



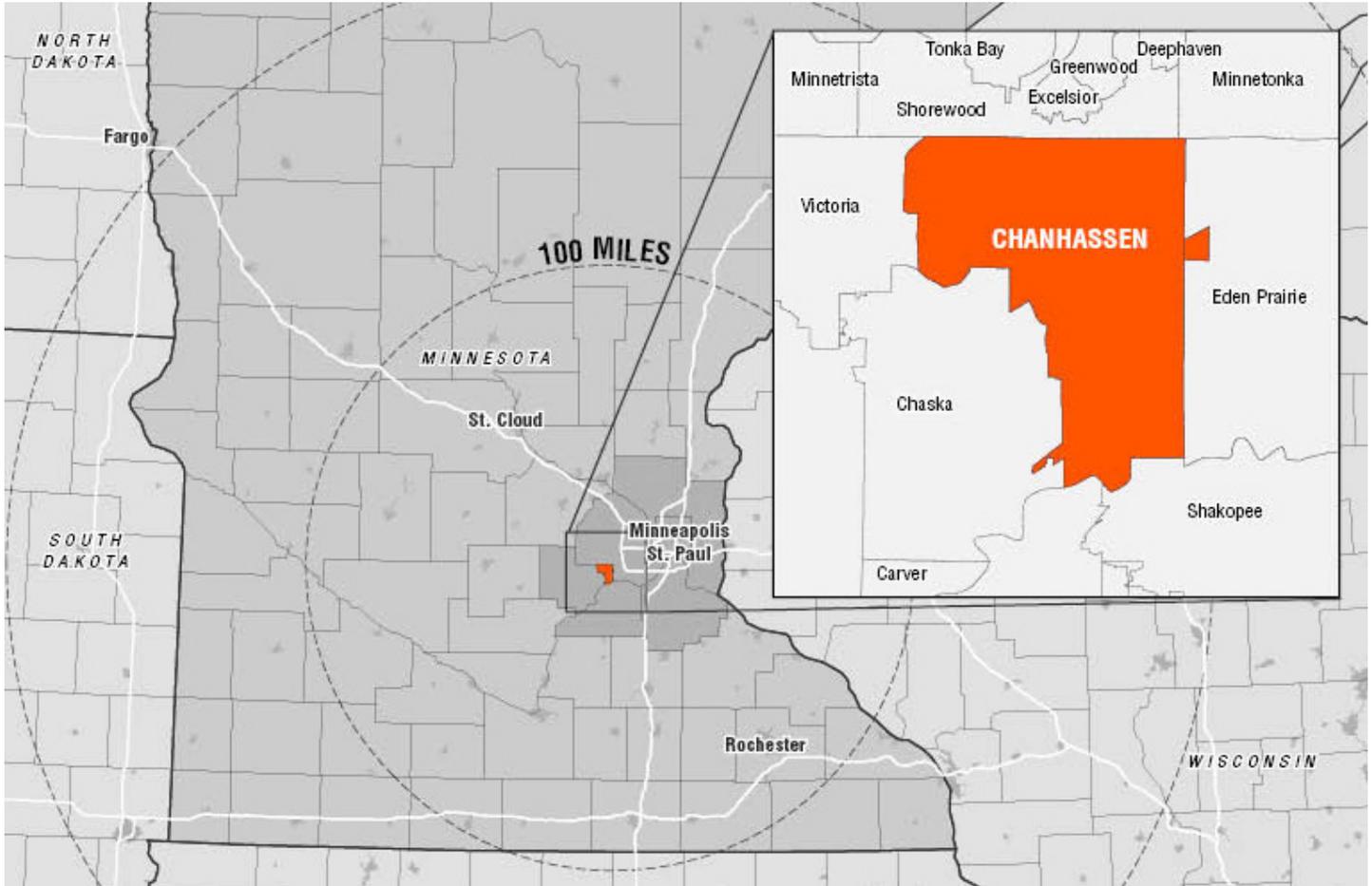
Chapter 3

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The foundation of system planning lies in understanding its existing conditions. A Park System Inventory was conducted at the beginning of this planning process, which involved identifying and mapping all of Chanhassen's current park and recreation amenities. This audit is a standalone document that can be found on the City's website.

This chapter combines the system audit with demographic data, a gap and distribution analysis, the results of the first phase of community engagement, peer communities, and national standards to establish how well the City is currently serving the needs of the community, as well as how well it is positioned to meet any future needs that may arise.

Figure 3-1. Community Context



Community Context

The City of Chanhassen encompasses 14,427 acres of land in the western portion the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. While the majority of this acreage is located in Carver County, 154 acres in the eastern portion of the City are in Hennepin County. Five major highways travel through the City, providing easy connections to surrounding metropolitan areas.

With twelve beautiful lakes, two public school districts, 30 parks, a wide range of housing options, and over 700 businesses, Chanhassen offers residents and visitors alike a great destination for shopping, eating, entertainment, commerce, and recreation.

Demographic Overview

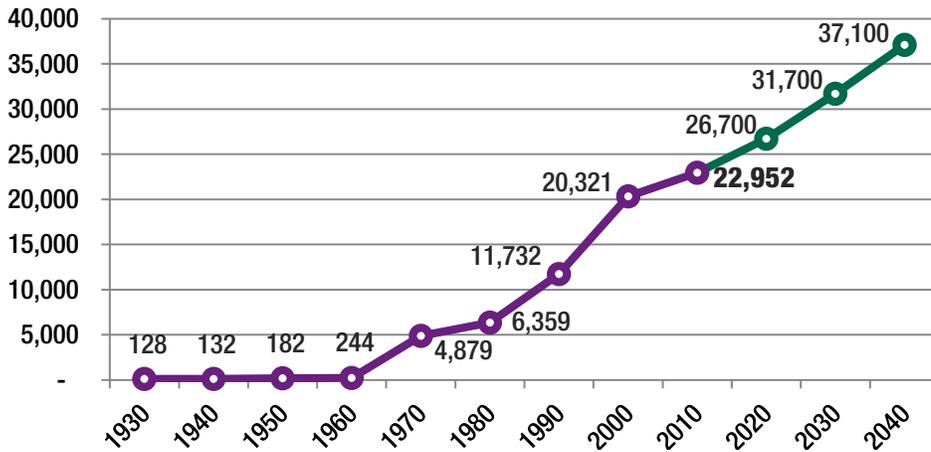
Population

Chanhassen's population has increased significantly over the past 50 years, growing from 244 in 1960 to just under 23,000 in 2010. According to the Metropolitan Council, this growth is expected to continue moving forward, with 37,100 residents projected for the year 2040; almost 15,000 more residents than were reported at the 2010 census.

Age

According to the U.S. Decennial Census, the largest age cohorts in the City in 2010 were 45-49 and 50-54, which are closely followed by the 10-14 age cohort. With the 20-24 and 25-29 age cohorts being some of the smallest, Chanhassen seemingly contains many families with younger children, but are lacking in young professionals. Over 12% of the population is older than 60, a figure that has doubled since the 2000 census. Demographic changes will alter the labor force and also impact preferences for transportation, housing, and park needs. For instance, both millennials and seniors will be seeking walkable neighborhoods and expanded trail facilities.

Figure 3-2. Historic Population and Metropolitan Council Population Forecasts



Race + Ethnicity

In 2014, the majority of Chanhassen’s population identified as white (91%). Of the remaining 9%, 6% identified as Asian, 1.4% identified with two or more races, 1% identified as Black or African American, and less than 1% identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native. Just over 2% of the population identified as Hispanic or Latino.

Households

The total number of households in Chanhassen has increased by over 2,000 units since 2000. While the majority of households in the City are occupied by families (75%), the number of family households with children decreased by over 100 and the amount of non-family households increased by 5% between 2000 and 2010. These statistics are representative of a larger trend towards smaller households, resulting in an increase in the total number of households; an increase in the percentage of married couple, no children households; and an increase in the percentage of households with individuals over 65.

Income

Chanhassen is an affluent City, with over 50% of all households and almost 65% of all families earning an income of over \$100,000. Both median household and family incomes have increased by over \$20,000 since 2000, and was at \$108,078 and \$125,303 respectively in 2014 according to the American Community Survey. In comparison, both the Twin Cities Metro Area’s median household income (\$68,019) and the average median household income of surrounding municipalities (\$99,524) was lower than that of Chanhassen for 2014.

While the City’s 2.9% poverty rate is stable and well below the national poverty rate of 15.6%, consideration still needs to be given to whether the Park and Recreation system is sufficiently serving those with limited incomes, particularly by providing access to facilities within a walking or biking distance.

Education

Of Chanhassen residents 25 and older, 96% have achieved at least a high school diploma, 60% have obtained a Bachelor’s degree or higher, and almost 19% have obtained a Graduate or Professional degree. These figures have remained relatively steady since 2000, and are comparable to those of surrounding communities.

