

CITY OF HOWARD LAKE

PARK & TRAIL PLAN



Effective July 6, 2011

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this plan would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the following persons:

Mayor and City Council: Mayor Richard Lammers, Jan Gilmer, Tom Kutz, Al Munson, and Pete Zimmerman

Park Commission: Chair Mike Mitchell, Jean Schmidt, Shelly Reddemann, Darrell Main, and April Debner

Planning Commission: Chair Jean Schmidt, Shelly Reddemann, Fran Wren, Vern Kleve, and Mike Mitchell

This plan was compiled with the collaborative efforts of the following staff members and consultants: Kelly Hinnenkamp, City of Howard Lake, City Administrator; Nate Sparks, Northwest Associated Consultants, Consulting City Planner; Stephen Grittman, Northwest Associated Consultants, Site Designer; Robert Kirmis, Northwest Associated Consultants, Architectural Consultant; Dan Sjordahl, Northwest Associated Consultants/Outworks, Landscape Architect; and Barry Glienke, Bolton & Menk, City Engineer

The City of Howard Lake would like to thank LiveWright for the funding that made this planning effort possible.

The City would also like to thank the Howard Lake Orphans Baseball Club for their participation in this process and for providing input on the Memorial Park master plan.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Howard Lake establishes this Park & Trail Plan to comprehensively identify goals and needs for the present and future park, trail, and recreational system of the community. This endeavor will result in the City establishing methods by which to more efficiently distribute park funds in order to get the most out of the community's investments in the system.

Wright County's Public Health Department launched a public health program Live Wright. Live Wright has distributed grant funds from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) in order to assist Wright County communities in developing programs that promote healthier lifestyles for area residents and to improve the overall community health. The City of Howard Lake recognizes the importance of this endeavor and shares the goals expressed by this program. Thus, the City is utilizing this opportunity to analyze, project, and develop the City's park, trail, and recreational system to ensure successful, coordinated, and efficient short and long term planning with the goal of overall community health in mind.

This plan was developed by a process that included several opportunities for public input. The Park Commission hosted a public open house for residents and other interested parties and listens to concerns, comments, and ideas regarding the City's existing park system and individual parks. From that input, the Park Commission held a series of meetings at which the park system and individual parks were analyzed. The public was invited to these meetings, as well. Then the Planning Commission and Park Commission held a joint public hearing on the draft plan document prior to forwarding on to the City Council. The planning process was a collaborative approach involving the general public, Park Commission, Howard Lake Orphans baseball club, Planning Commission, and City Council.

PLAN PURPOSE

Park and trail facilities are an essential part of a healthy, attractive, and quality community environment. The system provides necessary components for community events, physical activity, and general recreation. Whether for passive or active use, parks are an important part of everyday life in the community. As with streets and public utilities, parks and trails are integral components of municipal infrastructure. Thus, the park and trail system warrants a significant level of planning and commitment of resources to ensure the system is efficient, accessible, safe, and properly operated.

This document serves as a guiding philosophy and a practical guide for creating a park and trail system capable of meeting the current and future needs of Howard Lake residents. This plan assesses the existing park and trail system and the needs of the existing and future residents. The plan then establishes community visions, goals, policies, and specific action steps intended to be utilized in developing a cohesive, coordinated, efficient, and interconnected system of active parks, community recreation areas, natural areas, and historic sites.

This planning process results in the establishment of three broad outcomes. First, the City is establishing general goals for what it chooses to look for in parks and trails. Second, the City is surveying the existing park system and identifying short term needs. Third, the plan identifies long term needs for future park locations and types.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

To better identify the City's current and future park system needs, it may be appropriate to briefly assess the nature of the community itself. Factors such as age and population can assist in determining and analyzing the appropriateness of various park facilities.

Howard Lake History

The City of Howard Lake gets its name from the body of water, Howard Lake. The lake was named in 1856 for a famous English philanthropist, Sir John Howard. The area near Howard Lake was initially settled by Morgan Cochran in 1855 who intended to establish a town site in this location. In 1863, he sold his land to a farmer named Charles Goodsell. A railroad line was soon built to the area and in 1869, Goodsell platted his land and began making improvements. Using the railroad and lake as a focal point, soon mills, stores, a hotel, and other such businesses were opened and a school district was established in 1870. Howard Lake became incorporated in 1878. The iconic historic city hall building was built in the early 1900s. The City of Howard Lake continued to grow until reaching 1240 people in the 1980 census and then to almost 2000 people in 2010.

Population & Demographics

The City of Howard Lake has grown from 1343 people in 1990 to 1926 in 2010. The greatest growth was in the 1990s when the City added over 200 new dwelling units. Growth continued through the 2000s as the City added an additional 130 units. The Minnesota State Demographer's Office in 2007 projected the City's population to reach 3000 by 2025. Growth has been slowed by recent economic conditions. However, the close proximity to the Twin Cities Metro Area and the overall continued population growth in Wright County, one could expect these trends to continue.

Table 1: Howard Lake Population 1990-2010

| Year | Population | Units | # per Unit |
|------|------------|-------|------------|
| 1990 | 1343 | 517 | 2.6 |
| 2000 | 1853 | 735 | 2.5 |
| 2010 | 1926 | 865 | 2.2 |

Source: US Census Bureau

Currently, the City of Howard Lake has 1926 residents and 865 household units. This comes out to 2.2 people per unit, which is most likely low, due to higher vacancy rates, however, it also indicative of the overall aging population throughout the country.

Complete census data from 2010 has not been released, as of yet. Based on the 2000 Census there were 25% of counted residents under the age of 18 and 12% over the age of 65. This almost exactly matches the United States as a whole where 24% were under 18 and 12% were over 65. This data shows that Howard Lake has a standard diversity of ages. For the purposes of park and recreation programming, this results in a need to supply facilities across the age spectrum.

COMMUNITY VISION FOR PARK & TRAIL SYSTEM

From the planning process used for the development of this plan, a community consensus regarding the idealized goals and concepts for a comprehensive park system were established. This resulting community vision serves as the mission statement for the City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan. This statement of purpose summarizes the purpose behind the overall comprehensive plan. This purpose is further represented by the key principles and goals identified. From this larger vision, the comprehensive principles can assist in evaluating the current system, setting up goals for the future, establishing funding priorities, and reviewing proposals.

Mission Statement

The City of Howard Lake seeks to establish and maintain a park and trail system that provides recreational opportunities for all residents in a highly efficient manner while incorporating access to the City's unique natural, historical and cultural resources.

Comprehensive Park & Trail System Principles

In order to establish a comprehensive park system reflected in the mission statement, the City of Howard Lake adopts the following principles regarding the ideal system. Decisions regarding funding, proposals, acquisition, and other such endeavors should keep these key ideas in mind.

Park System For All Residents

The park and trail system is being provided for all residents. Therefore, all residents will have access to the park system and the healthier lifestyles provided by the increased physical activity afforded by such a system. The key concept behind a successful, efficient, and well-utilized system of parks is an even distribution of recreational and open space areas throughout the community. All residents are viewed as the target users for the park and recreation system. Therefore, parks shall be located within convenient access to all residents throughout the City equipped with amenities that appeal to all park users.

A Park System That Is Reflective Of Community Character

The City of Howard Lake intends for its park system to be a reflection of the community. Residents are drawn to Howard Lake due to the lakes and the classic small town character of the City. Individual parks and open spaces within the City are intended to capture and reflect this essential character of the City. Currently, Howard Lake has parks situated to capitalize on the unique amenities found in Howard Lake. In the future, this goal is intended to continue. Therefore, while providing for recreational opportunities, the park system will also serve to preserve the unique natural and historic amenities found within the community. The preservation of such amenities within the park system will provide community access to these characteristics.

A Park System That Increases Physical Activity

Parks and recreation are an integral part of the public infrastructure and are essential to the goal of promoting and sustaining active living for all residents. The City of Howard Lake recognizes the need to comprehensively plan the municipal park, recreation, and trail system in order to increase the overall community physical activity. This will lead to healthier lifestyles and a more vibrant community.

An Efficient, Cost-Effective Park System

Park and recreational systems that are efficient and cost-effective avoid duplicating services, overlapping service areas, and lower costs per site in order to provide more amenities. The City of Howard Lake seeks to utilize long term site planning and evaluate development opportunities with property already owned by the City in order to lower costs to be able to provide more facilities for less money. Long term maintenance costs are also to be monitored.

PARK SITE & DESIGN TYPES

In order to maximize access, efficiency, community character, and physical activity the City of Howard Lake intends to establish stated goals for all parks within the present and future park system. Existing parks may be reviewed against these concepts and future parks location and styles will be based on these criteria. In some instances the ideal park may not be feasible and in these cases the goals will assist in analyzing the trade-offs and getting the maximum out of each opportunity.

Visible & Accessible

Parks with a proper amount of visibility and accessibility maximize public safety and efficient usability. Play areas may be open to the street to increase visibility. Interior paths should link the various amenities to the parking areas, sidewalk, and trails. Large grade changes between the street, trail, or sidewalk and park facilities should be avoided.



Parks that do not have significant frontage and access to public roads are by nature more secluded. This type of parkland is usually behind houses in a subdivision and may often create confusion of ownership. Park users may conflict with the residential users as noise, lighting, and heavier usage becomes more incompatible. While sometimes parks such as this are necessary to preserve key natural areas, great lengths should be taken to ensure the park can serve more than one purpose.

Accessible parks are also located within the neighborhoods they intend to serve. Ideally, all residents will have a park within ¼ to ½ mile of their home. This allows for people to walk or bike to parks within the system.

Higher Classification Roadways

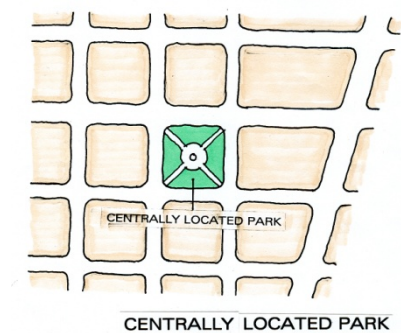
Parks should be located on higher classification roadways such as collector or arterials with parking opportunities available on site or availability nearby in public lots or on public streets. Only smaller minor parks should be located on lower classification roadways to avoid interfering with residential traffic. Public trail or sidewalk access to the park and within the park should also be available to ensure that pedestrians and bicyclists have easy access to the site and all amenities.



When parks have limited frontage and access points, parking areas are more difficult to provide. Park users will be restricted in access methods and may resort to parking in neighborhood streets exclusively and creating conflicts with area residents.

Central Location

Parks should be as centrally located as possible. Centrally located parks are accessible from multiple directions and therefore can serve more residents. By focusing acquisition on key intersections or the center of neighborhoods, it may accentuate and enhance other key community facilities.



Incorporate Character of the City

Parks should be located to incorporate key natural, historic, or cultural areas. The park system is intended to not only provide recreation but to also enhance, preserve, and reflect the community identity. This identity includes the numerous lakes, historic buildings, natural resources, and other such amenities.



