



## Chapter 9: Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources

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### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

Edina residents value and are very passionate about their park lands, facilities and programs. Residents are always willing to volunteer to serve the public to provide the best parks and recreation programs, services and facilities. Edina's volunteers are a critical and extremely valuable resource in the delivery of park and recreation programs and services. The City relies heavily on Edina's volunteers to provide a comprehensive and quality recreation program.

As Edina plans for the next 20 years, the plan is to be mindful of energy efficiencies. In addition, our focus will also be mindful of the preservation of natural resources and, where appropriate, restoration of natural resources to create an environment that promotes sustainable natural resources. There is a strong interest among residents and staff in improving water quality. The City will be working to ensure compliance with the established "Surface Water Quality Plan." The City will also continue to work closely with the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to coordinate and support future efforts to create, protect and preserve wetland areas and restoration projects that improve shoreline stabilization, establish and maintain environmentally sound shoreline buffer zones and other water quality best practices projects.

This Comprehensive Plan also addresses the community's strong desire to create more greenways to tie park system components together to form a more cohesive park environment.

The City, with the help of volunteers, will respond to a growing trend of childhood obesity by creating and administering new and innovative programs, facilities and services that address this important issue. The City Council adopted a resolution to support a Minnesota State initiative called "Get Fit" in an effort to heighten awareness of the growing epidemic of childhood obesity and show a commitment to do its part.



The Edina Park and Recreation Department recognizes the importance of establishing a common vision that leads to a preferred future. This common vision positions us to proactively address future trends, meet the needs of a rapidly changing society, and place parks and recreation at the table when critical issues are framed and decisions are made. The Park and Recreation Department's Vision Statement is; "We Create Community through People, Parks and Programs." In a sense, this vision is a perpetual action plan and will be the cornerstone of future strategic planning efforts.



The benefits of parks and recreation are endless. The core mission of Edina's Park and Recreation Department is diverse, meaningful and comprehensive. The community will continue to have ever changing needs. It will be the City's challenge to adapt to these inevitable ever changing needs through facilities, programs and services and be mindful of existing facilities, programs and services offered in nearby surrounding communities so as not to create duplication.

See Figure 9.1 Parks and Open Space Map (at end of this chapter)

## 9.2 CURRENT CONDITIONS: PARKS, OPEN SPACES, AND NATURAL RESOURCES



## Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Classification

In 1995, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Academy of Park and Recreation Administration revised the suggested classifications for parks, recreation areas and open spaces. The key changes were the inclusion of park-school sites, athletic fields, private park/recreation facilities, natural resource areas/preserves and greenway classifications.

This new classification system states that there are essentially two types of park and recreation land:

1. Publicly owned land.
2. Privately owned land that contributes to the public's park and recreation system.

Examples of privately owned land that contribute to the public's park and recreation system would include:

- Edina Country Club
- Interlachen Country Club
- Church-owned properties
- Southdale YMCA
- The meadows in White Oaks neighborhood
- Power line easements
- Other miscellaneous privately owned vacant space

These privately owned spaces and facilities provide the public with valued park and recreation services and benefits.

The National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) periodically publishes "Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines" for municipal park and recreation agencies to assist in comprehensive planning. The NRPA suggests that the "national standards" be used only as a benchmark guideline because each community has its own unique profile in regards to demographics, total acreage, terrain, climate and a host of other affecting factors. Nonetheless, Edina currently exceeds the national standard guideline for acres per 1,000 residents.

The NRPA suggests a national standards guideline of 25 acres per 1,000 residents. This standard would include all local, County, and State-owned property within the community. Edina has no county, state or federal parklands. The City's 1,565 total park and open space acreage computes to 33 acres per 1,000 residents (based on the 2000 census population of 47,425).



The NRPA also suggests that each community should devote 10% of the total area of a city to park and open space. Edina has a total of 10,240 acres of which 1,565 acres are park and open space. Thus, 15.3% of Edina's land area is currently devoted to park and open space.

### **Regional Parks and 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan**

There are currently no county, state or federal park lands in Edina. All 1,565 acres of park land and open space are owned and maintained by the City. There are however regional public parks and facilities in the Twin Cities area that serve Edina residents. For example, Three Rivers Park District owns and maintains regional parks, such as Bryant Lake Regional Park in Eden Prairie, Hyland Lake Park Reserve in Bloomington and 16 other regional parks within the Three Rivers Park District.

These regional parks offer a variety of recreation opportunities, some of which are not available in Edina but are within a reasonable driving distance. For example, Three Rivers Park District parks offer snowmobiling, horseback riding, boating, archery, camping, canoeing, downhill skiing, nature centers and historic farm facilities. As we plan for development of future park facilities, it will be important to be mindful of existing public park and recreation facilities throughout the Twin Cities area so as not to unnecessarily duplicate services.

To the north, the Minneapolis Park Board offers miles of trails for walking, running and biking around its chain of lakes and the Grand Round trail system. As stated later in this Chapter, it is the goal to make trail connections to give Edina residents access to the Minneapolis Park Board's Grand Rounds trail system and the Three Rivers Park District's Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail.

The 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan adopted by the Metropolitan Council in June 2005 is the metropolitan system plan for regional recreation open space. The 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan does not involve acquisition or development of any land for park purposes in Edina with the exception of the proposed development of two regional trails:

South Hennepin Regional Trail-West – This is a proposed regional trail that would follow an existing north-south railroad grade owned by Canadian Pacific Railroad in the City of Edina. It would connect to Hyland-Bush-Anderson Park Reserve on the south and the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail north of the Edina city limits. The railroads are still in active use so planning for the conversion to a regional trail requires joint use of the



Right-of-Way. The proposed trail alignment as shown in Figure 9.2 is the preferred route.

Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail – This is a proposed regional trail that would be an east-west connecting trail in Edina. The City of Edina has been working closely with Three Rivers Park District and others to identify the most appropriate alignment of this east-west regional corridor. The general alignment is shown in Figure 9.2.

Other than the two proposed regional trails mentioned above, there are no plans within the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan that involve any property in Edina.

### Natural Resource Open Space Areas

The National Recreation and Park Association defines Natural Resource Areas as lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. These lands consist of:

- Individual sites exhibiting natural resources.
- Land that is unsuitable for development but offers natural resource potential. (Examples include parcels with steep slopes, and natural vegetation, drainage-ways and ravines, surface water management areas (man-made pond areas, and utility easements).
- Protected lands, such as wetlands/lowlands and shorelines along waterways, lakes, and ponds.

All natural resource open space areas were inventoried and categorized as follows:

(Quadrants were determined by the two dividing highways in Edina: TH 62 and TH 100).

| <u>NORTHWEST QUADRANT</u>            | <u>ACREAGE</u> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Nine Mile Creek Right of Way         | 148.15         |
| Lincoln Drive Floodplain             | 17.16          |
| Division Street Storm Water Drainage | 18.14          |
| Moore Property (Melody Lake)         | 4.96           |
| Normandale Rd. (NW Benton & Hwy 100) | 2.14           |
| Garden Park Addition                 | 6.70           |
| Glenbrae & Ayrshire                  | 4.30           |
| Krahl Hill                           | 7.75           |
| Pine Grove Rd. (S and E of dead-end) | 4.39           |



NORTHEAST QUADRANT

|                                            |       |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|
| Littel & Lynn Avenue                       | .46   |
| W. 41 <sup>st</sup> Street and Lynn Avenue | 3.10  |
| Minnehaha Creek Right of Way               | 22.88 |
| Townes Road                                | 1.00  |

SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

|                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Nine Mile Creek Right of Way       | 9.75  |
| Cahill School Backlot              | 11.05 |
| NE of High School & S of Crosstown | 37.29 |
| Dewey Hill Ponds                   | 48.00 |
| Limerick Dr. (dead end W of RR)    | 3.90  |

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Bristol & Mavelle | 1.01 |
|-------------------|------|

**Total Natural Resource Acres 352.13**

**City Parks**

The following are individual park locations and acreage totals:

**Mini-Parks - 12 Parks – 21.12 Acres**

A Mini park is characterized by a size of approximately 2 acres or less and is designed to serve primarily the needs of pre-school age children, although it may provide facilities designed to serve the recreation needs of other age groups. Edina's Mini-Parks typically do not have scheduled athletic facilities. Mini parks are typically used to address limited or isolated recreational needs. Service Area - ¼ Square Mile.

| <u>Park</u>      | <u>Address</u>                    | <u>Size</u> | <u>Quadrant</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Birchcrest       | 6016 Hansen Rd.                   | 1.61 Acres  | NW              |
| Browndale        | 4510 Browndale Ave.               | .82 Acre    | NE              |
| Chowen           | 5700 Chowen Ave.                  | .93 Acre    | NE              |
| Grandview Square | 5213 Grandview Square             | .60 Acre    | NW              |
| Kojetin          | 4201 W. 44 <sup>th</sup> Street   | 2.69 Acres  | NE              |
| Lake Edina       | 4400 Parklawn Ave.                | 3.10 Acres  | SE              |
| McGuire          | W. 69 <sup>th</sup> & McGuire Rd. | 2.00 Acres  | SW              |



|             |                                     |            |    |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------|----|
| Melody Lake | 5501 Melody Lake Dr.                | 4.18 Acres | NW |
| Sherwood    | Sherwood Rd. & Edenmoor             | 1.53 Acres | NW |
| St. Johns   | W. 60 <sup>th</sup> & St.Johns Ave. | .94 Acre   | NE |
| Tingdale    | W. 59 <sup>th</sup> & Tingdale Ave. | .67 Acre   | NW |
| York Park   | 5448 York Ave.                      | 2.05 Acres | NE |

