

# 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan

Madison, Wisconsin

*play*  
**MADISON  
PARKS**

# DRAFT

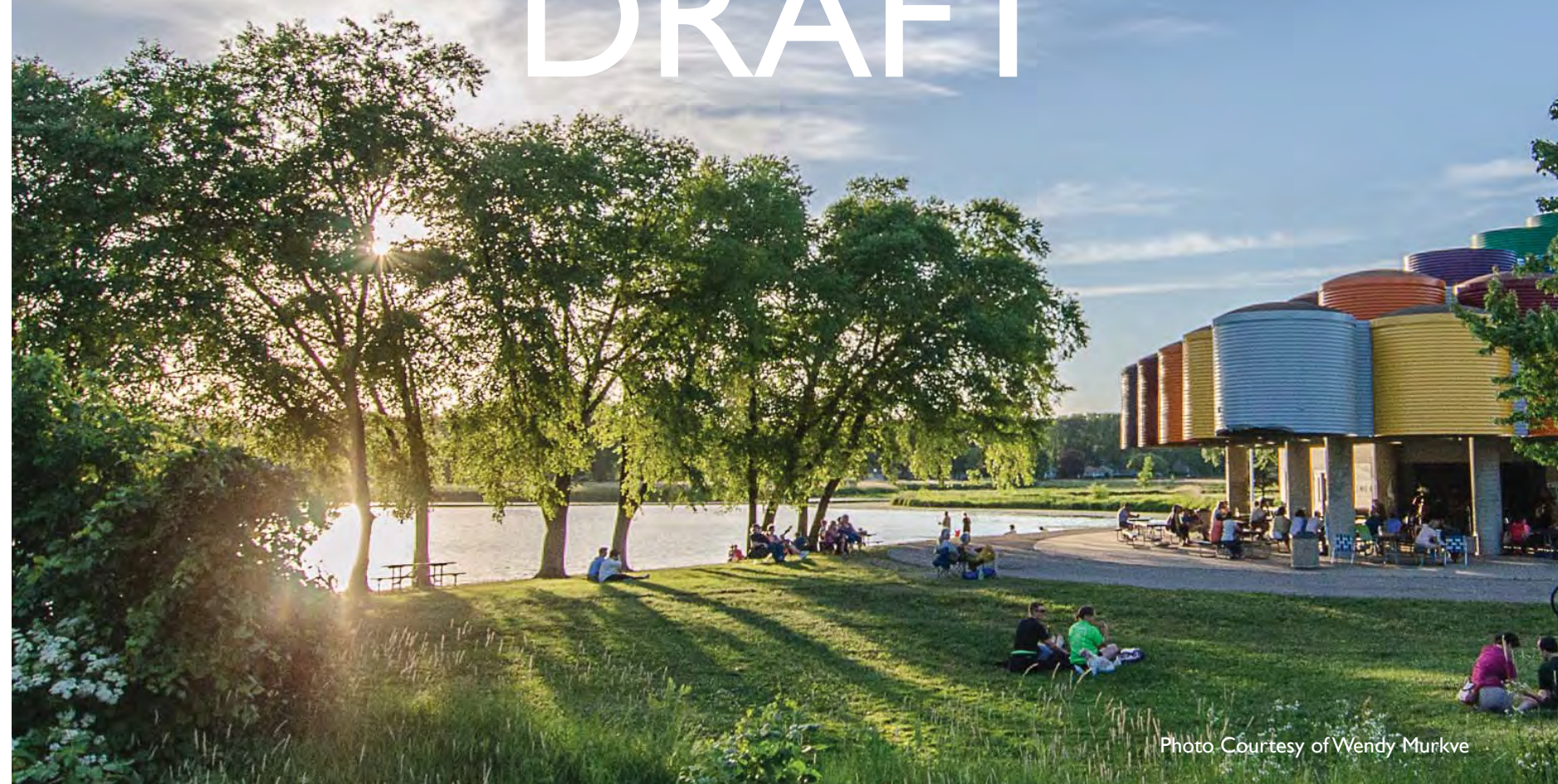


Photo Courtesy of Wendy Murkve

June 29, 2018



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

THE CITY OF MADISON PARKS DIVISION WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
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SPECIAL THANKS TO PROFESSOR SAMUEL DENNIS (UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN) & PUBLIC HEALTH - MADISON & DANE COUNTY



Madison residents are fortunate to have inherited a park system built by the progressive vision and efforts of previous generations.

Today, the Board of Park Commissioners, Madison Parks Foundation, and City of Madison Parks Division continue a mission of enhancing Madison's legacy of diverse parklands; providing green space, safe environments, and recreational facilities; and meeting the changing needs of present and future generations.

The quality of life for City of Madison residents is influenced by the City's natural resources: parks, greenways, and public access to the numerous waterways which greatly define Madison culture. The mission statement, vision, and goals in this plan serve to guide the development of policies and facilities in the City of Madison park system.

### **Vision Statement**

Everyone shall have access to an ideal system of parks, natural resources, and recreational opportunities that enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors.

### **Mission Statement**

Provide an exceptional system of safe, accessible, well-planned and maintained parks, facilities, public cemetery, natural areas, and public shorelines.

Provide affordable opportunities for recreational and educational experiences.

Preserve and expand our urban forest resources through a well-planned and systematic approach to tree maintenance, planting, and natural area management.

Preserve and promote City of Madison parks' historic legacy, as well as its future legacy.

Provide opportunities for cultural interaction by facilitating community and events and through the display of public art.



## Executive Summary

|                                                             |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Chapter One: Introduction.....                              | p. 1  |
| 1.1 Purpose of the Park and Open Space Plan.....            | p. 1  |
| 1.2 Accomplishments.....                                    | p. 3  |
| 1.3 A History of the City of Madison Park System.....       | p. 5  |
| 1.4 Planning Process.....                                   | p. 8  |
| 1.5 Public Engagement Strategies.....                       | p. 9  |
| Chapter Two: Guiding Lenses.....                            | p. 11 |
| 2.1 Equity.....                                             | p. 12 |
| Population.....                                             | p. 12 |
| Housing.....                                                | p. 14 |
| Race/Ethnicity.....                                         | p. 15 |
| Economy and Opportunity.....                                | p. 17 |
| 2.2 Public Health.....                                      | p. 19 |
| Physical Health.....                                        | p. 19 |
| Mental and Emotional Well-being.....                        | p. 20 |
| Social Cohesion.....                                        | p. 21 |
| Environmental Health.....                                   | p. 21 |
| 2.3 Sustainability and Adaptability.....                    | p. 22 |
| Environment.....                                            | p. 23 |
| Economic and Cultural.....                                  | p. 26 |
| 2.4 Conclusion.....                                         | p. 27 |
| Chapter Three: Engagement Strategies and Outdoor Recreation |       |
| Needs Assessment.....                                       | p. 29 |
| 3.1 Engagement Strategies.....                              | p. 29 |
| Engagement Methods.....                                     | p. 29 |
| Engagement Demographics.....                                | p. 33 |
| 3.2 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment.....                | p. 35 |
| Engagement Outcomes.....                                    | p. 35 |
| Top Issues and Concerns.....                                | p. 37 |
| Facility Demands.....                                       | p. 42 |
| 3.3 Conclusion.....                                         | p. 51 |

|                                                               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Chapter Four: Parkland Inventory.....                         | p. 53 |
| 4.1 City of Madison Park Classifications.....                 | p. 53 |
| Mini, Neighborhood, & Community Parks.....                    | p. 54 |
| Conservation Parks.....                                       | p. 52 |
| Sports Complex.....                                           | p. 56 |
| Trafficways.....                                              | p. 56 |
| Open Space.....                                               | p. 56 |
| Other.....                                                    | p. 56 |
| Special Use Park.....                                         | p. 56 |
| Greenways.....                                                | p. 57 |
| 4.2 Park Facilities.....                                      | p. 58 |
| 4.3 Other Park and Open Space Facilities.....                 | p. 60 |
| University of Wisconsin.....                                  | p. 60 |
| Public School Grounds.....                                    | p. 62 |
| Dane County Parks.....                                        | p. 62 |
| Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.....                | p. 64 |
| Other Parks/Conservancy Areas.....                            | p. 62 |
| 4.4 Private Recreational Facilities.....                      | p. 64 |
| 4.5 Conclusion.....                                           | p. 64 |
| Chapter Five: Parkland Access.....                            | p. 65 |
| 5.1 Method One: Parkland Acreage and Parkland per Capita..... | p. 66 |
| 5.2 Method Two: Population Density and Use.....               | p. 68 |
| 5.3 Method Three: Service Area.....                           | p. 70 |
| Mini and Neighborhood Park Service Areas.....                 | p. 68 |
| Community Park Service Areas.....                             | p. 74 |
| 5.4 Method Four: Access Analysis.....                         | p. 76 |
| Walkability.....                                              | p. 76 |
| Public Transportation.....                                    | p. 78 |
| School Influence on Walkability and Transportation Access..   | p. 79 |
| 5.5 Conclusion.....                                           | p. 82 |

|                                                             |        |                                                |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Chapter Six: Relevant Plans.....                            | p. 83  | Chapter Eight: Park Operational Resources..... | p. 109 |
| 6.1 How this Plan Relates to Other Plans.....               | p. 83  | 8.1 Parks Division Operating Expenses.....     | p. 109 |
| 6.2 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.....    | p. 84  | 8.2 Golf Enterprise Operating Expenses.....    | p. 112 |
| 6.3 Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan.....              | p. 90  | 8.3 Parks Division Staff.....                  | p. 112 |
| 6.4 Intergovernmental Agreements.....                       | p. 91  | Community Services.....                        | p. 114 |
| 6.5 Imagine Madison City of Madison Comprehensive Plan..... | p. 93  | Finance and Administration.....                | p. 114 |
| Changing Demographics.....                                  | p. 93  | Olbrich Botanical Gardens.....                 | p. 114 |
| Changes in Housing and Neighborhoods.....                   | p. 93  | Operations.....                                | p. 114 |
| Desire for Trails and Increased Connectivity.....           | p. 94  | Planning and Development.....                  | p. 114 |
| Strong Community Value in Culture and Character             |        | Public Information Office.....                 | p. 115 |
| of Neighborhoods.....                                       | p. 94  | 8.5 Partnerships and Volunteers.....           | p. 115 |
| Concerns Regarding the Environment.....                     | p. 94  | Madison Parks and Volunteers.....              | p. 116 |
| 6.6 Neighborhood Development Plans.....                     | p. 94  | 8.6 Conclusion.....                            | p. 117 |
| 6.7 City of Madison Downtown Plan.....                      | p. 96  |                                                |        |
| 6.8 Conclusion.....                                         | p. 98  | Chapter Nine: Recommended Strategies.....      | p. 119 |
| Chapter Seven: Park Development Resources.....              | p. 99  |                                                |        |
| 7.1 Parks Division Capital Budget.....                      | p. 99  | Appendix A: Works Cited.....                   | p. 125 |
| 7.2 Funding the Capital Budget.....                         | p. 100 | Appendix B: Engagement Summary Data.....       | p. 131 |
| General Obligation Bonds.....                               | p. 100 | Appendix C: Tables.....                        | p. 155 |
| Parkland Dedication and Impact Fees.....                    | p. 100 | Appendix D: Additional Maps.....               | p. 191 |
| Donations and Partnerships.....                             | p. 104 | Appendix E: ADA Accessibility.....             | p. 200 |
| Grants.....                                                 | p. 105 | Appendix F: Historic and Landmark Parks.....   | p. 207 |
| Other.....                                                  | p. 105 | Appendix G: 2018 Capital Budget.....           | p. 211 |
| 7.3 Conclusion.....                                         | p. 106 |                                                |        |