Importance of Park Design

Parks are important infrastructure components of the City. Their location and base design are important considerations. Park sites should not be an afterthought in subdivision design. The location and design of parks have important long term impacts on the community and the City's budget. When placed in difficult to access locations, parks may be harder to maintain and less usable requiring the acquisition of more parkland. Existing parks that resemble these types should be targeted for improvement or possible long term replacement.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

A variety of park and recreation facilities are recommended to satisfy the diverse interests of the population. This ensures adequate opportunities for all people and encourages use by all citizens. Facilities that serve regional populations have different location and programming needs than facilities intended for use by a small residential neighborhood.

Community Parks

Community Parks are semi-regional in nature and are intended to draw from a larger population. They may be areas of diverse environmental quality which may include areas suited to intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes as well as passive type areas depending largely upon the site location, suitability, and community need.

Community parks are most desirable at about 25-40 acres in size. However, sizes may be smaller or larger depending on the programming, availability of land, or nearby facilities. All Community Parks should be located on higher classification roadways and have trail or sidewalk access linking the park to the remainder of the system and the community as a whole.



Such parks provide for a combination of intensive and non-intensive development ranging from play equipment to trails. It may include natural features, such as waterbodies or forested land, and must include support elements such as restrooms, drinking water, parking, and lighting. Community playfields and larger programmed athletic facilities are ideal components of such a park.

While not having specific service areas, Community Parks may sometimes incorporate neighborhood facilities within. This lessens the need for additional neighborhood parks. In these situations, a Community Parks will have a similar $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile service area for residential access.

Neighborhood Parks

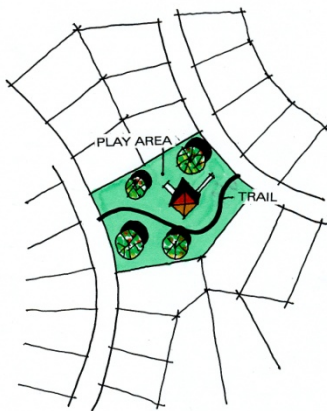
Neighborhood Parks are intended to be the primary recreation areas that draw users from specific areas. These parks are often the social and recreational focal point of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Parks of this type are intended to have service areas between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Such

parks sites should be suited for multi-use development, easily accessible to individual neighborhood populations, and geographically centered with safe walking and bike access.

While neighborhood parks in Howard Lake are traditionally between 0.5 and 2 acres in size, with centralized facilities to promote a more efficient system this general size may ideally be larger going forward. Future neighborhood parks should be between 5 and 10 acres in size. However, parks size may vary depending on the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and specific intended use.

Neighborhood parks should be located within walking distance from the neighborhoods being served by the park.

Ideally, the park will be within ½ mile or less of all residents to encourage convenient use, easy access, and pedestrian access. When located on higher classification roadways, there should be safe street crossings planned for access.



In cases where smaller neighborhoods cannot be serviced by the area neighborhood park due to location or access issues, specialized facilities serving a limited population or specific group may be appropriate. These mini-parks are intended to augment the service areas of the neighborhood parks but not replace them. Such parks should be limited in use to play equipment, walking trails, picnic areas, limited fields, and other such amenities but not draw from a larger area. Through good subdivision design and neighborhood park locations the need for such parks can be limited, as they less efficiently provide park services. When

necessary these parks should be an acre or less in size but still follow acceptable park site location guidelines.

Passive Parks / Open Space

Passive Parks or Open Space serve to protect, manage, and provide access to the natural/cultural environment. Ideal components of a passive park are natural preservation areas, walking trails, rest areas, picnic areas, and off-street parking. Such parks are not included in the active park system like the Community or Neighborhood Parks because of the limited infrastructure placed within the parks and the less intense uses. Passive Parks should only be established where there are



important natural features to be preserved that are incompatible with active recreation uses. If these conditions are not present, such a park may end up being an inefficient use of City resources. A park may be classified as a passive park in the short term but may change classification if needs arise.

Typical Park Amenities

Different classifications of park have different types of park amenities based on the potential park users. Table 2 identifies common park amenities and which type of park these elements are found within.

Table 2: Typical Park Amenities By Park Classification

| Typical Park Amenity | Community Park | Neighborhood Park | Mini Park | Passive Park |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Basketball Court | X | X | | |
| Boat Launch | X | X | | |
| Dog Park | X | X | | X |
| Fishing Pier/Docks | X | X | | X |
| Horseshoe Pitch | X | X | X | |
| Interpretive Nature Area | | | | X |
| Nature Trails | X | X | | X |
| Open Play Area | X | X | X | X |
| Pavilion | X | X | | |
| Picnic Areas | X | X | X | X |
| Playground | X | X | X | |
| Skating | X | X | | |
| Sports Complex | X | | | |
| Sports Fields | X | X | | |
| Swimming Area | X | X | | |
| Tennis | X | X | | |
| Trail Access | X | X | X | X |
| Volleyball | X | X | | |
| Water Park | X | | | |

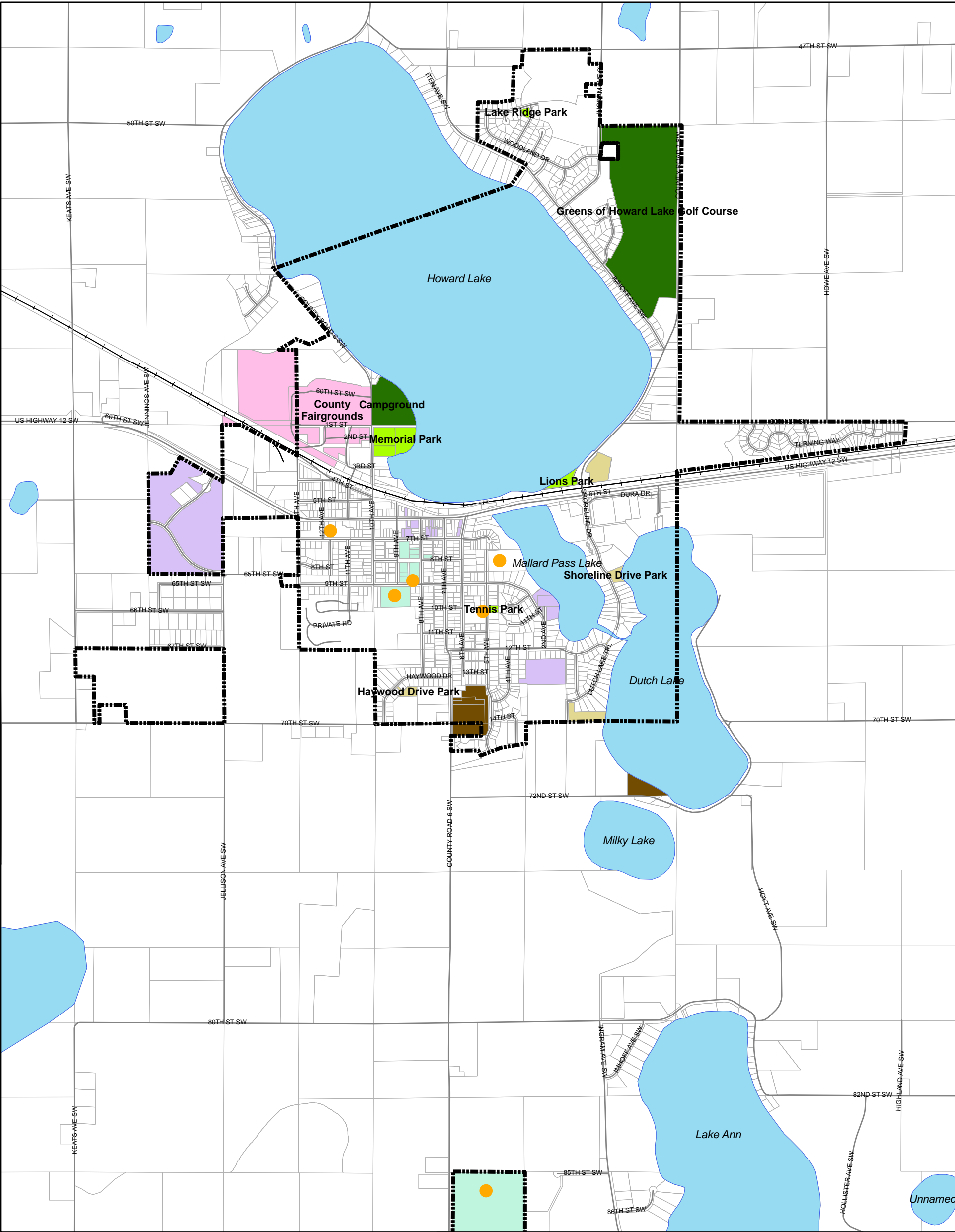
CURRENT MUNICIPAL PARK SYSTEM

A key part of the park planning process is to understand what parks, recreation, and open space facilities are currently established within the City. This allows for an assessment of the condition of the existing facilities and to identify short and long term improvements, keeping in mind the park type and location criteria. Some parks may be ideal candidates for expansion or greater investment, while others may not.

The City of Howard Lake currently has about 21 acres of municipally provided parkland. Of the 21 acres, 12 are utilized for active recreation and about 9 are passive parks or open space. The table below shows the park name with its acreage.

Table 3: Existing Park System

| Active Parks | Acreage | Passive Parks | Acreage |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Memorial Park | 7.9 | Shoreline Drive Park | 1.1 |
| Lions Park | 1.8 | Dutch Lake Trail Park | 2.9 |
| Lake Ridge Park | 0.5 | Haywood Drive Park | 1.1 |
| Tennis Courts | 0.5 | Lions Park | 3.7 |
| 12 th Street Park | 1.3 | | |
| Total | 12 | Total | 8.8 |
| Total Active & Passive Parks | | 20.8 acres | |



Existing Parks

City Park

Private Recreation

Cemetery

Open Space

Church & School
Playground/Ballfield

School District Property

City Property

County Property

Railroad

City Limits

Water

0

1,375

2,750

5,500

Feet

City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan

Existing Parks



Memorial Park

10th Avenue & 1st Street

Community Park

7.9 acres

Current List of Equipment:

- Ball Field
- Volleyball Court
- Parking lot
- Park Equipment
- Park Pavilion
- Fishing Pier
- Bathrooms



Planned Improvements:

- Improve drainage near playground equipment
- Patio seating area
- Internal pathways
- Baseball park improvements
- Improve access to the lake



At nearly eight acres, Memorial Park is the largest park facility in Howard Lake's system. The park is dominated by two elements – a full-size adult baseball park adjacent to the lake, and a picnic and playground area to the west. The ball field is lighted and includes concessions, stadium seating, and other amenities. Along the north side of the ball field access to the lake and a fishing pier have been provided.

The picnic/playground area to the west includes permanent restrooms, picnic pavilion, playground equipment and volleyball in a wooded setting. The City is currently working to resolve drainage issues in the northern portion of this area.