**Neighborhood Parks - 12 Parks - 112.85 Acres**

Neighborhood parks are designed to serve primarily the needs of children six to fourteen years of age. Tennis courts, softball diamonds, basketball and ice skating facilities are commonly provided in neighborhood parks. Some of Edina's neighborhood parks have one or more scheduled athletic facilities, such as outdoor hockey rinks and/or fields for soccer, football, baseball and softball. Neighborhood parks typically range in size from approximately two acres to twenty acres. Service Area = 1 Square Mile.

| <u>Park</u>     | <u>Address</u>                      | <u>Size</u> | <u>Quadrant</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Alden           | 6750 Belmore Lane                   | 5.12 Acres  | NW              |
| Arden           | 5230 Minnehaha Blvd.                | 17.75 Acres | NE              |
| Cornelia School | 7124 Cornelia Drive                 | 10.75 Acres | SE              |
| Countryside     | 6240 Tracy Ave.                     | 9.01 Acres  | NW              |
| Fox Meadow      | Blake Rd. & Fox Meadow Ln.          | 3.84 Acres  | NW              |
| Heights         | 5520 W. 66 <sup>th</sup> Street     | 4.00 Acres  | SW              |
| Normandale      | 6501 Warren Ave.                    | 10.06 Acres | SW              |
| Strachauer      | 6200 Beard Ave.                     | 4.50 Acres  | NE              |
| Utley           | 50 <sup>th</sup> & Wooddale Ave.    | 5.73 Acres  | NE              |
| Wooddale        | W. 50 <sup>th</sup> & Wooddale Ave. | 4.70 Acres  | NE              |
| Yorktown        | W. 73 <sup>rd</sup> & York Ave.     | 3.42 Acres  | SE              |
| Todd Park       | 4429 Vandervork Ave.                | 33.97 Acres | NW              |



**Community Playfields – 8 Parks - 253.68 Acres**

Community playfields typically range in size from approximately 20 to 60 acres. These parks are designed to provide facilities for diverse recreational activities for young people and adults, although a section is also typically set aside for smaller neighborhood children. All of Edina’s Community Playfields have one or more scheduled athletic facilities, such as outdoor hockey rinks and fields for soccer, football, baseball and softball. Service area - 9-16 square miles.

| <u>Park</u>    | <u>Address</u>                     | <u>Size</u> | <u>Quadrant</u> |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Creek Valley   | W. 64 <sup>th</sup> & Gleason Road | 10.00 Acres | SW              |
| Garden         | 5520 Hansen Road                   | 18.74 Acres | NW              |
| Highlands      | 5200 Doncaster Way                 | 44.05 Acres | NW              |
| Lewis          | Dewey Hill & Cahill Road           | 21.04 Acres | SW              |
| Pamela         | 5900 Park Place                    | 62.00 Acres | NE              |
| Van Valkenburg | 4935 Lincoln Drive                 | 41.76 Acres | NW              |
| Walnut Ridge   | 5801 Londonderry Road              | 44.24 Acres | NW              |
| Weber          | 4115 Grimes Ave.                   | 11.85 Acres | NE              |





**Community Parks - 4 Parks - 549.05 Acres**

The community park is usually a large park of more than 100 acres, or a smaller park containing special community facilities.

| <u>Park</u>      | <u>Address</u>                    | <u>Size</u>  | <u>Quadrant</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Braemar          | SW Corner of Edina                | 500.00 Acres | SW              |
| Centennial Lakes | 7495 France Avenue                | 25.00 Acres  | SE              |
| Kenneth Rosland  | 4300 West 66 <sup>th</sup> Street | 22.05 Acres  | SE              |
| Edinburgh        | 7700 York Avenue South            | 2.00 Acres   | SE              |

**Special Purpose Parks - 7 Parks - 277.11 Acres**

The special purpose park provides a single or specific form of recreation. Service Area is city-wide.

| <u>Park</u>                                | <u>Address</u>                    | <u>Size</u>  | <u>Quadrant</u> |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Arneson Acres                              | 4711 West 70 <sup>th</sup> street | 15.00 Acres  | SE              |
| Bredesen                                   | Vernon Ave. & Olinger Blvd.       | 206.00 Acres | NW              |
| Richards Golf Course                       | 7640 Parklawn Ave.                | 39.65 Acres  | SE              |
| Southdale Gateway                          | SE Corner of Edina                | 9.97 Acres   | SE              |
| Tupa                                       | 4918 Eden Avenue                  | 1.00 Acre    | NE              |
| Williams                                   | West 50 <sup>th</sup> & Browndale | .34 Acre     | NE              |
| Grandview Square/<br>Senior Citizen Center | 5280 Grandview Square             | 5.15 Acres   | NW              |

**Inventory Summary**

| <u>PARK TYPE</u>                         | <u>ACRES</u>  |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Natural Resource Areas (19 areas)        | 352.13        |
| Mini-Parks (12)                          | 21.12         |
| Neighborhood Parks ( 12)                 | 112.85        |
| Community Playfields ( 8)                | 253.68        |
| Community Parks (4)                      | 549.05        |
| Special Purpose Parks (7)                | <u>277.11</u> |
| Total Parklands & Natural Resource Areas | 1,565.94      |



OTHER MAINTAINED GRASS AREAS

|                                             |                 |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Plazas, Triangles, and circles              | 5.00            |
| Storm Water and Drainage Areas              | 60.00           |
| Parklands and Natural Resource Areas        | <u>1,565.94</u> |
| Total Parks, Natural Resource & Other Areas | 1,630.94        |

**Parkland and Natural Resource Areas Acreage Summary**

The following are parkland acreage totals per park classification:

| <u>COMPONENT</u>                                   | <u>CHARACTER</u>                                                                                  | <u>SVC AREA</u> | <u># OF PARKS</u> | <u>TOTAL ACREAGE</u> |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Natural Resource Areas                             | Vary in size                                                                                      | Varies          | 19                | 352.13               |
| Mini-Parks                                         | Less than 2 acres                                                                                 | ¼ sq.mi.        | 12                | 21.12                |
| Neighborhood Parks                                 | Serve children ages 6-14                                                                          | 1 sq.mi.        | 11                | 78.88                |
| Community Playfields                               | Serve recreational needs of young people and adults                                               | 9-16 sq.mi.     | 9                 | 287.65               |
| Community Parks                                    | Large parks in excess 100 acres. Serve pre-school -adult active and passive recreational pursuits | 4-16 sq.mi.     | 4                 | 549.05               |
| Special Purpose Parks                              | Provide a special form of recreation                                                              | City Wide       | 7                 | 277.11               |
| <b>Total Parkland &amp; Natural Resource Areas</b> |                                                                                                   |                 | <b>62</b>         | <b>1,565.94</b>      |



## 9.3 TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

### Community Attitude and Interest Citizen Survey (“Needs Assessment Survey”)

The City has a very comprehensive and continually progressive park system that serves the leisure needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

A Community Attitude & Interest Citizen Survey (herein referred to as the “Needs Assessment Survey”) was conducted in 2006. The Needs Assessment Survey was mailed to a random sample of 3,000 households in the City in September 2006. 865 surveys were completed and returned by the deadline. 91 percent of respondents indicated that they had visited an Edina park during the past year. 97 percent rated the level of maintenance as either excellent or good. The facilities used by the highest percentage of respondent households were Centennial Lakes Park, Edinborough Park, Braemar Golf Course, Bredesen Park walking or biking trail, and the Edina Aquatic Center.

Based on the results of that survey, 77 percent of respondents are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the overall value their household receives from the City. 11 percent of respondents indicated “neutral,” and 8 percent said “don’t know.” 88 percent of respondents indicated that they were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the number of Edina parks. 93 percent were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the maintenance of the parks.

The Needs Assessment Survey results repeatedly show the community’s strong support and desire for more walking and biking trails throughout the park system. In cooperation and collaboration with neighboring communities and Three Rivers Park District, Edina’s goal is to create north/south and east/west corridor trails that connect with neighboring communities and ultimately the greater regional trail system. The plan will be to further pursue the development of the “Nine Mile Trail,” which is the east/west corridor across Edina from Richfield to Minnetonka. The plan will also be to work with the Bike Edina Task Force, Three Rivers Park District and cities to the north and south to plan and develop a north/south corridor that connects with the greater regional trail system as called out in the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan.

The Needs Assessment Survey results also indicate residents’ strong desire to support the maintenance of parks. Residents recognize the value and importance of maintaining existing park lands and infrastructure. As the City develops more infrastructure within the park system, it should be mindful of the importance of planning



for adequate resources to maintain parks at a level that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.

### **Trends Influencing the Planning Process**

There are a number of trends listed below that will influence the park and recreation planning process of the future. In this post-industrial age of rapid change, constant monitoring will be required to develop a keen awareness of the global and local trends that are shaping the world and this community. The City will need to continually provide sensitive and appropriate responses to changes in social, demographic, technological, economic, political and environmental trends. The magnitude of these changes will demand flexibility in planning practices to appropriately respond to rapidly changing needs.

