



CITY OF BAXTER

Mississippi River Overlook Park Master Plan & Community Use Policy

August 19, 2022



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Acknowledgements

The City of Baxter Mississippi River Overlook Park Master Plan and Community Use Policy has been a team effort led by a dedicated group consisting of City staff, council, and commission representatives; Brainerd School District and Central Lakes College representatives; Camp Ripley Environmental Team and Minnesota DNR representatives; and other local representatives and members of the general public.

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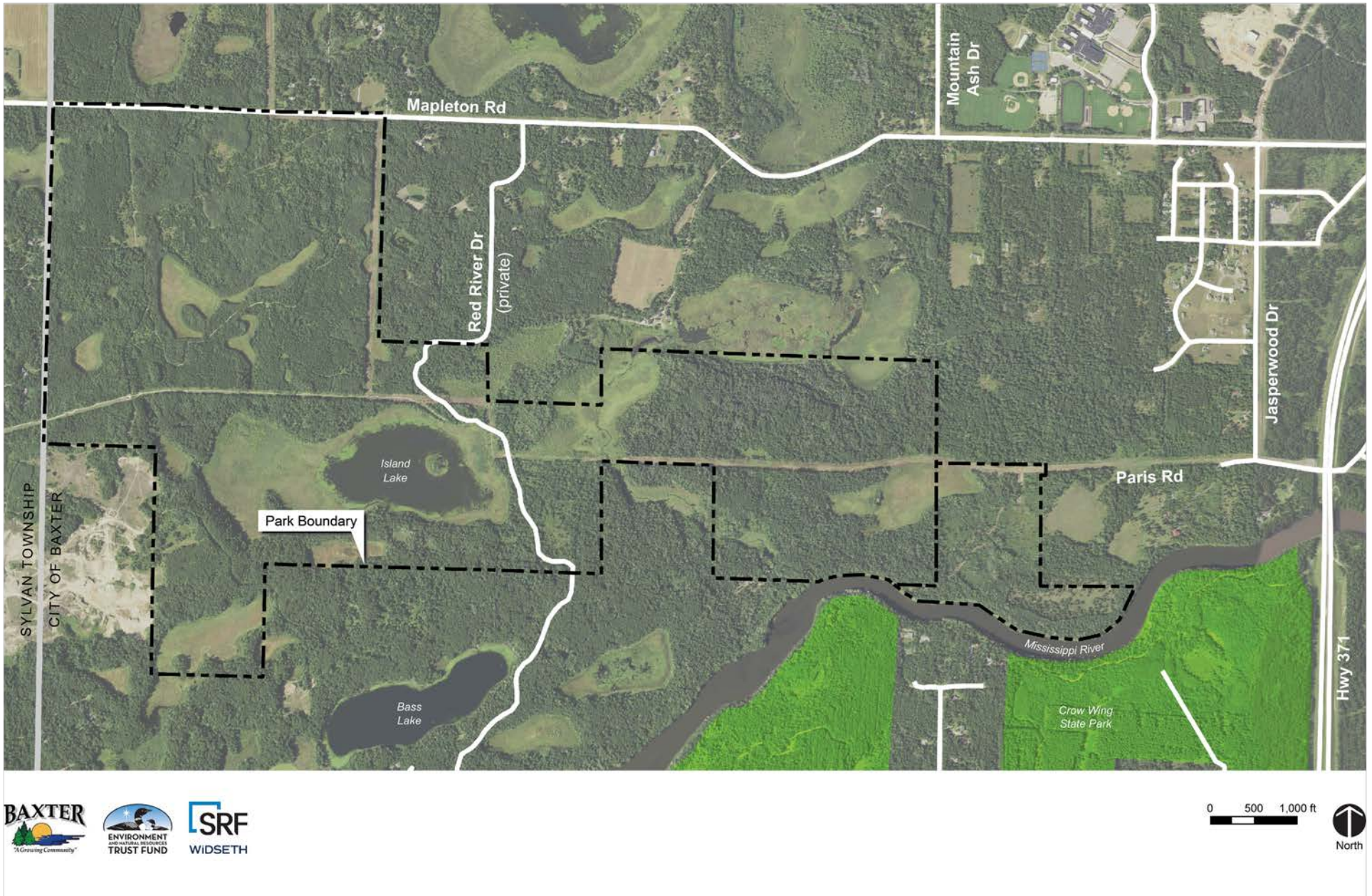
Consulting Team

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Introduction

In 2022, the City of Baxter and SRF Consulting Group (SRF) gathered information and public input to develop a master plan and enhance public use of 880 acres of City-owned open space in southwest Baxter. With frontage on the Mississippi River and Pike Creek, Mississippi River Overlook Park includes forested rolling hills, wetlands, and Island Lake. The City received the land through a combination of a land donation and various acquisitions through grant funding from the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) and the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) via recommendation by the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Natural Resources (LCCMR). The Conservation Fund and the Camp Ripley Environmental Team assisted the City throughout the grant process. This report documents the analysis, findings, public involvement, and recommendations for the Master Plan and Community Use Policy for Mississippi River Overlook Park.

Fig 1: Park Property



I. Vision Statement & Public Process

Vision Statement

Mississippi River Overlook Park will provide high-quality, non-motorized recreational and educational amenities while preserving and restoring high biodiversity forests, wetlands, and riparian areas.

Public Process

Embracing and protecting the natural resources of the land is consistent with the goals of multiple stakeholders including the Conservation Fund, the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs, the Camp Ripley Environmental Team, and the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The City started the process with additional goals for the study, including:

- Identification of potential future roadway corridors to connect City of Baxter residents south of the project location with Mapleton Road north of the project property
- Identification of potential corridors for the proposed Camp Ripley State Veteran’s Trail to work in concert with the Master Plan and Community Use Policy
- Protection of the Camp Ripley training mission from incompatible land uses, such as residential or commercial development within the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB)
- Identification of outdoor educational opportunities and future relationships with local and regional institutional, cultural, special interest groups

The City formed a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) composed of local conservation-minded professionals, health advocates, education representatives, local stakeholders, and City staff. The committee met four times during the study, as shown in Figure 1. Each meeting included a short presentation by SRF followed by a group discussion of the natural resources, proposed concepts, potential land uses and policies, public feedback, and related topics. The City solicited input from the general public at multiple points during the project. Figure 1 lays out the timeline of public events.

On March 10, 2022, the project team met with the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and neighbors of the project property in two meetings (residents and land owners adjacent to the project boundary) at the Northland Arboretum in Baxter, Minnesota. The project team presented background information, an overview of the project schedule and public process, and site analysis. Attendees were tasked with providing input on issues and opportunities.

Fig 2: Public Process Timeline



On March 30, 2022, the project team held a public Open House to share findings from the analysis phase of the project and to gather input on issues and opportunities from the general public. The project team presented background information, an overview of the project schedule and public process, and site analysis before allowing time for an open question and answer period followed by small group conversations with Open House attendees. Comments were collected in the form of written responses, notes from conversations, and comments left on poster boards. In addition, a Wikimap allowed the public to share site-specific and general input via an online interactive mapping tool that remained active throughout the public process.

A “pop-up” event was held at the Lakes Area Growers Market at the Westport Shopping Center on May 27, 2022 with the goal of gaining feedback from the public on three preliminary master plan concepts for the Park. Comments were collected as notes from conversations. Feedback gathered at this pop-up event was combined with previous public feedback and analyzed for common themes, which were used to narrow potential Park master plan concepts.

A final Open House was held on July 21, 2022 at Baxter City Hall with the goal of gaining feedback from the public on three master plan concepts. The shared concepts were similar to the three concepts shown at the Lakes Area Growers Market pop-up event and at the PAC meeting on June 21, but with various revisions resulting from feedback from those events. Comments were collected as notes from conversations. Feedback was combined with previous public feedback and analyzed for common themes, which were used to further narrow potential Park master plan concepts.

Throughout the public process, feedback from public events, the online Wikimap tool, and individual conversations informed the development of the Mississippi River Overlook Park Master Plan and Community Use Policy. At each PAC meeting Project Advisory Committee representatives reviewed public feedback and weighed potential options with the capabilities and desires of the City and other commissions, input from local organizations, funding conditions, and applicable local and state policies. Several common themes emerged during the public process, which include:

- **Light development is preferred over heavy development.** There is a strong public desire for keeping the Park the way it is and for conservation and restoration in general. Future development should minimize impacts to the character and quality of the land and should include ecological conservation and restoration efforts.
- **The Mississippi River is an important destination for the community.** There is a strong public desire for improving river access and for amenities that allow for diverse ways of embracing the river, such as campsites, canoe launches, interpretive trails, observation decks, and improved water access.
- **Education opportunities for K-12 students, local colleges, and the general public are crucial.** There is a strong public desire to incorporate education opportunities in the Park and to align opportunities with conservation, restoration, and stewardship efforts. Education opportunities should be expressed in future development, such as outdoor classrooms, interpretive signage, test plots, and trails connecting to local schools.
- **Park accessibility is a common concern.** There is a strong public desire for improving accessibility of the existing woodchip trail and future trails within the Park. ADA access and non-motorized access from adjacent residential areas and trails are important features for future users, as well as parking and a trailhead nearer the river.
- **The Park should connect with other local trails.** There is a strong public desire for the Park to connect with the Paul Bunyan State Trail, future Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail, and local trails to improve non-motorized local trail connectivity and to attract visitors.
- **Silent sports are a popular desire for the community.** There is a strong public desire for additional mountain bike trails, cross country ski trails, hiking trails, and multiuse trails to supplement existing trail offerings and to provide new types of trails for emerging user groups, such as K-12 mountain biking teams.

- **Non-motorized uses are preferred over motorized uses.** There is a strong public desire for restricting ATV and snowmobile use within the Park to reduce noise pollution in nearby residential areas, to protect against harmful impacts to valuable habitat areas, and to mitigate erosion near wetlands, Pike Creek, and the Mississippi River.
- **Expanding camping opportunities is popular.** There is a strong public desire for camping opportunities to be expanded within the Park, especially near the river. Common suggested types include hike-in and boat-in tent sites, yurts, and camper cabins.
- **Park amenities should compliment other local amenities.** There is a strong public desire for Park amenities to supplement existing amenities offered locally at the Northland Arboretum, Crow Wing State Park, and others. Desired amenities may expand existing offerings by providing more of an existing amenity or provide a new amenity.
- **Hunting is an important tradition in the community.** There is public desire for including hunting within the property, either by designating a portion of the property as a wildlife conservation area, with short-term leases available for hunting in specific areas offering hunting on City-owned portions of the property as allowed by the City's hunting map and permits approved by the police department, allocating certain time frames for hunts (Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area is a regional example of this), or exploring possible other outtake strategies with willing and able partners.

II. Regional Context

Overview

The 880-acre Mississippi River Overlook Park property in southwest Baxter is part of an extensive network of parks and trails in the Brainerd Lakes Area. The Regional Context map shows the location and regional context of the Park, as well as regional park, forest, and trail amenities within 30 miles of the project site. Camp Ripley is a significant downriver neighbor of the Park, which is situated within the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) that designates compatible land uses alongside regular military training activities. Various recreational opportunities are provided at Crow Wing State Park, Northland Arboretum, Pillsbury State Forest, Cuyuna State Park, Crow Wing State Forest, and other parks and forests. The Regionally Significant Parks & Forests matrix lists amenities associated with each regional open space and helps to identify any deficiencies or surpluses of specific forms of recreation within the regional system. The existing Paul Bunyan State Trail runs through Crow Wing State Park to the south before turning north and following Paris Road and Jasperwood Drive near the Park's eastern boundary. The future Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail has several potential alignments that either bisect or border the Park property.

Regional Parks & Trails

The Northland Arboretum and Crow Wing State Park are situated within 10 miles of Mississippi River Overlook Park. The 400-acre Northland Arboretum offers educational programming, recreational opportunities, and conservation efforts for the Brainerd Lakes community and broader public. The Arboretum has a large visitor center with indoor and outdoor gathering areas, educational programs, and rentals. Summer hiking trails and winter snowshoeing and cross country ski trails thread through restoration and conservation landscapes, such as jack pine savanna, red pine forest, and wetland areas.

Crow Wing State Park and the Paul Bunyan State Trail border Mississippi Overlook Park to the south across the Mississippi River. At over 3,000 acres, Crow Wing State Park is a significant regional public amenity offering an array of educational and historic preservation programs, recreational opportunities, and conservation efforts. The park has several camping options, preserved historic facilities, gathering spaces, rentals, and access to the Mississippi River for fishing and canoeing. Hiking, snowshoe, and multiuse trails offer visitors of all abilities means of experiencing the park. The 115-mile Paul Bunyan State Trail is Minnesota's longest state trail, beginning in Crow Wing State Park and continuing northward on Paris Road and Jasperwood Drive in Baxter. The future Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail has several potential alignments that either bisect or border the Park property east-west and join with the Paul Bunyan State Trail to the east. In conjunction with the Gull Lake Trail, these trails and existing local trails will provide connected and expansive bicycle and pedestrian options for residents and visitors to the area.

Pillsbury State Forest is 13 miles from the Mississippi River Overlook Park and is reachable by the Paul Bunyan State Trail and Gull Lake Trail. The 25,000-acre state forest offers recreational opportunities that include hiking, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing trails, as well as equestrian and snowmobile trails. Visitors can enjoy several camping options, fishing, hunting, and boat access to various lakes and water bodies.

Cuyuna State Park and the Crow Wing State Forest are about 25 miles to the northwest in Crosby, Minnesota. Like nearer parks and forests, Cuyuna State Park and Crow Wing State Forest offer recreational programming that includes hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and multiuse trails. In addition, these parks offer renowned mountain bike trails that attract visitors from across the state and upper Midwest. Crow Wing State Forest offers OHV and snowmobile trails, but trail use at Cuyuna is limited to non-motorized vehicles. Visitors can fish and hunt in both areas, but can only hunt during designated windows at Cuyuna State Park. Both areas offer several camping options, boat access, indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, and educational programming.

Regional parks and forests offer a wide swath of amenities for the Brainerd community and visitors to the area. The Regionally Significant Parks & Forests matrix lists amenities associated with each regional open space and helps to identify any deficiencies or surpluses of specific forms of recreation within the regional system. For instance, Pillsbury State Forest and Crow Wing State Forest have the largest acreage of nearby parks and forests but lack accessible multi-use trails and equipment rentals that visitors may need or desire. Virtually all nearby parks and forests have hiking and snowshoeing trails, which may suggest that those amenities are oversaturated or simply popular among users. Feedback gathered in the public process can help clarify whether certain amenities are in fact desired among would-be users.

Based solely on availability, multi-use trails, cross country ski trails, mountain bike trails, and equestrian trails are all lacking in regional parks and forests. OHV and snowmobile trails are also lacking, but public feedback has indicated a strong desire for silent sports or non-motorized uses due to the residential and urban contexts of the Mississippi River Overlook Park property. Outlooks and blinds are also rare amenities in regional parks and forests and may be unique opportunities for visitors to interact with the high-quality habitats of the Park. Camper cabins and equipment rentals are also rare, if popular, amenities at other parks, but typically require staffing and may not be possible amenities for the City to support in the near-future.

Camp Ripley

Located just north of Little Falls, Camp Ripley is a 53,000-acre training facility for the Minnesota National Guard. Relative to the Mississippi River Overlook Park, Camp Ripley is just 2.5 miles to the southwest. The Park property is connected to Camp Ripley by the Mississippi River, which runs along the Camp's eastern boundary for nearly 18 miles. The City of Baxter received a portion of the land for the Mississippi River Overlook Park through a combination of land donations and various acquisitions through grant funding from Camp Ripley via the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI).

