish this. At the same time, the City should work to establish a list of rules and encourage community awareness of such.

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### COMMUNITY EDUCATION

As indicated throughout this plan, a clear and concise system of park and trail signage is beneficial in any recreational system to assist users in finding and using the facilities. Directional graphics may be in the form of painted pavement symbols/lettering or any variety of regulatory, warning, or guidance signage. Signage should include general identification of an area, layout and types of facilities present, directions for specific points of interest such as handicapped areas, restrooms, or connections to destinations, trail distances, and user/safety rules. The best location for much of this information is near the entrances to parks/trail segments or near parking areas. The signage should be consistent throughout the City and should be easily understandable and maintainable.

### SIGNAGE



## APPENDIX A

# FACILITIES PLANNING – DESIGN GUIDELINES

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### INTRODUCTION

Numerous physiological and psychological factors are involved in the planning and design of park and trail areas which will undoubtedly affect their desirability among residents and anticipated development if not handled properly. The natural features both within and adjacent to a desired trail corridor or park site should be used to complement the desired recreational activity and if modified, should be done without causing irreparable harm to the environment. These include existing vegetation, topography, wetlands/water bodies streams, or other natural features such as rock outcroppings. Built features are equally as important in their effect upon recreational elements and include such items as buildings, bridges, power substations, utility corridors, streets/parking lots, or other man-made and largely utilitarian components. The age, dominant characteristics, function, and condition of built structures should be evaluated to determine what, if any, modifications are needed (either to the structure itself or in areas surrounding it – such as a buffer) so that the structure remains an asset for recreational use.

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### TRAIL GUIDELINES

Composition of proposed trail corridors refers to the original or altered surface upon which the recreational element will be constructed. The subsurface condition of areas such as the Xcel power line easement have most likely been altered and may require specialized preparation or construction methods to establish them as a usable part of the recreational system.

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### COMPOSITION

The cross slope which is perpendicular to the direction of travel may either be flat, convex (raised), concave (carved-out), or terraced (along a side slope) and may affect access to a certain area or drainage patterns. As a general rule, an acceptable cross slope for most trails is 2 percent. An accessible trail is a cross slope of 5 percent or less.

### SLOPE

The running slope is parallel to the direction of travel and is comprised of an average of many short, contiguous grades, which can be flat, uphill, and downhill slopes. An equitably accessible running grade is generally 5 percent or less, although up to 10 percent with no cross slope may be acceptable in certain areas where access would otherwise be limited.

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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The sequence of different landscapes that compose a trail corridor makes it an interesting place to walk, bike, and ride. Spatial components of recreational systems include:

### SPATIAL VALUES

- ▶ Viewsheds. Lines of sight within a corridor or out to a landscape or adjacent built feature are called viewsheds. The views from adjacent lands into the trail corridor are just as important as views from the proposed trail. This is particularly important when you have a feature that should be highlighted or when an adjacent landowner objects to the trail corridor. Safety and visibility are the two viewshed issues of concern of future trail users. The need for unobstructed forward and rear views should be provided for each type of trail user classification: 50 feet for pedestrians and 150 feet for bicyclists/ roller skaters. Viewing opportunities from a trail affect the quality of users' experience and are classified as either open or closed landscapes.
- ▶ Open and Closed Landscapes. These affect viewsheds and light, provide structure, and heavily influence the spatial sequence of a trail corridor. An example of an open landscape is an agricultural field or meadow, while a closed landscape may be a segment of corridor surrounded by thick, overhanging trees or large buildings. An ideal trail has a contrasting sequence of both open and closed landscapes.
- ▶ Light and Dark Areas. These are determined by sun exposure, topography, surrounding vegetation, and adjacent structures. Light and dark areas alter the trail's environment, affect the soil's moisture content, influence temperatures, and vary the quality of the trail's features (which may change from season to season).

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Intersections can pose challenges during trail design and development, but they can also provide trail access. Roads are the most hazardous and frequently encountered trail intersections and things such as how the trail will cross (at-grade, under, over), the degree of road traffic, alternative crossings, and money available to do the work will determine how to best incorporate them into the overall plan.

