CITY OF BAXTER

DOG PARK STUDY

March 2024

WiDSETH

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Baxter has received suggestions and commentary over the past years related to adding a dog park to the park system. The demand for a dog park coupled with the need for an analysis of the city's potential locations formed the backbone of this study. The intent of the study was to address the potential locations through comprehensive analysis, research, and stakeholder input to better inform the planning, design recommendations, and operation/maintenance concerns of the future dog park. The study developed recommendations to address these questions and challenges. Full implementation of these recommendations will position Baxter's park system to meet the needs of a growing and urbanizing population.

Recognizing the city's growing population distributed across a mix of suburban and rural land uses, the many voices and interests conveyed by the public, and need for standards and guidance, the 2024 dog park study was undertaken by a team consisting of GIS analysts, park designers, engineers, the Parks and Trails board, and city staff. The team identified a list of areas to be addressed by the study:

1. **Needs Assessment:**
    - **Stakeholder Meetings:** Engage with local residents, businesses, and community groups to gather input on desired features and potential concerns.
2. **Spatial Analysis:**
    - **Mapping:** Utilize geographic information systems (GIS) to analyze the spatial distribution of potential sites.
    - **Proximity to Residential Areas:** Identify areas near high density residential to ensure accessibility for local residents without access to green space.
3. **Accessibility and Connections:**
    - **Transportation Infrastructure:** Evaluate the proximity of potential sites major roads, access to the site, and parking opportunities.
    - **Pedestrian Access:** Ensure that the site is easily accessible from the extensive trail network, promoting walkability.
4. **Site Characteristics:**
    - **Size and Topography:** Assess the size of potential sites, considering the availability of flat, well-drained areas suitable for a dog park.
    - **Existing Amenities:** Consider existing amenities such as parking, water sources, and shade.
5. **Environmental Impact Assessment:**
    - **Natural Habitats:** Evaluate potential sites to minimize disruption to natural habitats and ecosystems.
    - **Environmental Protection:** Implement measures to protect against soil erosion and preserve local flora and fauna.

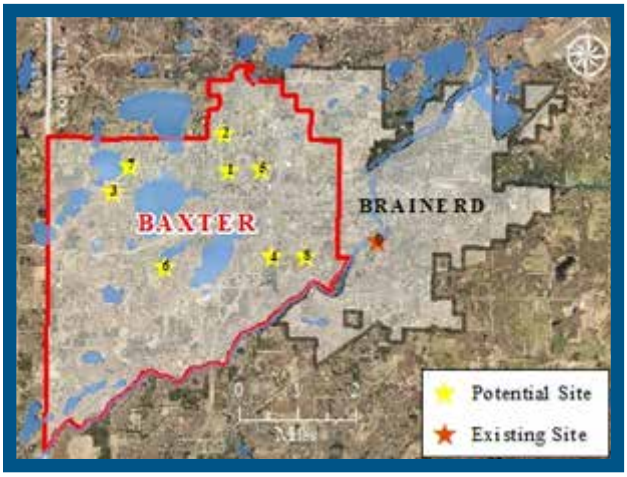
6. **Safety and Visibility:**
    - **Visibility:** Choose a location that is visible to enhance safety and discourage inappropriate behavior.
    - **Proximity to Hazards:** Avoid areas near busy roads, industrial sites, or other potential hazards that could pose risks to dogs and their owners.
7. **Cost-Benefit Analysis:**
    - **Infrastructure Costs:** Estimate costs associated with developing the dog park, including fencing, signage, waste disposal, and potential amenities.
    - **Economic Impact:** Consider the economic benefits the dog park might bring to the community, such as increased local business activity.
8. **Future Growth Considerations:**
    - **Population Growth:** Anticipate future population growth and development in the area.
    - **Flexibility:** Select a location that allows for future expansion or adaptation based on changing community needs.

Selecting the right location for a new dog park in a city involves considering several factors to ensure it is accessible, safe, and meets the needs of both dogs and their owners. By carefully considering these factors and involving the community in the decision-making process, we were able to identify an ideal location for a dog park that enhances the overall well-being of residents and their four-legged companions.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Since the first municipal dog park was founded in 1979 in Berkeley, California, dog parks have become an increasingly desired public amenity in communities throughout the United States. To many dogs are considered beloved family members. Collectively, communities have shifted their views; dog parks are no longer seen as specialty auxiliary facilities, but rather public spaces necessary for dog socialization and exercise and a place for community members to gather.

The City of Baxter is home to approximately 9,400 residents (according to the 2021 census) and is growing at a rate of 2.2% annually. It is however part of the Brainerd Micropolitan Statistical Area which was considered in this study. The city currently requires residents to purchase a dog license for their pet. Below is a table providing total licenses sold for the last five years.



Map 1

City of Baxter Dog Licenses	
Year	Total Licenses
2023	142
2022	119
2021	139
2020	150
2019	152

The city is growing and as it does so will its dog population. As requests for a dog park within the city limits have grown the city heard and understood that a systematic approach to determining the most suitable location was necessary.

Over the years, the public has shared numerous inquiries and ideas pertaining to ideas for a future dog park with the city. At present, there are no public dog parks in the City of Baxter and the public's interest in dog parks continues to grow. Recognizing the city's growing population distributed across a mix of suburban and urban land uses, the many voices and interests conveyed by the public, and need for standards and guidance, the 2023 dog park study was undertaken by the team to achieve the following:

- Evaluate county-wide dog park need
- Evaluate site placement and develop metrics and recommendations for placement
- Develop guidelines and design standards
- Review and develop operations and maintenance best practices for enforcement and etiquette

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The approach to the dog park study was two-fold: first, the project team conducted spatial analysis and employed data-driven methods; second, the project team engaged city officials and the project team to gain a deeper understanding of the city's needs, priorities, and preferences when it comes to dog parks. Combined, these methods formed the basis for the recommendations in this report.

The team began the process by conducting extensive research on industry best practices and developed a set of metrics based on the research. The team inventoried and analyzed potential parcels by using ArcGIS and examining datasets such as the 2021 census. Criteria were developed based on research from municipalities across the U.S. and guidance from the Trust for Public Land's research on dog parks. The study provided information to prepare the final list below of criteria for future dog park locations to be considered. These criteria create a score for each park and are intended to guide discussions on where dog parks are most needed and desired in the city and make provisions for their location within existing city-owned properties to ensure the park's success and positive impact on the community. The criteria then go further to guide site-specific features such as its general size, potential impacts, mitigations, and expected audience.

The following criteria are listed and have been used to score each of the potential parcels.

1. **Property size—**The city has identified a minimum of 1.5 acres as the desired parcel size. This would not include parking. (Brainerd's dog park is 1.5 acres for reference)

2. **Proximity to high density housing** (assuming that would be the highest need because they do not have access to green space)

3. **Environmental Quality—**Wildlife, habitat, and water quality are priorities. Dog parks are very hard on the landscape and a parcel with minimal environmental benefits is preferred. This metric was based on NWI wetland inventory, delineated wetlands, and CWC shoreland zone. Establishing a dog park on City property can have environmental benefits, such as preserving green space, promoting biodiversity, and improving air and water quality.

4. **Cost** (water, sanitary, fencing, road access/parking, and ownership)

5. **Accessibility—**Trail connection would increase walkability. Generally, people will walk between a quarter and a half-mile to a park. Baxter has an extensive network in place.

6. **Property screening—**to avoid conflicts from outside distractions that could encourage barking—vegetated buffers, berms or screening.

7. **One hundred fifty feet minimum from potential conflicts—**This includes residential homes and popular areas such as playgrounds, baseball,

or game courts to avoid conflict. The distance between the proposed fenced dog park and adjacent park features, homes, and businesses will be evaluated for conflicts associated with noise. A minimum separation of two hundred (200) feet is preferred; however changes in topography or intervening landscape screening can reduce the distance of spatial separation.

If located within a city park, a fenced dog park shall not be placed in any area where it will negatively impact primary uses of the park, unless the impact can be mitigated by regulating the hours of operation. Sites will be evaluated for noise conflicts with adjacent park uses, adjacent residences, and businesses. Potential use conflicts include but are not limited to the following:

- Playgrounds and other children's play areas
- Athletic fields and courts
- Sensitive habitats and wildlife areas
- Areas directly upslope from community gardens
- Greenway trails or internal park pathways
- Historic sites or other cultural resources

8. **Soil & Topo—**Fenced dog parks will require well drained soils with a maximum slope of 5%. Fenced dog parks are not recommended for placement in floodplains.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Spatial Analysis

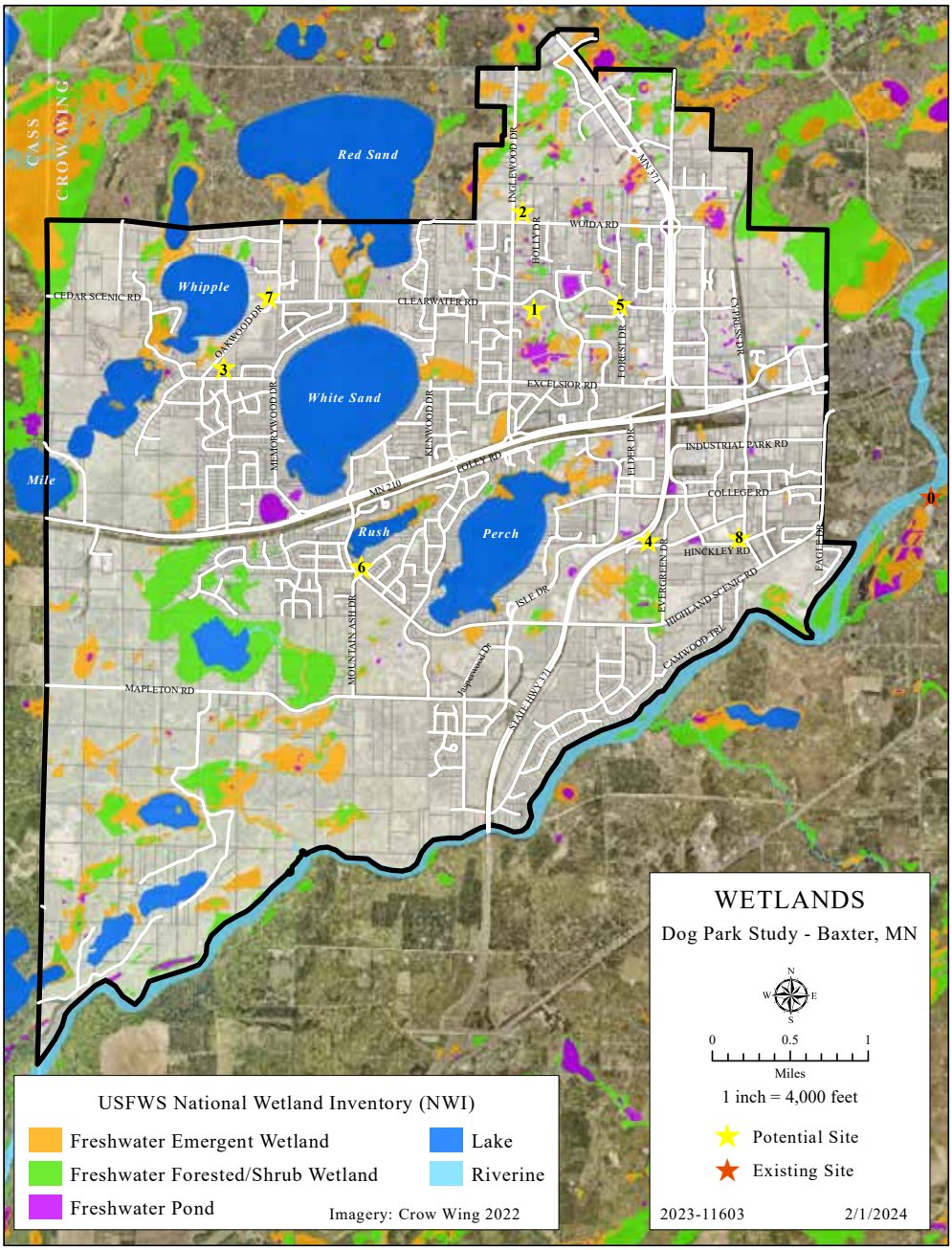
To identify priority areas in need of future dog park development, we considered a number of factors that related directly to our identified criteria. These included geographic and demographic, environmental factors, and accessibility that can be used as indicators of dog park demand.

These objective factors can be analyzed in combination with public input (as expressed through the community input gathered at the public open house and future planning processes) to provide a holistic evaluation of which areas of the city have the highest unmet need for dog parks. This section highlights the layers of spatial analysis that were used.

City Lands and Property Size

Our spatial analysis started by identifying city owned parcels that were underutilized or vacant. Transforming unused land into a dog park allows cities to maximize the use of public space and provide amenities that meet the needs of residents and if acquisition could be avoided, it was viewed as a large cost savings to the city. Our team evaluated over 30 potential sites both on and off city property that were a minimum of 1.5 acres. Our team looked closely at multiple factors before narrowing our list to eight potential properties for the home of the future Baxter dog park. Detailed maps of each property are provided in the appendix. More detail was given to our number one and two site recommendations that can be found in the site recommendations chapter of the study.

Well-maintained dog parks can enhance the attractiveness and desirability of neighborhoods. Access to recreational amenities like dog parks can increase property values and attract new residents to the area.

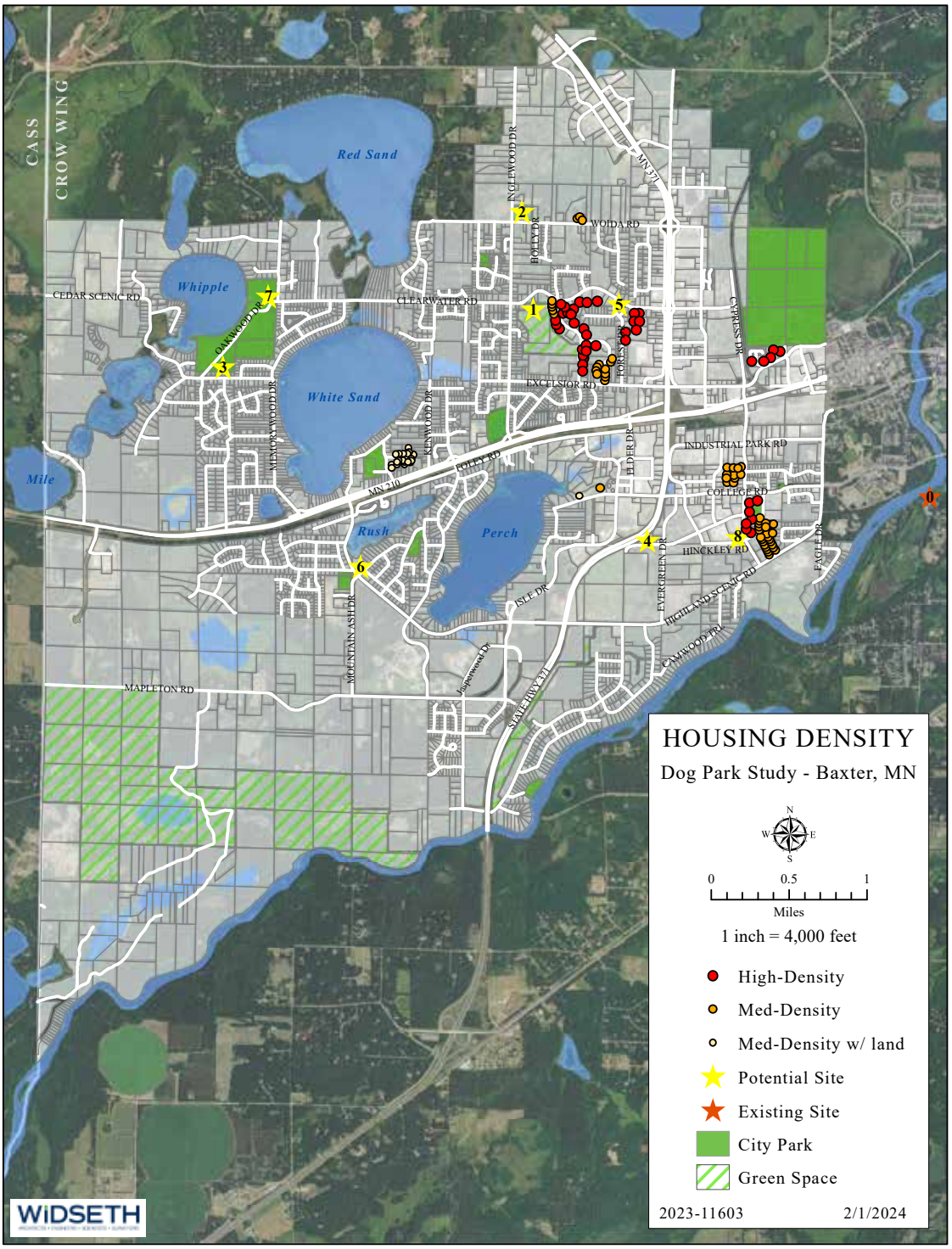


Map 2

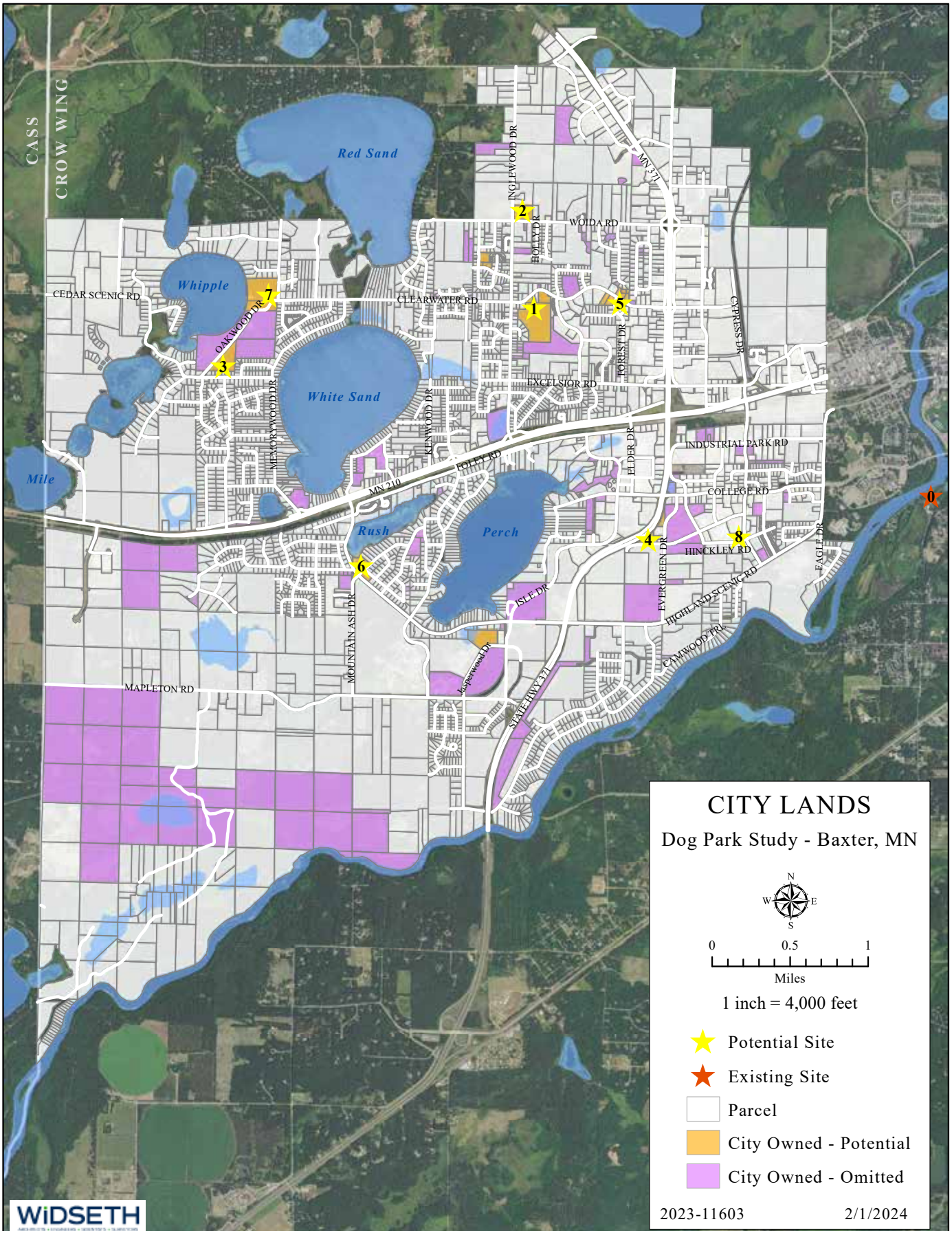
High Density Housing:

Our research provides an analysis of the locations of high-density multifamily housing units throughout Baxter, no existing units offer on-site dog exercise area for the use of residents.