Plans for the park include the addition of a patio area that can be used to observe activity in both the ball field and the playground, an internal trail system that would help delineate playground uses, as well ring the ballfield along the lakeshore, and which would connect to the sidewalk and trail system beyond park boundaries. The concept plan on the following page also shows potential for reconfigured ball field support amenities, the patio seating discussed above, as well as a trail concept for the picnic and playground portion of the park.



Memorial Park
City of Howard Lake, Minnesota

NAC NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.
4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 203, Golden Valley, MN 55416
Telephone: (763) 251-2000 Fax: (763) 251-2001 www.nacparking.com

12th Street Park

12th Street near Mallard Pass Trail

Neighborhood Park

1.3 acres

Current List of Equipment:

- Skating Area
- Warming House
- Lights

Planned Improvements:

- Add playground equipment
- Separate public works and park uses



The 12th Street Park is a planned park to fulfill the park needs for the southeastern portion of the City. Currently this area is not served by a City Park and only has immediate access to school facilities which are generally greater than ¼ mile to most of this park's service area.

Currently, this site is utilized as primarily a public works facility but also a winter ice skating area. The northeastern 1.3 acres of the site is being separated for general park uses but the balancing of park and public works needs will require ongoing monitoring. For the initial development, a 50 foot buffer is shown to the wells in the northeastern corner of the site to provide ample room for unfettered Public Works access and use.

The site is planned for inclusion of playground equipment and a basketball court, while preserving the existing skating facilities. A proposed site plan is included on the following page. This site plan intends to coordinate all of these potential uses for the site. Three basketball courts are shown which can also be used for one hockey rink. A combination of the two may also be used. The location of the first basketball court should be picked based on long term skating needs. Lights should be relocated, as needed.

To improve access to the site, pedestrian and bicycle corridors should be examined. Also, construction of a pathway over the channel between Mallard Pass and Dutch Lakes would increase accessibility.



Concept Plan for:

12th Street Park

City of Howard Lake, Minnesota



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4900 Olsen Memorial Highway, Suite 200, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2561 planners@nacplanning.com

Lions Park

Highway 12 & County Road 7

Neighborhood Park

5.5 acres (1.8 active, 3.7 passive)



Current List of Equipment:

- Playground Equipment
- Bathrooms
- Beach Area
- Boat Launch
- Boat Dock
- Pavilion

Planned Improvements:

- None identified at this time

Lions Park is classified as a Neighborhood Park but, in fact, it has many unique elements that draw users from a greater area. The Playground Equipment and Boat Launch were installed in 2003. The playground equipment will need to be planned for possible replacement around 2023 or shortly thereafter. The park also features great access with parking on site and trails leading to the park along Highway 12. Lions Park has a passive park area to the east of County Road 7. This area is largely wetland.

In the even that current road locations are altered, it would be ideal for the City to explore the expansion of this park. It has an ideal location at the intersection of two major roadways and has a major boat launch facility. If the park is expanded it could become classified as a Community Park but maintain neighborhood facilities for use in the immediate service area. Any expansion of this park may lessen the need for additional planned facilities in the immediate vicinity.



Lake Ridge Park

Pine Avenue & Maple Street

Neighborhood Park

0.5 acres

Current List of Equipment:

- Playground Equipment
- Small Picnic Area

Planned Improvements:

- None at this time



Lake Ridge Park is a smaller, neighborhood park for the northeastern portion of the City. It is accessed by sidewalks on the northern and eastern side of the park site. The park is newer in vintage and should be examined for possible equipment replacement after approximately 20 years based on level of use. As this neighborhood grows, the City may wish to discuss with area residents the potential for adding future amenities to the park.



5th Avenue Tennis Courts

Highway 12 & County Road 7

Neighborhood Park Facility

0.5 acres

Current List of Equipment:

- Tennis Court
- Basketball Court
- Trail

Planned Improvements:

- Resurface Court



The 5th Avenue Tennis Courts is an independent recreational amenity with limited to no opportunity to be incorporated into a larger park setting. There is access via a trail to the 11th Street cul-de-sac. A pedestrian pathway of some sort on 5th Avenue would also be ideal to provide more access.

Sport surfaces such as this should be maintained generally once every five to ten years, based on level of use. At the time of resurfacing, the use of the facility as part basketball and part tennis should also be re-analyzed. If the basketball court planned for the 12th Street Park is sufficient to fill this need, this facility may be put back to use as a tennis court and perhaps a backboard installed. If basketball is to remain, the surface may be customized and options for

Dutch Lake Trail Park

Dutch Lake Trail near Mallard Pass

Passive Park with Nature Trail

2.9 acres



Current List of Equipment:

- Trail
- Benches

Planned Improvements:

- Dock

This park is intended to remain as generally passive. As the City grows south, it may be ideal to expand the size of this park and extend the internal trail further south. Trails connecting this park to the rest of the City should be pursued to provide better access to the site.

Haywood Acres Park

Haywood Drive between 70th St & 8th Ave

Passive Park – 1.1 acres



Current List of Equipment:

- None

Planned Improvements:

- Bird Houses
- Benches
- Walking Path
- Info Center

Haywood Acres Park currently has no facilities and is open space. Prior to investing in improvements, the City should improve access, as it is only accessible through a narrow strip of land between houses and there are no sidewalks or trails in the area. A natural resource study should be conducted to determine value of the open space. If there this is a valuable natural resource area, an info center would be appropriate.

Shoreline Drive Park

Shoreline Drive on Dutch Lake

Passive Park

1.1 acres

Current List of Equipment:

- None

Planned Improvements:

- Benches
- Internal Trail



Shoreline Drive Park is intended to be kept as a passive, natural park. An internal trail system, similar to that found in the Dutch Lake Trail Park, may be developed. To improve accessibility, it would be ideal to build a trail segment over the channel between Mallard Pass Lake and Dutch Lake. Paths and other facilities would receive more limited use without such a connection. The City should continue to review and pursue other passive opportunities for this site.

NON-MUNICIPAL PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES

In addition to the City park system, there are also non-municipal recreation facilities located in Howard Lake. The School District, area churches, and some private businesses all provide such recreational opportunities. These facilities may assist in determining future needs and prioritizing funding targets.

School Facilities

The Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District provides open fields, ballfields, and playground equipment as part of their school sites. This includes Yager Field on 9th Street and the school playground at the northwest corner of 8th Avenue and 9th Street. There are also ballfields at the High School site south of town. Coordination with the School District is important to avoid duplication of services.

Church Facilities

Some of the churches in Howard Lake also have playground equipment and playfields. The facilities are shown on Map #1. While these facilities are not always for use by the general public, consideration of these facilities and their intended use can be involved in future decision making regarding public funding priorities.

Private Facilities

The City of Howard Lake also has several important private recreational facilities. The Greens of Howard Lake Golf Course is located in the northeastern section of the City. The Codger Cove Campground is located on the western shore of Howard Lake across the street from the Fairgrounds and adjacent to Memorial Park. Both provide extra green space, as well as additional recreational opportunities. There is also a cemetery on the southern edge of the City on Country Road 6 that provides additional open space.

Wright County Fairgrounds

The County Fairgrounds are also located in Howard Lake. Not only does the County Fairgrounds provide a location for the County Fair but also other off-season events. Its location is across County Road 6 from Codger Cove and Memorial Park.

Wright County Parks

There are two County Parks near Howard Lake. The Bill Anderson Memorial Park is north of the City on County Highway 7 on the Crow River offering two campsites, a picnic area, sledding hill, canoe access, and short trail for hiking and snowshoe use. The County also provides the Dustin Historic Site west of the City on Highway 12 which has a historic marker and picnic area.

PARK SYSTEM PLANNING

The City of Howard Lake has grown by about 600 people over the last twenty years as new residents are drawn to the many lakes, historic downtown, and the small town character of the City. In order to continue to accommodate growth, the City has identified short term and long term annexation areas. As these areas are developed, the City must keep in mind the future park system needs.

Using the existing population and park supply as a baseline, the City now has 1926 residents and 12 acres of active parkland and about 9 acres of passive parkland. The active parkland is inclusive of the 12th Street Park, which is intended to fulfill the neighborhood park needs for the southern portion of the City. During this planning process, the City established that with the new 12th Street Park in service, the City Park System would be at an adequate overall service level. This service level is intended to be maintained into the future.

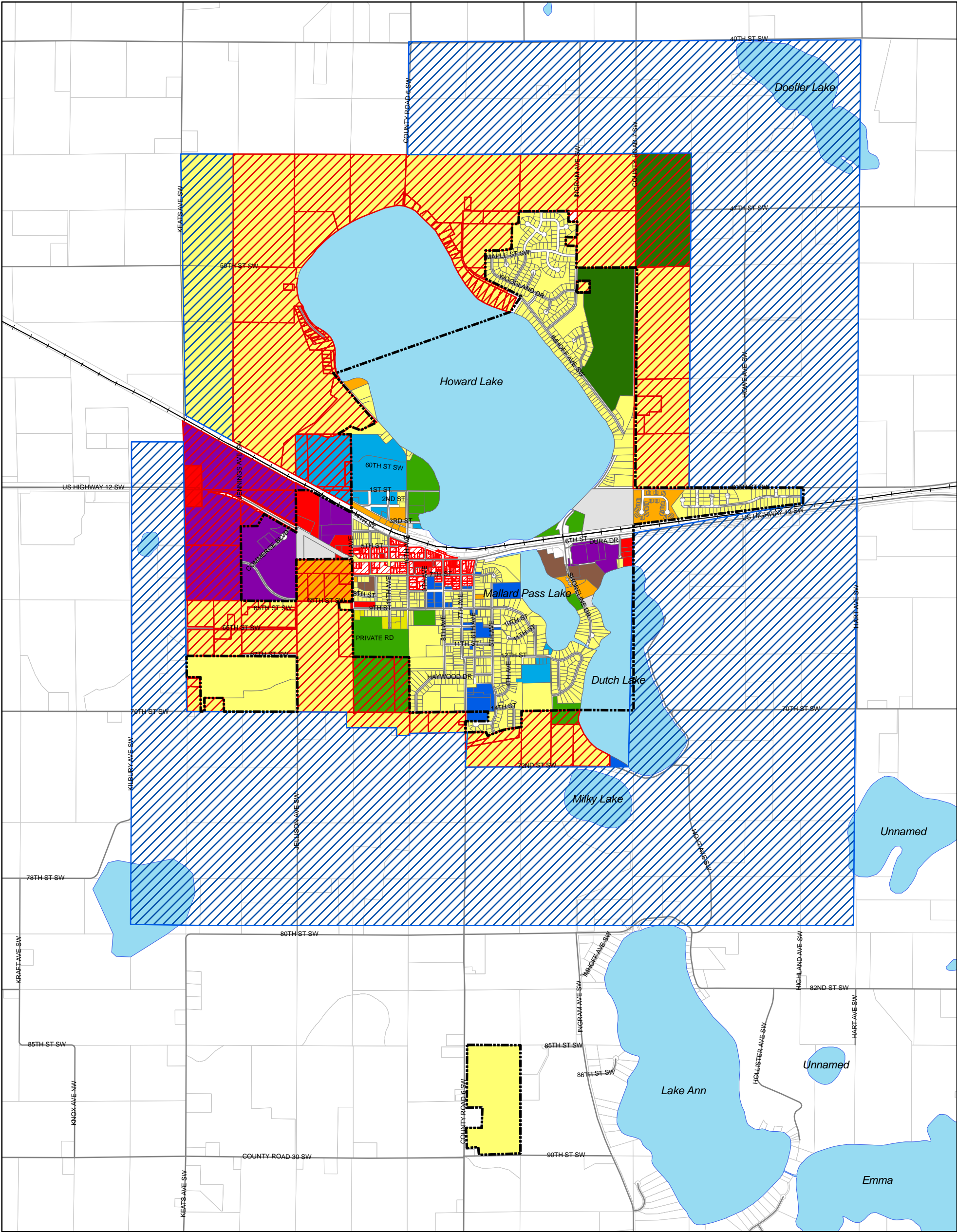
In the short term annexation area, the City has about 950 net acres of undeveloped land. This is not inclusive of wetlands or other undevelopable areas. While, it will take some time for this land to be fully developed, it is important to analyze this area to ensure that park needs are being met regardless which portions are developed first. There are 918 net acres of land identified for single family residential in this area and 29 net acres of land guided for multiple family uses. To determine the number of future residents in this entire area, the City can use a general base of 2 units per acre for single family and 7 units per acre for multi-family, based on zoning and land use designation standards. Then using a very conservative estimate of 2.2 residents per unit, a general estimate of 4486 future residents is generated. 2.2 residents per unit is considered very conservative because this number is based on the current number of residents per unit from census data and that does not account for vacancies.

