



APPENDIX D2: PARKS AND TRAILS



Cultivate Hopkins Comprehensive Plan

APPROVED 11/17/20 DRAFT

Existing Conditions

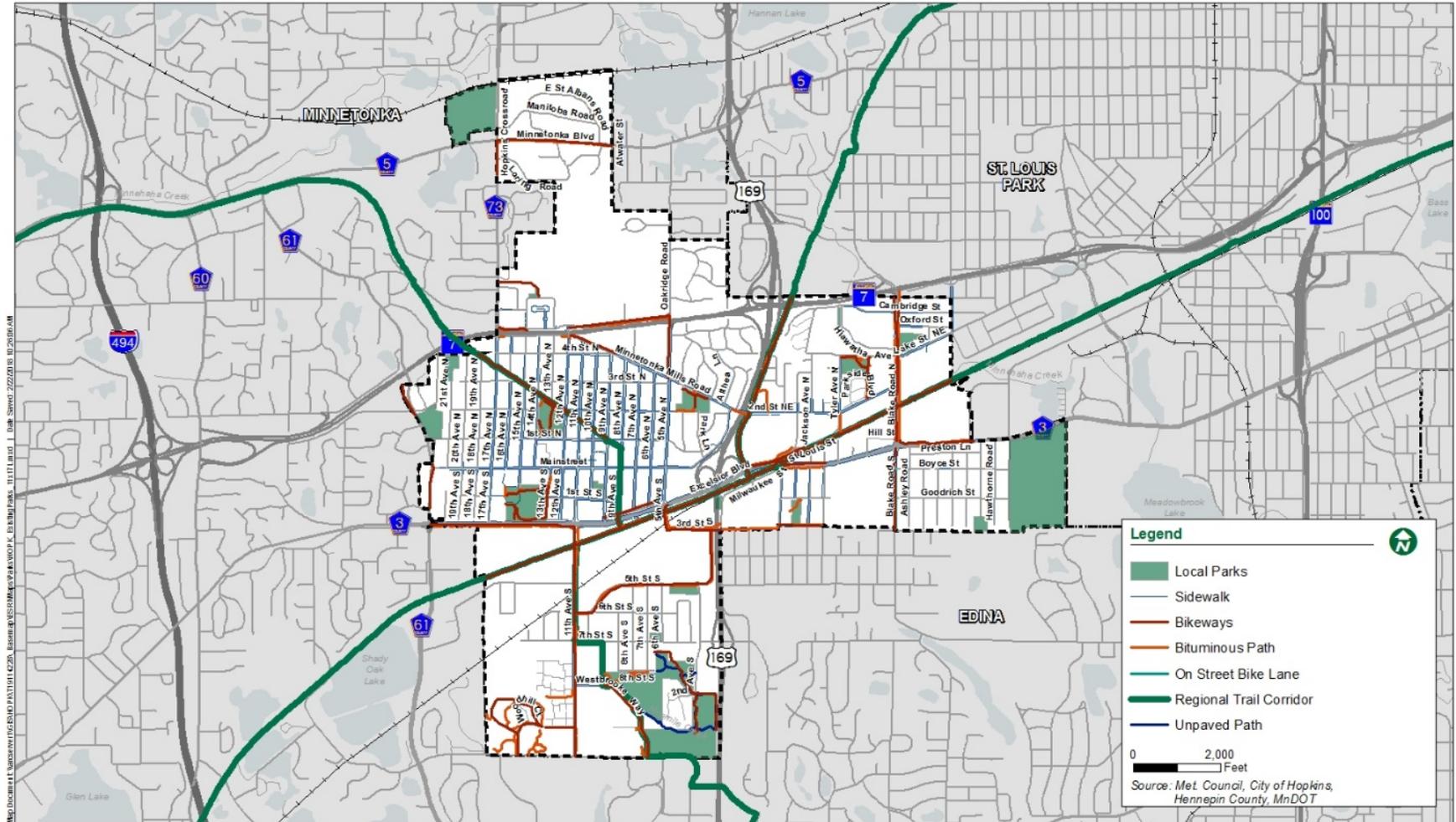
Local Parks and Trails

Figure D2.1 shows the existing park and trail system in Hopkins. The City of Hopkins maintains 19 parks and nature areas in Hopkins. Additionally, there are facilities at three schools, as well as a couple golf course areas. Locations and details on amenities for each are provided below.

An inventory of the amenities available at each local park is in Table D2.1.