This data can be used to highlight several trends: High-density housing in the densest areas of the city are less likely to provide on-site dog amenities, but in general, there has been a trend toward newer apartments being more likely to provide on-site dog amenities for the use of residents. Based on this analysis, approximately 0% of all dog-friendly multifamily developments offer some type of on-site dog exercise area.



Map 3


CASS
CROW WING
Red Sand
Whipple
White Sand
Mile
Rush
Perch
CEDAR SCENIC RD
CLEARWATER RD
WOIDA RD
EXCELSIOR RD
FOLEY RD
MN 210
INDUSTRIAL PARK RD
COLLEGE RD
HINCKLEY RD
HIGHLAND SCENIC RD
MAPLETON RD
INGLEWOOD DR
HOLLY DR
OAKWOOD DR
MEMORYWOOD DR
KENWOOD DR
FOREST DR
ELDER DR
CYPRESS DR
EVERGREEN DR
EAGLE DR
ISLE DR
MOUNTAIN ASH DR
Jasperwood DR
CAMWOOD TRL
STATE HWY 371
0
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2
3
4
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6
7
8
CITY LANDS
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
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E
S
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0.5
1
Miles
1 inch = 4,000 feet
Potential Site
Existing Site
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024
WIDSETH

Map 4

Environmental Factors (Wetlands, Tree Canopy, Habitat)

Our team assessed the existing vegetation and habitat within the proposed sites. We established goals of preserving mature trees and natural vegetation where possible to provide shade, habitat for wildlife, and aesthetic appeal. We prioritized to avoid disrupting sensitive habitats or protected species.

The proximity to water bodies such as streams, ponds, and wetlands was evaluated. We want to ensure that the dog park is located away from sensitive aquatic habitats to minimize pollution, erosion, and disturbance to aquatic ecosystems.

Consideration was given to the soil type, drainage patterns, and erosion potential of the site. During construction we recommend implementing erosion control measures such as vegetative buffers, permeable surfaces, and retaining walls to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation in nearby water bodies.

It is recommended that the final design of the dog park incorporate best management stormwater practices such as permeable pavement, bioswales, and rain gardens to reduce runoff and improve water quality. Impervious surfaces will be minimized to allow for natural infiltration and groundwater recharge. Avoid installing excessive lighting in the dog park to minimize light pollution and disturbance to nocturnal wildlife. Use shielded fixtures and timers to control lighting levels and reduce energy consumption during nighttime hours.

Accessibility – Existing Parks & Trails

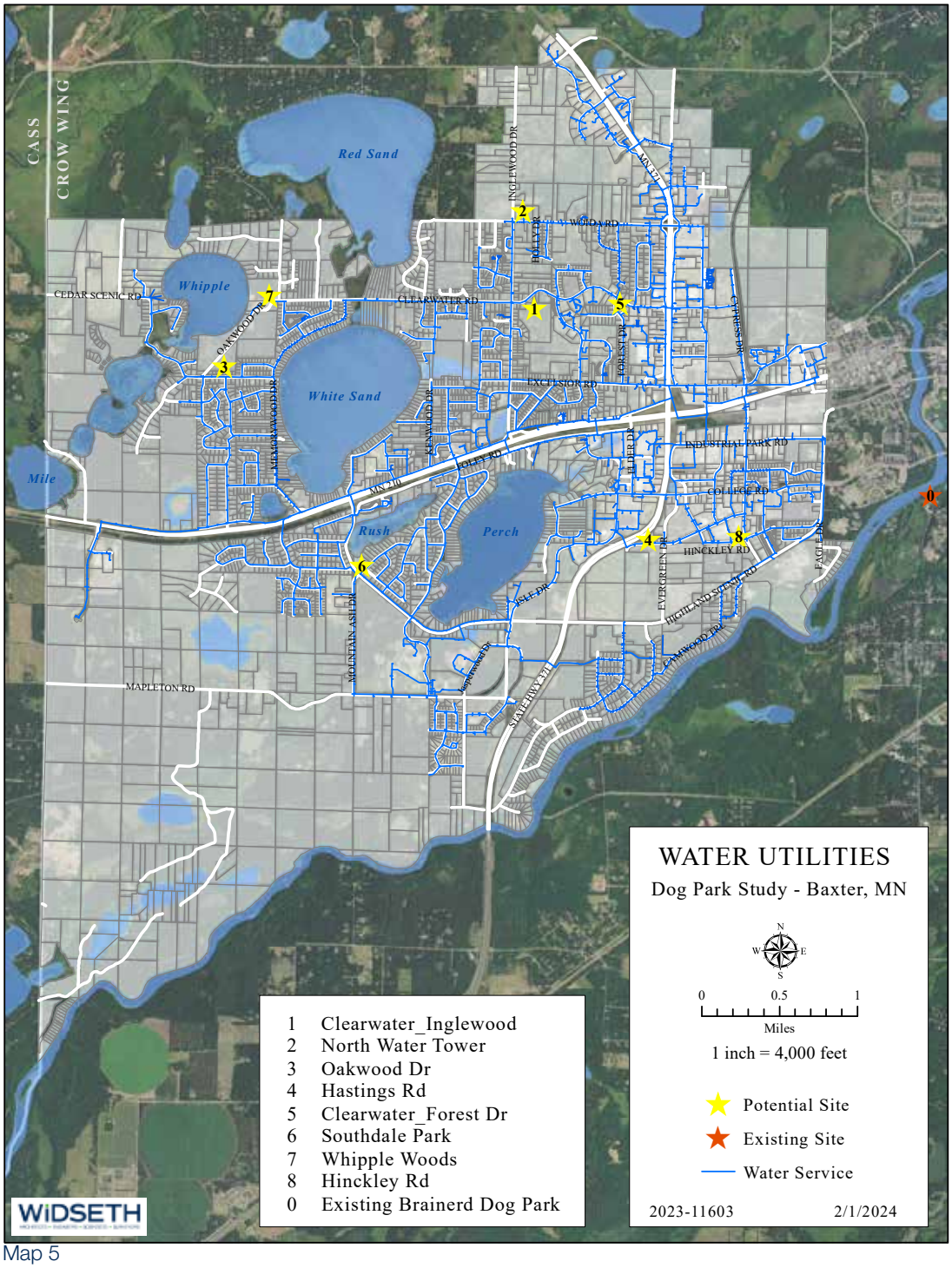
Situate the dog park near the walking trails to encourage use and promote connectivity between the two recreational amenities. Locating the dog park at a trailhead or along a loop trail for convenience to users is an additional bonus. We placed a high priority on connecting to Baxter's extensive trail network and a direct connection to high-density or single-family housing. This will encourage walking to the park and minimize the need for an oversized parking lot in the future. We will suggest providing clear signage and wayfinding markers to guide users to and from the dog park safely.

Incorporating designated dog-friendly trails or pathways within the walking trail network to accommodate dog owners who wish to explore the trails with their pets off-leash. If this is a priority of the city for the final site clearly designate these trails and establish rules and regulations for dog behavior to ensure compatibility with other trail users.

Population Density/Zoning

Visualizing the density or clustering of population locations throughout the City of Baxter is one method we can use to identify high concentrations of residents that will rely on public open space to walk, exercise, and socialize with their dogs.

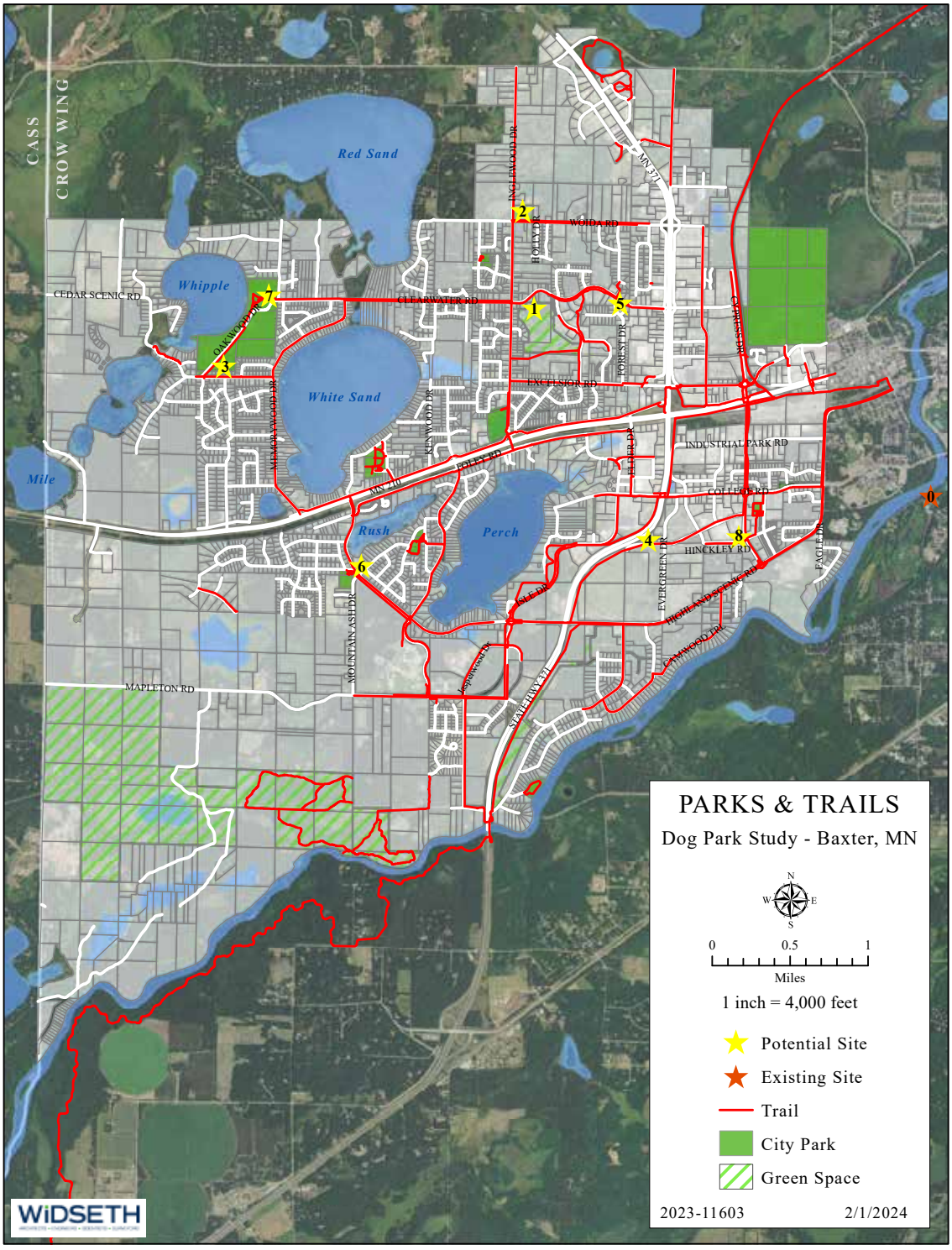
If these residents do not have convenient access to public dog parks, they will be more likely to use public sidewalks or other areas in nearby public parks as exercise or play spaces for their dogs, potentially creating conflicts with other park users. Locating dog parks near these areas may reduce the potential for conflict and will serve a segment of the population that is likely to have a high demand for dog park access.



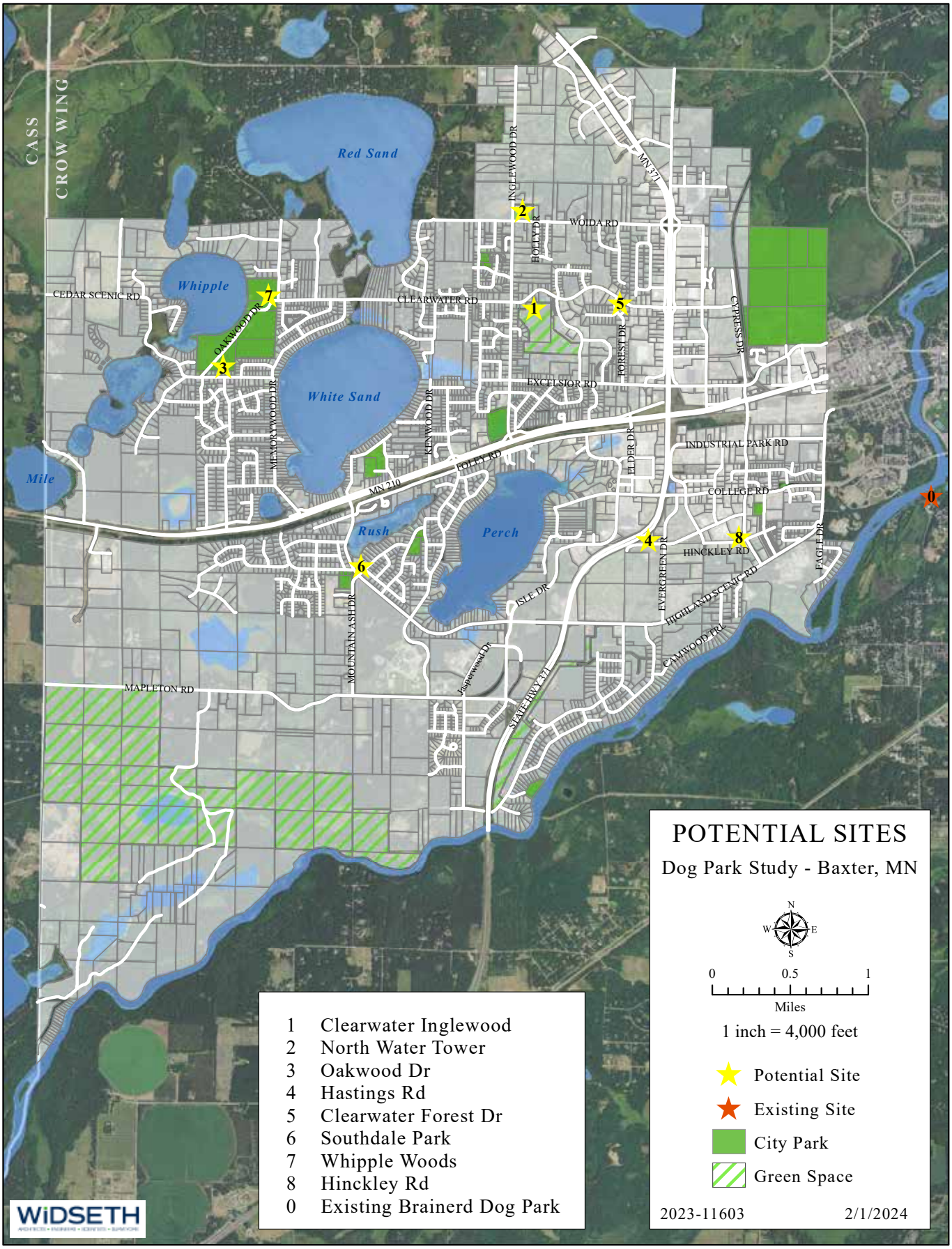
Map 5

Existing Utilities

A priority was identified by the Baxter city staff to have access to a restroom and water at the dog park site. Priority was given to parcels that offered existing utilities as it would be a large cost savings not having to extend utilities to the future park. Sites were omitted based on the distance from utilities but could offer additional dog parks for the city in the future. Both recommended sites have a connection to sanitary and water. A restroom might not be part of phase one of the park but having the utilities will allow a future phased restroom to be included at a much lower cost.



Map 6


CASS
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Whipple
White Sand
Mile
Rush
Perch
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CLEARWATER RD
WOIDA RD
EXCELSIOR RD
GOLEY RD
MN 210
INDUSTRIAL PARK RD
COLLEGE RD
HINCKLEY RD
HIGHLAND SCENIC RD
MAPLETON RD
STATE HWY 371
INGLEWOOD DR
HOLLY DR
FOREST DR
CYPRESS DR
ELDER DR
EVERGREEN DR
EAGLE DR
OAKWOOD DR
MEADOWWOOD DR
KENWOOD DR
ISLE DR
MOUNTAIN ASH DR
Poplarwood Dr
CAMWOOD RD
1 Clearwater Inglewood
2 North Water Tower
3 Oakwood Dr
4 Hastings Rd
5 Clearwater Forest Dr
6 Southdale Park
7 Whipple Woods
8 Hinckley Rd
0 Existing Brainerd Dog Park
POTENTIAL SITES
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
0.5
1
Miles
1 inch = 4,000 feet
Potential Site
Existing Site
City Park
Green Space
2023-11603
2/1/2024
WIDSETH

Map 7

Omitted Parcels

When considering the omission of parcels for a future dog park location within city limits, it was important to approach the decision-making process with careful consideration of various factors. We reviewed many city owned parcels and weighed the data carefully. Additional parcels shown on Map 5 were omitted as potential sites for a dog park for the following reasons:

1. **Zoning and Land Use Regulations:** Ensure that the selected sites comply with local zoning and land use regulations. Some parcels were omitted that violated regulations to avoid regulatory issues.

2. **Proximity to Existing Housing:** The priority was made that the dog park should be easily accessible to the existing city's residents. Sites were omitted that are not easily accessible to a diverse range of community members may help ensure inclusivity. Future development was considered and sites were discussed as potential future dog park locations as the city population grows.

3. **Environmental Impact:** Parcels were excluded that could harm ecosystems, wildlife habitats, or sensitive environmental areas based on topography and soil maps.

4. **Infrastructure and Utilities:** Assess the availability of necessary infrastructure and utilities at each site. Parcels were omitted where the cost of providing essential amenities (e.g., water, sanitary) is prohibitively high.

5. **Space and Size:** Parcels were evaluated to ensure they provide adequate space for the intended dog park activities. Sites were omitted that are too small (less than 1.5 acres) or have limitations that could compromise the park's functionality.

6. **Future Development Plans:** Upcoming development plans for the city were considered. Parcels were omitted in areas that are slated for major construction or redevelopment in the near future.

Level of Service

There is no standard method for determining a minimum number of facilities needed when it comes to locating dog parks. Most municipalities either focus on providing a predetermined number of facilities to each of their individual districts or rely on placing dog parks based solely on the measured distance between facilities.

While both concepts can be useful for determining placement of new facilities, they do not provide a measurable standard of how we can determine the demand of designated off-leash space. As a response, the City of Baxter’s

desired level of service is determined by a combination of two metrics: quantity of facilities and area of designated dog space.

- Baxter LOS = 0 dog parks per 9,400 people (Brainerd micropolitan area = 85,250 or Brainerd for 14,255)
- National Average = 1 per 46,000 people
- Boise Idaho (top ranked city for dog parks) = 1 parks per 20,000 people

Baxter scores moderately well when looking at total acreage of dog parks, at 0.41 acres per 10,000 people. But the city would like to consider their relationship to the greater Brainerd micropolitan area with an additional potential 76,000 people visiting and/or driving through Baxter regularly especially during the summer months. To meet the goal of being in line with the national average LOS rate of 0.86 acres per 10,000 residents, the city would need to add (1) 1.5 acre dog park to the city to accommodate the current and future population.