Table 4: Short Term Annexation Area Development Capacity

| Net Acres | Development Type | Units per Acre | Total Units | Population per Unit | Total Population |
|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 918 | Single Family | 2.0 | 1836 | 2.2 | 4039 |
| 29 | Multi-Family | 7.0 | 203 | 2.2 | 447 |
| 947 | Residential | 2.15 | 2039 | 2.2 | 4486 |

The City currently has about 2000 residents with 12 acres of active park land (including the 12th Street Park) and about 9 acres of passive parkland. This provides about 6 acres for every 1000 people of active parkland and 11 acres for every 1000 people of total parkland. The National Recreation and Park Association used to provide general standards of the amount of parkland

needed by a City for every 1000 people. While this respected industry association has gotten away from using these standards, due to the extreme variety of municipality types, a comparison is still somewhat useful.



Howard Lake
City Hall - 1904



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4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55423
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2561 planners@nacplanning.com

- Commercial
- Industrial/Business
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Mixed Use
- Government Buildings
- Schools/Churches/Cemeteries
- Parks
- Private Recreational
- Vacant

- Short Term Annexation Area
- Long Term Annexation Area
- water
- railroad
- City Limits

0 2,000 4,000 8,000 Feet

City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan

**Proposed Land Use &
Future Annexation/
Utility Extension Area**



Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

Map #2

The former standard was that it was necessary for a city to have between about 6 and 10 acres of active parkland per 1000 people. This number is often modified by cities up to 11 acres per 1000 people when including open space. This gives Howard Lake a current supply of about 6 acres per 1000 people of active parkland and 11 acres per 1000 people for overall parkland. Both calculations place Howard Lake within these standard ranges.

Based on the projected population for the short term annexation area, the City will need to provide about 28 acres of additional active parkland, primarily as neighborhood parks, in the future. Future neighborhood parks are anticipated as being mostly between 5 and 10 acres in size. While establishing ½ mile service areas for each park and avoiding overlapping as much as feasible this would appear to necessitate four future neighborhood parks in the short term annexation area. This will maintain the level of active park service in the community, as the City grows.

Table 5: Population Per Acre of Parkland

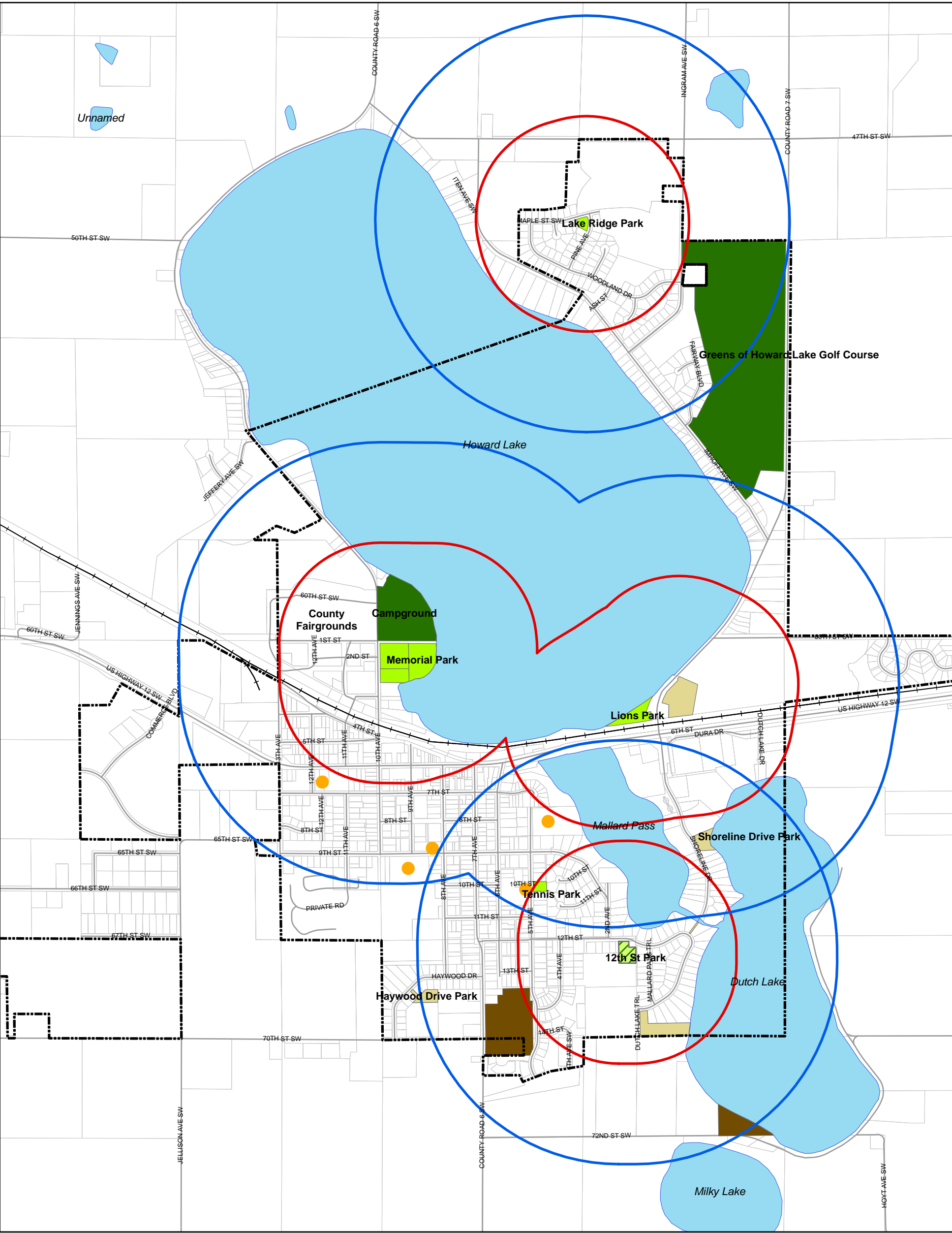
| | Population | Active Park Acreage | Population per Acre | Passive Park Acreage | Population per Acre |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Current | 1926 | 12 | 160.5 | 9 | 214.0 |
| Future | 4486 | 28 | 160.2 | 21 | 213.6 |
| Total | 6412 | 40 | 160.3 | 30 | 213.7 |

In Table 5 passive parks are also indicated in this calculation for demonstration purposes. It should be noted that it is difficult to project passive park sizes, as it is impossible to predict availability and quality of resources for protection at this stage. It is more important to identify key areas and attempt to preserve key areas as much as feasible, based on the situation.

Table 6: Park Acreage Per 1000 people

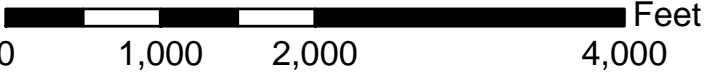
| | Population | Active Park Acres | Acres per 1000 People | Total Park Acres | Acres per 1000 People |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Current | 1926 | 12 | 6 | 21 | 11 |
| Future | 4486 | 28 | 6 | 49 | 11 |
| Total | 6412 | 40 | 6 | 70 | 11 |

Map #3 shows the existing parks and the new 12th Street Park with ½ mile and ¼ mile service areas around each park that has neighborhood level facilities, regardless of classification. It is ideal for residents to have access to a park within ¼ mile or ½ mile at most from their home. This map shows that most all residents are within ½ mile of a municipal active park facility, at this time.



- 1/2 Mile Park Service Area
- 1/4 Mile Park Service Area
- City Park
- Private Recreation
- Cemetery
- Open Space
- 12th St Park
- Church & School Playground & Ballfields

- Water
- Railroad
- City Limits



City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan

Existing Park Service Areas

N



Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

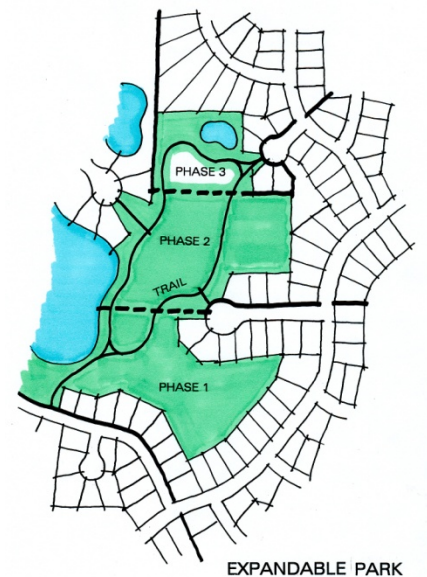
FUTURE PARKS

As noted in the analysis above, the City is intending to provide for four future neighborhood park search areas and identify possible locations for other specialized parks. No neighborhood parks are identified in the long term area, as land uses are not established. When land uses are established in this area, the same exercise can be conducted for that area. Community and Passive Parks are identified in the long term annexation area due to their not being related to land use patterns but rather overall community needs.

Map #4 shows the approximate location and search areas for future parks. Locations are not fixed but rather dependent upon conditions at the time of acquisition and development. Many of these parks will only be created within future subdivisions. The location of the park within subdivisions will utilize the goals and criteria established within this plan and will require developments to be designed to accommodate the parkland. When a property is to be developed in an area identified for a future park, the City will review the subdivision with that in mind. Search areas are intended to replicate existing park service areas and are positioned in a fashion to avoid overlapping and creating inefficient spacing. Future parks intended for active neighborhood uses are depicted with a ½ and ¼ mile service areas to demonstrate ideal accessibility.