Fig 3: Regional Context

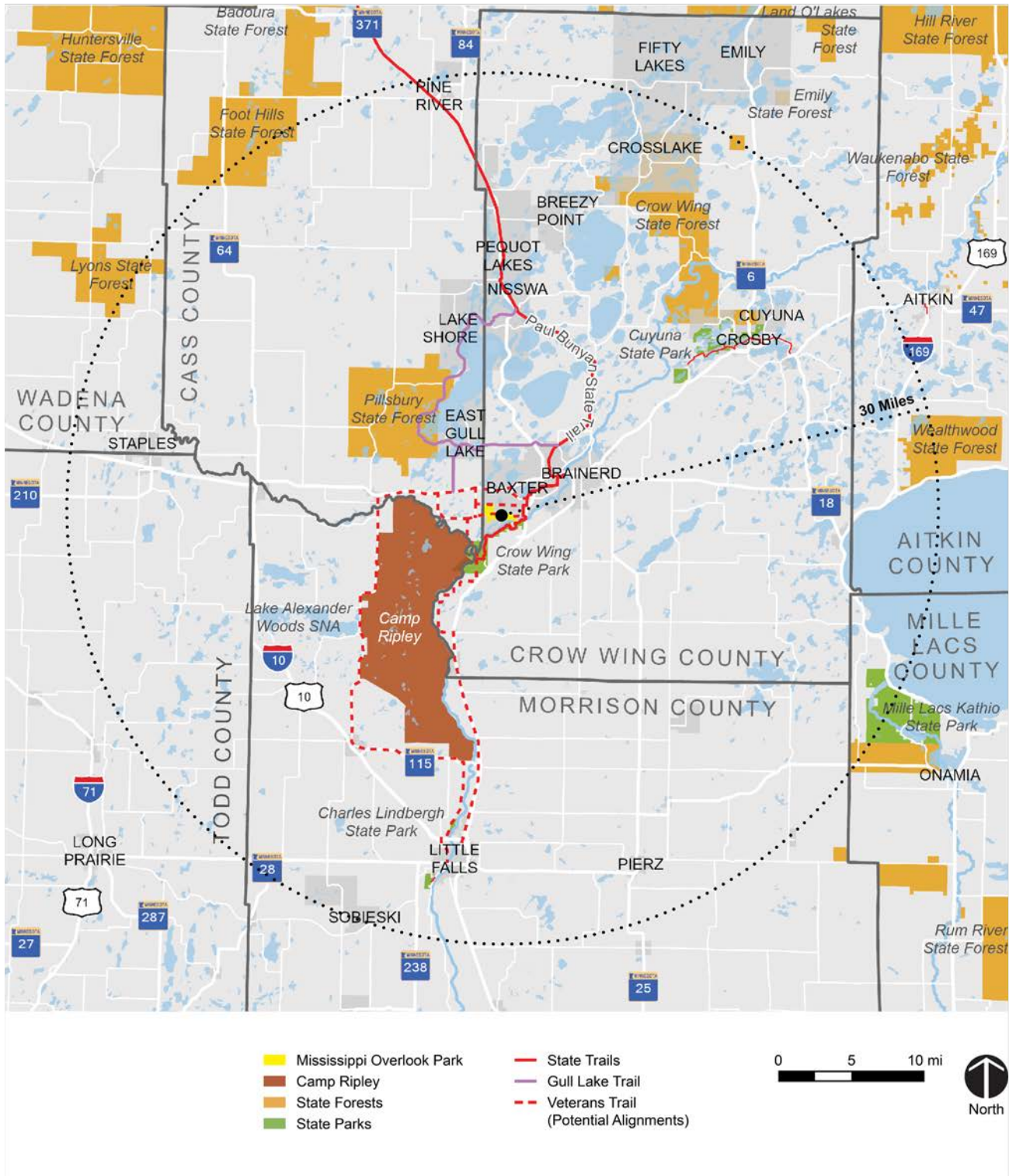


Fig 4: Regionally Significant Parks & Forests

	PARKS AND FORESTS WITHIN 30 MILES									
	Northland Arboretum	Crow Wing State Park	Pillsbury State Forest	Cuyuna State Park	Lake Alexander Woods SNA	Crow Wing State Forest	Charles Lindbergh State Park	Wealthwood State Forest	Lyons State Forest	Mille Lacs Kathio State Park
Driving Distance	5 mi	8 mi	13 mi	23 mi	25 mi	26 mi	33 mi	36 mi	40 mi	40 mi
Size (acres)	400	3,119	25,612	5,000	1,990	33,714	570	15,042	14,789	12,900
Multi-Use Trails		●		●						●
Hiking Trails	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Snowshoe Trails	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
XC Ski Trails	●		●	●	●					●
Bike Trails		●		●						●
MTB Trails				●						
OHV Trails						●			●	
Snowmobile Trails			●			●		●	●	●
Horse Trails			●							●
Tent Camping		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Car / RV Camping		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Camper Cabins		●		●						●
Fishing		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Hunting			●	●	●	●		●	●	
Water Access		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Boat Launch		●	●	●		●	●	●		●
Outlooks / Blinds	●	●		●						●
Play Features	●					●	●			●
Outdoor Gathering	●	●	●	●		●	●			●
Indoor Gathering	●	●		●		●	●			●
Education	●	●		●			●			●
Equipment Rental	●	●					●			●

Northland Arboretum:
www.northlandarb.org

Minnesota State Parks and Recreation Areas. Mn DNR.
www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/index.html

III. Local & Site Context

Overview

The Mississippi Overlook Park property is situated in southwest Baxter, less than a mile walk from Forestview Middle School (one of the largest Middle Schools in the State of Minnesota) and Baxter Elementary School. The Local Context map shows the Park boundary, municipal boundaries, and nearby parks, forests, and trails. The Park includes 60 acres at the southeast corner that is the original City Park with frontage on the Mississippi River. Users access the original Park by an existing woodchip trail that leads from the cul-de-sac at Oakdale Rd to the river (see Site Context map). The newly-acquired 800+ acres includes 200 acres east of Pike Creek, which runs generally north-south, bisecting the Park property. The 600 acres west of Pike Creek surrounds Island Lake and is bounded on the west by the Crow Wing / Cass County border, which is also the boundary between the City of Baxter and Sylvan Township. The northwest portion of the property is bounded on the north by Mapleton Rd (Crow Wing County CR 170) and on the east by the Great River Energy powerline corridor. Low-density residential lots border the property. A private road (Red River Dr) runs north-south through the Park between Island Lake and Pike Creek, providing access to private homes on Bass Lake and the Mississippi River.

The property is attached to compatible uses and restrictions based on its original funding agreements. The western 600 acres must meet the requirements of the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, which preserves the military's training purpose within the Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB). Those requirements exclude future subdivisions, and residential, commercial, or industrial development. The eastern 260 acres also falls under REPI requirements but must also meet the specific restrictions of the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), which is focused on water resources research and improvement, environmental education, invasive species management, and protection and restoration of natural habitats.

Mississippi River

The Mississippi River runs along the southern edge of the original 60-acre City Park for just over 0.5 miles. New land acquisitions to the west increase total river frontage for the Park to 0.7 miles, terminating close to where Pike Creek flows into the river. The banks of the river are generally steep and range 6 to 30 feet in elevation change between average river elevation and adjacent bank elevations. The slope and aspect of the banks present unique issues such as access, and opportunities such as prime overlook and camping sites.

Feedback gathered during the public process indicated a strong public desire for improved access to the Mississippi River. The river is already an important local destination for the community and an important regional destination for recreational tourism and paddlers on the Mississippi River Water Trail. There is a strong public desire for improving river access and for amenities that allow for diverse ways of embracing the river, such as campsites, canoe launches, interpretive trails, observation decks, amphitheaters, and improved water access. While the total boundary of the Park is mostly composed of forested areas and wetlands, the Mississippi River is an historic, magnetic, and invaluable natural resource for the community and visitors alike.

Island Lake & Pike Creek

Of the total Park acreage, 212 acres are defined as wetlands, emergent wetlands, or open water, or 26% of the total property area. Island Lake is a large, 91-acre lake in the western half of the Park with 38 acres of open water and 53 acres of wetlands, emergent wetlands, and a small island. When combined, the lake's high habitat value and steep banks make for a critical and scenic natural resource, as well as a waterfowl hunting and birding opportunity for potential outtake partners. Pike Creek flows generally north-south for 0.4 miles before entering the Mississippi River (0.6 miles given recommended future land acquisitions). Comparable to the banks of the Mississippi River and Island Lake, the banks of Pike Creek are generally steep and offer both issues and opportunities with respect to access and

Fig 5: Local Context

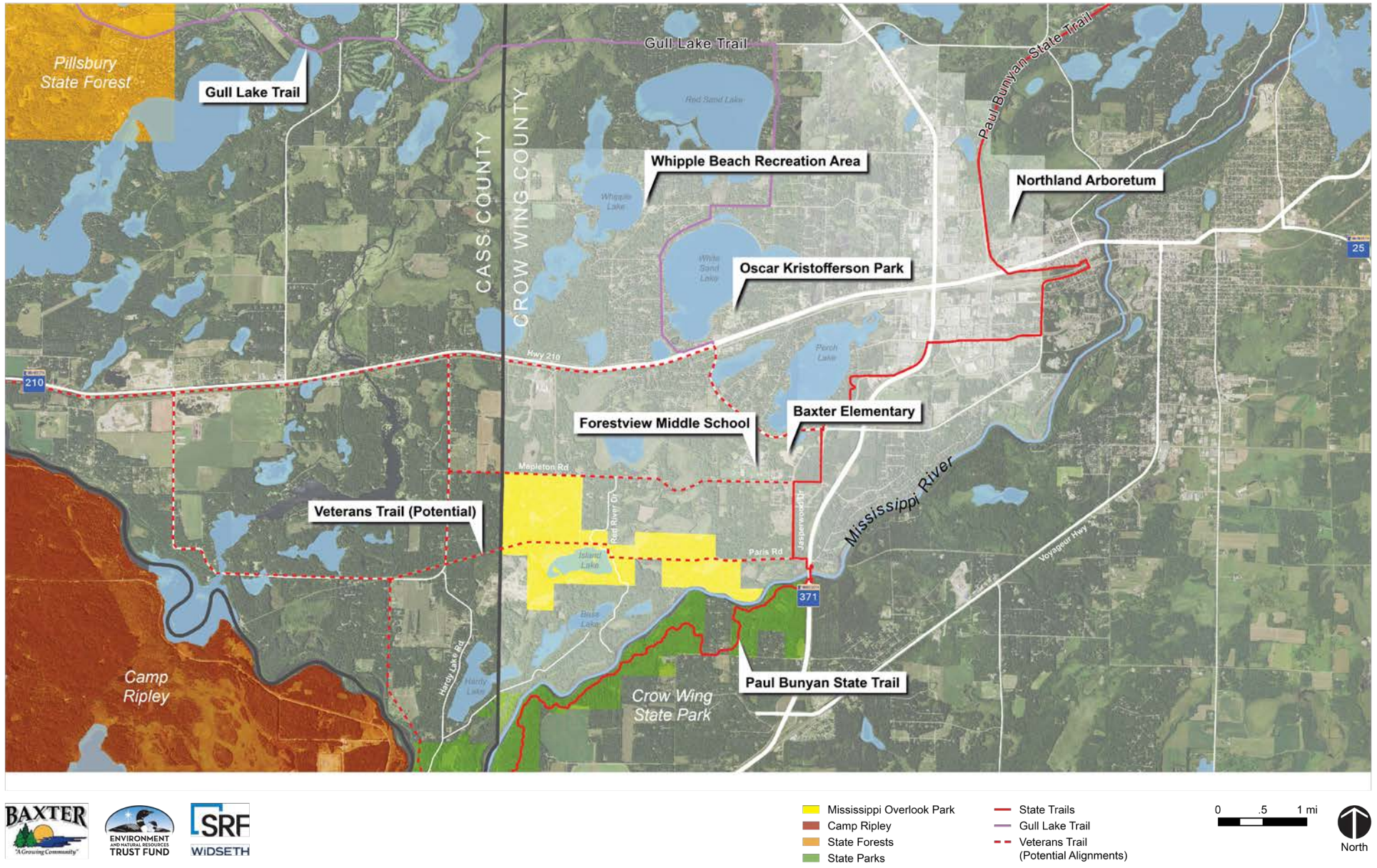
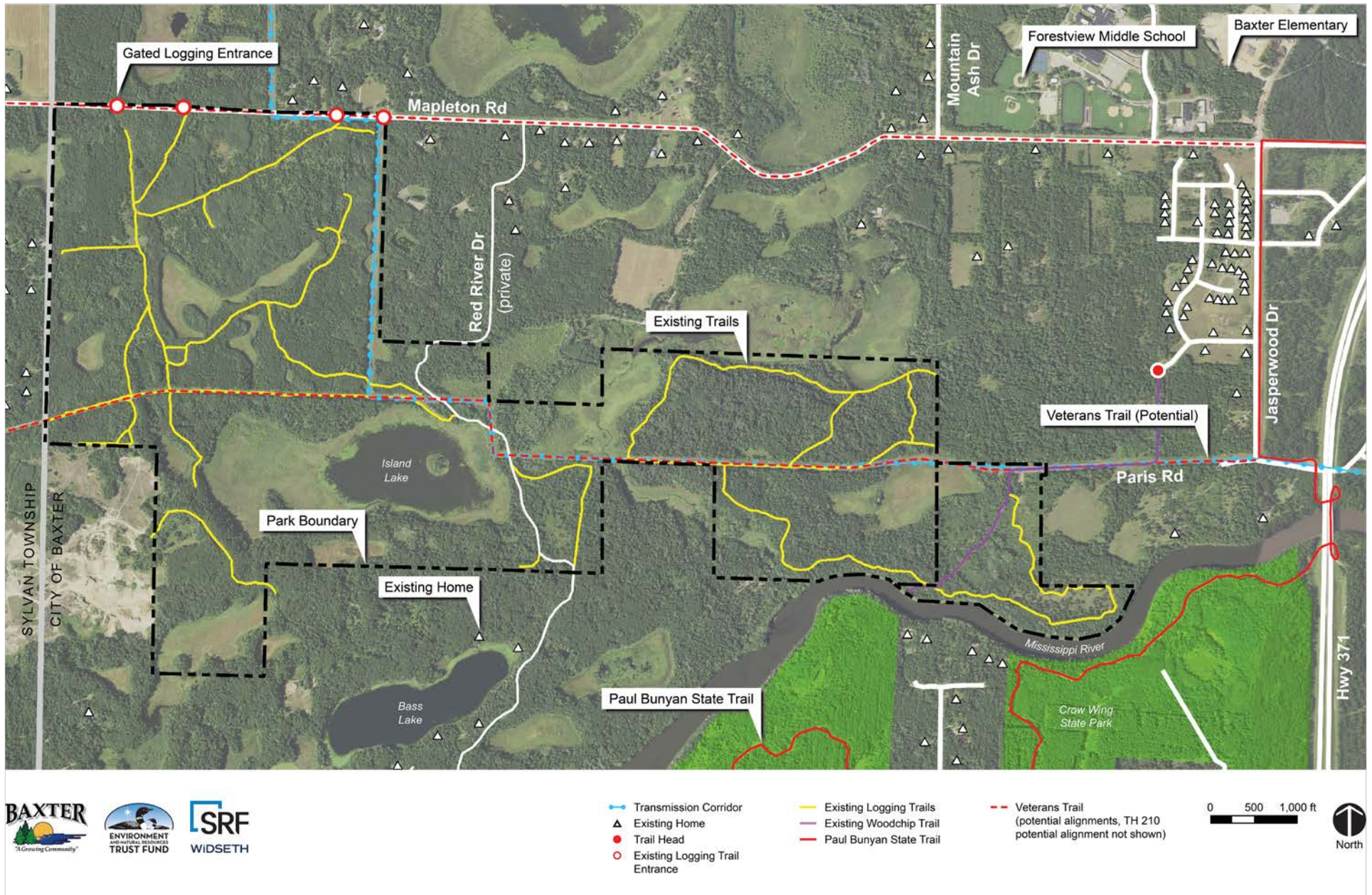


Fig 6: Site Context



development. The creek poses an issue for east-west site circulation due to the complexity of traversing the creek's steep banks and broad floodplain near the existing utility corridor.

Future trail alignments, including the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail, and future overlooks will need to navigate these natural obstacles to provide safe, adequate, and connected circulation throughout the Park. Traversing Island Lake and Pike Creek will prove difficult for future trail alignments but will attract and reward Park visitors with dramatic vistas of those water bodies and neighboring topography. It will be important to align safe, adequate, and connected access around these natural features with the education and conservation ethic of the Park, helping to ensure the Park's natural character and resources are protected for future generations.

Existing Infrastructure

The existing Park has been in use since 2006 when the City of Baxter acquired 63 acres of riverfront property from the Trust for Public Land. Newly acquired Park properties to the west of the original Park were logged historically, have seen informal use by the community, and have evidence of early homesteading.

Utility corridors owned by Great River Energy and Minnesota Power are prominent pieces of existing infrastructure that transect the Park east-west and north-south. These corridors offer natural circulation opportunities across the site and may be leveraged for future roadway alignments to minimize additional clearing and impacts to valuable habitat areas. The east-west utility corridor has been identified as a potential alignment for the future Camp Ripley State Veteran's Trail. The north-south corridor may offer additional right-of-way access and an alternative alignment for the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail should an east-west alignment prove difficult to construct or if that alignment conflicts with future uses, such as an allowable area for hunting.

A series of existing trails navigate the original City Park property and the acquired properties to the west. The existing 0.75 mile Woodchip Trail is currently the primary access to the Park via an existing trailhead on Oakdale Rd. This trail leads users across private property, along the east-west utility corridor, and then southwest through forested and open landscapes before descending to a small picnic area near the Mississippi River. Feedback indicates that this trail is too soft and too long for some users, particularly families with young children and users with strollers, wheelchairs, or walkers.



Existing Woodchip Trail, looking south from the existing trailhead on Oakdale Rd.



Existing Woodchip Trail, looking west along the east-west utility corridor.



Existing east-west utility corridor, looking west.



Existing picnic area near the Mississippi River, looking west.



Mississippi River with Crow Wing State Park at right, looking east.



Existing river access and canoe-in campsites.



Pike Creek, as it flows in the Mississippi River.



Existing east-west utility corridor, looking west over Pike Creek, adjacent wetlands, and tamarack stand.



Island Lake, looking southwest from the east-west utility corridor.



Wetland at the west end of Island Lake, looking south.



Existing ATV trail within tree plantation, looking south.



Existing logging trail, looking south.



Forrested area with tree plantation in background, near Mapleton Rd and north-south utility corridor, looking southwest.



Existing logging trail through tree plantation, looking south.

There are winter cross country ski trails, fatbike trails, and informal snowshoe trails in the original City Park. The cross country ski trails correspond with historic fire breaks and are evidenced by 10 to 20-foot cleared paths in the landscape. The fatbike trails follow the Woodchip Trail and ski trail alignments at times but generally have unique routes and are less evident in summer months due to the narrow clearing required for winter fatbike use. The informal snowshoe trails follow the Woodchip Trail, cross country ski trail, and fatbike trail alignments and also have unique routes that may change each winter.

The acquired properties were previously owned and maintained by Potlatch. Existing logging, truck, and ATV trails are evident in the landscape. Some trails have seen successional plant growth over time and others have seen enough traffic that tire paths have remained eroded. Despite restrictions, both the original City Park property and the acquired properties are visited in winter by snowmobiles and the acquired properties are visited in summer by ATVs. Feedback indicates a strong desire for limiting motorized use within the Park, due to the negative impacts motorized vehicles can dispense, such as noise pollution and erosion.

Red River Dr is an existing, private roadway that runs north-south and bisects the Park property to the east of Island Lake. Several residents living north and south of the Park property access their properties by this roadway and will require continued access to their properties in the future, whether by the same roadway, another roadway, or some combination thereof.

Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB)

The acquired properties to the west fall within the 3-mile ACUB boundary and are therefore subject to particular development restrictions. Restricted uses include residential, commercial, and industrial developments. These types of developments are prohibited in REPI-funded properties within the ACUB boundary due to the regular noise impacts emitted from firearm and explosive drills at Camp Ripley. Restricting these types of developments protects the Camp from future litigation and greatly benefits habitat conservation and restoration efforts in the region.