### INTERSECTIONS "TRAIL CROSSINGS"

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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Driveways may be either residential, commercial or industrial in nature and will have differing effects upon the trail corridors, depending upon their frequency of use daily or monthly. If the traffic on the driveway is less than the anticipated trail traffic, then the trail should be designed to have the right-of-way at this intersection. Other trail corridors and nearby trails allow you to link trails together. Assess any intersection trails for compatibility and conflict, based on types of use, surface, signs, and regulations.

### INTERSECTIONS "TRAIL CROSSINGS" (continued)

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Like any major capital improvement, building a trail requires some thought about how the facility will be used and by whom. In other words, you need to market the trail. Determine the ratio of existing/proposed trail miles to the user population. Compare this to the National Recreation and Park Association's Open Space Standards which suggests a ratio of one trail mile per 2,000 people for multi-use (pedestrian-bicycle) trails. This number is intended only as a rough guideline and does not necessarily reflect local demographics, changing trends, uniqueness of the environment, or various other factors, but may help in estimating the over or under establishment of trails in relation to the number of residents. This, however, does not take the place of communicating with local residents, user groups, etc. to determine interest and needs.

### RECREATIONAL NEEDS

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Land uses (existing and proposed) adjacent to or directly abutting trail corridors should be evaluated to some degree relative to size, facilities, density, character, and type of ownership. However, unless safety factors prohibit such, the establishment of trails through all land use types should be promoted. Opportunities for or constraints against trail development exist in all areas of the community and depend more upon individual situations. In some situations, safety hazards or undesirables can be avoided through installation of a fence or berm while still allowing trail access and connections. Take special note of available properties adjoining the trail corridor as they may provide opportunity for public ownership and potential for establishment of sitting/picnic areas or landscaping. Vacant areas that remain privately owned provide excellent opportunities for additional trail links, access, or trail-related development.

### ADJACENT LAND USES

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### ADJACENT LANDOWNERS

Of all the obstacles trail developers face, opposition by adjacent landowners can be the most troublesome. Regardless of the community-wide support for trails, opposition from some adjacent landowners will voice concerns about trail design, management, quality of life, careless maintenance, land loss, decreased property values, increased crime, and liability will be unavoidable.

This and many similar concerns have been documented along trail projects across the USA and typically disappear once the trail is open but more commonly, the benefits outweigh the problems. In surveys conducted across the nation, it was shown that the vast majority of landowners living next to trail corridors were amenable to such and used the corridors frequently. With regard to crime, a specific study conducted in Minnesota showed that the incidence of crime is actually lower in homes near trails than those in surrounding neighborhoods. Additionally, no negative effect upon property values has even been proven, either nationally or locally and in some cases, neighborhoods adjacent to trail corridors have been marketed using trails as an amenity with property values increased. Finally, liability is not a valid concern thanks to the recreational use statutes (RUS) in place in Minnesota which does not make landowners liable for recreational injuries resulting from mere carelessness. To recover damages, the trail user needs to prove "willful and wanton misconduct on the part of the landowner." This would apply to easement situations in the City where the City does not own the land, but maintains control for trail access purposes via establishment of an easement.

In summary, problems may be exaggerated at the onset and others can be easily controlled through design and/or management solutions. Physical separation of trails from private properties via natural, vegetation or man-made means may also serve to alleviate homeowners concerns. Landowner involvement is the best and first step to a successful resolution.

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### FACILITY DESIGN STANDARDS

Once a trail or system of trails is built, it will become an integral part of the community which is part of an ever-changing environment. With this in mind, it is important to make sure that the trails can adapt to changing needs. The best policy is to build a trail with adequate capacity (width) initially. A multi-use trail shared by pedestrians and bicyclists should be a minimum of 10 feet wide. A minimum of eight feet may be used on shared-use paths that will have limited use. If the budget only allows for an eight foot trail, obtain easements that will permit expansion of the trail to 10 or more feet in the future.

Bridges, tunnels, culverts and other infrastructure should be made extra wide at the onset to accommodate expansion. Deciding which components to build to wider standards first will depend on the trail surfacing to be used. Concrete is virtually impossible to upgrade safely once it is in place as joints create a hazardous situation for bicyclists. Widening an asphalt or crushed material surface is not as difficult because the materials are less costly and can be blended. Basic grading should also be designed for the maximum future width if site conditions allow this.