## FIGURES

|                                                                              |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1.1: Catalogued Native American Legacy.....                                  | p. 6   |
| 1.2: Past City of Madison Park and Open Space Plans.....                     | p. 7   |
| 1.3: Project Timeline.....                                                   | p. 8   |
| 1.4: Engagement Strategy Matrix.....                                         | p. 9   |
| 2.1: Population Trends and Forecasts for Madison and<br>Dane County.....     | p. 12  |
| 2.2: Projected Population by Age Bracket.....                                | p. 13  |
| 2.3: Owner Occupancy Comparison Across Race/Ethnicity.....                   | p. 14  |
| 2.4: Owner Occupancy Comparison.....                                         | p. 14  |
| 2.5: Number of Residential Units Added by Year (City of Madison).....        | p. 14  |
| 2.6: 2006 and 2014 Race and Ethnicity.....                                   | p. 15  |
| 2.7: Race and Ethnicity Trends for MMSD Students.....                        | p. 15  |
| 2.8: Median Income Comparison.....                                           | p. 17  |
| 2.9: Household Income by Race/Ethnicity.....                                 | p. 17  |
| 2.10: Percentage of Residents Below Federal Poverty Threshold.....           | p. 18  |
| 2.11: Dane County Water Quality Beach Closures by Year.....                  | p. 24  |
| 3.1: Engagement Numbers.....                                                 | p. 31  |
| 3.2: Ages of Respondents from Engagement Methods.....                        | p. 33  |
| 3.3: Ethnicity/Race Demographics of Engagement Methods.....                  | p. 34  |
| 3.4: Top Activities as Reported per Engagement Method.....                   | p. 36  |
| 3.5: Top Comments During Engagement Process.....                             | p. 38  |
| 3.6: Online Survey Response.....                                             | p. 39  |
| 3.7: Online Survey Question Response.....                                    | p. 40  |
| 3.8: 2012-2017 Street Use Permits.....                                       | p. 48  |
| 3.9 2017 Permit Type Breakdown.....                                          | p. 48  |
| 5.1: Parkland Access Analysis Methods.....                                   | p. 65  |
| 5.2: NRPA Guidelines Compared to City of Madison Acreage.....                | p. 66  |
| 6.1: Planning Document Organizational Hierarchy.....                         | p. 83  |
| 6.2: Dane County Annual Trail Permit Sales.....                              | p. 90  |
| 6.3: Dane County Annual Recreation Permit Sales.....                         | p. 90  |
| 7.1: Comparison of 2002 and 2016 Parkland Dedication<br>Requirements.....    | p. 101 |
| 7.2: Example Scenario of Park Impact Fees vs. Park<br>Development Costs..... | p. 104 |
| 7.3: 2009-2016 City of Madison New Residential<br>Construction.....          | p. 106 |
| 8.1: Parks Division Organizational Structure.....                            | p. 113 |

## TABLES

|                                                                                                                                                                 |       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1.1 Accomplishments from the 2012-2017 POSP.....                                                                                                                | p. 3  |
| 1.2: Madison's Historical Population.....                                                                                                                       | p. 5  |
| 2.1: Physical Health Indicators Compared Across Madison,<br>Dane County, Wisconsin, and the United States.....                                                  | p. 20 |
| 2.2: Mental Health Indicators.....                                                                                                                              | p. 21 |
| 2.3: Economic Impacts of Madison's Urban Forest.....                                                                                                            | p. 25 |
| 3.1: 2017 Top Park Reservations by Sport.....                                                                                                                   | p. 42 |
| 3.2: 2017 Top Twenty Reserved Parks for Athletics.....                                                                                                          | p. 43 |
| 3.3: Athletic Organization Recreation Survey Results.....                                                                                                       | p. 43 |
| 3.4: 2017 Top Twenty Reserved Shelters.....                                                                                                                     | p. 45 |
| 3.5: 2017 Top Ten Reserved Parks for Events.....                                                                                                                | p. 47 |
| 3.6: 2015-2017 Permit Sales.....                                                                                                                                | p. 50 |
| 4.1: City of Madison Park Type Classification Descriptions.....                                                                                                 | p. 53 |
| 4.2: Typical Park Facilities by Park Classification.....                                                                                                        | p. 54 |
| 4.3: 2017 Facility Inventory Summary.....                                                                                                                       | p. 58 |
| 4.4: City Park Facts- Beaches.....                                                                                                                              | p. 59 |
| 4.5: City Park Facts- Pickleball Courts.....                                                                                                                    | p. 59 |
| 4.6: City Park Facts- Playgrounds.....                                                                                                                          | p. 59 |
| 4.7: City Park Facts- Community Gardens.....                                                                                                                    | p. 59 |
| 5.1: NRPA Metrics Compared to Madison Park Acreage.....                                                                                                         | p. 66 |
| 5.2: City of Madison Parkland Acreage.....                                                                                                                      | p. 67 |
| 5.3: Parks with Highest Number of People Within Half Mile.....                                                                                                  | p. 68 |
| 5.4: NRPA Service Area by Park Type.....                                                                                                                        | p. 70 |
| 5.5: Comparison of School Influence on Parkland Access<br>and Demand.....                                                                                       | p. 79 |
| 6.1: 2005 Regional Recreation Supply Shortages for the Southern<br>Gateways Region.....                                                                         | p. 85 |
| 6.2: 2011 Regional Recreation Supply Shortages for the Southern<br>Gateways Region.....                                                                         | p. 85 |
| 6.3: Draft 2018 Recreation Opportunities Analysis- Top 10 Most<br>Frequently Identified Recreation Opportunities Needed in the<br>Southern Gateways Region..... | p. 85 |
| 6.4: 2018 Draft Recreation Opportunities Analysis- Anticipated Future<br>Recreation Needs for the Southern Gateways Region.....                                 | p. 86 |
| 6.5: 10 Most Popular Outdoor Recreation Activities.....                                                                                                         | p. 88 |
| 6.6: Participation Rates for Developed-setting Land Activities.....                                                                                             | p. 89 |
| 6.7: Participation Rates for Outdoor Sports.....                                                                                                                | p. 89 |

## TABLES (continued)

|                                                                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 6.8: Participation Rates for Snow and Ice-based Activities.....                   | p. 89  |
| 6.9: Participation Rates for Nature-based Land Activities.....                    | p. 89  |
| 6.10: Participation Rates for Viewing/Learning Activities.....                    | p. 89  |
| 6.11: Participation Rates for Water-based Activities.....                         | p. 89  |
| 6.12: Neighborhood Development Plan Proposed Park Acreages<br>as of 1/1/2018..... | p. 96  |
| 7.1: 2012-2017 Capital Budget .....                                               | p. 99  |
| 7.2: 2018 Adopted Capital Budget & 2019-2023<br>Capital Improvement Program.....  | p. 100 |
| 7.3: Parkland Dedication Analysis.....                                            | p. 101 |
| 7.4: 2012-2017 Collected Park-Land Fees.....                                      | p. 102 |
| 7.5: 2012-2017 Collected Park-Infrastructure Fees.....                            | p. 103 |
| 7.6: 2012-2017 Collected Donations/Contributions.....                             | p. 105 |
| 8.1: 2012-2017 Parks Division Operating Expenses by Funding<br>Source.....        | p. 110 |
| 8.2: 2015-2017 Operating Budget Revenue Support by Section....                    | p. 107 |
| 8.3: 2012-2017 Golf Enterprise Operating Budget.....                              | p. 108 |
| 8.4: 2015-2017 Parks Operating Budget by Section.....                             | p. 109 |
| 8.5: 2017 Notable Volunteer Events.....                                           | p. 112 |

## EXHIBITS

|                                                                                        |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Exhibit 1: City of Madison Park and Open Space Inventory Map.....                      | p. 2  |
| Exhibit 2: City of Madison Demographics by Race/Ethnicity.....                         | p. 16 |
| Exhibit 3: POSP Engagement Locations.....                                              | p. 30 |
| Exhibit 4: Park Reservations - Athletics.....                                          | p. 44 |
| Exhibit 5: Park Reservations - Shelters.....                                           | p. 46 |
| Exhibit 6: Park Event Days.....                                                        | p. 49 |
| Exhibit 7: City of Madison Parks by Type.....                                          | p. 55 |
| Exhibit 8: Other Park and Open Space Facilities.....                                   | p. 61 |
| Exhibit 9: Population Served by Park.....                                              | p. 69 |
| Exhibit 10: Mini and Neighborhood Park Deficiencies Based on<br>Service Areas.....     | p. 72 |
| Exhibit 11: Elementary and Middle School Influence on Park<br>Deficiencies.....        | p. 73 |
| Exhibit 12: Community Park Deficiencies Based on Service Areas.....                    | p. 75 |
| Exhibit 13: Madison Parks Walkability Analysis.....                                    | p. 77 |
| Exhibit 14: Madison Parks Walkability Analysis - Residents<br>Below Poverty Level..... | p. 80 |
| Exhibit 15: Public Transportation Analysis - Residents Below<br>Poverty Level.....     | p. 81 |
| Exhibit 16: Intergovernmental Boundary Agreements.....                                 | p. 92 |
| Exhibit 17: New Parkland Identified in Neighborhood<br>Development Plans.....          | p. 95 |

## Executive Summary

The 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) assists City Boards, Commissioners, City agencies and staff, other governmental agencies, interested residents, and volunteers in decision-making related to park development and operations policies.

The development of this document included a robust public engagement process. A record number of over 30,000 contacts were made through the planning process, the highest number of people engaged ever in the development of the City's Park and Open Space Plan, and amongst the highest number of engaged nationally for any municipally developed plan document.

This document serves as a supplement to the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* and uses the four crosscutting lenses of equity, public health, sustainability, and adaptability to select and prioritize recommendations.

This plan includes review of the extensive opportunities provided by the existing City of Madison parks system, and identifies additional public land provided by Dane County, the State of Wisconsin, neighboring municipalities, and educational institutions. It incorporates four assessments to identify areas of uneven access, including National Recreation and Park Association standard analyses, as well as innovative approaches that identify walkability to parks along paths and sidewalks.

Finally, the plan describes the resources available and those that are needed to support the future system of parks and open spaces in conjunction with population increase, changing cultural and recreational preferences, equity, and fiscal and environmental pressures.

In addition to extensive supportive appendices, the plan closes with recommended strategies designed to achieve the plan's vision. The strategies included in this plan direct future park and open space development and are influenced by one or more of the guiding lenses.

The plan, adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners, is evidence-based and must be updated every five years. This plan is an update to the 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan that was adopted on May 15, 2012.



# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Park and Open Space Plan

City of Madison parks play a vital role in the well-being of Madison residents. Parks improve the health and wellness of residents, and in turn contribute to the well-being of the entire community. The City of Madison Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) serves as a guide to inform public policy and system-wide park facility decisions.

This Park and Open Space Plan supports City Boards, Commissions, City agencies and staff, other government agencies, and interested residents and volunteers. It serves as a guide in decision-making related to park policies, acquisition and development of parkland and facilities, and City financing and operations.