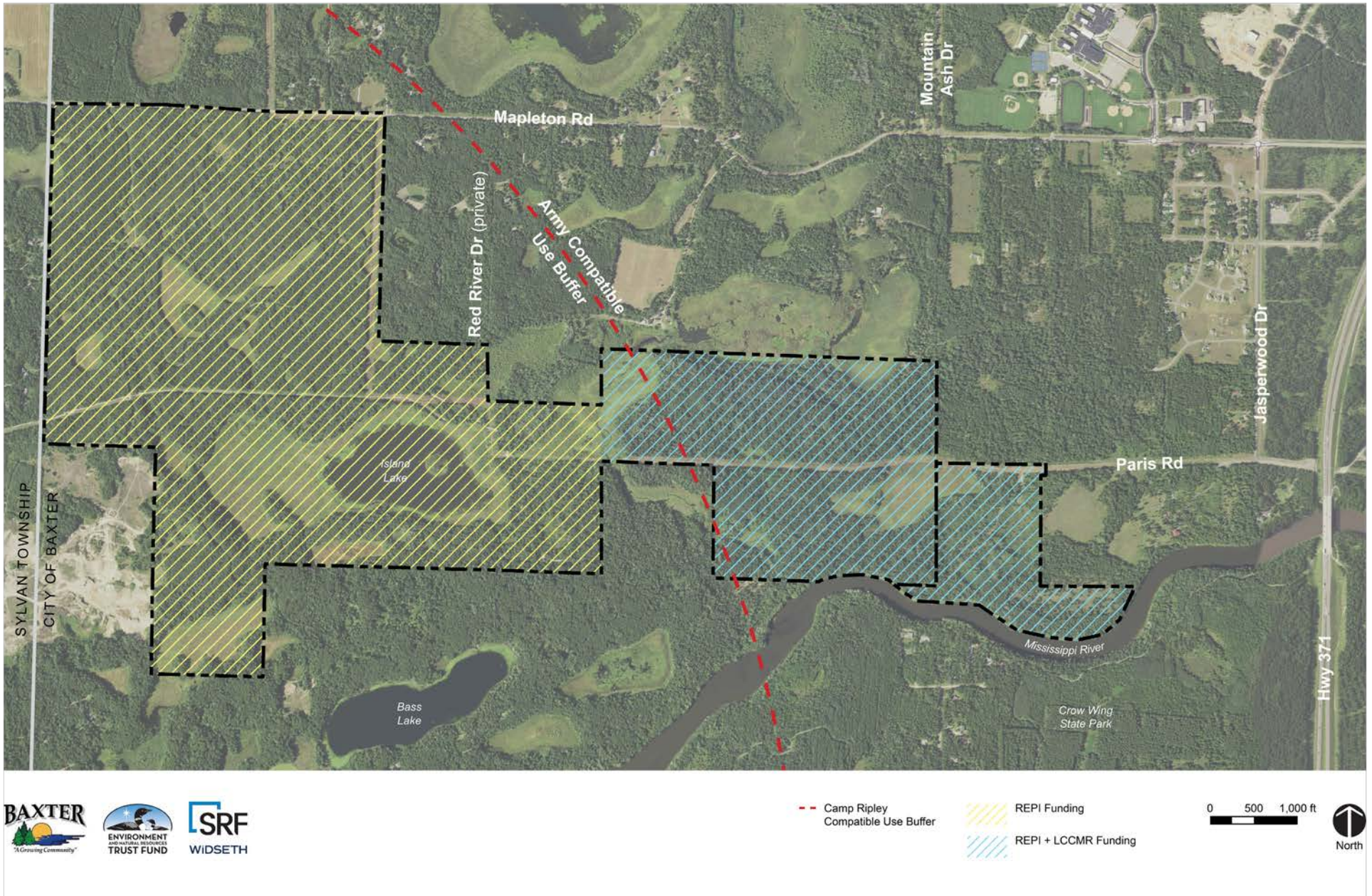
User Groups

The Park will be used by year-round and seasonal residents and visitors to Baxter. Primary user groups include local residents of the City of Baxter, Sylvan Township, and the City of Brainerd; local students and educators at Baxter Elementary School, Forestview Middle School, Brainerd High School; and Central Lakes College; local and regional clubs and interest groups; and regional visitors seeking recreational opportunities.

Local users will have unique relationships with the Mississippi River Overlook Park. Neighboring residents, students and educators, and clubs and interest groups may use the Park in similar ways as regional users, but have additional needs and desires that are unique to their locale. Special attention should be paid to ensure that local users' needs and desires are met in the public process. Local users are more likely to use alternative transportation to access the Park, so it is important to leverage existing trail networks and public transportation to create easy and convenient access to the Park where possible and to build new trails and service lines where applicable. Local users are also more likely to feel negative impacts of the Park, such as light pollution and increased traffic, and it will be important to minimize potential negative impacts in future developments.

Regional users will have many of the same needs and desires as local users. Visiting users may also desire alternative means of accessing the Park, whether for reaching the Park from lodging in the City of Baxter or for reaching dining amenities from campsite in the Park. Visitors may desire similar recreational amenities as local users, such as scenic river overlooks and multiuse nature trails. Visitors may desire unique recreational amenities or more of a given amenity, such as mountain bike trails. Feedback gathered during the public process will provide a fuller picture of what amenities are most popular among local users and ongoing engagement will help determine how regional users' desires align with and diverge from the desires of local users.

Fig 7: Funding & Compatible Uses



IV. Natural Resources

Overview

The Mississippi River Overlook Park landscape is characterized by rolling hills and rich wildlife habitat composed of deciduous and evergreen forests, woody and emergent wetlands, open water, and pasture (see the following Existing Land Cover, Hydrology, and Slopes maps). Former logging trails and powerline corridors intersect with natural areas and provide opportunities for possible roadway and trail alignments and may serve as intuitive boundaries to potential use zones within the Park. The northwest portion of the Park contains deciduous and evergreen tree plantations and most of the documented invasive species, including buckthorn and knapweed. The land around Island Lake is rugged and undulating, with deciduous forest and woody wetlands. The 200 acres east of Pike Creek also contains deciduous forest but features a larger proportion of woody wetlands than the area west of Pike Creek. The original 60 acres of the Mississippi River Overlook Park is deciduous forest, except for a clearing in the southeast corner.

Park Forests

Forested areas account for approximately 560 acres of the Park property. Deciduous, evergreen, and mixed forests are most common on the site, with woody wetlands being common north of the east-west utility corridor in the eastern half of the site and a mixture of woody wetlands and tree plantations being common north of the east-west utility corridor in the western half of the site. Tree plantations were planted by Potlatch and are primarily evergreen. Central Lakes Community College performed a tree survey for the 620 acres of acquired properties to the west and found that most stands were between 0 to 55 years old, with a lesser number being between 55 to 75 years old. Few stands were 55 to 95, 55 to 135, or 75 to 135 years old. One exception is a 2-acre stand on a wetland peninsula that is between 75 to 135 years old. A tree survey has not been performed for the eastern half of the Park property.

For planning purposes, canopy type and maturity can be important considerations when siting recreational amenities and development. Areas with least diverse, immature canopies may be prioritized for higher impact developments, such as wider trails and parking lots. Areas with diverse, mature canopies may be prioritized for lower impact developments, such as narrower or seasonal trails. Mature canopies may also be prioritized for experiential opportunities, such as shaded gathering spaces or overlooks.

Due to the varied topography and steep slopes of the Park property, future developments should minimize tree loss to help mitigate erosion and habitat loss. In addition, forested areas classified as woody wetlands should employ boardwalks and other low-impact design strategies to minimize harmful impacts to those areas.

Buckthorn and knapweed have been identified north of the east-west utility corridor in the western half of the Park property and south of Island Lake. The removal of invasive species should be prioritized to protect against further spread and damage to native ecosystems and habitats. In areas impacted by invasive species and other non-native plantings, such as the formerly pastured meadow in the original Park property, restoration efforts should reintroduce native plantings to impacted areas to rebuild those ecosystems.

Park Wetlands

Of the total Park acreage, 212 acres are defined as wetlands, emergent wetlands, and open water, or 26% of the total property area. Island Lake is a large, 91-acre lake in the western half of the Park with 38 acres of open water and 53 acres of wetlands, emergent wetlands, and a small island. When combined, the lake's high habitat value and steep banks make for a critical and scenic natural resource, as well as a waterfowl hunting and birding opportunity. Wetlands are important and increasingly rare habitats for many Minnesota species and should be conserved and restored wherever feasible.

Wetlands pose various conflicts for recreational land uses, but these conflicts can be amended for the betterment of both wetland ecosystems and recreational interests. One such conflict is circulation, which can be difficult or tedious to route around wetland boundaries. Bridges, boardwalks, and piers allow users to traverse wetlands responsibly and effectively without negatively affecting fragile habitats and ecosystems. There are several apparent circulation conflicts with wetlands at Mississippi River Overlook Park. One such conflict is the pinch point between Island Lake and Pike Creek. Steep slopes and an approximately 1,200-foot wide wetland traverse will make future east-west circulation difficult.

Habitat value translates to cultural value with proper planning. Bridges, boardwalks, and piers not only allow for low-impact circulation among wetlands, they also bring Park users closer to seldom-seen plants, animals, and wetland scenes. Wetlands are educational opportunities, sites for bird and wildlife tourism, diversified environments for ADA-friendly trails, focal points for outlooks, and backgrounds for gathering spaces. In winter months, frozen wetlands can be appreciated by snowshoers and cross-country skiers with seasonal trails taking advantage of a hardened landscape.

Park Riparian Areas & Streams

One of the longest American rivers, the Mississippi River, forms the southern boundary of the original City Park. The Mississippi River runs alongside the original 60-acre City Park for just over 0.6 miles. New land acquisitions to the west increase total river frontage for the Park to 0.8 miles, terminating close to where Pike Creek flows into the river. The banks of the river are generally steep and range 6 to 30 feet in elevation change between average river elevation and adjacent bank elevations. The river is just 175 feet wide in some areas of the Park, making for a remarkably intimate shoreline with views of Crow Wing State Park on the opposing side of the river. The original City Park is a popular stop on the Mississippi River Water Trail for paddlers and eroded banks are evidence of the river's draw for Park visitors. The Mississippi River is an invaluable natural resource for the local community, as well as downstream communities for thousands of miles. Future developments should seek to improve local relationships with the river while maintaining strong stewardship principles to ensure healthy use of the river for future and distant generations alike.

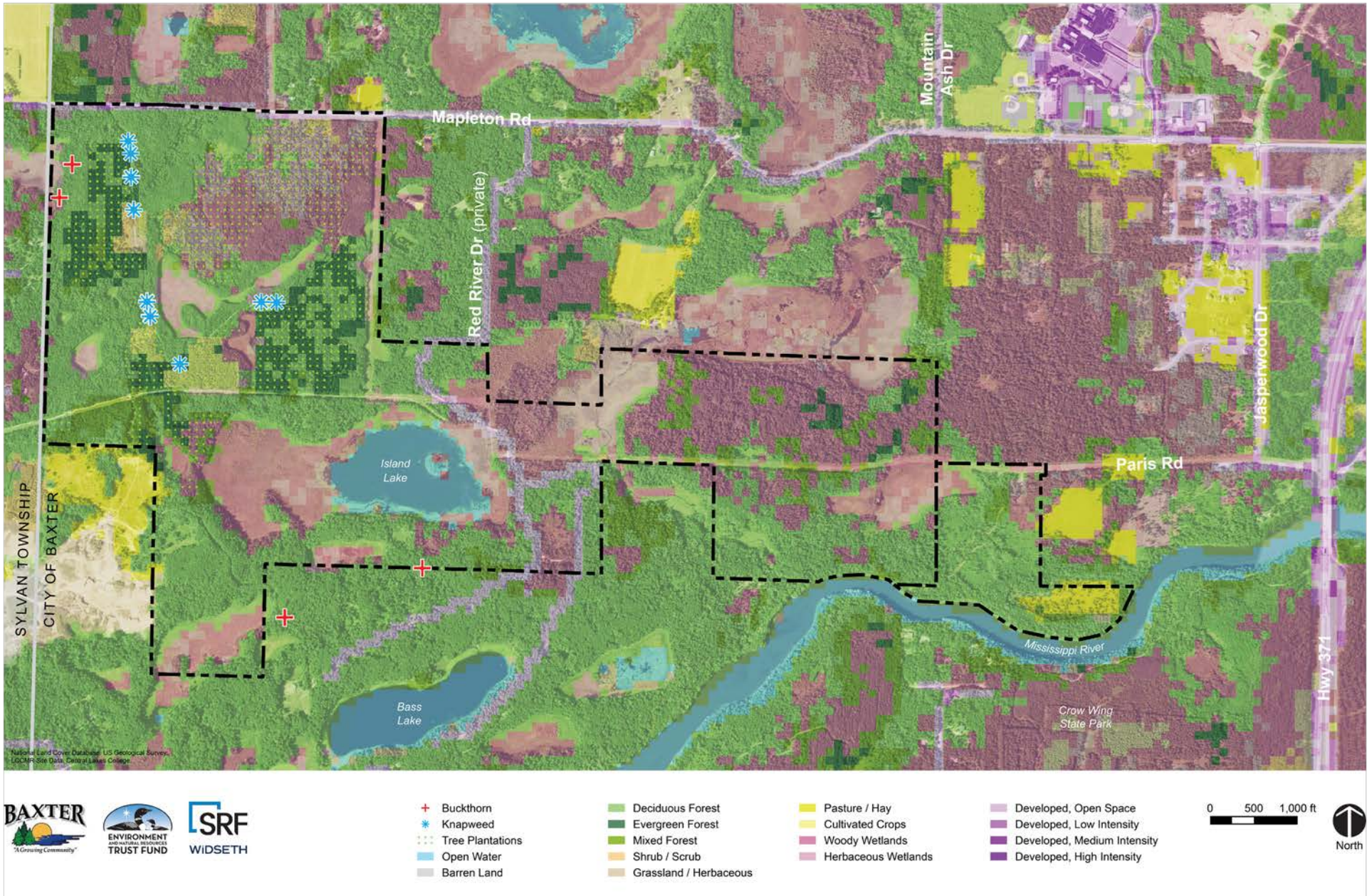
Pike Creek flows north-south for 0.4 miles before entering the Mississippi River (0.7 miles given recommended future land acquisitions). Comparable to the banks of the Mississippi River and Island Lake, the banks of Pike Creek are generally steep and access is difficult. Current access is limited as a result and access that does occur causes excessive erosion into the creek and the river. The steep and varied topography around Pike Creek and the Mississippi River are favorable conditions for improving water access, siting overlooks, establishing new camping options, routing nature trails, and placing interpretive signage. Balancing recreational amenities with site limitations, seasonal and future weather, and natural contexts can improve users' relationships with riparian areas and streams while protecting those natural resources from harmful impacts.

Wildlife Resources

The Mississippi River Overlook Park is home to the red-shouldered hawk, gray wolf, Blanding's turtle, and eastern hognose snake. The combination of rare and threatened species found in the Park stresses the need for conservation and restoration of forested, wetland, and riparian habitats and ecosystems to support rare and common wildlife alike. Diverse and abundant wildlife resources present educational and tourism opportunities for Park users and should be prioritized in future developments to minimize harmful impacts to the habitats and ecosystems they rely upon.

Common species, such as whitetail deer, turkey, and ruffed grouse are also valuable wildlife resources. These species are important to Park users for the same cultural reasons as rarer species, but are also important game species for hunters. Hunting is an important historic pastime for the community that supplies hunters with food and helps control overpopulation of certain species, like whitetail deer, whose populations may produce negative environmental impacts when left unchecked.

Fig 8: Existing Land Cover



V. Site Analysis

Neighboring Residents

Mississippi River Overlook Park is a mostly natural landscape situated in an increasingly residential area of Baxter. The Park is currently bordered by low density residential subdivisions to the west in Sylvan Township, rural residential developments to the north along Mapleton Rd, a low density residential subdivision to the east along Jasperwood Dr, and rural residential developments to the south along the Mississippi River. Given projected population growth in the City and County, residential developments neighboring the Park are likely to increase in number and density. The expansion of the Park property and its close proximity to the Mississippi River and local schools make this area attractive to prospective residents.

Neighboring residents are essential stakeholders due to their close relationship with the Park property. Residents living in Sylvan Township to the west may wish for access to the Park through the continued use of informal trails and the east-west utility corridor. Both potential alignments in the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail Master Plan would provide access for Sylvan Township residents, with the option that uses the east-west utility corridor being the more accessible alignment for most residents. Circulation plans will also need to consider north-south access so that residents to the south retain access to their properties. Those residents currently access their properties via Red River Dr, a private roadway that bisects the Park property and runs north-south from Mapleton Rd to just south of Bass Lake. Near-term access should be preserved for those residents, but restricted for the general public due to the private nature of Red River Dr. Near-term public access / parking should be provided from Mapleton Rd to give public access that is separate from Red River Dr for the 600 acres of public land. A future north-south right-of-way corridor may allow for public / Park access from Mapleton Rd. Residents living in the subdivision along Jasperwood Dr will likely be affected by altered traffic in their neighborhood if the existing trailhead and Park amenities are expanded. The existing trailhead includes informal parking spaces at the cul-de-sac on Oakdale Rd, welcome signage, and a woodchip trail. Paris Rd presents a strong alternative for accessing the Park from the east, which may alleviate traffic in the subdivision near the existing trailhead but require approximately 2,000 feet of roadway acquisitions or easements across four privately-owned parcels.

Current and future residents living near Mississippi River Overlook Park will remain uniquely invested in development plans for the Park. Future developments should minimize impacts to surrounding properties whenever possible. Strategies for minimizing impacts include adopting conservation, restoration, and stewardship frameworks; comprehensive traffic and roadway planning; employing stormwater best management practices in Park developments; applying setbacks for specific Park amenities; limiting light and noise pollution; and maintaining channels for gathering public feedback at given intervals or milestones to identify successes and areas for growth.

Hydrology

Mississippi River Overlook Park contains approximately 212 acres of wetlands, emergent wetlands, and open water, or 26% of the total property area. Island Lake is a large, 91-acre lake in the western half of the Park with 38 acres of open water and 53 acres of wetlands, emergent wetlands, and a small island. A significant portion of the Park west of Pike Creek and south of the east-west utility corridor drains into Island Lake. Central Lakes College recorded several areas of concern for erosion north of Island Lake along the east-west utility corridor, where elevation changes between the wetland delineation boundaries and banks sometimes exceeds 50 feet or more. Various smaller wetlands pocket the landscape throughout the Park with similarly steep banks, which present vast opportunities for trails and outlooks, as well as various dilemmas for Park development.

