

Section 7 • Community Facilities

7.1 Introduction

Community facilities and services form the backbone and public face of any City. High quality parks, recreational, and cultural facilities, public safety, and community services enhance livability and contribute to community pride and sense of identity.

7.2 Facilities and Assets

Community facilities generally consist of public buildings and property owned and operated by governmental agencies. While the majority of the facilities described below are City-owned, a number of important facilities located in Bloomington are owned and/or operated by other public agencies and organizations. Similarly, while this element focused primarily on physical facilities (buildings, grounds), it is recognized that services associated with these facilities are also valued community assets.

Many of the City-owned community facilities were constructed in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's when Bloomington experienced most of its growth. While improvements have occurred over the years, many facilities remain in need of replacement or upgrades to meet current needs.

Parks, Open Space and Recreation Facilities

The City of Bloomington has one of the premier parks and recreation systems in Minnesota with over a third of the City's land comprised of parks, open space, wetlands, lakes, and other public spaces. The City, Federal Government (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), State of Minnesota, and Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) all maintain and operate parks, recreation, and open space facilities located in Bloomington. Ownership and jurisdiction of parks and open space facilities located in Bloomington are shown on Figure 7.1.

The City of Bloomington park system includes 97 parks, recreation or open spaces that provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation. These facilities are located across the City, resulting in over 99% of the City being within a half mile from a park or conservation area. Table 7.1 summarizes the types of existing parks located in Bloomington.



Bloomington Park Planning

In 2019 the City will begin updating its *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, last updated in 2008. The update will involve a thorough evaluation of existing park facilities, programs, and operations and determine improvements needed to meet future demand. The update will also set priorities for investments in facilities, operations, and programming that will inform the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process in years to come.

The City is completing an inventory and assessment of existing public park facilities. This information will provide the underlying basis for identifying needed improvements to park and recreation facilities in the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* update.

Figure 7.1: Parks and Recreation Systems





Recreational Programing

The City provides a programs to meet the needs of a diverse community with a range of recreational interests and abilities. Programs target a spectrum of user groups including: adults, children, families, seniors, and people with disabilities or special needs. In many cases the City partners with other organizations and agencies to conduct programs. For example, the annual Easter Egg Hunt is hosted with the support of the Bloomington Optimist Club.

Table 7.1 Bloomington Parks and Recreational Facilities

Park Type	Total Acres	Number of Parks
Playlot/Neighborhood Parks	250.2	45
Community Park/Playfields	324.4	10
Large Urban Parks	369.8	2
Special Use Areas	51	6
Golf Courses	153	2
Conservation Areas	1,584.8	30
Regional Parks	6,217.6	2
Grand Total	8,950.8	97

Source: City of Bloomington, 2008 Comprehensive Plan

In addition to general use parks and recreation facilities, the City owns and operates several specialized facilities shown on Figure 7.2 and described below:

Bloomington Ice Garden (BIG) - Opened in 1970 with one rink, the Bloomington Ice Garden has grown to three indoor rinks (one Olympic-sized). The rinks meet much of the community's existing needs for indoor skating except during the most sought-after prime hours. The rinks are used primarily for youth and high school hockey and figure skaters but are also open for public skating as well as adult open hockey and pond hockey for youth. In recent years upgrades have been made to roofs and heating and cooling systems. To maintain a high quality of service, additional upgrades will be required. Specific maintenance and needed upgrades are routinely identified and budgeted for in the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Golf courses - The City of Bloomington maintains and operates two public golf courses: Dwan and Hyland Greens. Dwan Golf Course is an executive length, par 68 golf course. Hyland Greens Golf and Learning Center consists of a par 3 course, practice greens and short game area, a 36-station practice range, and the State of Minnesota's first certified foot golf course. While nationally golf is dipping in popularity, Dwan continues to post steady numbers and is one of the most popular public courses in the Twin Cities. To address years of declining usage at Hyland Greens, a citizen task force was convened in 2015 to evaluate the feasibility of continued golf operations and to consider sale of the property to allow redevelopment with other uses. In the near-term, the courses will be retained and the City will continue to assess it's long-term viability.

Pond-Dakota Mission Park - Pond-Dakota Mission Park, acquired with Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds in the late 1970s, contains the historic Gideon Pond house and farm. The Gideon Pond house, initially constructed in 1856, was restored and dedicated in 1996 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Pond-Dakota Mission Park is the site of the annual River Rendezvous, an annual week-long event that engages 8000+ students from area schools in active learning around Native American and pioneer history.

Normandale Lake Bandshell - The bandshell, located adjacent to Normandale Lake, hosts over 40 events annually including Arts in the Parks programs, the annual Easter Egg Hunt, and the City's popular Independence Day celebration – Summer Fete. Arts in the Park programs include free musical performances, movies, and fireworks. The Normandale Bandshell can host events for up to 5,000 people. The facility has become an important City landmark since its construction in 2001 and is frequently cited as one of the Bloomington's most recognized assets.

Figure 7.2: Specialized Facilities



Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

Community Gardens - The City currently provides a total of 178 community garden plots at Smith Park, Brookside Park, and Harrison Park. Plots are available to residents and non-residents from May through mid-October. The City tills the plots annually and provides on-site water. Parks and Recreation Division staff conduct master garden sessions to assist gardeners. The Public Health Division also provides resources to gardeners to help promote the health benefits of fresh and locally grown produce. Additional independent community gardens are located at Cedarcrest Church, Christ the King Lutheran Church, St. Marks United Church of Christ, and St. Stephen Lutheran church. Demand for community garden space remains strong and is frequently cited as a desired asset in surveys.



Regional and Other Parks and Open Space Facilities

Large areas dedicated to park and open spaces uses located in Bloomington that are owned and/or operated by regional or other agencies are described below and shown on Figures 7.1 and 7.2.

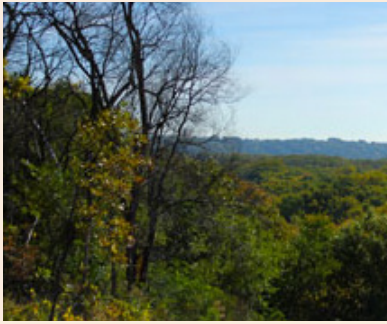
Hyland Bush Anderson Lakes Park Reserve - The 2,565 acre Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lake (HBA) Park Reserve is part of the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space system. The park reserve is jointly managed by the City of Bloomington and Three Rivers Park District (TRPD). There are seven individual park units that comprise the reserve: Hyland Lake, Bush Lake, Anderson Lakes, Tierney's Woods, North Corridor, South Corridor, and Normandale Lake. Six of the park units are located entirely within the City of Bloomington, and the seventh, Anderson Lake, is split between Bloomington and Eden Prairie. Bush Lake, Tierney's Woods, North Corridor, South Corridor and Normandale Lake park units are owned by the City of Bloomington. Anderson Lakes park unit is jointly owned and operated by TRPD and the City of Bloomington. Hyland Lake park unit is solely owned and operated by Three Rivers Park District.



Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve provides a broad spectrum of natural resource based recreational opportunities and outstanding facilities that were developed by both the City and the TRPD. It also includes several unique facilities, including: the Hyland Hills Ski Hill area, 70-meter ski jump, Richardson Nature Center, and Bush Lake Beach. The park offers over 7 miles of paved multi purpose trails, 11.8 miles of unpaved hiking trails and 9.7 miles of cross country ski trails, fishing, picnic areas, swimming, playgrounds, boating and camping.

The City works closely with TRPD to maintain and operate the park reserve. The City operates Bush Lake Beach, which receives over 100,000 visits per year. The City also runs Camp Kota, a youth summer camp for 2nd to 7th graders that utilizes the HBA's Richardson Nature Center. Camp activities include swimming, arts and crafts, games, and outdoor activities.

In 2010 TRPD and the City of Bloomington adopted the *Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Regional Park Reserve; Joint Master Plan*. The plan affirms the policy of retaining 80 percent of the upland area for restoration and preservation in a natural state. Most of the regional park is zoned Conservation (SC), which stipulates that physical public recreation uses (e.g., buildings, parking lots) constitute no more than 20 percent of the land area. Beyond preserving the park's natural resources, the master plan identified a number of improvement projects planned to respond to changing demographics and interests. Facilities such as playgrounds, improved parking facilities, lighting, and building improvements are designed to enhance the user experience and encourage year-round utilization of the park.



Minnesota River Valley Strategic Plan

The 2016 *Minnesota River Valley Strategic Plan*, established a framework to enhance awareness and access to the river valley in Bloomington, while providing ongoing environmental protection and stewardship. The Plan focuses on City-owned land, but recognizes the multiple stakeholders and partners with interests. It provides strategic guidance and establishes priorities for further actions the City should undertake, including preparation of detailed plans to address: natural and cultural resources; trails; signage; and maintenance.

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge - The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) was established by Congress in 1976 to preserve the Minnesota River valley's natural resources, develop recreational opportunities, and provide a wildlife interpretation and education center. The Refuge is owned and/or managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). It extends from Fort Snelling State Park to the City of LeSueur, Minnesota and contains sometimes non-contiguous parcels of protected wildlife habitat. The visitor center, which houses the Refuge headquarters, is located at 3815 American Boulevard East in the far northeast corner of Bloomington.

The Minnesota River valley extends along the entire length of Bloomington's south and east boundaries. The USFWS owns about 2,100 acres in Bloomington, mostly around the Long Meadow Lake and the Bloomington Ferry units of the Refuge. The City owns about 1,131 acres in the river valley, roughly divided east and west of I-35W. Several City parks abut the river valley, including portions of Central Park, Mound Springs Park, and Pond-Dakota Mission Park. Approximately 400 acres of City-owned land is currently managed by the USFWS under a Memorandum of Understanding.

While the Bloomington-owned land in the river valley is not identified in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan for potential regional designation, the City believes regional designation should be considered. The river valley is a regional destination for nature-based recreation and environmental education. The Minnesota River Valley is also recognized for its significant role in the cultural history of settlement and development of the region. It is designated for conservation uses and provides significant habitat for resident and migratory wildlife within the metropolitan area. Recreation uses include nature study, bird watching, walking, biking, and other trail uses. Furthermore, it has been noted in discussions with TRPD that east Bloomington is underserved by regional parks.

Designating the City-owned land in the river valley as a Regional Park Reserve would require an amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. This would involve preparing a formal request and compiling all required documentation to substantiate the merits of regional park reserve designation. The City's initial step will be to reach out to TRPD and the Metropolitan Council's regional park staff to determine the level of support for this idea. Benefits of regional designation include additional natural resource protections and eligibility for grant funding through the State and Metropolitan Council to support enhancement and recreation.

City Trails

There are 36 miles of existing off-road trails in Bloomington providing connections to parks, community facilities, and other important destinations. These include paved and unpaved multiuse and pedestrian-only trails. It is difficult to categorize trails between those used for recreation from those used primarily for transportation. In general, off-road trails, particularly those located within park areas, are considered recreational trails. These tend to accommodate a wide range of users and abilities and are illustrated on Figure 7.3. Trails and on-road bicycle facilities that provide more direct connections to destinations or facilitate through travel are discussed in further detail in the *City's Alternative Transportation Plan* (2016) and the Transportation Element (see Section 4 and Figures 4.1 and 4.2.)

State and Regional Trails

State and regional park and trail facilities are designed to accommodate a wide range of users and abilities consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Trail alignments are selected to connect and provide access to public parks, natural areas, and other amenities and destinations within local communities. Segments of state and regional trails located in Bloomington are shown on Figure 7.3 and include:

Minnesota Valley State Trail - The Minnesota Valley State Trail is a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) project funded by the State Legislature. The trail was authorized in 1969 by the State Legislature to establish a continuous 72-mile trail corridor extending from Fort Snelling State Park to the City of Le Sueur. While much of the trail upstream (i.e., southwest) of Shakopee is in place, the portion from Shakopee to Fort Snelling has not been completed. In 2014, the State Legislature approved funding to begin construction on the Bloomington trail segment that will extend between the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge visitors center and the Bloomington Ferry Road trailhead. The State Trail segment in Bloomington will contain two treadways: a natural surface trail and a paved, ADA-compliant multi-use trail. Construction on the Bloomington trail segment is anticipated to commence in 2019.

Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail - This 15-mile trail spans the cities of Hopkins, Minnetonka, Edina, Richfield, and Bloomington. The mostly east-west trail connects with several other regional trails, including: Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail, Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail, North Cedar Lake Trail, and Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail. Its eastern terminus is the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center in Bloomington, where connections can be made to the Minnesota Valley State Trail and the Big Rivers Regional Trail in Dakota County. Final alignment for the 3.25 mile Bloomington segment is still under evaluation. The two potential route options include one located just north of the Bloomington border in an area controlled by the Metropolitan Airport Commission. The other route would run through the City's South Loop District, mostly following American Boulevard. This route provides connections with transit and other destinations, including the Mall of America and MSP International Airport. Completion of the Bloomington segment is contingent on securing required right-of-way and coordination with road reconstruction.

Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail - This seven mile trail extends from Lake Nokomis Parkway in Minneapolis to 86th Street in Bloomington. The trail mostly follows the Old Cedar Avenue alignment through Richfield and Bloomington. On the north end, the trail connects with the Grand Rounds, a national scenic byway consisting of walking/biking/driving routes along the parkways that encircle Minneapolis. On the south end, the regional trail terminates at East 86th Street, although an extension to East Old Shakopee Road was completed in 2018 by Three Rivers Park District (TRPD). In late 2018, the City will complete construction on a segment that will further extend the trail to terminate at the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge. According to the approved Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail Master Plan, regional trail designation terminates at 86th Street. The City and TRPD have discussed the merits of amending the Master Plan to extend regional trail designation to the segment between 86th Street and the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge. The Old Cedar Avenue Bridge will connect the trail to the planned Minnesota Valley State Trail and to the Minnesota River Greenway and Big Rivers Regional Trail in Dakota County, providing a significant regional trail connection. The trail is jointly operated and maintained



Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail

by TRPD, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the City of Bloomington. The City will work with TRPD to formally request an amendment to the Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail Master Plan to extend regional trail designation from 86th Street to the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge.

