

City of Richland Center

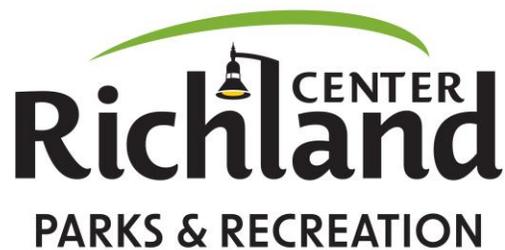
COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

2026 - 2030

Prepared for Richland Center City Council by

Richland Center Park Board & Public Works Committee

DECEMBER 2, 2025



450 S. MAIN STREET,
RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581

**CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER
RESOLUTION 2025-___**

RESOLUTION ADOPTING UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Center has historically maintained a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to guide recreational planning and preserve eligibility for state and federal outdoor recreation funding programs; and

WHEREAS, to maintain the City’s eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Stewardship, LAWCON, and other cost-sharing grant programs, this plan must be updated every five years; and

WHEREAS, the updated 2026–2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the City of Richland Center has been prepared through coordination with the Park Board, the Public Works Department, and community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the updated plan reflects sound planning principles, community-identified priorities, and long-range goals for the City’s parks, trails, and outdoor recreation system;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Richland Center City Council hereby goes on record to adopt the updated Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as the City’s guide for future outdoor recreation improvements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City requests the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to maintain the City of Richland Center’s eligibility for participation in LAWCON, Stewardship, and other recreation-related grant programs for the duration of this five-year planning period.

ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Richland Center on this 2nd day of December by the following vote: AYES: _____, NOS: _____

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER
RICHLAND COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Todd Coppernoll, Mayor

Attest:

Misty Molzof, Deputy Clerk

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the City of Richland Center is an expression of the community's recreation goals and objectives, as well as current and future needs and demands for recreational facilities. The intent of this document is to plan for the maintenance and improvement of Richland Center's recreational and open space resources by outlining a strategy to manage existing resources wisely and to develop new resources to meet future needs and demands.

Parks can serve a limited neighborhood area, a portion of the community, or the entire community or region and provide open space and facilities for outdoor recreation for residents and visitors. Open space can take the form of parks, greenbelts, wetlands, and floodplain. Open space can also serve many functions for a community other than recreation, such as the following:

- preservation of scenic and natural resources
- flood management
- protecting the area's water resources
- preserving prime agricultural land
- limiting development that may occur
- buffering incompatible land uses
- structuring the community environment

A well-designed park and facilities plan should incorporate private as well as public open space areas in the community. The development and continual updating of the outdoor recreation plan becomes an asset to a community and contributes to its stability and attractiveness.

PLAN PURPOSE

The specific purpose of this plan is to guide the development and improvement of the City's outdoor recreation facilities over the next five years to meet the recreational needs and demands of the residents, as well as protect and enhance the City's natural and historical resources. By developing short-term plans and long-term goals, the City can identify and accommodate necessary changes to the parks, open space and outdoor recreational needs for the residents of Richland Center. The City is also able to identify areas where achievements have been made in previous plans and use these as guidelines for developing future plans.

Policy decisions made by the Richland Center Park Board, the Public Works Committee and the Richland Center City Council for park programs and improvements shall be guided by the goals, objectives, findings and recommendations of this adopted plan. Actual public policy decisions or choices are contingent on funding sources, new opportunities and ideas, changing growth patterns, budget priorities, and changing community needs and desires. For this reason, the plan should be reviewed annually, and a detailed update such as this should be completed every five years. Updating the plan every five years is also a requirement of the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for a community such as Richland Center to stay eligible for matching government funds for parkland acquisition and facility improvements. Just as importantly, the City of Richland Center needs to set a course of action for continued improvement of its parks and outdoor recreation system.

SUMMARY OF PAST PLANS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Most of the short-term recommendations from the 2021 Comprehensive Outdoor Plan have been completed, under the assistance of the Department of Buildings and Grounds. Additionally, several long-term recommendations identified in the previous plan have also been completed. All of the city's Ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash Borer were removed from parks, boulevards and private residences, and many new varieties were planted in their place.

Krouskop Park

Updated playground equipment and Generational Face-to-Face Swings and repainted spring toys.
Removed failing storage sheds, upgrades to ball field lighting, new concrete for four dugouts.
Constructed a 24-page Story walk in collaboration with the Brewer Public Library.
Resurfaced the basketball court and added new posts, sand and nets for the volleyball courts.
Fire rings were added to each campsite as well as refreshed gravel drive and pads.
Installed informational signs donated by the Lions Club and a historical sign for a local resident politician.

North Park

Upgrades to ball field lighting, two new dugouts and new roofs on two existing dugouts constructed in collaboration with RCYBS and RSD Building and Construction staff and students.
Parking lot enhancements and refreshed gravel walking trails
Cleared trees and brush away from outfield fences and footbridge

North Park Pond

Tree and brush trimming and new aerators installed.

Lions Park

Developed a remote-control racetrack.
Fire rings were added to each campsite as well as refreshed gravel drive and pads.

Old Mill Pond Park

Updated playground equipment, adding a Generational Face-to-face swing.
Fire rings were added to each campsite as well as refreshed gravel drive and pads.
Installed informational signs donated by the Lions Club.
Trees planted in collaboration with the RSD students and teachers.

Wedgewood South Park

New shelter donated by the Rotary Club.
Installed new ADA kayak landing donated by a local family in memory of their loved one.

Downtown District

Installed new garbage cans donated by the Lions Club. Established a designate bike route.

Pine River Recreational Trail

Installed new trailhead signage donated by the Symons Foundation.

City Branding

Installed new wayfinding signage city wide. Installed new brand signage at the entrances to the city.

Safe Routes to Schools

Installed new paved and gravel trail access to schools in collaboration with Southwest Partners.

PLANNING PROCESS

This section of the report will give a brief description of the sequence of events that will be taking place during the development of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. It will also describe the process that can be used to amend the plan.

PROCESS DESCRIPTION

The City of Richland Center has had an outdoor recreation plan for many years. Department Heads will have a working session to update the inventory of city park and recreation areas. The need to update the City's goals and objectives to guide the recreation planning process will also be discussed.

Following that work session, an initial meeting will be held with the Richland Center Parks Board to go over the state's planning guidelines for the outdoor recreation plan update and to discuss the recreation facility needs at each of the parks in the community. The committee will develop its goals and objectives, with input from the general public. The committee will review the inventory material prepared by the Recreation Director along with the help of the Public Works team. The committee will also review the listing of needs and priorities from the southern district of the state, identified in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which will serve as a general guide when developing the local needs assessment. The recreation standards being used in the planning process will also be discussed, which include both the open space standards and the recreation facility standards supplied by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

While the committee is going through the steps of assessing the recreation needs in each sector of the community, comments and suggestions from the public should be encouraged. The committee may also explore other opportunities for eliciting public comment, such as appointing a citizen advisory group or conducting a survey of recreation needs. The committee should also refer to the minutes and records of past meetings for information and ideas expressed regarding the park and recreation facilities needed.

During this public participation stage, the committee will come up with a comprehensive listing of park and recreation needs for the City and School District. The City's Recreation Director will work with school officials to identify any additional recreation facility needs the school district has identified in recent years, for inclusion in the plan. The need to acquire additional land and develop completely new facilities in areas of the community not presently served by a park will also be discussed. The various recommendations for upgrading and improving the City's park system will then be prioritized for inclusion in the "Action Program" portion of the report.

The City Recreation Director will then develop a preliminary draft of the updated comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, based on the recommendations of the Richland Center Parks Board, the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and citizens in the community. The Recreation Director along with the help of the Director of Public Works will also assist with the preparation of materials pertaining to ADA requirements in each park, a capital improvements schedule for the recommended park improvements, and an operations and maintenance schedule to be included in the appendix of this report.

The updated report will then be reproduced in draft form and copies given to the members of the Richland Center Parks Board and Public Works Committee for their review and approval. After suggesting any minor revisions to the report, the Parks Board will be asked to endorse the draft comprehensive outdoor recreation plan as their guide for future decisions related to park development in the City of Richland Center. They will also be taking action to recommend the draft plan, as revised, to the Richland Center City Council for adoption.

The final report will be reproduced and copies given to members of the Richland Center City Council for their review. They will also be given a copy of a proposed resolution recommending adoption of the plan as the City's official park and recreation plan for the next five-year period. Following adoption, the plan and resolution will be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources requesting re-certification for participation in the State's park and recreation cost-sharing programs.

AMENDING THE PLAN

Plan amendments are common and should be considered part of the planning process. They frequently represent good implementation or plan usage and should be acceptable for consideration by local decision-makers. Amendments must follow the same process as when the original plan was prepared. Amendments generally prolong the effectiveness of the original plan.

The process, then, of amending the city's comprehensive outdoor recreation plan would involve several meetings with the Recreation Director, the Public Works Committee & Parks Board, depending on the extent of changes that are being proposed in the amendment. At the least, there should be an opportunity for public input in the plan amendment process, a full and open discussion of the need for the amendment by the City Parks Board, the development of a draft amendment that is reviewed and acted on by the committee at an official public meeting, the referral of the recommended amendment to the City Council for action, and finally, the adoption of the plan amendment by the Council.