Steep slopes and erodible soils make trail planning and development a delicate task. Some of the Park's wetlands pose problems for site circulation. Where Pike Creek flows into the Mississippi River its banks are generally steep and its base flow narrow. However, where the creek bisects the Park property near the east-west utility corridor it is widened on each side by wetlands and grows to approximately 1,200 feet east-west. This area of the Park offers exceptional opportunities for boardwalks and outlooks that might take advantage of steep vistas over Pike Creek and woody wetlands dotted with tamarack stands. This area also presents a dilemma for east-west

circulation due to the dramatic changes in elevation and formidable distance that would need to be traversed by bridges, boardwalks, and other structural means.

Further east, in the northwest corner of the original City Park, a 20-acre wetland obstructs east-west circulation to a comparable degree. Should future trail alignments follow the east-west utility corridor, approximately 1,300 feet of infrastructure would be required to move Park users safely and conveniently across the wetland and steep terrain on either end. In cases such as these, strategic acquisitions are sometimes more suitable options if the possibility of a narrower traverse or circumnavigation are feasible on adjacent properties.

Wetlands are important and increasingly rare habitats for many Minnesota species and should be conserved and restored wherever feasible. While bridges, boardwalks, and other structural means may allow for safe and convenient circulation among wetlands, they quickly become cost-prohibitive at larger scales. Future Park developments should offer trail, overlook, and interpretive opportunities near wetlands and explore adjacent land acquisitions where infrastructure over wetlands is impractical or unfeasible. Developments should employ stormwater best management practices to minimize impacts to wetland habitats and ecosystems.

Topography

The Park topography is characterized by rolling hills and plateaus with steep descents to wetlands and open water. The flattest areas of the Park are above the banks of the Mississippi River in the original City Park to the southeast and in the newly acquired Park property north of the east-west utility corridor. These areas are most appropriate for siting amenities such as parking lots, pavilions, accessible trails, and playing fields because of the lessened need for grading and minimized potential for runoff and erosion during construction. There are two areas to the southeast: an approximately 15-acre plateau adjacent to the east-west utility corridor and an approximately 18-acre plateau further south, adjacent to the Mississippi River. The latter area is between 50 and 160 feet from the river, making it an excellent site for appreciating the Mississippi River and Crow Wing State Park on the opposing bank. The existing Woodchip Trail runs through the northern plateau before turning west and descending to the river. River accessibility could be substantially improved if parking, trails, and other amenities were located near either plateau.

There is a series of flatter areas in the newly acquired Park property north of the east-west utility corridor, the most significant of which is located along Mapleton Rd. This area is approximately 125 acres and nestled into the corner of Mapleton Rd and the north-south utility corridor. This area presents a larger opportunity for siting amenities listed above in terms of level land area but a smaller opportunity in terms of appreciable natural features or aesthetics. Of note, this area is 1.7 miles as the crow flies from the areas near the river. Island Lake, Pike Creek, and neighboring wetlands effectively cut the Park in half with an upland unit to the west and an upland unit to the east. These units are large enough and far enough from each other that Park users may visit one unit at a time, as opposed to visiting both units on the same day.

Hikers, cross country skiers, snowshoers, and fatbikers appreciate the Parks' varied topography using existing trails in the original City Park. Current trails supplement local and regional offerings such as those found at Northland Arboretum, Crow Wing State Park, Dean Makey School Forest, and Cuyuna State Park. Elevation-rich trail systems near urban areas are less common in Minnesota than some other parts of the country and offer unique and diverse experiences that might otherwise require travel to more remote areas. The varied topography throughout the Park is ripe for high-quality hiking, cross county skiing, snowshoeing, fatbiking, and mountain biking trails. That same topography presents challenges for roadways, service corridors, and accessible multiuse trails, which require wider clearances, gentler slopes, and wider turns for multiple users and mobility types, such as joggers, wheelchair users, parents with strollers, and cyclists.

Site Opportunities

Site opportunities for Mississippi River Overlook Park are guided by three categories of land use and protection: high priority habitat, transition zones, and high impact areas. High priority habitat includes Park wetlands and open water, transition zones include areas buffering wetlands and open water, and high impact areas include upland areas set back from high priority habitats and transition zones. Tree canopy maturity and diversity, steep slopes (more than 8 percent), rare and protected species, historic resources, existing development, and neighboring contexts can be overlaid to further identify site opportunities, as well as constraints. In general, high

priority habitats and transition zones reflect on-site water (see Hydrology map) and high impact areas reflect upland areas to the northwest and east of Island Lake.

The upland area northwest of Island Lake has a younger and less diverse tree canopy than the rest of the Park, due to the vast logging that occurred there and the tree plantations that remain. This area is also flatter than other areas of the Park, especially in the approximately 125 acres bordering Mapleton Rd. As compared to the upland area near the Mississippi River, the upland area northwest of Island Lake is currently inaccessible by formal trails or roadways. Future right-of-way corridors and trails may improve access to this area of the Park from adjacent areas and east of Pike Creek, but remain remote for some would-be users. Remoteness, maintenance costs, and relatively low-quality tree canopy suggest that this area of the Park could be considered for higher impact amenities, more intensive development, or potential short-term leases or outtake partners. South of the east-west corridor, future trails will reward Park users with exceptional views of Island Lake. Wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities here suggest that wildlife conservation might drive future developments in this half of the Park. The existing east-west utility corridor, existing north-south utility corridor, and Pike Creek might all serve as potential boundaries for leased lands or outtake partners.

The upland area east of Pike Creek is generally steeper, with a relatively intact tree canopy and strong existing use patterns. This area is currently used by hikers, snowshoers, skiers, fatbikers, and paddlers. Undulating topography, numerous scenic vistas, river access, and closeness to existing trail systems, neighborhoods, and schools make this area prime for improvements. While accessible via the existing trailhead and Woodchip Trail, the 0.75-mile hike to the Mississippi River and the trail's soft surface are barriers for many users. Flatter open areas in the original City Park offer various opportunities for siting a parking lot, trailhead, shelter, and gathering spaces. Paris Rd and the existing east-west utility corridor are strong options for improving vehicular access, as well for connecting with the Paul Bunyan State Trail. Existing trails may be improved and supplemented, particularly in areas with high scenic and experiential value, such as the Mississippi River and Pike Creek.

Key findings and conclusions stemming from site analysis help guide this Master Plan and Community Use Policy. Combined with feedback heard in the public process, these findings and conclusions shed light on issues and opportunities, stakeholder interests, conservation values, and considerations for the future. Findings and conclusions stemming from site analysis include:

Findings

Increasingly Urban Context

Inaccessibility of Original Park

Circulation Opportunities of Existing Corridors

Wetland Barriers May Warrant Future Acquisitions

Two Major Upland Areas in the Park

Conclusions

Mississippi River Overlook Park is situated in an increasingly urban context. This presents an exceptional opportunity for area residents and visitors alike. Future developments should leverage local assets, connect with adjacent trail systems and neighborhoods, and foster relationships with communities, institutions, and businesses. Future developments should minimize impacts to surrounding properties wherever possible.

The Park is inaccessible for some users due to the length and surface of the existing Woodchip Trail. Future developments should improve access for all Park users by employing ADA-friendly trails, siting parking lots and trailheads closer to current and future amenities, and enhancing river access.

Mississippi River Overlook Park is crossed east-west and north-south by two existing utility corridors. To reduce impacts to forested areas and wetlands, future developments should leverage these existing corridors for non-motorized multiuse trails, vehicular circulation, and parking. Existing corridors can be optimized and connected to current and future trails to improve access from adjacent neighborhoods and trail systems.

Wetlands are significant assets for the Park, but also pose problems for circulation. Possible land acquisitions adjacent to the Park property should be explored where infrastructure over wetlands is impractical or unfeasible.

Island Lake, Pike Creek, and adjacent wetlands effectively divide the Park into two major upland areas with unique characteristics and site opportunities. Future Park developments may not necessarily be congruent between each upland area, due to their uniqueness, distance from one another, and site-specific issues and opportunities. Future Park developments should accommodate suitable uses for each area and strive to remain accessible for all users, via connected trail networks, independent parking lots and trailheads, use guidelines, and future outtake opportunities.

Topography is an Issue and an Opportunity

The Park's steep and varied topography presents issues and opportunities for future development. Steep slopes are more difficult to navigate and erosion may negatively impact nearby water bodies. This topography also offers challenging, rewarding, and unique experiences for users. Future developments should balance best practices for developing trails and other amenities on steep slopes with the vast recreational and educational potential of the site.

Conservation, Education, and Restoration Opportunities

High-quality habitats and ecosystems exist throughout Mississippi River Overlook Park. The intact natural character drives many stakeholders' wishes to keep the Park the way it is. Conservation will be a guiding principle for future developments, in part due to public interests and in part due to funding agreements. Evidence of logging, invasive species, erosion resulting from informal ATV use, and historic agricultural land uses all present opportunities for restoring native ecosystems as well. Recreational and expanded educational amenities - outdoor classrooms, test plots, equipment lockers, bike and boat racks, student stewardship projects, and site-based curriculums - should complement conservation and restoration efforts to ensure sustainable use for current and future generations of Park users.

Fig 9: Hydrology

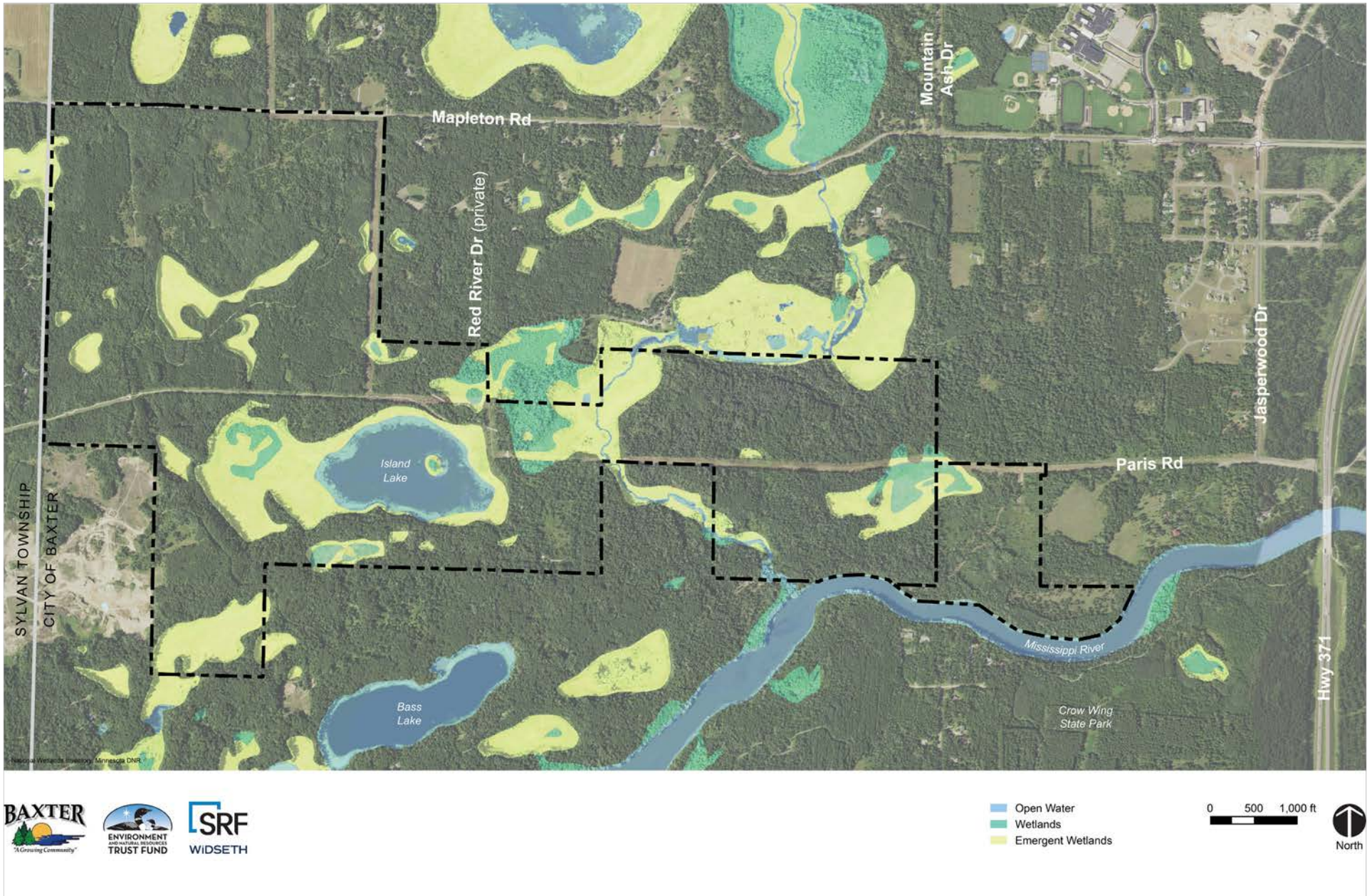


Fig 10: Slopes

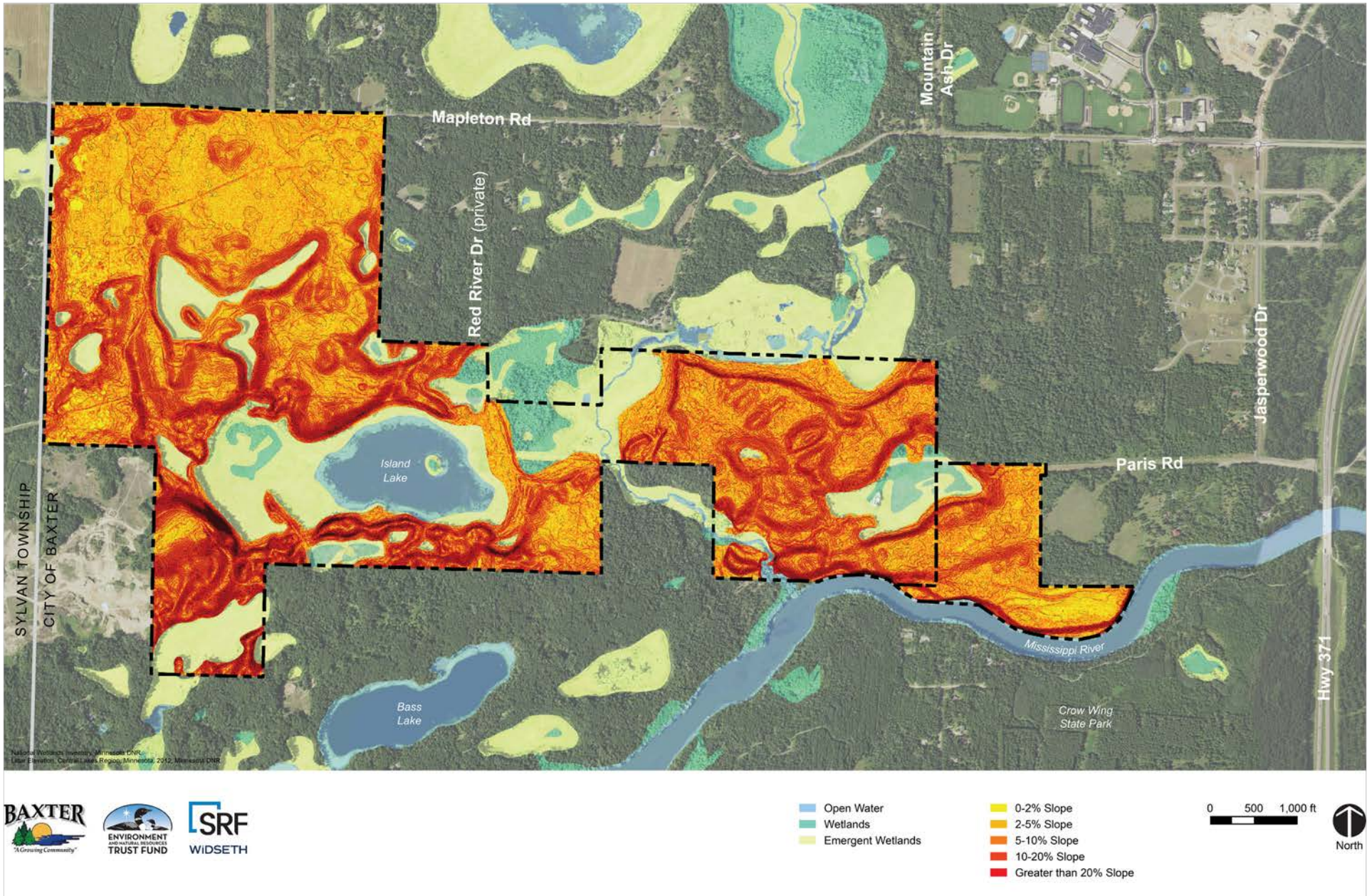
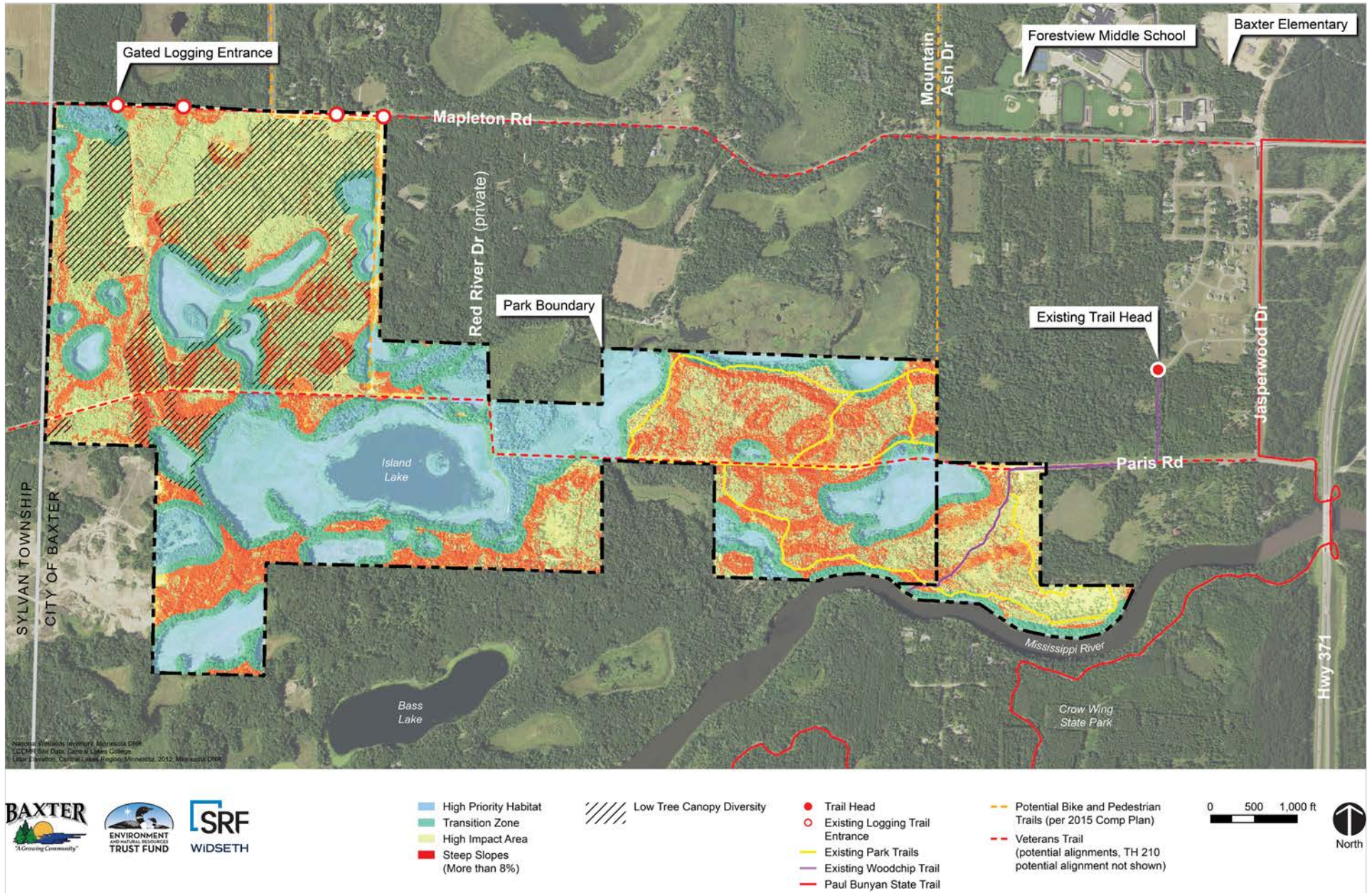