Future Regional Trails

The Metropolitan Council established the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*, which identifies several potential future trail alignments and search corridors (see Figures 4.2 and 7.3.) Specific timing to implement these trails is not defined, but Tier 1 trails are the highest priority. Tier 1 alignments are identified along France Avenue, 12th Ave S, Old Cedar Avenue, and East Old Shakopee Road. One Tier 2 alignment is identified extending east-west across the City along 84th and 86th Streets. More generalized RBTN search corridors are also identified, including a Tier 1 search corridor along Old Shakopee Road and Tier 2 corridors along Lyndale Ave, Normandale Boulevard, 86th Ave E, and the Minnesota River valley.

Two regional trail search corridors have been identified in the City along existing rail lines (see Figure 7.3.) Both rail lines are currently active and will continued to be monitored for possible conversion to trails. TRPD is currently preparing a master plan for the Canadian-Pacific Rail Regional Trail. This trail will provide a connection between the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail, Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve and the Minnesota River Valley.

Public Buildings and Services

City-owned buildings comprise the majority of public facilities located in Bloomington. Libraries (Hennepin County) and schools (Bloomington School District #271) are not city-owned or operated but contribute significantly to the City's appeal and identity. These City, County, and School facilities are described below and shown on Figures 7.4 and 7.5.



Bloomington Civic Plaza and Center for the Arts.

Civic Plaza – Since its opening in 2003, Bloomington Civic Plaza has housed City Hall, Police, and the Center for the Arts. The building was intentionally designed to combine municipal facilities with the arts center. Creating a shared destination for official government activities and cultural events has helped to foster awareness and collaboration between those visiting the facility. The building and grounds incorporate numerous works of art, including a 2,500 square foot mural by Minneapolis artist Erik Pearson that was added to the exterior flyloft in 2007. The building design incorporates motifs that reflect the natural environment of the Minnesota River Valley. Landscaping consists of native plants and trees to complement the stone, cedar, and metal building materials.

Bloomington Center for the Arts - The Bloomington Center for the Arts occupies the north end of Civic Plaza. A focal point for performing and visual arts in Bloomington, the Center attracts audiences from across the Twin Cities metropolitan region and beyond. The facility contains two theaters, rehearsal space, two art galleries, dance studio, classrooms, and more. The facility is home to eight resident nonprofit organizations that produce arts programming alongside City-presented concerts and activities: Artistry, Angelica Cantanti, Bloomington Fine Arts Council, Bloomington Chorale, Bloomington Symphony Orchestra, Continental Ballet Company, Medalist Concert Band, and NOTE-able Singers.

Public Works – Located across 98th Street from Civic Plaza, the Public Works complex was extensively remodelled in 2002. In 2003, a salt-storage shed was constructed. The shed enables the City to buy salt in larger quantities in the off-season and keeps the products dry and protected from the elements.

Creekside Center - Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue, currently houses staff from the City's Human Services Division who focus on programs for senior citizens. The facility hosts a range of programs including senior enrichment activities, tax preparation assistance, and community meals and serves over 100,000 visitors annually. Located in a former elementary school built in 1960, the facility does not adequately meet anticipated needs of the City's growing senior population. In 2015, the City convened a citizen task force to assess needed physical and programmatic upgrades and identify potential sites for a new or remodelled community center. The City anticipates moving forward with a new facility in the next few years.

Public Health Center – Located at 1900 West Old Shakopee Road, across the street from Civic Plaza, the Public Health Center houses the Bloomington Public Health Division. The facility supports numerous programs and services. The Public Health Center also provides office space for staff.

Like many of the City's facilities, the PHC building is old and outmoded. Built in 1960, with modifications in 1970 and 1981, a recent study of City buildings rated this structure as "unsatisfactory". There have been ongoing issues with the aging HVAC system and the building's energy use intensity rating was the worst of the City buildings studied.

Old Town Hall -The Old Town Hall, located at the intersection of Penn Avenue and West Old Shakopee Road, was the original Bloomington Town Hall. The building was moved to its present location in 1924. In 2007, the building was rehabilitated to reflect its 1892 appearance. The building serves as a depository for historic artifacts, photos and documents, and provides limited meeting space. The Old Town Hall is leased to the Bloomington Historical Society to operate a historical museum.

Public Safety Facilities and Services

Ensuring the safety of residents, businesses, and visitors is a top priority of the City. This requires well trained and engaged staff; dependable, well-maintained, and effective equipment; and accessible and safe building facilities. Community awareness and outreach efforts play a critical role in preventing unsafe behavior and reducing the need for emergency responses.

Fire - The City maintains a 120-person volunteer Fire Department who operate from six fire stations located across Bloomington. The majority of fire stations were built over 40 years ago. Station upgrades and/or replacement are needed to accommodate new, often larger, equipment and trucks. The average response time is 4.5 minutes. In 2016 the Fire Department responded to over 1,760 emergency calls. Beyond responding to emergency calls, the department also responds to citizen assists and conducts educational programs, such as car seat checks, smoke detector installations, and fire prevention programming.

Police - The Bloomington Police Station is located at the west end of Civic Plaza. The Police Department has an authorized strength of 118 sworn officers, 35 civilians, and 2 animal wardens. The average response to an emergency call is 4.1 minutes. Police officers patrol the City and investigate crimes. They also conduct training, provide

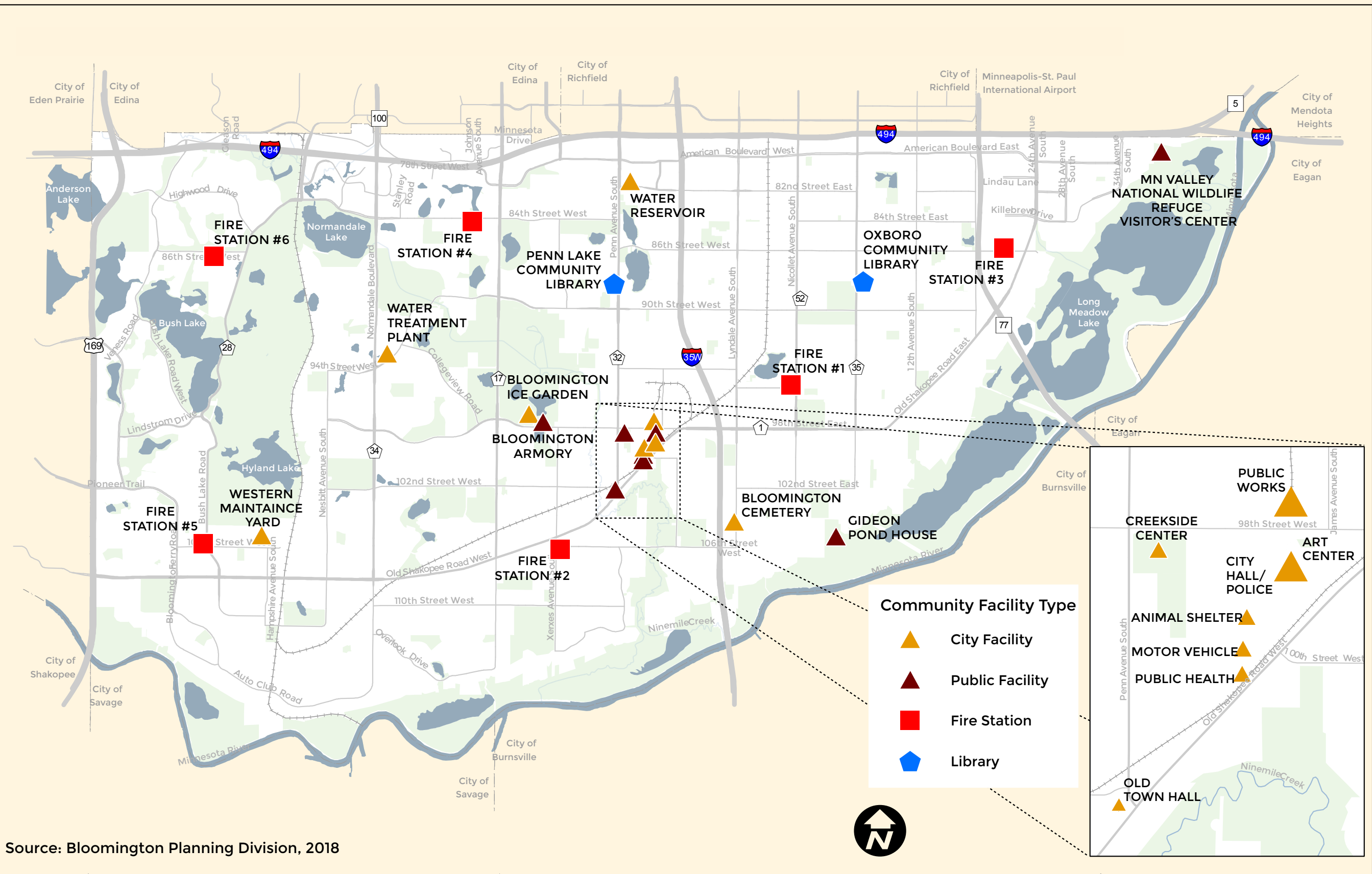
Social Services enhance quality of life in Bloomington