The analysis and recommendations discussed in this plan relate to park development, management of core facilities, and broad concepts in park system planning. Specialized elements of the Madison Parks Division such as Forestry, the State Street/Capitol Mall Concourse, Golf Enterprise, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, and the Warner Park Community Recreation Center in many cases, have their own adopted plans, guiding committees, mission statements, and strategies. The 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan recognizes these plans as part of the recommendations of this plan.

This plan does not address the City’s bicycle and pedestrian system which are addressed in separate plans, with guidance provided by the Park and Open Space Plan.

Analysis and recommendations provided in this plan were developed from an extensive public engagement strategy conducted from May 2016 through November 2017. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

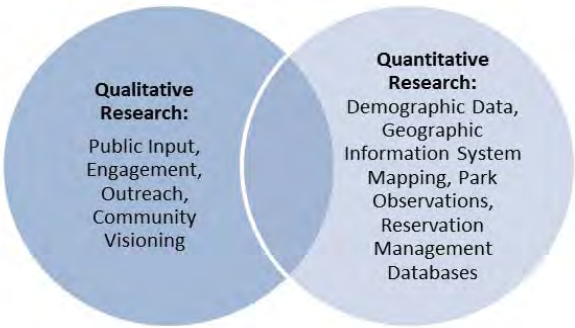
Exhibit I provides an inventory map of the City of Madison’s park and open spaces.

The Park and Open Space Plan is to be evidence-based and, as such, utilizes extensive public input, census data, park use records, geographic information systems mapping, and other informational databases.

The plan has been subject to public review, hearings, and is adopted by the Board of Parks Commissioners and the Common Council.

The Park and Open Space Plan is updated every five years to stay current with changing recreational trends, demographics, and park needs, as well as to reflect the integration with the planning efforts of complementary City boards, agencies, county, and statewide efforts.

Maintaining a current Park and Open Space Plan is a prerequisite for participation in Federal and State park and open space financial aid programs. The City must continue to remain eligible for these program funds to accomplish many identified park, recreation, and open space objectives.



### In this Chapter

Purpose of the Parks and Open Space Plan

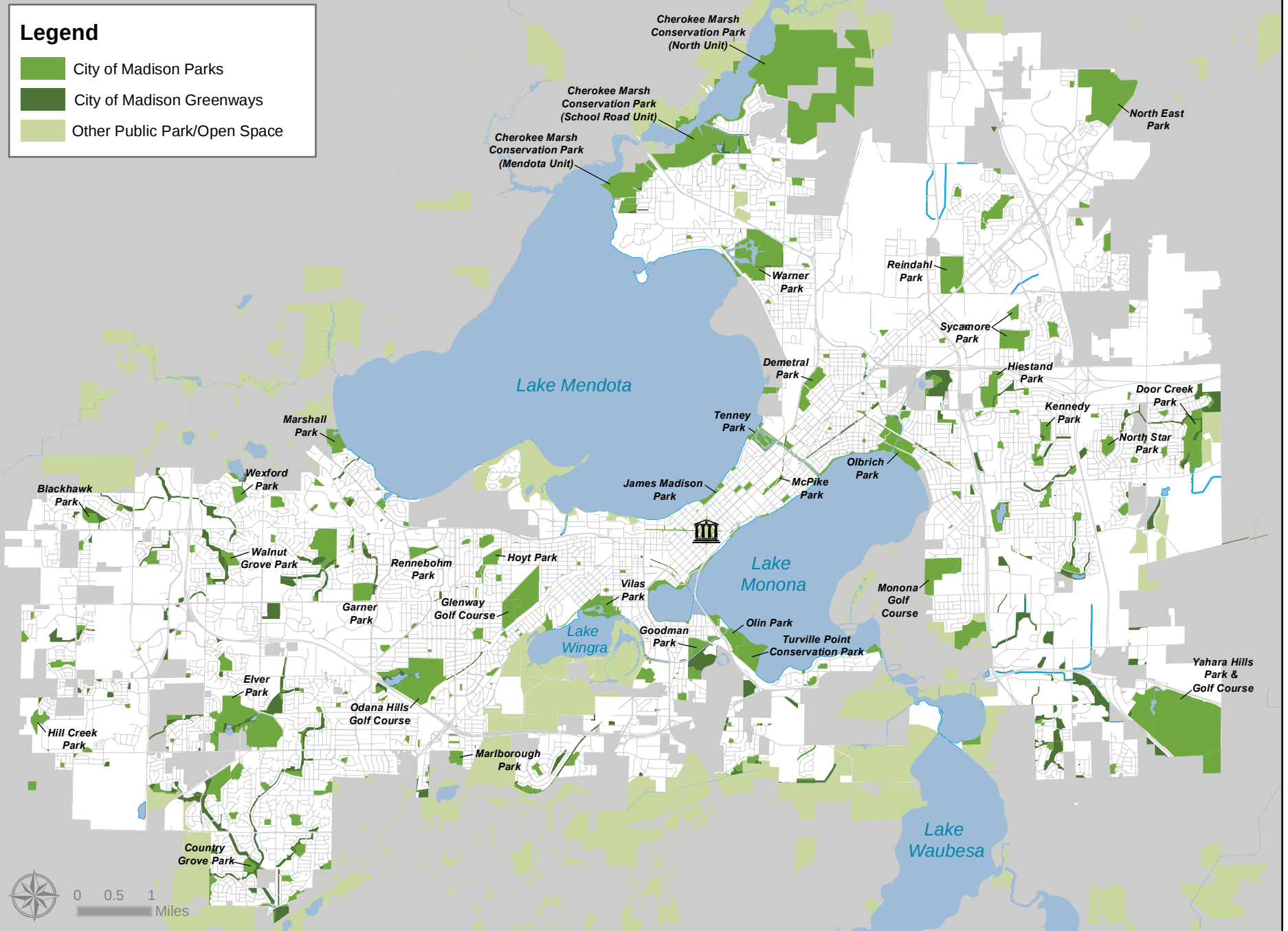
Accomplishments

History of Madison Parks

Planning Process

Public Engagement Strategies

# Exhibit I: City of Madison Park and Open Space Inventory Map



## I.2 Accomplishments

The past five years have included significant improvements to the City's park system. Appendix C, Table 2: 2012-2017 Park Development Accomplishments highlights substantial achievements since the last Park and Open Space Plan. The table below identifies the City's effort to fulfill the recommendations of the 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan.

**Table I.I: Accomplishments from the 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan**

|                                                                              | Completed. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Advancements since 2012-2017 POSP |  | On-going project. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Recommendation from the 2012-2017 Plan                                                                                                                        |            | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Review and update existing park dedication ordinance and development fees including park impact fees and "fees in lieu of" dedications.                       |            | Adopted the Park Impact Fee and Land Dedication Policy and Public Facility Needs Assessment (2016) and updated Madison General Ordinances to reflect recommendations of the Needs Assessment.                                                                                                          |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Create a sustainable park system in terms of park size, amenities and maintenance.                                                                            |            | Worked with staff team to update Neighborhood Development Plans to be more consistent with park goals for minimum 5-acre size parks to promote a sustainable park system. Implemented recommendations as part of plat approval and parkland dedication within the Neighborhood Development Plan areas. |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Address park deficiencies through development of community and neighborhood parks.                                                                            |            | Acquired new parkland for Acer Park, Allied Park, Blitzler Family Preserve, Camar Park, Highland Manor Park, Jeffy Trail Park, Kestrel Park, Sugar Maple Park, Thousand Oaks Park, and Woods Farm Park and expanded Hill Creek Park.                                                                   |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Prioritize acquisition of land adjacent to existing parkland to fill gaps in the park system in accordance with goals, objectives, and policies in this plan. |            | Acquired additional land to expand Central Park, Cherokee Park, Cherokee Marsh - School Road Unit, Merrill Springs Park, North Star Park, Owl Creek Park, and Penn Park.                                                                                                                               |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Continue to develop Master Plans for parkland which include both passive (non-developed, and active (developed) recreation.                                   |            | Developed park master plans with both passive and active space for Allied Park, Owl Creek Park, Patriot Park, Sugar Maple Park, Thousand Oaks Park. Currently in the process of completing master planning for North Star Park Expansion, Camar Park, and James Madison Park.                          |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Identify areas in our parks with significant natural resources for preservation and protection and develop land management goals for these areas.             |            | Adopted the Madison Parks Land Management Plan (2017).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Improve and preserve the unique habitats and ecosystems within conservation parks.                                                                            |            | Treated invasive species in 205 acres of conservation parks; seeded native seed mix on 30 acres of prairie and oak woodland; performed controlled burns on 395 acres of conservation land; began the draft Habitat Management Plan.                                                                    |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Increase connectivity between parks including pedestrian, biking, and water trails.                                                                           |            | Coordinated and improved 26 bike and pedestrian connections and added eight new canoe/kayak launches for water access.                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Work with other agencies to support planning efforts across the City of Madison and Dane County.                                                              |            | Joint collaboration with Dane County on implementation of water quality enclosures at beaches to improve swimming conditions; joint efforts to fund improvements at Central Park; and improvements to the Capital City Trail System within Madison Parks.                                              |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Construct park facilities to provide access to City residents to standard park amenities.                                                                     |            | Replaced 50 playgrounds, installed five new playgrounds, six new basketball courts, 11 sun shelters, two new shelters with restrooms, upgraded the existing Penn Park shelter, and added a reservable concession building.                                                                             |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |
| Build on the existing positive relationships with public and private organizations for donations and volunteers to aid in park system development.            |            | Establishment of the Madison Parks Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring financial resources through contributions and grants to make park improvements and support park programming. The Parks Division also supplemented the efforts of over 1,994 park volunteers.           |                                   |                                                                                     |                   |