Fig 11: Site Opportunities



VI. Corresponding Park & Trail Plans

Future development and use of Mississippi River Overlook Park will be guided by this Master Plan & Community Use Policy document. The Park is situated among various local, regional, and state parks and trails with specific master plans and policy documents guiding their own development and use. These corresponding plans can help identify broader trends, immediate and adjacent communities' needs and desires, future issues and opportunities, and gaps in service. Corresponding park and trail plans include:

- Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Strategic Plan, 2019-2029
- City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan Update, 2015
- Crow Wing County Comprehensive Plan, 2003-2023
- Crow Wing State Park Management Plan, 2002
- Sylvan Township Master Plan, 2014
- Northland Arboretum Strategic Plan, 2022

Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Strategic Plan

The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape mission is “to protect the current and future military training mission of Camp Ripley while protecting and enhancing natural and cultural resources and preserving the rural character and economies of the landscape”. The Strategic Plan outlines the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program and its end goal of protecting 75% of the land area within the 3-mile buffer, or 78,000 acres. 638 acres for Mississippi River Overlook Park were acquired via Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) funds. The four strategies of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape are 1) protects and enhance high quality natural resources, 2) protect working lands, 3) increase coordination, and 4) restore and improve habitat and water resources. Acquisitions for the Park are a significant gain for conservation efforts and the Sentinel Landscape mission, which coincides with the conservation-oriented mission of the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF).

City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan

In the City of Baxter Comprehensive Plan Update, the Long Range Planning Commission identified several key opportunities and threats for the City long-term. For key opportunities, the City found that a connected trail system would make Baxter more walkable and bikeable and reduce everyday reliance on vehicular traffic. The City also found that planning for growth would be a key opportunity to leverage moving forward. The Mississippi River Overlook Park should be connected to adjacent neighborhoods and trail systems by accessible, multiuse trails to broaden usership of the Park and to diversify transportation options in Baxter. Additionally, the Park can help expand the City's trail system and build greater connectivity with Sylvan Township via the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail. While the Park may not be applicable for residential, commercial, or industrial growth, specific outtakes for future recreation can help the City prepare for increased demand as population increases over time. In Chapter 4 - Parks, Trails, and Open Space, the Comp Plan inventories current amenities in existing City parks. Outtakes for growing recreational needs could supplement popular and available amenities, such as trails and canoe launches, or popular yet limited amenities, such as soccer fields and fishing piers. For key threats, the City found that the “loss of natural resources that make Baxter unique” would fundamentally change the character and identity of the City of Baxter. Future Park developments should weigh growth and increased capacity in City parks with natural resource conservation and restoration to ensure that parks are both adequately-suited for the community and sustained in their character.

Crow Wing County Comprehensive Plan

In the Crow Wing County Comprehensive Plan, the issue of increased population growth and loss of rural character is expressed at the scale of the County. Like the City of Baxter, Crow Wing County expects continued population growth and residential development. A result of this growth and development is the subdivision and loss of natural and agricultural landscapes that fundamentally define the County for many residents and visitors. The City can jointly support its own strategies for growth and conservation with the County's strategies at Mississippi River Overlook Park by considering county-wide issues and opportunities in future developments. Setting aside a such a significant area of land for public park land is a crucial step for conservation of natural areas for the City and County alike.

Crow Wing State Park Management Plan

The Crow Wing State Park Management Plan identifies camping and trail opportunities within 50 miles of the park. Drive-in campsites with and without electricity can be readily found in DNR state parks, state forests, counties, cities, and in privately-owned campgrounds. Notably, walk-in, boat-in, and group campsites, as well as camper cabins, are mostly missing in counties, cities, and privately-owned campgrounds. Camping opportunities at Mississippi River Overlook Park could supply these types of camping and begin to fill gaps in regional camping accommodations. Walk-in, boat-in, and group campsites are also particularly suited for local park users who are able to reach the Park and nearby amenities via alternative transportation or as part of an educational program. Camper cabins, yurts, and canvas tents are attractive to local users for the same reasons and may draw regional and state-wide visitors looking for the unique natural context of the Park in such close proximity to various local cultural and entertainment offerings.

The Management Plan also identifies regional trail opportunities. At the county and city parks, hiking and mountain biking trails are the rarest of trail opportunities, perhaps due to the natural context that typically makes for attractive hiking and the perception that mountain biking requires a large land area. The natural character of Mississippi River Overlook Park is ripe for hiking trails due to its high-quality habitats and ecosystems, varied landscape, undulating topography, and scenic views of the Mississippi River, Pike Creek, and Island Lake. Mountain bike trails may also be a key opportunity for the Park, due to their high demand in the community, success at other parks in the state, and for the Park's natural character. Future developments of all trails should employ sustainable design and construction practices, particularly with respect to stormwater and erosion.

Sylvan Township Master Plan

For the Sylvan Township Master Plan, residents were tasked with prioritizing positive and negative elements of the Township via surveys and visioning sessions. 82% of residents ranked the natural environment - "woods, fields, water, and wildlife" - as an asset and 72% listed the natural environment as something that should be preserved. 51% of residents ranked protecting water quality as a first tier priority for the Township. In general, residents were similarly concerned as the City of Baxter and Crow Wing County with the problem of "rapid growth and protection of what now exists." A unique element of the Sylvan Township Master Plan is that local high school students were also tasked with prioritizing positive and negative elements of the Township. Their responses largely mirrored feedback from the general public, but diverged in several areas. While students felt as strongly as the general public about preserving their natural environment, they outranked the general public in listing outdoor recreational opportunities as being important assets for Sylvan Township. And while students took pride in their natural environment, they also appreciated nearby amenities offered in Baxter and Brainerd. Feedback from Sylvan students may suggest that recreational opportunities should play a larger role in the natural environment or that residents living in the Baxter area can have the best of both rural and urban environments. In any case, students and youth should be included in ongoing and future developments at Mississippi River Overlook Park to ensure that this invaluable public resource is guided by and relevant to current and future users in the community.

Northland Arboretum Strategic Plan

The Northland Arboretum performed a SWOT analysis - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats - for its Strategic Plan. Trail expansion and growth of educational programs were listed as opportunities. "Offsite" amenities and other public open spaces may complement Arboretum programming in the future, support its strategic goals, and serve as a basis for collaboration and partnerships.

VII. Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail

The Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail (CRVST) was designated a state trail in the Minnesota State Trail System in 2009. The CRVST is a planned multiuse state trail that will connect the Soo Line Trail south of Little Falls, MN with the Paul Bunyan State Trail near Baxter, MN. Recommended trail uses include bicycling and walking, as well as horseback and ATV riding. Incompatible uses will require separate trails or distinct corridors to avoid conflicts between users moving at vastly different speeds or users that have specific surface requirements.

Two potential alignments for the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail pass by or through Mississippi River Overlook Park as outlined in the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail Master Plan (see Regional Context, Local Context, and Site Context maps.) One potential alignment follows Mapleton Rd S (County Rd CR 170) along the Park's northern boundary and does not pass through the Park. The other potential alignment loosely follows the existing east-west utility corridor from 136th St SW in Sylvan Township to Paris Rd in the City of Baxter and passes through the Park for 2.8 miles.

The preferred alignments outlined in this master plan correspond with and differ from potential alignments outlined in the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail Master Plan. The preferred alignment outlined in Option A differs from both alignments outlined above and proposes a route that avoids Mapleton Rd S (County Rd CR 170) and potential hunting conflicts by following the western, northern, and eastern boundaries of a future potential outtake conservation area. This alignment avoids CR 170 due to there being no future plans to widen and reconstruct that roadway for a multiuse trail. This alignment also avoids bisecting areas that may be hunted. The preferred alignment outlined in Concept B corresponds with the potential alignment outlined above that follows the existing east-west utility corridor. Several additional property acquisitions are recommended for this alignment, due to site conditions that make routing difficult over steep topography and wetlands. Concepts A and B propose similar alignments for the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail east of Island Lake.

VIII. Master Plan

Open Space Master Plan

Over the course of the master planning effort, two final Master Plan concepts have emerged as feasible options for the long-term viability of the Mississippi River Overlook Park. Public input, Project Advisory Committee feedback, long-term City goals, and the natural characteristics of the land itself have all shaped the final options. Both final concepts incorporate the most popular recreation and habitat preservation-oriented goals: a network of soft-surface trails, a connection to the paved Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail (CRVST), improved access to the river and recreation, increased educational opportunities, specifically programmed recreation along Mapleton Rd, and designation of a portion of the City property to a potential outtake partner. The primary differences between the two concepts are related to the size and boundary characteristics of the outtake land and City-owned land.

Option A designates approximately 550 acres of the land west of Pike Creek, including all of Island Lake, as a possible outtake area. As a physical barrier in the landscape, the creek divides the property into east and west sides. In Concept A, the natural boundary would become a meaningful land use boundary; the City of Baxter owns and maintains control of the Park east of Pike Creek, while the future outtake partner owns and manages the land west of the creek. The exceptions to outtake management would be 1) the north-south roadway corridor that preserves the City's right to establish a public connection to the residents living south of the Park property, and 2) approximately 30 acres along Mapleton Rd that the City preserves for specific recreational activities (including athletic fields, a mountain biking terrain park, and a dog park). Option A features a meandering alignment for the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail located at the perimeter of the Park property. Trail users coming from neighboring Sylvan Township would turn north toward Mapleton Rd, follow Mapleton Rd at the north end of the Park, and return south along the City's preserved roadway corridor before traversing Pike Creek to the east. This specific trail alignment preserves a contiguous land area for the future outtake partner, minimizing conflict between trail users and other land uses (such as hunting).

Option B designates a smaller future outtake area (250 acres) in the northwest region of the property, keeping most of the site under City ownership. The boundary between outtake land and City land is the existing powerline corridor that runs east-west north of Island Lake. Under Option B, the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail continues its alignment from Sylvan Township within the powerline corridor. In contrast to Option A, the southwest portion of the Park property (that portion south of the powerline corridor and west of Pike Creek) is City-owned and maintained. The network of trails on the east side of Pike Creek connect to more trails around Island Lake.

Under both concepts, the original 60 acres of the Mississippi Overlook Park is the hub of recreation access and natural educational opportunities. With frontage along the Mississippi River, this region of the Park offers the public a rare opportunity to see, feel, and connect with its natural setting in the Minnesota Northwoods. A primary directive for the Park is to expand outdoor education opportunities for local and regional institutional, cultural, special interest groups. The vision for the Park is to bring Baxter residents and visitors closer without impacting its ecology or spoiling its natural appeal. A roadway corridor offers vehicular access and extends public utilities to a parking lot and park facility. The facility is planned to have a roof and stable footing suitable to host picnics or class gatherings. Specific facilities may be defined in a future project and may include restrooms. Option A has the parking lot and building located on a level clearing farther from the river, while Option B shows these elements on the flat terrace closest to the Mississippi River. Option A reduces the drawbacks by siting the facilities within an existing clearing that requires less utility infrastructure, but Park users must travel farther to see the Mississippi River. Option B prioritizes proximity to the river but comes with drawbacks that include tree clearing and additional expense to extend public water and sanitary facilities. From the parking area, multiple trails provide access to an outdoor amphitheater, nature walks through prairie and forest habitats, and the riverbank. Primitive camping sites are situated along the flat land adjacent to the river. Trail connections are shown to the paved Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail and the wider network of year-round hiking, biking, skiing and snowshoe trails.

Both concepts preserve 30 acres along Mapleton Rd for potential City parks and recreation facilities. The concepts include 2 soccer fields, 2 softball or baseball fields, a 2-acre dog park, and a 4-acre mountain biking terrain park. These facilities are served by a 150-stall parking lot accessed from Mapleton Rd. These facilities would not be built immediately but provide the City with flexibility to address future recreation needs as appropriate. A dog park and terrain park in particular have been associated with some demand from the public. Options A and B include the same elements but feature different spatial layouts of Park elements. A future design project may explore further layout options in more detail.

Under each Master Plan concept, the City preserves a corridor that may be used in the future for a public road. Baxter property owners south of the Park access their land via private road to Mapleton Rd (Crow Wing County 167) and would be cut off from the City if the project property was transferred to an outtake partner. The corridor is a minimum of 100 feet wide to allow a standard City roadway and a potential trail through the undulating terrain. The corridor generally runs north-south from Mapleton Rd parallel to the Great River Energy powerline corridor, widening in areas to minimize impacts to wetlands and riparian areas. The corridor alignment meanders around Island Lake and nearby wetlands to carve out a path that limits tree clearing and earthwork for a future roadway.

Options A and B identify potential parcels for future acquisition. These areas have been identified based on their potential to improve connectivity of the Park. Each option shows a wedge of land where Pike Creek meets the Mississippi River, which would allow the City to own all of the land east of the creek. The wedge is currently the only piece of land east of the creek that is not included in the Park property. A 20-acre parcel is identified at the center of the property that, if acquired, would allow more flexibility in connecting the east and west sides. Similarly, a small wedge-shaped area is identified at the north end of the east property that would allow trails to connect around the north side of a large wetland near Pike Creek. The existing network of logging roads is an out-and-back system where users must funnel through one pinch point on their journey. Acquiring the small wedge-shaped section would provide a loop and greatly reduce the complexity of the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail as it follows the powerline corridor across the wetland. Finally, a 20-acre parcel is shown for potential acquisition at the east end of the property. The parcel is a meadow and would provide an opportunity for parking and other recreation with minimal site clearing.

Both Master Plan options were presented to the Project Advisory Committee at the final PAC meeting on August 16, 2022, with the goal of weighing and building consensus around a single preferred option. The PAC identified Option A as the preferred Master Plan.

Interpretation Plan

Site-specific interpretation and programming draw visitors to parks, communicate the unique stories and attributes of those places, and offer responsive and engaging elements to existing resources and amenities. Opportunities for interpretation at Mississippi River Overlook Park include wayfinding signage, conservation-oriented educational signage, and passive trail, outlook, and gathering area design features. Wayfinding signage should be included throughout the Park at entrances and parking lots, trailheads, and along trail networks. Nearby trails and possible access points are additional wayfinding opportunities. These include the Paul Bunyan State Trail, Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail, Mississippi River, and adjacent neighborhoods and local trail networks. Educational signage should be included near Park ecosystems, natural features, conservation and restoration projects, wildlife habitat areas, historic sites, and gathering areas and communicate site-specific and broad attributes of the Park, as well as ongoing management efforts and natural resource values. Future Park developments should strive for passive interpretation opportunities, especially in the design of trails, outlooks, and gathering areas to take full advantage of the many diverse experiences the Park landscape has to offer.

A uniform signage theme should be developed throughout the Park for communicating site information, offered amenities and event schedules, and for understanding Park rules and regulations. The design and implementation of signage should be integrated with wayfinding signage to create an attractive and unobtrusive appearance throughout the Park.