The City provides a variety of services to address special needs in the community.

- **Human Services** - The City's Human Services Division provides support to people with disabilities; adults age 50 and older; individuals, families, children and youth who are immigrants and refugees, multicultural, low-income, or homeless. Human Services staff are responsible for programming at Creekside Community Center. They also coordinate several events throughout the year to foster community engagement such as the annual Kite Day. They partner with over 45 organizations to address community needs.
- **Public Health** - The City of Bloomington partners with the cities of Richfield and Edina to provide public health services including: immunizations and a Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinic.



Figure 7.4: Existing Community Facilities



Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018



School Choice

Open enrollment allows students to attend a school outside of the school district where they reside. In 2016, the number of non-resident students electing to attend Bloomington Public School District #271 (729 students) was greater than the number of Bloomington resident students that choose to attend a public school outside of the district (593 students). This speaks to the high quality education that BPS provide.

emergency support, and engage the community in crime prevention activities. The Department is home to one of only four Bomb Squads in the state of Minnesota.

Libraries

Two branches of the Hennepin County library system are located in Bloomington: the Penn Lake and Oxboro libraries. Both are owned and operated by Hennepin County. The Penn Lake Library opened in 1970 and was renovated in 2003. The Oxboro Library opened in 1975. It was most recently renovated in 2004 and is slated for renovation in 2018. Both libraries hosts a computer lab, language collection, and have meeting rooms available for public use.

Schools

Bloomington is home to both K-12 schools and post-secondary schools. The majority of schools are operated by Bloomington Public School District #271, whose boundaries coincide closely with the City's boundaries. Public, private, and post-secondary educational institutions located in Bloomington are described below and shown on Figure 7.5.

Public K-12 Education - District #271 operates 2 early childhood family education centers; 10 elementary schools (Grade K-5); 3 middle schools (Grade 6-8); and 2 high schools (Grade 9-12). As shown in Table 7.2, the majority of Bloomington students enrolled in the 2016-17 school year attended District #271 schools.

Table 7.2: K-12 School Enrollment: Bloomington Resident Students, 2016

School	Enrollment	Percent of Total Enrollment
Bloomington Public Schools (ISD #271)	10,149	81.6%
Other public schools	593	4.8%
Charter Schools	700	5.6%
Home Schools	150	1.2%
Private Schools	841	6.8%
Total Enrollment	12,433	100%

Source: Bloomington Independent School District #271

After declining significantly from its peak in 1969, enrollment in Bloomington Public Schools has remained relatively stable over the past two decades. As shown in Table 7.3, District #271 predicts enrollment numbers will remain flat over the next 5 years. Over the past decade, District #271 has experienced notable changes in the racial and ethnic diversity of its student body. According to the 2016 *Enrollment Report* for District #271, 49 percent of all students enrolled were non-white. Elementary schools reflect a higher level of diversity with 52 percent non-white student body. Elementary schools are an important indicator of the future demographic makeup of a community. Schools often reveal emerging demographic trends before they are reflected in the greater community.

Table 7.3: Bloomington School District Enrollment Projections, 2018-2023

School/ Grade	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Elementary (Grade K-5)	4,387	4,403	4,373	4,415	4,477
Middle School (Grade 6-8)	2,456	2,355	2,316	2,257	2,293
High School (Grade 9-12)	3,212	3,255	3,323	3,384	3,377
Total	10,045	10,013	10,013	10,056	10,147