|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop reservable recreational fields that can be used for multiple purposes.                                                                          | Underway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Promote winter recreation opportunities.                                                                                                                | Implemented new NiceRink program to improve efficiency and longevity of ice skating rink use. Partnered with MadNorski for snow making and trail grooming.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Respond to changing recreational trends by providing new facilities for popular new recreation trends.                                                  | Developed new pickleball complex and added pickleball line painting to 18 courts. Planned and developed mountain bike course at Quarry Park.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Pursue development of community gardens and edible landscapes.                                                                                          | Worked with the Mayor's Office on implementation of the Edible Landscape Permit, permitting three new edible landscapes sites in parks. Currently working with the Mayor's Office on expanding community gardening opportunities on the west side of Madison. Added additional community garden plots at Brittingham, Aldo Leopold, and Rennebohm Park.    |
| Continue to construct and improve dog park and dog exercise areas levying funding generated from the sale of dog park permits.                          | Constructed two new dog parks (Walnut Grove and Odana School), and implemented improvements at Demetral, Sycamore, Warner, Brittingham, and Quann Park. Currently, planning implementation of the City's first synthetic turf dog park.                                                                                                                    |
| Continue to improve water access and quality to promote water recreation.                                                                               | Developed private partnerships for operating three new canoe/kayak rental facilities at Olbrich, Brittingham and Marshall Park. Worked with Dane County on clean beaches efforts to install beach enclosures at several beaches, and a beach enclosure, which filters lake water.                                                                          |
| Continue to operate a sustainable golf enterprise.                                                                                                      | Presented Financial and Operational Analysis of Course Closure and Hole Reduction Report (2017) addressing the financial challenges to the golf course to Golf Subcommittee and Board of Park Commissioners.                                                                                                                                               |
| Continue to optimize maintenance efforts in our parks by implementing sustainable practices within budget levels.                                       | The City of Madison continues to identify and implement cost effective, sustainable maintenance strategies to supplement current efforts, which include managed meadows and reduced mowing.                                                                                                                                                                |
| Focus on core facilities, like playgrounds to ensure continued service levels.                                                                          | Completed comprehensive inventory of all playgrounds, implementing significant playground infrastructure plan. Replaced 59 playgrounds in the past 5 years to bring them to U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.                                                                                                                             |
| Continue to recognize, preserve and enhance historic parks.                                                                                             | Implemented upgrades to historic Breese Stevens Field, worked with volunteers to improve Glenwood Children's Park, and worked with private developers on the rehabilitation and re-use of the historic Garver Feed Mill.                                                                                                                                   |
| Investigate opportunities for a scientifically valid behavior role assessment of park use to provide insight on existing park uses throughout the City. | Piloted System of Observation for Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) method and worked with City staff and board members to catalog park observations.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Pursue Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) analysis of park development to reduce inappropriate activities in parks.                  | Park planning staff have coordinated with rangers and operations staff to implement designs that reduce inappropriate activities such as activating spaces with private/public partnerships at Brittingham, Olbrich, and Marshall Park; and construction improvements to address community concerns at Aldo Leopold Park, Penn Park, and Worthington Park. |
| Coordinate with educational agencies to expand programming and opportunities for outdoor education.                                                     | Developed the Madison Connecting Children to Nature Implementation Plan in partnership with Public Health Madison & Dane County, the Children and Nature Network, and the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families.                                                                                                          |
| Continue to expand Olbrich Gardens per the March 2009 Olbrich Park Land Use Plan.                                                                       | Began design of the education addition to the visitor center with construction anticipated to begin in 2018.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Develop recommendations in future plans to be consistent with the recommendations, goals and objectives of this plan.                                   | Underway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

### 1.3 A History of the City of Madison Park System

The DeJoep (Four Lakes) region that defines the majority of Madison today was formed by the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago. Evidence suggests that humans occupied this area starting as early as 300 AD (Historic Madison, Inc., n.d.). Wisconsin was “home to one of the earliest socially complex societies in the Upper Great Lakes” and “what is now southern Wisconsin was a place where the Sauk, the Kickapoo, the Potawatomi, the Menominee, the Ho-Chunk, and the Ojibwe could all call their ancestral home in some way or another” (Aaron Bird Bear, 2011). By the time settlers began to arrive, the Ho-Chunk Nation called this area Taychopera (land of four lakes) and considered it their home. However, the Ho-Chunk were forced to move west of the Mississippi River after the Black Hawk War of 1832, a brief conflict between the United States and Native Americans (led by Black Hawk).

**Table 1.2 Madison’s Historical Population**

| Year | Population |
|------|------------|
| 1829 | <200       |
| 1851 | 1,600      |
| 1900 | 19,000     |
| 1910 | 25,531     |
| 1930 | 57,899     |
| 1960 | 126,706    |
| 1990 | 190,816    |
| 2016 | 252,551    |

Source: Historic Madison, Inc.

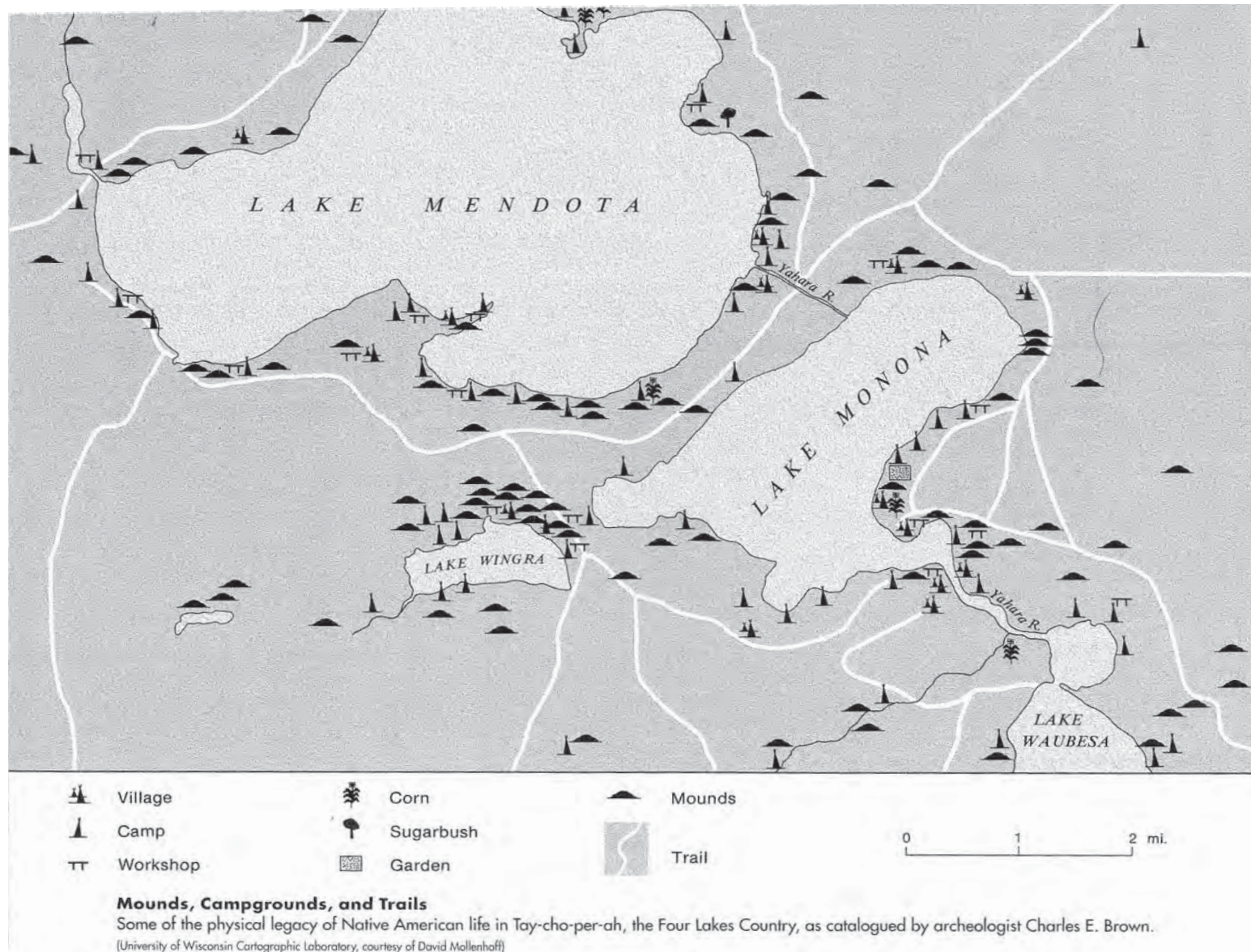
James Doty visited Madison in 1829, and in 1836 drew plats for the Four Lakes area. He also persuaded the territorial legislature to designate Madison as the new capital (Historic Madison, Inc.). It did not have a single park, but was in a magnificent setting on the isthmus between Lakes Mendota and Monona. By 1892 residents had realized the beauty of the surroundings and a group of private residents banded together to form the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association. The Association raised private donations to acquire and improve park land, to construct pleasure drives, and to plant trees and shrubs throughout the City.

In 1910, the Association engaged the services of the famous landscape architect, John Nolen, to prepare a comprehensive plan for the improvement and future growth of the City. In 1911, Nolen’s plan was published in which he recommended that the existing 150 acres of parkland and miles of pleasure drives be expanded into a coordinated system of parks under the responsibility of an official Park Commission.

In 1932, the Madison Park Commission (now the Board of Parks Commissioners) was created, and the City assumed full responsibility for the operation, maintenance, and acquisition of all park and pleasure drives.

In 1938, another civic organization, the Trustees of Madison Planning Trust, privately engaged the services of the famous city planner, Ladislav Segoe, to prepare a comprehensive plan for the City in cooperation with the Madison Park Commission and Plan Commission. This comprehensive plan included a park, playground, and open space system plan. It recommended that the existing 441 acres within 29 parks and a single public golf course be expanded dramatically to over 1,520 acres in recognition of forecasted urban growth.

In 1961, a Park and Open Space Plan was adopted that recommended preservation of natural drainageways and significant natural areas such as

**Figure 1.1: Catalogued Native American Legacy**

The Dane County 2018-2023 POSP includes a recommendation from Earth/Art® Resources to explore the feasibility of a Earth Day Heritage public lands/water trail to celebrate and highlight the unique cultural legacy of Dane County.

Source: Charles E. Brown, *Lake Mendota, Prehistory, History and Legends*, (Madison: The Wisconsin Archeological Society, 1933)

Cherokee Marsh and the Nine Springs wetlands. An emphasis of this plan and subsequent updates was to eliminate a deficiency of parkland. The Plan was updated regularly, raising the standard for the desirable amount of parkland, and dramatically increasing park acreage. Madison's historic commitment to public recreation and open space of all kinds provides the public today with a diverse system of parks and open spaces. Additional Park and Open Space Plans were completed in 1961, 1971, 1977, 1984, 1991, 1997, 2005 (an update to the 1997 plan), and 2012, and all include recommendations regarding eliminating parkland deficiencies.

Today, the City of Madison Parks Division manages over 270 parks totaling more than 5,600 acres of land (shown on Exhibit I) and is responsible for over 6,000 acres of public land in total. The additional acreage includes land such as street ends, right-of-ways, and stormwater facilities. The Parks Division is also responsible for the operation and maintenance of special facilities such as Olbrich Botanical Gardens, four public golf courses, and one public cemetery, State Street and the Capitol Mall Concourse, and pruning, planting, and removal of all trees in public right-of-ways.

The City Parks Division does not provide City-funded recreational programming. Recreational programming is primarily offered through the Madison Metropolitan School District and other community recreational organizations.

The Madison Parks Foundation, formed in 2002, augments the City of Madison Parks Division. This nonprofit organization creates and supports initiatives to improve and expand the park lands, facilities, and services offered through the City of Madison Parks Division. Further information on the Madison Parks Foundation is discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight.

**Figure 1.2: Past City of Madison Park and Open Space Plans**



## I.4 Planning Process

The planning process for the 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan involved three phases:

### Phase I: Data Gathering and Public Engagement

The first phase of the project occurred from May 2016 until November 2017. This phase included data collection, public engagement, and geographical information system data analysis.

### Phase II: Plan Development

Plan Development overlapped with Phase I and occurred from July 2017 to February 2018 with guidance from the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee.

### Phase III: Plan Review and Approval

From March 2018 until adoption, the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee, the Board of Park Commissioners, the Plan Commission, the Board of Public Works, and the Common Council reviewed the draft plan. Their comments are incorporated into the final Park and Open Space Plan.