Fig 12: Master Plan - Option A

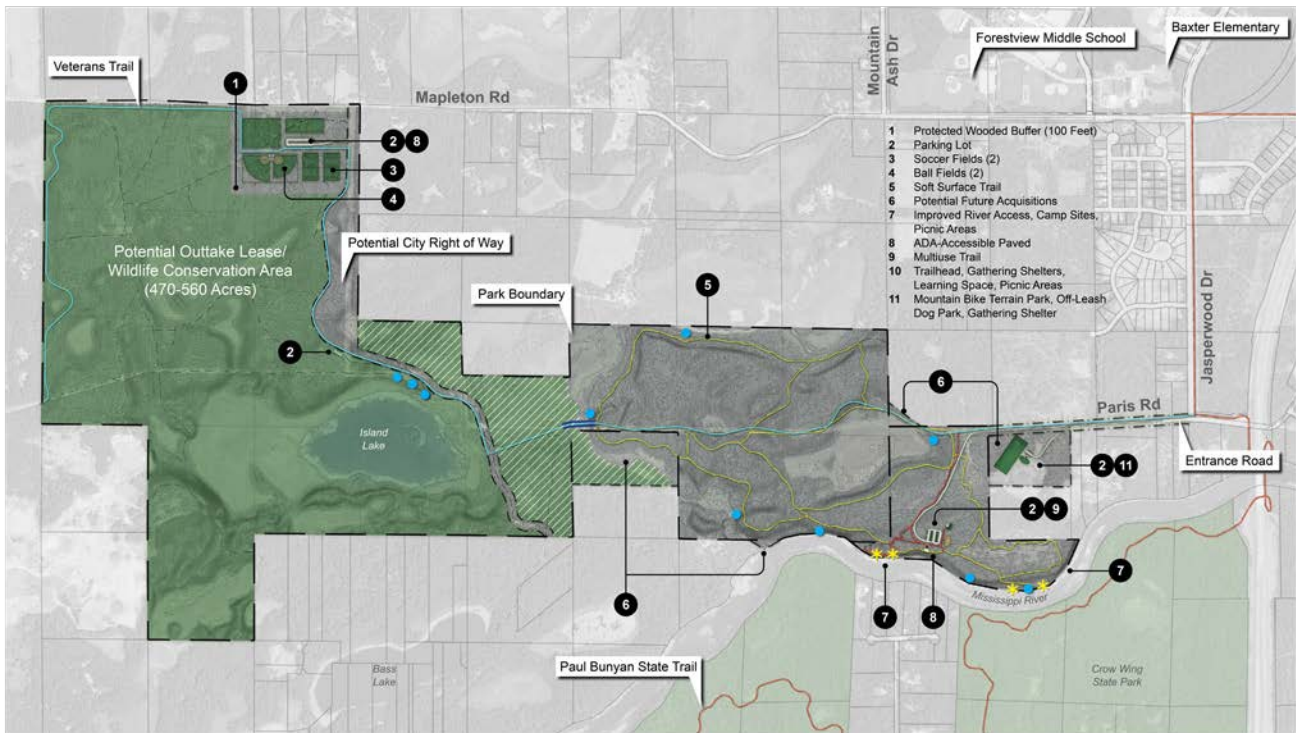


Fig 13: Master Plan - Option B

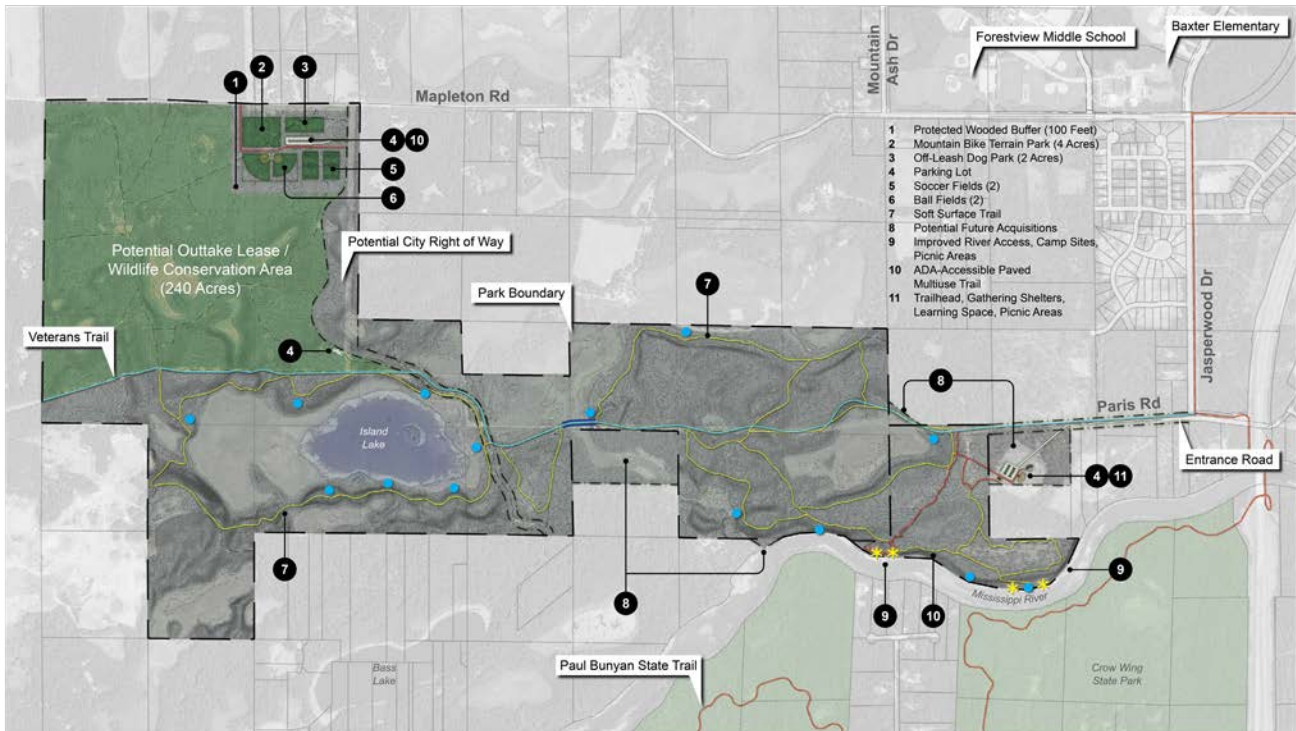
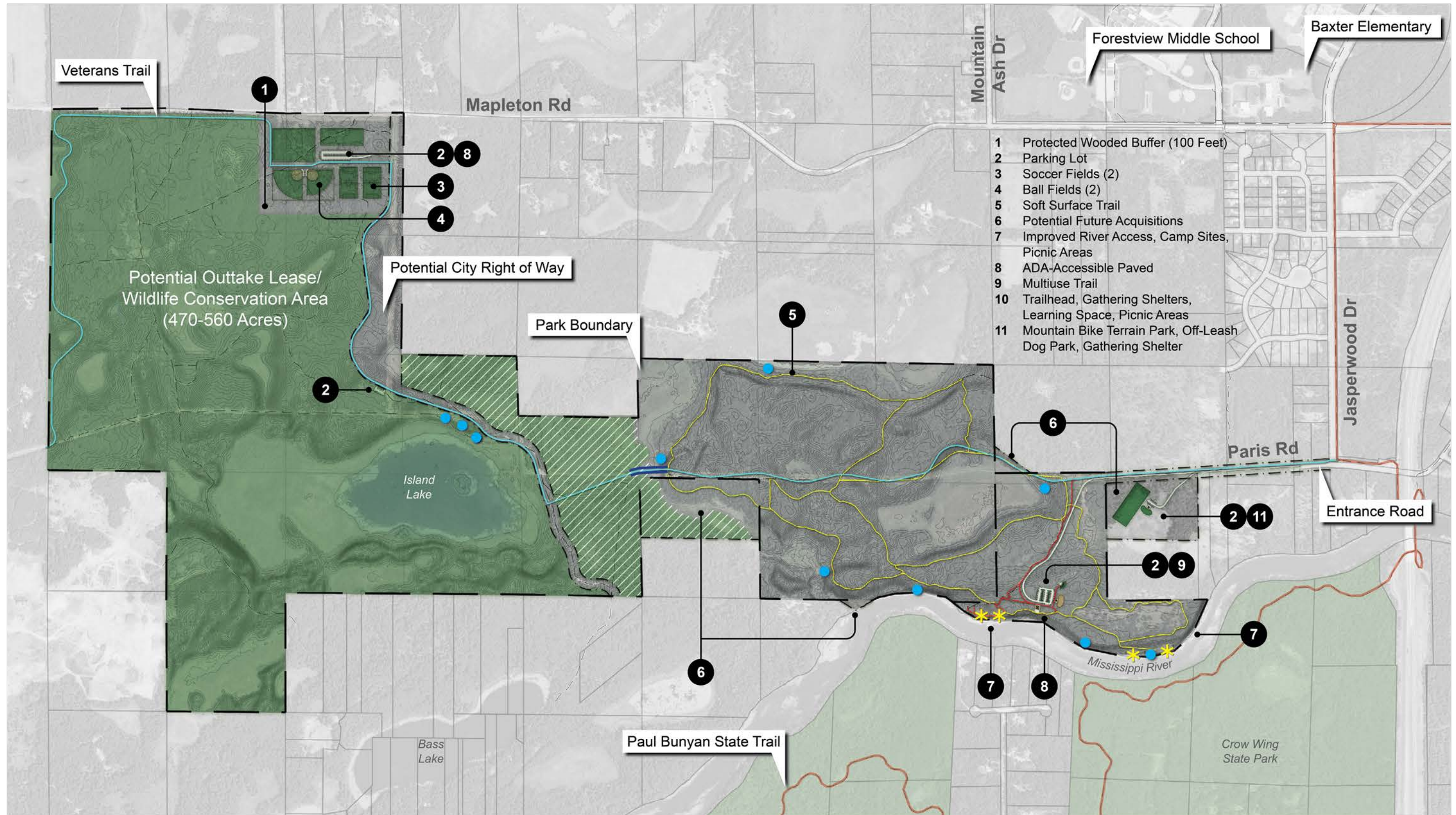


Fig 14: Preferred Master Plan - Option A



- River Access, Camping, and Picnicing Opportunities
- Overlook Areas
- Veterans Trail Bridge
- Outtake or City Property

- Unpaved Trail
- Paved Multiuse Trail
- Veterans Trail
- Wildlife Conservation Area
- Recreational Fields

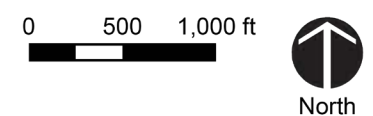
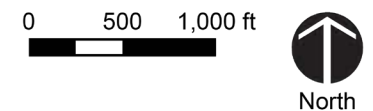


Fig 15: Preferred Master Plan - Option A, Showing Example Amenities



- River Access, Camping, and Picnicking Opportunities
- Overlook Areas
- Veterans Trail Bridge
- Outtake or City Property
- Unpaved Trail
- Paved Multiuse Trail
- Veterans Trail
- Wildlife Conservation Area
- Recreational Fields



Public Hunting Access Plan

Hunting is an important tradition in the community. There is public desire for including hunting within the property, either by designating a portion of the property as a wildlife conservation area, with short-term leases available for hunting in specific areas offering hunting on City-owned portions of the property as allowed by the City's hunting map and permits approved by the police department, allocating certain time frames for hunts (Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area is a regional example of this), or exploring possible other outtake strategies with willing and able partners. Hunting may be accommodated in a number of ways at Mississippi River Overlook Park and should be guided by both Park-specific rules and regulations, as well as by City law. This Master Plan has identified two potential areas for hunting that correspond with site analysis and opportunities and are contained by man-made and natural features. Both potential areas are west of Pike Creek and are differentiated by their inclusion or exclusion of Island Lake and the surrounding landscape.

Option A identifies a 470 to 560-acre area for hunting that is contained by Park property boundaries to the south and west, by Mapleton Rd and a wooded buffer to the north, by a potential City right-of-way along the north-south utility corridor to the east, and by Pike Creek further east. Should the eastern boundary extend to Pike Creek, available hunting area would be 560 acres. Should the eastern boundary extend to only the potential City right-of-way, available hunting area would be 470 acres. Extending hunting to Pike Creek may yield a larger hunting area, but may pose conflicts between roadway users and hunters. Extending hunting to the City right-of-way may yield a smaller hunting area, but may also act as a more intuitive boundary for hunters and better protect against conflicts between roadway users and hunters. Aligning the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail with the existing east-west utility corridor would be problematic and potentially dangerous for trail users. For this reason, an alternative alignment is proposed to lower these risks and runs along the western property line, along Mapleton Rd, and along the City right-of-way.

Option B identifies a 240-acre area that resembles the area outlined in Option A but is bounded by the existing east-west utility corridor to the south. This option allows for a potential alignment of the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail along the existing east-west utility corridor, as proposed as a potential alignment in the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail Master Plan. With respect to nearby hunting, the proposed alignment for the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail shown in Option A borders or bisects hunting lands for up to 2.1 miles, while the proposed alignment shown in Option B borders hunting lands for 0.7 miles. For comparison, the average size for Minnesota DNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) is approximately 275 acres. Hunting is permissible at WMAs ranging in size from 20 acres to over 200,000 acres.

State and County regulations do not outline a minimum land area for hunting purposes, but the City of Baxter does have unique guidelines for hunting within City limits. For instance, the City permits archery, shotgun, and muzzleloader hunting in some areas but does not permit hunting of any type in other areas, particularly areas with higher-density development. The City does not permit rifle hunting in any area.

Community Use Plan

All forms of recreation within the City-owned portion of the Mississippi River Overlook Park are non-motorized. ATVs and other motorized vehicles are to be used on alternate routes to eliminate noise pollution of the natural habitat and prevent erosion of soft-surface trails. All motorized traffic from the State Veteran's Trail is separated from non-motorized recreation, where it must comply with existing City ordinances for ATVs.

The network of soft-surface trails is open to the public during normal Park hours (as defined by the City's existing ordinances). Biking, running, hiking, and other non-motorized modes of transportation are permitted. The City has the responsibility to maintain trails as resources dictate. The City reserves the right to close trails that are deemed impassable or must be temporarily closed for any reason.

Winter recreation may occur in the form of snowshoeing, Nordic (cross-country) skiing, and fat-tire biking. The City will not groom tracks for winter activities. Any private maintenance of winter trails must be approved by the City and must be open for all trail users.

Trails are marked by wayfinding signage. Venturing off established trails is discouraged to protect wildlife habitat, and to be assumed at the user's own risk.

If and when conflicts arise, priority of Park use will be granted to Brainerd Public Schools, Central Lakes College, and other educational programming. City Park land will be made available for academic purposes as coordinated with City staff. As Park facilities are built, the City will manage reservations. Specific policies for potential planned facilities (picnic shelter, amphitheater, athletic fields, dog park, mountain biking terrain park, etc.) will be issued with the construction of those facilities.

Camping sites along the river are not supplied or maintained by the City. Users must bring any equipment needed and will be responsible for cleaning their own site. Reservations are not booked through the City; sites will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Public Roads & Utilities Plan

Wideth reviewed and evaluated available mapping including topography (LIDAR), wetlands, property base and utilities within and adjacent to the City's acquired Mississippi Overlook Park property with the objective of preparing concept plans for future road and utility corridors.

Key factors that are driving the establishment of future road and utility corridors include:

- Potential Park land uses and the possibility of creation of a wildlife conservation area that would include hunting.
- Property access needs identified by landowners that currently access through the Park property to reach their parcels located south of the Park.

Key factors that influenced recommended corridor routes and widths included:

- Natural features such as small lakes, creeks, steep slopes and wetlands and man-made features such as existing utility easements, trails, and future Veterans State Trail routes
- Type of traffic dictating the need for motor vehicle roadways and pedestrian/bicycle trails
- Public outreach and input received from property owners, agency partners, city department staff and interested public on preferred access and destination points, uses and routes

The minimum corridor width for roadway and trail is based on the concept design sections included as Exhibit A. These include a roadway surface width of a minimum of 22 feet with 1-foot-wide shoulders and a trail surface width of no less than 10 feet with 2-foot-wide shoulder/clear zone. These section designs are consistent with State-Park Road standards and State trail design standards. Other criteria include setbacks and clearances from utility poles and provisions for ditching and drainage culminating in a minimum recommended right-of-way width of 100 feet. In many instances the right-of-way area shown, as illustrated in Exhibit B, is much wider than 100 feet. This is being proposed to close the corridor boundary with an adjacent property boundary to avoid leaving small remnants of property that would provide no WMA or other public benefit. Other reasons for recommending wider right-of-way areas are flexibility with design and construction feasibility due to the challenging steep slopes and wetlands adjacent to the corridor alignment and adjoining utility corridors occupied by Great River Energy (GRE). The right-of-way illustrated in Exhibits C and D depict potential corridors that are feasible within a 100-foot-wide right-of-way. In addition, these exhibits identify a separate utility easement for extension of municipal sanitary sewer and water mains to the 100-foot-wide right-of-way from Oakdale Road. The width of the utility easement is recommended to be no less than 80 feet.

Future sanitary sewer and water mains were evaluated along the corridors to determine the potential area that could be served and potential effect on right-of-way corridor needs. The priority area that would be served with municipal utilities was identified as the picnic area alongside the river front that would be accessed from either Paris Road or Oakdale Road. The secondary area that may benefit from municipal sewer and water would be potential public park and recreation fields and associated structures that may be located adjacent to Mapleton Road South and the GRE easement running north-south. The conceptual review of extending municipal utilities resulted in no change in the recommended minimum right-of-way corridor width of 100 feet. In general, it can be stated that sanitary sewer and water main extensions are feasible within these corridor widths; however, the topography will dictate how far gravity sewer collection pipes can be extended before pressure sewer is needed to serve locations where public structures may be constructed at low elevations near the river.

Public Roads & Utilities Plan Findings

- This masterplan includes the establishment of a mapped future public road corridor on the west side of the property from Mapleton Rd S to the south end of the City property east of Island Lake. This mapped corridor will remain City-owned and is available if the City and affected residents ever decide to build a public road within the corridor. The City has no current plans to build the road but wishes to protect this possibility long term.
- Public access for the approximately 600 acres to the west shall be directed away from Red River Rd and near-term access and parking improvements shall be made to direct the public away from this private road.
- This masterplan includes the establishment of a mapped future public road extension of Paris Dr.
- The city may consider options for public road development through the park, as funding opportunities arise that are outside of the city's budget process, such as grants or other means to pay for the road.