Source: Bloomington Independent School District #271, 2018

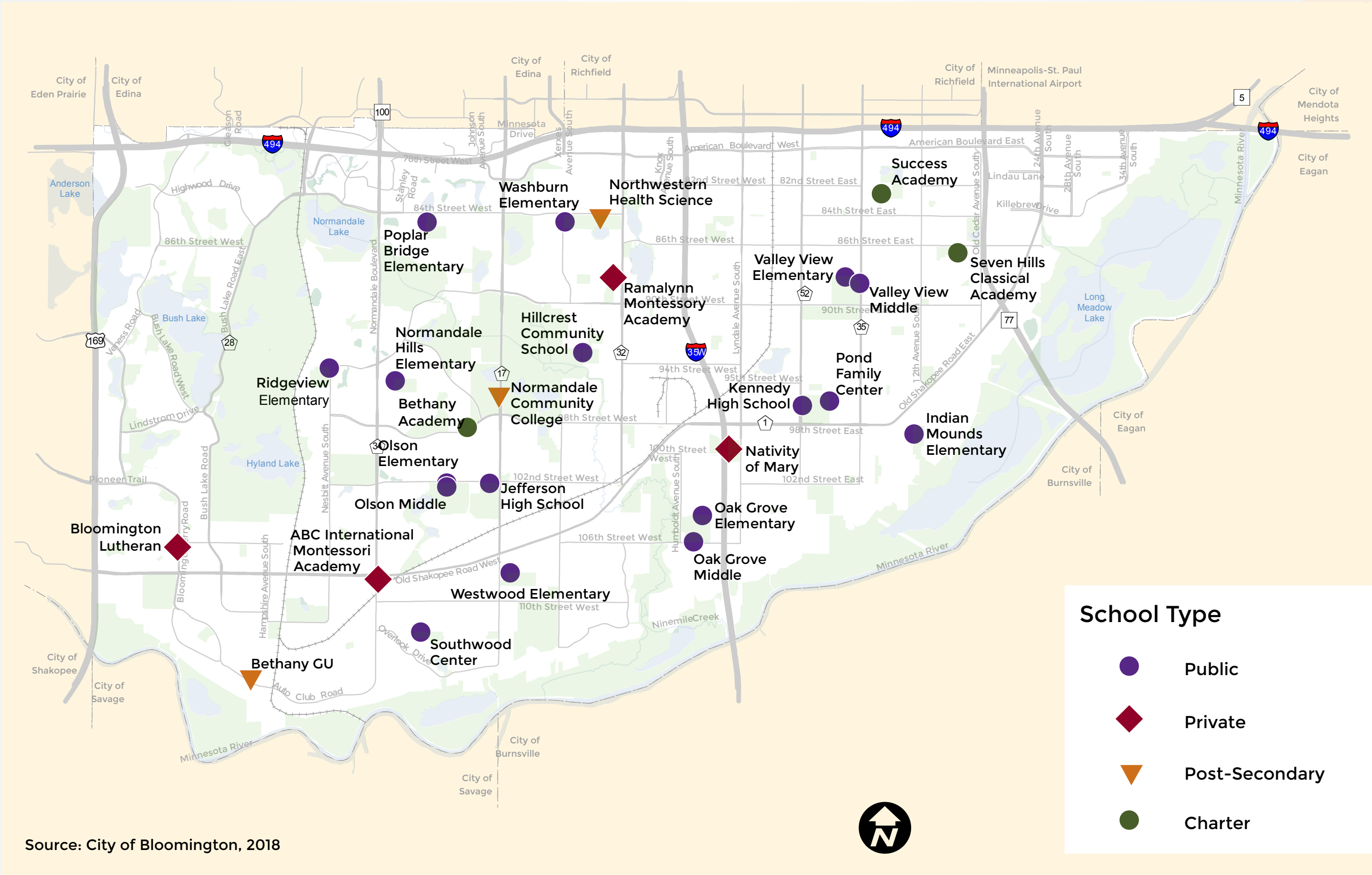
Private K-12 Education - Bloomington is also home to several private and charter schools (see Figure 7.5). Some offer K-8th grade while others offer K-12th grade. As shown in Table 7.2 above, slightly over 18% of Bloomington students enrolled in schools other than District #271 schools. Of those, 700 enrolled in charter schools and 841 enrolled in private schools.

Post-Secondary Education – There are three post-secondary institutions located in Bloomington.

- **Normandale Community College (NCC)** is by far the largest post-secondary school in the City, with enrollment over 17,000 students in the 2017-18 academic year. While NCC has always provided associates degrees and the ability to transfer credits to 4-year institutions, recently they began offering bachelors and master's degree programs.
- **Northwestern Health Sciences University** offers degrees and certification in a variety of natural health care professional programs in areas such as chiropractic, acupuncture, and massage therapy disciplines. The University occupies a 25-acre campus located at the intersection of Penn Avenue and 84th Street West.
- **Bethany College of Missions**, located in southwest Bloomington, serves less than 100 students and offers programs in cross-cultural studies and global internships.



Figure 7.5: Public, Private and Post-Secondary Schools





Advancing equitable use of parks and trails.

The ten Implementing Agencies of the regional park system, including Bloomington, are working together to advance equitable use of regional parks and trails. This effort involves developing shared definitions and goals, conducting visitor surveys, developing a grant program to fund capital projects that promote equitable park and trail use.

7.3 Opportunities and Challenges

Aging Infrastructure

Many of the City's parks and community facilities were developed during the 1960s and 70s. While some have been updated or replaced since, several are nearing the end of their service life and are in need of major renovation or replacement. Through the years, funding has primarily been directed to facility operations and little has been set aside for upgrades and replacement. Given the high costs of upgrading these facilities, the City will need to be strategic in prioritizing investments.

To assist in setting priorities, the City has begun conducting inventories to assess the condition of its buildings and park facilities to determine needed repairs, upgrades, and potential replacements. The process of prioritizing facility improvements provides an opportunity to ensure that upgrades and new facilities are designed in a manner that is sustainable, cost effective, and responsive to the changing needs of the community.

While facility condition is a significant factor in prioritizing investments, facility use and demand must also be considered. Factors such as frequency of use; degree of utilization; safety; accessibility; and whether other, similar facilities meet community demand can help determine how investments should be prioritized.

The City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is utilized to allocate funding for facilities such as fire stations, parks buildings, athletic fields, and special facilities such as the community center and Bloomington Ice Garden. Park development and facility improvements have historically been funded through park dedication fees, which are collected when properties are platted or replatted. Because the City is fully developed and most properties are platted, this funding source has diminished. Identifying stable funding sources to assist with replacement and upgrading of facilities is an ongoing challenge. Moving forward, the City will need to seek out opportunities to collaborate with partners to leverage limited resources. For example, park facilities that serve regional demand and/or attract users from across the region and beyond may be eligible for non-city funding, including the State of Minnesota's Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment, and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Changing Community Needs

The needs and expectations of Bloomington residents today and in the future are different than they were in the 1960s and 1970s when most of the City's parks and community buildings were constructed. To effectively meet future needs, the City must have a clear understanding of how needs and expectations are changing and strategically focus resources to respond to those needs. New technologies are making it easier to share and coordinate data collection and analysis across City departments and with outside partners. This will become increasingly important as we work to understand and assess changes in community needs.

Adapt to Demographic Changes and Enhance Inclusion

While Bloomington's population has not grown much over the last few decades, the character of the population has changed significantly. Demographic shifts affect demand for community services and programs as well as the physical design of community facilities. The City is committed to inclusion and accessibility and recognizes efforts to make City facilities and programs accessible and welcoming to serve all members of the community.

Increased Diversity: In 1970 Bloomington's population was 99 percent white. By 2010, the City's non-white population grew to 20 percent, in part as a result of the influx of immigrant families. As noted above, the Bloomington School District reported 52% of kindergartners in 2016 were non-white and over 20% of children age 5 to 17 speak a language other than English at home. The increase in racial and ethnic diversity is occurring across the region and nation and is expected to continue. These trends suggest the City's population will become increasingly diversified in the future.

Potential barriers to participation in City programs or use of facilities include: language barriers, safety concerns, costs, transportation, and lack of time. The City is committed to build relationships and break down barriers that inhibit residents from visiting City parks or participating in programs or events. The City recently hired an outreach coordinator who is tasked with engaging Bloomington's communities of color in learning how facilities and programs can be more inclusive and better connect people across cultures. In addition, the City is reorganizing some departmental functions to establish a group of staff more directly focused on community engagement.

Growing Senior Population - In 1970 only 3 percent of Bloomington's residents were older than 65. By 2016 the portion of residents 65 and older was estimated at 18.8%. By 2040, residents 65 and older are forecast to represent about 27% of the City's population.

Many of the City's aging Baby Boomers are choosing to stay in Bloomington. It is important to recognize their value to the community. They are the best educated, healthiest and fittest group of older people this country has ever seen! While many Baby Boom seniors remain highly active, their needs and demands will change as they age. The City provides a variety of activities for senior residents and is committed to accommodating people with a range of abilities through enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its adaptive programming and inclusion services.