Potential Suitable Dog Park Locations Ranking and Scoring

Column5	Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Property size = 30.4 acres	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Proximity to high density housing	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Low Environmental Quality	Med	2
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Low Cost	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Accessibility	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Property screening	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	150 feet from conflict	High	4
1	Clearwater_Inglewood	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**28**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
2	North Water Tower	Property size = 3.2 acres (USABLE)	High	4
2	North Water Tower	Proximity to high density housing	Med	2
2	North Water Tower	Low Environmental Quality	High	4
2	North Water Tower	Low Cost	High	4
2	North Water Tower	Accessibility	Med	2
2	North Water Tower	Property screening	High	4
2	North Water Tower	150 feet from conflict	High	4
2	North Water Tower	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**26**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
3	Oakwood Dr.	Property size = 11.4 acres	High	4
3	Oakwood Dr.	Proximity to high density housing	Low	0
3	Oakwood Dr.	Low Environmental Quality	Med	2
3	Oakwood Dr.	Low Cost	Med	2
3	Oakwood Dr.	Accessibility	High	4
3	Oakwood Dr.	Property screening	High	4
3	Oakwood Dr.	150 feet from conflict	Med	4
3	Oakwood Dr.	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**22**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
4	Hastings Rd.	Property size = 2.4 acres	Med	3
4	Hastings Rd.	Proximity to high density housing	Low	0
4	Hastings Rd.	Low Environmental Quality	High	4
4	Hastings Rd.	Low Cost	Med	2
4	Hastings Rd.	Accessibility	Low	0
4	Hastings Rd.	Property screening	High	4
4	Hastings Rd.	150 feet from conflict	Med	2
4	Hastings Rd.	Soil & Topo	High	4
			Total	**19**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Property size = 1.2 acres	Med	2
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Proximity to high density housing	High	4
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Low Environmental Quality	Low	0
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Low Cost	High	4
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Accessibility	Med	2
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Property screening	High	4
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	150 feet from conflict	Low	0
5	Clearwater_Forest Dr.	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**18**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
6	Southdale Park	Property size = 4.6 acres	Med	4
6	Southdale Park	Proximity to high density housing	Low	0
6	Southdale Park	Low Environmental Quality	Med	3
6	Southdale Park	Low Cost	Med	3

6	Southdale Park	Accessibility	Med	2
6	Southdale Park	Property screening	High	3
6	Southdale Park	150 feet from conflict	Low	0
6	Southdale Park	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**17**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
7	Whipple Woods	Property size = 17.7 acres	High	4
7	Whipple Woods	Proximity to high density housing	Low	0
7	Whipple Woods	Low Environmental Quality	Low	0
7	Whipple Woods	Low Cost	HIgh	2
7	Whipple Woods	Accessibility	Med	2
7	Whipple Woods	Property screening	High	4
7	Whipple Woods	150 feet from conflict	Low	0
7	Whipple Woods	Soil & Topo	High	4
			Total	**16**
Map No.	**Potential Parcel Name**	**Metric**	**Rank**	**Score**
8	Hinckley Rd.	Property size = 1.5 acres	Med	2
8	Hinckley Rd.	Proximity to high density housing	High	3
8	Hinckley Rd.	Low Environmental Quality	High	4
8	Hinckley Rd.	Low Cost	Med	2
8	Hinckley Rd.	Accessibility	Low	0
8	Hinckley Rd.	Property screening	Low	0
8	Hinckley Rd.	150 feet from conflict	Med	2
8	Hinckley Rd.	Soil & Topo	Med	2
			Total	**15**

Summary of Findings

The data illustrated throughout this chapter can be overlaid to analyze patterns and identify key areas in the City of Baxter where the future dog park might be the most beneficial for the residents. Potential dog park locations were identified, evaluated, and prioritized in the following chapter using this multi-layered approach that considers all of the criteria discussed.

Dog parks are most successful when they are located in communities with a true sense of ownership and stewardship over these shared spaces. Future dog park planning should prioritize development in areas where citizens have demonstrated the desire and commitment to work with the City of Baxter to build and sustain a local dog park. When planning for future dog parks, the city should take an active role in seeking and identifying community leaders that could help to organize an Adopt-a-Park agreement with a local volunteer group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recommendations chapter is intended to guide the future planning, design, delivery, operation, and maintenance of public dog parks and dog-related policies in the City of Baxter.

These recommendations are intended to set realistic and achievable goals. Together, they provide a clear vision for the future which is supported by a consensus of public opinion, stakeholder priorities, spatial data analysis, and professional staff experience.

Dog Park Membership Program

The future Baxter dog park could consider requiring users to register their dog or pay membership fees to access the dog park. Many other communities institute membership programs to control access, enforce penalties for rules violations, and recover some of the cost associated with operation and maintenance of their dog parks.

Currently, budgeting for dog park development in Baxter must be prioritized against many other needs throughout the parks system. If revenue from a membership program could be used to help offset the cost of new construction and ongoing maintenance and operation, it could improve the feasibility of developing more dog parks in the future.

Membership fees could be an important source of cost recovery and revenue generation, which could make it easier to develop more new dog parks in under-served areas of the city while maintaining the existing dog parks. However, the administrative costs associated with managing and enforcing memberships may reduce the cost-effectiveness of the program.

It is not recommended that Baxter institute a membership program for dog park access at this time, but should continue to evaluate the costs and benefits of such a program as more dog parks are added to the park system.

Design Guidelines

This chapter outlines the top priorities for future dog park design.

The amenities recommended in this chapter are not necessarily guaranteed to be provided at any particular dog park. Rather, they are intended to serve as a prioritization guide when deciding which features should be provided, given the limited space and limited budget available for each new project.

According to the results of Trust for Public Lands research, the most important features of a successful dog park include: cleanliness and maintenance, shaded areas, and water fountains for dogs. Whenever space allows, separate areas for small dogs and large dogs should also be provided.

Other top design priorities for future dog parks include lighting to extend access hours after dark, especially during winter months; expanded water access for

cooling off, design to mitigate maintenance issues due to erosion and runoff; and alternative ground cover other than mulch.

Where feasible, additional special features should be considered, such as: Walking/exercise tracks outside the off-leash area to walk dogs, ample seating and shade structures, and play equipment such as ramps, tunnels, and obstacle course elements.

Dog Park Design Criteria

Overall Design Criteria:

1. **Size:** The planning guideline for a Dog Park is an area of approximately 1.5 acre minimum.

2. **Fencing:** Galvanized or vinyl coated chain link fences, with a minimum height of five feet. Double gated entries to allow for dog owners to unleash the dogs in a corral prior to letting the dog run free are the norm.

3. **Signage:** Post rule signs displaying hours of operation, rules and regulations, and contact information for both PRCR and Animal Control. Not required but consider a bulletin board to post announcements.

4. **ADA Access:** All cities contacted said that they comply with the ADA for access to the site. Design of a fenced dog park shall consider an accessible route from designated parking if provided or available.

5. **Surfacing:** There is no consensus as to the best type of surface. Several cities have multiple surfacing types including crusher fines or decomposed granite around the entrance area, concrete, grass, and mulch. For the larger areas, grass is used most often.

Types of Surfacing	Pros	Cons	Cost
Natural Turf	Soft	Digging; subject to wear, loos of turf	$$$
Stone, crushed aggregate	Drains Well	Sticks in dogs paws	$$
Mulch, wood chips	Inexpensive	Frequent replacement	$
Synthetic Turf	Consistent look, low maintenance	Expensive	$$$$
Dirt, Sand	Inexpensive; low maintenance	Digging; requires adding additional materials	$

Top Priority Additio

These design featu
are top priorities fo
drinking water and
dog parks.

1. **Shade:** Conc
growing con

2. **Water for Dog**
source for dogs to

Site Recommendations

1st Site Recommendation: Clearwater Inglewood ranked highest based on the criteria matrix with a final score of 28.

Conveniently situated in the heart of Baxter, this site is easily accessible to all residents and visitors. On the GIS site map shown on the next page three parcels are shown in orange and are referencing the most suitable areas to site the fenced dog park area and proposed park amenities. There are additional parcels that are owned by the city but have been omitted (for the fenced dog park area) due to the wetlands and low topography. What these do offer are opportunities to expand the dog park fenced area with on-leash gravel walking trails throughout this wooded property as an additional amenity unique to this site. This site offers a very natural setting that would be shaded and immediately enjoyable by the public due to it's dense tree canopy and access to nature.

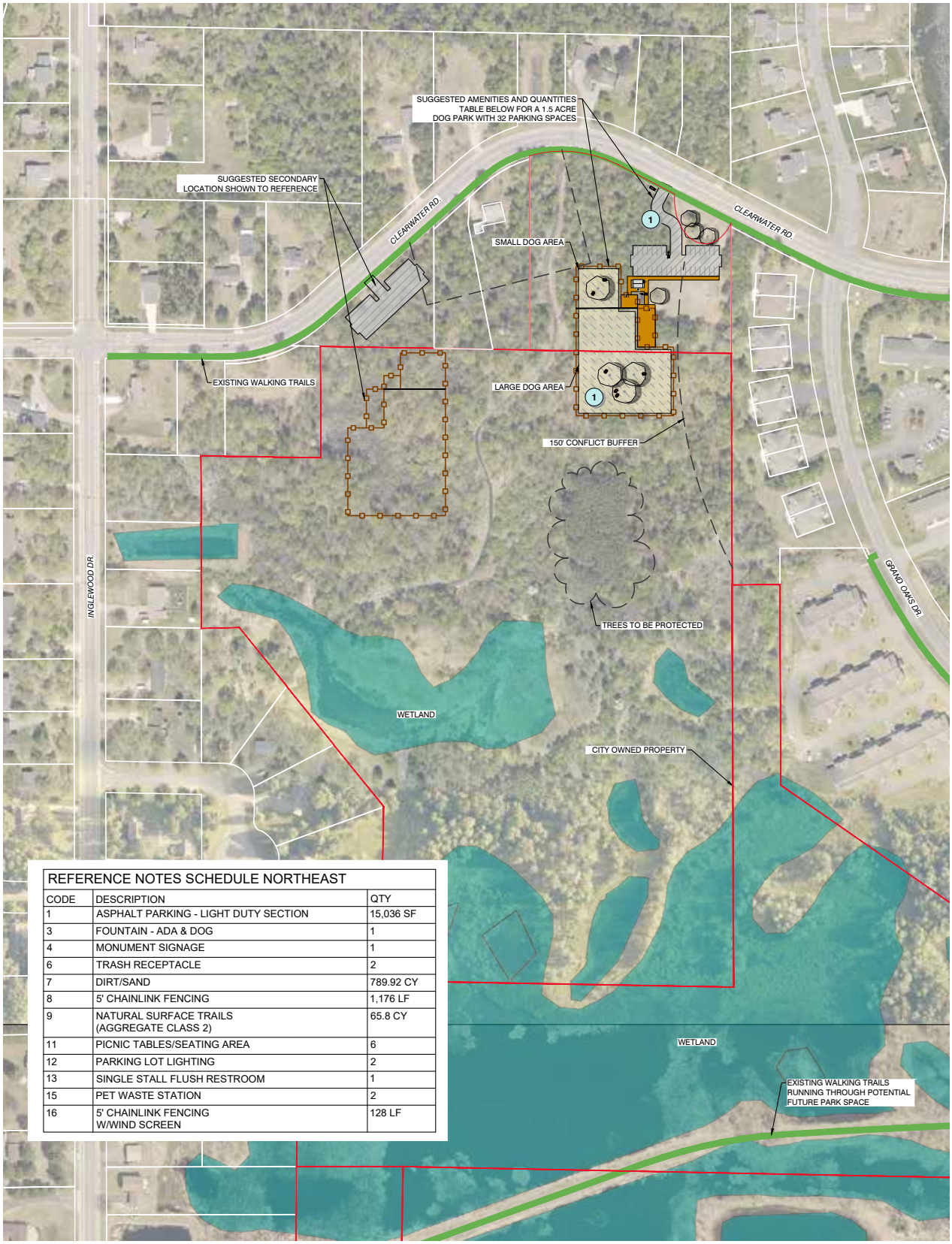
Crossing the existing stream and/or wetland to access the existing trail that cuts through the center of the park and for direct access from the south parcel to adjacent homes is a feasible future expansion. For estimating purposes, we have provided a general 'dog park' layout on the maps below but these are shown for cost estimating and to understand a sense of scale for the proposed fenced area. These drawings are not for construction.

1. **Property size—**Orange parcels (3) total 31.4 acres with access to an additional 40.5 acres to the south of city owned property. An existing trailhead with five parking spaces on Grand Oaks Drive for existing trail access could be connected to the north fenced dog park in future phases.
2. **Proximity to high density housing—**These city owned parcels ranked high in close proximity to high density housing units. They are accessibly by trails on Clearwater Road and Grand Oaks Drive.
3. **Environmental Quality—**This site did ranks medium for environmental quality as it would require removal of the existing tree canopy and there are wetlands present. The dog park would not be situated on an area of the parcel adjacent to wetlands and minimal tree removal would be the goal of development. Precautions would be taken to provide for water quality treatment prior to any runoff from the dog park going directly into the wetlands.
4. **Accessibility—**Trail connections ranked high and can be found along the northern parcel boundary and east parcel boundary. These directly connect the adjacent high-density housing to the site.
5. **Property screening**—This location ranked high as it provides dense existing tree coverage on most of the property. Providing a cost savings on privacy screening and shade structures without additional planting.
6. **150 feet minimum from potential conflicts—**This site ranked high as it has no adjacent conflicts withing the 150 ft minimum shown on the map below. Housing is within the 200 ft suggested boundary but screening is already in place.
7. **Soil & Topo**—The site ranked medium, it has well drained soils and does not exceed the maximum slope of 5%. It does however have areas of hydric soils due to the wetlands which kept it from ranking high.

This site offers a park that can blend harmoniously with the natural surroundings of the walking trails, preserve existing vegetation, incorporate natural features such as trees and boulders, and minimize site grading and disturbance to maintain the aesthetic and ecological integrity of the area.

Site Recommendations

1st Site Recommendation: Clearwater Inglewood ranked highest based on the criteria matrix with a final score of 28.



REFERENCE NOTES SCHEDULE NORTHEAST		
CODE	DESCRIPTION	QTY
1	ASPHALT PARKING - LIGHT DUTY SECTION	15,036 SF
3	FOUNTAIN - ADA & DOG	1
4	MONUMENT SIGNAGE	1
6	TRASH RECEPTACLE	2
7	DIRT/SAND	789.92 CY
8	5' CHAINLINK FENCING	1,176 LF
9	NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS (AGGREGATE CLASS 2)	65.8 CY
11	PICNIC TABLES/SEATING AREA	6
12	PARKING LOT LIGHTING	2
13	SINGLE STALL FLUSH RESTROOM	1
15	PET WASTE STATION	2
16	5' CHAINLINK FENCING W/WIND SCREEN	128 LF

Map 8

2nd Site Recommendation: North Water Tower ranked second based on the criteria matrix with a final score of 26.

Coming in a close second to the first site selection the North Water Tower site is located on the intersection of Inglewood Drive and Woida Road; main east/west and north/south collector streets. Making the location easy to get to by car and centrally located to Baxter's existing population and growth areas to the north. The site is home to the city's north water tower and a dog park would be a great combination of uses on a site that otherwise would be unused space.

Currently the site is fairly flat and wide open, and the area shown on the map as not available is used by public works for vehicle staging and storage. Trees do however line all of the property boundary's offering good screening from adjacent properties to the north and east. The site already has a paved and established entrance on Inglewood Drive which would be a cost savings for the city. The access road to the dog park would have to be a shared driveway to the existing water tower and vehicle staging area. The recommendation is to share the entrance to start, but future use might require a second access or relocating the access further to the north to move away from the already busy intersection of Woida Road and Inglewood Drive.

1. **Property Size—**Scoring high the overall parcel is 7.07 acres. We have shaded the purple 'omitted' area as water tower and staging. This leaves approximately 3.2 acres of usable space for the dog park.

2. **Proximity to high density housing—**This site ranked medium. It is within a mile of high-density housing units on Clearwater Road and Grand Oaks Drive but farther than the suggested walking distance to parks of one-half mile.

3. **Environmental quality—**This site did rank high for environmental quality. It has little environmental value and would require no tree removal to construct a dog park in the open gavel area. No wetlands are present.

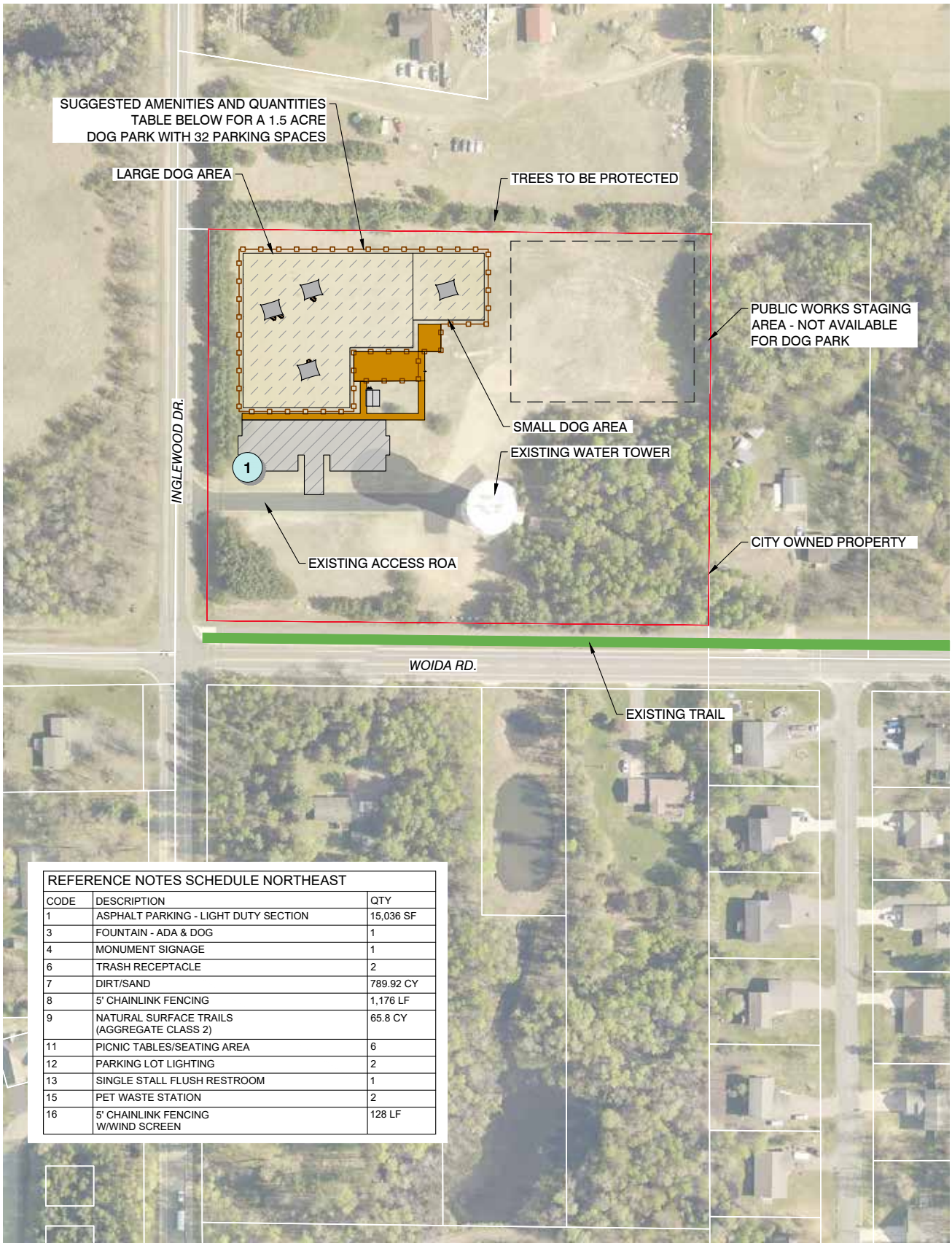
4. **Accessibility —**Trail connections ranked medium and can be found along the southern parcel boundary only. There are potential future trails to be built on Inglewood Drive to the west but currently it is only on street. It is also not directly connected to high density housing with trails.

5. **Property screening—**This location ranked high as it provides a consistent boundary of existing trees surrounding all sides of the property. Providing a cost savings on privacy screening but shade structures would be required.

6. **150 feet minimum from potential conflicts —**This site ranked high as it has no adjacent conflicts withing the 150 ft minimum shown on the map. There is a single-family resident on the north and east parcel boundary but both are over 300 ft from where the dog park is suggested to be built.

7. **Soil & Topo –** The site ranked medium, it has well drained soils and does not exceed the maximum slope of 5%. It does however have areas of hydric soils which kept it from ranking high.

2nd Site Recommendation: North Water Tower ranked second based on the criteria matrix with a final score of 26.