This City Council action on the plan amendment should be by written resolution so that a copy of the resolution can be sent to the Department of Natural Resources for re-certification of the City's comprehensive outdoor recreation plan with the new provisions incorporated therein. The plan amendment will not be effective until a letter is received back from the Department of Natural Resources indicating their receipt and approval of the amendment.

SUMMARY

When people talk about the places they love in the city or neighborhood, parks are typically at the top of the list. They are sources of civic identity and pride, and parks and recreation are also essential to the physical, economic, environmental, and social health of cities and their residents. Quality parks, along with schools and access to transportation, are typically the top three criteria people consider when choosing a place to live.

The plan provides a road map for system revitalization and expansion, fostering strong partnerships to create safe and welcoming parks and recreation facilities for the current community as well as for the future. Strong working partnerships were formed with residents of the City and County as well as Southwest Partners, to make these plans a reality. Social trends have continued to set high demands on time spent outdoors, and to continue to adapt we must provide recreational and alternative transportation opportunities that are easily accessible and safe, that entice the user to reconnect with nature, that promote active lifestyles and are family friendly on a multi-generational level. The accomplishments of the last five years are an excellent precursor to the best laid plans for the next five years.

CHAPTER 2: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OVERALL SYSTEM

This section of the plan presents the goals and objectives that are being used to guide the park and recreation program in the City of Richland Center. There are five basic goals that address the community-wide system of parks, encourage coordinated planning in the operation and improvement of the parks to create more welcoming spaces, and promote the conservation/enhancement of natural resources for recreational purposes.

The goals are followed by a listing of objectives. While each of the goals point toward a desired outcome, the objectives are more specific in terms of listing the types of things that need to be worked on to achieve the goal. The goals and objectives serve as a guide for the preparation of plans for specific improvements, policies and programs.

Goal #1: Maintain a community-wide system of outdoor recreation spaces to ensure all current and future residents have safe and equitable opportunities to access them.

Objectives:

1. Provide park and recreation facilities that adequately serve all areas of the community and accommodate all user groups.
2. Evaluate existing outdoor recreation facilities, schools and industrial parks to provide safe and adequate accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles; including street crossings, adequate lighting and visibility.
3. Ensure all outdoor recreation facilities and programs are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), identify inadequacies and create a transition plan for future compliance.

Goal #2: Continue to promote a system of community parks that focuses on the conservation, protection and enhancement of natural resources in the community and make them available for recreational use.

Objectives:

1. Consider environmental impacts when developing all types of outdoor recreational facilities.
2. Utilize sensitive environmental areas for passive recreation. Provide for buildings, intensive and active recreation in the least environmentally sensitive areas.
3. Preserve or acquire properties that are environmentally unique or sensitive, and allow for wildlife watching, whenever feasible. Ensure planning aligns with environmental sustainability goals.
4. Enhance and protect streams for water quality and develop creative stormwater management areas as we adapt to the ever-changing climate.

Goal #3: Operate and conduct planning, acquisition and development in a way that respects and utilizes participation from the public, the school district, various civic groups, and takes advantage of the resources available at the county, regional and state levels.

Objectives:

1. Continue to work with recreational users, neighbors, civic groups, the school district and other interested parties to determine park operation, planning and development.
2. Incorporate an equity analysis into the park planning process to eliminate potential redundancies and inadequacies in our park systems.

Goal #4: Operate and improve the community park system and recreation facilities, in an efficient and organized manner.

Objectives:

1. Use the community outdoor recreation plan to develop a capital improvements schedule/budget for guiding future park acquisitions and improvement projects.
2. Use city, county, state, federal, and private resources to develop and maintain high quality park and recreation facilities.
3. Utilize the skills and energy of city, county, and regional staff in facility planning, development and operation.

Goal #5: Establish a trail system connecting city and county parks and promote tourism to the area.

Objectives:

1. Continue to collaborate and support projects proposed by Richland County and work towards connecting city & county trails and routes.
2. Continue to cooperate with Richland County to market our resources to attract non-resident visitors who value those that may not be readily available to them.
3. Identify future funding sources available.

CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PLANNING REGION

This section of the report will give a brief description of some of the social and physical factors affecting future recreational development in the City of Richland Center. These factors are important to understanding the community and its recreational needs and potentials.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY

Richland Center is located in approximately the center of Richland County and is serviced by two principal highways - U.S. Highway 14 (east/west traffic) and State Highway 80 (north/south traffic). The population of Richland Center is expected to increase, despite slight population declines elsewhere in Richland County.

POPULATION TRENDS

1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
5086	4997	5018	5114	5184	5186	5193	5016	4513	3913	3301

https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Population_Projections.aspx.

Richland Center's population is expected to decline in the coming years, but its members continue to push forward to defy the projections by adding housing and new local business as well as increasing the tourism offerings of the region. A healthy industrial community, strong collaborations between City and County as well as the ever-growing Richland School District, the ability to provide centralized service and distribution of goods, the influx of rural residents for retirement, outdoor recreation activities, raising a family, economic reasons and new growth and housing development to both the east and west are all part of the vision. It is evident that Richland Center's reputation being a good place to live has attracted people from outside the city and county. Recent top scoring schools, bountiful indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and a stable local government provide strong evidence that Richland Center is working hard to offer its citizens the "good life."

There is a direct relationship between population and the need for parks and recreational space. Predicting how the population might grow in the future provides important information about the amount of new parkland and recreational facilities that will be needed to serve the new populations. The City of Richland Center has had a stable population over the last 50 years. Since 1970, the population has grown by only 107 people. The highest ten-year period of growth in that time frame was between the years 1990 and 2000 when the population grew by 96.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION

To better understand the recreational needs and potential of the community, it is helpful to have an analysis of the physical environment of the region in which the community is situated. This section summarizes the natural resource base information for southwestern Wisconsin as compiled by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Regional Settings: Richland Center is in the five-county area of southwestern Wisconsin. The southwestern Wisconsin region occupies an area of nearly two and one-half million acres in the extreme southwestern corner of Wisconsin and includes the five counties of Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland. Except for the southeastern two-thirds of Green County, the region falls entirely within the so-called "Driftless Area" of

Wisconsin. Because of the lack of glaciation, streams have continued their weathering process, uninterrupted, for many thousands of years, resulting in a complete absence of any natural lakes within the region.

Climate: The climate of Richland Center and the surrounding Richland County is continental and typical of the central areas of a continent in the middle latitudes; winters are relatively cold and snowy with extended periods of rain during the spring and autumn and intermittent periods of hot, humid summer weather. Air temperatures within the County are subject to large seasonal change and yearly variations. Precipitation in Richland Center and Richland County for the six-month period from April through September falls largely as rainfall and may range in intensity and duration from showers to destructive thunderstorms. The average snowfall for Richland County is about 40 inches annually. Prevailing winds are westerly in winter and southerly in summer.

Topography: Richland Center and the surrounding Richland County are located entirely within the Western Upland, a thorough dissected highland. The average elevation in Richland County is between 900 to 1200 feet above sea level, where the area immediately adjacent to the highland averages 600 to 900 feet in elevation. Aside from the Upland itself, the strongest topographic features of the region are the trenches of the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers and their numerous branches. One of the most dominant topographic features of the region is Military Ridge. The Ridge is the divide between the north flowing tributaries of the Wisconsin River and the south flowing streams tributary to the Rock and Mississippi Rivers. The entire region, except for the eastern half of Green County and a small portion of southeast Lafayette County, is characterized by rugged, steep-walled valleys and high relief. As mentioned earlier, the region is generally referred to as the Driftless Area which preserves a large sample of what the rest of Wisconsin, as well as the northern and eastern United States were like before the Glacial Period.

Soils: Throughout the Driftless Area the work of weathering has continued since long before the Glacial Period and has produced a deep mantle of residual soil. This forms a notable contrast with the remainder of the State, where the continental glacier scraped away nearly all the residual soil and left a sheet of transported soil. Generally, the solids of the region have been classified as the Grayish-Brown Unglaciated Silt Loam, hilly or steep. Their soils were formed from parent materials reflecting native vegetation such as prairie, oak-hickory, forestry and oak savannas. Their basic materials include clay residue from weathered limestone, weathered sandstone, loess and stream-laid sand and gravel. The latter occurs in valleys of large streams, while the first three are widespread. The entire southwest Wisconsin region is covered with a thick blanket of loess (windblown silt and sand). Over most of the region the loess is largely silt and is two to three feet thick. In addition, some sandy areas along the Wisconsin River have active dunes.

Forests: The southwestern Wisconsin region comprising Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, and Richland Counties has an area of 2,380,900 acres of which 445,300 acres are classified as forestlands. A breakdown by percentage shows 18.71 percent of the region is classed as forestland and 81.29 percent is classed as non-forest land. In addition, there are 149,700 acres of land classed as wooded pasture in the non-forest category.

Water Resources: Two major rivers form boundaries of counties within the region. The Wisconsin River forms the northern boundary of Iowa and Grant Counties, and the southern boundary of Richland County; and the Mississippi River forms the western boundary of Grant and Crawford Counties. In addition, the area is transverse by several smaller rivers and streams that flow to either the Wisconsin or Mississippi Rivers. As mentioned above, there are no natural lakes in the region because the area was never covered by glaciers. However, there are a few man-made lakes in the region, most of which are in the state parks or other public recreation areas.