Table D3.1 - Hopkins Park System Inventory																										
Park Name	Size (Acres)	Park Type	Play Areas	Ball Fields	Open Field	Picnic Area	Outdoor Open Space	Picnic Shelter	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Soccer Fields	Outdoor Skating Rink	Sledding Hill	Restrooms	Volleyball	Football Field	Indoor Ice Arena	Canoe Launch	Golf Course	Archery Range	Community Garden	Track & Field	Skateboard Park	Swimming Beach	Horseshoes	
Alice Smith Elementary	9.82	School - Park	*	*	*																					
Blake School	47.94	School - Park	*	*	*					*	*						*					*				
Buffer Park	3.1	Neighborhood Park		*	*								*													
Burnes Park	7	Neighborhood Park	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*												*
Central Park	18	Community Park	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*									
Cottageville Park	4.1	Neighborhood Park	*		*		*	*	*					*							*					
Downtown Park	0.91	Neighborhood Park				*																				
Eisenhower Elementary Community Center	24.97	School - Park	*	*	*					*	*															
Elmo Park	0.62	Neighborhood Park	*						*																	
Harley Hopkins Park	2.89	Neighborhood Park		*	*		*	*				*														
Hiawatha Oaks	0.9	Natural Resource Area					*																			
Hilltop Park	3.5	Neighborhood Park	*	*	*	*	*					*	*													
Interlachen Park	2.4	Neighborhood Park	*	*		*	*		*			*		*												
Maetzold Field	10.1	Community Park	*	*			*				*			*		*										
Meadowbrook Golf Course	65.6	Special Use Facility																	*							
Minnehaha Creek Preserve	26	Special Use Facility																*								
Oakes Park	5.7	Neighborhood Park	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*											
Park Valley Playground	1.14	Neighborhood Park	*		*			*	*																	
Shady Oak Nature Area	6.8	Special Use Facility					*																			
Shady Oak Beach	5.44	Community Park	*			*	*								*		*								*	
Skateboard Park	1	Special Use Facility																					*			
Stein Park Preserve	33.34	Natural Resource Area					*																			
Valley Park	33	Community Park	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					*	*					
TOTAL	314.27		14	12	11	8	10	9	6	6	5	7	4	7	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