Figure 3-3. Age & Gender Distribution

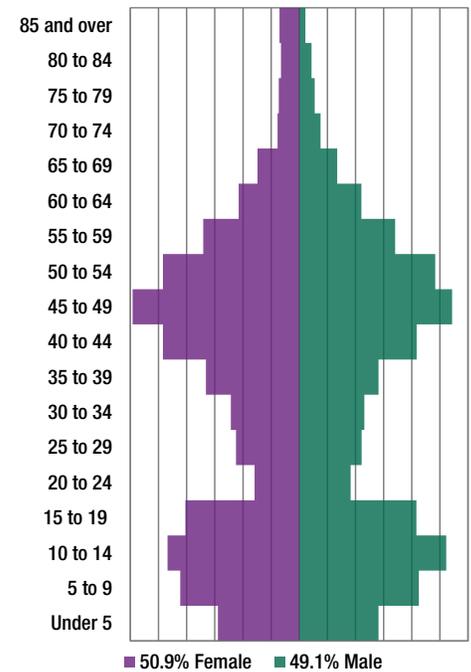
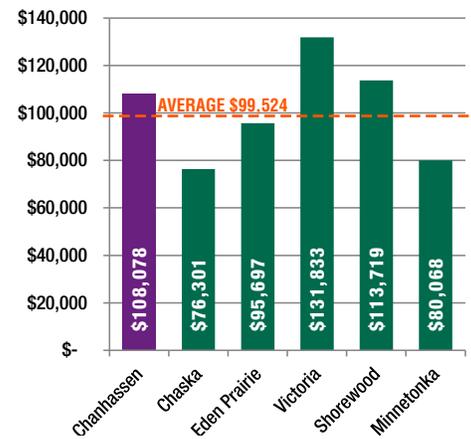


Figure 3-4. Median Household Income



SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

- » Almost 1,000 acres of city-owned parks, preserves, and open space
- » 30 community & neighborhood parks
- » 14 preserves & 1 special use park
- » Almost 80 miles of trails

Facilities

-  27 playground areas
-  21 picnic shelters
-  5 swimming beaches
-  16 tennis courts
-  10 pickleball courts
-  28 diamond fields
-  21 rectangular fields
-  20 basketball courts
-  6 sledding hills
-  4 sand volleyball courts
-  1 skate park
-  1 disc golf course
-  1 garden plot site
-  7 docks & 3 fishing piers
-  5 outdoor hockey rinks & 5 pleasure rinks
-  1 dog park (in partnership)
-  1 recreation center

System at a Glance

The Chanhassen Park and Recreation Department manages almost 1,000 acres of parkland, almost 80 miles of trails, and two major indoor community facilities; the Recreation Center and the Senior Center. These amenities offer area residents, employees, and visitors numerous opportunities for active and passive recreation while providing invaluable benefits to the community's ecosystem and users' physical and mental health.

System History

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

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

Park Classification

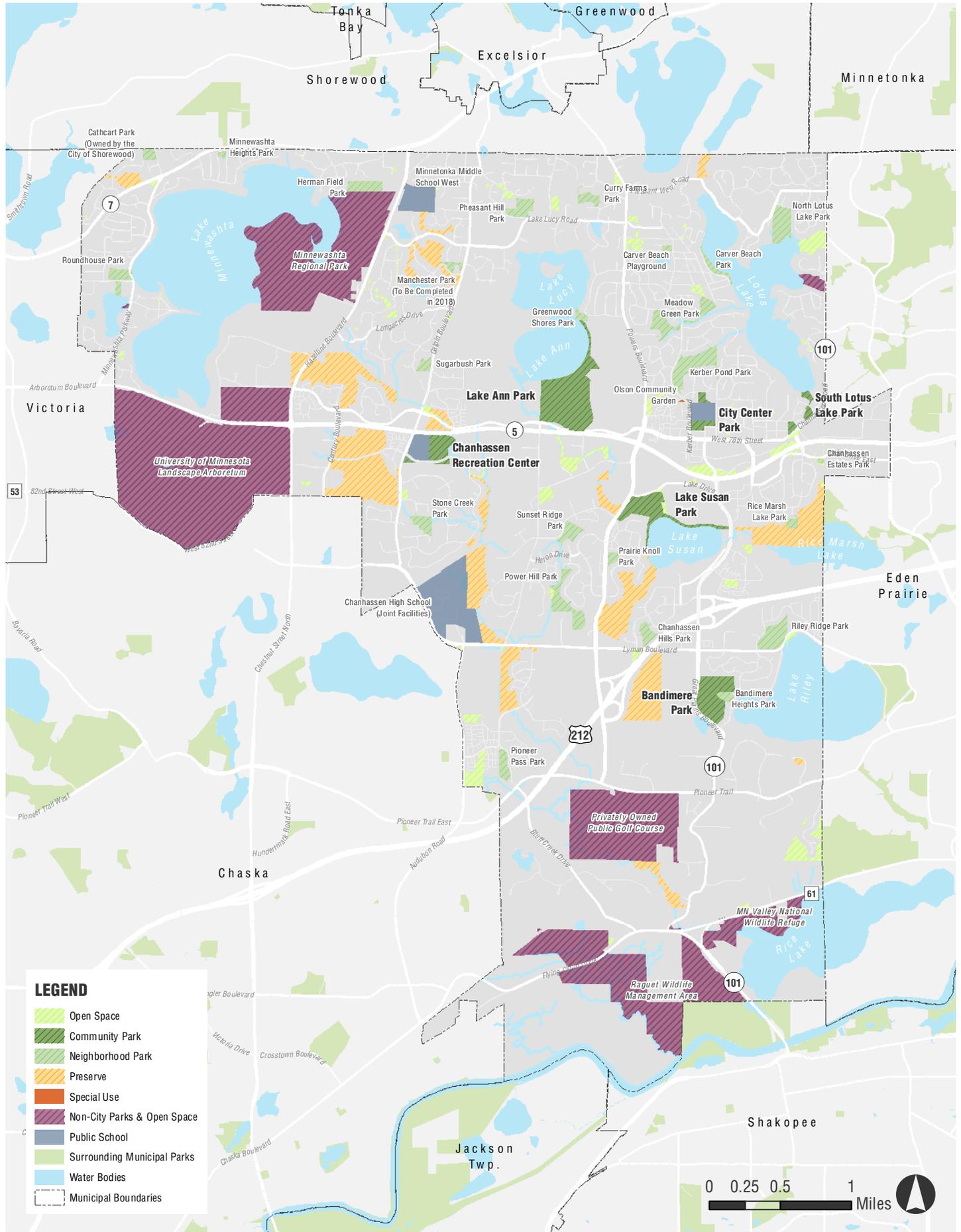
Today, the City's park and recreation needs are met by a combination of: city parks; city trails and sidewalks; school district facilities; private facilities; recreation programs; as well as non-city amenities including regional parks and trails and facilities in surrounding communities. Park classifications are used to ensure that a park and recreation system has sufficient diversity and geographic distribution to serve various neighborhood and community needs. In Chanhassen, there are four types of parks: community, neighborhood, special use, and preserves.

Community Parks

Community Parks provide opportunities for City-wide recreation and typically serve a 1-2 mile area. They emphasize active recreation by providing amenities like ball fields and soccer/football fields. Chanhassen's six community parks are distributed throughout the City and most residents live within an easy drive or bike-ride. Over the next 20 years it is anticipated that additional land for community park facilities will be needed to serve the community. Because most of the new residential growth is anticipated to occur in two areas, south of Lyman Boulevard and on the west side of Lake Ann, it makes sense to look for new or expanded community parks in these areas.

Chanhassen currently has six Community Parks, including Bandimere Park, City Center Park, Lake Ann Park, Lake Susan Park, South Lotus Lake Park, and the Recreation Center.

Figure 3-5. City Park Distribution





Olson Community Garden



Tennis League



Recreation Center Weight Room



Senior Center Card Playing Event

Neighborhood Parks

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

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

Special Use Parks

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

Preserves

Preserves function to protect the City's high quality natural space, and usually involve minimal low-impact development. The City currently owns over 500 acres of open space protected throughout Chanhassen's fourteen preserves. These acres encompass a large portion of the Bluff Creek Corridor, as well as other treasured wetland and woodland areas.

Notable Facilities

City Facilities

Recreation Center

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

Senior Center

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



Lake Minnewashta Regional Park



Minnesota Landscape Arboretum



Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Non-City Parks & Open Space

There are several non-city parks and open spaces located in Chanhassen. The locations of these facilities are highlighted in purple in Figure 3-5.

Schools (ISD 276 & 112)

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

Lake Minnewashta Regional Park

This 330 acre Regional Park on the east side of Lake Minnewashta is owned and operated by Carver County with support from the Metropolitan Council. Facilities include: lake access, a fishing pier, picnicking, sand volleyball, a swimming beach, and trails. A new off-leash dog area was established in partnership with Carver County, the City of Chanhassen, and the City of Shorewood Parks Foundation. A fee is required for use.

Camp Tanadoona

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

MN DNR Lands

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources protects several areas of land within Chanhassen. An 8 acre parcel on the east side of Lotus Lake is preserved as open space. The DNR also owns 106 acres of the 600-acre Seminary Fen wetlands complex in southern Chanhassen, which contains a Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) that encompasses 73 acres and protects a rare calcareous fen and threatened plant species. The remaining 33 acres were allotted to the adjacent Raguet WMA. Finally, the DNR owns public land surrounding Lake St. Joe, which is just south of Roundhouse Park in northwest Chanhassen.

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

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

Raguet Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

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

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

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

Golf Courses

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



Pop-Up Event



Advisory Committee members

Needs Assessment

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

The evaluation process included:

- » Meetings with the City Staff, Advisory Committee, Park Board, and the City Council
- » Two phases of community input to gather feedback on existing conditions and future desires
- » Evaluation of the entire system of parks, trails, natural resources, connectivity, programs, and facilities, including an update of the Park System Inventory
- » Demographic analysis
- » Evaluation of current park classification system and standards
- » Evaluation of service areas, future growth, and development needs
- » Identification of issues and opportunities at a system-wide level
- » Comparison of existing supply, quality, and distribution of features and facilities to national standards and to peer communities
- » Evaluation of emerging trends influencing future needs of the system

Community Input

A variety of community engagement activities were completed over the course of this project to ensure the project remained reflective of community desires. This input helped identify satisfaction with the existing park system, the level of Park and Recreation use, opinions on the system's needs, issues, and priorities, and desires for future system development. While opportunities to attend community events and hold stakeholder meetings were explored throughout the process, there were two major phases aimed at collecting public input, the first in fall of 2016 and the second in spring of 2017.

Resident and stakeholder outreach methods included:

- » Seven Community Pop-Up Events
- » Athletic Association Stakeholder Meeting
- » Senior Stakeholder Meeting
- » Three Online Community Questionnaires
- » Two Online Social PinPoint Maps
- » Community Open House

For a summary of all community input results, refer to [Appendix #](#).