Engage Youth

Providing an engaging and educational environment for youth is often cited in surveys as a priority by Bloomington residents and is important to attracting young families. The City has an established commitment to programs that engage youth. Staff from multiple City divisions (Human Services, Parks and Recreation, Public Health, etc.) work closely and collaborate with partners such as the School District, Youth Sports Associations, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and Three Rivers Park District to provide a wide range of youth-oriented activities.

A multitude of community benefits result from these programs. Children learn life skills such as healthy lifestyles, emergency preparedness, and civic engagement. Many form lifelong friendships and develop a sense of community through these programs. Some programs are designed to connect and engage different people from different groups and generations. These interactions expand awareness and shared experiences foster tolerance that can help build a sense of community connection.

Participation data suggest there is pent up demand for youth programs in Bloomington. Responding to this demand will require a clear understanding of potential barriers to participation. Barriers often relate to individual circumstances, including factors such as scheduling, access, costs, lack of awareness, and lack of facilities or staff capacity to provide more opportunities.



Demand for pickleball, which appeals particularly to seniors, has increased in recent years.

Proactive Evaluation

Understanding demand for programs and facilities and potential barriers to participation is essential to evaluating program and facility efficacy. Tracking program participation, use of facilities, condition of facilities, energy usage, and other metrics can indicate changes in demand and needs. This data can demonstrate how citywide goals related to equity and sustainability are being achieved. It also ensures that best practices are being followed and updated.



Native landscaping at City of Bloomington's Public Works Facility.

Benefits of Native Landscape Plants

Planting native flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees provide food and habitat for pollinators, migrating and resident birds and other native animals. They can also reduce use of water and maintenance.

Healthy Lifestyles

As more people become aware of the consequences of unhealthy behaviors, people across generations have increasingly made the pursuit of health a high priority. The City of Bloomington can influence community health through policies, programs, and investments in the built environment. Through these influences the City can ensure healthy choices are available to enhance the quality of life for City residents, employees, and visitors. Taking a “health in all policies” approach ensures that decisions intentionally consider outcomes that advance health.

Investing in infrastructure that supports physical activity is one of the most direct ways the City can ensure the physical environment enables people to engage in healthy lifestyles. The City’s *Complete Streets* policy, which promotes development of sidewalks and bicycle facilities in conjunction with street construction, is one way that health is incorporated in the physical design of the City. Providing convenient and accessible recreational and athletic facilities allows residents opportunities for active recreation and exercise. Providing farmer’s markets and community gardens allows residents to grow and access healthy food. Spending time in natural areas, such as the Minnesota River Valley, has been shown to provide benefits through restorative relaxation and connection to nature.

The City also provides programs to improve health and well-being. The City’s Public Health and Human Services Divisions address issues such as child development, nutrition, and tobacco use that directly influence positive health outcomes for residents. Many programs provide opportunities for residents to both participate and be educated about healthy habits. However, the benefits our community facilities and programs provide are not always accessible or available to all residents. Groups that experience the greatest disparities in health outcomes also experience the greatest inequities in social and economic conditions. Recognition of these health disparities is critical to addressing them.

Resiliency and Stewardship

Resiliency and stewardship are related, but distinct concepts. Resiliency refers to the ability to respond to disruptions and successfully recover. Stewardship refers to responsible management and strategic investment in our resources and assets.

To enhance resiliency, the City must be prepared to respond to unplanned events that threaten our safety, health, and welfare. These might involve extreme weather events such as drought, extreme heat, ice storms, and flooding. They could also involve attacks on people, communications infrastructure, and technology systems. Being prepared and having plans in place to respond to these types of events is the foundation of resilience.

Some ways the City can utilize its community facilities and services to enhance resiliency include:

- Design and maintain our natural drainage systems (creeks, lakes, ponds) and landscaped areas in parks to enhance stormwater management and help reduce the risk of flooding of structures and roadways. These opportunities are discussed more in the Utilities Element.
- Incorporate sustainable and low-impact design approaches into City buildings and properties. This might involve making buildings more energy efficient, landscaping with native plants, and using permeable pavement. Energy

usage and maintenance schedules can be tracked and evaluated to determine what replacement or upgrades will be most beneficial. Significant updates or replacement of the City's facilities provide an opportunity to design new facilities to reduce their impact on the environment.

- Investments in staff training, first responders, and community education can improve the ability of the entire community to respond to natural disasters and other unplanned events. City staff from the Police, Fire, and other departments continue to evaluate practices and procedures and prepare for emergency operations. Through continual training and proactive planning for use of public facilities to assist in emergencies, the City can be prepared to quickly respond and recover after an emergency.

Good stewardship involves investment in the ongoing maintenance and operation of City buildings and facilities to ensure they serve their desired function and to prolong their useful life. It also involves routine evaluation of maintenance practices to ensure techniques and operations are cost-effective. Some ways the City can enhance stewardship include:

- Modifying maintenance approaches to strategically direct limited resources to high use areas of parks and community facilities. For example, reducing mowing frequency in little used areas of parks can significantly reduce the resources spent on maintenance with little, if any, impact on user enjoyment.
- Converting low-use areas of parks or facility grounds to native plantings can further reduce maintenance needs while improving habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.
- Use of durable and low-maintenance materials for buildings, signs, play structures and other items.
- Establishment of asset management plans and criteria for prioritizing maintenance and replacement of community facilities.

Sense of Identity and Connection

Neighborhoods and cities that project a strong identity or a sense of place often engender high levels of pride and allegiance. A sense of place or connection often evolves organically. While an attractive appearance is part of it; fostering a sense of social connection and belonging is critical to creating and sustaining community identity.

Community surveys consistently indicate that residents find Bloomington to be a great place to live. However, ratings of the City's overall image have declined in recent years. Improving community image is one of six strategic priorities in the One Bloomington initiative. To better understand and address issues around community image, the City convened a One Bloomington Summit that engaged nearly 70 community leaders to generate ideas for improving community image. Several priority action areas were identified, including:

- Igniting partnerships; creating a bold vision;
- Telling stories that sell Bloomington;
- Embracing diversity;
- Strengthening civic engagement.

Creative Placemaking

Since 2016, the City has commissioned several art works in the South Loop District.



At Confluence of Science and Nature
(Artists: Erik Pearson)



Convergence (Artists: James Brenner)



River Rendezvous, held in the fall at Pond-Dakota Mission Park, demonstrates the lifestyles of people living in the area between 1830 and 1870.

Moving forward, specific steps will be identified that the City can take to improve its image and identity.

Revitalization projects provide a great opportunity to engage residents in neighborhood improvement efforts. This is best demonstrated by a relatively new City effort, informally called the Neighborhood Focus Area Initiative. This approach strategically focuses resources from multiple City departments in a targeted area to implement projects to improve safety, beautification, and community engagement. Projects may include sidewalk and street improvements, utilities, parks, housing rehabilitation, public art, and community events. Focusing resources maximizes the impact of investments. This strategy not only helps develop a sense of identity but also allows the City to address issues that affect neighborhood safety and livability. Actively engaging neighborhood residents in the process also helps build a sense of ownership and connection.