Note that different segments of the trail are likely to have different levels of use, thus it may be necessary to provide a 10 foot width only in areas where heavy travel is expected to occur. Another option is to plan for two separate paths within the same (easement) corridor, by separating users such as pedestrians from bicyclists. Individual routes have been planned to vary as needed within the City, thus reference should be made to the section within this document which describes specific routes and trail segments.

Decisions about widening a trail should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based upon a community's economics, politics, safety, and long-term project goals. Weigh the cost of extra length against extra width prior to beginning a project. It may be beneficial to construct an entire segment of the trail system at a less than optimum width in areas where trails are presently non-existent to heighten the excitement and promote usage by residents. But on the other hand, if larger than expected numbers of people use the trail, it will pose crowding and safety problems. It is generally best to construct individual portions of a trail (which maybe does not yet make a through connection) at the full, long-term width desired. While this is somewhat dependent upon the material used, maintenance needs, and material life, pressure will build (and money will become available) to develop additional segments.

## APPENDIX A FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### DISABILITY ACCESSIBILITY

At least a portion of your multi-use trail design should be accessible – free of barriers and obstructions – and usable by people with disabilities. The primary sources of information for developing accessible standards for all facilities are the *Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS)* and the *American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines*, both published in the *Federal Register* on July 26, 1991. These guidelines define what specifications must be met in order to be classified as an accessible trail such as trail width, passing space, surface, slopes, clearance, rest areas and signs.

Five feet is the minimum width to accommodate a wide range of users with disabilities in a one-way scenario. Hard surfaces such as asphalt and concrete make a trail most accessible. An accessible trail gradient should not exceed a cross slope of 5 percent. When trails must be built with steeper grades, it is essential that the lengths of the maximum grade segments are minimized to enhance accessibility and grade segments are free of other access barriers.

When it is not possible to having running grades at 5 percent or less, the following recommended guidelines should be used for designing maximum grades over short intervals:

- ▶ 8.3 percent for a maximum of 200 feet
- ▶ 10 percent for a maximum of 30 feet; and
- ▶ 12.5 percent for a maximum of 10 feet.

On recreational trails, a 14 percent maximum grade is acceptable for open drains when resting intervals are provided every five feet, and the maximum cross slope is 5 percent. Furthermore, the total running slope should not exceed 8.3 percent for 30 percent or more of the trail.

Any part of an accessible route with a slope greater than 5 percent shall be considered a ramp. Ramps, which should have a level landing at the bottom and top of each run for every 30 inches of vertical rise, must have a hard, slip-resistant surface and railings. An accessible trail calls for a rest interval before and after segments of steep grades, within 25 feet of the top and bottom of a maximum grade segment, preferably cleared with a bench located outside of the trail head. If numerous benches are not possible, the distances between stopping points should be posted so that users will know what is ahead.

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends a 10 foot trail width, but some of these paths are too narrow to handle the ultimate volume of users and may not take into account other factors such as the trail surface, speed of trail users, etc. Consider the number of people who are likely to use your trail. Where “significant” trail traffic is anticipated (100 trail users per hour during peak periods), the width of a two-way shared path should be at least 10 feet in suburban areas. In rural and urban areas, the minimum trail widths change to eight feet and 12 feet, respectively.

### TRAIL WIDTH

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Topography, or the shape of the land, can be defined as flat, gently rolling, hilly, or mountainous. A physical assessment of a trail corridor determines the running and cross slopes of specific segments. An accessible trail will have a maximum running slope of 5 percent and a maximum cross slope of 5 percent. The following table lists ranges of running and cross slopes acceptable for specific trail user groups.

### SLOPE

Trail User	Average Speed	Running Slope	Cross Slope
Pedestrian	3 to 7 mph	No Restriction	4% maximum
Bicyclist	8 to 20 mph	3% preferred; 8% maximum	2% to 4%
Equestrian	4 to 8 mph	10% maximum	4% maximum
Skier	2 to 8 mph	3% preferred, 5% maximum	2% preferred

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There are many surface types available to complete the cross section of your multi-use trail, including granular stone, asphalt, concrete, soil cement, wood chips, and natural surface. Surface materials are either soft or hard, defined by the material's ability to absorb or repel moisture. Many single use trails throughout the country, particularly hiking and equestrian trails, have soft surfaces (natural earth/turf, wood chips, etc.). These surfaces often do not hold up well under heavy use or varying weather conditions, and therefore are not ideal for multi-use trails. Hard surfaced materials (soil cement, asphalt, cement, etc.) are more practical for multi-use trails, especially in urban and suburban areas. They are generally more expensive to purchase and install but require less maintenance and can withstand frequent use. Hard surfaces also accommodate the widest range of trail users.