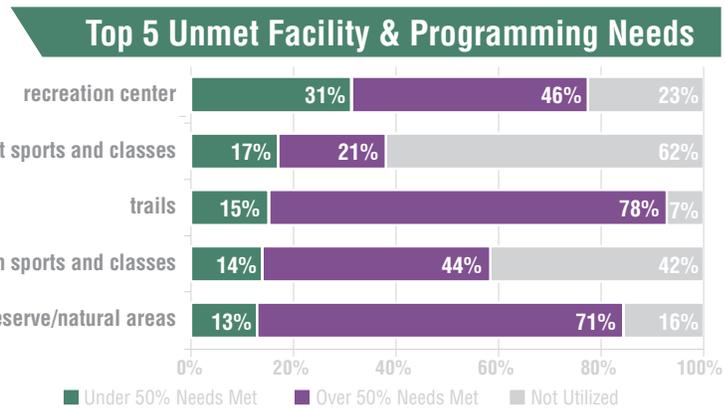
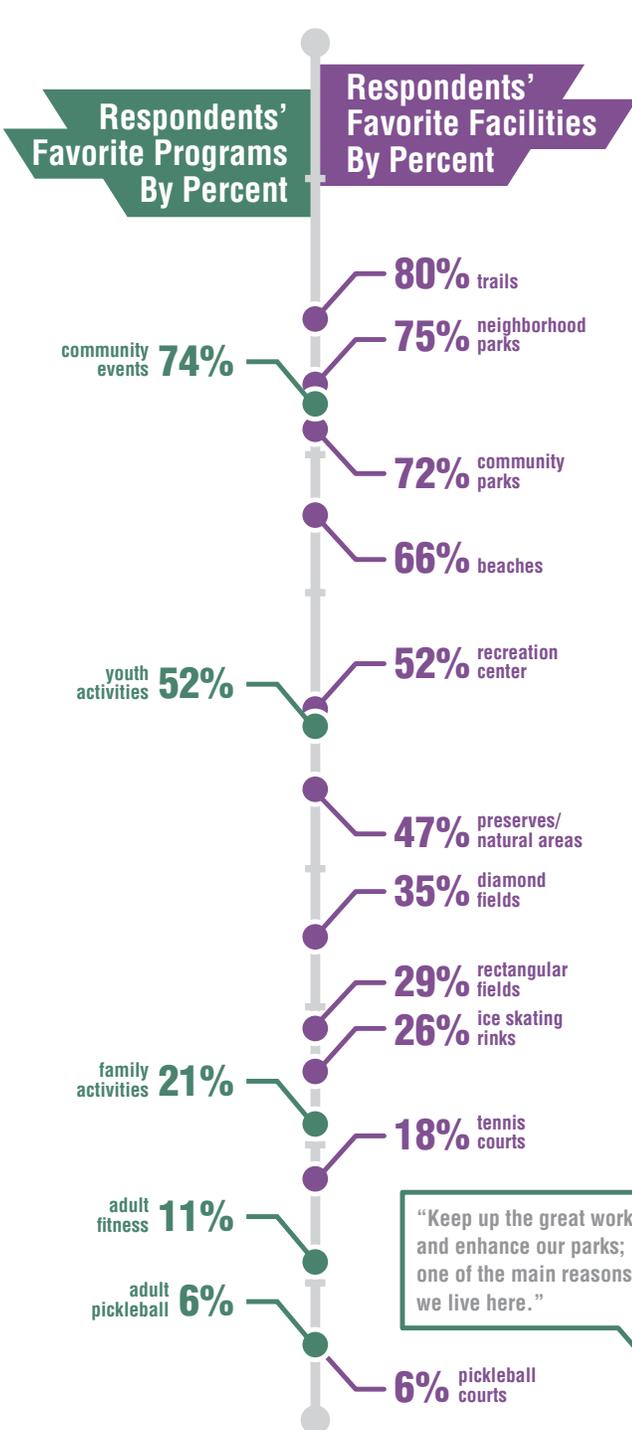
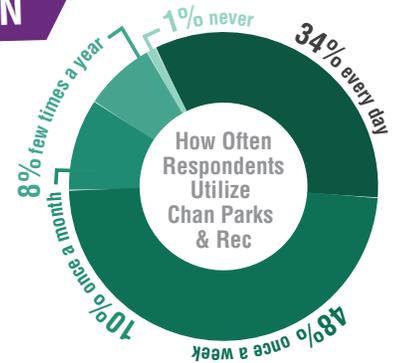
Figure 3-6. Key Findings From the Fall System-Wide Questionnaire



CHANHASSEN PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM PLAN

Online Community Engagement Summary

Four different online engagement strategies were implemented in order to reach as many demographics as possible. Three online questionnaires captured public comments regarding the senior center, the recreation center, and the parks and recreation system in general. The fourth online strategy involved an interactive mapping software intended to collect geographic-based comments. This summary includes a synopsis of some of the significant findings from all four engagement techniques.



Select General Comments

"We are lacking in facilities to support our population here. A larger sports complex is needed."

"Keep up the great work and enhance our parks; one of the main reasons we live here."

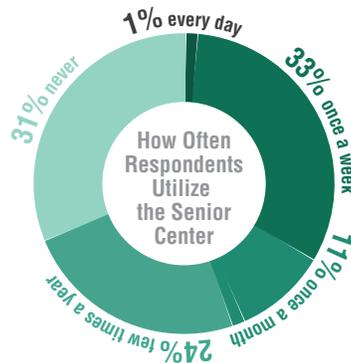
"Improving our existing rec center would add value and encourage pride in our community. It should be a top priority."

"While private rec facilities should fill the gaps in programming, something like an outdoor swimming pool should be seriously considered as a city run facility. Lifetime is the only option in the city and is not affordable for all."

Figure 3-7. Key Findings From the Fall Senior Center Questionnaire

SENIOR CENTER

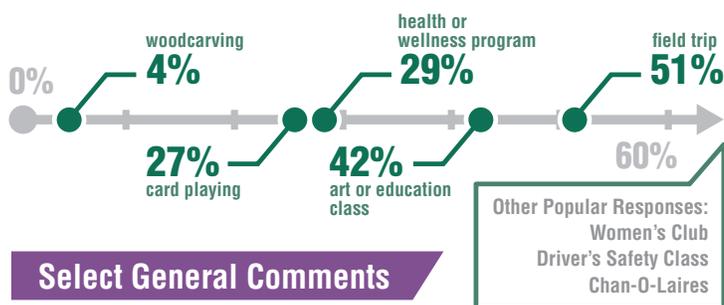
While all responses to the Senior Center survey were evaluated, only those from respondents over the age of 60 were considered for the charts included in this infographic. However, the comments included below are representative of all participating age groups.



Of Respondents That Never Use the Senior Center:



Existing Facility & Programming Usage



Select General Comments

"I am proud of what the existing Senior Center offers in relation to programming but we will be out growing the facility with the shift in retirees. And we do have a dynamic and hard-working director in Sue!!"

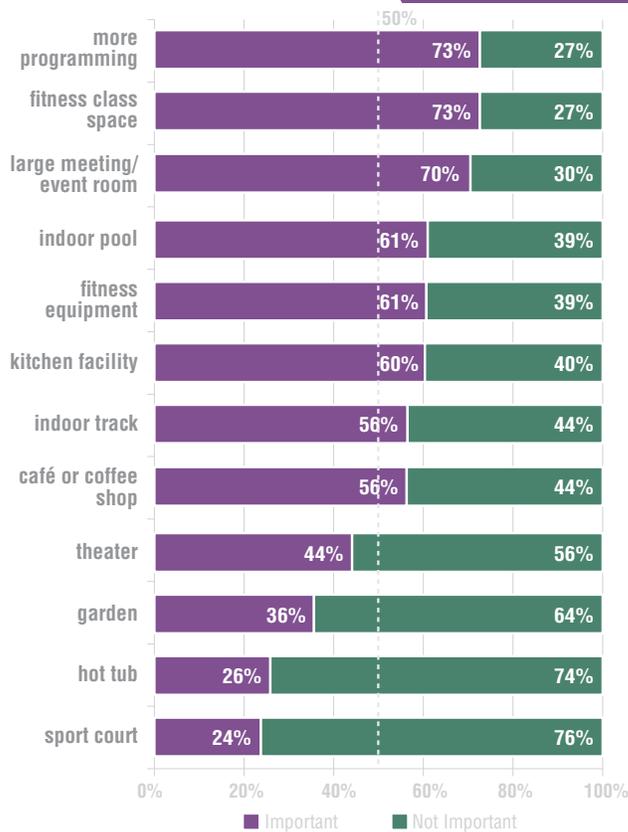
"From what I've seen, there isn't much offered for Senior Citizens that still work full-time. I would like to see some programs offered evenings or weekends."

"The location of the Chanhassen Sr. Center appears to be superb! It is easy to locate, access for pleasure and emergencies if needed. If you are considering a new community center please include the senior's space: Chaska's community center where all ages and all activities can participate is the ultimate (even church studies, meetings, etc.)"

"As the population ages Chanhassen needs a viable senior center. The one we have is very small and does not have enough programs. A theater and art space are very important to me."

"Please keep the bus trips so we can get to places we can't drive to and that have limited parking."