CHAPTER 4: SERVICE STANDARDS

RECREATION OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has endorsed a park and open space classification system which will serve as a guide throughout much of this plan. These standards pertain only to parks, recreation lands, and other open spaces discussed in this plan. Standards can be a good starting point or reference when determining a community's outdoor recreation land and facility needs, however each community's needs are different based on such factors as a community's demographic profile and what types of facilities and outdoor recreation priorities the citizenry deem important.

Resident input in the form of surveys and/or public hearings are also important when recreation and park planners look at future development and/or preservation of public lands. Based on recommendations from the DNR and Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the standard of 12 acres of developed park lands/open space per 1,000 population is used throughout this plan. This figure is viewed as a target number when recreation and park planners analyze a community's park, recreation land, and open space composition.

NRPA's standards have been modified to more accurately define park, recreation land, and open spaces within the City of Richland Center. For example, NRPA recommends that a Neighborhood Park/Playground have a desirable size of 15+ acres. In Richland Center, most parks of this nature are in the 1 to 10-acre range. This has been noted in the definition section below. All parks, recreation lands, and open space under the jurisdiction of either the City of Richland Center and the Richland Center School District have been assigned one primary classification or code using the following titles and abbreviations: **(M-P) Mini-Park (a.k.a. Tot Lot); (NP/P) Neighborhood Park/Playground; (C/CP) City/County Park; (LP) Linear Park; (SU) Special Use Area.**

It should be noted that a particular site may contain one or more characteristics or components of another site. A definition of each type of park, recreation land and open space used in this plan is listed below:

Mini-Park (a.k.a. Tot Lot) (M-P)

Desirable/Typical Size: 1 acre or less

Service Area: One-eighth to one-fourth mile

Acres/1,000 Population: 0.5 to 1.0 acre

Use: Specialize facilities that serve a concentration of limited population or groups such as senior citizens or tots.

Site Characteristics: Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to concentrations of family housing or housing for the elderly.

Neighborhood Park/Playground (NP/P)

Desirable/Typical Size: 1 to 10 acres

Service Area: One-fourth to one-half mile radius

Acres/1,000 Population: 2 to 3 acres

Use: Area for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, ice skating, picnicking, volleyball, etc.

Site Characteristics: Suited for intense development; easily accessible to neighborhood population; geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. may be developed as a joint school/park facility.

City/Community Park (C/CP)

Desirable/Typical Size: 10 to 25+ acres

Service Area: One to two miles

Acres/1,000 Population: 6 to 8 acres

Use: Area of diverse environmental quality. May include acres suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes or large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing, sitting and picnicking. May be any combination of the above depending upon site suitability and community need.

Site Characteristics: May include natural features, such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easy access by all modes of transportation.

Linear Park (LP)

Desirable/Typical Size: Sufficient width to protect resource and provide maximum use

Service Area: No applicable standard

Acres/1,000 Population: Variable

Use: Area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel or activity such as hiking, biking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, fitness trails/cross-country skiing and canoeing. May include active play areas.

Site Characteristics: Built or natural corridors such as utility or railroad right-of-way, bluff lines, vegetation patterns and roads that link other components of the recreation system or community facilities such as school, libraries, commercial areas and other park areas.

Special Use Area (SU)

Desirable/Typical Size: Variable depending on type of facility

Service Area: Entire community

Acres/1,000 Population: Variable

Use: Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, zoos, conservancies, arboreta, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theatres, gun ranges, and downhill ski areas. Plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, or parkways as well.

Site Characteristics: Located within the community.

In summary, NRPA standards recommend the following acreages be used as guidelines when a community is trying to determine how much land should be allocated for the various types of parks:

Mini-Park (a.k.a. Tot Lot) (M-P)	0.5 - 1.0 acres per 1,000 population
Neighborhood Park/Playground (NP/P)	2.0 - 3.0 acres per 1,000 population
City/Community Park (C/CP)	6.0 - 8.0 acres per 1,000 population

RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Facility standards for the development of recreation facilities are like open space standards because they are expressed in facility units per population ratio. The purpose of evaluating a recreation system from a facility viewpoint, in addition to an open space viewpoint is to determine the amount of facility development needed in each recreation area.

Problems related to using facility development standards can be seen in the assumption of desired opportunities by the resident population. For example, an examination of the facilities standards may show that a horseshoe area is needed based on the municipality's population. In reality, it is possible that very few people in the community enjoy playing horseshoes, which may eliminate the need for this type of facility. Age, income, and education all contribute to people's recreational preferences, yet facility standards sometimes ignore these variables. Another problem with using standards is that they have been developed primarily for urban communities and have limited application to rural areas. Despite these problems, facility development standards have a place in recreation planning. Community leaders can use them to approximate the adequacy of their park systems.

A listing of recreation facility development standards, prepared by the National Recreation and Park Association, can be found in the appendix to this report (Appendix A).

NEEDS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE SCORP

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has prepared a State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) which evaluates the recreation needs of the entire state as well as the six multi-county DNR districts. The five counties in the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission are all included in DNR's Southern District (a fourteen-county district). A statewide assessment of outdoor recreation needs was conducted as part of the planning process in preparing this report. Each type of outdoor recreation activity was given a priority ranking-either "high" priority, "medium" priority, or "low" priority for the state as a whole as well as for each DNR district.

The procedure used by DNR to assess the need for various types of recreational activities involved various steps, including: 1) a county-by-county supply analysis, 2) statewide citizen surveys, and 3) the factoring of regional trends based on District meetings. The objectives of the recreation needs assessment were: 1) to assist sub-state jurisdictions in planning for outdoor recreation development and land acquisition, 2) to act as one of many decision-making tools in the Open Space Selection Process, which determines where funds from outdoor recreation aid programs will be directed, and 3) to combine the views and expert opinions of outdoor recreation enthusiasts with the actual supply of recreation facilities in order to synthesize perceived and actual need.

Through the needs assessment process, priorities were established for the Southern District, which includes Richland County and the City of Richland Center. The recreation activities and their priority status as outlined in the SCORP report are as follows:

High Priority: Hiking, walking, and running trails; public shore access to lakes, rivers and streams; kayaking, and canoeing; play equipment; historic sites; dog parks; sport courts for tennis, pickleball, basketball, etc.

Medium Priority: Picnicking; disc golf, soccer, baseball and softball; swimming pools and splash pads; fishing and boat launches; camping; bicycling trails and mountain biking; ATV/UTV's and snowmobiles; nature centers, activities and areas.

Low Priority: Interpretive trails; hunting and trapping opportunities; horseback riding.

Local officials in Richland Center referred to the SCORP report as a general guide when conducting the assessment of local needs. In particular, the priority ranking of recreation needs for DNR's Southern District was most useful. A summary of DNR's listing of priority needs for the Southern District is included in the appendices to this report, for reference purposes (refer to Appendix B). The summary provides a brief discussion of each activity as prioritized in the above listing.

CHAPTER 5: INVENTORY OF EXISTING FACILITIES

To determine what courses of action City Officials must take to provide a comprehensive recreation program, it is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of existing areas and facilities in meeting demands for recreation. This section of the report provides an inventory of Richland Center's recreational facilities. The location of all park and recreation areas is recorded on the map following this section.

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER OWNED PROPERTY

Krouskop Park (37.5 acres)

Krouskop Park is a park of citywide importance which also plays a major role in satisfying recreational demands of people residing elsewhere in Richland County. The park with the Pine River running through its center (12 1/2 acres on the north side and 25 acres on the south) provides many excellent recreation facilities for area residents.

The park contains a new family aquatic center that offers zero depth, water play activities, a lazy river, a tube slide, a diving board and a splash pad; a lighted athletic field complex that has fields for football, baseball, softball; one tennis court and 6 pickleball courts; one basketball full court (all lighted); an 18-hole Frisbee golf course; two sand volleyball courts; four horseshoe courts, picnic area with seven shelters, and over 100 picnic tables of which several are designed for use by disabled persons, two gazebos; a variety of playground apparatus; and new story walk trail. The park is ADA accessible. The park has several access points to the Pine River Trail as well as the Prairie Trails. Camping facilities have been developed, as well as an ADA canoe/kayak ramp.

A Community/Senior Center is located in the heart of Krouskop Park. It provides a multi-use facility with a well-equipped kitchen, a multi-purpose room for various events, a meeting room along with a Senior Center. The Parks and Recreation office is also located in the building. A considerable reach of the Pine River within the park boundaries allows easy water access for canoeing, fishing, and nature observation.

The Pine River dike provides Krouskop Park and the entire community with certain outdoor recreation opportunities not realized before. The top of the dike has been surfaced and signed for use as a multi-use recreational trail extending more than two miles through the entire length of the community (north/south direction). Ramps have been constructed to make the trail accessible for all. Krouskop Park is divided into four different areas-Krouskop Park, Krouskop Park East, Krouskop Park North, & Krouskop Park West.