REFERENCE NOTES SCHEDULE NORTHEAST		
CODE	DESCRIPTION	QTY
1	ASPHALT PARKING - LIGHT DUTY SECTION	15,036 SF
3	FOUNTAIN - ADA & DOG	1
4	MONUMENT SIGNAGE	1
6	TRASH RECEPTACLE	2
7	DIRT/SAND	789.92 CY
8	5' CHAINLINK FENCING	1,176 LF
9	NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS (AGGREGATE CLASS 2)	65.8 CY
11	PICNIC TABLES/SEATING AREA	6
12	PARKING LOT LIGHTING	2
13	SINGLE STALL FLUSH RESTROOM	1
15	PET WASTE STATION	2
16	5' CHAINLINK FENCING W/WIND SCREEN	128 LF

Map 9

Implementation & Cost Estimates

The final chapter of this study will focus on implementation and general budgeting costs. Final estimated construction costs for a dog park can vary widely depending on various factors such as location, size, amenities, materials, labor costs, and local regulations. Below this study has provided a breakdown of potential expenses the city might encounter when planning and budgeting for the future dog park as shown on the suggested site layouts in the recommendations chapter:

DOG PARK SUGGESTED AMENITIES ESTIMATED COSTS		
Item Description	**Unit**	**Cost**
Site Preparation/Grading	Lump Sum	$15,000—$20,000
Asphalt Parking (light duty)	Square Feet	
Fountain – ADA & Dog	Each	$5,000—$6,500
Park Monument Sign	Each	$3,500
Additional Signage (rules and wayfinding)	Each	$350
Trash Receptacle	Each	$950
Dirt, Sand (surfacing option)	Cubic Yards	
Natural Turf (surfacing option)	Acres	
Stone (surfacing option)	Cubic Yards	
Mulch (surfacing option)	Cubic Yards	
Artificial Turf (surfacing option)	Square Feet	$25
Natural Surface Trails	Cubic Yards	
Picnic Table	Each	$1,200
Lighting (parking or pedestrian)	Each	$13,500
Single Stall Flush Restroom	Each	$65,000—$90,000
Pet Waste Station	Each	$650
5’ Chainlink Fencing	Lineal Foot	$30
5’ Chainlink Fencing with privacy screening (between small and large dog areas)	Lineal Foot	$35
Double Gate	Each	$2,500
Shade Structures	Each	$12,000—$17,000
Dog Park Agility Components (package)	Lump Sum	$10,000—$15,000
Permitting	Lump Sum	$500—$2,000

The next steps to implementation of the park will be to work with landscape architects and engineers to create a final layout that includes separate areas for large and small dogs, agility equipment, seating, shade structures, water stations, waste disposal bins, and other amenities chosen by the city.

The design team will assist with development of a final budget for the design, construction, and maintenance of the dog park. Exploration of funding options such as grants, donations, sponsorships, fundraising events, and public-private partnerships to finance the project could be reviewed.

Establishing operational procedures and maintenance protocols to ensure the ongoing upkeep and cleanliness of the dog park will be an important step for the city. Consider establishing volunteer or adopt-a-park programs to engage the community in park stewardship.

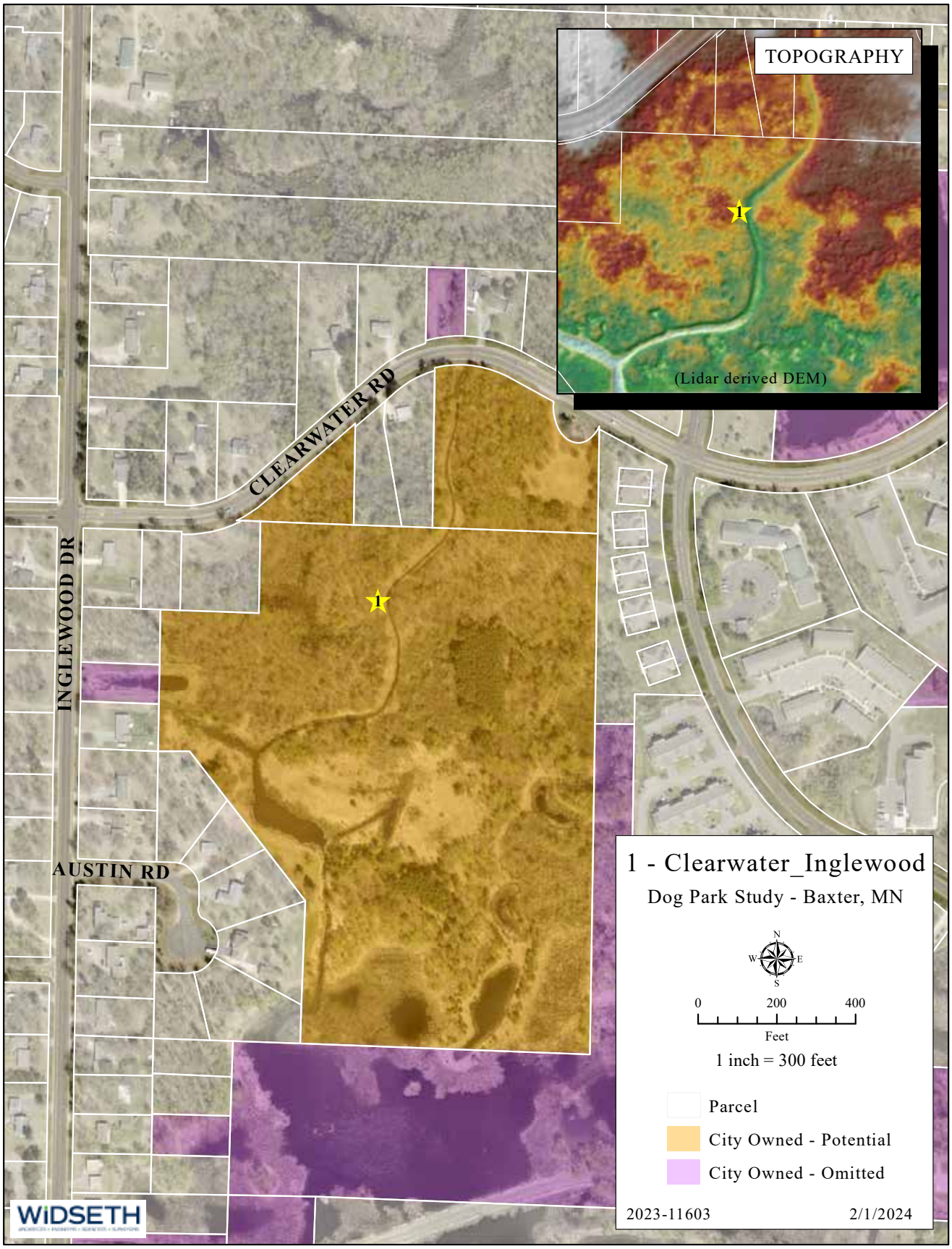
Monitor the usage, satisfaction, and effectiveness of the dog park through regular observation, surveys, and feedback from users. It is recommended that the city evaluate the impact of the dog park on the community, including social, economic, and environmental outcomes and use this information to make adjustments and improvements as needed. Maintain ongoing communication and engagement with the community, stakeholders, and user groups to address concerns, solicit feedback, and foster a sense of ownership and pride in the dog park. Encourage participation in park events, programs, and activities to promote community cohesion and support.

By following these steps, you can successfully implement a dog park that meets the needs of the community and provides a safe, enjoyable, and sustainable recreational space for dogs and their owners.

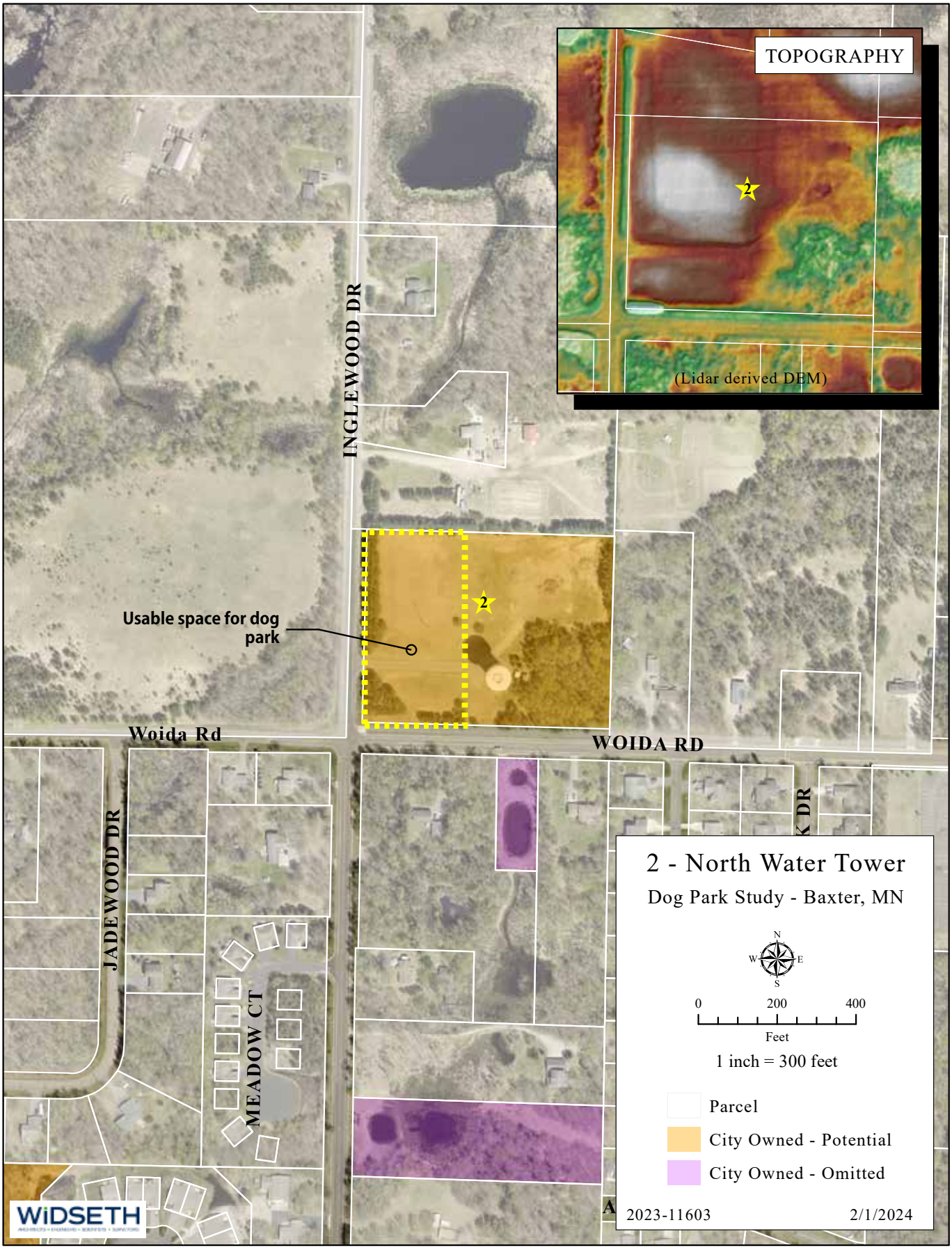
APPENDIX

WiDSETH

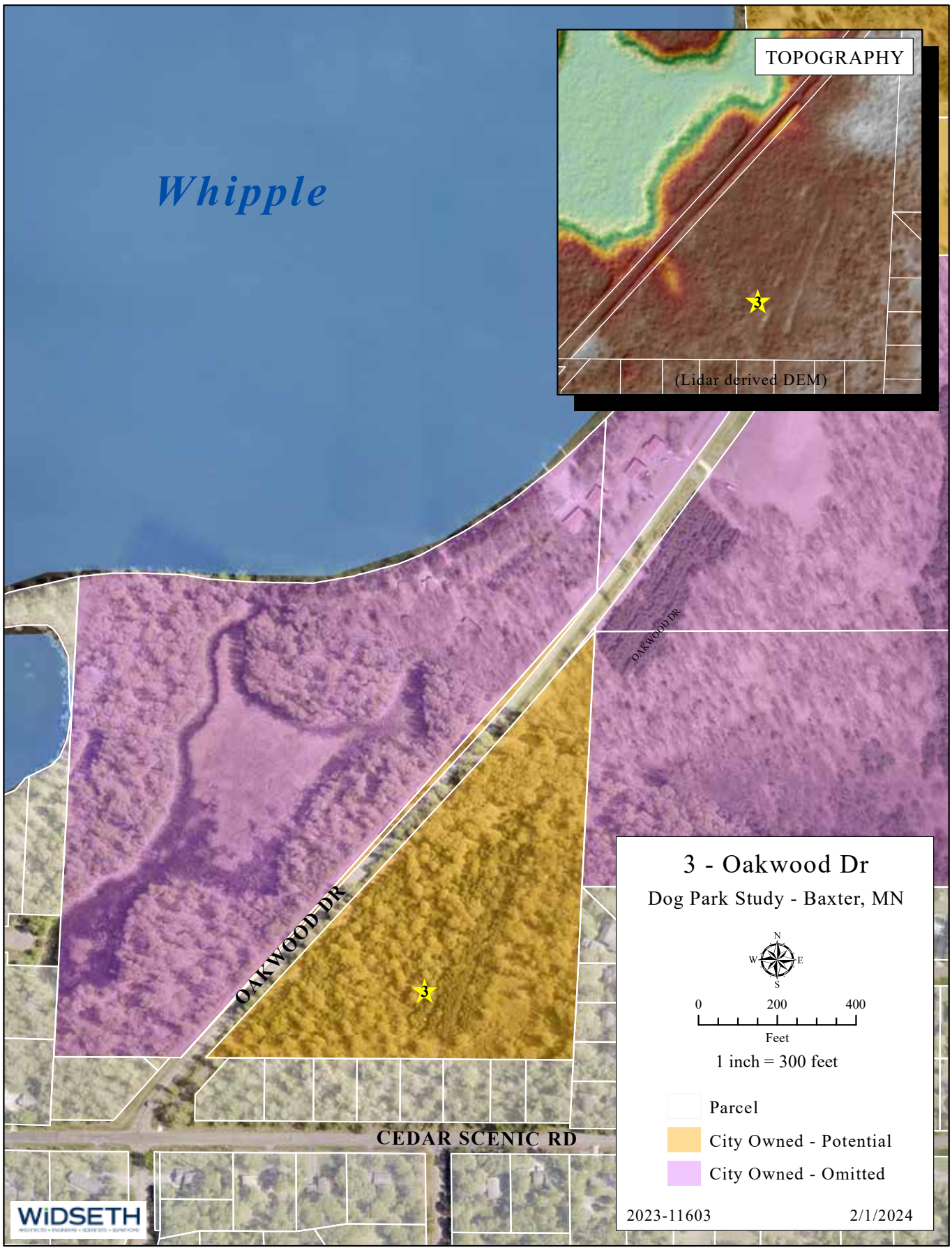
ADDITIONAL SITE RECOMMENDATIONS



Map 10


TOPOGRAPHY
2
(Lidar derived DEM)
INGLEWOOD DR
Usable space for dog park
2
Woida Rd
WOIDA RD
JADEWOOD DR
MEADOW CT
2 - North Water Tower
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024
WIDSETH

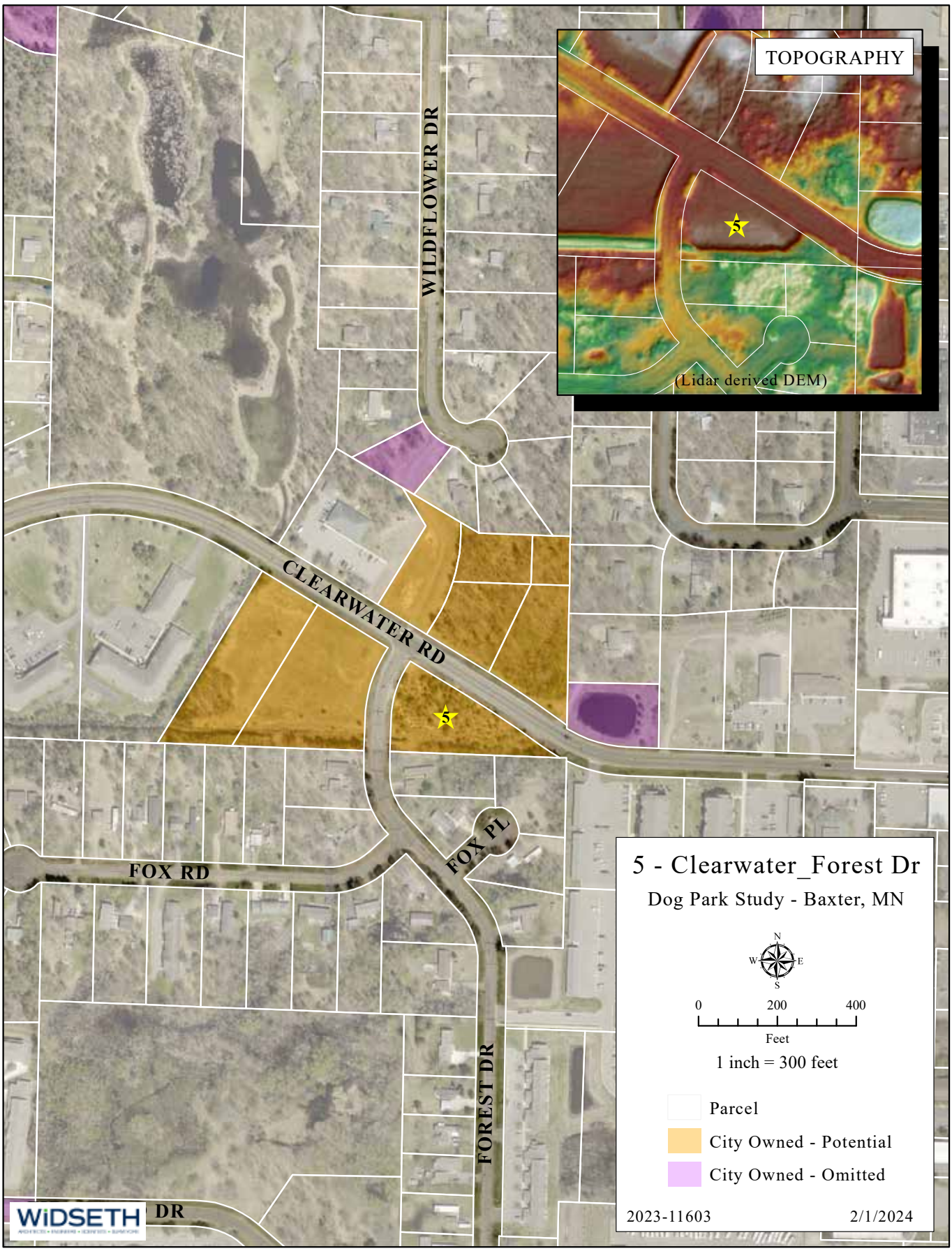
Map 11


Whipple
TOPOGRAPHY
3
(Lidar derived DEM)
OAKWOOD DR
OAKWOOD DR
3
CEDAR SCENIC RD
WIDSETH
3 - Oakwood Dr
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024