Importance of Additional Facilities & Programming



Support For Senior Center Alternatives

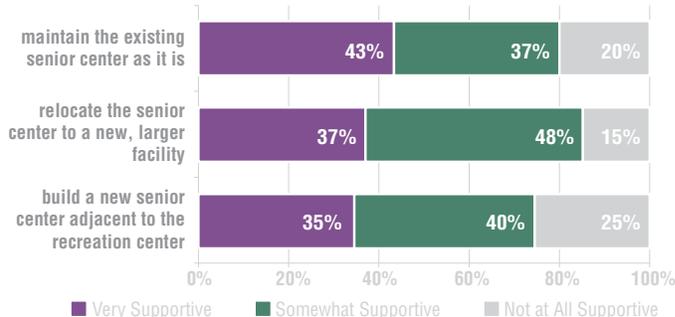
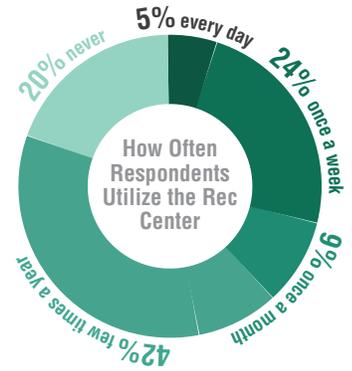


Figure 3-8. Key Findings From the Fall Recreation Center Questionnaire

RECREATION CENTER

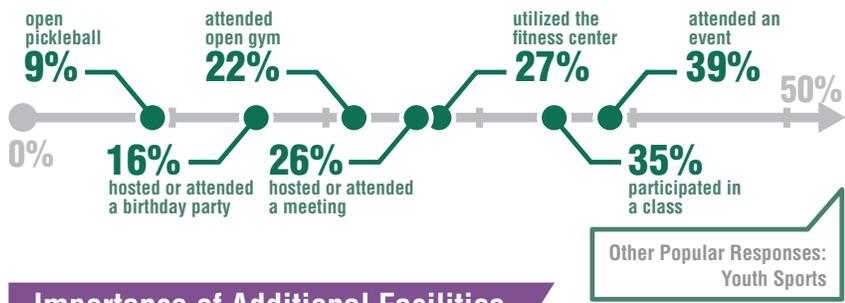
This survey was geared toward people who utilize the Recreation Center's facilities and programming, regardless of whether or not they are a resident of Chanhasseen. All of the questions specifically pertain to the Recreation Center rather than the park system as a whole.



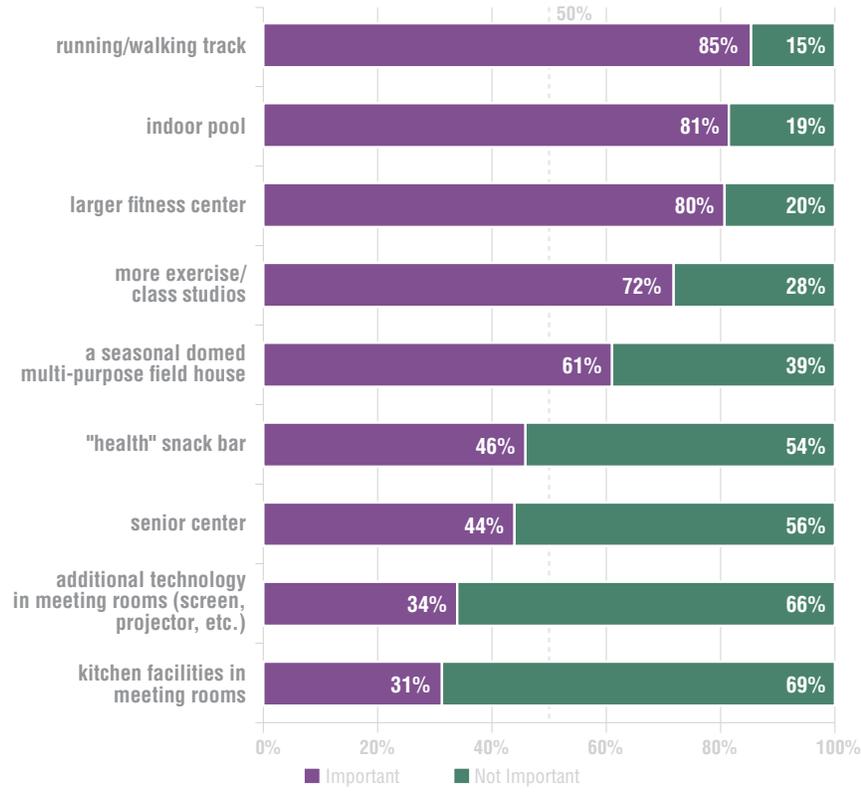
Of Respondents That Never Use the Recreation Center:



Existing Facility & Programming Usage



Importance of Additional Facilities & Programming



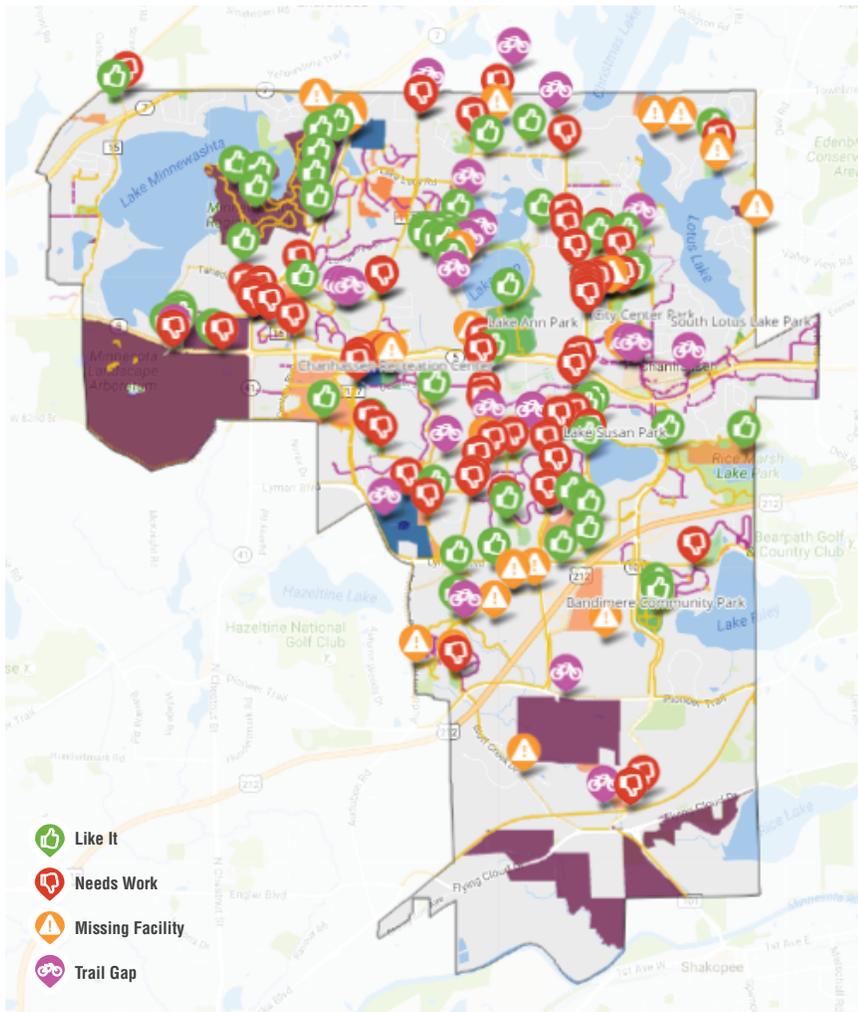
Select General Comments

- "I hope it can expand, perhaps by moving to a new building and leaving the full building for an expansion of Bluff Creek."
- "We need an economical alternative to the expensive and overly busy Lifetime Fitness. Doesn't need to be fancy but something more like a YMCA or the Chaska Community Center."
- "More pickleball courts. As this sport grows, so should the number of courts."
- "It is a very nice facility. I exercise there 3 days a week. The staff is friendly and helpful."
- "The rec center needs to fill the needs of all community members. Currently, I feel the programming has a focus on children and families..."
- "We would LOVE to go if you had swimming lessons in an indoor pool, and much more creative classes to choose from (art, clay, music, theater...)"
- "An indoor public pool and walking track like Chaska Comm. Center...the private clubs are so costly!"

Figure 3-9. Key Findings From the Fall Social PinPoint

SOCIAL PINPOINT

Social Pinpoint is an online platform that helps users place geographically-referenced comments in the following categories: “Like it,” “Needs Work,” “Missing Facility,” and “Trail Gap.” This method of engagement received almost 170 responses distributed throughout the City, which can be seen on the map below. A selection of the most popular comments are displayed at the right by category.



Key Findings

- 1 The majority of comments across all categories were in reference to the trail system
- 2 While “Like it” contained a high number of responses, many were constructive as well as positive, pointing out missing facilities, trail gaps, and potential opportunities
- 3 Many comments urged the City to maintain land around Lake Ann as natural, open space, and suggested the only development be hiking or skiing trails
- 4 Tunnels were highlighted as an important amenity for respondents, and many expressed desire for more along Highway 5, especially in closer proximity to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

63 identified areas that need work

“The trails around Lake Susan need improvement. Very cracked, pitted, bumpy and uneven. Have seen people trip and fall.”

“The Chanhassen Rec Center is sub-standard compared to other adjacent towns. We could definitely improve it. Aim high, add an indoor skating rink and a pool.”

“Need a safe way to cross Highway 5 at Powers. Underground tunnel?”

57 identified areas they like

“I love [the] walking path behind the High School and how we are maintaining the natural area here.”

“We love the proposed trails near Lake Lucy and Lake Ann but do not want any of Prince’s land to be developed! Keep land as a preserve!”

“The tunnel under 41 is a great way to get to the Minnewashta trails.”

23 identified missing facilities

“[Southeast of Bluff Creek Preserve] is another wooded area that would be nice to preserve in its natural state and have public access allowed.”

“More painted/signed crosswalks would be nice on Audubon as there is lots of fast moving traffic.”

“Consider adding a fishing dock accessible from North Lotus Park.”

22 identified trail gaps

“The city already has a future trail connection planned from Lake Lucy to Lake Ann Park. Make it happen!”

“Bringing a full loop path around Lake Ann would be a huge advancement in running options for the city.”