Fig 16: Exhibit A - Typical Roadway Corridor Sections

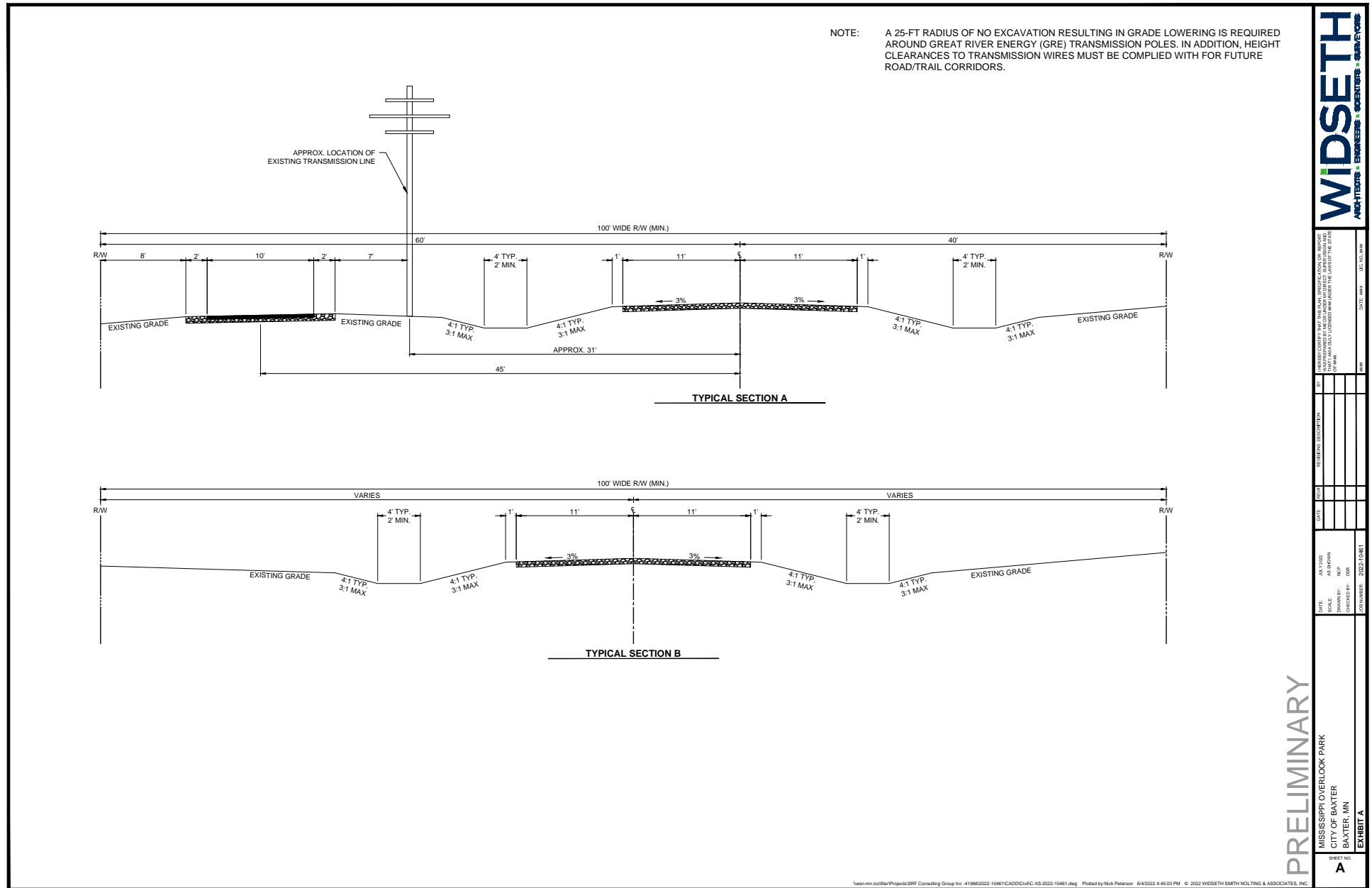


Fig 17: Illustrative Corridor Section



Illustrative roadway corridor showing 10' multiuse trail at left, utility corridor with appropriate setbacks, and 22' two-way roadway

Fig 18: Exhibit B - Future Westerly Road Corridor

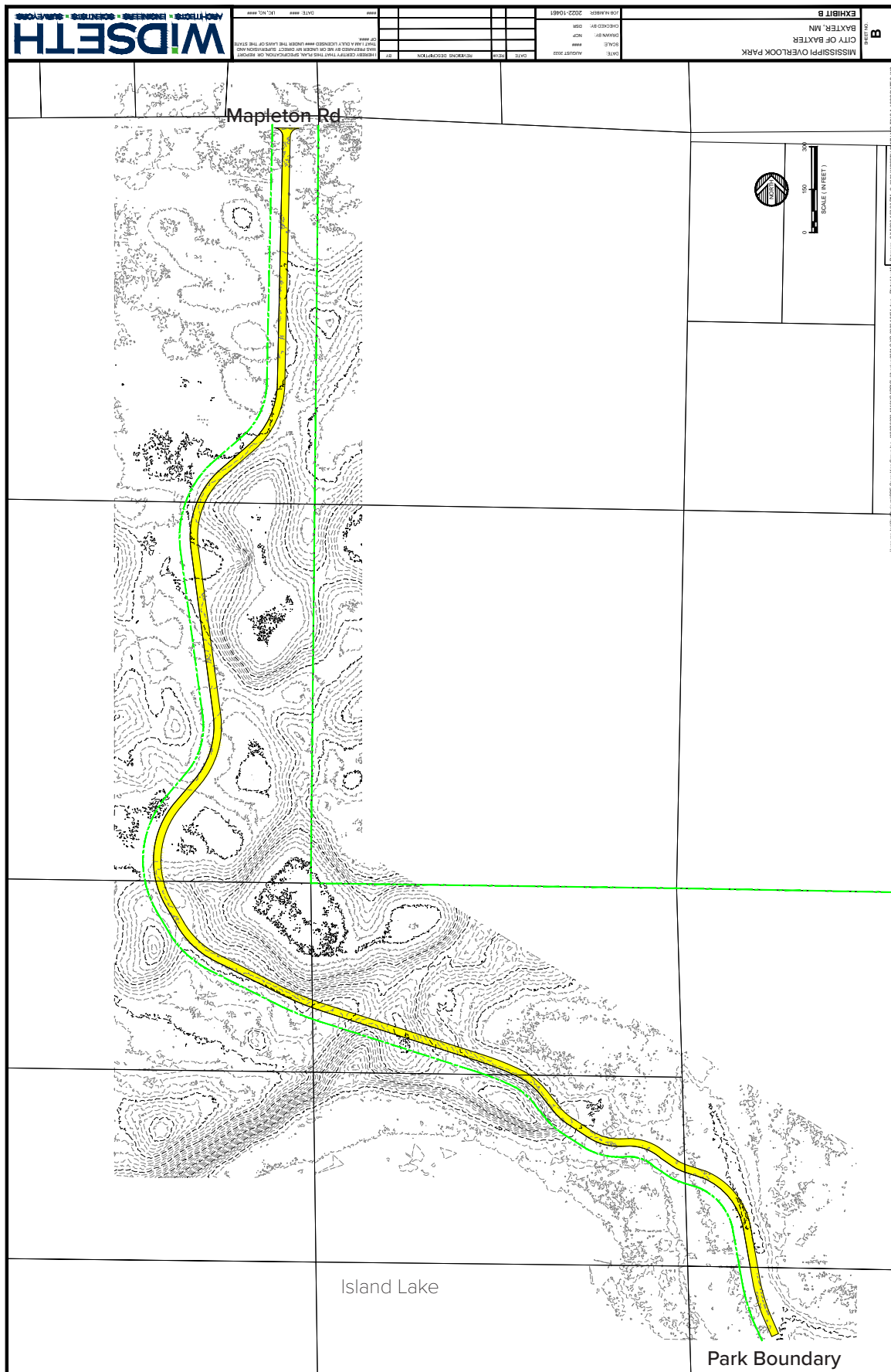
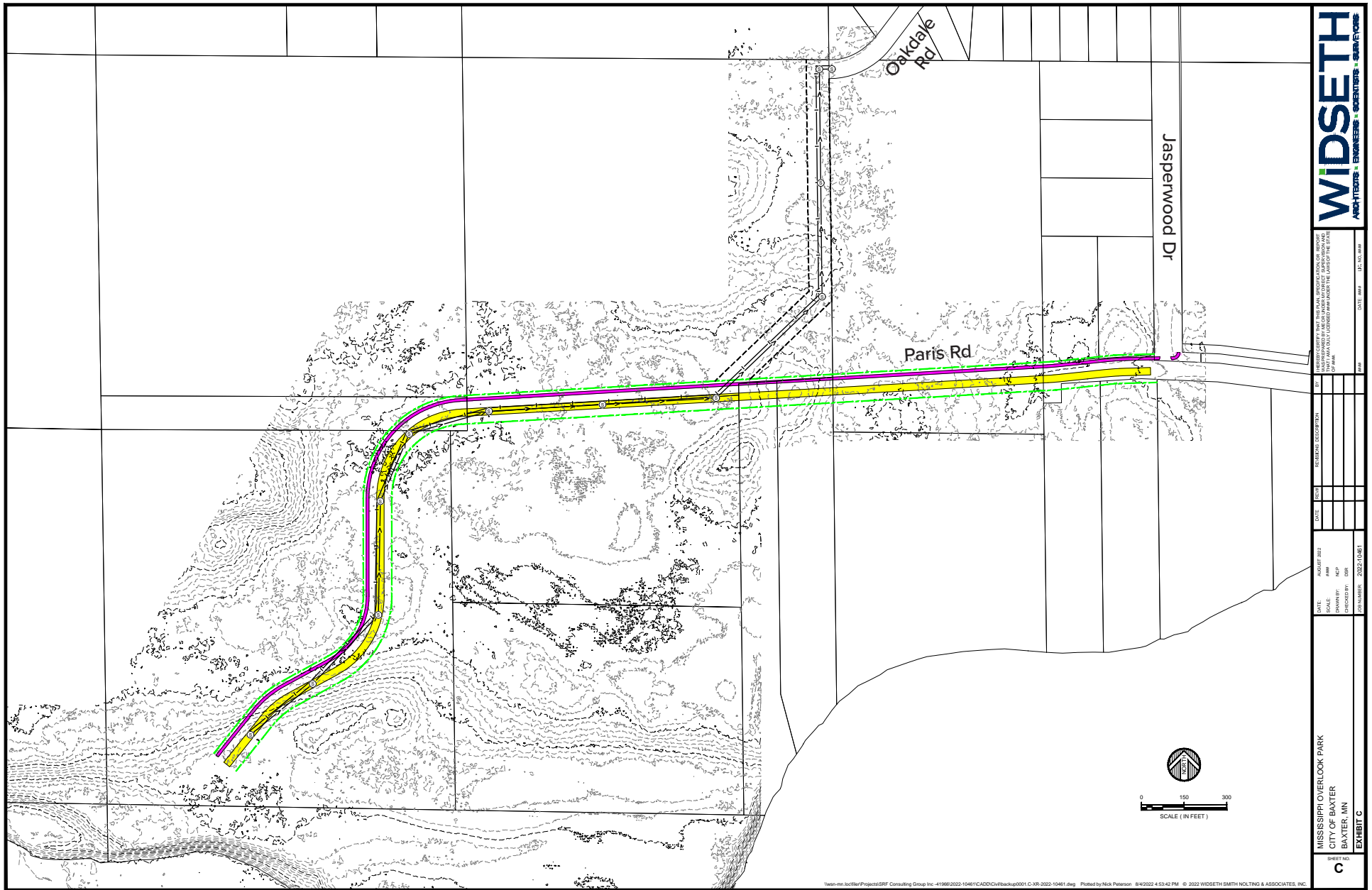


Fig 19: Exhibit C - Easterly Future Road / Trail Corridor with Parking Near River



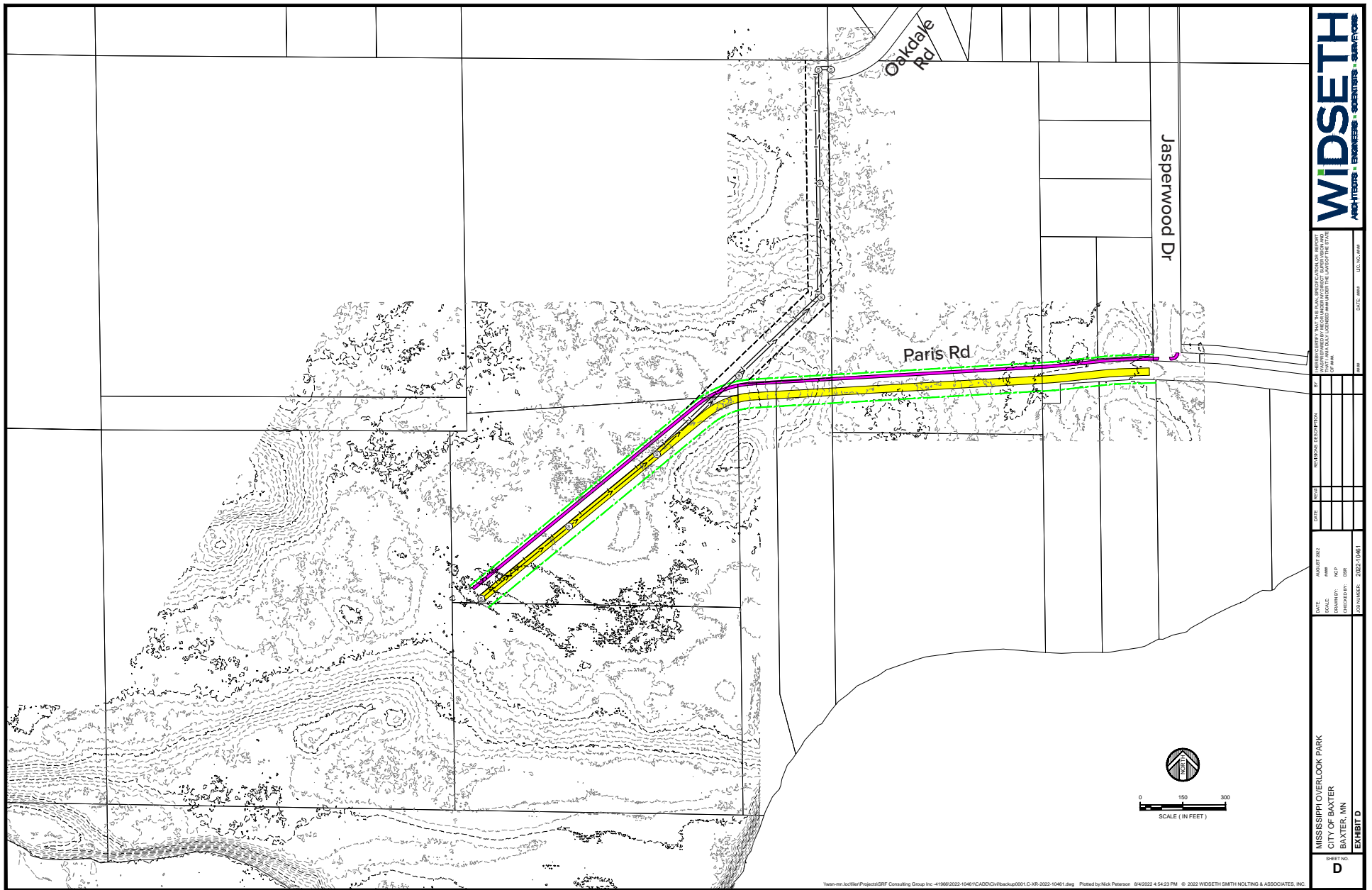
DATE	REVISIONS DESCRIPTION	BY

DATE: 02/21/2022
 SCALE: 1" = 50'
 DRAWN BY: NPK
 CHECKED BY: DMK
 DATE: 02/21/2022

MISSISSIPPI OVERLOOK PARK
 CITY OF BAXTER
 BAXTER, MN
 EXHIBIT C

\\srm-01\staff\Project\SRF Consulting Group Inc -41968\2022-10461\CAD\Civil\baux2001\C-XR-2022-10461.dwg Plotted by NPK Plot Date: 8/4/2022 4:55:42 PM © 2022 WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Fig 20: Exhibit D - Easterly Future Road / Trail Corridor with Parking on Future Acquisition Parcel



IX. Acquisitions

This Master Plan recommends several land acquisitions to coincide with future Park developments. Wetlands are significant assets for the Park, but also pose problems for circulation. Land acquisitions adjacent to the Park property are recommended where infrastructure over wetlands is impractical or unfeasible. In total, four land acquisitions were identified to improve circulation around wetlands and to better provide quality user experiences near natural features.

The first recommendation is for an approximately 10-acre acquisition spanning Pike Creek between the two major upland Park units. Pike Creek, with its steep banks and wide adjacent wetlands, is perhaps the most significant barrier to circulation in the Park. Traversing the creek east-west within the confines of the existing Park property would be a difficult, costly, and environmentally harmful task. The recommended land acquisition to the south would reduce the required infrastructure to span Pike Creek from approximately 1,200 linear feet to 300 feet. In addition to ease of construction, cost savings, and reduction of environmental impacts, this recommended acquisition will provide users a more continuous experience along Pike Creek and help clarify Park boundaries.

The second recommendation is for an approximately 1-acre acquisition at the mouth of Pike Creek. Where Pike Creek flows in the Mississippi River, a small portion of land northeast of the creek is privately-owned. For Park users, this boundary is less intuitive than the creek itself. Signage serves to instruct Park users of the Park boundary, but may ultimately fail to keep users from venturing into the creek. The recommended acquisition would provide the Park with a natural boundary and, as above, provide users with a more continuous experience along Pike Creek and the Mississippi River.

The third recommendation is for an approximately 4-acre acquisition where a large wetland restricts circulation along the existing east-west utility corridor. Existing trails already extend off-property to circumnavigate this wetland. Similar to the 10-acre acquisition recommended for Pike Creek, this acquisition would reduce the required infrastructure to span the wetland. Approximately 1,300 linear feet of infrastructure would be required to cross the wetland within the confines of the existing Park property. The recommended acquisition may make it possible to circumnavigate the wetland without boardwalks or bridges, but those elements should be considered in some capacity for experiential reasons.