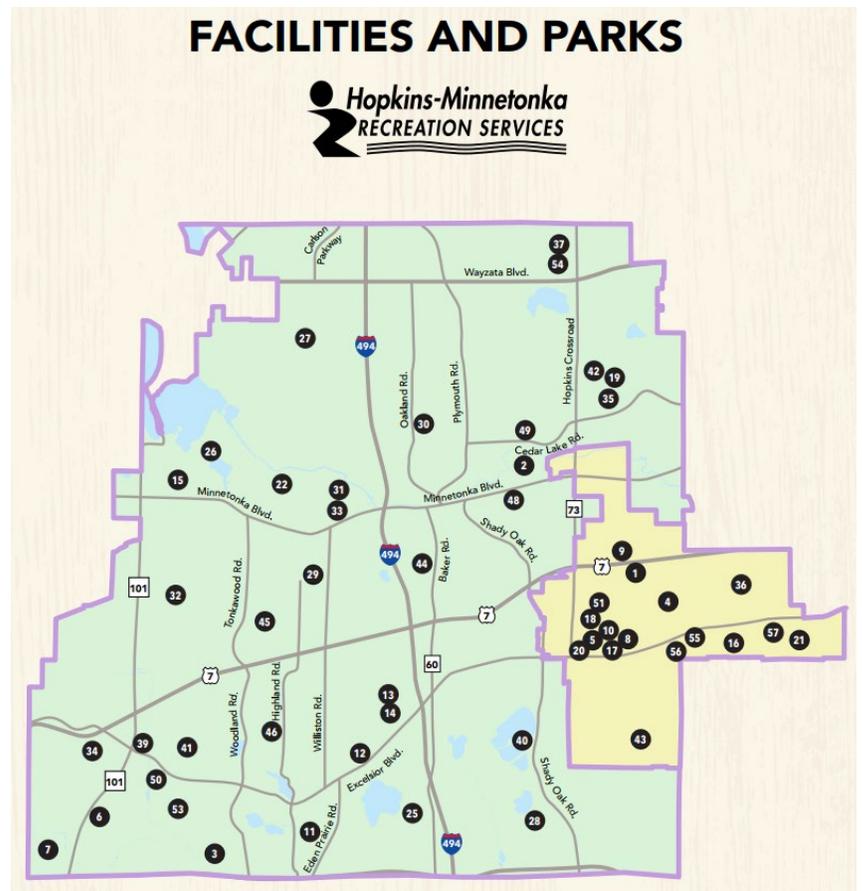
Figure D2.1 – Existing Parks and Trails



Recreation Programs

Since 1967, the Cities of Hopkins and Minnetonka have jointly planned and provided community recreation for their residents. A Joint Recreation Board, consisting of Hopkins and Minnetonka residents, directs recreation programming and services. Of the net cost required to operate the joint recreation program, the City of Hopkins is responsible for 33 percent and the City of Minnetonka pays 66 percent. Current recreational offerings include:

- Community Events
- Preschool Programs
- Youth Programs
- Teen Programs
- Adult Athletics and Programs
- Senior Services



- Williston Fitness Center (in Minnetonka)
- Fitness
- Tennis
- Aquatics
- Ice Skating

Youth classes are offered in several areas of interest including tennis, golf, swimming, ball skills, and arts & crafts. Youth sports leagues are offered in basketball and soccer. Adult classes are offered in several areas of interest, and team sports are offered in soccer, softball, basketball, volleyball, hockey, broomball and football.

Joint Recreation provides 14 supervised outdoor ice rinks throughout Hopkins & Minnetonka. Each site is staffed with rink attendants from mid-December through mid-February dependent on weather conditions.

Hopkins-specific facilities include:

- The City of Hopkins owns Overpass Skate Park, which provides skateboarders, bikers, and inline skaters age 10 or older with a safe, fun and challenging place to improve their skills.
- The Hopkins Pavilion is an arena used for a multitude of activities including ice skating, broomball, soccer, lacrosse, inline skating, rugby, baseball, softball, concerts, company picnics and other community and private events.
- The Hopkins Activity Center is a gathering place for older adults to participate in organized as well as unorganized recreational, social, educational, nutritional, fitness, and volunteer activities.

Regional Parks

There are no existing or planned regional parks located within Hopkins. However, the regional trail network that runs through Hopkins provides connections to numerous regional park facilities in nearby communities, including Lake Minnetonka Regional Park, Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, Carver Park Reserve, Bryant Lake Regional Park, and Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area.

Minnetonka Facilities

See map on page 76.

- 39 Family Gardens-Kelly Park
17500 Excelsior Blvd.
- 12 Glen Lake Activity Center
14350 Excelsior Blvd.
- 12 Glen Lake Skate Plaza
14350 Excelsior Blvd.
- 14 Glen Lake School Warming House/Tennis Courts
13850 Bellevue Dr.
- 57 Gray's Bay Marina
2831 County Rd. 101
- 34 Arts Center on 7
18301 Highway 7
- 19 Lindbergh Center
2400 Lindbergh Dr.
- 33 Minnetonka Ice Arena
3401 Williston Rd.
- 33 Minnetonka City Hall
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
- 33 Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
- 52 Williston Fitness Center
14509 Minnetonka Dr.

Hopkins Facilities

See map on page 76.

- 55 Depot Coffee House
9451 Excelsior Blvd.
- 43 Family Gardens - Valley Park
801 7th Ave. S.
- 20 Hopkins Pavilion Ice Arena
11000 Excelsior Blvd.
- 18 Hopkins Activity Center (Seniors)
33 14th Ave. N.
- 10 Hopkins Center for the Arts
1111 Mainstreet
- 17 Hopkins City Hall
1010 1st St. S.

Minnetonka School District

See map on page 76.

- 6 Clear Spring Elementary
5701 Highway 101
- 34 Minnetonka High School
18301 Highway 7
- 32 Minnetonka Middle School East
17000 Lake St. Ext.
- 53 Scenic Heights Elementary
5650 Scenic Heights Dr.

Hopkins School District

See map on page 76.

- 1 Alice Smith Elementary
801 Minnetonka Mills Rd.
- 9 Eisenhower Elementary
1001 State Highway 7
- 11 Gatewood Elementary
14900 Gatewood Dr.
- 13 Glen Lake Elementary
4801 Woodridge Rd.
- 16 Harley Hopkins
125 Monroe Ave. S.
- 44 Hopkins West Jr. High
3830 Baker Rd.
- 35 Hopkins North Jr. High
10700 Cedar Lake Rd.
- 19 Hopkins High School
2400 Lindbergh Dr.
- 42 Tanglen Elementary
10901 Hillside Ln.