“Can Chanhassen and other cities work to get a path all the way from 5 to downtown Excelsior?”

System Components & Condition

In the 2016 National Citizen Survey, residents indicated that they highly value Recreation and Wellness opportunities in Chanhassen and ranked the City's health and wellness, recreational and fitness opportunities, and preventive health services to be higher than other communities across the country. The survey also indicated that 9 out of 10 residents frequently make use of the City's wide array of recreational opportunities. The City will work to maintain these high standards moving into the future by ensuring the system continues to meet community needs.

Parks

Chanhassen's 30 parks comprise 888 acres of City land, providing 36 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. While the City's park acreage exceeds national standards as well as that of surrounding communities, the number of parks is fewer than average. With the expected population growth of over 10,000 new residents in the next 10 to 20 years, the City should continue to look into expanding the number and distribution of parks as opportunities arise. Emphasis should be placed on currently underserved areas, as well as future areas anticipated to be developed with medium and high density housing. At existing parks, user amenities like lighting, benches, grills, wifi, and permanent restrooms were suggested as potential improvements.

Accessibility to parks is excellent within the community's core. This access is complimented by successful partnerships with school facilities and access to amenities in surrounding communities. However, pockets of low accessibility exist in the northwest due to the barriers of Lake Minnewashta, major roadways, and large lot residential development. While this is a gap, it should be noted that Lake Minnewashta Regional Park fulfils the role of a community park in this area. In the south, accessibility is reduced due to fewer parks, major roadways, and large lot residential development. Consideration of park access in the south should occur as development of low, medium, or high density housing occurs. Overall, the construction of additional grade-separated roadway crossings would also help improve park access.

WHAT WE HEARD

“ Love all the programs, trails and parks available to us in Chanhassen



Carver Beach Park



Pioneer Pass Park

Figure 3-10. Neighborhood Park Access

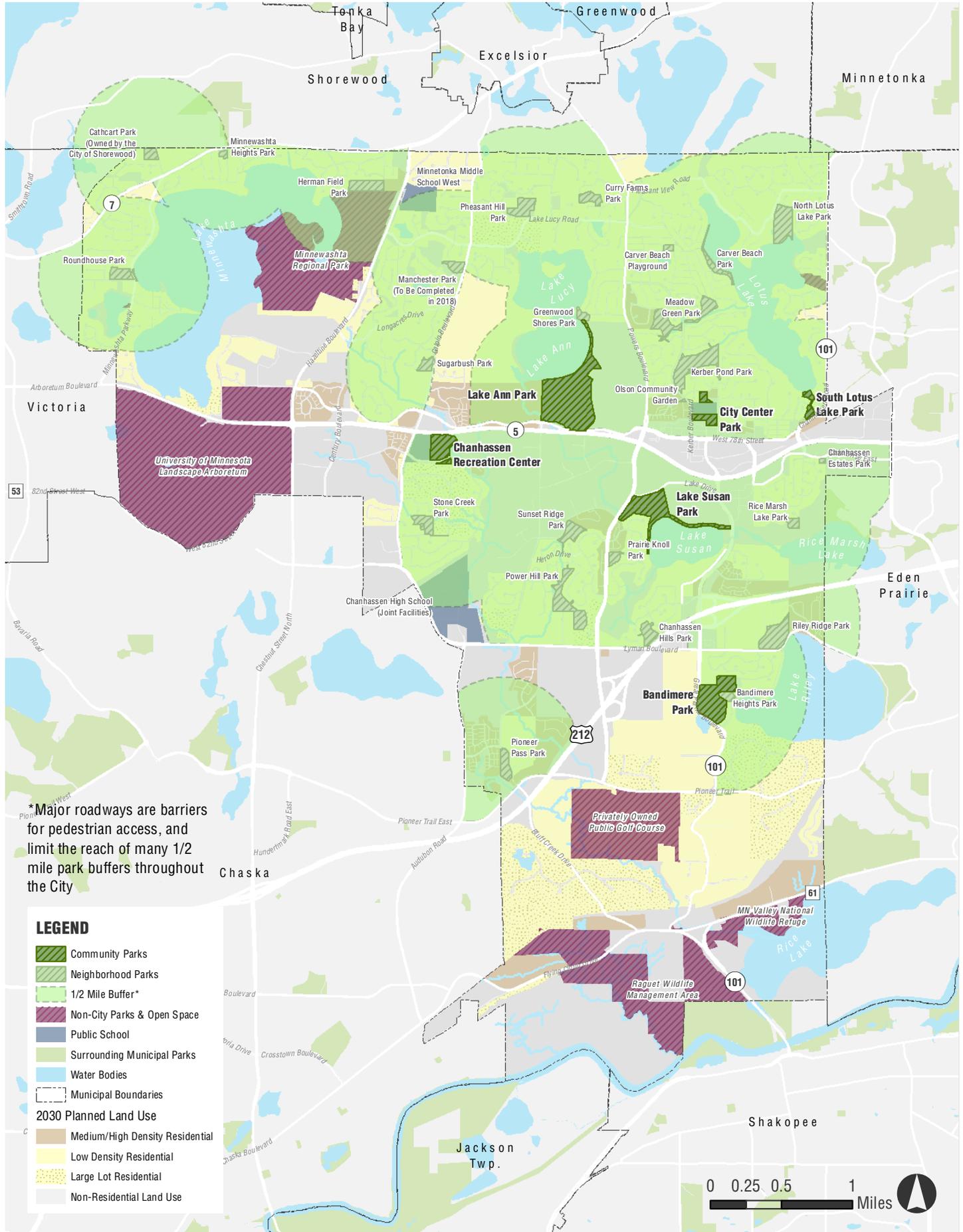
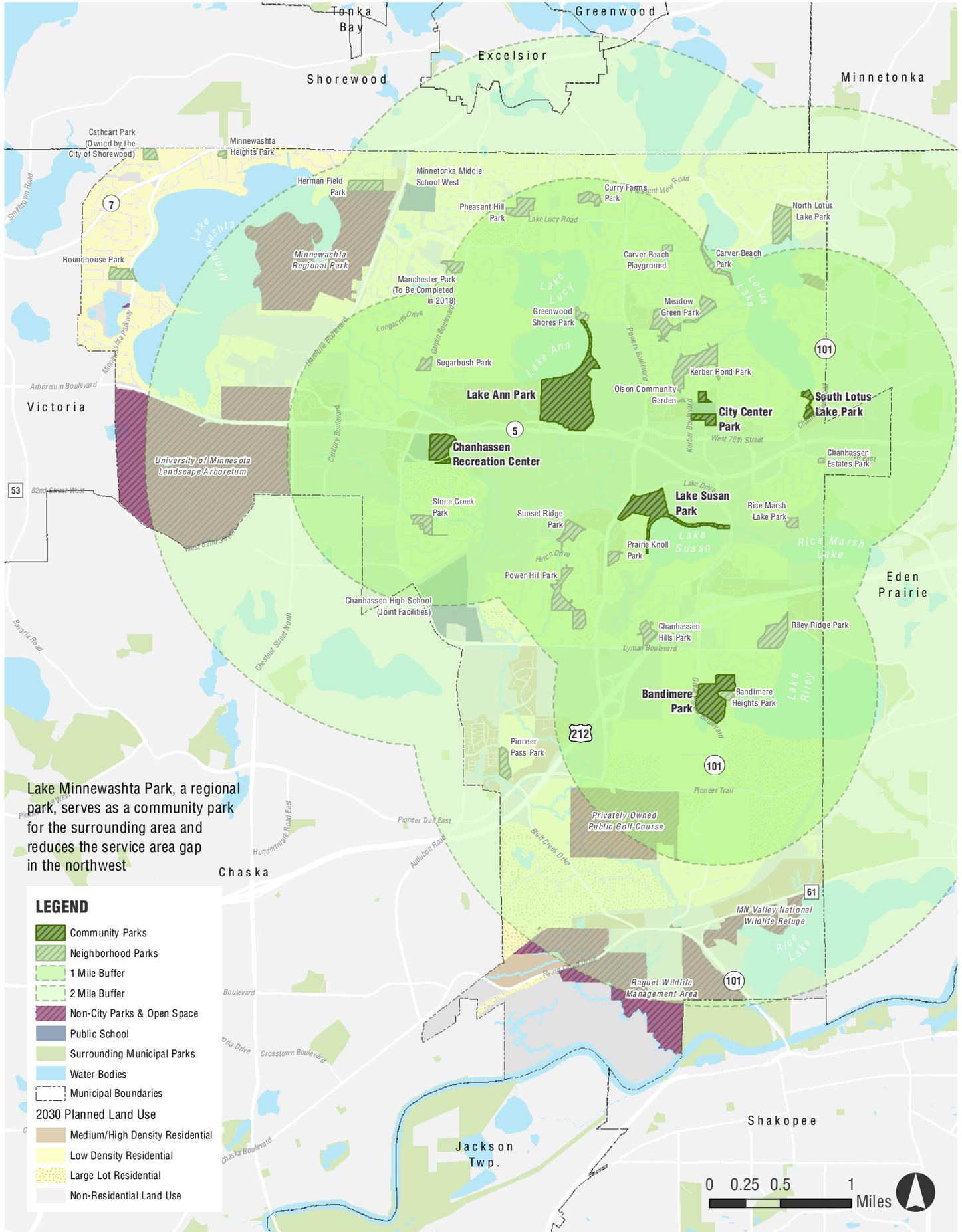