#### Demographic Trends:

Although Edina's overall population is expected to increase only a modest 3 percent over the next 20 years, residents aged 65 years and older are projected to increase by over 100 percent from 2005 to 2030. The projected increase in population of those under the age of 20 by the year 2050 is expected to be only 1.3 percent, the number of residents ages 21-44 is projected to decrease by 2 percent and the number of residents ages 45-64 is projected to increase by 5.4 percent. The projected 102.5 percent increase (in Hennepin County) in the 65+ age group by the year 2030 will significantly impact the need for more recreational services for seniors. Trends suggest that seniors will live more active lifestyles in the future. Therefore, there will be an increased demand for even more trails and recreational opportunities for seniors. There will be a greater emphasis on mobility by non-vehicular transportation for that age bracket, including walking and biking.

#### Nation-wide Trends:

According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, the following are emerging trends that are evident in many communities across the country. NRPA suggests that the implications of these trends on public parks and recreation will be profound, affecting every facet of systems planning and the delivery of services. The following is an abbreviated list of identified national trends, some of which may be evident in Edina. Those trends that do affect Edina will likely have an effect on the future planning and delivery of parks and recreation services in Edina.



### Environmental Trends:

- Disappearing resources – significant open spaces and natural habitats, original landscapes, wetlands and natural drainages, ancient forests, water and energy resources, remnant landscapes.
- Reduction of pollution and waste; recycling.
- Environmentally sensitive lifestyles – low impact, non-consumptive use (walking, bicycling) and increased aesthetic appreciation.
- More environmentally sound practices and habits – reduced and modified use of pesticides and herbicides.
- NIMBY and no growth attitudes – “not in my back yard” resistance to change, growth, development.
- Natural areas management – maintaining and reclaiming natural values and open spaces.
- The Greenhouse effect – may disrupt some regional economies within 10-20 years.
- Federal water quality mandates – natural drainage systems become more important as urban waterways and wetlands are protected.

### Social Trends:

- Increased crime and violence – domestic violence, gangs, violence in schools and other public places, drugs, vandalism, racial tension.
- Increased numbers of children at risk – child abuse and neglect, teen pregnancies, suicides, family instability, loneliness, alienation, rebelliousness, substance abuse.
- Change-related stress – economic, social and technological change continues in 21<sup>st</sup> Century, at rates creating stress.
- People empowerment – opportunities for building community and social bonding, neighborhood watch, community policing.
- Citizen participation – involvement of “stakeholders” in public planning and decision-making; planning with, not for people.
- Social service networking – organizing community resources to attack complex social problems.
- Increasing concerns for personal and family safety.
- Major public health issue – continuing AIDS epidemic, STDs, etc.
- Increased importance of wellness activities.
- Desire to preserve and maintain cultural heritages.
- Volunteerism – making more effective and efficient use of volunteers.



### Economic Trends:

- Reduced discretionary or leisure spending.
- Increasing public costs – associated with health, social services, environmental protection and clean-up, aging infrastructure.
- Increasing labor and energy costs – consuming higher percent of budgets.
- Tax limitation measures – reduction in and/or caps on revenue traditionally used to support public programs (education, recreation, etc.).
- Increase in national poverty rate.
- Leisure services provided by multiple providers – private and non-private sectors.
- More partnerships – doing more with less in conjunction with others.
- Recognition of economic value of parks, open spaces, and amenities in infrastructure.

### Technological Trends:

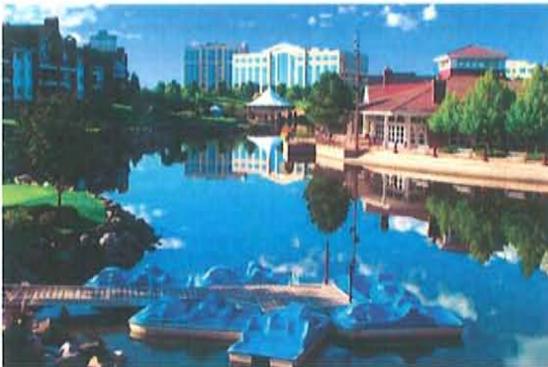
- Technological change – rapid pace will continue.
- Easing of the effects of aging.
- Advances in information technology – making products, services and information more accessible and targeted.
- Increased contact with computers.
- Information technology will blur distinction between work and home.
- Increased media maladies – information overload, privacy, objectionable material, distorted reality.
- More public meetings aired on public/access cable television – more education on issues and services.
- Greater energy costs shaping technology – smaller cars and multi-modal transportation systems, more efficient buildings.

### Trends in Urban Patterns:

- Increased urban sprawl – located primarily along major transportation corridors and mass transit routes.
- Greater “in-fill” development – lands considered marginal will be upgraded for new development, increasing density in the urban core.
- Revitalizing and retrofitting downtowns, industrial plants and commercial centers – amenities included to make them more marketable – mixed use development.



- Increasing importance of amenities – recognized as essential for maintaining competitiveness.
- Historic preservation – valuing heritage resources as treasures.
- Continued gentrification – caused by increasing land values in central city areas.
- Affordable housing – community mandates and improved technology.
- Increased traffic congestion – placing more emphasis on mass transit and transportation options using existing open space.
- More political pressure for urban growth management – balancing sustainable future.
- Growth of partnerships – public and private partnering to address complex urban needs.



#### Implication of Trends on Parks, Recreation, Natural Resource Areas, and Greenway Planning:

NRPA suggests that the above listed trends will have a significant impact on the planning, design, and delivery of parks and recreation programs, facilities and services. NRPA suggests that the following defines some of these impacts:

- Greater focus on benefits-driven needs assessments which link planning decisions more directly to community values and goals.
- Greater emphasis on comprehensive open space planning and preservation, including broader definitions of open space and green space.
- More greenway planning along urban waterways and other corridors, supporting flood plain management, fish and wildlife habitat protection, water quality enhancement, off-street bikeways and pathways, aesthetic amenities and passive recreation.



- More emphasis on bio-filtration of storm water run-off using natural drainage systems.
- More protective measures for wetlands, waterways and uplands in natural resource planning.
- Increasing importance of recreation and open space contributing to more walkable, livable and sustainable communities.
- Merging of recreation, open space and transportation goals, especially multi-modal systems.
- More stakeholder involvement, as in adopt-a-park projects, park stewardship committees, friends-of-the-park groups, park watch and other forms of community volunteering.
- The legitimization of parks and open spaces as part of the urban land use planning and development process.
- Greenspaces contributing to downtown and neighborhood revitalization.
- More collaboration between parks and schools through joint acquisition, development and use of lands, and joint construction and use of facilities.
- Prevention recreation – recreation, parks and open spaces as antidote for social problems.
- Joint use of utilities for linear connectors, pathways and bikeways.
- Collaboration among providers – partnering and cooperation between public, private and nonprofit sectors in leisure delivery, especially social service agencies.
- Pressure to increase capacity and infrastructure of existing parks and facilities; concern for adequate maintenance.

## 9.4 GOALS AND POLICIES

### Overall Goal and Goals and Policies for Programmatic Areas

The **Overall Goal** of the Edina Park and Recreation Department is to do its part in further developing, preserving, and maintaining the City of Edina's parks, recreation programs and resources as a premier and comprehensive park and recreation department in the Twin Cities area.

### Goals and Policies for Programmatic Areas

The following **Goals and Policies** are intended to serve as a guide for future decisions pertaining to Edina's park and recreation areas for the next twenty years. These goals reflect the results of the Community Attitude and Interest Survey conducted in 2006. However, the goals are not intended to appear in order of priority. These goals also



reflect the input from the community received during the comprehensive planning process.

## **Parkland and Open Space**

### **Background**

The City is 100 percent developed. Therefore, the City is no longer actively acquiring additional property to develop as park land or open space. However, it plans to retain all of the current publicly owned park land and consider any additional property that may be offered in the future as potential additional park property. For example, the Grandview Square development resulted in a one-acre park nestled in the center of a mixed developed site that includes offices, condominiums, library and senior center. Other successful mixed-use developments have been created at Centennial Lakes Park and Edinborough Park. As Edina approves future redevelopment projects that result in more population density (both commercial and residential), there will be a demand for additional park land, open space and additional recreational opportunities to serve that growing population. These newly created park lands and open spaces should ideally be connected via greenway to other existing parks and trails to create connections throughout the park system. Edina's population is projected to grow 3 percent in the next 20 years, which will likely demand more park land and open space. As these opportunities arise, each new development should be studied on a case by case basis, with specific solutions determined by factors including whether the population increase is commercial and/or residential, as well as the age/lifestyle of the new residents or workers.

### **Goals**

1. Continue to devote a minimum of 15 percent of Edina's land area to parkland and open space in the future.
2. As commercial and residential population density increases due to redevelopment, provide additional parkland and/or open space, or connections to nearby parks, as needed, or facilitate the connection of new private facilities to the public system.
3. Maintain existing parks and facilities in a fashion that maintains Edina as a premier place for living, learning, raising families, and doing business.
4. Retain, maintain, and protect and preserve all park and open space property currently owned by the City.
5. Acquire additional park and open space land as more private land may become available for public acquisition.