### SURFACING

## APPENDIX A FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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Trail surfacing can be used to encourage or discourage use. If you want to encourage as many users as possible, choose one of the hardest surfaces. If you want to limit the number or speed of users, choose a soft surface. Recycling options should also be considered when choosing a surfacing material. Car tires and other rubber products, crushed glass/pottery, and ground asphalt shingles are some of the materials that have been used in the construction of trails. The recycled products industry is expanding quickly, with new manufacturers emerging constantly. It may be worth doing some research into what types of recycled products are available to you and what type of strength, longevity, and durability they have in relation to their cost, ease of installation, effect upon the environment, etc.

### SURFACING (continued)

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An often overlooked design factor is the long term cost of operations and maintenance. Prior to constructing trails, the City's Public Works Department should be consulted relative to their staffing, time, equipment, etc. to verify that the ability exists to properly maintain the trails which will be constructed. Also consider the long term replacement costs of trail surfaces and other major recreation components.

### MAINTENANCE

- ▶ Asphalt needs resurfacing every seven to 15 years depending on site conditions and construction quality.
- ▶ Concrete lasts approximately 25 or more years.
- ▶ Crushed stone will typically last 7 to 10 years, although it requires frequent patching and spot repairs.
- ▶ Wood chips decompose rapidly under prolonged exposure to sun, heat, and moisture, wash easily under moderate slopes and rainfall, and require almost constant maintenance to keep the width and depth consistent. They are, however, often available at no cost (or a nominal cost) from commercial tree trimming services.

# APPENDIX A

## FACILITIES PLANNING - DESIGN GUIDELINES

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The types of support facilities your trail will need, and their replacement along the trail, depend on several factors: the setting and proposed uses of the trail; the trail's intensity of use; the level of servicing/maintenance that the facilities need; and the utility/infrastructure requirements of the facilities. Whatever the location, user groups, and desired activities along the trail, you must plan for trail facilities from the start. If you cannot afford to develop all facilities at the outset, know the types of facilities that you and your community ultimately want.

### TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES

To a large degree, the parks, schools, and many commercial operations within Oak Park Heights act as "built in" trail nodes and stopping points where persons may rest, obtain shelter from the elements, eat lunch, use a bathroom or get a drink of water. The distance between these known points and exactly what they offer should be studied in the early stages of trail design and implementation. In areas where distances are excessive or where easy access (either physically or at certain times of day) is a problem, consideration should be given to establishing support facilities to supplement the existing ones.

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To get the most out of a trail experience, it helps to start with a beautiful trail setting which offers exceptional landscapes and visual amenities. In reality, however, not all trail corridors come with such benefits and require significant work in the form of landscaping to give the trail a personality of its own. To create a successful trail experience, you must consider the perspective of the user. Since the landscape is typically viewed while moving, a sequence of views is more important than a single view in one direction. Trails are multi-dimensional, with things to see, hear, and feel along the way.

### LANDSCAPING

In developing a landscape plan for trails in the community, you must think of it as a phased process which is an ongoing commitment. The overall intent and that of specific areas may differ significantly based upon what land uses are adjacent to the trail, whether it is along a roadway or not, as well as what environmental and soil conditions are present. Ongoing maintenance is a major factor in a multi-use trail's landscape plan; even "natural" landscapes require trimming, weeding, etc. Cleared and mowed trail shoulders at least two feet wide on either side of the trail provide a groomed look, offer better visibility, and provide an option for those who like to utilize soft surfaces. It is best to set back trees and shrubs, when planted, at least five feet from the trail surface to control the inundation of paved areas by tree/plant roots.



## APPENDIX B

### 2009-2013 ANTICIPATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS – PARKS

Project # **PRK 001**  
 Project Name **Install Trail -58th Str. to Upper Valley View Park**

Type Improvement  
 Useful Life 20 years  
 Category Trails  
 Priority 2 High  
 Department Parks  
 Total Cost \$200,000

**Description**  
 Provide a safe accessible trail connection from 58th Street (the Valley View Estates neighborhood) to the picnic area of Valley View Park. Currently, visitors either have to cross private property or cross through a ravine to reach the Park.  
 This connection likely requires the installation of a bridge over the ravine.