This park hosts several special events including the annual Independence Day celebration. This celebration includes music, games, food and traditional fireworks display. Krouskop Park is also host to the Rotary Lights during the Christmas season. **CODE: C/CP**

North Park (12.5 acres)

North Park is located on the north side of the Pine River which is also divided by State Highway 80. This area was used previously as the city's solid waste disposal site. This park has one large shelter building that was converted to batting cages and one double shelter with concession stand in the middle, playground equipment, and a parking lot. Development of this park has alleviated some of the congestion being experienced in Krouskop Park. Soccer fields and two little league ball fields as well as a baseball field are also available. Part of North Park (on the north side) is undeveloped and will be reserved as a conservancy area for nature study, river trails and soccer fields. **CODE: C\CP**

North Park Pond (3.5 acres)

One important result of the Pine River dike project has been the development of a large drainage pond just north of the river to the west of State Highway 80. A picnic shelter with parking lot and ample picnic

tables are available to rent for gatherings. The park area around the pond is graded and landscaped, and the pond has aerators and fountains. An ADA accessible walkway leading to a fishing pier allows everyone the opportunity to fish the stocked pond. A free youth fishing tournament is held annually at this facility. **CODE: NP/P**

Old Mill Pond Park (3.5 acres)

This was the former site of the Community Center. The building has been removed but the site still remains an area for activities, due to the central location. The site is located adjacent to the Pine River so the land next to the river is utilized as a canoe launching facility as well as fishing facilities. The banks of the Pine River have been rip rapped to prevent erosion. This area also overlooks planted prairies in the millpond area. A community garden has been established. An updated ADA accessible canoe / kayak landing was installed, a large shelter was constructed, and both camping sites with electricity and without electricity were developed over the past 4 years. The area park also has new playground equipment and a basketball hoop. The park links to the Pine River Trails as well as the Prairie Trails. **CODE: SU**

Wedgewood Park (30 acres)

This park was developed in the summer of 2004. It is divided into two parks, Wedgewood North and Wedgewood South. This land is adjacent to the Pine River, and has about 2 miles of hiking trails, fishing areas, picnic tables, benches, a picnic shelter, and a parking lot. A large sitting area with a perennial bed, adjacent to an apartment complex for the elderly is also available. In 2020 a new picnic shelter was built by the Rotary at Wedgewood South. **CODE: SU**

West Side Park (3 acres)

West Side Park is a linear neighborhood park located on the west bank of the Mill Pond. It offers brand new playground equipment for recreational use. It also contains one end of the Mapleside Walking Bridge that provides west side residents access to the schools and business enterprises located in eastern Richland Center.

This park is also home to a large perennial flower garden with benches, trails, and trellis. The park also links to the Pine River trails, that run over two miles along the river. **CODE: NP/P**

Strickland Park (0.30 acre)

This is a small neighborhood park and playground which is surrounded by residential property. It also provides access to a hiking trail, which connects with the trail located on Miner Hill. This park is in need of a smaller shelter with picnic tables. **CODE: NP/P**

Miner Hill Trails Park (50 acres)

Miner Hill Bluff overlooks the city from its east side. The bluff features several trails that take hikers to five scenic overlooks, wooded areas, open meadows, and an old quarry site. Trailheads are on Court Street, County Highway N and at Strickland Park, where a parking area is provided. All trail overlooks are railed, and the trail itself is complete with signs. Several improvements were made to this park in recent years, including the addition of picnic facilities, improved fencing, and the opening of new areas for scenic overlooks. Plans continue to be made to improve the picnic area and to promote this area for hiking and picnicking. A special point of interest is a dynamite shack, built and used in the 50's and 60's. **CODE: LP**

Lions Park

Lions Park is currently located on HWY 80 North and is near the Pine River and has an easy access point with a canoe/kayak landing, along with two campsites and a remote car dirt track. A picnic shelter and volleyball court is on site with additional equipment planned. **CODE: NP/P**

Woodman Happy Tails Dog Park

Woodman Happy Tails Dog Park is located at 151 Industrial Drive and was completed in July of 2017. The park is approximately 2 acres in size and includes shaded rest areas for dogs and their owners, benches, along with water for drinking and waste receptacles. There are separate areas for large and small dogs to play safely. A shelter was constructed for gathering with friends. Plans continue to enhance the area including more dog play apparatuses. **CODE: SU**

Dike Project (approximately 65 acres)

In the early 1990's, the City of Richland Center and the State of Wisconsin constructed a dike system from the very North side of the town to the South side. This dike was built to alleviate the flooding that happened almost yearly. The ground maintenance of this dike has been maintained by the Parks and Grounds Department since the fall of 2003. Maintenance involves mowing, caring for over 1000 bushes and 300 trees, over four miles of fence, lighting, as well as the walking/biking trail that is on top of the dike. Changeover to LED lighting has begun from Highway 80 N to Highway 14 W. **CODE: SU**

Pine River Walking Trail

A 6-mile walking trail along the Pine River beginning at County AA and ending at Bohmann Drive features 5 canoe ports and 5 fishing platforms. Plans are to enhance the Pine River by adding riprap to increase trout habitat. Groomed cross-country ski trails are incorporated into these trails for winter use. **CODE: SU**

City of Richland Center Prairie (37 acres)

A prairie restoration project was started in 2003 in the drained lakebed next to the Pine River. Half of the 37 acres on the south side were randomly planted with a variety of native prairie flowers. A wildlife scrape was added to the north part of the lakebed. A semi-prairie and wildlife watching area, with some walking trails throughout the prairie have been established that connect to the Pine River Trail. **CODE: SU**

Ocooch Living History Center & Gardens

The gardens are composed of low maintenance plants including hostas, iris, tree peonies, poppies tulips, daffodils, and daylilies, creating a long blooming season. This was created to be a botany garden of the highest aesthetic value, including two water features. Included in the center are 23 signs to interpret the natural and Native American culture of the area. **CODE: SU**

Ocooch Mountain Biking/Hiking Recreation Trails

This area of 112 acres is located near the Armory, at 1350 Peebles Drive. There are currently several recreation trails of over three miles that are for mountain biking, running and hiking trail in the warmer months, then in the colder months, cross country skiing and snowshoeing. There is plenty of signage to keep the trails easily followed. Future development of additional trails in this hillside park is ongoing. **CODE: SU**

Safe Route to the Middle School for Walking, Biking and Recreation Trails

A gravel/partial paved trail from the Richland Middle School north property line along State Highway 80 to the intersection at US Highway 14. Easements were signed and recorded at the Richland County Register of Deeds. Construction of a gravel base in 2021. It is anticipated to apply for grant funding so the rest of the trail can be paved and a gravel-based trail extension between the Richland Middle School and Doudna Elementary can be constructed. This trail extension would cross a wooden snow mobile trail bridge over the Pine River. **CODE: SU**

City of Richland Center Urban Forestry Department

The City of Richland Center has adopted a very aggressive and proactive Urban Forestry Department. A tree board to oversee the activities of the forestry department was established in 1998. Their mission statement is to: coordinate community forestry issues in Richland Center, develop comprehensive forestry policy recommendations for Richland Center, develop educational efforts on proper tree management, seek public and private funding for community forestry management, coordinate demonstration projects, and integrate natural resource issues into local and regional planning efforts. Richland Center Tree Board activities are funded through the city budget. The board has also received generous grants from the Department of Natural Resources. Tree Board activities have been educational and of direct benefit to the community. The tree board is made up of three city council members, one city employee and one citizen city resident governed under City Ordinance Chapter 301. The Parks, Recreation and Grounds department is governed under City Ordinance Chapters 701, 702, 703 and 704. A copy of this ordinance is available upon request at the City Clerk's office. **CODE: SU**

City of Richland Center Community Forest (450 acres)

The City of Richland Center owns and manages 450 acres of forest surrounding the city. In 2008, this forest was enrolled in the State Community Forest program. This program gives the city services from the state to aid in management, technical assistance, and planting and harvesting services. **CODE: SU**

City of Richland Center Arboretum (6 acres)

The City Arboretum was established in 2003 with matching funds from an Urban Forestry DNR Grant. At that time, 134 trees of 71 different species were planted. Since then, the arboretum has been expanded to 200 trees and over 100 shrubs. The arboretum is designed for self-guided tours 7 days per week. Each tree is labeled with a brief explanation. **CODE: SU**

Richland Center Cemetery (34 acres)

Maintenance includes over 350 trees and shrubs, mowing, and approximately 75 burials a year. The cemetery contains over 12,000 stones and monuments. The department works closely with the area monument companies so that stones are erected within our guidelines. Plans are underway to begin a monument repair program, as many stones and foundations (most very old ones) are in dire need of repair. Approximately 100 American Arborvitae were planted in 2005 along the North boundary line of the new Memorial section of the cemetery. A cremation memorial garden was developed with a centralized monument. **CODE: SU**

Stori Memorial Field (8.6 acres)

Purchased from the Richland School District for the purpose of creating a new housing development. Currently being used for mixed green space and a sledding hill. **CODE: C/CP**

RICHLAND COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY

Ash Creek Community Forest

The 360.5 acres known as Ash Creek Community Forest includes two parking lots, three miles of horse-riding trails, four miles of hiking and biking trails, and three miles of class one trout stream. It is open to hunting and fishing in season. Future developments include new signs for all trails, ADA approved pit toilets, upgraded road access, and upgraded fencing around parking areas. **CODE: SU**

Pier Natural Bridge County Park

The park is located 10 miles north of Richland center on Highway 80 in the town of Rockbridge. It is presently ten acres in size with future plans of adding additional land by long-term lease. It has been developed for both recreational usage, and to preserve its natural beauty. The unusual geological feature of the park consists of a half-mile long "finger" of blocked and layered sandstone rising about 60 feet above the flood plain of two merging valleys. The narrow finger is topped by tall pines and covered with green shrubs. It has an opening through which the West Branch of the Pine River flows, making a natural land bridge. Future developments include 10 heavy duty recycled picnic tables, flood proof the foundation for both shelters, expansion of the walking trail, updating the playground equipment, providing an ADA accessible toilet and shower facility, provide campfire pits to each designated campsite in the park and find a space to house artifacts found at the site. **CODE: CP**