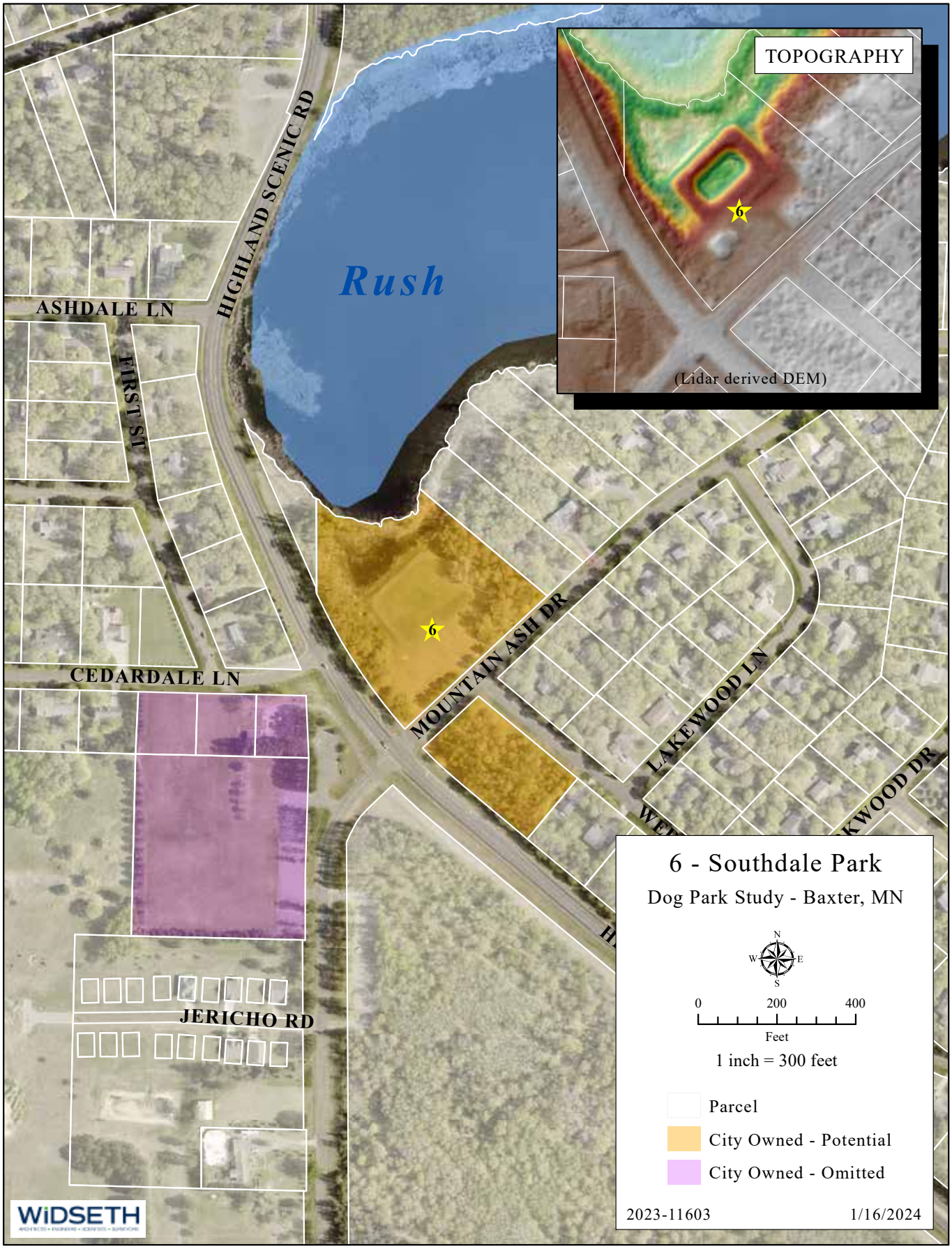
Map 12


ELDER DR
GLORY RD
STATE HWY 371
STATE HWY 371
TOPOGRAPHY
(Lidar derived DEM)
DOUGLAS FIR DR
HASTINGS RD
HASTINGS RD
EVERGREEN DR
4
4
4 - Hastings Rd
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024
WiDSETH

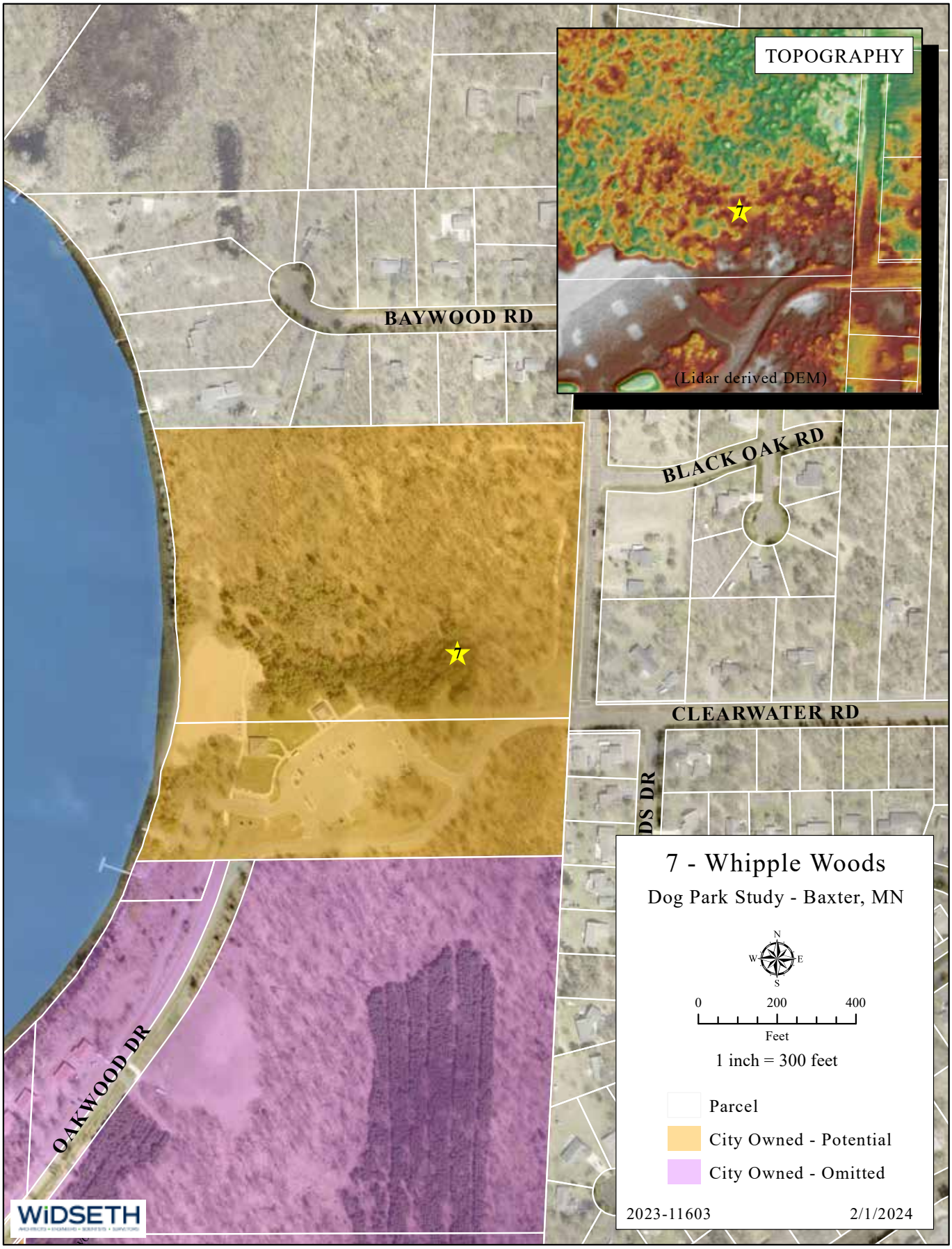
Map 13


TOPOGRAPHY
5
(Lidar derived DEM)
WILDFLOWER DR
CLEARWATER RD
FOX RD
FOX PL
FOREST DR
DR
WIDSETH
5 - Clearwater_Forest Dr
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024

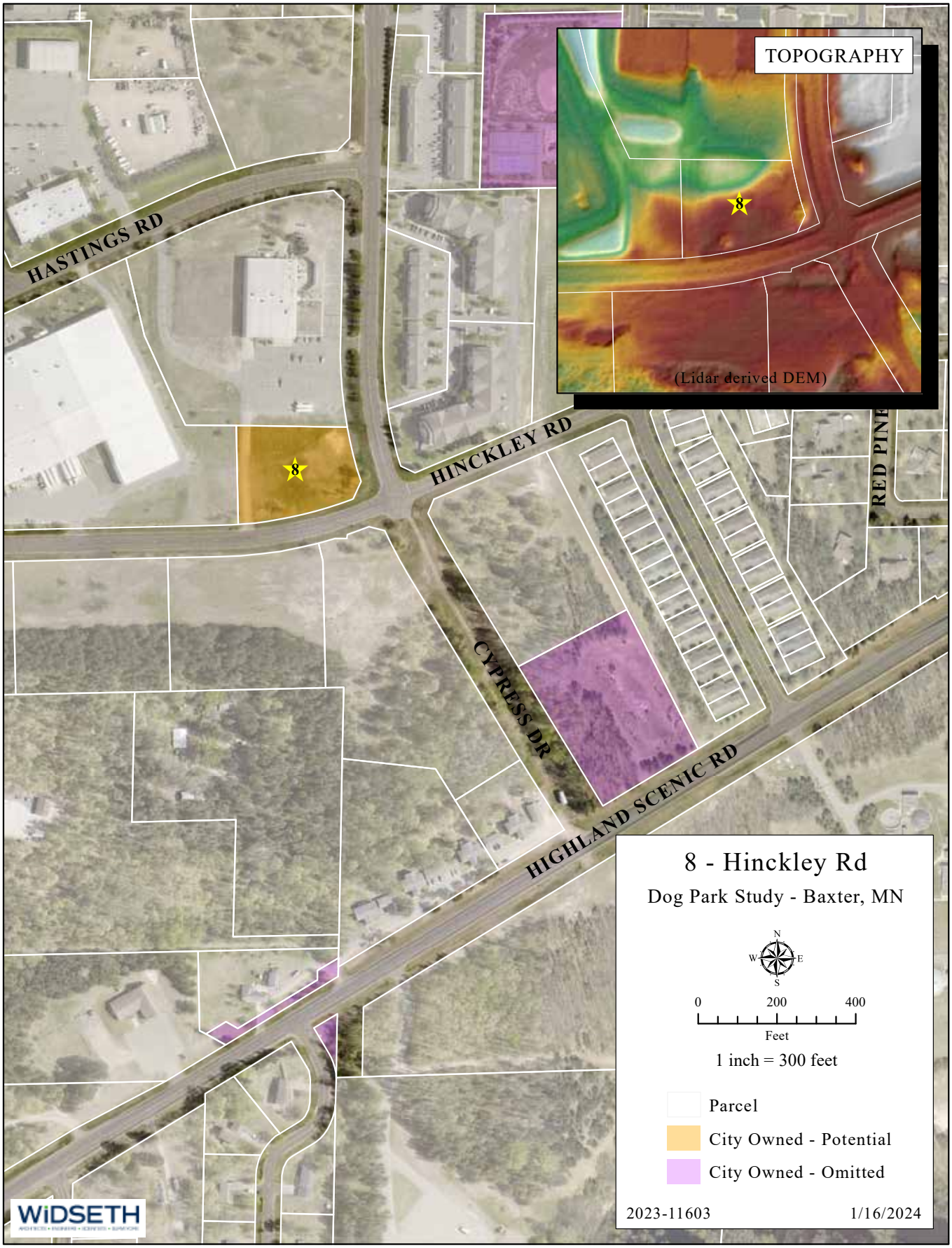
Map 14


TOPOGRAPHY
(Lidar derived DEM)
Rush
HIGHLAND SCENIC RD
ASHDALE LN
FIRST ST
CEDARDALE LN
MOUNTAIN ASH DR
LAKEWOOD LN
JERICHO RD
6
6 - Southdale Park
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
1/16/2024
WIDSETH

Map 15


TOPOGRAPHY
(Lidar derived DEM)
BAYWOOD RD
BLACK OAK RD
CLEARWATER RD
OAKWOOD DR
7 - Whipple Woods
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
2/1/2024
WIDSETH

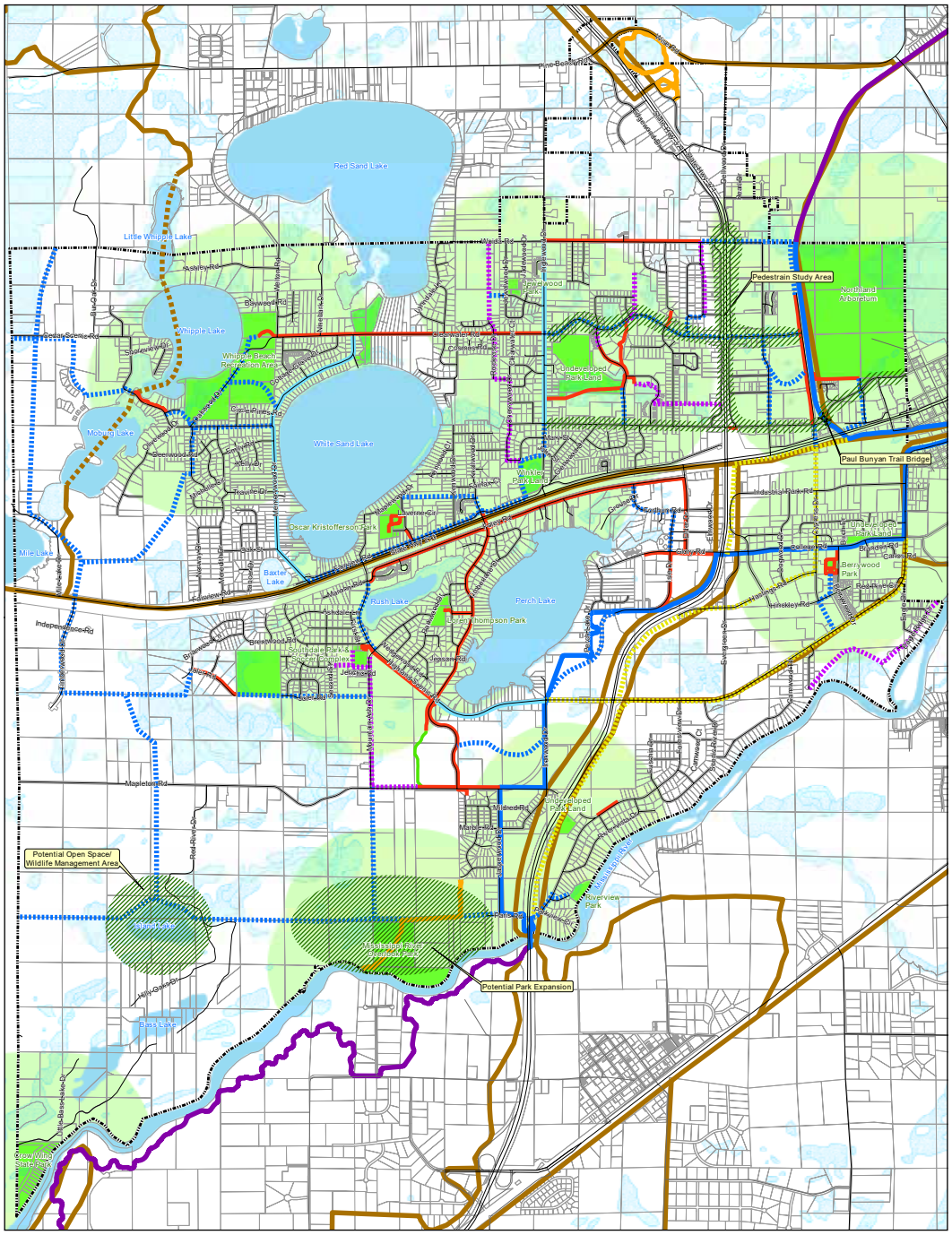
Map 16


TOPOGRAPHY
8
(Lidar derived DEM)
HASTINGS RD
HINCKLEY RD
RED PINE
CYPRESS DR
HIGHLAND SCENIC RD
8
8 - Hinckley Rd
Dog Park Study - Baxter, MN
N
W
E
S
0
200
400
Feet
1 inch = 300 feet
Parcel
City Owned - Potential
City Owned - Omitted
2023-11603
1/16/2024
WIDSETH

Map 17

ADDITIONAL MAPS FROM THE CITY OF BAXTER 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

#21



Future and Existing Parks and Trails System

City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan

- Paul Bunyan State Trail - Baxter Segment
- Paul Bunyan State Trail Crow Wing County Segment
- Paul Bunyan State Trail Safety Re-Route Options
- Bike/Pedestrian Trail
- Wood Chip Trail
- Paved Roadway Shoulder
- Private Trail
- Future Bike/Pedestrian Trail
- Future Trail - Easement
- Snowmobile Trail
- Snowmobile Trail on Water Body
- MunicipalBoundary
- Parks
- Half-Mile Park Service Areas

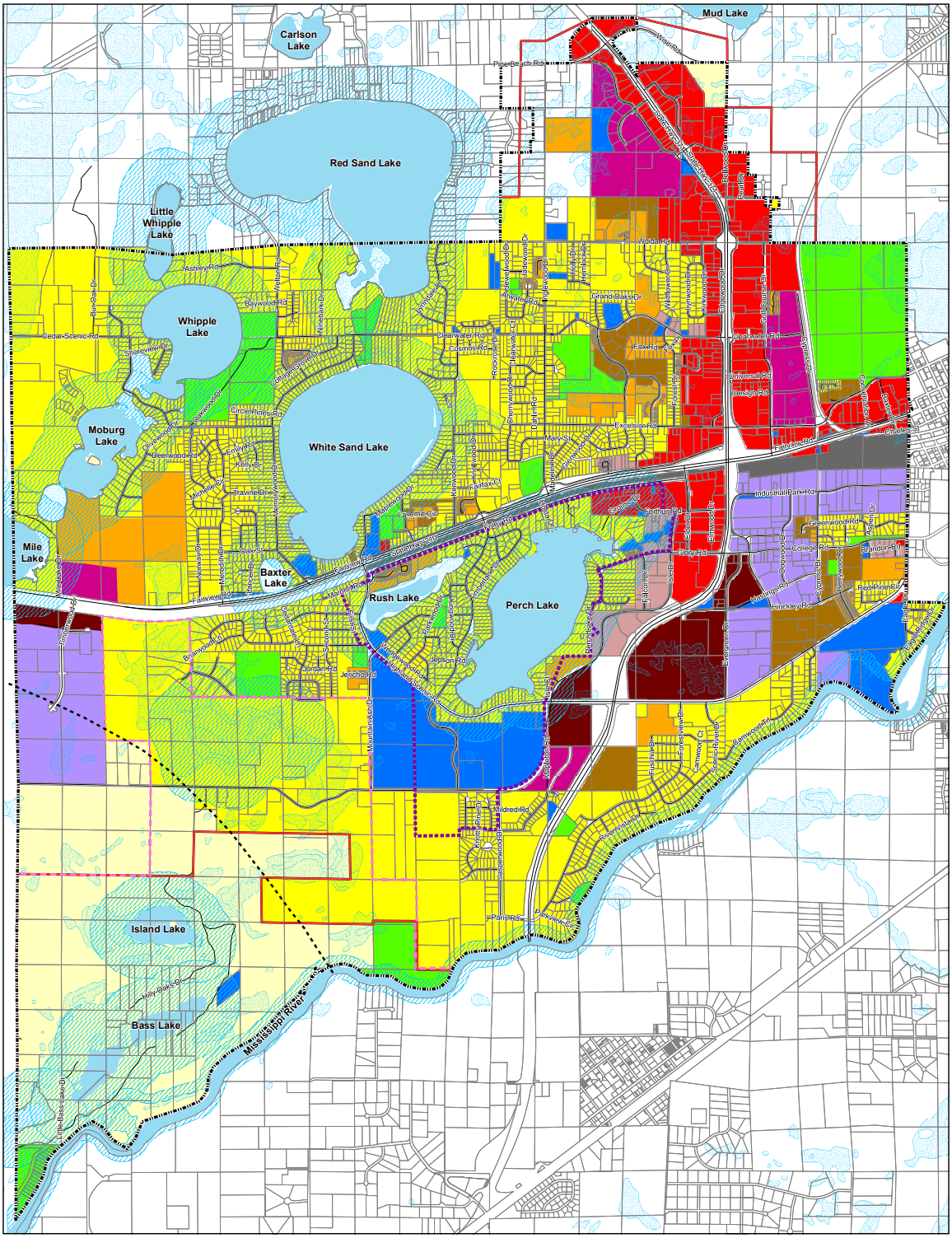
N W E S

0 0.5 1 Miles

July 23, 2015

Stantec

Map 18



Future Land Use

City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan

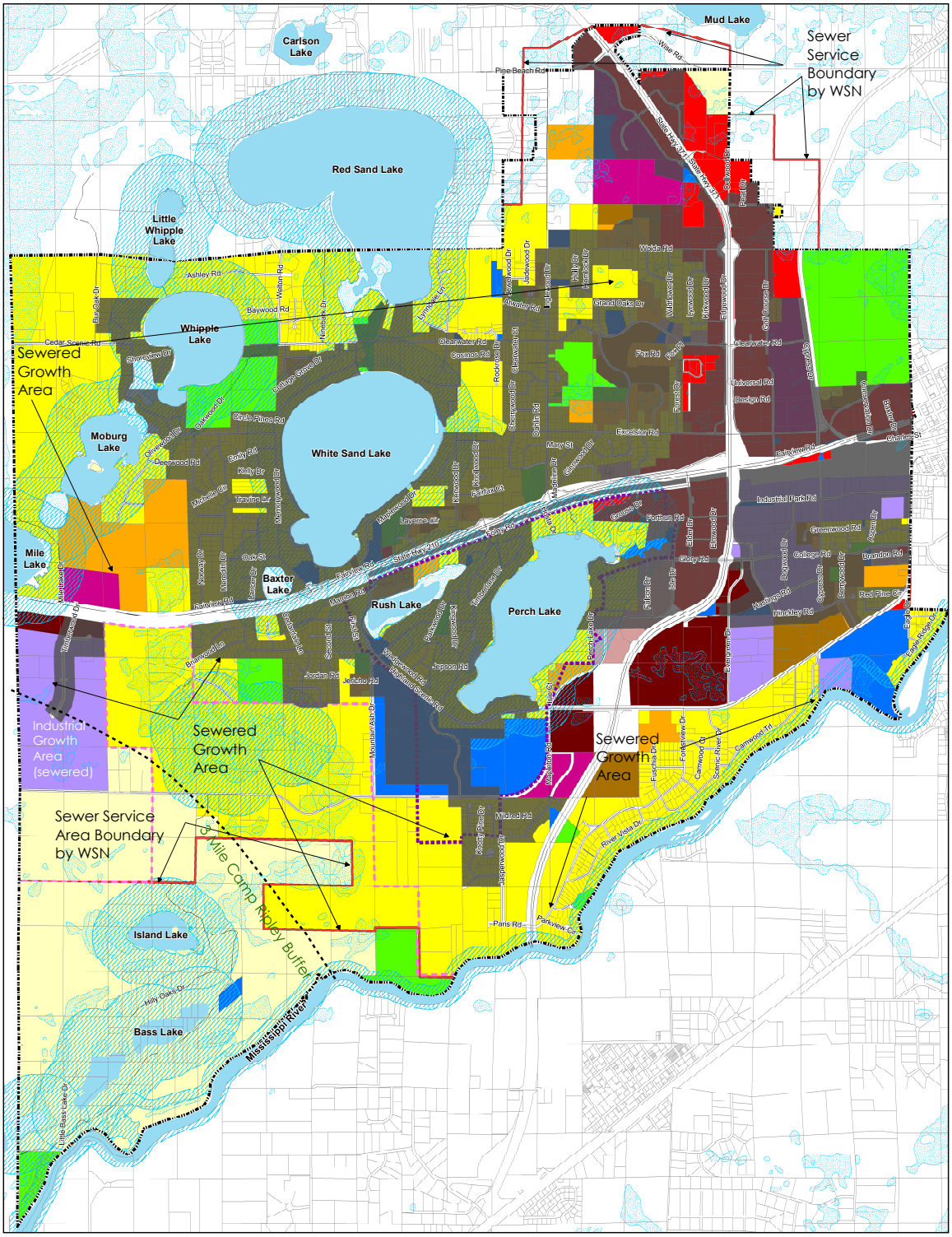
- MunicipalBoundary
- Water Supply Management Area Boundary
- Sewer Service Area Boundary
- Conservation Overlay Boundary
- Three-Mile Camp Ripley Buffer
- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Business Gateway
- Office Service
- Mixed Use
- General Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public/Institutional
- Parks/Greenway
- Railroad
- Open Water
- NWI Wetland
- Shoreland Overlay District