Contact Public Works Director

**Justification**

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance					200,000	200,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>FY '09</b>	<b>FY '10</b>	<b>FY '11</b>	<b>FY '12</b>	<b>FY '13</b>	<b>Total</b>
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)					200,000	200,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**

**Project #** PRK 002  
**Project Name** Acquire DNR Property - Osgood Ave.

**Type** Improvement  
**Useful Life**  
**Category** Park Improvements  
**Priority** 4 Low

**Description** Acquire the DNR property (200+ acres) lying west of Osgood, south of Brekke Park.  
**Contact** City Administrator  
**Department** Parks  
**Total Cost** \$500,000

**Justification** A viable property to add to the City park areas. This will aid in the long-term assurance that the property will not be inappropriately developed. The City will also then be able to install an east-west water loop main.

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Land Acquisition					500,000	500,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Park & Rec Dedication Fund					500,000	500,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**

**Project #** PRK 003  
**Project Name** St. Croix River Access

**Type** Improvement  
**Useful Life** 20 years  
**Category** Park Improvements  
**Priority** 5 Very Low

**Department** Parks  
**Contact** Public Works Director  
**Total Cost** \$250,000

**Description**  
 Trail connections:  
 Xcel Energy Trail to St. Croix River  
 Valley View to new Hwy 36 regional trails  
 New connections to King Landfill Park.  
 Construction in 2009 with bridge construction.  
 Possible MNDOT, DNR Regional Trails Grants?

**Justification**  
 This is the final segment of the trail system that eventually will connect the west end of the City to the St. Croix River loop.

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY '09</b>	<b>FY '10</b>	<b>FY '11</b>	<b>FY '12</b>	<b>FY '13</b>	<b>Total</b>
Construction/Maintenance					250,000	250,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>250,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>FY '09</b>	<b>FY '10</b>	<b>FY '11</b>	<b>FY '12</b>	<b>FY '13</b>	<b>Total</b>
State DOT Funds					250,000	250,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>250,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**  
 This project can require significant local input of annual maintenance and security. The City should carefully consider this project and its possible incorporation with the proposed St. Croix River Crossing. The City should seek cost sharing from the US Park Service, MNDOT and or MNDNR.

Project # **PRK 004**

Project Name **Update Swager Park Playground**

Type **Equipment**

Useful Life **10 years**

Category **Park Equipment**

Priority **3 Moderate**

Department **Parks**

Total Cost **\$50,000**

Contact **City Administrator**

**Description**

The Swager Park Playground is worn and dated.

**Justification**

Install new playground equipment that does not conduct electricity as some of the current playground equipment may deliver a static shock due to the overhead transmission wires as own by Xcel Energy.

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY '09</b>	<b>FY '10</b>	<b>FY '11</b>	<b>FY '12</b>	<b>FY '13</b>	<b>Total</b>
Equip/Vehicles/Furnishings		50,000				50,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>50,000</b>				<b>50,000</b>

**Funding Sources**

	<b>FY '09</b>	<b>FY '10</b>	<b>FY '11</b>	<b>FY '12</b>	<b>FY '13</b>	<b>Total</b>
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)		50,000				50,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>50,000</b>				<b>50,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**

Project # **PRK 005**

Project Name **Update Valley View Park Playground**

Type Improvement

Useful Life 20 years

Category Park Equipment

Priority 3 Moderate

Department Parks

Total Cost \$40,000

Contact Public Works Director

Description  
The playground at Valley View Park is in need of updating, all equipment and apparatus is over 20 years old. (in similar condition as Cover Park equipment as replaced in 2006)

Justification

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance	40,000					40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,000</b>					<b>40,000</b>

Funding Sources

Budgeted Projects (transfers in)	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
	40,000					40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,000</b>					<b>40,000</b>

Operational Impact/Other

Project # **PRK 006**  
 Project Name **Brekke and Valley View Shelters - Updates**

Type Maintenance  
 Useful Life 10 years  
 Category Buildings  
 Priority 3 Moderate  
 Department Parks  
 Total Cost \$15,000

**Description**  
 Stabilize and Replace soffit, fascia and ceilings at Brekke and Valley View Parks.  
 These structures are dated and need some attention in this regard.