Park Classification System

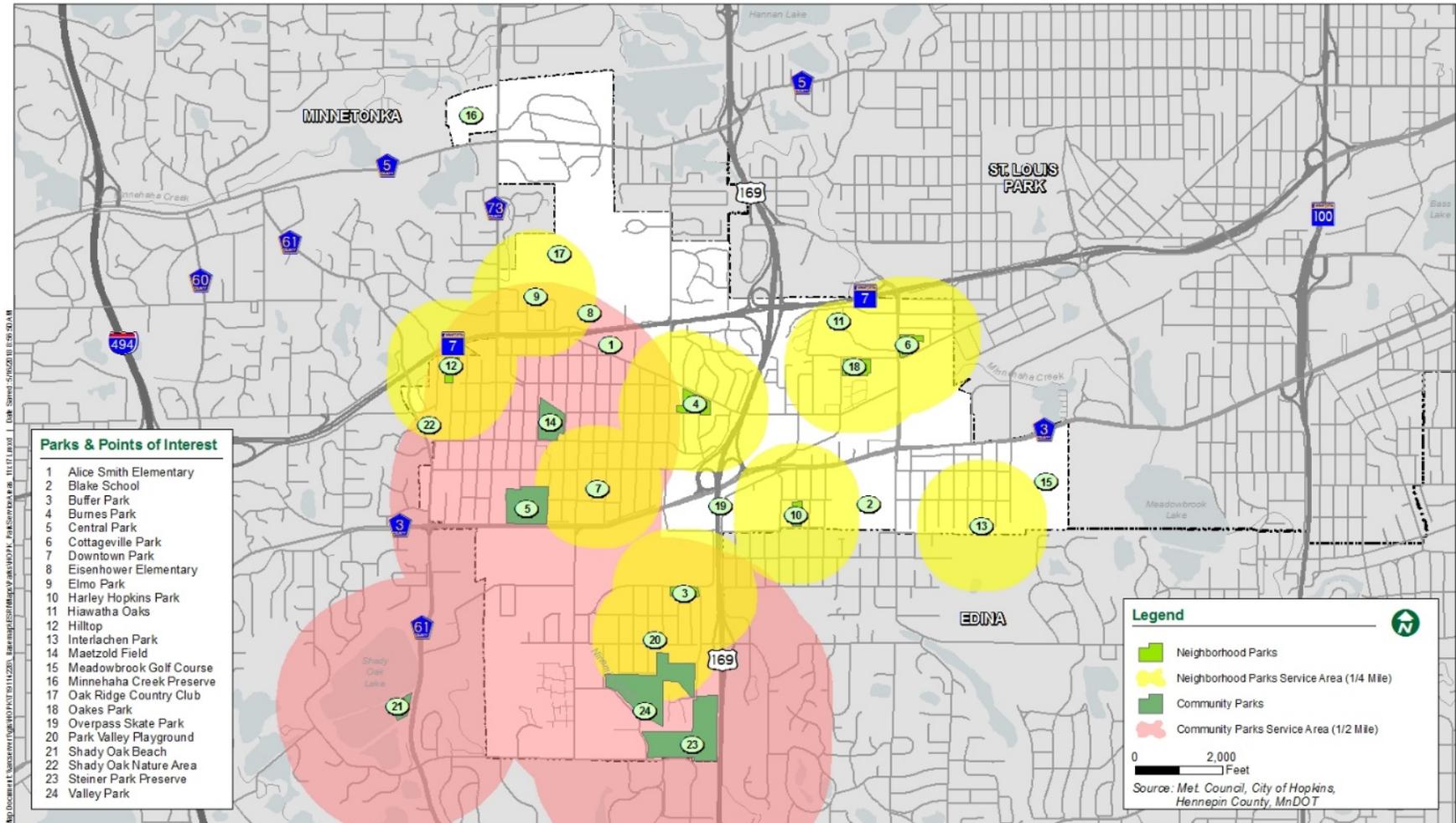
Hopkins has a variety of parks that are components of the overall park system. To examine existing parks and to project future park needs, a uniform classification system is used in this plan. **Table D2.2** provides categories have been established, consistent the system used in the 2030 plan.