## Policies

1. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.
2. Study the feasibility of acquiring additional park and open space property within the City limits as it may come available for public ownership.
3. Study the feasibility of acquiring or leasing additional property outside the City limits not greater than a five mile radius of the City limits for athletic field purposes.
4. Study the feasibility of partnering with surrounding communities to gain priority access to additional property within five miles of the City limits for athletic field purposes.
5. As population density increases (commercial and/or residential), secure additional property as needed for park land and/or open space to serve that population. Every effort will be made to create additional trails and greenways to connect these new park lands and open spaces to existing trails, greenways and other existing parks.
6. When seeking additional park land and/or open space to accommodate increased population density, explore and consider all opportunities and options available to acquire additional park land and/or open space. For example, the City will entertain the options of easements, joint uses, purchases, partnerships, leases and donations to acquire and develop additional park lands and/or open space.
7. Consider the purchase of additional potential park and/or open space acreage if and when future opportunities arise. However, each opportunity will be judged on its individual merit and value to the total Edina Park Systems. Special consideration will be given to parcels which are currently owned by a public or quasi-public entity other than the City of Edina, or privately owned, and currently serve in a open space or parkland capacity.
8. When considering land dedication or cash in lieu of land in the future, strongly consider "the Platting Ordinance Guidelines", which applies to Edina Ordinance No.810. More commonly known as Edina's Park Developers Fund, this is not anticipated to be a significant source of funding in the future for park development, acquisition or renovation simply because Edina is essentially fully developed.
9. Consider the creation of a "Redeveloper's Fund," to create a source of funding for park development, acquisition, or renovation from the redevelopment of land to new uses and/or to higher densities.



## Natural Resources Conservation and Management

### Background

Over the past decade, residents of the Twin Cities metropolitan area and nation-wide have shown an increased interest in the preservation and restoration of open space and unique natural areas. Consistent with national trends, Edina residents have voiced a strong interest in the protection and restoration of Edina's natural resources. The community wants to examine ways to better restore native landscaping and maintain native vegetative buffers along the riparian corridors of Minnehaha Creek and Nine-Mile Creek, and the small lakes in Edina, to maintain and improve water quality, and to provide more and higher quality habitat for birds and wildlife.



The Community Needs Assessment Survey shows that 66 percent of Edina residents have a need/desire for natural areas and wildlife habitats compared to 48 percent which is the national benchmark response for that need/desire. Edina residents feel strongly about natural resources, natural areas and their protection and (where appropriate) restoration. The need/desire for natural areas and wildlife habitat was second only to the highest need/desire, which was walking and biking trails at 86 percent. Third place was the need for golf courses (49 percent) and fourth was playground equipment at 45 percent.



The City owns over 1,565 acres of park land and open space areas and the City is essentially 100 percent developed. Therefore, in establishing goals for Edina's natural resources the primary focus is on establishing restoration and preservation management practices. Open space areas owned by the City are intended to remain protected and preserved from any future development. Therefore, the focus will be to determine what level of management and restoration is desired for Edina's natural resources.

### Goals

1. Establish a scientifically-based Natural Resources Conservation and Management Plan to identify,, restore and/or protect natural resources and native wildlife habitat. The primary reason to restore and/or protect natural resources is to sustain their ecological integrity and functions and protect the health and safety of the public. Natural resource areas shall include prairies, woods and wetlands. The Water Resources Management Plan is addressed under the Water Resources section of this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Ensure that Edina's development regulations include provisions for protection of the shorelands of those sections of Minnehaha Creek and Nine-Mile Creek within Edina, and for the shorelands of the lakes within Edina.
3. Identify a master landscape plantings plan for all Edina parks, which is the final phase of park development that has yet to be completed.
4. Conserve, and replace as necessary, Edina's urban forest to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of this integral part of Edina's overall identity and attractiveness.

### Policies

1. Conduct a resource inventory and assessment to identify Edina's prairies, woods and wetlands and produce a landscape comprehensive resource map. Conduct a woodland survey, resource assessment and production of a landscape comprehensive resource map to assess ecological functions. This survey and resource assessment is intended to identify rare plant and animal species, and exotic non-native plant species assessment. The assessment can also include other important information such as soil types, existing infrastructures, and areas of significant historical and cultural values.
2. Once a resource inventory assessment is completed, establish a Natural Resources Conservation and Management Plan. At that time, natural resource



management policies will be proposed and adopted. For example, exotic or invasive plants may be controlled to protect native habitats for the health and safety of the public.

3. Identify what and where additional landscape plantings are desired for each park. This master plan of landscaping would be addressed on an annual basis.
4. Continue to carry out all Minnesota state mandates for shade tree disease control and noxious weed control.
5. Create a program for maintaining trees throughout the City, and replacing them as necessary,
6. Work closely with the Energy and Environment Commission to embrace and utilize volunteer service that provides valuable resident input and advice on natural resource conservation and management plans.
7. Seek State and Federal grant funding to assist with financing the resource inventory process.
8. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

## **Wildlife Management Plan**

### **Background**

Edina is home to a variety of wildlife, some of which make Edina their home year around and other wildlife that migrate in and out of Edina. Wildlife is more often than not viewed by residents as an asset to community and a wonder of nature for park users to view and enjoy. In some cases, wildlife poses a threat to public safety and in some cases wildlife may be considered a nuisance to park users and traffic.

In managing wildlife, the focus is to manage habitat for wildlife and, when necessary, target specific wildlife species for removal. The Natural Resources Conservation and Management Plan will help identify any rare animals that may require additional attention to provide better habitat protection. The Natural Resources Management Plan will identify specific plants for wildlife needs. The Wildlife Management Plan defines an appropriate population target and management process approved by state and/or federal government agencies.

### **Goals**



1. Maintain existing wildlife sanctuaries and create new ones where appropriate to protect significant plant communities and associated wildlife from the impacts of human activity.
2. Manage animal and bird populations that are considered to be a threat to public health or safety; or considered hazardous to the environment and/or infrastructure; or create an unacceptable public nuisance that could result in financial or social hardship if not controlled.
3. Continue to improve shoreline fishing opportunities for the public.

### **Policies**

1. The City of Edina will continue to work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to maintain a healthy herd of 40 to 60 deer (or as otherwise directed by the Minnesota DNR) within the City of Edina. Professional contractors or trained City staff will be used to assist with deer control and the City will continue to support aerial deer count surveys during the winter months to assess the size of the City's deer herd.
2. The City of Edina plans to continue to control geese populations in targeted park settings where their presence can create a threat to public health and/or an unacceptable public nuisance. As a federally protected migratory waterfowl, geese are difficult to control in an urban setting. The City will continue to use a dog as a means of forcing geese off of golf courses. The City will also continue to engage a professional contractor to round-up geese throughout targeted areas in the City during the goose molting season.
3. The City of Edina will continue to control other animal species (especially beaver) that are considered harmful to the environment, the general public and/or the watershed. Beaver can disrupt the flow of storm water, cause flooding, and need to be removed.
4. The City of Edina will continue to work closely with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Division to enhance shoreline fishing opportunities for the public, which includes stocking of game fish, improving habitat and water quality for game fish, offering Minnesota DNR shoreline fishing programs and supporting educational opportunities for the public to learn more about fishing.

### **Walking and Biking Trails Pathways Plan**



## Background

The 2006 Community Attitude and Interest Citizen Survey clearly showed that the most important amenity requested by residents is walking/biking trails. One question in the survey asked; "Which Parks and Recreation Services Do You Think Should Receive the Most Attention from City of Edina Officials over the Next TWO Years?" The results were:

- 54% Maintenance of Edina parks
- 53% Number of walking/biking trails
- 16% Number of nature conservation areas
- 14% The City youth programs
- 13% Number of Edina parks
- 12% Quality of outdoor athletic fields
- 9% Quality of indoor athletic fields
- 8% Quality of outdoor swimming pools
- 8% Availability of info about Edina programs/facilities
- 8% Quality of programs/facilities for adults age 55+
- 6% The City adult programs
- 6% Fees charged for recreation programs

Residents were also asked to identify their top three choices that they are most willing to fund with additional tax dollars; and the results were:

- 66% develop walking and biking trails
- 42% develop a new indoor recreation center
- 21% develop outdoor athletic fields for sports
- 21% aggressively remove buckthorn from city parks
- 19% develop new indoor sports facility for games, etc.
- 17% develop a new outdoor dog exercise park
- 13% develop new outdoor artificial hockey rink
- 5% other

The survey also asked for reasons that residents would use walking and biking trails in the City of Edina. The results were:

- 84% for exercise and fitness
- 84% for enjoying outdoors/nature
- 25% for transportation
- 7% would not use trails



The survey results clearly indicate that residents desire and support more park trail opportunities in their local park to use for fitness and enjoying nature and the out of doors more so than for transportation purposes.



To create more recreational trail opportunities for residents to enjoy nature and the out of doors, the City is working closely with Three Rivers Park District to develop regional trails to create connections to neighboring community trail systems that are subsequently connected to the greater regional trail system.

Three Rivers Park District maintains the popular 27-mile trail formerly known as the Southwest Regional LRT Trail. The corridor between Hopkins and Victoria is named the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail and the corridor between Hopkins and Chanhassen is named the Minnesota Bluffs LRT Regional Trail. With grades of five percent or less, the 10-foot wide crushed limestone trail is ideal for biking, walking or running. The trail is two-way and includes wooden bridges and several road crossings. The corridors were acquired by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) 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. As stated below, it is the City's goal to find strategic trail connections for Edina residents to have access to this popular regional trail, which will require a connection on the north side of Edina. The long-range plan is to have this trail also make connection with Bloomington and/or Eden Prairie in the future to complete a north/south corridor.