**Figure I.3: Project Timeline**

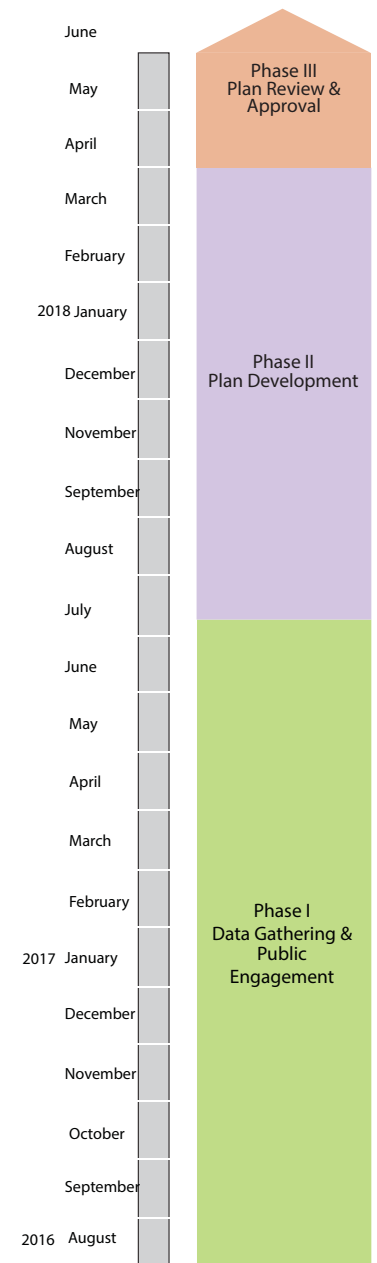


Photo: Community Visioning Session at Alicia Ashman Library

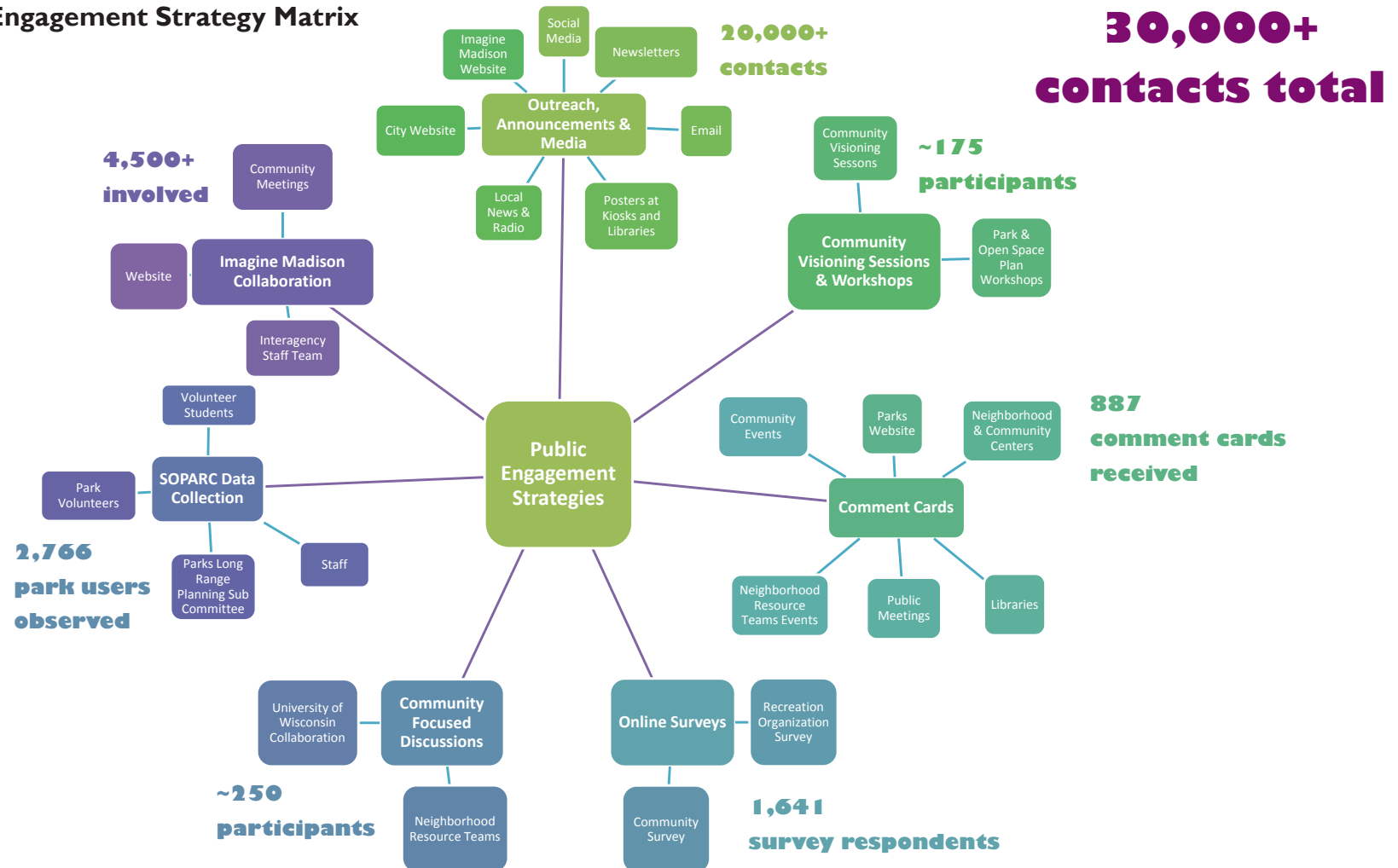


Photo: Students designing a park as part of a planning activity at Lussier Community Education

## 1.5 Public Engagement Strategies

Recognizing the limitations and bias associated with no random samples in the public input processes, the Park and Open Space Plan engagement process incorporated various methods to increase opportunities for public participation. These included hosting community visioning sessions, workshops, surveys, focus group discussions, and requests for input through comment cards distributed at various park events, community centers, libraries, and public meetings. Results from the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* engagement process related specifically to park and open space improvements are incorporated into this plan. Chapter Three describes the engagement strategy in further detail.

**Figure 1.4: Engagement Strategy Matrix**



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## Chapter Two: Guiding Lenses

In alignment with the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* update, the Park and Open Space Plan investigates how to improve Madison Parks through the lenses of equity, public health, adaptability and sustainability. The definition of each lens was defined as part of the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan.

The four icons below are used throughout this plan to identify recommendations that may be associated with one or more of the plan's guiding lenses. The purpose of this chapter is to review these lenses and discuss their relevance to park planning. Lenses provide an opportunity to think in-depth of the ideals that Madison Parks strives to achieve and to inform the dialogue of these large goals in context of limited resources, balancing objectives, and occasionally competing priorities. The following discussion describes these goals and reviews why and how they relate to the Park and Open Space Plan.



**Equity:** The inherent worth of each individual in Madison should be esteemed and fostered, enabling them to reach full potential.



**Public Health:** The access and contribution to mental and physical health of a community.



**Sustainability:** Management of resources to promote welfare and equity for current and future generations.



**Adaptability:** Preparedness and ability to respond to and recover from hazards and threats with minimal damage to safety, health, security, and the economy.

In this Chapter

Equity

Public Health

Sustainability &  
Adaptability

Conclusion

## 2.1 Equity

A focus on equity is imperative to achieving the Parks Division's vision of providing parks to all Madison residents. The Parks Division recognizes that thoroughly understanding the population it serves is the first step towards developing an inclusive parks system. This section reviews Madison's existing demographic profiles and anticipated shifts, and the implications of these changes to park planning.

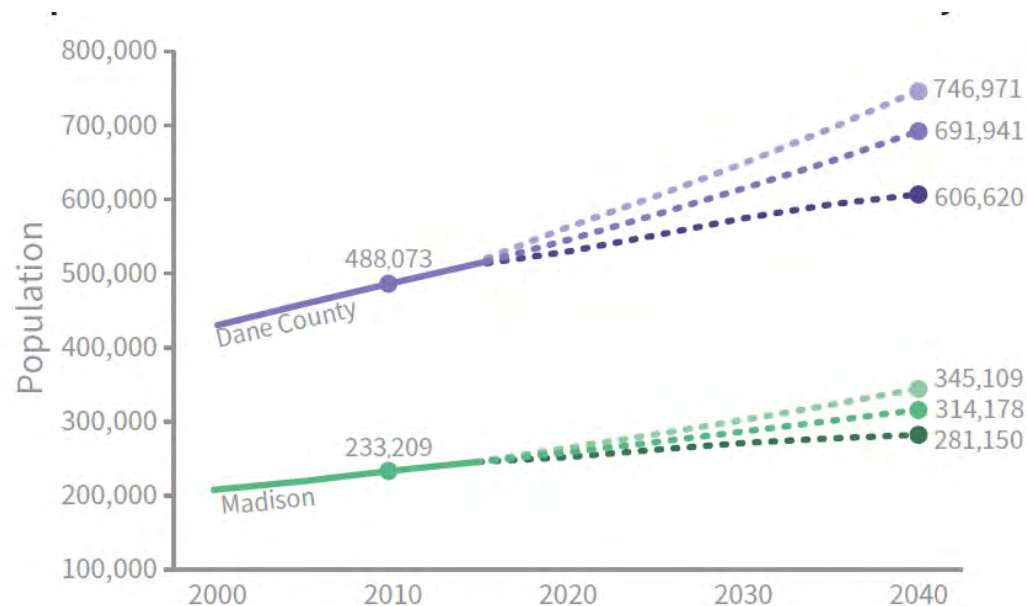
### POPULATION

Madison is the second largest city in the state of Wisconsin, having an estimated population of 252,551 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). The City's population has increased by 12% since 2000, by 6% since 2010, and is expected to continue growing in the near future. The Wisconsin Department of Administration predicts that by 2040 Madison's population may grow up to 345,109<sup>01</sup>, making it the fastest growing city (by total population growth) in Wisconsin (Egan-Robertson, 2013).

Due in part to the presence of the University of Wisconsin, Madison has a relatively young population compared to the rest of the state. In 2006, the median age was 32.3, approximately five years younger than the statewide median of 37.6 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Young adults aged 20-34 have historically been Madison's largest age segment. From 2011 to 2015 this group accounted for over one-third of Madison's total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

The Wisconsin Demographic Services Center projections show that the population of older residents in Dane County is expected to grow substantially over the next few decades. The population of residents aged 65-84 is projected to nearly double between 2010 and 2040, increasing from 8.68% in 2010 to 16% of the overall population by 2040. Residents aged 85 or older, who only made up 1.59% of the population in 2010, will account for 3.91% by 2040 (Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2017).