Pine River Recreational Trail

The Pine River Recreational Trail starts in Lone Rock and follows the old railroad corridor to the intersection of County Hwy OO. The multi-purpose trail is used by bikers, hikers, and snowmobilers. It is 14.8 miles long and includes 15 bridges. The trail passes through lowland and hardwood forests, cattail marshes, a tamarack bog, dry land prairies, and jack pine barrens. The trail has one rest area with one portable toilet at Twin Bluffs. Future Developments include new signage, repair bridges, developing another rest area in Gotham, adding crushed limestone to the trail, paving from Cty Hwy OO to Bohmann Dr. and add LED lighting to enhance safety and energy savings. **CODE: LP**

Richland County Fair Grounds

The Richland County Fairground is located approximately one mile north of Richland Center on County Highway AA. It is 39 acres in size, with about half of it in the flood plain or flood fringe. The site has seen many improvements in the last ten years. Additions include ADA accessible bathrooms with shower facilities, over 70 acres of campsites with electrical hookups, new signage, and an upgraded parking area.

Richland County Rifle Range

This facility includes a couple of picnic tables, six shooting benches, and a primitive pit toilet which is not ADA accessible. The parking lot at the site has a capacity for 30 vehicles. The range is set up for shooting distances of 50 yards to 200 yards. Specialized shoots are managed by the Richland County Sheriff's Department. **CODE: SU**

OTHER RICHLAND COUNTY PARKS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS

County Parks

Akey School Wayside
Orion Boat Landing
Pier County Park
Richland County Fairgrounds
Viola County Park

Village Parks

Boaz Community Park- Village of Boaz
Cazenovia Memorial Park- Village of Cazenovia
Fireman's Village Park - Village of Lone Rock
Garrison/Battery Park - Village of Lone Rock
Patterson Park - Village of Lone Rock
Viola Banker Park - Village of Viola
Yuba Community Park- Village of Yuba

Town Parks

Gillingham Town Park- Town of Marshall
Gotham Bicentennial Park - Town of Buena Vista

State of Wisconsin

Highway Wayside- Highway 14
Highway Wayside- Port Andrew

Privately Owned

Ithaca Lions Park Ithaca - Lions Club
Twin Bluffs Picnic Area
Eagle Cave Natural Park
Elephant Trunk Rock

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT OWNED PROPERTY

Lincoln Elementary and Jefferson Elementary Schools were both sold to private owners, while Stori Memorial Field was sold to the City of Richland Center for the purpose of constructing future housing.

St. Mary's Catholic School (0.75 acre)

Two basketball goals and a selection of standard playground apparatus make up this neighborhood playground's developed recreation facilities. The play area is enclosed by cyclone fencing to prevent children from getting involved with traffic on U.S. Highway 80. **CODE: NP/P**

Father Mitchell Park (0.75 acre)

This small park located on the school ground of St. Mary's Catholic School features an assortment of playground equipment. **CODE: M-P**

Richland Center High School 9-12 (15 acres)

Athletic facilities include a practice football field, two soccer fields, two baseball fields, and a softball field. There is a football/soccer stadium with lighting, fencing, bleachers, a concession stand, and restroom facilities. **CODE C/CP**

Richland Intermediate School 3-6 (10 acres)

The acreage assigned to this school site for recreation purposes is considerable. It is mostly open space but also has fenced playground equipment, basketball standards, youth soccer fields, a football and a youth softball diamond. **CODE: NP/P**

Richland Primary School 4K-2 (5 acres)

School located on the south side of Richland Center that offers approximately five acres of open space for potential recreational development. The site offers two basketball standards, a softball diamond, a soccer field, and playground apparatus. The Richland School District will be adding other recreation facilities in the future. The site could be expanded somewhat to accommodate these plans. **CODE: NP/P**

Richland County Campus / Symons Recreation Center (135 acres)

Three tennis courts, a basketball court, two soccer fields and two practice fields for soccer, a backstop for field games (softball), and an area for winter sliding sports occupy this very spacious (estimated at nearly 20 acres) recreation-oriented open area. Other outdoor features include nearly two miles of hiking trails and a mile-long aerobic exercise trail. The natatorium, an indoor facility, is an excellent community facility featuring an Olympic-Sized swimming pool, racquetball courts, and an exercise/weight room. There is also an indoor basketball court, pickleball courts and public use of volleyball courts. **CODE: SU**

PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAINED

Quail Run Club Golf Links (N/A)

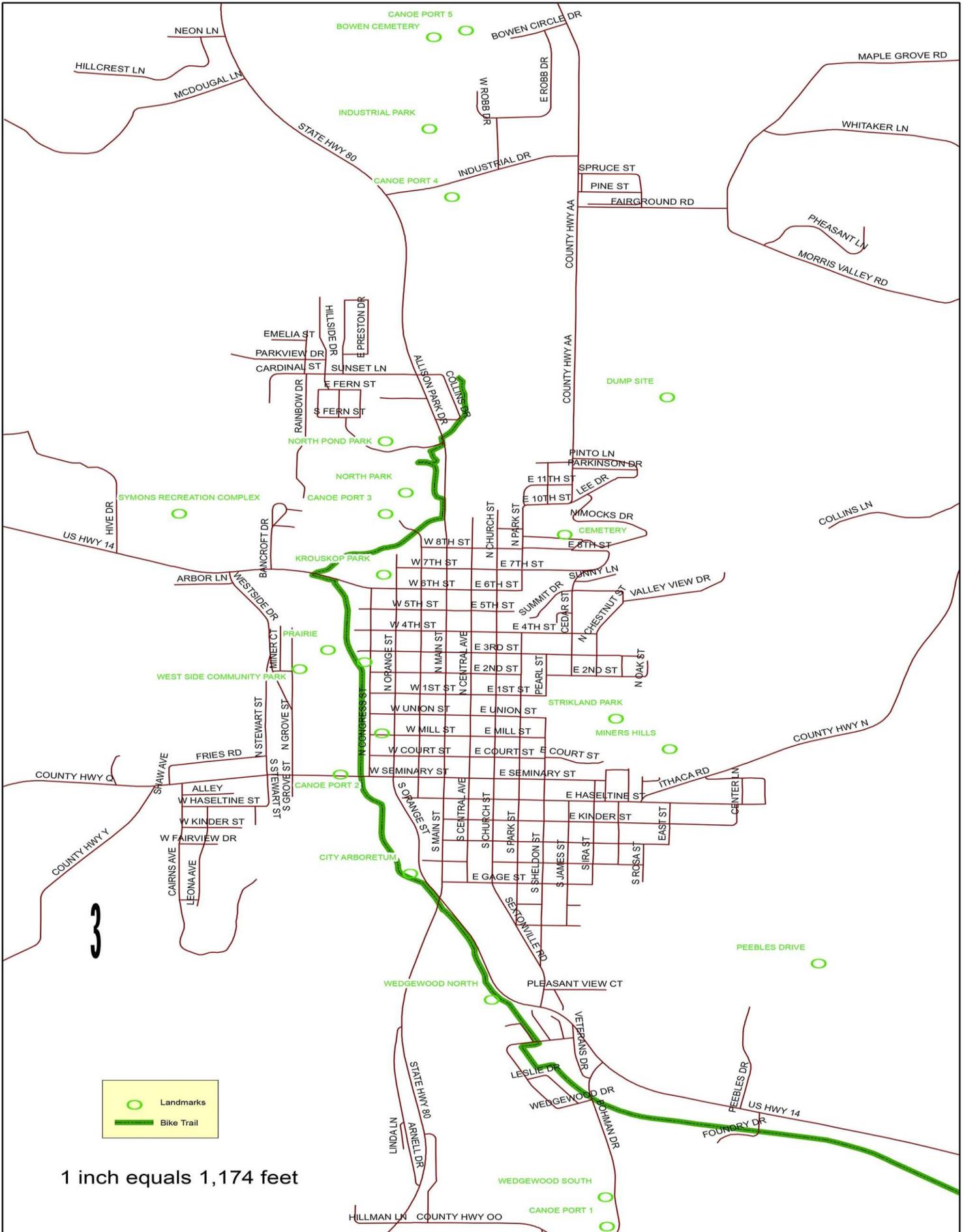
This regulation 9/18-hole, privately owned golf course is also open to the general public. The course and its attendant improvements are well maintained and in good condition. A golf course is defined as a specialized recreation area. **CODE: SU**

ATV/UTV Trails (N/A)

The Dayton Ridge Runners requested access throughout the City and in April of 2018 Ordinance 104 allowing one route through the city was approved. In January of 2019 the Ordinance was amended to open almost all City streets for ATV / UTV access. This private partnership with the City promotes economic growth as well as recreation. **CODE: SU**

Snowmobile Trails (N/A)