Future Park Search Areas #1-#3

A large amount of the future residential development in the short term annexation area is north of Highway 12. Therefore neighborhood parks are needed for the future residents in these areas. Search Area 1 is positioned to also serve the Terning Trails Development on the eastern edge of the City. All three parks should be sited to capture the natural character of the area, as much as possible, and ideally with access to or views of Howard Lake. The parks should be located on a higher classification roadway with parking, if none is available on the street. The parks should have a target size of 5 to 10 acres include playgrounds, open playfields, and also include some recreational components not found in other parks. Ballfields, soccer fields, or other such fields may be placed in a supplemental fashion in these parks if needed. Trails and sidewalk systems should be built to each park and connect to the main trail system. Each park may be dedicated in stages through multiple developments to avoid having to dedicate funds for acquisition. In cases where development occurs in such a fashion where segments of neighborhoods become too distant from the park, miniature parks an acre in size or less with minor facilities may be acquired and developed, as well.



Future Park Search Area #4

Much the same as Search Areas #1-#3, Search Area #4 is intended to serve future development. However, this park is intended to serve development in the southwest corner of the short term annexation area. Unique natural areas are not as prevalent in this location, therefore, the park should be located to maximize accessibility and use. The existing neighborhoods in the southwest portion of the City will need to be provided access when the location of this park is set.

Future Park #5

Future Park #5 is the park on the Howard Lake Public Works site located on 12th Street. This park is intended to be the primary park for the residents south of Highway 12 in the short term and in the long term serve the southeast area of the City and the adjacent short term annexation area.

Future Park #6

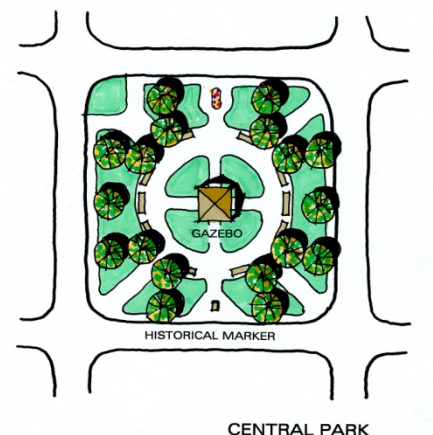
This future park is intended to be an expansion of the Dutch Lake Trail Park. This future park was identified in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. By expanding this park, the City will be giving more access to the public on Dutch Lake and allow expansion of the walking trails in this area. The amount of land acquired will be based on availability at the time of future development in the area. Active programming is not intended for this park, unless future roadway patterns restrict access to the 12th Street Park.

Future Parks #7, #8 and #10

A passive park on the east side of Dutch Lake to provide public access is depicted as Future Park #7. If land on the lake is not available, this park may also be located with a view. Parks #6 and #7 may also serve as trailhead sites for trails that are planned in the area. Future Park #8 is intended to be another passive park serving the same purpose of Future Park #7 but rather preserving access or views of Milky Lake. This site is not located within the short term annexation area. Another long term passive park, Future Park #10 is intended to serve as a passive lake access park for Doerfler Lake.

Future Park #9

Howard Lake has a very important cultural amenity in the Downtown District featuring several historic buildings and views of the lake. If space becomes available through redevelopment or building removal, it may be ideal to preserve an open square or small space as a downtown park. This park would serve to augment



the downtown experience and create a public space for gatherings and smaller community events. This park may also be used as a potential trailhead site linking the east-west and north-south trail routes for the western side of Howard Lake.

Future Park #11

A long term need for the park system would be to establish a sports complex featuring multiple organized ballfields. The proposed site for this is larger 30-50 acre facility is intended to be near the school in order to coordinate efforts, share facilities, and possibly develop the park jointly. As the City grows in size it will be essential to continually monitor demand for this facility. Specific planning for a sports complex should begin well in advance of the City fully developing the short term annexation area. Ideally, this facility would be ready to come online when the City exceeds 5,000 in population.

If coordination efforts with the school district are not possible, other locations may be considered. Other locations should also be on a higher classification roadway such as a County Road or even Highway 12. As the City grows southward, the sports complex may also double as the neighborhood park for this area by providing smaller scale playground facilities.

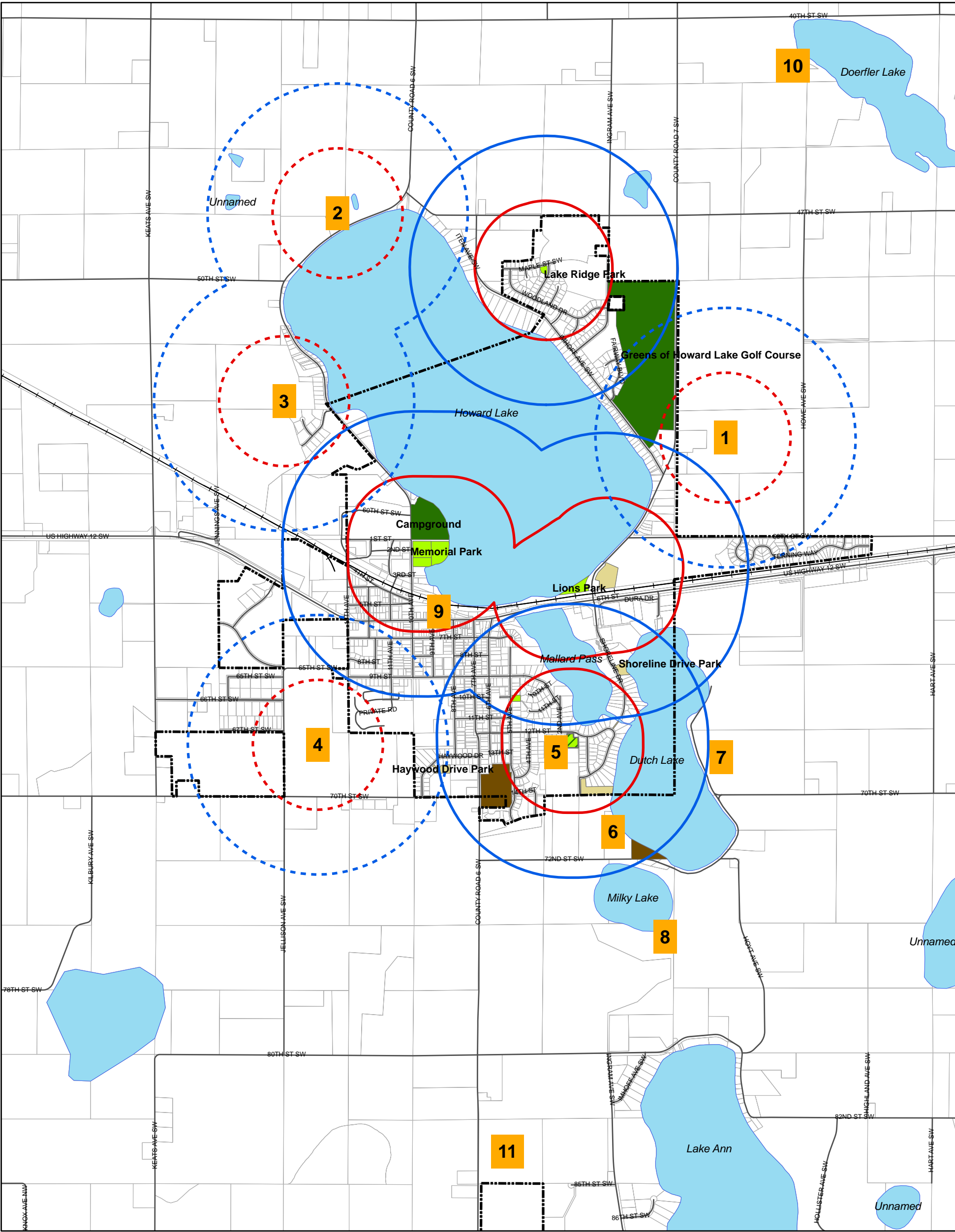
Sports complex facilities attract tournaments and users from outside the area. This can be an economic development boon to the City, as well as filling a community need. However, the City should ensure it is capable of handling the maintenance responsibilities for such a facility before establishment.

Dog Park Concept

In the recent past, there had been discussion about placing a dog park area to one of the City parks. This park is not mapped, as it is considered a component of a park and is not required to be in one specific fixed location. A dog park should be placed within a park large enough that the dog related uses are not a nuisance for neighboring property owners. The location should also have pedestrian access.

Future Park Development Strategies

At the time new parks are acquired, it should be decided whether the park is to be developed immediately or whether to wait until the neighborhood is at least partially developed. The former method is preferable when amenities are known ahead of time. The latter is ideal when the City establishes a need for public input. When the City decides the park amenities ahead of time, concepts that fit the classification of the park should be the primary consideration. Cities require the construction of streets, sidewalks, water mains, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer systems as a prerequisite of development. Trails and parks may be included and established at the time of development.



- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------|
| | 1/2 Mile Park Search Area | | City Park |
| | 1/4 Mile Park Search Area | | Private Recreation |
| | 1/2 Mile Park Service Area | | Cemetery |
| | 1/4 Mile Park Service Area | | Open Space |
| | Future Parks | | Water |
| | 12th St Park | | Railroad |
| | | | City Limits |