The fourth recommendation is for an approximately 16-acre acquisition to the east of the original City Park. This acquisition would help provide access from Paris Rd and would offer an alternative location for a parking lot nearer the Mississippi River, as shown in Option A. Furthermore, such an acquisition would give the City of Baxter the option to site amenities not permitted in the current Park property due to allowable uses attached to grant funding from the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) and the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Such amenities identified in the preferred Master Plan include a 20-car parking lot, trailhead, off-leash dog park, and mountain bike skills course.

Fig 21:
Potential Acquisitions



X. ADA

Feedback gathered during the public process indicated a strong desire for improving accessibility of the existing woodchip trail and future trails within the Park. Access for people with disabilities, as laid out in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and non-motorized access from adjacent residential areas and trails are important features for future users, as well as parking and a trailhead nearer the river.

Improving access to the Mississippi River should be a priority for future developments in the Park. Roadway access, conveniently-located trailheads and parking lots, and a well-connected network of accessible paved trails would help users of all abilities access an invaluable local natural resource and the greater Park landscape.

The implementation of barrier-free design principles should be integrated wherever possible to meet the needs of all Park visitors using Park amenities. All hard surface trails and paving areas should strive to meet ADA design requirements (for slope, width, and surface characteristics) to provide equal access to all recreational amenities and activities. Some limitations may be present for making all trail systems accessible because of their remote location, proximity to existing steep terrain, or unsuitable surfacing for accommodating wheelchair use.

XI. Operations & Maintenance

Operations

The City of Baxter will operate the Mississippi River Overlook Park using professional staff in the Public Works Department and in accordance with City of Baxter policies, guidelines, and codes. The City of Baxter Code specifies rules and regulations in order to provide for the safe and peaceful public use of parks and facilities and for the safety and general welfare of the public. Baxter parks are open to the public year-round, from 6 AM to 10 PM.

The Baxter Police Department is the law enforcement agency responsible for providing a safe environment in City parks.

Maintenance

The City of Baxter will maintain the Mississippi River Overlook Park in a safe, clean, and usable manner. Maintenance is an important part of providing high-quality customer service and meeting park user expectations.

Maintenance operations include routine specialized and seasonal tasks and inspections. On occasion this may include extraordinary maintenance due to unforeseen events. Routine maintenance tasks include mowing, sweeping, trash clean-up, and building and restroom cleaning. Specialized maintenance includes tasks such as tree removal, pothole patching, culvert replacement, etc. Seasonal maintenance including inspection, minor repairs and spring/fall cleanup. Extraordinary maintenance occurs in response to storm damage, vandalism or other planned circumstances.

Park facilities and buildings are inspected annually in the spring as part of the pre-season maintenance program and are then inspected periodically by City maintenance staff as part of ongoing operations. Minor facilities repair is handled on a timely basis, and probable major repair needs are evaluated and recommended to city management for planning or engineering review.

The City of Baxter maintains vegetative clearances so as not to negatively affect roadway and trail use or sight lines. Vegetation control includes addressing vegetation control along road and trail shoulders such as mowing, but it also includes managing vegetation in the wider corridor.

The Mississippi River Overlook Park roads and paved trails will receive scheduled striping, seal coating, and redevelopment under the City's pavement management program and in accordance with city standards and as funding permits.

XII. Staging

Project staging helps divide large and unwieldy projects into smaller projects. Staging is an important feature of managing large projects because it allows for focused project planning, scoping, and management for clients; feasible funding strategies and specific project budgets; and better-organized construction phasing. The following phases serve as a general outline for possible staging of future improvements at Mississippi River Overlook Park. Projects phases and individual items may be adjusted per available funds, partnerships, or as a result of other factors.

Phase One

Estimated Cost: \$6,013,000

Roads, Trails, and Parking

- Access road from Paris Rd to new parking lot and trailhead
- 80-car parking lot
- ADA-accessible multiuse trail parallel to access road, plus a loop near the trailhead and river
- ADA-accessible sidewalk between parking lot and trailhead amenities

Park Elements

- Vault toilets near parking lot and trailhead

Site Furnishings

- Interpretive and wayfinding signage near trailhead and river
- Picnic tables, benches, bike racks, and bike repair station near parking lot, trailhead, and river

Phase Two

Estimated Cost: \$1,370,000

Roads, Trails, and Parking

- Natural surface trails throughout park, including but not limited to hiking trails, cross country ski trails, and mountain bike trails

Architectural Elements

- Small and large gathering shelters near parking lot and trailhead
- Amphitheater-style outdoor classroom near trailhead and river

Park Elements

- Elevated river pier for improved access
- Canoe launch near river
- Overlook areas along paved and natural surface trail networks

Site Furnishings

- Interpretive and wayfinding signage along natural surface trail network
- Picnic tables and tent campsites near river

Phase Three

Estimated Cost: \$852,000

Park Elements

- Ages 5-12 natural play area near parking lot and trailhead

Site Furnishings

- Interpretive and wayfinding signage near ongoing conservation and restoration efforts
- Picnic tables near trailhead and restored areas

Site Restoration

- Perennial plantings in construction-impacted areas and for general beautification
- Restoration of upland areas with native plantings and site improvements
- Restoration of wetland areas and streams with native plantings and site improvements

XIII. Cost Estimates

Notes

1. Single-phase electrical service. Assumes above-ground poles and wiring to access site.
2. Assumes two 3" lifts for 6" pavement thickness, base material.
3. Assumes two 3" lifts for 6" pavement thickness, base material and concrete curb and gutter.
4. Assumes 3" pavement thickness.
5. Assumes 4" pavement thickness.
6. Includes clearing and grubbing of vegetation.
7. Structure size is 20' x 20'.
8. Structure size is 40' x 52'.
9. Site area is 5,000 sq ft.
10. Cost for one toilet.
11. Includes wood mulch and concrete curb.
12. Price includes wood deck and helical piers.
13. Price includes gradual grading to water.

UNIT LEGEND: LS=Lump Sum, SF=Square Feet, SY=Square Yard, EA=Each,
LF=Lineal Foot, CY=Cubic Yards, AC=Acre

City of Baxter Mississippi River Overlook Park

Phase 1

Preliminary Construction Estimate (2022 Dollars)

Notes	Utilities		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
	Water Service	LF	\$75	4000	\$300,000
	Sanitary Sewer Service	LF	\$100	4000	\$400,000
1	Electrical Service	LF	\$2	4000	\$8,000
	Parking Lot Lighting	EA	\$9,000	10	\$90,000
Subtotal					\$798,000
Notes	Asphalt, Concrete & Surfacing		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
2	Bituminous Roadway	SY	\$150	9850	\$1,477,500
3	Bituminous 80-Car Parking Lot	SY	\$250	3750	\$937,500
4	Bituminous Trail	SY	\$125	1500	\$187,500
5	Concrete Sidewalk (8' width)	LF	\$45	2400	\$108,000
Subtotal					\$2,710,500
Notes	Site Furnishings		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
	Interpretive & Wayfinding Signage	EA	\$2,500	4	\$10,000
	Picnic Table	EA	\$1,600	4	\$6,400
	Bench	EA	\$1,600	4	\$6,400
	Bike Rack	EA	\$1,000	20	\$20,000
	Bike Repair Station	EA	\$3,000	1	\$3,000
Subtotal					\$45,800
Notes	Park Elements		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
10	Vault Toilet	LS	\$25,000	2	\$50,000
Subtotal					\$50,000
SUBTOTAL IMPROVEMENTS*					\$3,600,000
Erosion Control, 3%*					\$108,000
Construction Surveying, 8%*					\$288,000
Mobilization, 5%*					\$180,000
SUBTOTAL 2					\$4,176,000
Construction Contingency, 20%*					\$835,000
SUBTOTAL 3					\$5,011,000
Design & Engineering Contingency, 20%*					\$1,002,000
GRAND TOTAL					\$6,013,000

* Figure has been rounded.

UNIT LEGEND: LS=Lump Sum, SF=Square Feet, SY=Square Yard, EA=Each,
LF=Lineal Foot, CY=Cubic Yards, AC=Acre

**City of Baxter Mississippi River Overlook Park
Phase 2**

Preliminary Construction Estimate (2022 Dollars)

Notes	Asphalt, Concrete & Surfacing		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
6	Natural Surface Trail	LF	\$8	24300	\$194,400
Subtotal					\$194,400
Notes	Architectural Elements		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
7	Small Shelter	LS	\$75,000	2	\$150,000
8	Large Shelter	LS	\$250,000	1	\$250,000
9	Outdoor Classroom (Amphitheater)	LS	\$120,000	1	\$120,000
Subtotal					\$520,000
Notes	Park Elements		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
12	Elevated River Pier	EA	\$35,000	1	\$35,000
13	Canoe Launch	EA	\$1,200	1	\$1,200
	Overlook	EA	\$5,000	8	\$40,000
Subtotal					\$76,200
Notes	Site Furnishings		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
	Interpretive & Wayfinding Signage	EA	\$2,500.00	6	\$15,000
	Picnic Table	EA	\$1,600.00	4	\$6,400
	Camp Fire Ring	EA	\$2,000.00	4	\$8,000
Subtotal					\$29,400
SUBTOTAL IMPROVEMENTS*					\$820,000
Erosion Control, 3%*					\$25,000
Construction Surveying, 8%*					\$66,000
Mobilization, 5%*					\$41,000
SUBTOTAL 2					\$952,000
Construction Contingency, 20%*					\$190,000
SUBTOTAL 3					\$1,142,000
Design & Engineering Contingency, 20%*					\$228,000
GRAND TOTAL					\$1,370,000

* Figure has been rounded.

UNIT LEGEND: <u>LS</u> =Lump Sum, <u>SF</u> =Square Feet, <u>SY</u> =Square Yard, <u>EA</u> =Each, <u>LF</u> =Lineal Foot, <u>CY</u> =Cubic Yards, <u>AC</u> =Acre					
City of Baxter Mississippi River Overlook Park					
Phase 3					
Preliminary Construction Estimate (2022 Dollars)					
Notes	Park Elements		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
11	5-12 Playground/Natural Play Area	EA	\$95,000	1	\$95,000
Subtotal					\$95,000
Notes	Site Furnishings		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
	Interpretive & Wayfinding Signage	EA	\$2,500	4	\$10,000
	Picnic Table	EA	\$1,600	3	\$4,800
Subtotal					\$14,800
Notes	Landscape/Site Restoration		Unit Price (in Dollars)		Total (In Dollars)
	Perennial Plantings	SF	\$20	6000	\$120,000
	Upland Restoration	AC	\$9,500.00	15	\$142,500
	Wetland Restoration	AC	\$9,500.00	15	\$142,500
Subtotal					\$405,000
SUBTOTAL IMPROVEMENTS*					\$510,000
Erosion Control, 3%*					\$15,000
Construction Surveying, 8%*					\$41,000
Mobilization, 5%*					\$26,000
SUBTOTAL 2					\$592,000
Construction Contingency, 20%*					\$118,000
SUBTOTAL 3					\$710,000
Design & Engineering Contingency, 20%*					\$142,000
GRAND TOTAL					\$852,000

* Figure has been rounded.

XIV. Funding Implementation Strategy

To be completed upon approval.

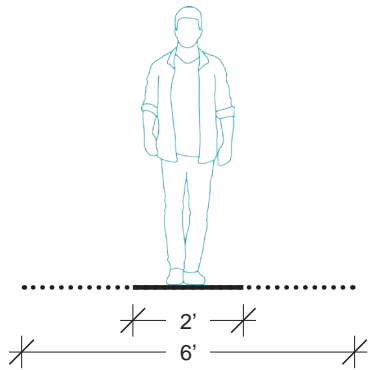
Appendix

Walking Trails



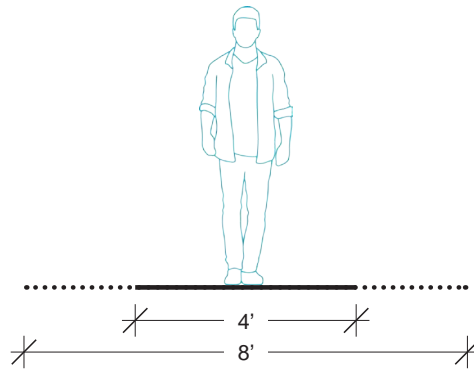
Soft Surface

Surface Grass, dirt, gravel
Width 2-6'



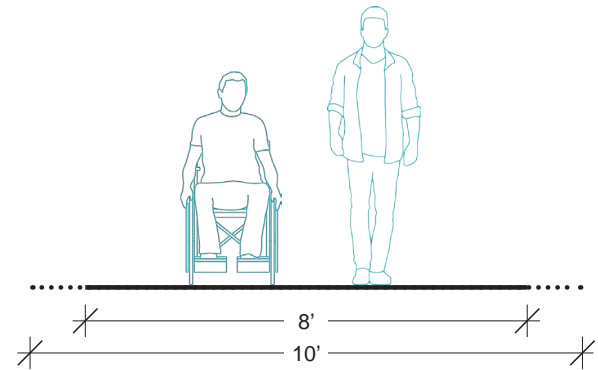
Boardwalk

Surface Wood, wood composite, metal
Width 4-8'



Paved (multiuse)

Surface Asphalt, concrete
Width 8-10'



“Trail Classifications and General Characteristics.”
Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines.
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2007.

Skiing Trails



Single Classic Track

Surface Width Snow, groomed or ungroomed
6'



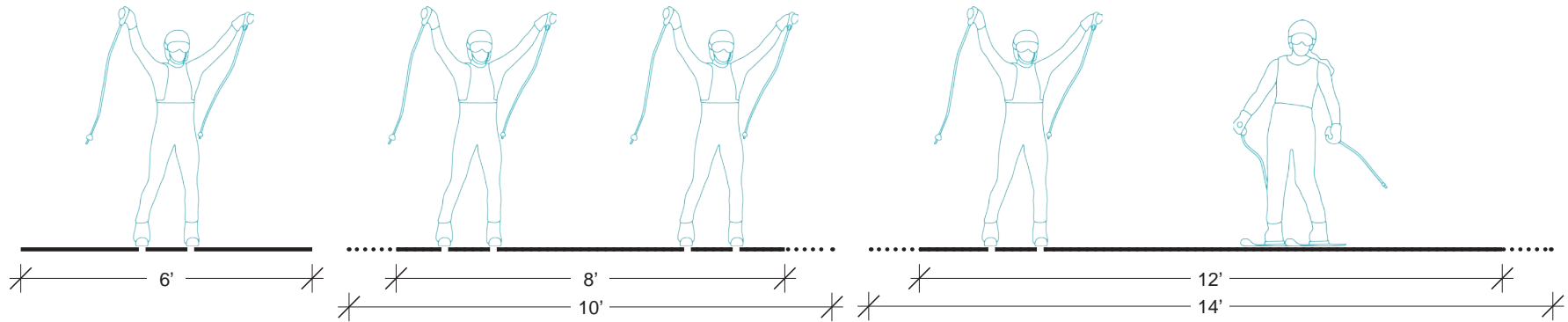
Double Classic Track

Surface Width Snow, groomed or ungroomed
8-10'



Single Classic Track + Single Skate Lane

Surface Width Snow, groomed
12-14'



“Trail Classifications and General Characteristics.”
Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines.
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2007.

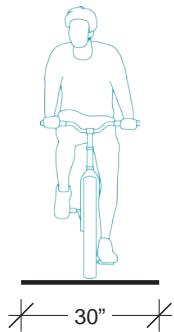
Biking Trails



Fatbiking

Surface
Width

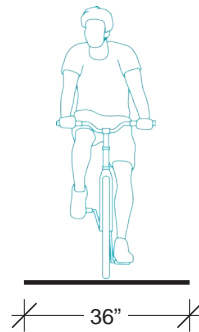
Snow, groomed or ungroomed
30"



Easy Mountain Biking

Surface
Width

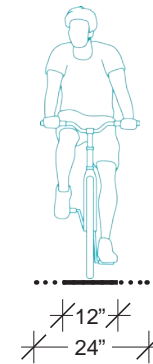
Dirt
36"



Difficult to Very Difficult Mountain Biking

Surface
Width

Dirt
12-24"



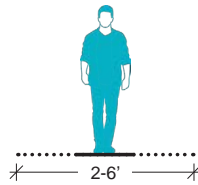
“Trail Classifications and General Characteristics.”
Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines.
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2007.

Trail Type

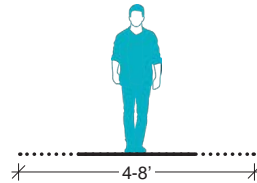
Dimensions

Other Uses

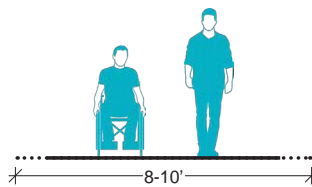
Walking /
Soft Surface
Grass, dirt, gravel



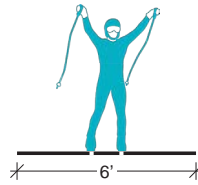
Walking /
Boardwalk
Wood, wood composite, metal



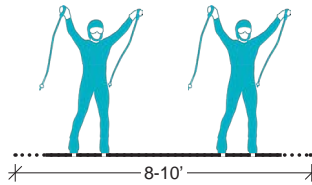
Multiuse /
Paved
Asphalt, concrete



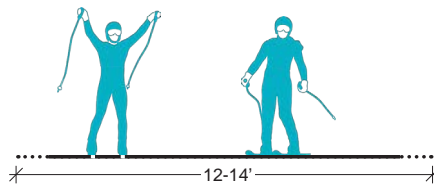
Skiing /
Single Classic Track
Snow, groomed or ungroomed



Skiing /
Double Classic Track
Snow, groomed or ungroomed



Skiing /
**Single Classic Track +
Single Skate Lane**
Snow, groomed



Trail Type

Dimensions

Other Uses

Biking /
Fatbiking
Snow, groomed or ungroomed



Biking /
Easy Mountain Biking
Natural or stabilized surface



Biking /
Difficult to Very Difficult Mountain Biking
Natural or stabilized surface