Table D2.2 – Park Classification System			
Classification	Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Neighborhood Park	Basic unit of the park system; serve as the recreational focus of neighborhoods; emphasize informal active and passive recreation	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non- residential roads and other physical barriers	Usually between 5 and 10 acres
School-Park	Combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks such as neighborhood, community, sports complex and special use	Determined by location of school district property	Variable
Community Park	Serves a broader purpose than neighborhood parks; focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs as well as preserving unique open space	½ mile to 3-mile distance and typically uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. Determined by the quality and usability of the site	Usually between 20 and 50 acres
Special Use Park and Recreation Facilities	May be privately or publicly owned; private facilities can offer either indoor or outdoor recreation opportunities, usually on a membership or fee basis	Variable, depends on specific use	Variable
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space and visual aesthetics	Depends on resource availability and opportunity	Variable

Parks and recreational facilities are typically utilized based on the distance residents are willing to travel to access amenities. The location criteria set above provides general guidelines on the intended service areas a park should serve. Using these guidelines can provide a useful tool when analyzing the existing park system and determining areas that are underserved.

Figure D2.2 provides a visual assessment of Hopkins park system and its service areas. Service areas have been mapped for neighborhood and community parks. Overall the service area analysis shows the City of Hopkins to be well served by its existing system. There are areas for improvement; however, these areas are not likely to see new park construction, unless they are through redevelopment initiatives.

Figure D2.2 – Park Service Areas



Park System Needs

On the recreational side, Hopkins needs to determine whether the amount and location of parks in the city are sufficient to meet the needs of the city's population. This standard is expressed as a number of acres of park land per one thousand people and is used to provide a general guideline for the assessment of existing and future park needs. For the Hopkins comprehensive plan, a standard of 7 acres of municipal park land per 1,000 people has been used as a benchmark for planning purposes. This standard is consistent with a range of standards offered by the National Park and Recreation Association. Additionally, the overall standard has been broken down into the following components:

- Neighborhood Park – 2 acres per 1,000 people
- Community Park/Sports Complex – 5 acres per 1,000 people

Standards have not been directly applied to the other classifications used in this plan including school parks, natural resource areas, trails, or private park and recreation facilities. Neighborhood and community park needs can be satisfied in combination with the development of school facilities provided that facilities are available to both groups. Trail corridors are very site specific and are not included in overall acreage calculations because they serve as links between various components of the park system. Private facilities are also not included in the overall standard because in many cases, they do not have the same longevity enjoyed by public park uses.

The results of the application of these standards are summarized in **Table D2.3**.

Table D3.3 - Parks Assessment of Need					
Assessment of Need - 2010 (Population 17,591)					
Component	Existing Acres	Standard Acres	Per Population	Std. Applied to 2010 pop.	Net 2010 Acres
Park System	97.9	7	1,000	123.137	-25.237
Neighborhood Park	31.36	2	1,000	35.182	-3.822
Community Park	66.54	5	1,000	87.955	-21.415
School Park	82.73	*	*	*	*
Natural Resource Area	34.24	*	*	*	*
Assessment of Future Need - 2020 (Population 18,900)					
Component	Existing Acres	Standard Acres	Per Population	Std. Applied to 2010 pop.	Net 2020 Acres
Park System	97.9	7	1,000	132.3	-34.4
Neighborhood Park	31.36	2	1,000	37.8	-6.44
Community Park	66.54	5	1,000	94.5	-27.96
School Park	82.73	*	*	*	*
Natural Resource Area	34.24	*	*	*	*
Assessment of Future Need - 2030 (Population 19,600)					
Component	Existing Acres	Standard Acres	Per Population	Std. Applied to 2010 pop.	Net 2030 Acres
Park System	97.9	7	1,000	137.2	-39.3
Neighborhood Park	31.36	2	1,000	39.2	-7.84
Community Park	66.54	5	1,000	98	-31.46
School Park	82.73	*	*	*	*
Natural Resource Area	34.24	*	*	*	*
Assessment of Future Need - 2040 (Population 20,100)					
Component	Existing Acres	Standard Acres	Per Population	Std. Applied to 2010 pop.	Net 2040 Acres
Park System	97.9	7	1,000	140.7	-42.8
Neighborhood Park	31.36	2	1,000	40.2	-8.84
Community Park	66.54	5	1,000	100.5	-33.96
School Park	82.73	*	*	*	*
Natural Resource Area	34.24	*	*	*	*

Neighborhood Parks

Standard: 2 acres per 1,000 people

Comments: Neighborhood parks are recreational facilities that are intended to serve populations residing within a ¼ - ½ mile radius of the site. These facilities typically contain open space areas, which accommodate uses such as field games, court games, play equipment and other uses. Although five acres is generally recognized as a minimum size for neighborhood parks, smaller tracts of land can be used due to natural conditions or in areas where larger land parcels are not available.