Figure 3-11. Community Park Access



WHAT WE HEARD

“ Another neighborhood playground in downtown Chanhassen



Picnic Shelter at Greenwood Shores Park

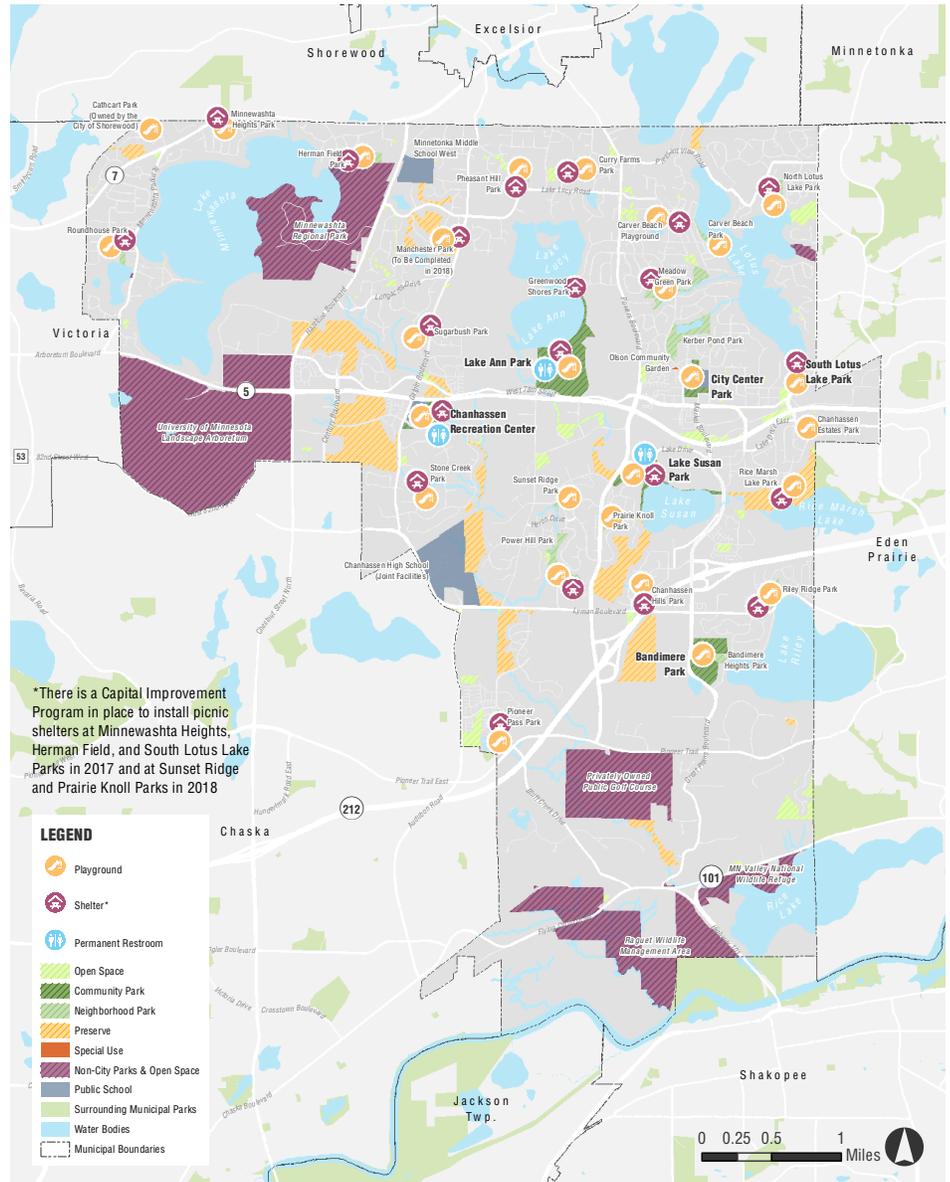


Playground Equipment at North Lotus Lake Park



Playground Equipment at Carver Beach Park

Figure 3-12. Playground & Picnic Shelter Distribution

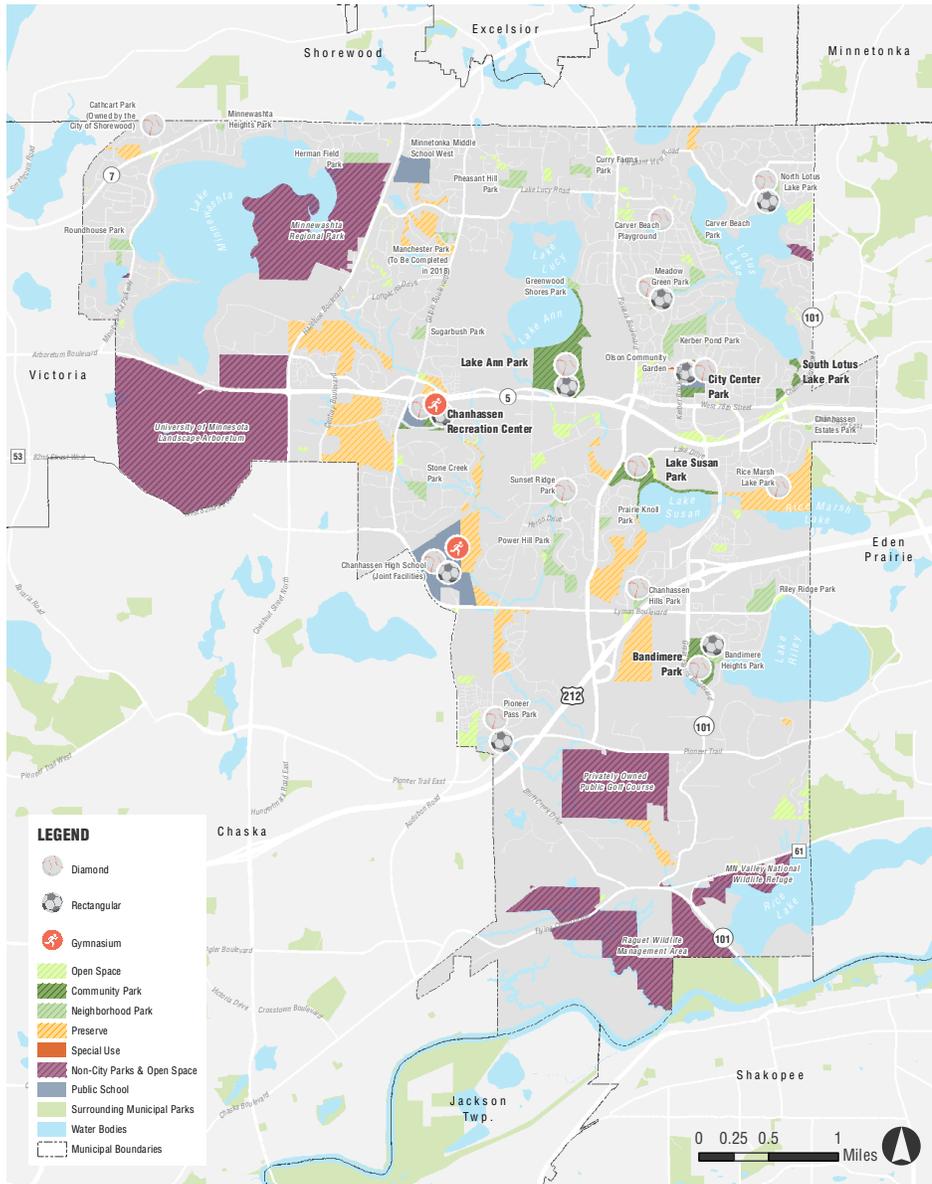


Facilities

Chanhassen currently provides a diverse, well-distributed range of park and recreation facilities.

Picnic shelters and/or playgrounds are present in all but one of the City's neighborhood parks. A Neighborhood Park Picnic Shelter Initiative is currently underway that will add 6 more shelters between the years 2017 and 2018 throughout the City. The amount of playgrounds in Chanhassen is consistent with that of surrounding communities, and is within an acceptable range for anticipated population growth. A major desire of the community identified in the engagement process was for the inclusion of natural playscapes, play areas either made with natural materials or made to look like nature. The incorporation of natural playscapes can be addressed through replacements, upgrades, and when new construction occurs. For efficiency reasons, new playgrounds should continue to be placed carefully to ensure a 1/4 to 1/2 mile gap is maintained between like facilities.

Figure 3-13. Traditional Athletic Fields Distribution



Rectangular Fields at Bandimere Park



Diamond Fields at Lake Ann Park



Diamond & Rectangular Fields at North Lotus Lake Park

Traditional athletic facilities include diamond fields (baseball, softball) and rectangular fields (soccer, football, lacrosse). After evaluating current and projected population figures, the City is in excess of national norms and peer community comparisons for both the amount and quality of athletic fields. However, an analysis of field sizes finds that many of the existing diamond and rectangular fields are not large enough for adult games. Thus, ensuring a mix of field sizes is an important consideration moving forward. Additionally, the existing distribution for both athletic facility types primarily serves residents in the core of the City. Moving forward, the City should explore opportunities to place facilities to serve areas in the north, west, and south, particularly when non-city facilities, like schools, or adjacent community facilities can not serve the needs.

During the community engagement process, residents expressed a desire for amenities that improve the quality of their playing and viewing experience. This includes lighting, permanent restrooms, and seating.