**Figure 2.1: Population Trends and Forecasts for Madison and Dane County**



Source: Egan - Robertson, 2013

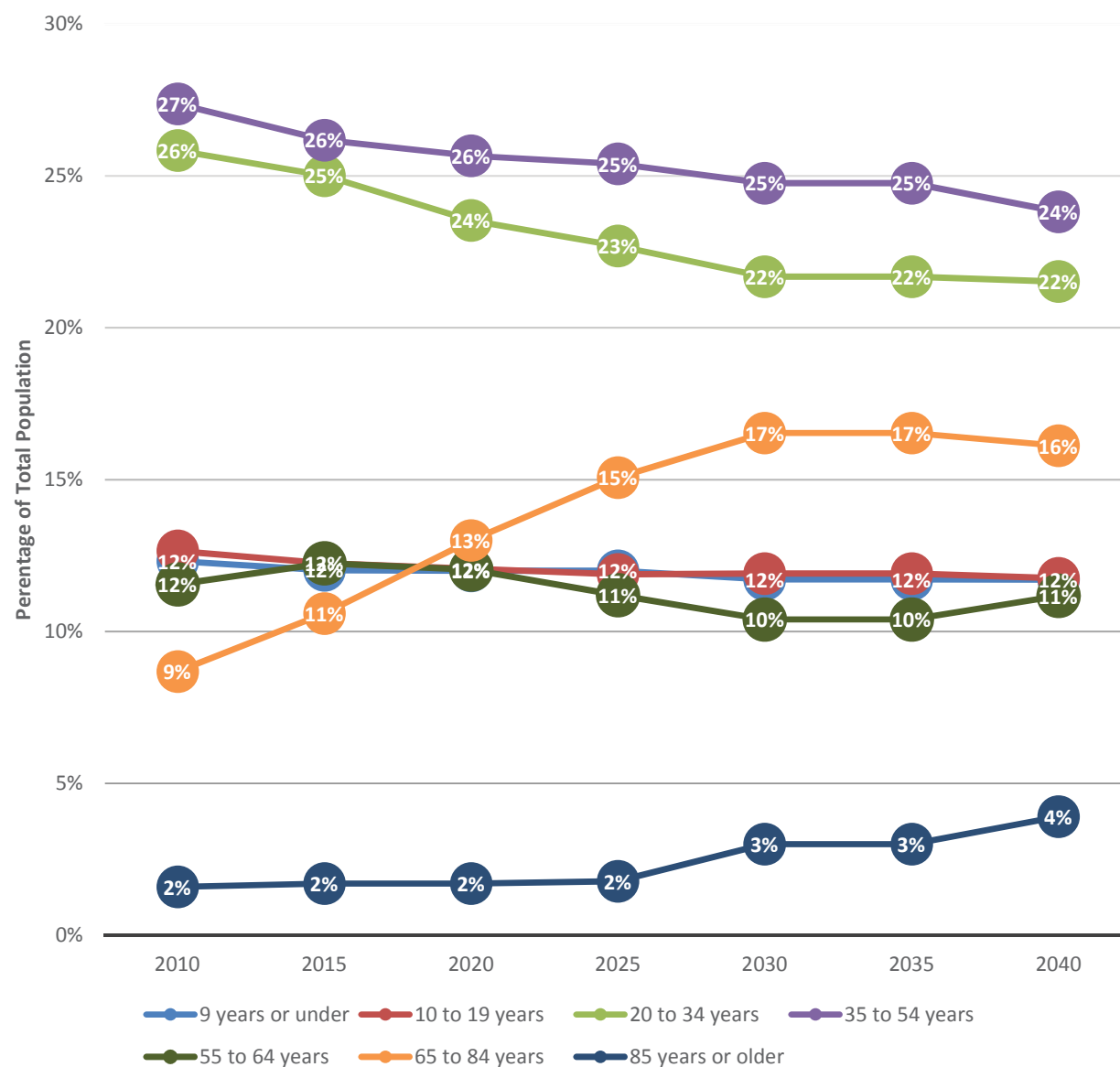
<sup>01</sup> Low estimates from Wisconsin D.O.A. Demographic Services Lab Population Projects. High estimates based on 5-year growth trend according to U.S. Census Bureau; Middle estimate based on average of 5-, 15-, and 25-year growth rates from U.S. Census and Wisconsin D.O.A. Projections through 2040.

Conversely, Figure 2.2 shows that the population of younger residents is anticipated to decline. This nationwide demographic trend may result in changing recreational preferences. As the number of older residents grows, parks and park amenities need to be both accessible and attractive to these individuals. The City's priorities for accessible improvements is available in Appendix E: ADA Accessibility.



Photo: Park visitor playing pickleball

**Figure 2.2: Projected Population by Age Bracket**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2017

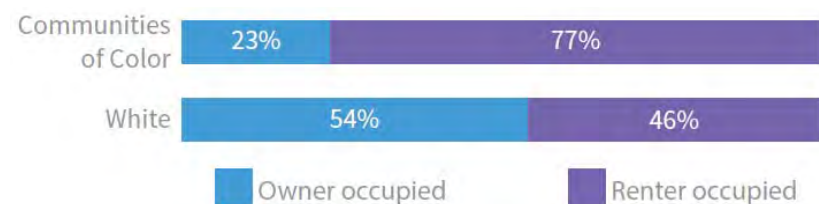
## Housing

Figure 2.3 shows that in comparison to the national average, the City of Madison has a high level of rental units. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, 53.9% of all occupied dwellings in Madison were rental units, compared to only 37% of all dwellings nationwide. From 2007 to 2015, nine out of ten new Madison residents were renters (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015) and the number of rental units added each year continues to increase (Figure 2.4).

In the City of Madison, homeownership is disproportionately lower for communities of color compared to white households. Figure 2.3 shows that communities of color represent 23% of owner-occupied housing compared to 54% for individuals who identify as white.

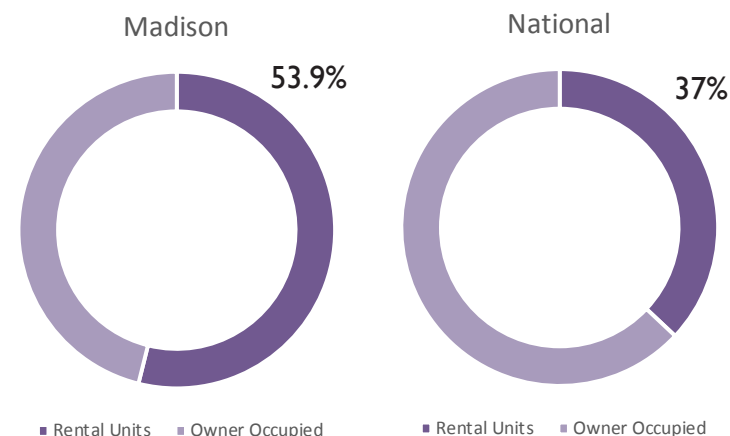
Multi-family units typically lack outdoor spaces and their occupants rely more heavily on public park and open spaces to serve their recreational needs. As the number of multi-family unit residences increase, Madison Parks faces challenges to expand recreational opportunities in the City's more densely populated areas. The City recognizes the importance of adequate recreation opportunities for these residents, and will continue to ensure that their needs are incorporated into the planning and design process.

**Figure 2.3: Owner Occupancy Comparison Across Race/Ethnicity**



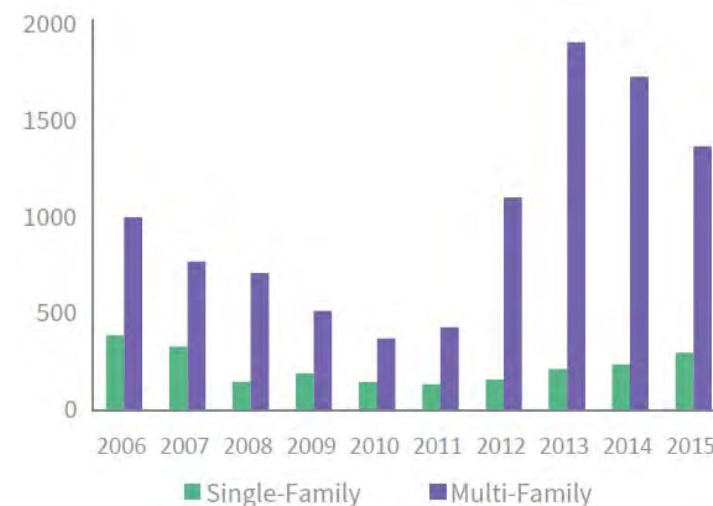
Source: City of Madison, 2016

**Figure 2.4: Owner Occupancy Comparison**



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2017

**Figure 2.5: Number of Residential Units Added by Year (City of Madison)**



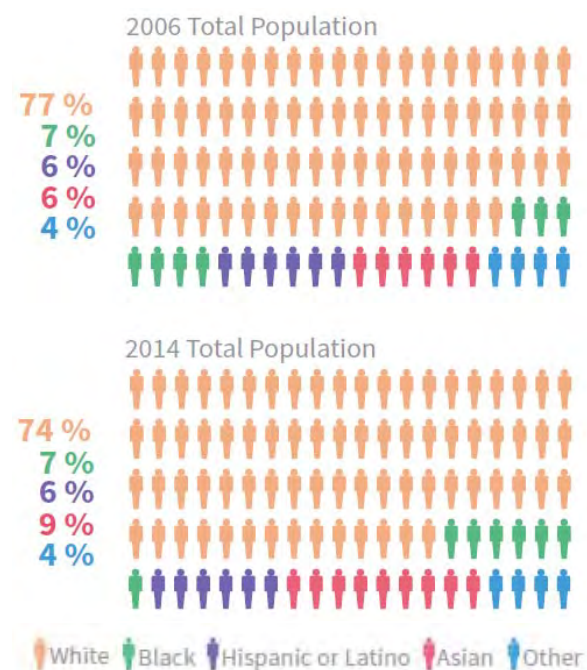
Source: City of Madison, 2016

## RACE/ETHNICITY

Numerous studies have documented that different races often have distinct park use patterns and preferences for open space (Gobster, 2002; Salk, 2014). The *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* posits that Madison will continue to diversify as youth populations of color increase. The student population in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) is more diverse compared to those identified in the US Census data. MMSD reports, “Over the past five years, the number of students and the percent of the student population identifying as Hispanic or Latino has steadily grown [and] the number of students and the percent of the student population identified as low-income or as English Language Learner has increased” (Chavira, 2016). While communities of color comprise more than 25% of Madison’s population, many communities are geographically concentrated in just a few neighborhoods (see Exhibit 2: City of Madison Demographics by Race/Ethnicity).

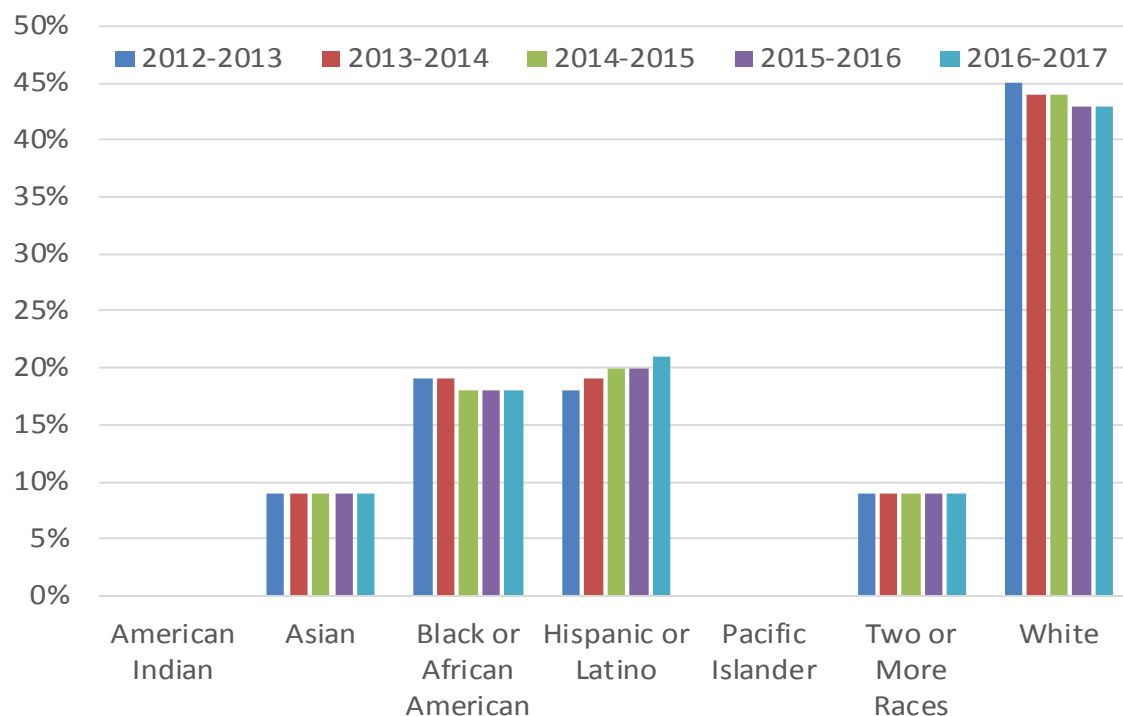
This plan utilized the City of Madison’s Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) tool. This tool is design to “facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-incomes populations will be affected by a proposed action/decision of the City” (City of Madison, RESJ Tool). The RESJ tool offers a complement to more traditional methods of planning park projects, and is further discussed in Chapter 5.