It is also recognized that children need safe trails/sidewalks to walk and bike to schools and libraries. Therefore, where trails are needed within parks to create safe passage for youth to walk and bike to schools, those trails will take high priority. The greater



issue of safe sidewalks for children to get to schools is addressed in the Transportation Plan Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Goals

1. Maintain existing walking/biking trails.
2. Develop additional walking/biking trails within each of Edina's parks wherever appropriate and desired and maintain existing trails at a level that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.
3. Create connectivity between Edina's individual interior trails and regional trails that connect Edina's parks to neighboring community trails and particularly trails that are part of the greater regional trail system.

### Policies

1. With extensive input from residents, review each park for potential development of new walking/biking trails within the park.
2. Continue to work with the Bike Edina Taskforce and Public Works staff to implement the new bike pathway master plan for the City of Edina. The objective is to identify the best routes for connecting existing and future internal park trail systems, as well as to identify the most appropriate routes for links to regional trails that will connect to neighboring community trails.
3. Continue to work closely with Three Rivers Park District and neighboring communities to develop a comprehensive trail system that connects to the greater regional trail system.
4. Acquire easements and purchase property where needed and available to develop future greenways that connect Edina's parks and connect to neighboring community trails and ultimately the greater regional trail system, such as the Southwest LRT and the Minneapolis Grand Round.
5. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.
6. Study parking needs and feasibility as part of the development of a comprehensive trail system.
7. Add new internal park walking/biking trails to the park system as funding becomes available under the capital improvement plan.
8. Maintain existing trails on a regular basis to keep them safe and user friendly.



## Park Maintenance and Aging Infrastructure Renovation and Replacement Plan

### Background

The Community Needs Assessment showed that, of all park and recreation services, residents want "Maintenance of Edina Parks" to receive the most attention from the City. 77 percent of respondents are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the overall value their household receives from the parks and recreation services in Edina. The national benchmark average is 57 percent that are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied. Even with those high marks, residents recognize the importance of maintaining existing infrastructure to maintain the value of recreation services. Maintaining parks was the most important tax supported function even over the second most important expenditure, the development of new walking/biking trails (54 percent vs. 53 percent).

Of the 26 different parks and recreation facilities to choose from, survey respondents rated playground equipment as the fourth most important recreation facility needed/desired (24 percent). The top three were:

1. Walking and biking trails (64 percent).
2. Natural areas and wildlife habitats (30 percent).
3. 18 and 9 hole golf courses (27 percent).

Resources to maintain park lands and facilities will be an ongoing challenge as facilities continue to age and will require either renovation or replacement.

Twelve of the 27 park buildings currently maintained by the Edina Park Maintenance Department are 25 to 100 years old or even older.

1. Arden Park Shelter Building
2. Bredesen Park Comfort Station
3. Cahill School Historical Building
4. Countryside Park Shelter Building
5. Creek Valley Park Shelter Building
6. Grange Hall Historical Building
7. Highlands Park Shelter Building
8. Lewis Park Shelter Building
9. Normandale Park Shelter Building
10. Pamela Park Shelter Building
11. Strachauer Park Shelter Building
12. Utley Park Comfort Station



The two historical buildings at Tupa Park are maintained and valued as historically and culturally significant buildings. The other ten aged buildings are approaching the end of their life span and will be in need of either major renovation or total replacement within the next 20 years. In determining renovation vs. replacement, each building's function needs to be analyzed as to whether or not it serves the current needs and desires of park users. In some cases, the current architecture and design of a building may meet residents' expectations. In other cases, the building may no longer meet residents' expectations.

The four newest park shelter buildings in the park system were built in 1997 as part of a successful general obligation bond. Those buildings were built at:

1. Cornelia School Park
2. Todd Park
3. Walnut Ridge Park
4. Weber Park

These newer facilities can accommodate social gatherings, meetings, classes, recreation programs. They also serve as a warming house to change skates and warm up during the winter skating season. The older shelter buildings serve primarily as a place in which to change skates during the winter skating season but are not used for other purposes during the non-winter seasons other than for their restroom facilities.

### Goals

1. Continue to provide a high level of park maintenance services that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.
2. Continue this level of service on a daily basis as well as maintain or replace existing park infrastructure in a timely manner that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.

### Policies

1. Through an aggressive Capital Improvement Plan and annual operating budget, maintain park infrastructure in a timely manner that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.
2. Continue to fund and employ an appropriate number of full-time professional park maintenance staff and part-time seasonal staff to perform all daily maintenance



functions needed to maintain Edina parks at a premier standard. As more infrastructure is added to the park system, more professional staff and equipment will be needed to maintain parks at a premier standard.

3. Do not rely on voter approved general obligation bonds to replace worn infrastructure.
4. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

## **Athletic Fields and Facilities Plan**

### **Background**

The nation-wide trend in youth athletics is that there are more outdoor athletic field programs offered to more youth each year. More and more program offerings are extended to children at younger ages and both sexes each year. There are well established and emerging sports that compete for the same fields, such as, soccer, rugby, football, lacrosse and ultimate Frisbee. It is not uncommon for youth athletic associations to offer athletic field programs to youth who are pre-kindergarten age.

The Needs Assessment Survey results state that 66 percent of households are either somewhat supportive (43percent) or very supportive (23percent) of developing outdoor athletic fields for sports, which ranked third highest (21%) of what residents are most willing to fund with additional tax dollars. Developing walking and hiking trails was first (66percent) and developing a new indoor recreation center was second (42 percent). There is simply more demand than supply of outdoor athletic fields to accommodate the ideal schedule for all youth sports. When asked in the survey what they think should receive the most attention from City of Edina officials over the next two years, only 4 percent stated that "number of city soccer fields" should receive the most attention. Therefore, survey results state that residents are supportive of developing outdoor athletic fields for sports; however, residents prefer that, within the next two years, resources should first be spent developing walking and biking trails before developing more outdoor athletic fields for sports. Given the demographics of Edina, the large senior population understandably has little or no interest in developing outdoor athletic fields. There are very few remaining park lands that could be developed into scheduled



outdoor athletic field space. There is also a problem of over-scheduled fields which demands artificial turf to withstand the heavy use. Survey results also showed that the quality of outdoor athletic fields ranked much higher than the number of City soccer fields. 58 percent of respondents stated that they would support partnering with surrounding communities to develop sports facilities in communities within 1-5 miles of Edina.

There is an emerging trend that youth athletic associations and families are reluctant to accept youth athletic program offerings during the weekday and weekend times. The window of acceptable days and times of the day have shrunk, thus putting more pressure on demand for more facilities to accommodate the ideal schedule for families, especially for dual working parents and single-parent families.

### Goals

1. Develop and maintain additional multi-purpose athletic fields where possible and reasonable within Edina's forty parks to help meet the demand for outdoor athletic fields.
2. Explore partnership or ownership opportunities within five miles of Edina to develop and/or secure additional outdoor athletic fields.
3. Expand program offerings to weekday and weekend times to maximize availability of existing facilities.

### Policies

1. Explore the feasibility of developing existing park lands into more outdoor athletic fields at parks such as Walnut Ridge Park, Pamela Park and Lake Edina Park.
2. Explore athletic field development and partnership opportunities with the Edina School District.
3. Explore the feasibility of converting one or more athletic fields into artificial turf surfaces.
4. Explore alternative scheduling opportunities such as Friday evenings and weekend events plus scheduled events during the working day.
5. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.



## Collaborations and Partnerships Plan

### **Background**

The Edina Park and Recreation Department has entered into several collaborations and partnerships as an efficient and effective method of providing recreation programs and facilities. Examples include the successful collaborative with the cities of Richfield and Bloomington and the Southdale YMCA to develop and operate the YMCA Tri-City Skate Park. Another good example is the Adaptive Recreation/Learning Exchange (ARLE) four-city partnership to provide adaptive recreation programs and services for residents with disabilities.

*Adaptive Recreation:* The cities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina and Richfield each have programs that are specifically designed for people with disabilities of all ages. These programs include: softball, bowling, swimming lessons, fitness programs, skiing/snowboarding, basketball, as well as a number of social activities for both youths and adults.

*Learning Exchange:* The school districts of Bloomington, Edina, Eden Prairie and Richfield Community Education Adults with Disabilities programs are working together to offer customized classes for adults with developmental and/or physical disabilities. Classes include cooking, independent living skills, health & fitness and other leisure learning activities.

The collaborative effort between the City and Hennepin County Library resulted in a very successful new Senior Citizen Center with a new 18,000 square foot library building on the second level. The City of Edina is also exploring a partnership opportunity with the cities of St. Louis Park and Minneapolis to provide another off-leash dog park location in Edina. The property, which is located just west of France Avenue in Edina and St. Louis Park, is owned by the City of Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis is still undecided of its long-term need for that property and they are aware of the two cities' interest in using the property as an off-leash dog park. The City of Edina entered into a lease agreement with a private company that originally built and operated what is now the Braemar Golf Dome. Other public/private partnerships have been studied in the past.



The Edina Park and Recreation Department also works closely with County and State levels of government to offer park and recreation services and facilities. The City of Edina is working closely with Three Rivers Park District to construct a regional trail or two in Edina to connect with the greater regional trail system. The Edina Park and Recreation Department also works closely with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in efforts to provide quality shore line fishing opportunities. There are numerous other examples; however, the point is that partnerships and collaborations should continue to be a viable option when considering new park and recreation services and/or facilities.

### Goal

1. When considering options to provide new services and/or facilities, consider and assess the use of partnerships as a cost-effective and efficient option.