0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan

Future Parks



Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

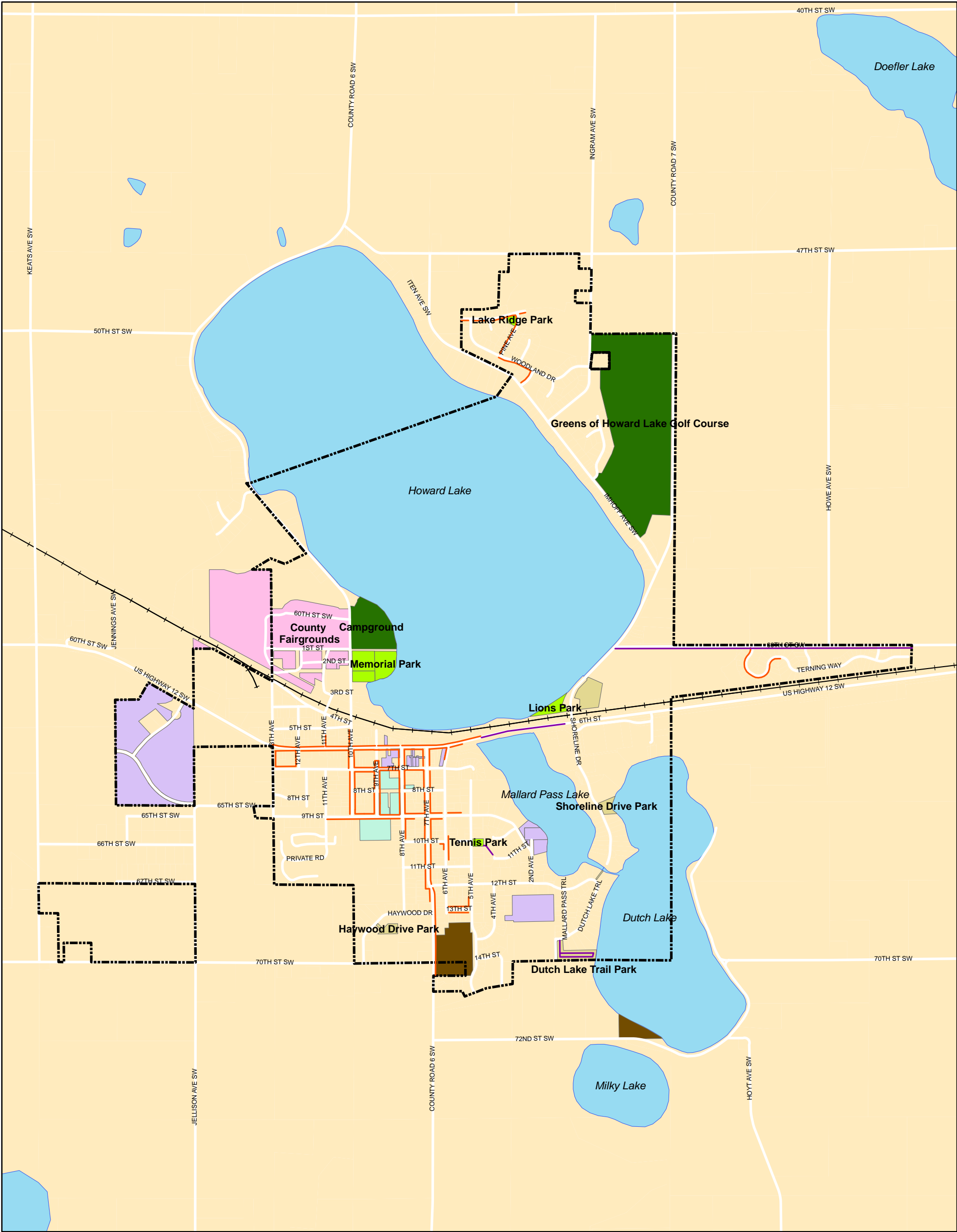
TRAIL SYSTEM & FUTURE TRAIL PLANNING

A complete system of park and recreation areas is not complete without linear linkages between facilities and connections to neighborhoods, schools, public use facilities, and key community focal points. As well as serving as a transportation method to bring users to park and recreation areas, an interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities may serve as a recreational feature of its own.

The City of Howard Lake currently has a system of trails and sidewalks focused on the established interior of the City. Further development of corridors in this area to reach current park and recreation locations may be necessary. Also, development of the system to reach future parks and recreation areas will be needed.

The trail plan is designed to assist in developing a community wide system providing greater access to community assets and provide greater recreational opportunities. The plan is intended to show conceptual trail or sidewalk alignments and may be revised as opportunities arise or situations are more defined. The City may elect to use sidewalks, separated trails, bike lanes, or any combination based on the situation and opportunities available to develop the system. As parkland is developed, the City fully intends to connect the parks to the overall trail system to ensure adequate access. In cases where the conceptual trail location is determined to be infeasible, a more realistic route may be chosen as long as it serves the same purpose.

Future sidewalks and trails are not identified with specificity of what type of infrastructure will be placed in that location. Based on the conditions on the site, land development patterns, and feasibility a trail, pathway, bike lane, or possibly other methods may be appropriate to serve the purpose. By the same logic, it is difficult to predetermine which side of the roadways will have the feature prior to further study and examination. The Future Trail Plan instead identifies where corridors will be generally placed.

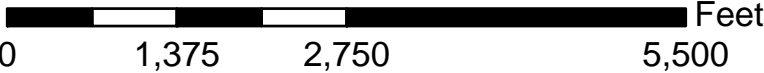


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4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55423
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2561 planners@nacplanning.com

Existing Sidewalks/Trails

- Sidewalk
- Trail
- City Park
- Private Recreation
- Cemetary
- Open Space

- School Property
- City Property
- County Property
- Water
- Railroad
- City Limits



**City of Howard Lake
Park and Trail Plan**

Existing Trails

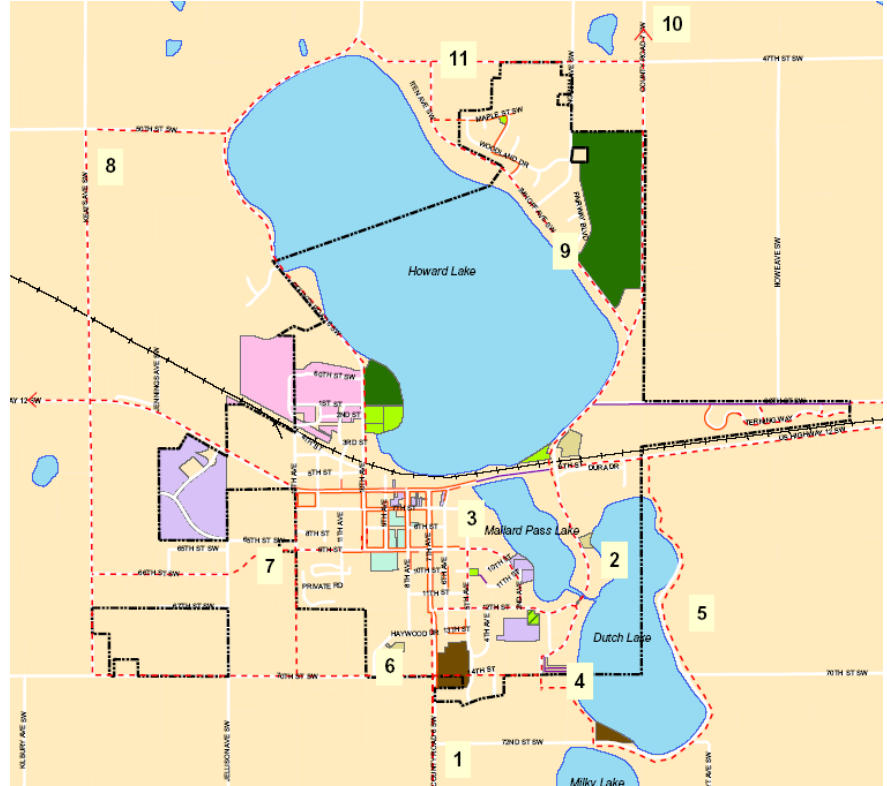


Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

Future Trail Planning

The City of Howard Lake Trail Plan is depicted on Map #6. In developing this trail plan several key policy points were considered:

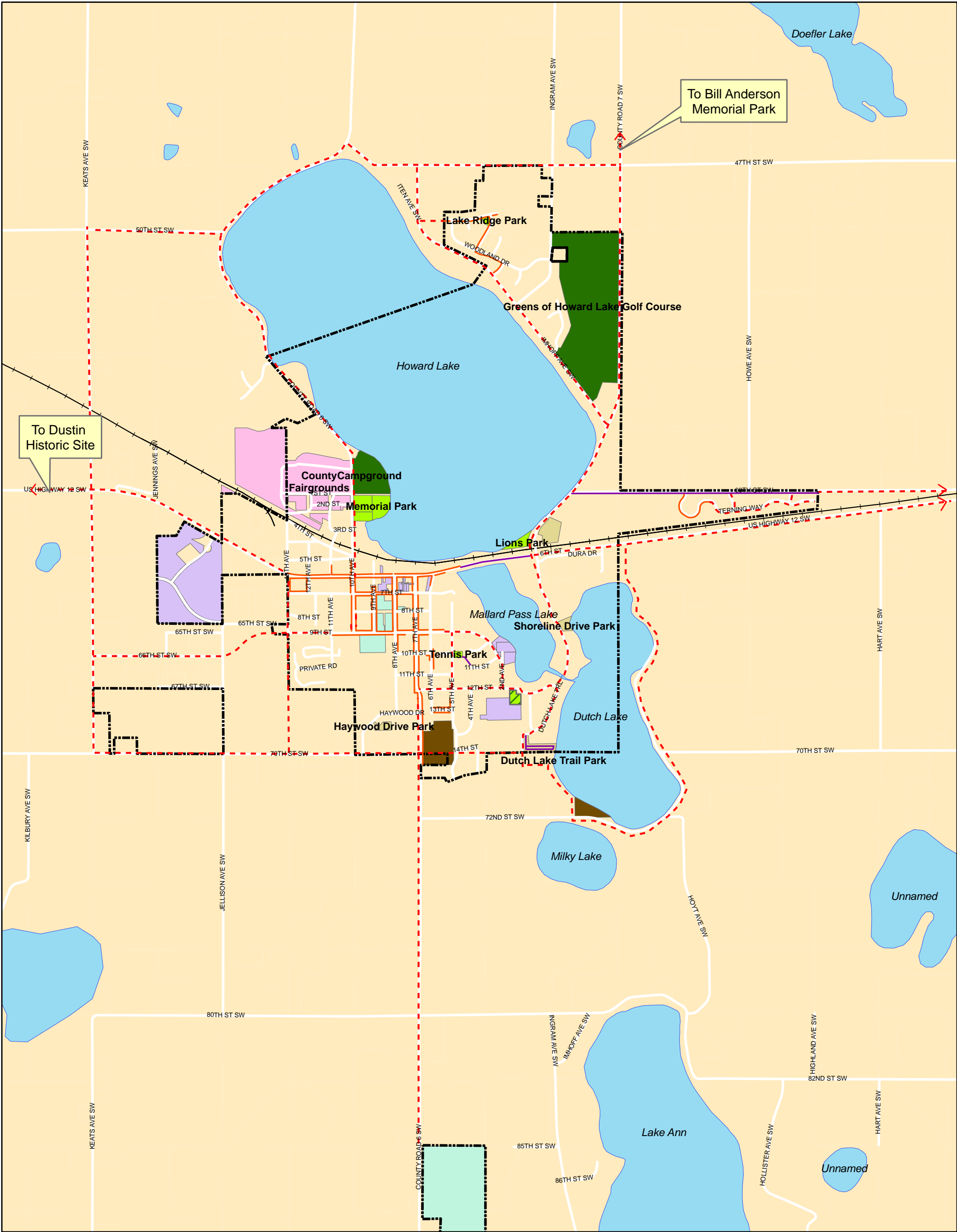
1. A future trail is intended to go south to the High School site and provide access to a future community park identified for this area. The identified corridor for this trail segment is on County Road 6.
2. The City has land acquired to build an elevated walkway across the channel between Mallard Pass Lake and Dutch Lake. With the new 12th Street Park being developed, this trail segment should be a higher priority. It will allow for greater access to this park.
3. If feasible, trails may be planned for the east side of Mallard Pass Lake to make a loop around this waterbody.
4. The Future Park Plan calls for an expansion of the Dutch Lake Trail Park to the south. This park should be developed with adding additional trails in mind to the south.
5. A long term future trail is planned to circle Dutch Lake. Development is not imminent for this area but if opportunities arise, it would be a high quality amenity.
6. If any facilities are placed in Haywood Drive Park, it would be essential to add a sidewalk or a trail leading to this park.
7. Based on future development patterns, there will need to be a sidewalk or trail system leading through the southwest growth area connecting 9th Street & 11th Avenue with Keats Avenue & 70th Street. This corridor should lead to the future park identified in this area.
8. There are two parks planned for the northwest growth area. Based on development patterns, there should be trails connecting these parks to the perimeter system identified on the map and the Howard Lake loop.