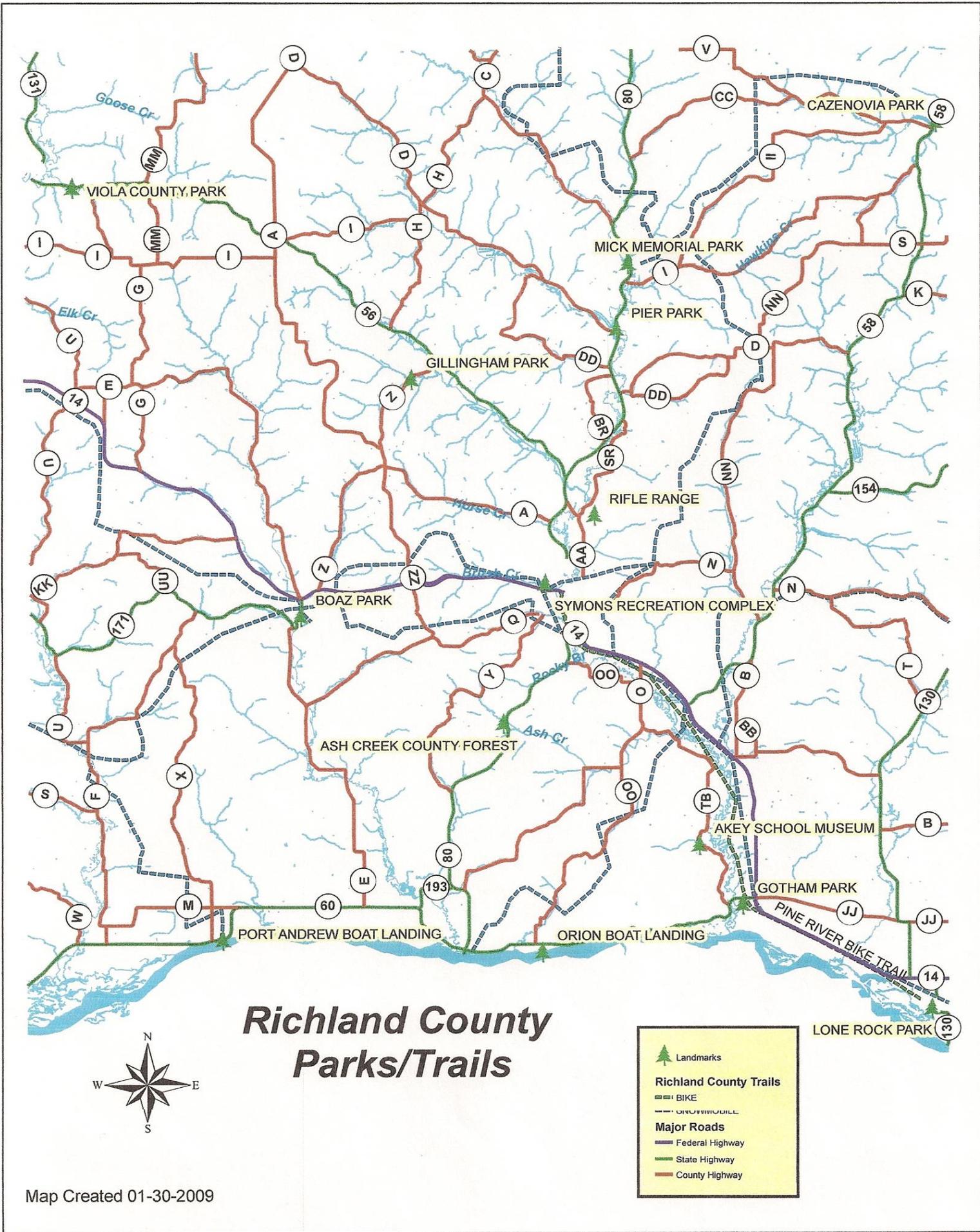
The Dayton Ridge Runners partner with the City for a snowmobile trail through the City. They use an existing trail on the west side of the Pine River and maintain the trails through the winter months. This private partnership with the City promotes economic growth as well as recreation. **CODE: SU**



3

Landmarks
 Bike Trail

1 inch equals 1,174 feet



CHAPTER 6: THE ACTION PROGRAM

Richland Center has over 200 acres of land (school grounds included) set aside for recreational purposes. According to a strict quantitative analysis, this is about two and one-half times the amount needed to meet the demands of its projected population. Of greater importance, however, is in the analysis of these 200 acres that evaluates the quality and quantity of facilities is their accessibility to the various age groups of potential users. The effectiveness of neighborhood and Community Park facilities need to be evaluated as to their ability to meet the demands of Richland Center residents when facility service areas and obstacles to access are considered.

The plate on the following page shows how the present supply of neighborhood park and playground facilities meet the demands of children, the primary users of these facilities. The only major deficiencies noted in neighborhood playground facilities are in the southern and southwestern areas of the city. It is interesting to note that neighborhood playground facilities at Krouskop Park service an area less than one-fourth mile in radius because of the influence of three major obstacles to easy and safe access for the primary users of neighborhood facilities, young children.

Other deficiencies noted within the neighborhood park and playground categories are associated with supply and quality of facilities and inadequate space.

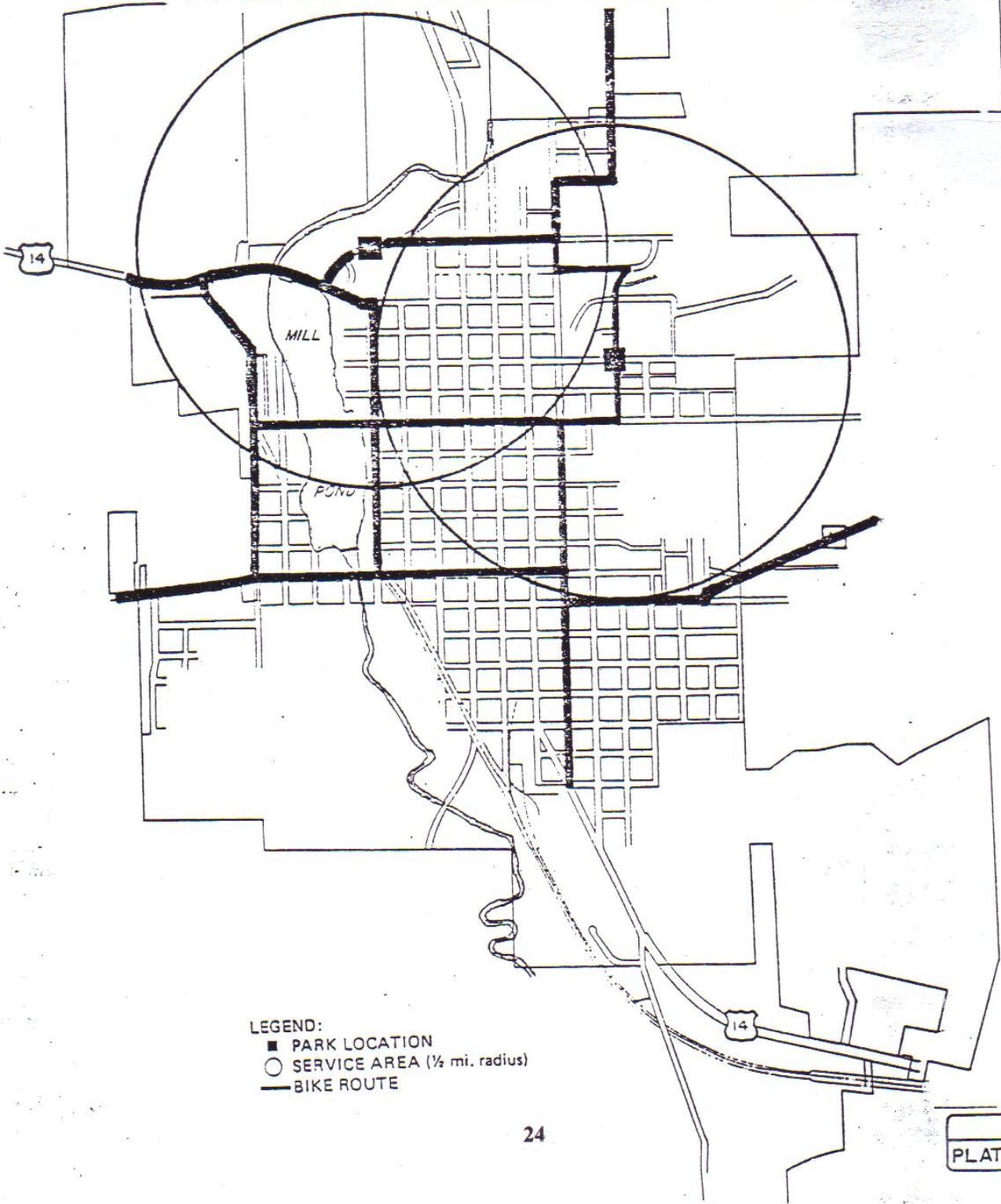
Another plate (following) indicates that the southeastern and southwestern quarters of Richland Center are short of community park facilities. Other deficiencies, those associated with recreational and recreational support facilities, are found throughout the city despite the excellent community park facilities provided by Krouskop Park. Because the primary users of community parks are generally youth between the ages of 12 and 18, only the most restrictive obstacles to access need be considered relevant to the analysis. Richland Center has no obstacles considered restrictive enough to affect this age group.