### Policies

1. When considering new recreation program services, explore partnership opportunities that may be the most cost-effective and efficient means of providing the new recreation program experience.
2. When considering development of new recreation facilities, explore partnership opportunities (public/private and public/public ventures) as a potential method of offering recreational facilities on a cost-effective and efficient basis that is in the best interest of the community.



3. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

### **Use of Volunteers Plan**

#### **Background**

One of Edina's greatest assets is its volunteers. Without volunteers, the Edina Park and Recreation Department would not be able to provide the extensive recreation programs and services available today. The Edina Park and Recreation Department also relies heavily on volunteers (those appointed and managed by the City as well as independent volunteer groups and individuals) to provide a number of services, only some of which include to:

- Provide comprehensive historical services (archival services, historical museum, historical artifact preservation, etc.) through the Edina Historical Society.
- Provide gardening opportunities and services throughout Edina's parks via the Edina Garden Council.
- Provide comprehensive youth athletic program services for a wide variety of different sport opportunities via Edina's 12 independently incorporated youth athletic associations and its two sport clubs (swimming and figure skating).
- Provide sound and informed advice to the City Council on important policies and other park and recreation matters via the Edina Park Board.
- Provide sound and informed advice to the City Council on important visual arts policies and matters via the Edina Art Center Board.
- Provide quality band concert music free to residents on a year around basis via the John Phillip Sousa Memorial Band.
- Provide advice to the staff at the Edina Senior Center via the Edina Senior Center Advisory Committee.
- Provide extensive clerical and light duty services to the Edina Senior Center.
- Provide numerous park improvement projects via Eagle Scout candidates.
- Provide extensive park clean-up twice a year at each park via the Adopt-A-Park program.
- Provide valuable input and feedback to the staff at Braemar Golf Course via the Braemar Golf Course Greens Committee.
- Provide assistance to golfers, downhill ski enthusiasts, and other recreation program registrants who have developmental disabilities.



The point is that the Edina Park and Recreation Department relies heavily on volunteers who donate thousands of hours of selfless service each year to help others and further the mission of the Edina Park and Recreation Department.

### Goals

1. Recruit, utilize and empower Edina's volunteers to provide a wide variety of important services to help serve the mission of the Edina Park and Recreation Department.
2. Thank and properly recognize volunteers for their valuable and self-less services to the City of Edina.

### Policies

1. Rely on, support and empower volunteers to provide recreation services as a cost effective method of provide recreation services to residents.
2. Recruit, train and supervise volunteers where needed to provide recreation services at minimal cost to residents.
3. Recognize (via the Annual Volunteer Awards Reception and Annual Board and Commission Reception) outstanding volunteers and the value they bring to the City of Edina.

### Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities Plan

#### Background



The results of the 2006 Needs Assessment Survey show that 75 percent of respondents are either very supportive (44 percent) or somewhat supportive (31 percent) of developing a new indoor recreation center in Edina. Results showed that a new indoor recreation center was the second most important new facility of respondents' choice. Developing walking and biking trails was first place at 89 percent, with respondents either very supportive (65 percent) or somewhat supportive (24 percent). When asked what they would be most willing to fund with additional tax dollars, respondents clearly stated that developing a new indoor recreation center (42 percent) was again second to developing walking and biking trails (66 percent). Developing outdoor athletic fields for sports finished third at 21 percent. When asked how they would allocate \$100 in extra funds if made available for the City of Edina, the response was:

- \$29 for improvements and maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities.
- \$26 for new walking and biking trails.
- \$15 for a new indoor recreation center.
- \$9 for removal of buckthorn.
- \$7 for new outdoor and indoor sports facilities.
- \$6 for a new indoor nature center.
- \$4 for a new artificially refrigerated outdoor hockey rink.
- \$4 other.

The survey asked respondents to choose from a list of 15 potential indoor programming spaces the ones that they and members of their household would use if they were developed in an indoor community center. Walking and jogging track (58 percent) was the indoor programming space that the highest percentage of respondent households would use. Other indoor programming spaces that at least 30 percent of respondents would use include: weight room/cardiovascular equipment (40 percent), aerobics/fitness/dance class space (40 percent), leisure pool (35 percent), and lanes for lap swimming (30 percent). Clearly the majority of respondents desire more indoor recreation space venue opportunities for exercise and fitness purposes.



Developing indoor fitness opportunities seems to be a priority for residents that should be addressed.

### Goals

1. Explore and study opportunities to provide indoor exercise and fitness opportunities for Edina residents. This desired facility may best be provided solely by the private or quasi-public sector such as the Southdale YMCA and/or Lifetime Fitness and/or public/private partnership.

### Policies

1. Actively seek a location and funding source to provide more indoor exercise facilities within the next five to ten years.
2. Actively support the development of an indoor exercise facility in Edina, whether it is a public, private or partnership venture.
3. Explore a potential partnership opportunities.
4. Do not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

## Outdoor Hockey and General Skating Rink Plan

### Background



Due to the trend of warmer winter seasons, the Edina Park Maintenance Department finds it more challenging each year to provide and maintain quality outdoor skating ice for longer than six to eight weeks. There was a time when outdoor ice was easily attainable by December 20. Outdoor ice was not attainable for skaters until after the first of the year for the 2006-2007 outdoor skating season. There is little debate that winters are getting warmer and outdoor ice is becoming more difficult to develop early and late in the season.

This trend may very well suggest that communities need to consider a form of artificial refrigeration to ensure quality outdoor ice for skating during the winter months. Most neighborhoods desire a hockey rink in the park nearest their home. The Edina Hockey Association desires outdoor hockey rinks for many of their games and practices during the winter months. If winter weather continues to be warmer each year, then communities will be faced with exploring other best practices to cost effectively provide and maintain quality ice during the winter season. These best practices may include artificial refrigeration systems, high molecular density plastic rinks, covered ice rinks (large roof structures or shade materials), ice resurfacing machines and/or other creative methods to build and maintain quality outdoor ice.



The Needs Assessment Survey results indicate very little community-wide support to fund a new outdoor uncovered artificially refrigerated hockey rink. The following are the results of "what respondents are most willing to fund with additional tax dollars:"



Develop Walking and Biking Trails 66%  
Develop a New Indoor Recreation Center 42%  
Develop Outdoor Athletic Fields for Sports 21%  
Aggressively Removing Buckthorn from City Parks 21%  
Develop a New Indoor Nature Center 19%  
Develop New Indoor Sports Facility for Games 19%  
Develop a New Outdoor Dog Exercise Park 17%  
Develop New Outdoor Artificial Ice Hockey Rink 13%  
Other 5%

Even though there is not strong community-wide support for artificially refrigerated outdoor hockey rinks, there may be interest in pursuing the concept with donated funds.

### **Goals**

1. Continually explore best practices to provide and maintain quality outdoor ice hockey rinks in an effective and energy efficient manner.
2. Continually monitor the demand for outdoor hockey rinks for scheduled play (games and practices) for the Edina Hockey Association, adult athletics (such as broomball and 4-man hockey) as well as the general public's demand/desire for recreational hockey.

### **Policies**

1. Actively pursue best practices to develop and maintain quality outdoor ice hockey rinks during the winter skating season.
2. Continue to provide a manageable (ability to maintain quality outdoor ice with given manpower and equipment resources) number of outdoor hockey rinks that meets the demand for both scheduled hockey rink play as well as general hockey rink play.

## **Recreation Programs and Services Plan**

### **Background**



Edina offers a wide variety of recreation programs and services for all residents, toddlers through senior citizens. The Park and Recreation professional staff and volunteers seek to offer programs and services that meet the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of all residents. Recreation programs are offered year round.

#### Adaptive Recreation

The City of Edina made a commitment to individuals with disabilities before it was required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Edina is a part of a partnership that includes four cities and four school districts to offer a variety of recreation opportunities specifically designed for individuals with disabilities ages 3 and older. Edina Adaptive Recreation is also responsible for providing inclusion services to provide a successful opportunity for individuals with disabilities who choose to participate in general recreation programs.

#### General Recreation Programs

The Park and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of year round opportunities for residents of all ages.

#### *Youth*

For youth ages 4-14 the Recreation Department offers programs at neighborhood parks during the summer months. From "Fab 4 & 5" to "You're Not Too Old for this..." there is something for everyone. During the winter a few special programs are also offered for our residents from "Tea for Two" to "Drive in Movies." Residents can register for these family friendly activities.

#### *Adults*

A variety of adult athletic programs is also offered throughout the year. From Broomball to Kickball residents have the opportunity to register teams at all ability levels.

#### *Tennis*

For youth and adults ages 5 and older Edina offers tennis lessons at all ability levels.

#### Shoreline Fishing Opportunities

The Edina Park and Recreation Department has long promoted and supported efforts to offer shoreline fishing opportunities in Edina's parks. Through a successful partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the City of Edina has improved shoreline fishing opportunities at Rosland Park and Centennial Lakes Park. The



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources provided the City of Edina a grant to purchase and install a fishing pier at Rosland Park on Lake Cornelia. The Park and Recreation Department also supports fishing clinics and programs sponsored by the Minnesota DNR at Centennial Lakes Park. We continue to work with the professionals at the Minnesota DNR to improve habitat for fishing, educate youth about the sport of fishing and nature, and promote water quality.