9. The Howard Lake loop is an important component of the trail plan. Howard Lake is one of the greatest amenities of the City and this trail loop is a key way to capitalize on its presence in the community. However, not all the proposed trail currently lies within the City. If establishing this trail is to be possible in the short term, it would need to be a cooperative effort with the County and the Township. The southwestern portion of the loop is also difficult because of the railroad trestle. This is an important issue to overcome to allow for this trail segment to reach Memorial Park, the County Fairgrounds, and the campground.

It may be ideal to build this trail in segments. For example, the City could construct a trail on Imhoff Avenue from the entrance of Lake Ridge to County Road 7. With the trail from County Road 7 to Lion's Park and other sections being future projects. Segments constructed first should be considered based on feasibility and opportunity.

10. North of the City on County Road 7 is a county park. As the City grows northward, it would be ideal to consider trail construction in this direction.
11. The trails in the northeastern growth area should be placed in a manner to connect with the sidewalk system that leads to the Lake Ridge Park.



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.
4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55423
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2501 planners@nacplanning.com

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|-----------------|
| | Future Sidewalks & Trails | | School Property |
| | Existing Sidewalk | | City Property |
| | Existing Trail | | County Property |
| | Future Park | | Water |
| | City Park | | Railroad |
| | Private Recreation | | City Limits |
| | Cemetery | | |
| | Open Space | | |

0 1,600 3,200 6,400 Feet

City of Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan

Future Trail Plan



Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

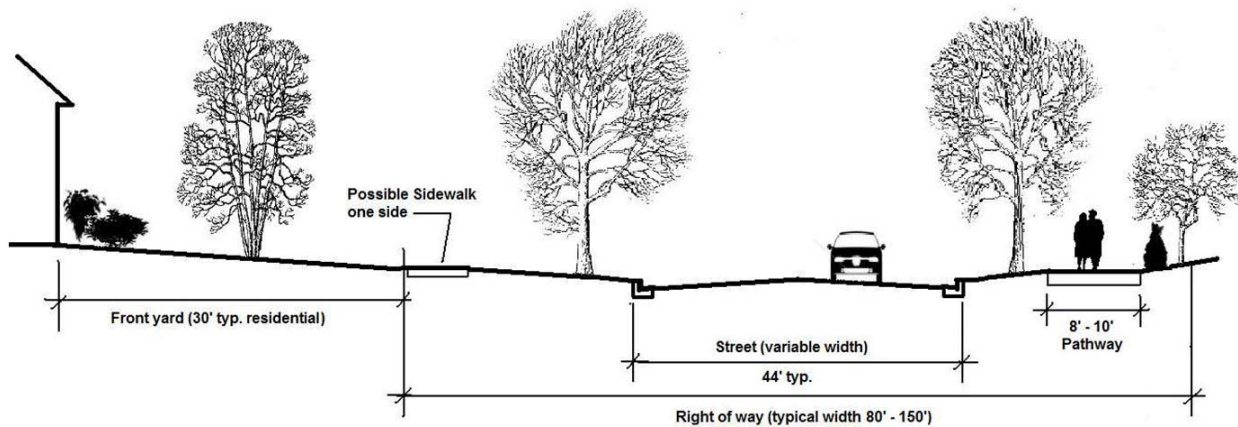
Map #6

Trail Types & Design

The trail plan does not specify which type of trail will be built in which location. This decision will be based on a feasibility review at the time of development. Cost constraints, availability of land, and proposed use will all need to be considered.

Primary Trails

Unless completely infeasible or out of character with the area, all trails will be constructed as primary trails. Primary trails are intended to be bituminous pathways 8 feet wide or more with

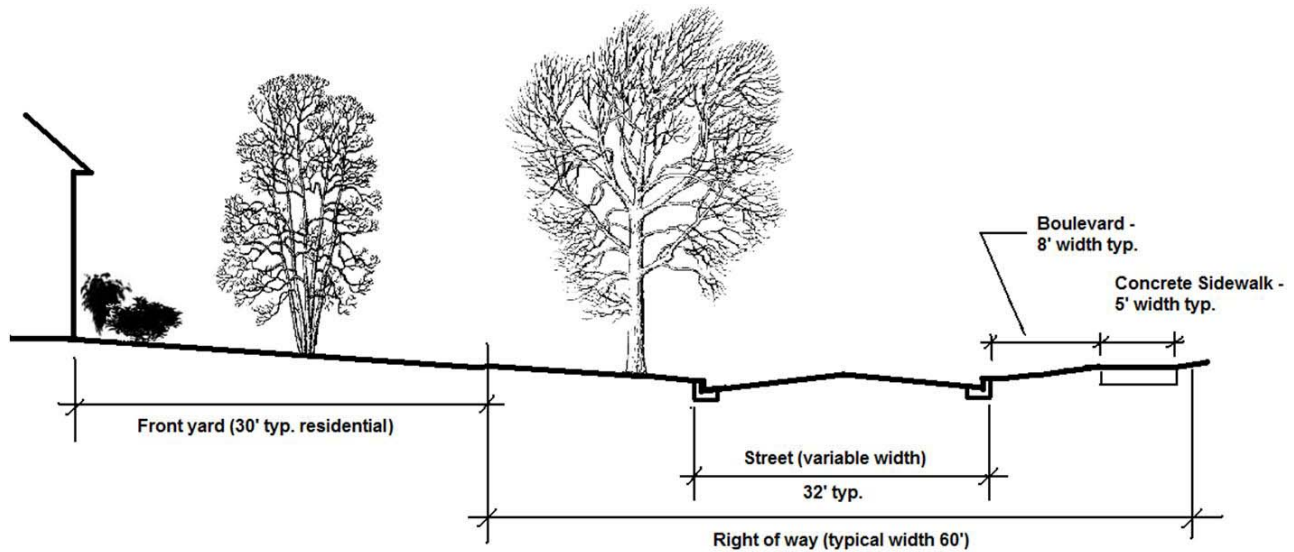


separation from the roadway. Primary trails in all cases should be constructed adjacent to collector roads, County Roads, and other higher classification roadways, as well as when constructed in areas where it the trail is not adjacent to a right-of-way. The absolute width will be determined based on projected level of use.

Sidewalks

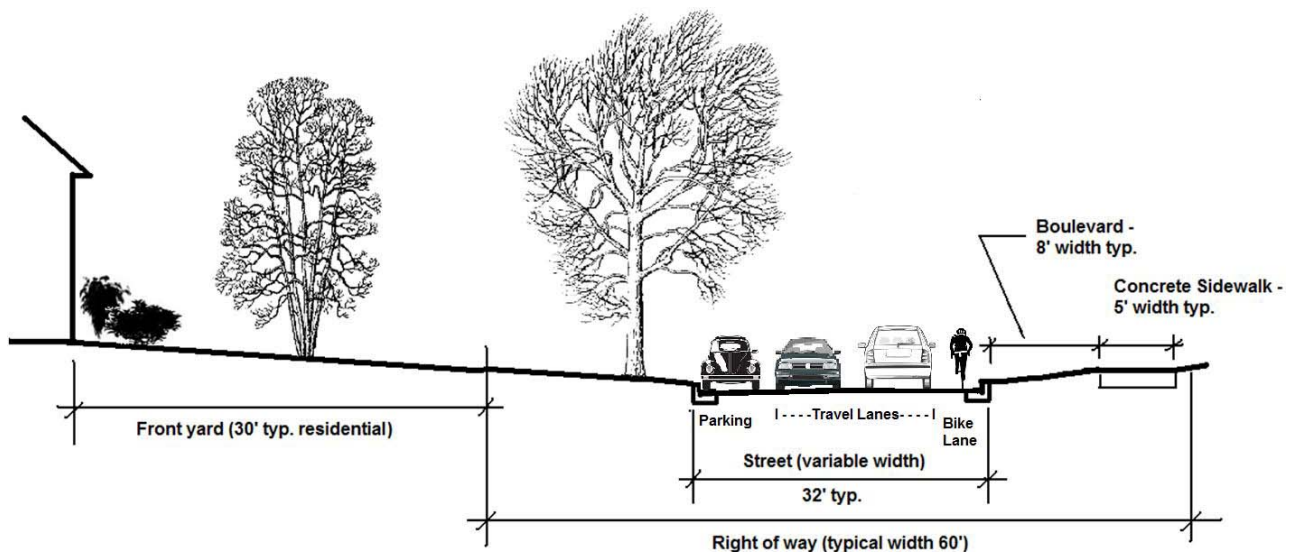
In situation where the purpose of the trail is for neighborhood access as a purely local route, whether that is for a short walk or providing transportation routes to a specific location. Locations might include a neighborhood park, a nearby business, school, or other land use, or a route to the larger trail system.

Neighborhood pedestrian improvements may take many forms, the most dominant of which would be a local sidewalk. Such improvements are commonly of concrete construction, five to six feet in width, and set within the public street right of way at or near the boundary line between the private property and the area of public use. The City's Engineering Design Standards and Specifications should be consulted for the most current design requirements.