Richland Center has Krouskop Park, North Park, and North Park Pond to satisfy its total city-wide park requirements. Continued development of park property north of the Pine River, improvements to other existing facilities, and continued good maintenance will provide assurance that these parks will be able to meet the demands of recreationists for city-wide park facilities throughout and beyond the planning period.

CITY of RICHLAND CENTER, WISCONSIN



PROPOSED BIKE ROUTES & SERVICE AREAS OF COMMUNITY PARK FACILITIES



LEGEND:
■ PARK LOCATION
○ SERVICE AREA (1/2 mi. radius)
— BIKE ROUTE

PLATE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RICHLAND CENTER'S PARK SYSTEMS

The recommendations that follow are based on recreation area deficiencies noted in the preceding discussion of neighborhood and community parks and on an evaluation of the quantity and quality of facilities within the park system. All future park improvements listed below are based upon the city's policy to meet and/or exceed requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by removing or modifying all physical barriers that hinder accessibility to outdoor recreation facilities and equipment.

Proposed Improvements at Krouskop Park

- a. Continue to update new ADA playground equipment and fix existing deficiencies.
- b. Upgrade ballpark lighting.
- c. Upgrade fencing around ballfields.
- d. Seal coat parking areas.
- e. Seal coat and/or chip seal the Pine River Recreation Trail from Highway 80 N entrance to Walmart at CTH O.
- f. Consider another park location for the pickle ball and tennis courts to remove them from the flood plain where flood waters deteriorate them considerably.
- g. Construct a multi-use area to accommodate a skate park and ice rink.
- h. Finish the Aquatic Center original design to add a body slide.
- i. Install a sail shade at the Splash Pad donated by the Rotary Club.

Proposed Improvements at North Park

- a. Expand gravel parking area into the grassy field.
- b. Seal coat parking areas.
- c. Upgrade ballpark lighting.
- d. Upgrade fencing around ballfields or install new at little league diamonds 1 & 2
- e. Install scoreboards at little league diamonds 1 & 2.
- f. Construct a shelter at little league diamonds 1 & 2/soccer field for concessions.
- g. Seal coat parking areas.
- h. Update batting cages with new backstops
- i. Update storage sheds

Proposed Improvements at North Park Pond

- a. Updates to ADA fishing pier.
- b. Re-evaluate and revitalize the pond.
- c. Replace the fountain and adjust the aerators.
- d. Widen and seal coat the parking lot.
- e. Construct a sidewalk from lot to shelter.
- f. Accessible access from Eldon Storer sidewalk to the entrance of the parking lot.

Proposed Improvements at Strickland Park

- a. Develop better access to the park and ADA upgrades.
- b. Build a smaller shelter in the park with additional picnic tables.
- c. Improve trailhead access

Proposed Improvements at Old Mill Pond Park

- a. Possible location for skate park/ice rink multi-use area.
- b. Continue to update new ADA playground equipment and fix existing deficiencies.
- c. Seal coat parking lot

Proposed Neighborhood Park on the Southwest Side of City

The west side of Richland Center near Seminary Street and Cairns Avenue contains several newer homes and could possibly use a neighborhood park or playground in the next five to ten years. Presently the Town and Country Presbyterian Church parking lot is the only play area available to neighborhood children. It contains a basketball court. An appropriate playground site should be selected in the near future even though development may be delayed. The City currently owns land at the northeast corner of W. Haseltine Street at South Stewart Street that would be ideal for development of this playground park. (Bennett-Dull Property).

Proposed Neighborhood Park in Southeastern Section of City

A neighborhood park, two to five acres in size, should be acquired and developed in the southeastern portion of the city. The park should contain playground facilities for small children, basketball standards, picnic facilities, restrooms, drinking water, etc. One possibility for this facility might be some vacant property left over when Highway 14 was reconstructed. The city should explore the possibility of acquiring this land from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Other Recommendations

a. The public access points shown on the map of existing park locations are presently undeveloped and should remain so for the duration of the planning period. In the interim, however, the city should make certain that their identity is not lost to encroachment by neighboring properties and that they are properly cared for so as not to become a nuisance or eyesore.

b. Among the city's most outstanding natural and recreational resources are the wooded and semi-wooded bluffs and hillsides that confine the city. The bluffs provide not only an attractive scenic backdrop to the city but also a sanctuary for a wide range of flora and fauna. The bluffs and hillsides should be protected against any encroachment that would detract from, or jeopardize, their natural condition. Zoning and land control by acquisition or easement are currently the best tools available to achieve this objective.

c. Some streets in the city have been designated as bike routes, however no signage has been installed. The route should be accessible to as large a segment of the population as possible. It should also carry a minimum of motorized traffic, and connect with key points in the city, like recreation areas, schools, and the central business district. Each route should be appropriately marked to guide the cyclists and to alert motorists to their presence. Heavily used routes may even contain a lane for the sole use of cyclists. The city bike trail should hook up with the county bike trail and eventually with the State 400 trail by the city working with townships and county governments to make this a reality.

d. Adding to the designated bike routes in the city, the city should also add safe routes to school and to the industrial park north, where the bike trails can connect with the mountain bike trail, and the southern industrial park in the form of walking or biking trails. Alternative transportation Grants should be a source of funding and should be applied for. The City should also apply for Grants each spring to develop the proposed trails as indicated on the attached maps in small projects that the City can budget appropriately for.

e. Another designated route should be the extension of the Pine River trail at Krouskop Park, north along the Dike and Highway 80 to Industrial Drive, then onto Highway AA, then back into the city cemetery. This loop would be suitable for those who wish to be going to the Dog Park, to get people out to industrial park and the dance studio and also getting those who wish to go to events at the Fairgrounds. This trail is the first step toward connecting with the State 400 trail at Hillsboro. Funds for this should be applied thru the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship DNR Grant. The City should apply for DNR Grants each May 1st to develop the proposed trails as indicated on the attached maps in small projects that the City can budget appropriately for.

f. The city should consider developing more ski / hiking / biking trails on undeveloped city properties. Much of the city land is underutilized and these trails would enhance the properties' usefulness.

g. Areas, events, and items of historic interest, are important components of a community's recreation plan. The Frank Lloyd Wright designed warehouse in Richland Center is of unusual construction and design, and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The downtown commercial district has also been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Emphasis should continually be made on identifying and preserving other significant historical items and places as well.

h. Community appearance is an important component of a recreation program. Maintained streets and sidewalks, attractive trees and shrubs, flower plantings, well-cared for homes and commercial buildings, and neatly landscaped home lawns, public open space, and parks are principal contributors of community beautification. A program for community beautification is most rewarding to people engaged in passive recreation and should be encouraged. The city has taken steps to pass a nuisance ordinance and should work towards creating a downtown ambassador program to keep clean and tidy.

i. As discussed in previous sections of this report, consideration should be given to a better and more equitable distribution of park lands and recreational facilities throughout the city. Consideration should be given to acquiring small parcels of land as they become available in certain locations to provide additional open space for adults as well as play areas for children.

j. A wildlife scrape has been maintained with a plentiful prairie. Plans for additional plantings and wildlife habitat should be made. Walking trails continue to be maintained and some dead trees need to be cut down to maintain safety along the trails and disc golf course.

k. Future plans could be looked at to build an Indoor/Outdoor archery range on the north end of the city where land is currently available for future mentorship programs.

l. The city should consider potential sites for a skateboard park/ice rink. Possible areas are in Krouskop or Old Mill Pond Park.

m. Rip Rap should be considered along the Pine River on any necessary areas. This would help with erosion and many of the bridges as well as hiking/biking/snowmobile trails that could be affected.

n. A Dog park called Woodman Happy Tails dog park, located north of the city on Industrial Park Road was built in 2017. More play structures could be built for dog activities and interaction.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

It is important to realize that the CIS is only a summary of estimated costs based on recent figures. Project costs will be examined more closely when a particular improvement plan is being developed. It is recommended that this portion of the plan be updated on an annual basis by Public Works personnel with input from the Parks Board and Public Works Commission. Changes will be made that reflect changing user trends, citizen interest, and city budget considerations. Before capital improvement projects are undertaken, park board members, recreation and park staff, with citizen input, should:

- 1) Analyze all proposed projects and determine priorities each year.
- 2) Determine cost estimates for each development project.
- 3) Determine project budgetary limitations and potential funding sources.

The Parks Board is hopeful that several of the recommended improvements to the city parks can be carried out with financial assistance from the Department of Natural Resources cost-sharing programs. At the same time, however, the city recognizes that considerable investment will also be required at the community level if the recommendations discussed in this plan are going to be carried out. The CIS provides a good indication of what level of assistance is going to be required during any particular year in the planning period.

ESTIMATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS FOR THE YEAR 2026 AND BEYOND:

Name / Description of Project	Total Est. Cost
1. ADA Playground Equipment	\$25,000
2. Replace Ball Fence @ K. Park	\$25,000
3. Replace Ball Fence @ N. Park	\$30,000
4. Construct Shelter- N. Park Kiwanis Fields	\$10,000
5. Restrooms @ N. Park	\$125,000
6. Restrooms @ Old Mill Pond Park	\$125,000
7. Resurface Bike Trail- Walsh's to North Park	\$7,000
8. Resurface Krouskop Park Parking Lots	\$20,000
9. Resurface North Park Parking Lot	\$20,000
10. Resurface Community/Senior Ctr. Parking Lot	\$35,000
11. Resurface Old Mill Pond Park Parking Lot	\$35,000
12. Update Trail up to Tower Hill - Strickland Park	\$25,000
13. Enlarge and Resurface N. Park Pond parking	\$25,000
14. Updates to Safe Routes to School Trails	\$200,000
15. Construct Permanent Outdoor Ice Rick / Warming Shelter	\$150,000
16. Construct Skateboard Park	\$300,000
17. Update Lights @ Krouskop Park Ball Fields	\$200,000
18. Install Rip Rap Maple Side Footbridge	\$22,000

TOTAL FROM ALL PROJECTS: \$

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS SCHEDULE

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The following is the City of Richland Center Parks & Grounds Department annual operation and maintenance schedule. This includes personnel, tasks performed and budget amounts.