WHAT WE HEARD

“ The baseball/softball fields at Lake Ann need working bathrooms, covered dugouts, and bleachers

Figure 3-14. Informal Summer Facilities Distribution



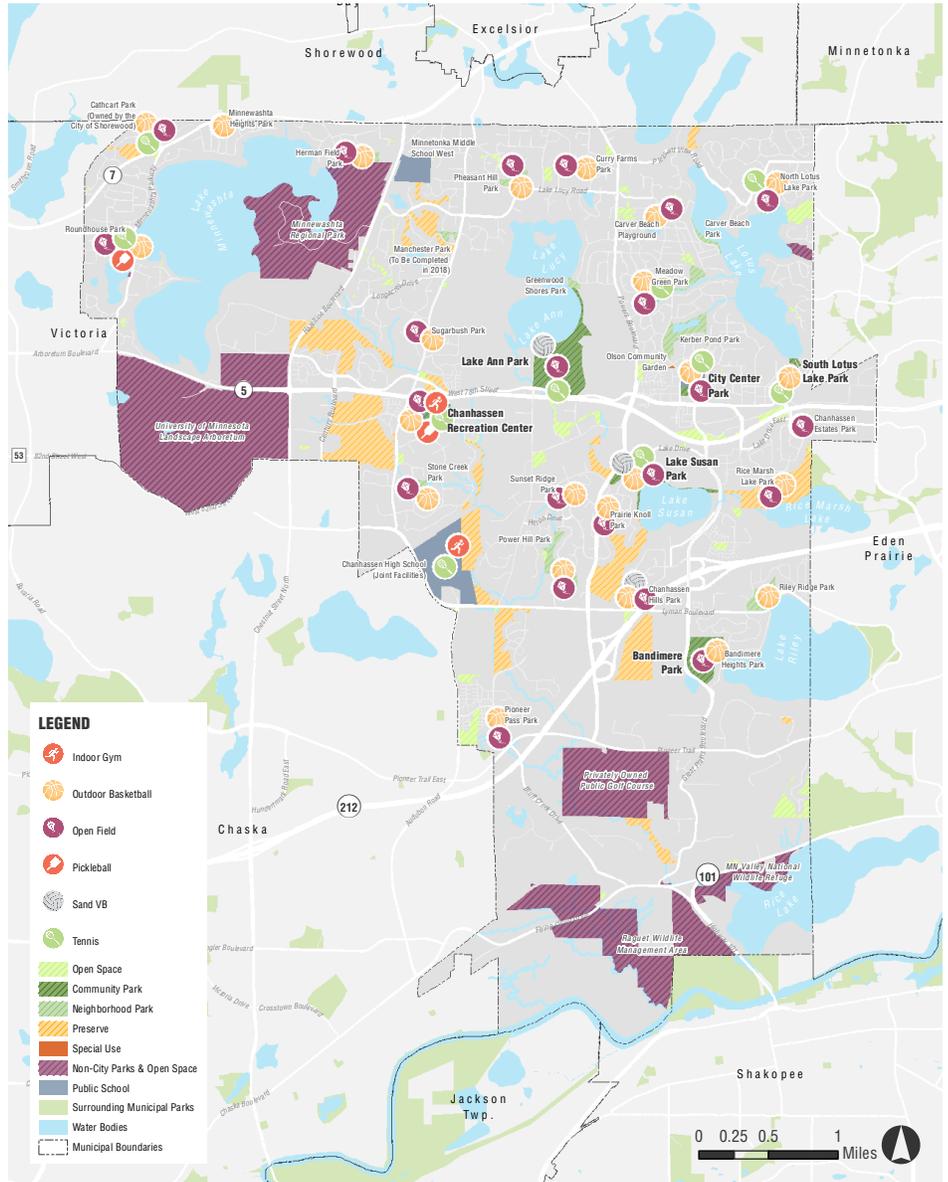
Pickleball Courts at the Recreation Center



Basketball Court at Sunset Ridge Park



Disc Golf Goal at Bandimere Heights Park

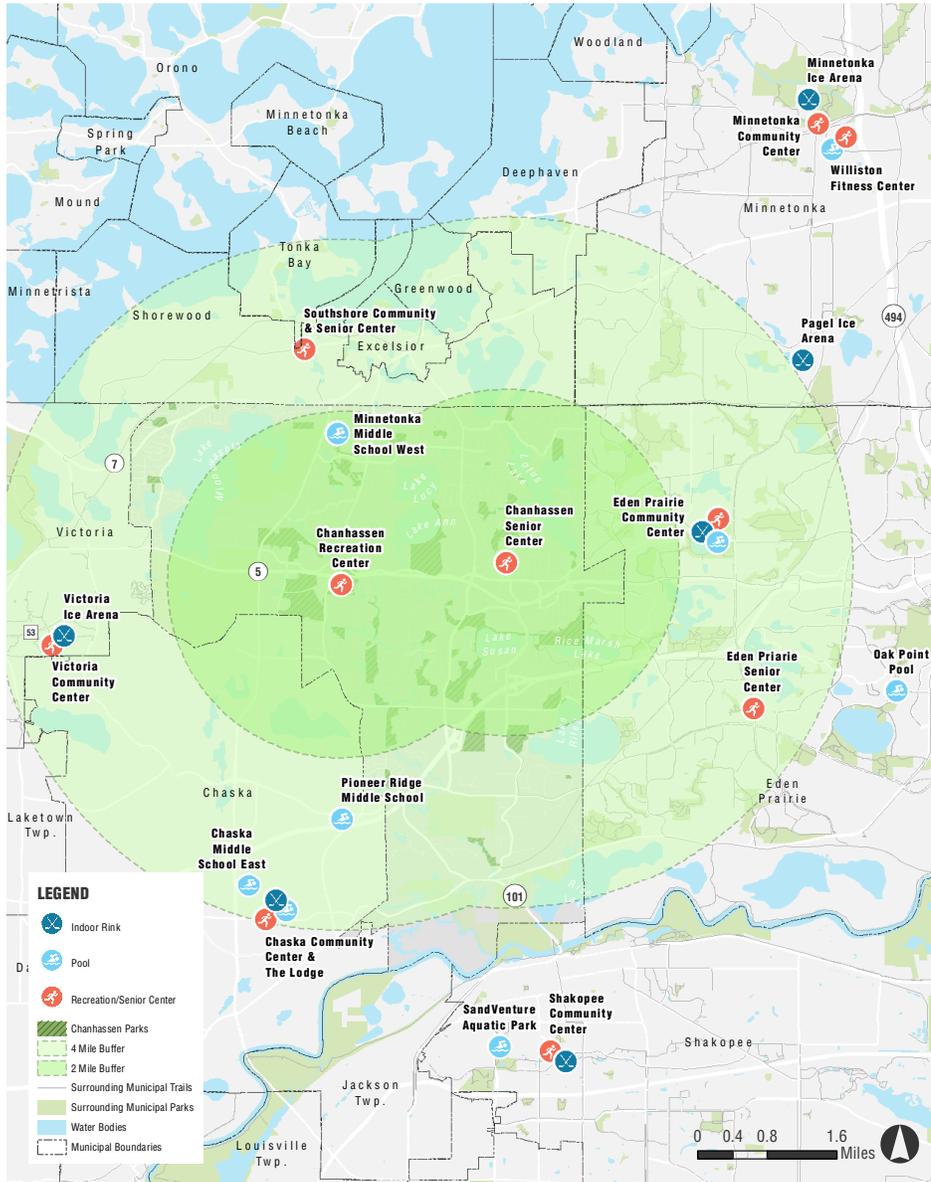


Informal sport facilities, like tennis, basketball, sand volleyball, pickleball, and open fields, are well-distributed throughout the community. Compared with peer communities, Chanhassen contains more than average informal facilities like tennis and basketball courts. To address the growing pickleball trend, the City has developed ten dedicated pickleball courts between the Recreation Center and Roundhouse Park. The Bandimere disc golf course is well-used with players requesting improvements like concrete tee boxes.

While the amount of aquatic facilities is on par with those of surrounding communities, it should be noted that all of the facilities are beaches. The community has expressed a strong desire for additional aquatic facilities like an outdoor pool, an indoor pool, and splash pads.

The Recreation Center and Senior Center provide year-round, indoor recreation opportunities. Community input has indicated that the current facilities are not sufficient. Residents desire a signature recreation facility that provides indoor facilities like a running/walking track, a larger fitness center, an indoor/outdoor pool, meeting spaces, family activities, and additional fitness classes. Additionally, interest was expressed in improving the Senior Center by

Figure 3-15. Surrounding Community Facility Distribution



WHAT WE HEARD

“ Creating redundant systems that are already available in surrounding communities will only create an excess, therefore underutilized, inventory

FUNDING

Funding for park and recreation facilities comes from multiple sources. Under Minnesota law, park dedication funds secured from the subdivision and development of property may only be used for new or expanded facilities to serve growth. Maintenance and replacement of facilities must be funded through other sources, such as a city’s general fund.

expanding awareness and adding more active recreation offerings, fitness facilities, and meeting spaces. While facilities of this scale exist within close proximity to the City (see Figure 3-15), residents express a desire to have these types of amenities within their community rather than having to travel to an adjacent community. .

Figure 3-15 also displays that while an indoor skating/hockey rink is not provided in Chanhassen, there are rinks available in Chaska (2), Victoria (2), Shakopee (1), Eden Prairie (3), and Minnetonka (4).

A key focus over the next 20 years should be the maintenance and replacement of aging facilities. Facility replacement should consider whether the same facility should be replaced or if a different facility should be built to address gaps in the existing system, needs driven by emerging trends , or a desire for speciality facilities. Examples might include additional dog parks, indoor facilities, lacrosse fields, pools or splash pads, etc.

WHAT WE HEARD

“ We NEED to have places for our wildlife to live - that is one of the most unique things about where we live. ”

Preserves and Open Space

Most residents are happy with the amount of perceived natural open space throughout the city and many would support additional preservation. Because the priority thus far has been to protect natural areas in their current state, access is limited and park preserves are not highly used. While the vistas created by open space are valued, desire was also expressed for increased access so users could better experience natural areas. In particular, residents expressed an interest in acquisition to support the expansion of natural trail corridors, particularly around Lake Ann and within the Bluff Creek Corridor.