August 18, 2015

N W E S

0 0.5 1 Miles

Map 19



Growth Areas Based on Sewer Service Boundary

City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan

Areas Currently Served by Sewer

- MunicipalBoundary
- Water Supply Management Area Boundary
- Sewer Service Area Boundary
- Conservation Overlay Boundary
- Three-Mile Camp Ripley Buffer
- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Business Gateway
- Office Service
- Mixed Use
- General Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public/Institutional
- Parks/Greenway
- Railroad
- Open Water
- NWI Wetland
- Shoreland Overlay District

N W E S

0 0.5 1 Miles

August 18, 2015

Map 20

REFERENCES

CITY OF BAXTER 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- National Library of Medicine—Use of Dog Parks and the Contribution to Physical Activity for Their Owners
  Kelly R. Evenson, Ph.D., MS, Elizabeth Shay, Ph.D., Stephanie Williamson, BA, and Deborah A. Cohen, MD, MPH

- Trust for Public Land—US City Rankings for Dog Parks San Francisco, CA 2019-03-21

- Trust for Public Land—Dog Parks 2019 - Center for City Park Excellence

2023 Pet License Listing

App No License No	Pet Tag Status	License License	Cust No Customer Address	Pet Name	Pet Name	Pet Breed	Pet Color	Pet Gender
0000356	122	DOG	013395	Athena	Doberman	Red	Female Altered	
PET-0353	Active	Pet	12517 Second St Baxter MN 56425					
0000237	123	DOG	012889		Wilson	AustralianShepherd	Black/Brown/White	Male
PET-0235	Active	Pet	13172 Cypress Dr Apt 112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000523	124	DOG	012889		River	AustralianShepherd	Red Merle	Male
PET-0519	Active	Pet	13172 Cypress Dr Apt 112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000287	125	DOG	006971		Wrigley	TerrierMix	Tri color	Female Altered
PET-0285	Active	Pet	5436 Jericho Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000578	126	DOG	014622		MiniAustralianSheph	Red Merle	Female Altered	
PET-0574	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt #103 Baxter MN 56425					
0000579	127	DOG	014622		GoldenRetriever	Gold	Female Altered	
PET-0575	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt #103 Baxter MN 56425					
0000541	128	DOG	013684	Walter	GoldenDOODLE	White	Male Altered	
PET-0537	Active	Pet	12743 Chestnut Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000339	129	DOG	013322		Piper	ShihTzu	White	Female Altered
PET-0336	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt 112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000312	130	DOG	013585	CHIPPER	SPRINGER	liver/white	Male Altered	
PET-0305	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd Apt 106 Baxter MN 56425					
0000580	131	DOG	014635	Adley	MiniDoodle	Brown	Female Altered	
PET-0576	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt #303 Baxter MN 56425					
0000386	132	DOG	007279		Marley	GermanShephard	Black and tan	Female Altered
PET-0382	Active	Pet	13361 Meredith Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000478	133	DOG	010631		IVY	BulldogMIX	BROWN & BLACK	Female Altered
PET-0474	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd #202 Baxter MN 56425					
0000554	134	DOG	014389		Lexi	chihuahuayorkiemix	Brindle	Female Altered
PET-0550	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #106 Baxter MN 56425					
0000595	135	DOG	005447	Rosie	MiniDoodle	Cinnamon	Female Altered	
PET-0591	Active	Pet	13071 Kingwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000467	136	DOG	013931	Moby	STBERNARD	Tri	Male Altered	
PET-0463	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt 202 Baxter MN 56425					
0000315	137	DOG	005653		Goldie	BelgianTervuren	Mahogany & Black	Female Altered
PET-0308	Active	Pet	13432 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000314	138	DOG	005653		Jet	BelgianTervuren	Mahogany	Male Altered
PET-0307	Active	Pet	13432 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000569	139	DOG	014589	Jack	LabRetriever	Black & White	Male Altered	
PET-0565	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #212 Baxter MN 56425					
0000570	140	DOG	014589	Gypsy	Collie	Black & White	Female Altered	
PET-0566	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #212 Baxter MN 56425					
0000513	141	DOG	014183		JELLY BEAN	CocherMixBullDog	Tri-color	Female Altered
PET-0509	Active	Pet	14306 Forest Dr #9 Baxter MN 56425					
0000008	142	DOG	006168		Addie	HuskyShepherd	White	Female Altered
PET-0008	Active	Pet	5427 Cedardale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000480	143	DOG	005744		Jax	ENGLISHCOCKERSPA	Black	Male
PET-0476	Active	Pet	6078 Knollwood Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000533	144	DOG	005744		Mosby	Labrador	Black	Male Altered
PET-0529	Active	Pet	6078 Knollwood Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000482	145	DOG	013961	Luka	AustShepMix	Tri	Male Altered	
PET-0478	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt 310 Baxter MN 56425					

0000572	146	DOG	014610	Hazel	ShihTzu	White	Female Altered	
PET-0568	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt #302 Baxter MN 56425					
0000596	147	DOG	014740	Max	VizslaMix	Redish Brown	Male Altered	
PET-0592	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #208 Baxter MN 56425					
0000597	148	DOG	014189	Sully	TERRIER	Grey	Male Altered	
PET-0593	Active	Pet	8044 Basswood Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000598	149	DOG	008820		Poppy	LabRetriever	Black	Female
PET-0594	Active	Pet	14998 Lynndale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000426	150	DOG	013732	Buttercup	ChihuahuaMix	White	Female Altered	
PET-0422	Active	Pet	14390 Inglewood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000427	151	DOG	013732	Bandit	BlueHeelerBorderCol	Blue Tick	Male Altered	
PET-0423	Active	Pet	14390 Inglewood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000515	152	DOG	011959	Lady	PitbullMix	Black & White	Female Altered	
PET-0511	Active	Pet	6819 Medford Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000326	153	DOG	013264		Ember	AustShepMix	Tri Color	Female Altered
PET-0317	Active	Pet	6588 Austin Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000421	154	DOG	013264		Maverick	GermanShephardMix	Tan	Male
PET-0417	Active	Pet	6588 Austin Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000334	155	DOG	013310	Sully	LabRetriever	Yellow	Male	
PET-0331	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd Apt 105 Baxter MN 56425					
0000504	156	DOG	010169	Trip	CocherSpaniel	White	Male Altered	
PET-0500	Active	Pet	PO Box 1085 Brainerd MN 56401					
0000583	157	DOG	014667	Buddy	Labrador	Black	Male Altered	
PET-0579	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt #112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000448	158	DOG	013832	Summit	BulldogMIX	BLACK/WHITE	Male Altered	
PET-0444	Active	Pet	14304 Forest Dr Unit 5 Baxter MN 56425					
0000599	159	DOG	014754	Posie	ChihuahuaRetLab	White/Brown	Female Altered	
PET-0595	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt 107 Baxter MN 56425					
0000464	160	DOG	013919		Baby Ella	MiniSchnauzer	Black/Silver	Female
PET-0460	Active	Pet	4759 Emily Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000128	161	DOG	007213		PENNY	GoldenDOODLE	RED	Female
PET-0127	Active	Pet	14877 Meadow Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000573	162	DOG	014612	Goose	Poodle	Black	Male	
PET-0569	Active	Pet	7375 Clearwater Rd Apt#209 Baxter MN 56425					
0000474	163	DOG	005533		Sadie	AustralianShepherd	Blue Merle	Female Altered
PET-0470	Active	Pet	6048 Knollwood Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000450	164	DOG	013850		Abby	ChiDachsund	Black	Female Altered
PET-0446	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt 308 Baxter MN 56425					
0000600	165	DOG	014761	Ames	LabRetriever	Black	Male Altered	
PET-0596	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt 109 Baxter MN 56425					
0000539	166	DOG	014315	FIONA	WelshCorgi	BLACK/TAN TRI-COL	Female Altered	
PET-0535	Active	Pet	6665 Excelsior Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000001	167	DOG	010977		Koko	Poodle	Chocolate	Male Altered
PET-0001	Active	Pet	14789 Kirkwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000550	168	DOG	011100	Habit	LabRetriever	Black	Male Altered	
PET-0546	Active	Pet	4567 Deerwood Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000538	169	DOG	014308	Helen	TerrierMix	Black & White	Female Altered	
PET-0534	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt 102 Baxter MN 56425					
0000433	170	DOG	013750	MR PICKLE!	BichonMix	BROWN/WHITE	Male Altered	
PET-0429	Active	Pet	14304 Forest Dr #3 Baxter MN 56425					
0000601	171	DOG	014779	Penny	WaterSpanielLab	Liver & White	Female Altered	
PET-0597	Active	Pet	13377 Cypress Dr Apt #2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000456	172	DOG	013785	Molly	LabRetriever	Yellow	Female Altered	
PET-0452	Active	Pet	4393 Cedar Scenic Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000081	173	DOG	011490	REMI	LabRetriever	YELLOW	Female Altered	
PET-0077	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #110 Baxter MN 56425					
0000531	174	DOG	007591		Grace	Labrador	Ivory	Female Altered
PET-0527	Active	Pet	4437 Cedar Scenic Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000026	175	DOG	011120	TUGGS	ShihTzu	Black/White	Male Altered	
PET-0026	Active	Pet	7276 Excelsior Rd Baxter MN 56425					

0000582	176	DOG	014412		Chanel	Chihuahua	Black/Brown	Female Altered
PET-0578	Active	Pet	14080 Grand Oaks Dr #23 Baxter MN 56425					
0000488	177	DOG	014033	Diggle	PITBULL	Blue Fawn	Male Altered	
PET-0484	Active	Pet	14358 Forest Dr Apt #206 Baxter MN 56425					
0000379	178	DOG	009511	Thor	AustralianShepherd	Merle	Male	
PET-0375	Active	Pet	6671 Afton Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000602	179	DOG	009511	ASPEN	RetrieverMix	BLACK/WHITE	Female Altered	
PET-0598	Active	Pet	6671 Afton Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000520	180	DOG	014229	Nadia	HUSKYMIX	Tri Colored	Female Altered	
PET-0516	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #207 Baxter MN 56425					
0000158	181	DOG	010517		BUCK	EnglishSetter	BLACK/WHITE	Male
PET-0156	Active	Pet	12838 Eagle Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000603	182	DOG	011712	Dozer	Akita	Tri	Male	
PET-0599	Active	Pet	13146 Knollwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000188	183	DOG	010786		Sherman	ChiDachsund	Brownish red	Male Altered
PET-0186	Active	Pet	12921 Knollwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000463	184	DOG	010786		Vinny	SiberianHusky	Black/White	Male
PET-0459	Active	Pet	12921 Knollwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000208	185	DOG	011216		Russell	HOUND	Gold	Male
PET-0206	Active	Pet	13755 Travine Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000604	186	DOG	011216		Logan	GoldenRetriever	Golden, Light	Male Altered
PET-0600	Active	Pet	13755 Travine Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000251	187	DOG	012976		Bo	ShihTzu	White	Male
PET-0249	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd Apt 111 Baxter MN 56425					
0000416	188	DOG	006713		TOBY	LABPUREBREAD	RED	Male
PET-0412	Active	Pet	4923 Cedar Scenic Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000605	189	DOG	011100	Frank	LabMix	Dark Brown	Male Altered	
PET-0601	Active	Pet	4567 Deerwood Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000524	190	DOG	014205	Tank	HUSKYMIX	Brown	Male Altered	
PET-0520	Active	Pet	13870 Cherrywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000606	191	DOG	013922	Von	TerrierMix	Fawn & Brindle	Female Altered	
PET-0602	Active	Pet	5130 Ashdale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000508	192	DOG	014057	Vinnie	EnglishSpringerSpan	Black & White	Male Altered	
PET-0504	Active	Pet	5225 Clearwater Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000607	193	DOG	014057	Leela	LabMix	Black	Female Altered	
PET-0603	Active	Pet	5225 Clearwater Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000024	194	DOG	011111		Scooby	DachsundShitzu	Brown	Male Altered
PET-0024	Active	Pet	13390 Memorywood dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000556	195	DOG	012936	REMINGTO	MastiffMIX	red/white	Male Altered	
PET-0551	Active	Pet	12905 Brentwood Cir Baxter MN 56425					
0000557	196	DOG	012936	BENNY	ShihTzuMIX	GRAY	Female Altered	
PET-0552	Active	Pet	12905 Brentwood Cir Baxter MN 56425					
0000311	197	DOG	005245		Kirby	GoldenDOODLE	Male	
PET-0304	Active	Pet	13287 Maplewood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000566	198	DOG	014161	Pebbles	Cavachon	White	Female	
PET-0562	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd #105 Baxter MN 56425					
0000567	199	DOG	014161	Lottie	Cavachon	Apriocot	Female	
PET-0563	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd #105 Baxter MN 56425					
0000608	200	DOG	014622	Rugger	GoldenRetriever	Gold	Male Altered	
PET-0604	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt #103 Baxter MN 56425					
0000609	201	DOG	014851	Ragnar	HUSKYMIX	Tri Color	Male Altered	
PET-0605	Active	Pet	4894 Cedar Scenic Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000610	202	DOG	014884	Lokahi	TerrierMix	black greying	Female Altered	
PET-0606	Active	Pet	14358 Forest Dr #301 Baxter MN 56425					
0000611	203	DOG	014889	Blue Bell	Dachshund	Brown	Female Altered	
PET-0607	Active	Pet	7357 Clearwater Rd Apt 202 Baxter MN 56425					
0000116	204	DOG	007716		Jack	GoldenRetriever	Golden	Male Altered
PET-0115	Active	Pet	4444 Briarwood Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000117	205	DOG	007716		Redmund	GoldenRetriever	Golden	Male Altered
PET-0116	Active	Pet	4444 Briarwood Ln Baxter MN 56425					

0000612	206	DOG	007716		Sr. Finnegan	GoldenRetriever	Gold	Male
PET-0608	Active	Pet	4444 Briarwood Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000613	207	DOG	005333		Mixed	Yellow	Female Altered	
PET-0609	Active	Pet	14483 Forest Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000510	208	DOG	013094	Layla	GermanShephard	Black & Tan	Female Altered	
PET-0506	Active	Pet	5341 Birchdale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000615	209	DOG	014895	Bailey	BOXER	Tan	Female Altered	
PET-0611	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt #312 Baxter MN 56425					
0000449	210	DOG	011095	ASH	RetrieverMix	BLACK	Male Altered	
PET-0445	Active	Pet	6620 Mary St Baxter MN 56425					
0000616	211	DOG	011095	Frank	Pug	Fawn/Black	Male Altered	
PET-0612	Active	Pet	6620 Mary St Baxter MN 56425					
0000461	212	DOG	013905	Sophie	DachshundMIX	Black w/ Brown Face	Female Altered	
PET-0457	Active	Pet	14181 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000434	213	DOG	013758	Docker	GermanShephard	Tan	Female	
PET-0430	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt 102 Baxter MN 56425					
0000617	214	DOG	008847		OSCAR	BoxerMix	BRINDLE	Male Altered
PET-0613	Active	Pet	14482 Northwoods Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000618	215	DOG	014952	CeCe	chihuahuayorkiemix	Brown & Black	Female	
PET-0614	Active	Pet	14272 Grand Oaks Dr Apt 102 Baxter MN 56425					
0000619	216	DOG	014800	Buddy	GoldenRetriever	Yellow	Male	
PET-0615	Active	Pet	14236 Grand Oaks Dr #13 Baxter MN 56425					
0000620	217	DOG	014960	Tucker	ShepherdMIX	black	Male Altered	
PET-0616	Active	Pet	7105 Fox Rd Apt 2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000621	218	DOG	014962	COOKIE	HAVANESE	BLACK	Female	
PET-0617	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd # 211 Baxter MN 56425					
0000622	219	DOG	014970	Winnie	CorgiLabMix	Tan	Female Altered	Male
PET-0618	Active	Pet	14358 Forest Dr Unit 304 Baxter MN 56425					
0000623	220	DOG	011181		Benny	GermanShephard	Black/Brown	Male
PET-0619	Active	Pet	5309 Clearwater Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000624	221	DOG	014975	Remington	AUSTRALIANCAT	Black & White	Female Altered	
PET-0620	Active	Pet	7023 Clearwater Rd Apt 103 Baxter MN 56425					
0000625	222	DOG	014983	Charlie	GermanShephard	Black	Female	
PET-0621	Active	Pet	13444 Art Ward Dr Unit 2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000072	223	DOG	007614		SUMMER	GERMANSHORTHAIR	WHITE/LIVER	Female Altered
PET-0072	Active	Pet	14401 Shoreview Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000626	224	DOG	007614		RIPLEY	GERMANSHORTHAIR	LIVER	Female
PET-0623	Active	Pet	14401 Shoreview Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000627	225	DOG	014993	Ivan	AUSTRALIANCAT	Red & White	Male Altered	
PET-0622	Active	Pet	14358 Forest Dr Apt 211 Baxter MN 56425					
0000628	226	DOG	014990	Jade	SPANIELENGSPRG	Liver/White	Female Altered	
PET-0624	Active	Pet	4781 Mapleton Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000629	227	DOG	014990	Roxy	LabRetriever	Red	Female Altered	
PET-0625	Active	Pet	4781 Mapleton Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000630	228	DOG	015008	Vinnie	ChihuahuaMix	Black & Brown	Male Altered	
PET-0626	Active	Pet	14304 Forest Dr Unit #4 Baxter MN 56425					
0000631	229	DOG	012454	GEMMA	Lab Retriever	Brown	Female Altered	
PET-0627	Active	Pet	14358 Forest Drive Apt 111 Baxter MN 56425					
0000632	230	DOG	015014	Max	ShihTzu	Tri Color	Male Altered	
PET-0628	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt 308 Baxter MN 56425					
0000213	101	DOG	012625		Figgy	BICHON	White	Female Altered
PET-0211	Active	Pet	14194 Kimberlee Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000633	102	DOG	007061	Apollo	GermanShephard	Black/Tan	Male	
PET-0629	Active	Pet	13705 Travine Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000527	103	DOG	013922	Toby	JackRussel	Brindle/White	Male Altered	
PET-0523	Active	Pet	5130 Ashdale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000606	104	DOG	013922	Von	TerrierMix	Fawn & Brindle	Female Altered	
PET-0602	Active	Pet	5130 Ashdale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000634	105	DOG	015040	mabel	OldEnglishBullDog	TAN/BROWN	(Unknown)	
PET-0630	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd Apt 203 Baxter MN 56425					