Creative placemaking also fosters a sense of place. Creative placemaking leverages the arts and creative disciplines to both build distinctive places and actively engage and connect people to their neighborhood. *The South Loop District Plan*, adopted in 2012, called for the City to take a proactive and intentional approach to integrate creative people and arts into redevelopment efforts. While the City's creative placemaking activities are currently focused in the South Loop District, the long term aim is to expand the program citywide. In addition, public art may be incorporated in private development to satisfy certain building design requirements in the City's mixed use districts. For example, the developer of the Fresh Thyme market in the Penn American District was granted flexibility to install colorful, illuminated sculptural "gears" on the backside of the building in lieu of windows.

For people to truly feel connected to their community, they must feel socially engaged and welcomed. Providing opportunities for people to engage with their neighbors and other members of the community helps instill a sense of belonging. The City supports a wide variety of events and community activities at both the neighborhood and citywide level. The City also partners with private groups and other agencies on community events.

Community events are a great way to increase awareness and celebrate the City's ethnic and cultural diversity. Providing opportunities for people of different backgrounds to interact can help build relationships that expand cultural understanding and tolerance. Nurturing these opportunities will require intentional efforts to identify and remove barriers that may inhibit participation and working with community partners to build trusting relationships.

Bloomington currently offers a variety of events throughout the year. Some utilize unique destinations such as the Pond Dakota Mission Park and Normandale Lake Bandshell. Some involve scheduled activities and performances such as Arts in the Parks. Some have specific aims, like Safe Summer Nights, which focuses on neighborhood safety. Some, like the farmers market, promote healthy lifestyles.

7.4 Partnerships

The City partners with many outside organizations to provide a comprehensive and robust array of facilities and services that improve the lives of Bloomington residents and businesses. By leveraging partner organization's time, resources, and expertise, the City can more efficiently and effectively meet residents needs. Some of the City's most established partnerships are described below.

Sports Associations

While the City offers adult sports leagues, adaptive sports leagues, and some youth programs a large majority of youth sports is offered through partnerships with sports associations. One of the largest and most established is the Bloomington Athletic Association (BAA), which offers youth baseball, basketball, floor hockey, football, golf, ice hockey, soccer, softball, volleyball, and wrestling. Numerous other organized athletic groups operate in Bloomington. Most focus on specific activities such as, hockey, baseball, aquatics, and skating.

Three Rivers Park District (TRPD)

Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), an independent, special park district, is responsible for acquisition, development, and maintenance of regional parks and trails in suburban Hennepin County. Bloomington, as one of 10 regional park and trail implementing agencies, assumes responsibilities for operations and collaborates with TRPD on acquisition, development, and funding for portions of Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve located on City-owned land and segments of regional trails located in Bloomington (e.g., Nokomis-Minnesota River Regional Trail and Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail). An agreement exists between the City and TRPD for shared use of the Hyland Hills Ski Area and parking areas. In the future, the City may want to consider executing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TRPD regarding options and cooperative programming of the Park Reserve.

Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) owns and operates multiple units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) extending from Fort Snelling State Park to LeSueur, Minnesota. The Refuge Visitor Center is located in Bloomington's South Loop District. The City and USFWS have a long history of working together to leverage funding and create efficiencies through coordination and cooperation on maintenance, trail planning, and habitat protection. The City and USFWS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1997 whereby the USFWS assumed responsibility for natural resources and wildlife management on City owned land east of Lyndale Avenue. The agreement allows the City access to the specialized skills and expertise of the USFWS staff to augment the City's resource management capabilities. A pending update to the MOU provides an opportunity to continue to strengthen interagency coordination so more efficiencies and cost savings can be realized while improving policy and regulatory coordination

School District 271

The City assists and collaborates with Bloomington Public School District #271 (BPS) in a number of areas, including: demographic data sharing; joint use, development, and maintenance of recreation facilities; special programming; and safety enhancements



USFWS conducts a variety of outreach and education programs that benefit Bloomington residents and visitors and has been a strong partner and supporter of recent creative placemaking efforts in the South Loop.



Normandale Community College Japanese Garden

In the midst of the college campus is a unique two-acre Japanese garden. Designed by Takao Watanabe, a professional garden architect from Tokyo, Japan, the garden is designed to inspire contemplation and renewal of spirit. The garden is maintained jointly by the college and the Japanese Garden Committee and is open to the public year-round at no charge, except when reserved for special events.

such as Safe Routes to Schools. In some cases the City provides funding support. For example, the City has funded playground construction while BPS provides maintenance. The schools utilize the playgrounds during the school year and the City utilizes them for summer programming. The City also provides funding and/or staff for programs such as adaptive programs offered at BPS, which would not otherwise occur without City participation.

The City and School District have a mutual interest in retaining and attracting young families to Bloomington. This will require a continued commitment to work together to address community challenges and expand awareness of the City's assets and quality of public schools.

Normandale Community College

The City historically has partnered with Normandale Community College (NCC) on an ad hoc basis as needs arise. Cooperative agreements between the City and NCC are currently in place for use of Marsh Lake playfield and for NCC use of parking lots at Bloomington Ice Garden for overflow. The City has also allowed the NCC to utilize its adjacent archery range. Opportunities exist to strengthen partnerships around volunteer events, educational programs, and alternative transportation options (i.e., create a bike share program). Strengthening ties between the college and the community could encourage students and graduates to choose to play, work, and live in Bloomington.

Public Health Alliance of Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield

The Bloomington Public Health Division has a contracted partnership with the cities of Edina and Richfield to provide coordinated public health services to the three communities. This partnership organization—called the Public Health Alliance of Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield (PHABER)—has been nationally accredited through the Public Health Accreditation Board. The Public Health Division partners with schools, work sites, communities, and healthcare providers on initiatives to create healthy communities. Initiatives involve: research and analysis, education and outreach, and clinical operations. Services are available for all community members from newborns to the elderly. Efforts are targeted at improving community health equity while promoting policies, systems and environments that support healthy choices.

Artistry

Artistry is the largest of eight independent arts nonprofits based in the City-owned Bloomington Center for the Arts. With programming focused on theater and visual arts, Artistry serves a regional audience of more than 80,000 people annually through stage productions, exhibitions, arts education, and creative placemaking. In pursuit of artistic excellence, Artistry engages our region's most talented artists in work that welcomes and develops audiences and opens hearts and minds. Artistry has worked closely with the City for more than a decade to make the Bloomington Center for the Arts a resource and point of pride for local arts lovers and a destination for audiences from greater Minneapolis/St. Paul.

In recent years, Artistry has collaborated with the City to facilitate public art and creative placemaking in the South Loop and Bloomington as a whole. In combination with other public and private funding sources, City operating support helps Artistry provide a range of services. Examples include developing and implementing permanent and temporary creative placemaking projects; finding and selecting artists, designers, architects and other creative people for project commissions; supporting artists through permitting and other regulatory processes; and facilitating the relationships between artists and project hosts. This working relationship exemplifies the long history and deepening partnership between Artistry and the City.

Social Service Providers

The City contracts with a number of nonprofit agencies, and sometime to provide convenient, local access to services for residents in need of assistance. The agencies provide services to address a wide variety of challenges, including: affordable housing, homelessness, access to affordable and healthy food and other daily necessities. Some, like Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP) are based in Bloomington and have established relationships in the community.



Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP)

VEAP focuses on connecting community members to healthy food, social services, transportation resources, and children and youth resources. VEAP is located near 98th and Lyndale and shares a building with a Hennepin County Regional Human Services Center. This collaboration helps connect VEAP's clients with the necessary services provided by the County. VEAP operates a food pantry, nutritional education and teaching classes, food delivery for seniors, access to social workers, transportation for low and fixed income adults, and youth programs related to weekend food, school supplies, holiday gifts, and more.

7.5 Goals, Strategies, Actions

Goal 1: Replace, upgrade, and maintain aging facilities.

Strategy 1.1: Plan for strategic replacement and renovation of fire stations, parks and recreation facilities, and other community facilities.

- Continue to utilize the Capital Improvement Plan to commit funding for replacement of community facilities.
- Inventory and assess the condition of community facilities and assets to identify needed improvements and prioritize replacement of aging fire, parks and recreation, and other community facilities.
- Continue to study the funding, role, and location of a new community center.

Strategy 1.2: Routinely maintain and repair community facilities.

- Proactively maintain facilities to reduce the need for large scale and/or emergency repairs.

Strategy 1.3: Improve site and building sustainability and accessibility.

- Utilize sustainable building and site design practices (e.g., LEED or other officially recognized rating system) when constructing new public buildings or renovating existing public buildings.
- Design new facilities and, where feasible, renovate existing buildings and sites to incorporate universal design standards and provide multimodal access.
- Utilize software and other data sources to evaluate the energy efficiency of existing community facilities.
- Routinely analyze building management and maintenance practices to identify strategies to increase energy efficiency and enhance the health and welfare of building occupants.

Goal 2: Provide programs, services, and facilities to meet changing demand.

Strategy 2.1: Evaluate programs, services, and facilities regularly to reflect community needs.

- Update the Bloomington Park Master Plan to ensure parks and recreation facilities are meeting the needs of the community.
- Regularly evaluate and track participation in programs, services, and facilities to gauge participant satisfaction and demand.

- Actively solicit public input and enhance outreach to underrepresented communities when developing new programs and recreational opportunities.
- Routinely compile data to analyze trends and program participation and use to assist in funding pursuits.
- Investigate ways to utilize technology to enhance park and facility user experience in ways that attract new users.

Strategy 2.2: Provide park facilities and programs that accommodate a range of users and abilities.

- Expand more opportunities to walk and bike to and within parks.
- Continue to provide specialized recreation facilities, recreational opportunities, and adaptive services for the elderly, disabled, and other special needs populations.

Strategy 2.3: Minimize access barriers to encourage participation and use of programs, services, and facilities.

- Make reasonable accommodations for individuals with special needs. Exceptions may be warranted where an undue burden exists (i.e. some facilities may not be accessible due to extreme topography and the excessive cost to make the facility ADA compliant).
- Identify barriers to participation or use of public facilities and programs such as cost, language, or physical, and take steps to reduce or eliminate them.
- Update and implement the City's ADA Transition Plans to ensure compliance with ADA standards when facilities are replaced, repaired, or constructed.
- Conduct targeted outreach and education with underserved populations to better understand needs and wants regarding facilities, services, rules, reservation process and safety.

Goal 3: Create a sense of identity and strengthen community pride.

Strategy 3.1: Provide events, programs, and facilities that engage the community and help attract and retain residents.

- Continue to organize and promote events both citywide and in neighborhoods to engage the community and connect residents to each other and to Bloomington neighborhoods.
- Curate community conversations around topics of concern to residents and/or the business community.

- Explore and implement innovative ways to use technology and social media to promote Bloomington, its amenities and services (eg. smart phone applications; Facebook; Twitter).
- Foster partnerships between neighborhood, government, business, and institutional stakeholders to expand efforts to welcome new residents.
- Use social media and other tools to inform residents and businesses of the public and private investments being made in their neighborhood.

Strategy 3.2: Design public facilities and spaces to be inviting and create a sense of identity.

- Identify opportunities to invest in public common spaces to create neighborhood gathering spaces and enhance local identity.
- Support shared use of public facilities and spaces where multiple generations can formally and informally interact.
- Identify and support opportunities to incorporate public art in public facilities.
- Continue to promote, organize, and collaborate with organizations such as Artistry on arts programming and creative placemaking activities.

Strategy 3.3: Expand awareness of local history.

- Acknowledge and celebrate the diverse histories and traditions of Bloomington residents.
- Continue to support improvements to Pond-Dakota Mission Park and Old Town Hall to enhance historical and cultural-based programming.
- Work with local partners, such as the Bloomington Historical Society, to coordinate and enhance communication and awareness of Bloomington's history and historic places.

Strategy 3.4: Actively promote Bloomington's natural and cultural assets.

- Continue to utilize, support, and promote our unique regional facilities like the Minnesota River valley, Normandale Lake Bandshell, Hyland Hills Ski Area, Bush Lake Ski Jump, Dred Scott Playfields, Bloomington Center for the Arts.
- Work with partners to enhance citizen awareness and understanding of the City's natural and cultural resources through use of media, events, and other activities.

Goal 4: Promote, protect, and improve community health.

Strategy 4.1: Assure adequate and equitable public health infrastructure.

- In line with the City's strategic plan goals, administer programs that promote health for all age levels, cultures and abilities, with a focus on serving vulnerable populations (including but not limited to pregnant women and children; older adults; people with developmental and physical disabilities; immigrants and refugees; low income people; and people of color.)
- Educate residents, employees, and visitors about public health emergency preparedness.
- Work with community leaders and partners on outreach to ensure all residents have access to information about public health services and programs.

Strategy 4.2: Support a "health in all policies" framework.

- Encourage collaboration between city departments and programs to incorporate health principles in the design, delivery and evaluation of city programs, policies and services.
- Update city code standards to remove barriers to implementation of facilities, uses, and practices that promote improved health.

Strategy 4.3: Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors.

- Encourage adoption of policies in the public and private sector that promote healthy eating, active living, and environments for patrons and employees that are free of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- Enhance access to natural areas, parks, sport fields, and trails/sidewalks to foster opportunities for active lifestyles, social interaction and nature contemplation for a range of ages and abilities.
- Support infrastructure enhancements that position walking and biking as viable alternatives to motorized transportation.
- Improve resident access to farmers markets, community gardens, and the food system.

Goal 5: Enhance coordination and cooperation with partners.

Strategy 5.1: Enhance inter-governmental coordination and cooperation.

- Create channels to openly share relevant data between governmental agencies.
- Continue to host regular meetings between Bloomington School Board and City officials to identify, collaborate, and provide technical assistance on issues of mutual interest.

- Work with post-secondary institutions to engage students through creative partnerships and cultivate relationships between employers, high schools, and post-secondary institutions.
- Work closely on facility and services planning with federal, state and local governments.
- Coordinate with partner agencies on policies and programs that enhance resiliency and conduct emergency preparedness drills internally and with other governmental agencies.

Strategy 5.2: Explore opportunities to enhance coordination and cooperation and foster new partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organizations.

- Identify champions in the community to support partnerships.
- Work with community leaders to promote program participation in underrepresented communities.
- Explore partnerships with non-profit service providers and institutions to promote and expand access to City programs and services.
- Work with the private and non-profit sectors to coordinate approaches around issues of mutual benefit, such as energy efficiency and affordable housing.