#### Youth Athletic Associations

Edina Athletic Associations and Clubs currently offer athletic opportunities to over 9,000 youth of all abilities through fourteen clubs and associations. The independently incorporated youth athletic associations and clubs are run by volunteers with the help of a professional recreation staff liaison. In 2006, the City of Edina appointed a Youth Sports Task Force to address the current issues related to athletic opportunities available to youth in Edina. The outcome of this task force is as follows:

1. Updated relationship agreement
2. Updated priority use of outdoor facilities
3. Formal grievance process to be followed which supersedes existing association grievance processes
4. Resolution of Youth Sports Core Values and Community Strategy
5. Uniform Code of Conduct

#### Enterprise Facilities

The Enterprise Facilities within the Edina Parks and Recreation Department offer a comprehensive variety of programs and services in unique environments.

The Edina Art Center offers a variety of programs for all ages to meet the creative visual arts needs of our residents. The Edina Art Center contracts with specialists to implement a variety of course offerings ranging from pottery to photography.

Braemar Ice Arena is home to the Edina Hockey Association and Braemar City of Lakes Figure Skating Club. Braemar also internally offers skating lessons and open skating to meet the recreational ice skating needs of residents.

For golf enthusiasts, Braemar Golf Course offers lessons to youth ages 11 and older and adults. Braemar employs golf professionals to offer beginning through advanced lessons in group settings or one to one. Braemar also offers tee times for 36 holes of golf.

The Edina Senior Center currently has over 1,500 members ages 55+ seeking a variety of program offerings. Programs are created and implemented by staff and volunteer



seniors. The Senior Center is home to over 40 programs, from bridge to softball, to meet the needs of all members.

Centennial Lakes is a beautiful setting in the southeast quadrant of the City. During the winter months Centennial Lakes offers skate rental and open skating for residents to enjoy the 10 acres of carefully maintained ice. During the summer residents are welcome to golf on the natural 18 hole grass putting course. Also available are free outdoor concerts, a croquet field, and 1.5 miles of pathways.



Edinborough Park currently offers five special events per year for residents to enjoy the Park. Adventure Peak is a recently added but more importantly frequently updated, play structure that attracts youth up to age 12 from all over the metro area.

The Edina Aquatic Center offers waterslides, a zero depth pool with a play structure, diving boards, a cable ride, and a themed dry play area for patrons to enjoy. For patrons who seek to improve their swimming skills, the Aquatic Center contracts with Foss Swim School to offer lessons for youth ages three and older and adults.

## Goals

1. As residents enter retirement, the Edina Park and Recreation Department will follow the trends and offer diverse opportunities for seniors. What used to be softball and bridge is soon to be volunteering and rock climbing. The retired seniors of tomorrow will be looking for recreation opportunities outside of the traditional senior center environment.



2. Youth obesity is now considered an epidemic. Today's children are the first generation in which their life expectancy will be lower than that of their parents. The Park and Recreation Department has an opportunity to tackle this epidemic head on by providing recreation opportunities that lure children away from the TV and out into the parks.
3. Residents of all ages need not only programs but also opportunities for unstructured recreation
4. It is the Park and Recreation Department's goal to continue to support improved shoreline fishing opportunities, educate youth about the sport of fishing, and support efforts to improve fish habitat including water quality.

### **Policies**

1. The City will continue to add fitness based programs for residents of all ages.
2. The City will explore program opportunities for aging adults.
3. The City will explore options to provide safe opportunities for children to play at their local park in an unstructured environment.
4. The City will continue to work closely with the Minnesota DNR to promote and support improved shoreline fishing opportunities in Edina, improve fish habitat, water quality and educate youth about the sport of fishing.
5. It shall be the policy of the City of Edina to not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

### **Enterprise Facilities Plan**

#### **Background**

The City of Edina owns and operates six different enterprise facilities within the Park and Recreation Department:

1. Edina Art Center
2. Braemar Golf Course and Fred Richards Golf Course
3. Braemar Golf Dome
4. Edina Aquatic Center
5. Edinborough/Centennial Lakes Park
6. Braemar Arena



Each enterprise facility has its own mission statement:

#### EDINA ART CENTER

The mission of the Edina Art Center is to provide facilities, faculty programs and services that meet and reflect the needs of its residents and neighbors for participation, education and enjoyment in the arts with emphasis on fine arts.

#### BRAEMAR AND FRED RICHARDS GOLF COURSES

The mission of the Braemar Golf Course and Fred Richards Golf Course is to be a premier golf facility – keeping golf accessible and affordable to our residents, but not exclusive to Edina residents. We strive to be an exceptionally friendly, community based recreation amenity. Meeting our fiscal responsibilities and improving our facility for continued recreational pleasure is essential. Income generation is not our primary goal.

#### BRAEMAR GOLF DOME

The mission of the Braemar Golf Dome is to be the leader in the winter golf industry in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area by providing: the best quality golf balls and mats, a comfortable environment, and a friendly staff at a reasonable price to encourage repeat visits by customers.

#### EDINA AQUATIC CENTER

The mission of the Edina Aquatic Center is to be a premier public aquatic facility and to make swimming accessible and affordable to primarily, but not exclusively, Edina residents and yet remain competitively priced in the Twin Cities area.



#### EDINBOROUGH AND CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK

The mission of Edinborough and Centennial Lakes Park is to serve as a premier gathering spot for social, cultural and recreational opportunities, primarily, but not exclusively for the Edina community.

#### Objectives:

- Provide a safe, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing environment for park patrons.
- Provide premier recreational opportunities that are unique, inclusive and cost effective.
- Provide a diversified level of quality cultural programming that is cost effective and entertaining.
- Provide quality rental facilities to meet the needs of the City and community.

#### BRAEMAR ARENA

The mission of the Braemar Arena is to be a premier public ice facility and to make skating accessible and affordable to primarily, but not exclusively, Edina residents and yet remain competitively priced in the Twin Cities area.



In the 2006 Needs Assessment Survey, residents were asked which Edina Park and Recreation Department facilities they used most the previous year. The results were:

- 44% - Centennial Lakes Park
- 28% - Braemar Golf Course
- 27% - Edinborough Park
- 27% - Bredesen Walking or Biking Path
- 24% - Edina Aquatic Center
- 14% - Braemar Arena
- 13% - Rosland Park Walking Trail
- 9% - Fred Richards Golf Course
- 8% - Edina Art Center
- 7% - Edina Senior Center
- 6% - Arneson Acres Park
- 4% - Van Valkenburg Park Off-Leash Dog Park
- 10% - Other

Edina's enterprise recreation facilities provide a wide variety of popular recreational opportunities to residents and non-residents. Each enterprise facility is operated as a business; however, the mission as stated above (and unlike the private sector) is not to maximize profits but to provide recreational opportunities that are "accessible and affordable to primarily, but not exclusively, Edina residents and yet remain competitively priced in the Twin Cities area."

Each enterprise facility has its own unique business plan that is updated approximately every six years. The business plan for each enterprise facility includes a market analysis, competitive analysis, environmental analysis, marketing strategy, financial performance and business strategy. Surveys are conducted within each facility to better understand who uses the facility, what their opinions are about the facility and programs, where they reside and how they hear about the facility.

### Goals

1. For each of Edina's enterprise facilities, provide recreational opportunities that are accessible and affordable to primarily, but not exclusively, Edina residents and yet remain competitively priced in the Twin Cities area.
2. Provide fee-based revenue generating recreation enterprise facilities that collectively cover all facility and program expenses, including capital improvements, land purchase and all operating expenses.



## Policies

1. The City will continue to update the business plan for each enterprise recreation facility every six or seven years.
2. The City will conduct surveys on a routine as needed basis to provide critical information in updating the business plan for each enterprise facility
3. The City will annually adjust fees and charges for enterprise facilities in a manner that is in keeping with the goal to provide recreational opportunities that are accessible and affordable to primarily, but not exclusively, Edina residents and yet remain competitively priced in the Twin Cities area.
4. The City will continue to modify each enterprise facility and its services on an as needed basis in a manner that reflects the current identified and validated demand for recreation opportunities.
5. It shall be the policy of the City of Edina to not sell any park and/or open space property currently owned by the City of Edina. An exception to this policy might include a property exchange for land of equal or greater value that is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

## 9.5 IMPLEMENTATION

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

The following pages show the five-year Capital Improvement Plans (2008-2012) for the Edina Park and Recreation Department. Each enterprise facility also has its own Capital Improvement Plan. The funding for the Capital Improvement Plan is approved on an annual basis by the City Council; however, funding is only approved for the following calendar year. The following four years are shown for planning purposes and are adjusted annually to adapt to changing needs.