Sarah McGinn Honorable

Figure 3-16. Preserves, Open Space, & Trails

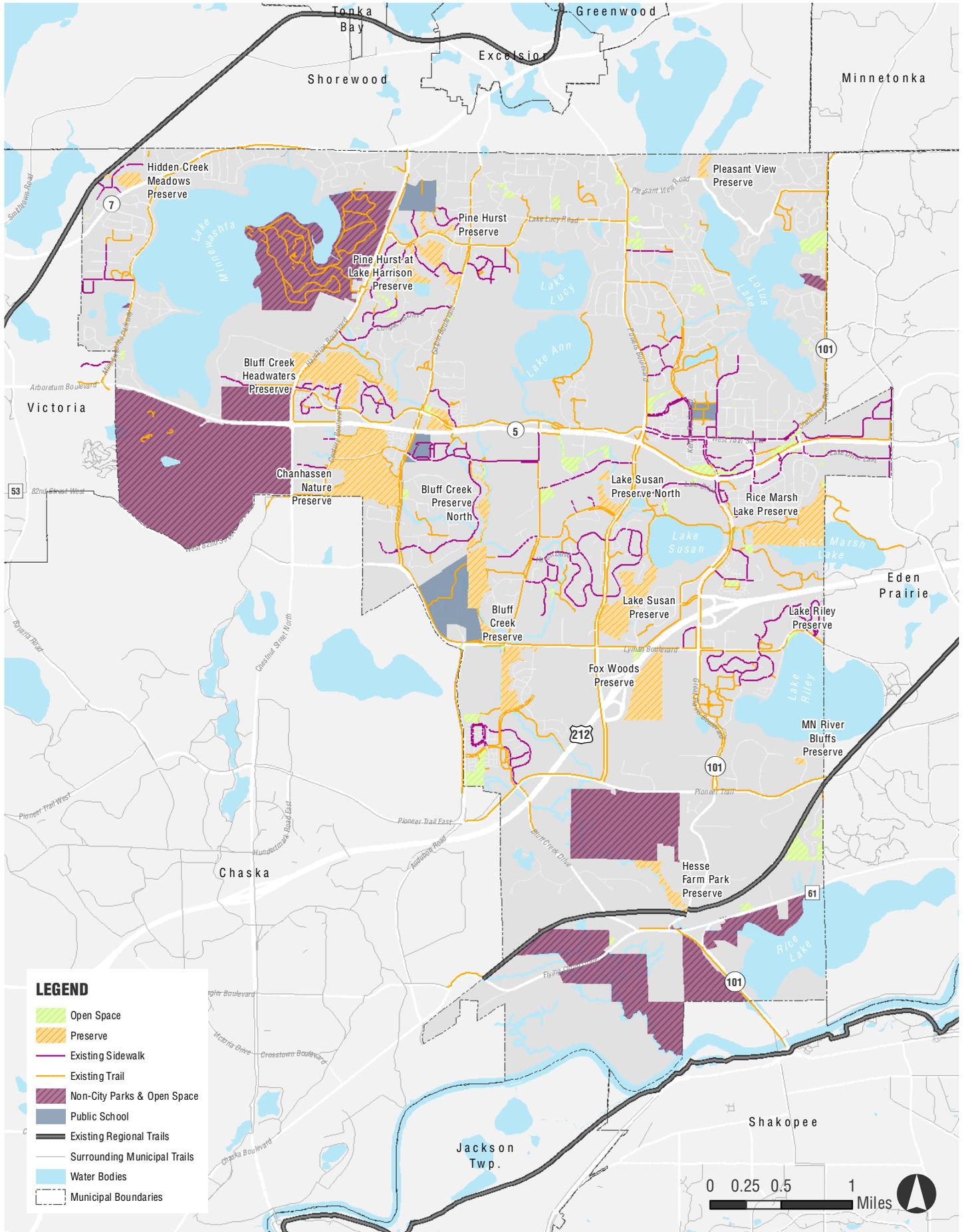
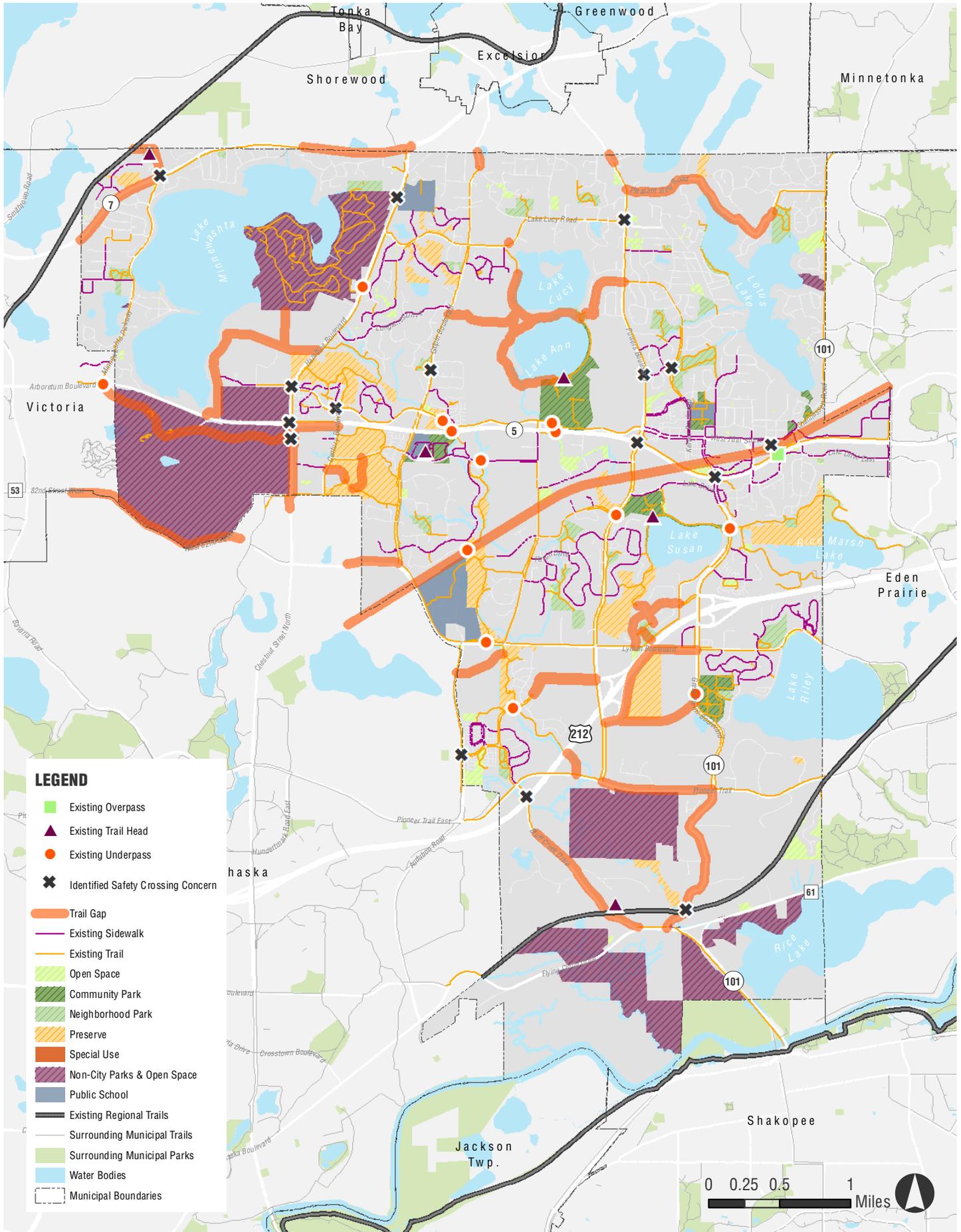


Figure 3-17. City Trail Gaps and Identified Safety Crossing Concerns



Trails

Chanhassen's 76 miles of trails have been identified as the most popular facility provided in the community. This city-wide system helps connect neighborhoods to parks, schools, commercial and civic destinations, and adjacent communities. The City is committed to providing pedestrians and cyclists with safe crossings of major roadways. Currently the City has a pedestrian bridge over Highway 5 as well as more than ten underpasses city-wide. Safe crossings were a topic discussed throughout the system planning process. Specific locations where additional crossing improvements are needed are identified in Figure 3-17.

In addition to safe crossings, trail users requested additional amenities to improve their trail riding experience. These requests include benches, wayfinding, and lighting to enhance safety and extend year-round use.

Several regional trails connect Chanhassen to surrounding communities and destinations, including the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail to the north and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and the Highway 101 Regional Trail to the south. Both of the LRT Regional Trail corridors are owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) and are slotted for future light rail transit use. A cooperative agreement between HCRRA and Three Rivers Park District allows the corridors to be used for interim recreational purposes.

Currently there are natural surface trails in Fox Woods Preserve, Carver Beach Park, Lake Ann Park, Carver Pond Park, and Stone Creek Park. Community members expressed a desire for additional natural surface trails, particularly as a way to further explore natural areas, whether in preserves or parks.



Trail crossing on Powers Boulevard



North Lotus Lake Park Trail

WHAT WE HEARD

“ It would be wonderful to have more trash cans along the trails!



Fourth of July Parade



Wood Carving by Chanhassen Woodcarvers



Summer Concert Series



Easter Egg/Candy Hunt

Programming

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

According to the online system-wide questionnaire performed in Fall of 2016, community events are the most popular type of programming offered by the City, as can be seen in Figure 3-6. Annual events hosted by the City and supported by area businesses and local service clubs include February Festival, Easter Egg / Candy Hunt, Arbor Day Celebration, July 4th Celebration, Fire Department Open House, Halloween Party, and Tree Lighting Ceremony. While these events are well-attended, there continues to be an interest for additional events throughout the year.

The City has good working relationships with recreation groups and associations, who do a good job of providing a variety of programs. Improved amenities that support events, like picnic shelters with amenities to support food preparation, would help encourage existing and future programming. The City provides introductory level athletic programming for very young children (under 6) and team, league athletics (softball) for adults. There is a desire from some residents that the young athletic programming be improved in terms of structure and coaching. Additionally, interest has been expressed for more older youth and adult programming in arts, fitness, and outdoor education. There is also desire from many residents for the City to provide more programming, such as aquatics, to meet the needs of those who prefer public recreation programs.

Management and Operations

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