**Figure 2.6: 2006 and 2014 Race and Ethnicity**



Source: City of Madison, 2016

**Figure 2.7: Race and Ethnicity Trends for MMSD Students**

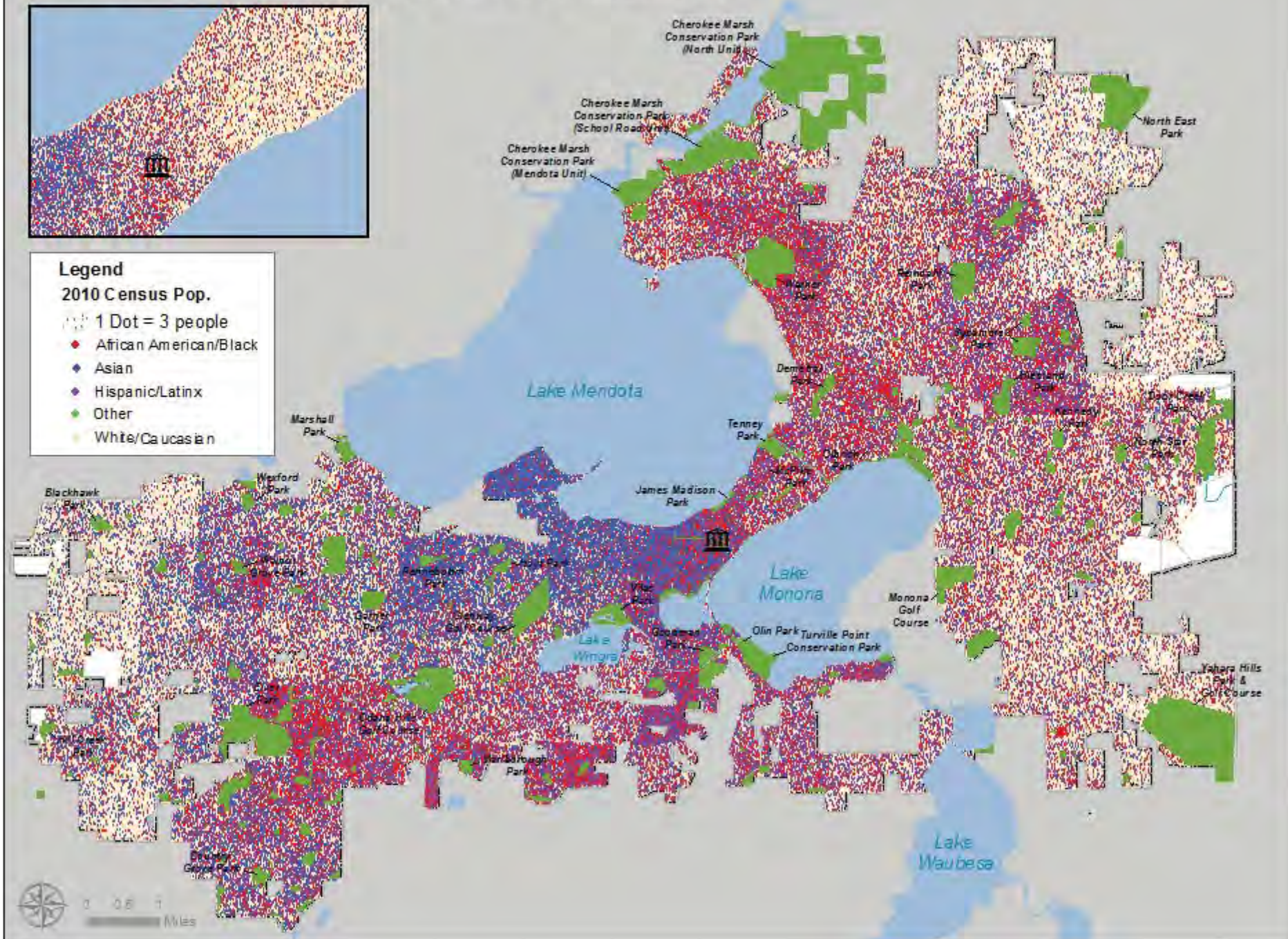


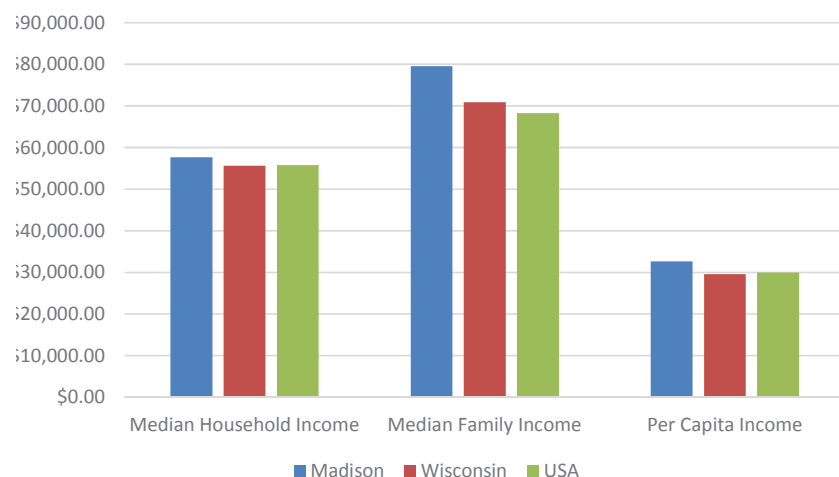
Source: Chavira, 2016

## 2010 Census Pop.

1 Dot = 3 people

- ◆ African American/Black
- ◆ Asian
- ◆ Hispanic/Latinx
- ◆ Other
- ◆ White/Caucasian



**Figure 2.8: Median Income Comparison**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016.

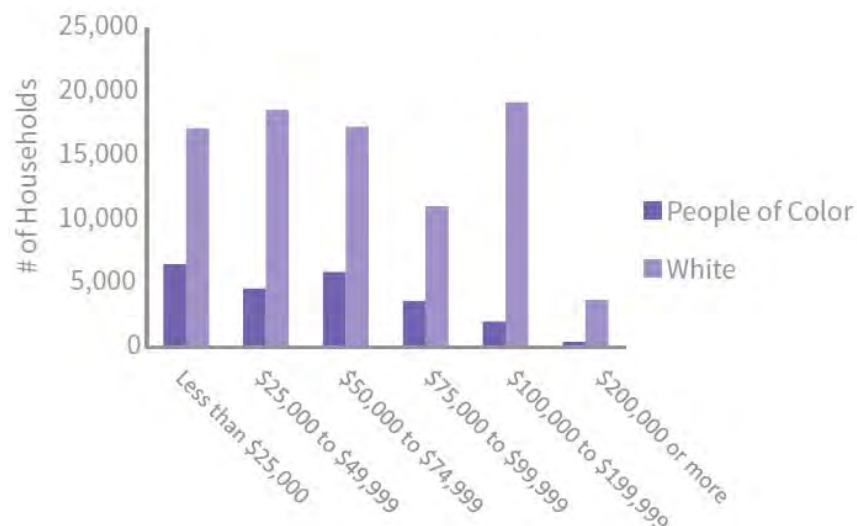
## ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITY

### Workforce and Employment

Madison has a substantial professional population, which can be in part attributed to its position as the state capital and the presence of the flagship campus of the University of Wisconsin. Education and health services represented the City's largest sector in 2015, employing 31.7% of the workforce, followed by the professional, science and management industry at 14.7%, and the arts, entertainment and recreation industry at 10.7% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

### Income

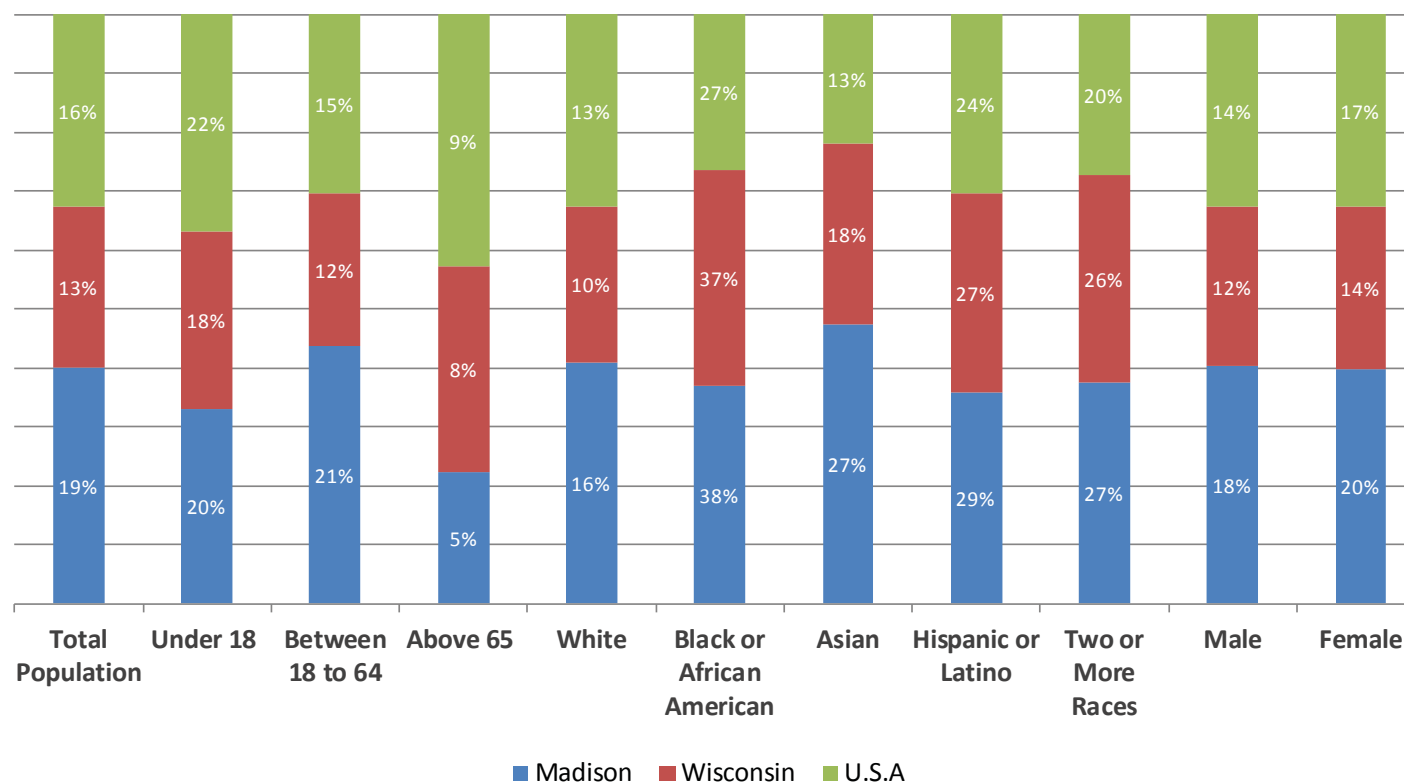
In 2015, the City of Madison had a median household income of \$57,690 and a median family income of \$79,555 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Figure 2.8 illustrates Madison's above-average levels of income compared to state and national levels when measured on a median household, median family, and per capita basis.