Funding for the Capital Improvement Plan comes from a variety of sources, such as:

- Revenue Bonds
- Revolving Funds
- General Obligation Bonds
- Public Improvement Revolving Bonds
- Internal Transfers – Transfer from Reserves

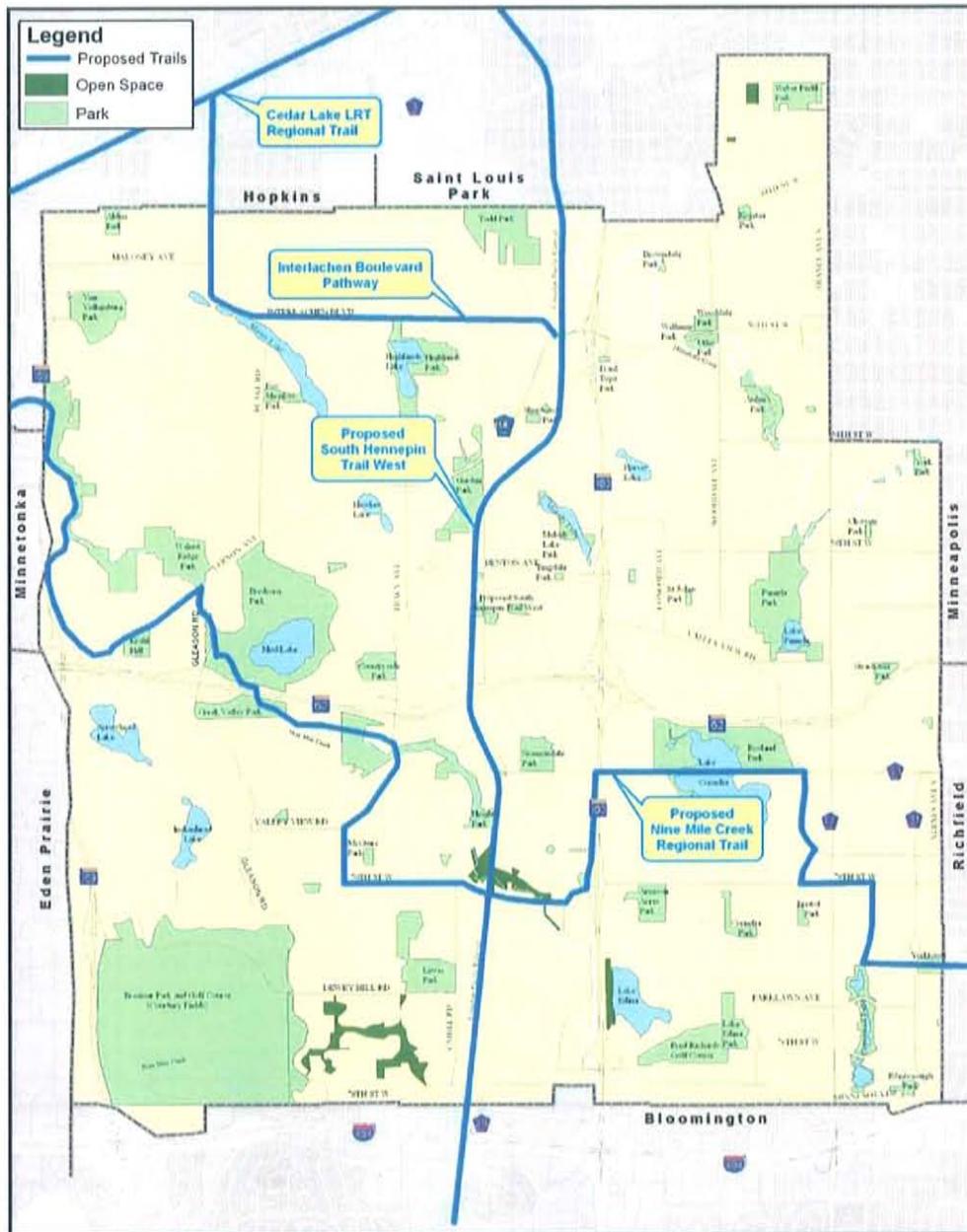


See the 2008-2012 Capital Improvement Plan on the next page.



## Edina Parks and Recreation Department Capital Improvement Plan for 2008-2012

|                                              | 2008           | 2009           | 2010           | 2011           | 2012           |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Pathway Repairs/Additions: Arneson Acres     |                | 45,000         |                |                |                |
| Parking Lot: Weber Park                      | 38,800         |                |                |                |                |
| Playground: McGuire Park                     | 120,000        |                |                |                |                |
| Playground: Pamela Park                      |                | 150,000        |                |                |                |
| Renovate softball field: Todd Park           |                |                | 91,000         |                |                |
| Renovate W. baseball field: Countryside Park |                |                | 138,000        |                |                |
| Renovate pathway: Todd Park                  |                |                | 45,000         |                |                |
| Playground: Chowen Park                      |                | 120,000        |                |                |                |
| Playground: York Park                        | 120,000        |                |                |                |                |
| Batting/Pitching Cage: Pamela Park           |                |                | 30,000         |                |                |
| Hockey Rink Relocation: Walnut Ridge Park    |                | 90,000         |                |                |                |
| Off-Leash Dog Park: France Avenue Site       |                |                |                | 40,000         |                |
| Replace Playground equip.: Countryside Pk    |                | 110,000        |                |                |                |
| Window Replacement: Arneson Acres Pk         |                | 10,000         |                |                |                |
| New Athletic Field w. lights: Pamela Park    |                |                |                | 400,000        |                |
| Neighborhood Park: Van Valkenburg Park       |                |                |                |                | 600,000        |
| Replace Light Fixtures/Poles: Pamela Park    | 80,000         |                |                |                |                |
| Pathway Plan Completion: Garden Park         | 90,000         |                |                |                |                |
| Softball Field Lighting: Pamela Park         |                |                | 250,000        |                |                |
| Softball Field Fencing: Pamela Park          | 30,000         | 30,000         |                |                |                |
| Concrete Maintenance Apron: Pamela Park      | 11,000         |                |                |                |                |
|                                              |                |                |                |                |                |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                                | <b>489,800</b> | <b>555,000</b> | <b>554,000</b> | <b>440,000</b> | <b>600,000</b> |



City of Edina  
2008 Comprehensive Plan Update

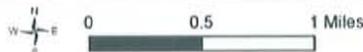
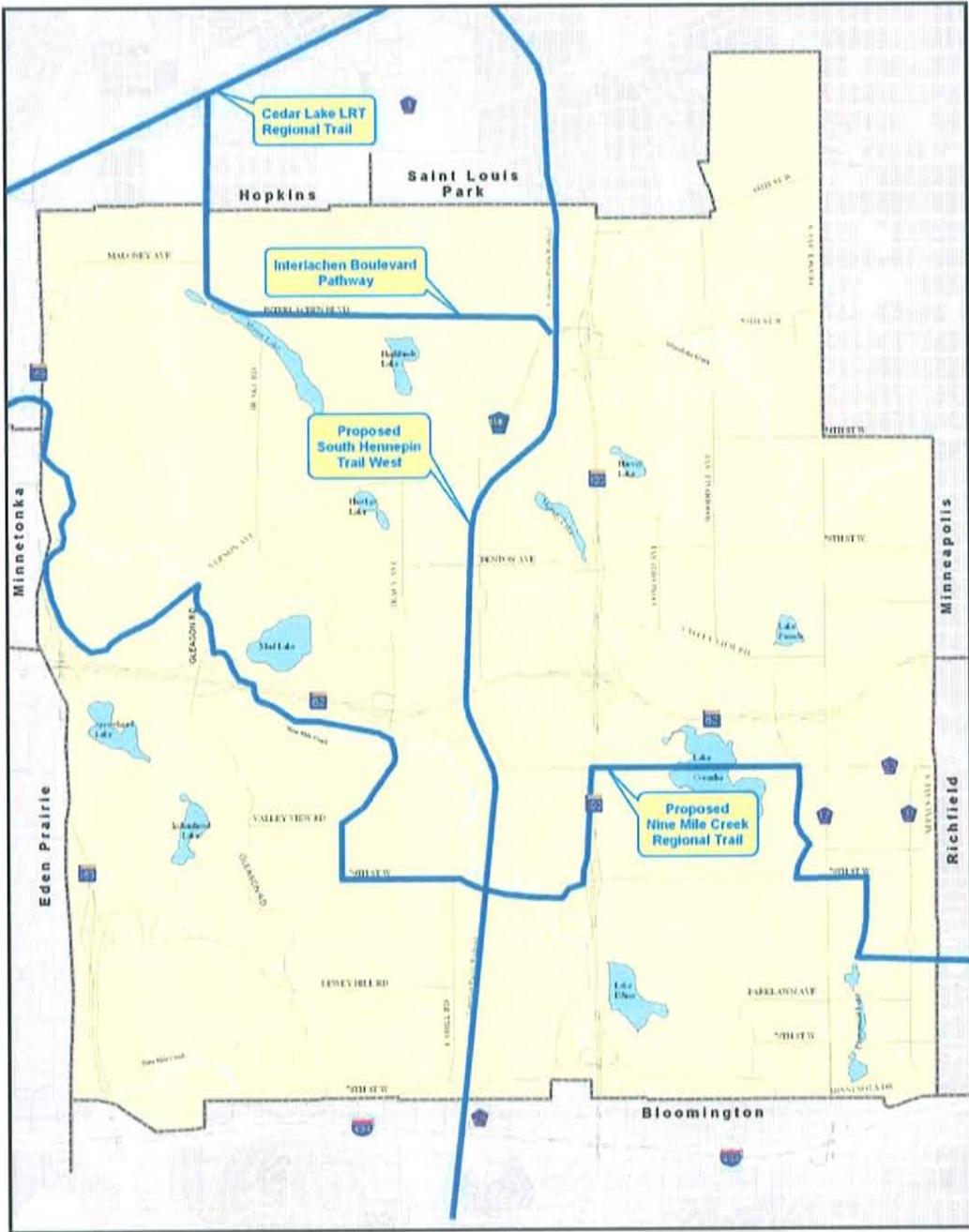


Figure 9.1  
Parks & Open Space  
October, 2008



City of Edina  
2008 Comprehensive Plan Update



0 0.5 1 Miles

Figure 9.2  
Trails

October, 2008