0000123	106	DOG	011831		ROSEY	Labrador	BLACK W/WHITE MUZZ	Female Altered
PET-0122	Active	Pet	8035 Dalton Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000586	107	DOG	011765	Daisy	GermanShephardMix	Brindle	Female Altered	
PET-0582	Active	Pet	14483 Lynndale Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000635	108	DOG	010726	ROSIE	GoldenRetriever	GOLDEN RED	Female	
PET-0631	Active	Pet	4428 Brownsville Cir Baxter MN 56425					
0000636	109	DOG	015045	Jax	BlueHeelerMix	Brown & White	Male Altered	
PET-0632	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #211 Baxter MN 56425					
0000637	110	DOG	015045	Axel	BlueHeelerMix	Black & White	Male Altered	
PET-0633	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #211 Baxter MN 56425					
0000237	111	DOG	012889		Wilson	AustralianShepherd	Black/Brown/White	Male
PET-0235	Active	Pet	13172 Cypress Dr Apt 112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000523	112	DOG	012889		River	AustralianShepherd	Red Merle	Male
PET-0519	Active	Pet	13172 Cypress Dr Apt 112 Baxter MN 56425					
0000312	113	DOG	006384		Luna	AustralianShepherd	Blue Merrel	Female
PET-0305	Active	Pet	13886 Grand Oaks Ct Baxter MN 56425					
0000526	114	DOG	014248	Cordel	LabMix	Brown Black	Male Altered	
PET-0522	Active	Pet	13799 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000394	115	DOG	013585	CHIPPER	SPRINGER	liver/white	Male Altered	
PET-0390	Active	Pet	7355 Clearwater Rd Apt 106 Baxter MN 56425					
0000638	116	DOG	014020	Stella	GoldenDOODLE	Apricot	Female Altered	
PET-0634	Active	Pet	12595 Camwood Trl Baxter MN 56425					
0000639	117	DOG	014020	Rip	Labrodoodle	White	Male Altered	
PET-0635	Active	Pet	12595 Camwood Trl Baxter MN 56425					
0000640	118	DOG	015060	Hamish	BLUETICKCOONH	BLACK	Male Altered	
PET-0636	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt 304 Baxter MN 56425					
0000641	119	DOG	014509		Beasley	BorderCollie	Black & White	Male Altered
PET-0637	Active	Pet	6999 Woida Rd Baxter MN 56425					
0000556	120	DOG	012936	REMINGTO	MastiffMIX	red/white	Male Altered	
PET-0551	Active	Pet	12905 Brentwood Cir Baxter MN 56425					
0000556	121	DOG	012936	Benny	MastiffMIX	red/white	Male Altered	
PET-0552	Active	Pet	12905 Brentwood Cir Baxter MN 56425					
0000087	122	DOG	011402		FRED	ShihTzu	BROWN/WHITE	Male Altered
PET-0083	Active	Pet	14690 Par Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000314	123	DOG	005653		Jet	BelgianTervuren	Mahogany	Male Altered
PET-0307	Active	Pet	13432 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000315	124	DOG	005653		Goldie	BelgianTervuren	Mahogany & Black	Female Altered
PET-0308	Active	Pet	13432 Memorywood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000601	125	DOG	014779	Winnie	CorgiLabMix	Tax	Female Altered	
PET-0618	Active	Pet	13377 Cypress Dr Apt #2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000601	126	DOG	014779	Penny	WaterSpanielLab	Liver & White	Female Altered	
PET-0597	Active	Pet	13377 Cypress Dr Apt #2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000642	127	DOG	015034	Brandy	LabMix	Brown	Female Altered	
PET-0638	Active	Pet	13001 Parkwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000643	128	DOG	015034	Poppy	Labrodoodle	Black	Female Altered	
PET-0639	Active	Pet	13001 Parkwood Dr Baxter MN 56425					
0000598	129	DOG	008820		Poppy	LabRetriever	Black	Female
PET-0594	Active	Pet	14998 Lynndale Ln Baxter MN 56425					
0000587	130	DOG	014713	Zoey	NewFoundland	Black	Female Altered	
PET-0583	Active	Pet	14304 Forest Dr Unit 2 Baxter MN 56425					
0000479	131	DOG	013952	JORDY	Taiwan	BLACK	Male Altered	
PET-0475	Active	Pet	7273 Clearwater Rd Apt 211 Baxter MN 56425					
0000513	132	DOG	014183		JELLY BEAN	CocherMixBullDog	Tri-color	Female Altered
PET-0509	Active	Pet	14306 Forest Dr #9 Baxter MN 56425					
0000081	133	DOG	011490	REMI	LabRetriever	YELLOW	Female Altered	
PET-0077	Active	Pet	7271 Clearwater Rd Apt #110 Baxter MN 56425					

2023 Licenses Sold 142

PUBLIC COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS DOG PARK STUDY BAXTER:

Dear Baxter City Representatives,

We have immense concern about a dog park being placed at the corner of Inglewood Drive and Woida Road on property owned by the city and where the water tower is currently located. The property was purchased from our family for a water tower. Over the years the city has obviously been concerned about children or families walking or biking near the tower due to the gate being placed and no further access to the roadway we once enjoyed during walks or bike rides.

We respectfully object due to the following reasons:

1. Our family has enjoyed the property to the north and east of this site for many years as a nature type preserve, with significant wildlife.
2. Dog urine and feces will contaminate the ground water that we use for our homes, and gardening.
3. We were annexed into the city without consent and our property taxes doubled in one year.
4. The city then proceeded to improve Inglewood, north of Woida, increasing traffic and speeds significantly.
5. We have one dog, wild turkeys, chickens, and other animals like bear, deer, a bobcat and more that we would be concerned for regarding their health and safety. We have one friend who quit taking their dog to Brainerd's dog park due to contracting communal dog diseases. We would not want the animals that currently enjoy this nature area to contract something.

If the city decides to proceed even though we respectfully object we would request the following considerations:

1. ***A noise and smell reduction, decorative solid fence, with no maintenance on either side, be placed on the north, west and east sides of the dog park, assuming the dog park is placed on the north side of the driveway to the water tower.***
2. The roadway and parking lot be available for all in the neighborhood to use while walking or riding bikes.
3. Users of the dog park be required to clean up their own dog waste, and not spend taxpayer money requiring city staff to do so. Put up cameras and establish an ordinance that includes a $500 plus fine for dog owners who do not comply.
4. If a dog/s can not be controlled of nuisance barking that they be banned from the park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gene and Sheila Haverkamp

Bruce and Angela Kruchten

Cedric Ford and Michaela Hart

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE GENERAL:

1. Not in support of either location
2. Will there be additional meetings
3. Whipple lake should be considered
4. Concern with dog park making neighborhood dogs restless
5. What hours for walking dogs – don't support either
6. Think there are better uses of tax dollars also impacts house values in high density areas
7. Like Woida better than clearwater and don't live near either
8. Increased traffic is a concern on either option
9. Make sure fence has a double door
10. Ice build up make sure there are 2 doors
11. Out of town visitors will come
12. People from surrounding communities come to Brainerd because of the water

Site 1 (Clearwater) focused comments:

1. Access to water please
2. Blind corner at clearwater is a concern
3. Can get wet back there
4. Traffic is concerned on clearwater
5.

Site 2 (Woida) focused comments:

1. Do home owners get impacted from noise and traffic – prefer site 2
2. Close to vet
3. Less clearing of trees is positive on this option
4. Safety concern for dogs at the water tower with trucks going in and out
5. Prefer this location because of impact on trees and homeowners

From: Donna Bower
To: Josh Doty
Cc: jdboser@charter.net
Subject: Dog park
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 11:33:17 AM

[You don't often get email from jdboser@charter.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

Sent from my iPad. in reference to the meeting this morning, I am sending my concerns on the dog park proposed site on Clearwater Rd. Which Grand Oaks twin homes would back up to park...
1..noise factor of barking dogs...patios or yards would have the noise nuisance. 2.lower house value 3. Parking lot in my back yard and subject to who knows what and living alone is not a comfortable feeling....4....smell/flies/fear of dogs coming in yard as too close...loud noise from people also....basically do not want to be near as moved here for peace and quiet !

date 2/28/24
Page 1

Dear Betty,

I received the letter from the City of Baxter regarding the Baxter Dog Park. I have met in person with Shanna to share my concerns and all the reasons why a dog park is not feasible to locate in close proximity within a residential housing area.

My concerns are as follows:

- There will be increased traffic at all times of day/night
- Increased activity in neighborhood to include people and dogs
- Increased noise level with traffic, people, dogs barking, fighting, owners yelling at their dogs, risk for injury to owners and dogs
- Site will likely attract riff-raff, a "new place to hangout"
- Lack of maintenance
- Limited policing due to staffing limitations and having greater needs than monitoring a Dog Park.
- Devalue our current and neighboring properties
- Environmental concerns: Stormwater runoff, contaminations, bacteria, pathogens from dog feces and urine being absorbed into the ground, potentially affecting our soil and water, developing bacteria and diseases in humans and animals.

date 2/28/19
page 2

I am a recent resident of Baxter with hopes of finding a safe, quiet and peaceful comfortable neighborhood within the City of Baxter that will meet my needs as a senior citizen for the best of my life. I ask that we as residents of the community that we be respected in making these concerns and most seriously reconsider your potential Dog Park Plans/locations with elimination of the Clear Water Road as a proposed site. I believe that there the majority of our population would not want to consider a Dog Park in their backyard. I do plan to attend the meeting February 27th Thank You! Sincerely

Nancy Halbert
14446 Grand Oaks Drive
Baxter, Mn. 56425

PLEASE **PRINT** NAME & ADDRESS

OK/Dog Park 2/29

NAME	ADDRESS	ITEM OF INTEREST
Amber + Ted Swanson	6710 Clearwater Rd.	
Niki Torrence	6524 Clearwater Rd	
Scott Rubin	6588 Austin Rd	
Debra NARLOCH	14395 Grand Oaks Drive	
Gary Ohnstad	6674 clearwater Rd	
Joel + Jenne Hutchins	13281 Maplewood Dr.	
CHUCK HILTNER	4614 MICHELLE CIR	
Jessica Schwimmer	6449 Woida Rd	Dog Park
Byron Stahl	14365 Grand Oaks Dr	Dog Park
ID		
Connie Meyer	14468 Inglewood	Dog Park
Jackie & Scott Longacreter	13603 Maplewood	Dr. Pickleball !! yes!!!

PLEASE PRINT NAME & ADDRESS

OK/Dog Park 2/29

NAME	ADDRESS	ITEM OF INTEREST
DAN LEIGHTON	14369 Grand Oak Drive	Dog Park

We live at the intersection of ~~Edgewood~~ Inglewood and Clearwater. We bought our house in August of 2019. We like our home itself, but what truly sold us on the property was the location.

- The property is a corner lot with beautiful trees around much of our yard, and an underground irrigation system.
- Our property has a smaller parcel of land to the side of it that we also own, and that forested area affords us privacy from other properties as well.
- Our property is almost equal distance to shops and restaurants, as it is to the beach.
- At our home we are afforded privacy and quiet living because of the property we chose to purchase.
- We feel lucky that we can live in a city with all the above, without having to move outside of city limits for that space and privacy.
- We had a fence put in around part of our yard so our two dogs can stay on our property and not be distracted by passersby walking down Edgewood or Clearwater, nor cause noise disturbance for our neighbors.
- We moved from Brainerd to Baxter because we fell in love with the privacy our property affords us.
- Winter/Spring/Summer 2023 the four members of our family went through major inconveniences for road improvements for a trail to be put in across the street from us. During that time, our coveted underground irrigation system was torn up by road workers and holes punctured in it, making it inoperable unless we pay for major troubleshooting to repair holes and replace and uncover spouts; our lawn was uprooted from the curb to tree line; our mailbox was taken down and replaced with a metal bar and our mail service was interrupted for months; we had surveying flags and bright spray paint all over our lawn for over a year; our vehicles were permanently spotted with asphalt and spackling; several times we were late to work or gatherings or meetings because we could not leave our driveway without walking around to find machine operators to move their equipment; we had fingers wagged at us by road workers because they assumed we (and our teens) were joyriding and not actual residents who had to drive up and down the blocked off road to get to our house; two of our vehicles bottomed out because of large, deep gaps between the road and our driveway which was also destroyed up to the tree line. Other than finding another home, we had no choice but to live through the inconveniences; and for that, we were just assessed $8,772.00 by the City of Baxter for road improvements we had no choice in, but to receive letters informing us that it was happening.

We are against a dog park near our property. A dog park brings with it additional foot and vehicle traffic, litter, noise disturbance – everything we moved to the City of Baxter to get away from. There is open land that we drive past every day, that could easily serve as an area for a dog park.

To us it makes no sense to put a dog park in the middle of a residential area. Take for instance the City of Brainerd's dog park: it is at the end of a city park and the bottom of a hill and has a river across from it; there are not property owners disturbed by foot and vehicle traffic or unleashed dogs or smells that a dog park brings with it. A dog park in a location such as the City of Brainerd's makes sense because it is right next to a city park and not surrounded by residential homes.

Please reconsider the idea of building a dog park in our residential area. I know that there are other homeowners in our neighborhood that feel as we do. We do not want our property values to decrease, we do not want more traffic – vehicle and/or foot – than we already have in our area, nor do we want a dog park that takes away from the beauty of the scenery around us, which is the reason we chose to live here.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nicole Torrence
6524 Clearwater Road 2/29/24

Received by Mayor, Darrel Olson

BAXTER

"A Growing Community"

MEETING NOTES

Baxter City Hall, 13190 Memorywood Drive, Baxter, MN

These are meeting notes regarding potential locations for a dog park.

9:00 am February 26, 2024

STAFF PRESENT: CD Director Josh Doty and Planner Matthew Gindele

OTHERS: John & Sue Ebinger 14399 Grand Oaks Dr., Myron & Debra Narlock 14395 Grand Oaks Dr., Donna Boser 14407 Grand Oaks Dr.

Residents came forward regarding the proposed dog park location on Clearwater/Inglewood Dr.

The residents had the following comments:

- Residents are considered a retirement community, consider the age of the people nearby.
- Most of the residents are in bed by 8:30pm.
- Grand Oaks Dr. is more densely populated than the Woida site which would allow for more conflict with adjacent neighbors.
- Dogs will be barking all day long making it very difficult or impossible to enjoy sitting on our porch with the barking dogs and loud voices.
- Wind will blow dog poop smells into our yards.
- The residents moved to this location because of the natural woods behind them (in the vicinity of this dog park site option). Concerned about a screening/sound barrier fence going up and ruining their view and access to the woods.
- More costly to develop Clearwater site than Woida site (suspected).
- Will negatively impact our property values (suspected).

From: burlingtonhouse218@gmail.com <burlingtonhouse218@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 12:04 PM
To: Josh Doty <JDoty@baxtermn.gov>; Bradley Chapulis <BChapulis@baxtermn.gov>; Darrel Olson <DOlson@baxtermn.gov>; Connie Lyscio <clyscio@baxtermn.gov>
Cc: 'Bruce Kruchten' <kruchtenheating@gmail.com>; michaelawasnie1996@icloud.com; 'Megan Adams' <megan.burlingtonhouse@gmail.com>; 'Joe Wasnie' <wasniejoe@gmail.com>
Subject: PROPOSED DOG PARK IN BAXTER MN

Dear Baxter City Representatives,
We have immense concern about a dog park being placed at the corner of Inglewood Drive and Woida Road on property owned by the city and where the water tower is currently located. The property was purchased from our family for a water tower. Over the years the city has obviously been concerned about children or families walking or biking near the tower due to the gate being placed and no further access to the roadway we once enjoyed during walks or bike rides.

We respectfully object due to the following reasons:

1. Our family has enjoyed the property to the north and east of this site for many years as a nature type preserve, with significant wildlife.
2. Dog urine and feces will contaminate the ground water that we use for our homes, and gardening.
3. We were annexed into the city without consent and our property taxes doubled in one year.
4. The city then proceeded to improve Inglewood, north of Woida, increasing traffic and speeds significantly.
5. We have one dog, wild turkeys, chickens, and other animals like bear, deer, a bobcat and more that we would be concerned for regarding their health and safety. We have one friend who quit taking their dog to Brainerd's dog park due to contracting communal dog diseases. We would not want the animals that currently enjoy this nature area to contract something.

If the city decides to proceed even though we respectfully object we would request the following considerations:

1. ***A noise and smell reduction, decorative solid fence, with no maintenance on either side, be placed on the north, west and east sides of the dog park, assuming the dog park is placed on the north side of the driveway to the water tower.***
2. The roadway and parking lot be available for all in the neighborhood to use while walking or riding bikes.
3. Users of the dog park be required to clean up their own dog waste, and not spend taxpayer money requiring city staff to do so. Put up cameras and establish an ordinance that includes a $500 plus fine for dog owners who do not comply.
4. If a dog/s can not be controlled of nuisance barking that they be banned from the park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Gene and Sheila Haverkamp
Bruce and Angela Kruchten
Cedric Ford and Michaela Hart

From: burlingtonhouse218@gmail.com
Subject: PROPOSED DOG PARK IN BAXTER MN
Date: Mar 11, 2024 at 12:04:31PM
To: jdoty@baxtermn.gov, bchapulis@baxtermn.gov, dolson@baxtermn.gov, clyscio@baxtermn.gov
Cc: Bruce Kruchten kruchtenheating@gmail.com, michaelawasnie1996@icloud.com, Megan Adams megan.burlingtonhouse@gmail.com, Joe Wasnie wasniejoe@gmail.com

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Gene and Sheila Haverkamp
Bruce and Angela Kruchten
Cedric Ford and Michaela Hart

VISITBRAINERD

10 Fun Things To Do With Dogs in Brainerd, MN

August 1st, 2023 | Things To Do

Plan Your Dog-friendly Weekend in Brainerd, MN

Outdoor dog parks, brewery patios, hiking trails and a canine spa treatment will all make it an unforgettable weekend! Here are some of the top 10 things dogs, and their owners, like to do in the Brainerd area.

1. There is nothing more refreshing than sitting on a patio, listening to live music and enjoying a craft beer on a hot summer day. Even more enjoyable with your pup beside you! Jack Pine Brewery welcomes you and your four-legged friends to their outdoor patio. Between food trucks, game and trivia nights, live music and more in-house events we're pretty sure you might never want to leave!
2. Pack your picnic basket and grab your hiking shoes to explore the Crow Wing State Park. Located just south of Brainerd on Highway 371 is the perfect spot to bring your pup for some exercise. Hike the Mississippi overlook or walk the historic boardwalk that once ran in front of 1860s "Old Crow Wing" village.
3. More dog friendly trails can be found at the Northland Arboretum. Dogs are welcome at the Arb as long as they are on a leash. If membership is something that you are considering, don't forget about adding a Dog

membership as well. Dog memberships allow the Northland Arboretum to provide waste bags at the Arb free to you. Owners must be current members. Your pup will receive a treat bag upon a new or renewed membership.

4. Does Fido like to swim? With all of the lakes around here, one of the easiest ways for your dog to cool off, is to use a public lake access.
5. Ernie's on Gull welcomes dogs on their outdoor patio bar because they know just how special our fur babies are! The Soft Pretzel bucket for an appetizer along with the delicious Walleye Sandwich is a must try. Please note that Ernie's does not allow dogs indoors or on their deck patio.
6. Whether your style is biking, walking, running or roller blading the Paul Bunyan Trail is a great place to bring your dog for some exercise. The Paul Bunyan trail is open year-round with lots of scenery opportunities, paved trails and in many of the connecting towns you will find bike-in camping, picnic areas and rest shelters.