Existing Supply/Need: Hopkins currently has ten sites that are categorized as neighborhood parks ranging in size from .5 acres to 7 acres. Application of the recommended standard for neighborhood parks results in a deficiency of nearly 9 acres by 2040. The standards indicate the need for additional

neighborhood park areas; however, closer examination of Hopkins reveals that the city probably does not need to add park areas to serve existing and future needs. Hopkins contains three public school sites that accommodate neighborhood park needs. These sites along with Alder Park in Edina provide convenient access for all residents. As shown in the service area analysis, almost every home in Hopkins is located within ½ mile of an existing neighborhood park. The only exception is the extreme northern portion of the community lying north of the Oak Ridge Golf Course. This area is completely developed, precluding the potential of adding an additional neighborhood park. If the golf course is ever redeveloped in the future, an additional park site could be acquired at that time. Residents in this area do have the opportunity to access bike routes and local trails via Minnetonka Blvd. that provide access to other local facilities within the City of Minnetonka.

Community Parks

Standard: 5 acres per 1,000 people

Comments: Community parks are recreational facilities that serve as focal points of community recreational systems. As such, they typically provide facilities that appeal to a broad spectrum of users. Activities may include athletic complexes, archery, fishing, nature study, hiking, picnicking and other uses. Community parks commonly contain facilities that are designed to appeal to both active and passive users within one park site. The location of community parks is usually established based on topography and other natural features and on accessibility via the local road network.

Existing Supply/Need: Hopkins currently has four sites that are classified as community parks. They include Central Park, Maetzold Field, Shady Oak Beach, and Valley Park. Central Park and Maetzold Field consist predominately of athletic field areas. Both of these sites are used intensively for adult and youth sports programs.

Additionally, Central Park is the home of the Hopkins Pavilion that accommodates indoor ice hockey and indoor soccer. Valley Park contains passive and natural areas in addition to active pursuits such as volleyball, basketball and archery. Shady Oak Beach, a facility run jointly with the City of Minnetonka, is an area that accommodates swimming, fishing, water oriented play areas and picnicking.

Application of the standard for community parks shows the city does not meet needs, and the deficiency of land will increase with population. Because of the developed nature of the community, adding community park land will be difficult; however, some future opportunities exist. The southern portion of Hopkins contains a landfill site that has been closed for a long time. At the present time the site has not been cleared by state agencies for any type of use. As a result, the property is fully fenced and it contains a methane collection system. At some point in the future, the property may become available for public use. When this occurs, the site could be developed as a community park. Additionally, there are existing golf course areas that could transition to more general parks and open space over time, perhaps in coordination with additional development. Finally, the development of Minnehaha Creek Preserve (classified currently as a special use facility) provides passive recreational opportunities, particularly in connection with the recently completed Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail connection.

Trails and Sidewalks

Overview

A well-developed bicycle and pedestrian network provides a way for people of all ages and abilities to travel in a way that is safe, comfortable, accessible, and active. It connects people to community destinations, improves bicycle and pedestrian safety, increases multimodal opportunities, encourages active living, and provides a community amenity.

In the context of parks and open space, trails provide access to recreation, physical activity, and opportunities to meet and connect with others. From a transportation perspective, they also provide an important component of a multimodal transportation network – both as a separate mode, and as a way to connect other types of trips (like transit) to destinations. The transportation function of these facilities is being covered more extensively in the transportation element of the plan. This section will focus on the recreational use of trails and sidewalks, particularly in terms of how they connect to parks and open spaces.

The bicycle and pedestrian network in Hopkins needs to operate on at least a couple scales.

- **Locally**, it should connect to neighborhoods and destinations within the city, to allow for convenient and safe travel by area residents. The traditional urban form of a significant portion of Hopkins provides good opportunities for walking and bicycling. Redevelopment in key locations can further expand those areas. However, major corridors and barriers exist that can be challenges to safety and connectivity.
- **Regionally**, it should connect to county and state trail networks, to provide for longer distance travel and linkages to nearby communities outside of Hopkins. Hopkins has developed as a downtown of the southwest metro, and likewise is a hub of trail corridors and connections – including multiple regional trails. This provides a high level of access for both residents and visitors to the entire system, and suggests possibilities for local connections, wayfinding, and amenities that complement the regional network.