Park Maintenance Areas

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Krouskop Park & Aquatic Center | 12. Pine River Trails and Canoe Ports |
| 2. North Park | 13. Urban Forest |
| 3. West Side Park | 14. Airport |
| 4. Strickland Park | 15. Prairie |
| 5. North Park Pond | 16. Cemetery |
| 6. Miner Hill Trails | 17. Community Center |
| 7. Arboretum | 18. Library |
| 8. Tree Nursery | 19. Depot |
| 9. Wedgewood North and South | 20. Dike System |
| 10. Ocooch Living History Center & Gardens | 21. Lions Park |
| 11. Ocooch Mountain Recreation Trail | 22. Woodman Happy Tails Dog Park |

Parks & Grounds Annual Maintenance

All maintenance is performed by the Parks and Grounds Department which includes 6 full-time and 9 seasonal part-time personnel.

January, February, March

TASKS PERFORMED
and skating rinks, as needed

- Snow plowing of Park streets, city sidewalks, parking lots
- Maintaining Hockey rink and skating rink
- Repair and paint picnic tables, and park equipment
- Open and close graves as needed all year

April

TASKS PERFORMED

- Make ready six diamonds and four soccer fields
- Open all restrooms which includes repair and painting
- Get all playground equipment back in place
- Make ready the outdoor swimming pool
- Put out all picnic tables, benches, and garbage receptacles
- Inspect all equipment
- Clean up all park grounds
- Resilient material to all playgrounds

May, June, July, August, September

TASKS PERFORMED

- Mowing and trimming of all Parks and Cemetery
- Playgrounds inspected weekly
- Trash pick-up and removal daily
- Add lime to all diamonds and drag daily
- Hockey and skating rinks will be painted and cleaned
- Daily cleaning of restrooms, parks, shelters
- Park repairs - done as needed
- Playground equipment painted as needed

- All trails are opened, repairs are done
- Weed trim around 13,000 stones in cemetery 4 times during the summer

October, November
TASKS PERFORMED

- Swimming pool cleaned and winterized
- All restrooms cleaned, winterized, and closed for the season
- Skating rink setup
- Picnic tables are put away and tables that need repair are separated to be repaired
- Leaf pick-up is done, also mulching of the leaves
- All Park equipment is inspected and then stored for the winter.
- Tennis and outdoor volleyball equipment is stored
- Playground equipment painted as needed
- Fields are made ready for soccer and football
- Mowers are removed and blowers and plows are installed for the winter

December
TASKS PERFORMED

lots throughout the winter
the year

- Maintenance of equipment is started
-
- Park takes care of sidewalks, roadway, rinks and parking
- Maintenance and janitorial of all city building throughout
- City Forestry activities throughout the year

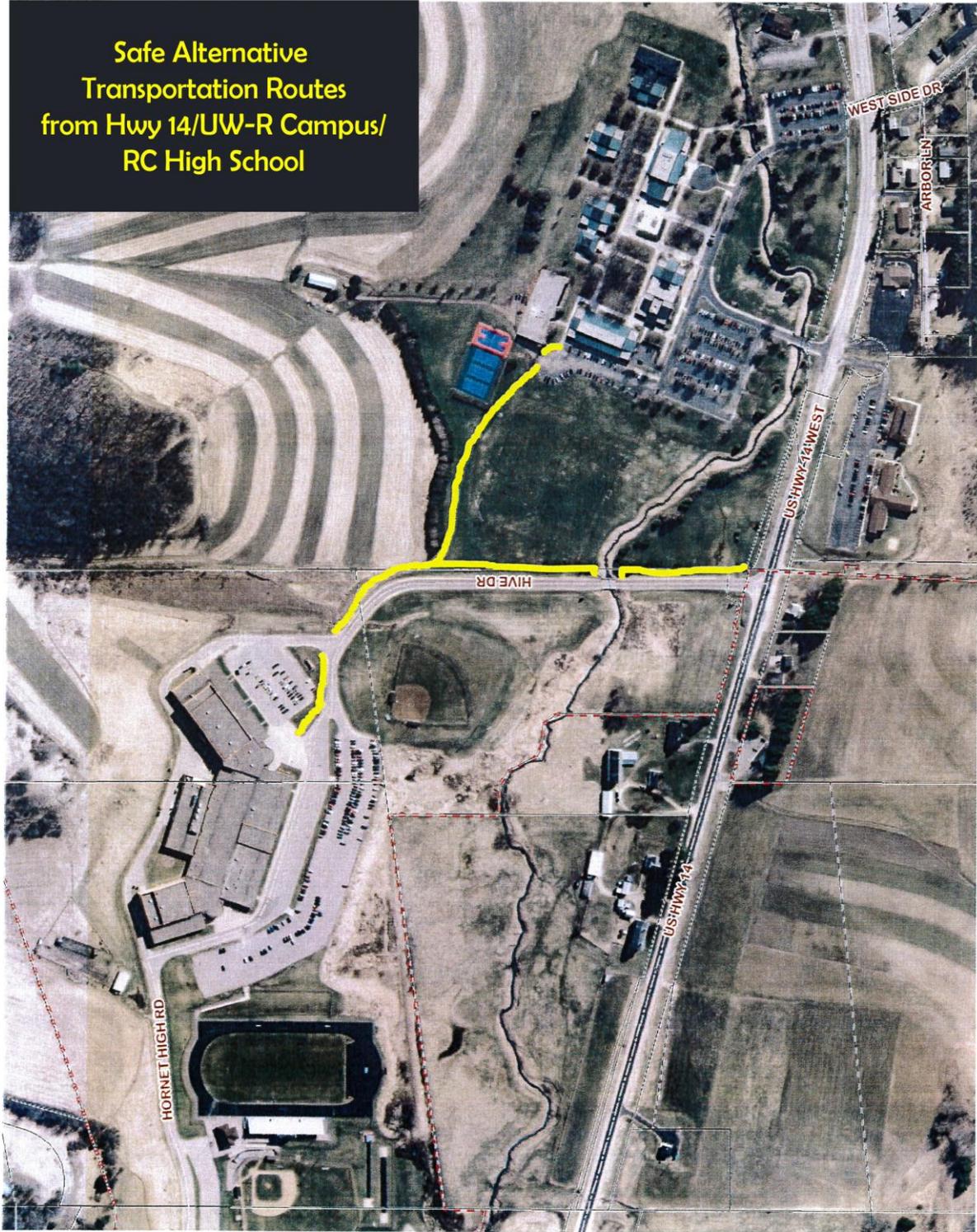
Park employees may help the City Street Department on occasional needs.

PROJECTED COST FOR 2026

Total Park System Maintenance

\$

**Safe Alternative
Transportation Routes
from Hwy 14/UW-R Campus/
RC High School**



**Pine River Trails-
Business Connections
from the Bike Trail/
School Connections**

**Safe Alternative
Transportation Routes
Connecting Existing Bike Trail/
Hwy 14/RMS/Doudna/Eagle**



Safe Alternative
Transportation Routes
Connecting Existing Bike Trail/
Hwy 14/RMS/Doudna/Eagle

Pine River Trails-
Mountain Bike/Hike Trail
Business Connections
from the Bike Trail



Park Amenities

	Krouskop Park	North Park	North Lake Park	West Side Park	Strickland Park	Minor Hills Trail Park	Wedge Wood North Park	Wedge Wood South Park	Old Mill Pond Park	Lions Park
ADA Accessible	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Basketball Court	X								Future	
Grills	X								X	
Lake/Pond/River	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Picnic Area	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Play Equipment	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Restrooms	X	X						X	X	X
Shelter/Pavillion/Gazebo	X	X	X	X			X	Future	X	X
Sports Field/Area	X	X								
Swimming Pool	X									
Tennis/Pickleball	X									
Trails	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Volleyball Court	X									X
Open Area	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Frisbee Golf	X									
Other Features	Ice Skating rink Camping	Batting Cages				Scenic overview			Camping Comm. Garden	Camping Pine River Raceway

	Community/Senior Center	Pine River Bike Trail	Petit Roche Prairie	Arboretum	Ocooch Living History Center	Pine River Walking Trail	Ocooch Mtn Bike Trails
ADA Accessible	X	X			X		
Lake/Pond/River		X	X	X		X	
Picnic Area		X	X	X		X	Future
Play Equipment		X					
Restrooms	X	X				X	Seasonal
Shelter/Pavillion		X					Future
Trail		X	X	X		X	X
Basketball/Volleyball Court	X					X	
Frisbee Golf			X				
Other Features	Multi-purpose Facility	Connects with County Bike Trail				Cross-country Ski Trail	Bike, hike, Ski or Snowshoe trails