Pictured at the Mississippi Overlook, Crow Wing State Park

7. What is ice cream without your favorite pup by your side? The Triangle Drive In Ice cream and Treats is owned and ran by dog lovers! Grab yourself an ice cream sundae and a Pup-A-Treat (Vanilla Ice cream, Dog Bone, Waffle Cone) for your dog. Enjoy your tasty treats on one of the picnic tables or while playing fetch in the grass.
8. Buster Park is an off-leash, fenced, one-acre public dog park where you and your dog can play together. Enjoy a park-like setting and the chance to socialize with other canines and their owners. Always observe all of the park rules posted at your local dog park to help keep everyone's experience enjoyable.
9. We all deserve a relaxing day of pampering, even our dogs! Pampered Pets in Brainerd has everything to ensure your pet has the best spa day. Choose from a full groom, bath, and blow dry or do it yourself with their self-service wash. For all the same reasons us humans take a day dedicated to wellness, our doggie best friends can enjoy the same oasis of luxury.
10. Visit an outdoor farmers market! The Destination Downtown Brainerd's Here For Good Market is held every Tuesday from 3pm-6pm ending August 30th. This weekly event features local good and art vendors, family-

friendly activities, food trucks, and live music.

However you decide to spend time with your pet, please be respectful of your surroundings. When nature calls, always be sure to clean up after your pets. Whether you have an energetic lab or a cuddly lap dog, they are welcome in the Brainerd and Baxter areas! For more information on things to do and to plan your stay, visit our website here.

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Public Health Considerations Associated with the Location and Operation of Off-Leash Dog Parks

Tissa Rahim,[1,3] Pablo Romero Barrios,[1,4] Geoffrey McKee,[2,5] Melissa McLaws,[1,4] and Tom Kosatsky[1,3,6]

Abstract

Off-leash dog parks may enhance human health, but may also lead to health risk through infection or canine aggression. Published evidence was reviewed to examine positive and negative public health impacts of off-leash dog parks, as well as strategies for enhancing benefits and mitigating risks. Evidence suggests that off-leash dog parks can benefit physical and social health, as well as community connectedness. While studies have documented shedding of zoonotic agents in dog parks, the risk of transmission to humans is relatively unknown. Evidence on the risk of dog bites in off-leash dog parks is also limited. Case-examples from North American off-leash dog parks highlight the importance of park location/design, public adherence to safe and hygienic practices, and effective regulatory strategies for mitigating potential risks and maximizing the benefits of off-leash dog parks.

Keywords: Public health, Dog parks, Off-leash, Urban planning, Built environment

Introduction

Off-leash dog parks are public spaces where dogs can exercise off-leash in designated areas under the supervision of their owners [1]. The prevalence of dog ownership (32% of Canadian households) [2], along with increased urbanization and density, have increased the demand for off-leash dog parks; however, off-leash dog parks have triggered controversy since their introduction to North America in 1979 [3]. Proponents often value access to areas where their dogs can exercise and socialize, while opponents cite concerns about public safety and nuisance [4–7]. Off-leash dog parks are of particular interest in health promotion because they may enhance physical activity and social networking for some individuals, while deterring park use for others [1].

In Canada, jurisdiction over dog park development and maintenance generally falls to municipal governments [8]. Off-leash dog parks can be established either through allotment of space in existing parks, or the creation of new parks; the former is the more common approach [9]. In these parks, by-law officers enforce rules on dog access and activities established by municipal parks boards and animal control agencies [8].

As part of creating new off-leash dog parks, it is important to identify and prevent potential health risks, and to maximize the health benefits to both dogs and owners. Public health departments can play an important advisory role in land use planning and related activities, and may be asked to provide comments on the potential impacts of off-leash dog parks on public health. This review aims to summarize published evidence examining positive and negative public health impacts of off-leash dog parks, and to lay out strategies for enhancing benefits and minimizing harms. For the purposes of this paper, canine health and ecological/environmental factors were not addressed.

Methods

A comprehensive review of the scientific literature was conducted using electronic databases, including CAB Direct, Google Scholar, Medline, PubMed, and Web of Science. Non-academic resources were also consulted, including government, public health department and newspaper websites. Bibliographies of retrieved articles were reviewed to locate additional material relevant to the search criteria. Based on the requirements of the database searched, both controlled terms and free text were used. The general search included seven key terms combined using boolean operators (i.e. "and" and "or"): (1) dog park; (2) public health; (3) policy; (4) risk; (5) off-leash; (6) canine; (7) health. Search results were restricted to English-only articles; no date restrictions were applied.

Results

Literature Search

Our literature search yielded 203 articles of interest, of which 176 were peer reviewed journal articles, and 27 came from the grey literature. Twenty-nine articles were reviews of canine and human health/public health/policy. Overall, it was difficult to identify studies with isolated assessments of dog ownership, dog walking and dog park utilization, as many studies examined these topics in combination. We identified 53 primary research articles studying the effects of dog ownership and/or dog walking on physical and/or social health. Articles included studies of off-leash dog parks (14), dog fouling (5), zoonoses (16), dog bites and dog aggression (2), and dog ownership/dog walking (16).

Health Benefits

Physical Benefits Inactivity is an important risk factor for many human chronic diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, obesity and diabetes [10, 11]. 48% of Canadians aged 12 and older are considered to be inactive with respect to Canadian physical activity guidelines [12]. Dog walking represents an opportunity to maintain a moderately active lifestyle and meet recommended physical activity guidelines [13–17]. It is also associated with lower risk of hypertension, depression, and death following myocardial infarction [15, 18–20]. Several studies have demonstrated that frequent dog-walkers are more likely to achieve recommended levels of physical activity compared to infrequent dog-walkers and non-owners [13, 21–29].

Six studies examined levels of physical activity in off-leash dog parks and reported mixed results. Dog parks were reported as one of the most commonly used types of parks in Southern California, although leash requirements were not mentioned [30]. An observational study of six dog parks with designated off-leash hours in Victoria, British Columbia (BC), found that dog owners maintained their walking practices more often than non-dog owners even during inclement weather [26]. Similarly, a cross-sectional telephone survey in Calgary, Alberta, reported that the frequency of dog walking was higher among dog owners who resided within 1.6 km of an off-leash area, compared to other dog owners [17]. Proximity to off-leash dog parks was also correlated with increased frequency of use in an observational study in Texas and Florida [31]. In another observational study of off-leash dog parks in the United States (US), dog walking was more common among more frequent park visitors; however, duration of stay in the park was shorter [32].

In contrast, a greater proportion of dog-walkers were observed to be stationary (i.e. dog owners who stood or sat while their dogs ran free) in two parks in Calgary, Alberta, when the areas were designated as off-leash [33]. These findings have been replicated in other Canadian and US studies [26, 34]. It has been hypothesized that the decreased mobility of dog-owners in off-leash parks may be due to owners socializing rather than walking with their dogs [15].

Social Benefits Dog ownership and the use of dog parks have also been studied in the broader context of community and social health [35]. Off-leash parks introduced in sparsely-used areas have been associated with a subsequent reduction in locally reported criminal activity [36, 37]. This was also observed in parks that are designated off-leash only during off-peak hours (i.e. evenings/nighttime and during the winter season) [36, 37].

Additionally, off-leash dog parks may improve social connectedness and overall community satisfaction by "catalyzing" social interactions [38]. The health risks attributed to the lack of social relationships are comparable to cigarette smoking, elevated blood pressure and lack of physical activity [35, 39, 40]. Enhanced social capital (i.e. positive networks of relationships in the community), community satisfaction and higher neighborhood safety appear to have considerable, indirect effects on individual human health, and may be facilitated by dog ownership and use of dog parks.

In a random telephone survey in Calgary, Alberta, older adults (over 50 years of age) who frequently walk their dog reported more positive feelings about their neighborhoods and an enhanced sense of community [21]. Similarly, in observational studies in Texas, Florida, and Georgia, community members reported off-leash dog parks increased socialization with neighbours and created a heightened sense of community [6, 31]. Wood and colleagues (2007) described a "ripple effect" of dog ownership and associated park use on neighborhood interactions and sense of community that could extend beyond dog owners to the broader community [41]. Elderly individuals or those with physical disabilities, for whom off-leash dog parks promote the formation of new social bonds as a side-effect of canine exercise, may particularly benefit [39]. The increase in community social connectedness could also have an indirect effect on responsible dog ownership, as owners share knowledge from their own experiences regarding pet hygiene and safety; however, these connections could also result in tension and exclusion of owners with poorly behaved dogs [42].

Health Risks

Common concerns regarding off-leash dog parks include dog fouling, zoonotic infections, bites, noxious smells, noise, unruliness, and fear that dogs may act aggressively [37, 43].

Dog Fouling Dog fouling, or failure to remove dog waste, is an oft-raised nuisance issue, which can also result in adverse health consequences [44]. There is concern that introducing off-leash areas could lead to increased dog-fouling due to greater density of dogs in designated park areas and reduced owner vigilance [4]. Not only is the presence of dog feces aesthetically unappealing, undisposed feces can lead to slips, falls, and subsequent injuries, as well as the transmission of zoonotic agents [43, 45]. While this may be a common complaint, there is limited evidence for greater dog fouling in off-leash dog parks compared to those with on-leash requirements. Rock et al. found implementation of off-leash policies resulted in conflicting results in two parks in Calgary, Canada [33]. Increased compliance with rules requiring proper disposal of dog waste was observed in one park, but not another, when compared to the same park prior to implementation [33].

Zoonoses Dogs can carry a variety of human pathogens, including *Escherichia coli, Campylobacter jejuni, Salmonella* spp., and *Giardia lamdia* (Table 1) [45–60]. These may be transmitted to humans, either directly through contact with infected dogs or indirectly via exposure to feces, urine and/or contaminated water or environments [60]; however, risk to human health depends on various factors, such as pathogenicity of the organism, concentration in feces, and route of exposure [50].

A study in Calgary city parks found a parasite prevalence among canine fecal samples of 50%; 25% contained *Giardia* spp., 15% *Cryptosporidium* spp., 17% *Cystoisospora* spp., and 4% helminths [64]. The prevalence of parasite infection was positively associated with dogs visiting multiple parks, as well as off-leash activity [64]. Another study of *Giardia* spp. among urban parks in Calgary demonstrated a significant, positive association between the presence of *Giardia* spp. among dogs and off-leash area use, as well as dog swimming frequency [49]. A study of off-leash dog parks in South-Western Ontario reported a prevalence of *Salmonella, Giardia* and *Campylobacter* spp. in fecal samples of 1, 6, and 43%, respectively [50]. In particular, younger and older dogs appeared to be at highest risk of shedding *Campylobacter* spp. [50]. Fecal samples collected from dog walking areas (including off-leash dog parks) in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, demonstrated a variety of potential pathogens, including roundworm species (2%), hookworm species (0.4%), whipworm species (0.7%), and *Strongyloides* spp. (0.6%), as well as *Giardia* spp., *Cystoisospora* spp., and *Alaria* spp. in 0.4% of samples [65].

Canine Aggression Canine aggression and risk of bites are often cited by opponents of off-leash dog parks, particularly given the limited control over unrestrained dogs [4]. In addition to immediate injury, bites may represent a considerable health concern due to the possibility of secondary infection and/or mental health sequelae [67, 68]. However, the frequency of dog bites to humans in parks, including off-leash dog parks, has not been studied. Reviews of dog bite injuries from the US, Canada, and Australia have reported that a majority of dog bites occur in the home [68, 69]. For children under 15, emergency department surveillance from Australia found that 66% of dog bite injuries occurred in the patients' own homes or a home they were visiting, and only 19% occurred in public places [69]. Children may be more susceptible, as they are approximately 3–5 times more likely to experience dog bites than adults [67, 68]. These injuries may also be more severe, as children are more likely to experience bites involving the head, neck, and face [67, 68].

Discussion

Although the literature supports the health benefits of dog ownership and dog walking, there is insufficient evidence to fully characterize the specific risks and benefits of off-leash dog parks. There are many studies investigating the effect of dog ownership on human health, but limited research into off-leash dog parks, their location/area type, and influence on public health. Many studies have also been limited to Caucasian dog owners of middle to higher socioeconomic statuses, indicating potential ethnographic/demographic biases. Finally, the preponderance of studies reliant on qualitative data and self-reporting makes generalizability and comparisons challenging. Nonetheless, the existing literature may be supplemented with examples of successful implementation in order to inform a discussion of measures that can be taken to maximize potential benefits and minimize harms of off-leash dog parks.

Strategies to Maximize Benefits

Table 1

Selection of canine zoonoses [66]

Brucellosis
Campylobacteriosis
Cryptosporidiosis
Dermatophytosis (ringworm)
Escherichia coli
Echinococcosis
Ehrlichiosis
Giardiasis
Leptospirosis
Pasteurellosis
Rabies
Salmonellosis
Sarcoptic mange
Staphylococcus spp.
Strongyloidosis
Toxocariasis

Given that off-leash designations may enhance dog–dog interactions, Westgarth et al. suggested there may be elevated risk of transmission of zoonotic agents [61]. While studies have examined the shedding of zoonotic agents in Canadian dog parks, none has explored the transmission risk from dogs to humans; however, dog ownership has been investigated as a risk for zoonotic transmission. In a US study, dog ownership was associated with increased *Toxocara* seropositivity (odds ratio: 1.2, 95% CI 1.1–1.4) [62]. Another study from the US reported an increased likelihood of *Cryptosporidium* infection in HIV-positive individuals who owned dogs as compared to those who did not (odds ratio: 2.19, 95% CI 0.9–5.3) [63]. Nonetheless, these studies may not be representative of the risk of *Toxocara* or *Cryptosporidium* infections in the general population associated with contact with off-leash parks.

Various park characteristics have been associated with increased physical activity among dog owners. Park features, such as a linear or walkthrough design, may deter sedentary behaviour by encouraging dog-owners to walk alongside their dogs [26]. Living near a designated off-leash area, and provision of dog litterbags and dog-related signage may also enhance dog-walking frequency [17, 70–72]. Proper park maintenance and enhanced safety (including neighborhood traffic volume and speed restrictions, park lighting, and reduced crime levels) appear to influence the likelihood of use by dog walkers [26, 73]. Durable, low-maintenance seating that faces the off-leash area can facilitate the social benefits of off-leash dog parks by balancing owner conversation with dog supervision [42].

Alternatively, some on-leash parks also allow dogs to be walked off-leash during off-peak hours or less busy months in order to avoid safety concerns [36]. This approach also been associated with a reduction in criminal activity, as these parks continue to be frequented at off-peak hours [36, 37]. Many parks also fence off their designated off-leash areas and limit access to other parts of the park to on-leash dogs, allowing park goers to avoid unrestrained dogs if preferred [9].

Strategies to Minimize Harm

Choice of location is key to ensuring safety, community satisfaction, and effective operation of the park. In order to mitigate safety concerns, particularly for vulnerable individuals such as children, off-leash dog parks should not be located directly adjacent to playgrounds or schools, nor interfere with established park uses [37].

The design of dog parks can also limit the degree of potential risk. Secure fencing (i.e. a gated enclosure at least four feet high) may protect park users, including children and cyclists, from aggressive dogs in addition to setting a clear boundary [74]. Provision of dog waste bags, access to waste receptacles that are routinely emptied, and signage reminding owners to pick up after their dogs, can reduce dog fouling [74]. The availability of hand-sanitizing stations for dog park attendees can also reduce risk of disease transmission [74]. Clearly visible rules, as well as following the example of fellow dog walkers, may result in improved compliance [33].

Quick removal of dog feces may significantly reduce the likelihood that parasites incorporate into soil, greatly reducing the likelihood of transmission [3]. Given that access to and contamination of water sources, including lakes and ditches, may increase the likelihood of disease transmission from dogs to humans [75], off-leash dog parks should be located away from sources of standing water and run-off [76]. Public messaging may advise owners that, if a dog is ill and/or known to be infected by a zoonotic pathogen, they should avoid walking them in busy park areas and bodies of water until treatment for the infection is completed [60].

Education and awareness initiatives may also mitigate behaviours that increase risk of harm to dog owners and other park attendees. Encouraging responsible dog ownership (i.e. maintaining continuous vigilance over their pet during a park visit) and hygienic practices can help avoid risk of aggression/injuries and transmission of zoonotic pathogens [74, 76]. Signs reminding attendees of park rules should be clear and visible, placed at park entrances, and include simple messages. These may also include maps of the desig-

nated off-leash zone, and contact information for reporting damage or making a complaint [3]. Signs should emphasize the importance of hand washing and proper disposal of dog waste [77]. Additional instructions may advise constant supervision and verbal control of the dog at all times, as well as the need for dogs to wear a valid license and be up-to-date on their vaccinations. It may also be beneficial to include messaging for owners to muzzle aggressive dogs and ensure they retain a leash in hand at all times while the dog is running free in cases where leashing may be required (i.e. if the dog is exhibiting aggressive behaviour) [77]. Finally, signs should remind owners they are responsible for any damage or injury inflicted by their dog [77].

Patrolling officers should be available to enforce policies that prevent rule violations, such as dog fouling and allowing aggressive dogs to remain unrestrained [74]. Rules and regulations should be publicized, whether through signage or publication on a park-related website [76]. Websites may also provide information on zoonoses and encourage regular veterinary check-ups [60]. Veterinary assessment may identify risk factors and symptoms of zoonoses in dogs, with regular visits ensuring proper vaccination, regular deworming, and provision of health and hygiene messaging [60]. As an example, the American Veterinary Medical Association published a pamphlet entitled "Internal Parasites in Cats and Dogs" that contains information on the most common parasites, detection methods and tips for prevention [78].

In addition to education of dog owners, other park attendees, such as children, may benefit from initiatives that enhance their ability to interact with dogs in a way that is less likely to result in aggression or injuries [60, 79, 80]. For example, educational programs in schools and children's museum settings on basic safety rules, as well as interactive computer animations and picture books, have been designed to educate children and families about properly interacting with dogs to minimize risk of injury [80].

Public Consultation and Evaluation

In order to address public concerns about the potential risks of proposed off-leash dog parks, decision-makers should be proactive and ensure broad community consultation. Clear descriptions of proposed plans for off-leash areas should be published in order to facilitate public feedback. Various stakeholders, including dog owners, non-dog owners, adjoining property owners, civic leagues, and animal health agencies should be consulted prior to initiating off-leash dog park development [81].

Ongoing, bidirectional communication between municipal governments and stakeholders may also alleviate concerns, prevent conflicts, and ensure continued community satisfaction/safety once an off-leash area has been opened. Mechanisms allowing park users and nearby residents to communicate park-related concerns with the relevant officials may inform ongoing park evaluation and improvements in response to perceived risks. This could be achieved via online polls, email lists, or scheduled meetings, as well as other technologies, including texting or phone applications [76, 77].

Table 2

Overview of five municipal off-leash dog park initiatives in Canada and the US

Location	Implementation	Outline of recommendations
Kelowna, British Columbia	Incorporated two off-leash dog parks on a 2-year trial basis [82]	Community input Continuous monitoring and evaluation Limit dog access in areas where human recreational activities occur Access to hand-washing facilities
Surrey, British Columbia	Created a "Dog Off Leash Area Strategy" to guide development of off-leash dog parks over 2011–2021 [76]	Summary of construction practices and materials used Quick waste disposal Requiring documentation of veterinary check-ups Easy-to-read rule enforcements
Calgary, Alberta	Created an updated off-leash management plan following extensive public engagement through surveys and open houses [83]	Evaluation of existing off-leash areas Volunteer program to assist with educating dog owners about dog-related bylaws and off-leash etiquette
Edmonton, Alberta	Created a "Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy", a 10-year strategy outline [84]	Planning recommendations: location choice based on population density and dog ownership numbers Design recommendations: setting of boundaries/fencing and walking circuits that encourage owners to keep moving with their dogs Management recommendations: educating park users through signage, enforcement of rules, and regular monitoring and evaluation
Seattle, Washington	Identified 70 possible off-leash sites; a 15 month pilot program was implemented at eight of those sites [37]	Avoid locations near children's play areas Avoid spill-over into non-dog areas

Conclusion

Although the associations between dog ownership or park use and health behaviours have been widely studied, off-leash parks have received limited attention. Nonetheless, available evidence suggests that off-leash dog parks can benefit physical and social health, as well as community connectedness. By considering the impact of park location/design, promoting public adherence to safe and hygienic practices, and employing effective regulatory strategies, municipalities can mitigate potential risks and maximize the benefits of off-leash dog parks on community health and wellbeing.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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