Contact Public Works Director

**Justification**

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance		15,000				15,000
<b>Total</b>		15,000				15,000

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)		15,000				15,000
<b>Total</b>		15,000				15,000

**Operational Impact/Other**

**Project #** PRK 007  
**Project Name** Replace Cover Park Warming House/ Shelter

**Type** Improvement  
**Useful Life** 30 years  
**Category** Park Improvements  
**Priority** 3 Moderate  
**Department** Parks  
**Total Cost** \$250,000

**Description**  
 Contact City Administrator  
 Current facility is over 50 years old and is generally in a minimally acceptable condition.  
 New facility should be ADA compliant and for year-round use.

**Justification**

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance			250,000			250,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>250,000</b>			<b>250,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Park & Rec Dedication Fund			250,000			250,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>250,000</b>			<b>250,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**  
 Additional cleaning and additional utilities will be necessary if the City builds a new facility.

**Project #** PRK 008  
**Project Name** Trail Maintenance Annual Allocation

**Type** Maintenance  
**Useful Life** 10 years  
**Category** Trails  
**Priority** 1 Very High  
**Department** Parks  
**Contact** Public Works Director  
**Total Cost** \$125,000

**Description**  
 Commencing in 2009, the City should endeavor to update, replace, repair a given section of its extensive trail systems. This can include crack-filling, section replacements, widening, etc.

**Justification**

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**

Project # **PRK 009**

Project Name **Valley View Park - Roadways and Parking Areas**

Type Improvement

Useful Life 20 years

Category Park Improvements

Priority 3 Moderate

Department Parks

Total Cost \$224,000

Contact Public Works Director

**Description**

2009 - Mill and Overlay (and patch) North Valley View Parking Lot - \$15,000  
This parking lot area has deteriorated and is in need of a mill and overlay

2010 - Mill and Overlay (and Patch) South Valley View parking Lot - \$19,000.  
This parking lot area has deteriorated and is in need of a mill and overlay.

2011 - Fully replace the Valley View Entrance Road - \$190,000  
Complete failure of roadway.

**Justification**

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance			224,000			224,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>224,000</b>			<b>224,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)			224,000			224,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>224,000</b>			<b>224,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**

Project # **PRK 010**  
 Project Name **Mill and Overlay of Brekke Park Parking Lot**

Type Maintenance  
 Useful Life 10 years  
 Category Park Improvements  
 Priority 3 Moderate  
 Department Parks  
 Total Cost \$23,000

Description  
 Patch Base and Mill and Overlay of Brekk Park Parking Lot  
 Needed due to current condition, full replacement is not warranted.

Contact Public Works Director

Justification

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Equip/Vehicles/Furnishings	23,000					23,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,000</b>					<b>23,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Budgeted Projects (transfers in)	23,000					23,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,000</b>					<b>23,000</b>

Operational Impact/Other

Project # **PRK 011**  
 Project Name **Tunnel and Trail Construction - Osgood Ave.**

Type Improvement  
 Useful Life 20 years  
 Category Trails  
 Priority 1 Very High  
 Department Parks  
 Total Cost \$500,000

**Description**  
 1) Construct a tunnel/trail under Osgood Ave. that is adjacent to the newly acquired Brekke Park land area and trails and which would convey pedestrians to and from Valley View Park.  
 2) Construct bituminous trail along Osgood Ave from .62nd dstreet (north of STH 36) to Upper 55th Street.

**Justification**  
 The tunnel will afford the safest method for crossing Osgood Ave. and would be a key link in the City's trail system - allowing people to move substantially throughout the City w/minimal need to be on roadways.  
 The trail along Osgood Ave. is severely needed as pedestrians are required to walk along a busy County Highway (Osgood) to make north - south connections.

Contact City Administrator

Expenditures	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Construction/Maintenance				500,000		500,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>500,000</b>		<b>500,000</b>

Funding Sources	FY '09	FY '10	FY '11	FY '12	FY '13	Total
Budgeted Projects (transfers in Washington County)	83,333	83,333	83,333	83,334	250,000	250,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,333</b>	<b>83,333</b>	<b>83,333</b>	<b>333,334</b>		<b>500,000</b>

**Operational Impact/Other**