The local and regional bicycle and pedestrian network is shown on **Figure D1.1**.

Regional Trails

In addition to a network of local sidewalks, trails, and bicycle lanes, Hopkins is the site of trailheads for five Three Rivers Park regional trails, described in the following section. Three Rivers Park District (the entity managing regional trails in Hennepin County) operates the regional trails for spring, summer, and fall usage. Some portions of the regional trails are maintained by cities during the winter, as indicated in their descriptions. As the trails generally have fairly flat grades, they are well suited for recreational bicycling, walking, and running.

- **Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail** is a limestone aggregate trail that heads southwest west from Hopkins to Chanhassen and Chaska along an old railroad route. It connects Shady Oak Lake, Miller Park, Riley Lake Park, and forested land along the Minnesota River Valley. There are connections to the downtowns of both Hopkins and Chaska. During the winter, the trail is plowed by the cities of Eden Prairie, Hopkins and Minnetonka. It is not plowed in Chanhassen. The total trail length is around 12 miles.
- **Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail** is a popular, wide, paved trail that heads east from Hopkins to Minneapolis, following the former railroad lines of the Great Northern Railway and the

Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway. During the winter, the trail is fully plowed by the cities of St. Louis Park and Hopkins. The total trail length is around 3.8 miles.

- **North Cedar Lake Regional Trail** is a paved trail that runs northeast from Hopkins to Minneapolis. It passes through neighborhoods in Hopkins and St. Louis Park, connecting to the trails around Cedar Lake in Minneapolis. During the winter, the trail is fully plowed by the cities of St. Louis Park and Hopkins. The total trail length is around 4.4 miles.
- **Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail** is a limestone aggregate path that runs west from Hopkins to Carver Park Reserve in Victoria, passing alongside Lake Minnetonka on the way. It connects Hopkins to the communities of Minnetonka, Deephaven, Greenwood, Excelsior, Shorewood, and Victoria. Camping opportunities in Carver Park Reserve provide another option for trail users. During the winter, the trail is plowed in the cities of Deephaven, Excelsior, Hopkins, Minnetonka, Shorewood, and Victoria. It is not plowed in Greenwood and Tonka Bay. The total trail length is around 15.8 miles.
- **Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail** is a paved trail following the meandering path of Nine Mile Creek, as well as passing through some wetland and woodland areas. It includes 1.7 miles of wooden boardwalk and 14 miles of paved trail, connecting from Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail in Hopkins to the cities of Edina and Richfield. In Richfield, it provides access to the Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail, and other park destinations. The trail is around 15 miles total in length.

At this time, no additional regional trails are planned in Hopkins. For additional information on planned improvements to local bicycle and pedestrian facilities, see **Appendix B2**.

There are no existing or planned regional parks or other protected county, regional, or state open spaces in Hopkins. This emphasizes the importance of connecting Hopkins to the larger regional parks network via trails, waterways, and open spaces.

Recommendations

There are currently no planned improvements to the regional trail network in Hopkins, besides incremental improvements and routine maintenance. For additional information on planned improvements to local bicycle and pedestrian facilities, see **Appendix B2**.

Based on the analysis presented previously, input from the public and the Hopkins Park Board, and overall goals of this plan, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Expand open space opportunities.** Develop the landfill site and/or other open space areas in Hopkins as community parks if the opportunity presents itself. If the landfill becomes available for public use, it could accommodate needed soccer fields and other active facilities. Should other areas, such as existing golf courses, become available, these should be considered as well. Master plans should be prepared for any potential park site prior to park development.
2. **Local connections for regional trails.** Work to establish a series of local trails that connect to the regional trails. Incorporate trails as part of all major road improvement projects such as Excelsior Boulevard. Examine higher volume local roadways for potential off-street trail installation.
3. **Accessibility.** Upgrade and improve all park buildings to ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.
4. **Flexibility.** Evaluate the use of open fields, ball fields and outdoor hockey rinks to determine opportunities for flexible uses, such as soccer and lacrosse, depending on demand from the community.
5. **Maintenance.** Regularly invest in park and trail improvements, in accordance with the capital improvement program. Improve lighting and sidewalks in park and recreation areas to make areas more pedestrian friendly.