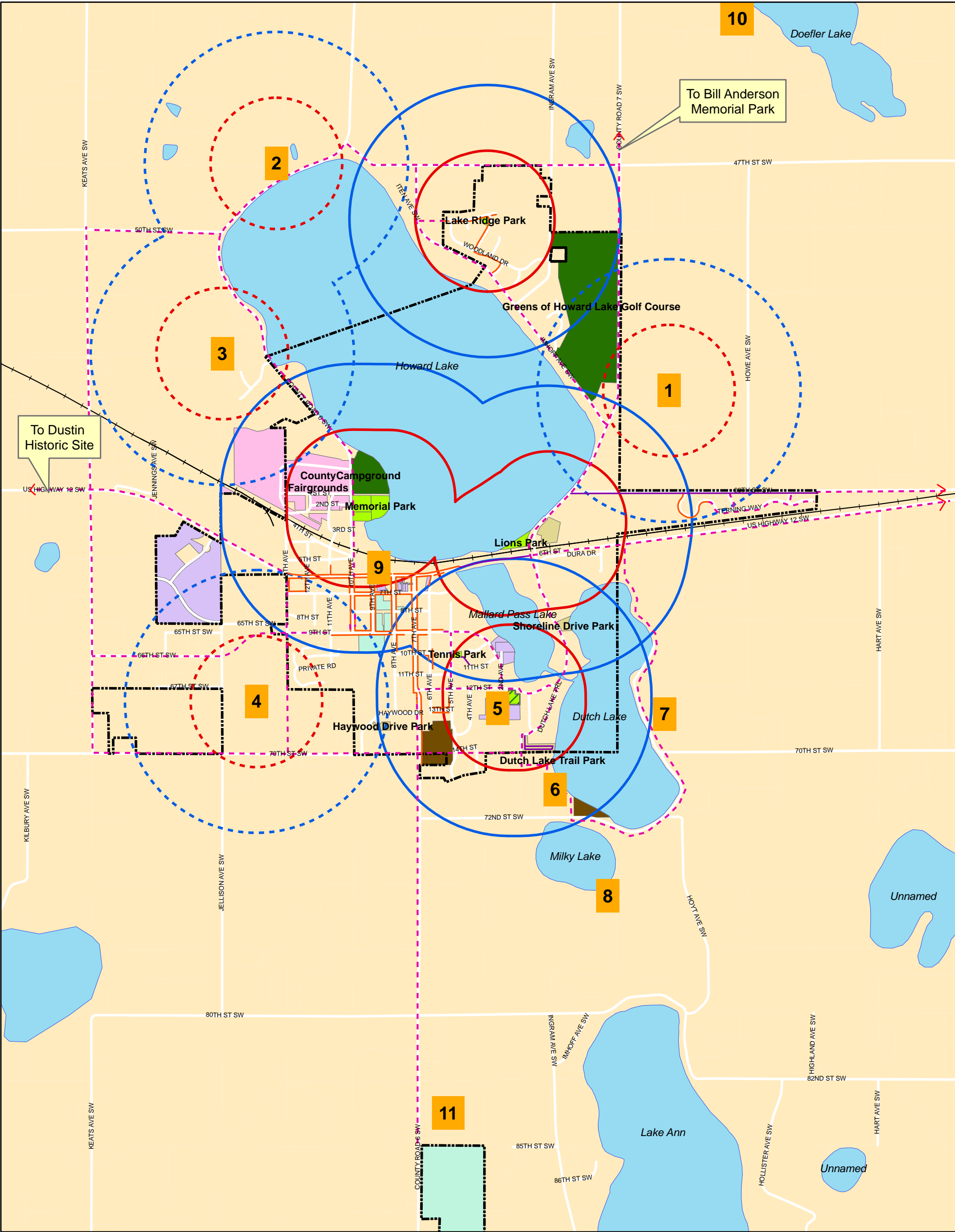



In some cases, these improvements (again, serving local neighborhood needs specifically) may be constructed with asphalt surfaces or wider concrete surfaces. These minor pathways serve essentially the same purpose as sidewalks, and should be considered the same for maintenance purposes, differing only in design and materials, but not in function.


On-Street Facilities

















Occasionally, neighborhoods will rely on on-street pedestrian/bicycle routes where sidewalk or trail construction is not practical, or where traffic volumes are so low as to make grade-separation clearly unneeded. Short cul-de-sac streets would be one example of these conditions. An alternative in this vein would be striping of on-street pedestrian/bike lanes where justified, but where street vehicular traffic levels suggest a safer design.














NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.
4890 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Facsimile: 763.231.2561 planners@nacplanning.com








0 1,625 3,250 6,500 Feet

City of Howard Lake

Park and Trail Plan

Master Park & Trail Plan



Sources: City of Howard Lake, Wright County,
Bolton-Menk, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
Map Date: 06/03/2011

Map #7

MAINTENANCE PLANNING

In addition to acquiring and developing parks and trails, the City needs to plan for the responsible maintenance of park facilities. This ensures that the park system will be safe and the City's liabilities are as limited as feasible. Managing capital improvement planning to account for the maintenance and repair of park facilities is very important.

Playground equipment should be inspected semi-regularly to ensure that it is good condition. Equipment should be planned for possible replacement after about 20 years. Sometimes this duration is shorter or longer depending on level of use. Equipment that lacks wheelchair accessibility shall be improved with access points and wood chip bases.

As a park system grows, the City may need to start keeping a stock of such items as benches and tables on hand to replace damaged, old, or unsafe items. Setting a specification for what the City uses for benches and tables can help maintain a consistent look and allow for the rotation and easy replacement of equipment.

Trails should also be maintained in regular fashion to ensure they are safe and usable. Based on levels of use the City may need to resurface trails every ten years or so and plan for replacement after twenty. Semi-regular inspections should take place to monitor conditions.

The City may wish to consider the long term maintenance implications of park facilities prior to their installation. Equipment that requires regular replacement and maintenance should only be installed when the budgetary implications are considered.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Every park plan requires a bit of focus on implementation of the plan. Without implementation a plan remains as a loose coalition of ideas without steps for moving the plan from concept to reality. This section of the Park and Trail Plan identifies the tools and processes to implement the Plan. Implementation of the Plan should be guided by efficiently using resources, strategic investments, opportunities, and the potential for collaboration.

Implementation Strategies

The following implementation strategies are suggested:

1. The Park Commission will review and update neighborhood park needs and service areas as development occurs so that new barriers and changing recreational needs are acknowledged and accommodated.
2. The Park Commission should review and analyze trends and needs for facilities within parks.
3. The Park Commission will review and evaluate each development project to ensure it provides appropriate park land dedication and trail connections to the park and trail system and City Center. The Park Commission will need to work closely with the Planning Commission in reviewing proposed subdivisions for park and trail dedication requirements, including whether or not to recommend the dedication of land, or cash in lieu of land
4. The Park Commission will review and prioritize trail needs and recommend a schedule and funding framework to the City Council.
5. The Park Commission will investigate the use of grants, donations, partnerships, and opportunities for joint powers agreements for the development of park, trail and recreation facilities.
6. The park dedication fee should be reviewed on an annual basis and updated pursuant to any changes to the Park & Trail Plan and adjusted for cost of living indexes.
6. The Park Commission recommends that the City Council consider incorporating park redevelopment infrastructure planning as part of the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan. Minnesota Statutes specify that park dedication fees may not be used for maintenance purposes and therefore it is important for the City Council to continue to provide a separate budget fund for maintenance.
7. The Park Commission recommendations for future land dedication will be based on the park land need defined by the Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan. Active park areas shall be exclusive of wetlands, slopes exceeding 12 percent, ponding areas, or other features unsuitable for active park development. The City may accept natural open space as part of the parkland dedication. Selection of parkland for dedication shall be at the discretion of the

City Council, based upon the policies and recommendations of the Parks Commission and Howard Lake Park and Trail Plan.

8. The Park Commission will act as the steering committee to further investigate options and agency participation for development of the sports complex and extension of the trail system outside of the current city limits and planning area.
9. The Park Commission should keep records of installation and ensure that equipment is maintained and replaced in a responsible manner. Capital improvement budgeting should account for this maintenance and eventual replacement of equipment and trails.
10. The Park Commission should continuously monitor the demand and need for a sports complex facility.

Funding Mechanisms

Financing the park and trail improvements will be a challenge for the City. The acquisition and development of the park and trail system will not occur without adequate funding and taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. Fortunately, in the short term, the City owns a significant portion of the land needed to meet the community park facilities identified in this Plan.

The financing of the park and trail system will occur one of two ways, either by raising revenue or incurring debt. Revenues provide the means to make investments in the park system and can be saved to finance improvements. Borrowing money provides upfront funding and pledges to repay the debt. A brief description of potential funding sources is provided as follows:

- **Park Dedication.** Pursuant to Minnesota State Statutes, the City requires the dedication of either land or cash, or combination thereof at the time that residential property is subdivided. Dollars collected from park dedication fees represent the primary source of park and trail revenue. A more detailed examination of Park Dedication issues is included in a separate section below.
- **Property Taxes.** The City has the ability to raise property taxes to help to pay for the park and trail system. As this Plan indicates, the current population has paid for more than their proportionate share of park and trail improvements. However, this may not continue to the case. In the event that future changes to the Park and Trail Plan, growth projections, land areas subject to the dedication analysis or other changes occur, the park dedication will need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Property taxes are a means to raise revenue for the part of the Park and Trail system that should be borne by existing residents. The use of property tax may be limited by overall financial management of the City or by State imposed levy limitations.
- **Special Assessments.** The ability of a city to levy assessments for park improvements is governed by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429. This statute defines eligible park

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

- **Referendum – Voter Approved Bonds.** The City may place a referendum on voter ballots for consideration by the public to support park and trail improvements. Voter approved debt service levies are spread on the market value of property. This funding mechanism is typically utilized for major improvements such as a community center, athletic complex or to acquire high amenity park and recreation areas.
- **Grants.** The City should continue to apply for available grants for development of its Park and Trail Plan through agencies such as but not limited to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Wright County, and any other agency.
- **Private Donations.** The City should establish a list of facilities that can be provided to the public, charitable institutions, on the City Website, etc., identifying park and trail needs and the process the public can use to donate revenue or equipment. Additionally, the Park Commission could proactively contact private foundations such as The Trust for Public Land, 1,000 Friends of Minnesota, McKnight Foundation, and others to identify potential funding sources for the community Park and Trail System.

Park Dedication

Park dedication is one of the most important tools for implementing the City’s Park and Trail Plan. Park dedication enables the City to acquire land needed to provide the park system described within this Plan. The use of park dedication should be guided by the following principles:

- The City should accept land only if the property to be acquired fulfills a need identified within this plan.
- In situations where no land is needed, the City shall require dedication of cash in lieu of park land.

- Money received from payments shall be used solely to acquire land or improvements needed to implement this Plan and other related capital improvement plans.

The City sets a park dedication requirement in its subdivision ordinance. Under state law, the City may require a subdivider to dedicate a reasonable portion of land for public park purposes, or the City may acquire an amount of cash in lieu of the required land, provided that the amount is based on the value of the land that would have been dedicated. The rationale for park land dedication is that the subdivision is altering the community and/or replacing open space with a built environment. This change expands the local population and the service base for the park system. This expansion necessitates additional park land or park facilities.

To implement the Park and Trail Plan, the City should evaluate land at the time of subdivision to analyze the following conditions:

- Active Parks: Does the subject site contain a location, consistent with the Park Plan, for an active park?
- Trails: What elements of the municipal trail system should be incorporated into the subdivision?
- Passive Parks: Does the subject site contain areas ideal for natural or cultural preservation?

Some subdivisions may contain more desirable parkland than the dedication provides for. In these instances, the City may wish to locate the park in a place where future expansion is accounted for or use alternate methods other than parkland dedication for acquiring the remainder of the needed park.

The City should annually review its park dedication ordinance and cash-in-lieu fee amount. This annual review will allow the City to ensure the ordinance is legal, effective, and appropriate. The City should also establish whether or not the intention is to require all subdivision to dedicate similarly or if there is less demand from industrial development than residential development or so forth.