**Figure 2.9: Household Income by Race/Ethnicity**

Source: City of Madison, 2016.

### Poverty

Despite these statistics, 19% of Madison residents were below the federal poverty level in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This number is 6% higher than the statewide rate, and 3.5% higher than the national rate. For the City of Madison, 19% of the population is considered as living below the poverty line, of which 87% of this population are communities of color. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, minority populations in Madison experience higher poverty rates than on a national scale (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The difference is most pronounced for Asians and African Americans, whose respective poverty rates are 2.17 and 1.4 times the national average. Figure 2.9 shows that a greater percentage of communities of color have incomes less than \$100,000 when compared to white communities.

**Figure 2.10: Percentage of Residents Below Federal Poverty Threshold**

Poverty rates influence access to parks, requiring more reliance on walking and public transportation. Access to parks is particularly important to these individuals, as low socioeconomic status groups face disproportionately higher rates of cardiovascular-related conditions (The State of Obesity, 2017).

Figure 2.10 identifies poverty statistics for various demographics at the local, state, and national level. Madison may be considered a relatively affluent city overall; however, various areas of the community still suffer from significant poverty. Identifying residents who are at the greatest disadvantage is vital to ensuring that Madison Parks provides equitable park access to all people.

## 2.2 Public Health

Parks and open spaces serve a significant role in the promotion and protection of public health for those who live, work, learn, and play in the City of Madison. According to the World Health Organization, health may be defined as “...a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” (World Health Organization, 2018). The many health benefits associated with parks align with this definition as they provide a place for people to be physically active, offer respite from busy schedules, provide opportunities to interact with neighbors, and support healthy ecosystems.

The City of Madison Parks Division embraces its role in creating a healthy environment for our residents and visitors alike. Applying a public health lens to park planning allows the Parks Division to boost the positive impacts associated with a robust, equitable, and safe parks system. Health benefits which have been shown to be associated with parks and open spaces include:

- Physical health
- Mental and emotional well-being
- Social cohesion
- Environmental health

### PHYSICAL HEALTH

Parks and recreational opportunities are valuable assets for promoting optimum physical health as well as a proven tool in lowering obesity and decreasing cardiovascular-related illness and mortality (Coutts et al., 2010; Takano et al., 2002). Parks provide an opportunity for park users to engage in physical activities that promote positive health outcomes. Increased levels of physical activity have many health benefits including a reduced risk for heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes (Sherer, 2006, Coutts et al., 2010; Takano et al., 2002). Proximity to parks and walkable areas leads to an increase in physical activity levels in both adults and children (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005; Brownson et al., 2001; Roux et al., 2007). Table 2.1 on the following page illustrates the varying prevalence of obesity in Madison. also includes medical conditions, which may have reduced risks with increased levels of physical activity.



Photo: Enjoying a basketball game at Penn Park

**Table 2.1: Physical Health Indicators Compared Across Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, and the United States**

| Measure                                                   | Madison | Dane County | Wisconsin    | U.S.         | Data Year |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Adults age 18+ who are obese                              | 23.5%   | ****        | 28.2%        | 29.8%        | 2014      |
| Children, 2 to 4 years old WIC participants who are obese | ****    | 13.0%       | 15.2%        | 15.9%        | 2010      |
| 7th-12th graders who are obese                            | ****    | 14.1%       | 14.9% (2011) | 15.2% (2011) | 2012      |
| Adults age 18+ who are sedentary                          | 17.1%   | ****        | 22.2%        | 26.2%        | 2014      |
| Population with access to exercise opportunities          | ****    | 95.0%       | 81.0%        | 62.0%        | 2014      |
| Adult Diabetes Rate                                       | 6.3%    | ****        | 8.5%         | 9.9% (2015)  | 2014      |
| Hypertension Rate in Medicare Population                  | ****    | 43.5%       | 48.5%        | 55.0%        | 2015      |
| Adult Asthma Rate                                         | ****    | 9.8%        | 9.7%         | 14.3% (2015) | 2014      |

Source: The State of Obesity, 2017 County Health Rankings, Healthy Dane

In addition to increasing levels of physical activity, parks and open spaces offer many other health-promoting features. For example, greenery and a mature urban tree canopy are important factors in improving respiratory health (Martineau, 2011). Time spent in park-like environments has been shown to lower pulse rate and blood pressure, increase parasympathetic nerve activity, and lower sympathetic nerve activity (Park et al., 2010).

### MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Mental and emotional well-being are essential to living a healthy life, and parks, open spaces, and natural landscapes have significant potential to boost mood (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). Table 2.2 shows that one in ten adults in Dane County experience frequent mental distress, and over 10% experienced 14 or more days of poor mental health in the past month. Among Dane County residents receiving Medicare benefits, 17.7% suffer from symptoms of depression (Healthy Dane, 2017). Spending time in parks and open spaces may lead to improved mood, reduced anxiety, and help reduce symptoms of depression when coupled with physical activity (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). Exposure to green spaces also has measurable effects on lowering concentrations of cortisol, often referred to as the stress hormone (Parks et al., 2010). Due to their natural environments, parks offer the perfect place to relax and de-stress from busy schedules.



Photo: Downtown Madison from Olin Park

**Table 2.2: Mental Health Indicators**

| Measure                                       | Madison | Dane  | Wisconsin  | U.S.  | Data Year |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------|-------|------------|-------|-----------|
| Frequent Mental Distress                      | ****    | 9.7%  | 10% (2014) | 11.0% | 2015      |
| Depression: Medicare Population               | ****    | 17.7% | 17.0%      | 16.7% | 2015      |
| 14+ poor mental health days in the past month | 10.5%   | ****  | ****       | ****  | 2015      |

Source: Healthy Dane

Additionally, Attention Restoration Theory posits that exposure to natural environments allows one's mind to recoup from the daily demands of work or school, leading to the promotion of effective mental functioning (Berman et al., 2008). This theory also has implications for those suffering from attention deficit disorders. Even a twenty-minute walk in a park-like setting is sufficient to elevate attention performance in those suffering from ADHD (Faber Taylor & Kuo, 2008).

### **SOCIAL COHESION**

Social cohesion is present when members of a community work towards the well-being of all its members, trust one another, and feel a sense of belonging (OECD, 2018). Feeling a sense of community, safety, and trusting one's neighbors assists in navigating life's challenges. As focal points for neighborhoods, parks are well positioned to promote social interactions among park users and offer opportunities to engage with old and new friends alike.

In Dane County, 15.4% of adults report that they do not get the social and emotional support they need (Healthy Dane, 2017). Parks provide neighborhood level gathering spaces, giving neighbors the chance to interact, which in turn increases social ties and boosts feelings of community (Sherer, 2006, Bedimo-Rung, 2005). Increased levels of social cohesion are associated with a number of personal and community level benefits such as increased social support, increased social interactions, increased trust in neighbors, and decreased levels of criminal activity (Kawachi and Berkman, 2000; Miller & Buys, 2008; Weinstein et al., 2015).

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Parks and open spaces provide critical protections for water, air, and flora and fauna biodiversity and help mitigate urban heat islands. This results in benefits to the environment, as well as to personal and community health. A study of nine urban park systems across the country found that urban parks contribute to an average of \$2.9 million in stormwater retention benefits and \$1.8 million in air pollution removal benefits to their respective municipalities (Harnik & Crompton, 2014). Exposure to pollutants can have both acute and chronic health implications, especially for sensitive populations such as children, older adults, and people with heart or lung diseases. Investments in parks and open spaces play a positive role in combatting pollutants and their negative effects on all living things.

## 2.3 Sustainability and Adaptability

A park system must be sustainable and adaptable to continually serve the community. Madison Parks Division uses both sustainability and adaptability as a framework for policies and recommendations in this plan. This is especially the case with regard to environmental considerations, but also to economic change and changing recreational preferences. The goals, if achieved, result in a vibrant park system.

Sustainability refers to a “state in which the demands placed on the environment can be met without reducing its capacity to allow all people to live well, now and in the future” (Financial Times, 2017). An example of a sustainable practice would be the use of solar panels to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and to mitigate growing utility costs. Sustainability also relates to ensuring that the park system has widespread budgetary support. A park system must be fiscally sustainable in order to survive economic downturns. For example, the Parks Division utilizes impact fee ordinances (further discussed in Chapter 7) to supplement the cost of new park development; however, these fees are also closely tied to the health of the economy. In situations of economic stagnation, impact fees will not be a reliable source of supplementing funding of new parks.

Adaptability, on the other hand, is “the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions or changes in the environment” (Hung et al., 2013). An example of an adaptable practice would be the City’s refocused efforts to increase species diversity in the urban tree canopy. Infestations of pests or diseases such as Dutch Elm Disease or the Emerald Ash Borer have had such catastrophic impacts on the City because of the historic over-planting of one species of tree. With increased diversity, fewer trees are affected by a specific pest, the potential spread is minimized, and there is less effect on the overall quantity and quality of the urban tree canopy. Through this strategy, the adaptability of the urban tree canopy is maximized. Adaptability also refers to the capacity of park system to respond to demographic changes that result in shifting priorities. As noted in the previous sections, the City of Madison is becoming both older and more diverse. Residents of different ages and cultures have distinct values for parks and open space; therefore, these trends have significant implications for park planning. An adaptable, flexible park system should evolve in conjunction with changes in its users. The adoption of movable skating rinks is an example of an adaptable policy.



Photo: Installing solar panels at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center

This section reviews sustainability and adaptability and their relation to the following aspects of the park system:

- environment,
- economic and cultural.

## ENVIRONMENT

Planning for both sustainability and adaptability ensures that the City of Madison can both reduce its environmental impacts and respond to adverse environmental pressures. Additionally, these practices increase the chance that biodiversity will be maintained over time and environmental shifts and changes can be addressed successfully. As an advocate for environmental health, Madison Parks recognizes that its role lies at the forefront of managing and preparing for environmental challenges. Specific topics frequently cited as concerns by Madison residents during the public engagement process include the following:

- climate change and other environmental pressures,
- pollinator decline,
- water quality,
- urban tree canopy, and
- invasive species.

### *Climate Change and Other Environmental Pressures*

Focusing on sustainability and adaptability can reduce the public health and equity implications of environmental pressures, such as climate change, which affects vegetation, stormwater, groundwater, air, and water quality. Climate change is projected to have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities (Rudolph, Gould & Berko, 2015). Those with greater economic, social and political resources are more likely to succeed in both managing and adapting to future climatic changes (Rudolph et al., 2015). Meanwhile, those in poorer living conditions will become increasingly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Climate change has the potential to further increase disparities in health outcomes. For example, lower-income neighborhoods that lack trees and green space are at a greater risk of heat-related illness. This increased risk necessitates that sustainability and adaptability initiatives recognize, and subsequently emphasize, an additional focus towards assisting these vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

The effects of climate change have already become apparent in the form of warmer temperatures and increased precipitation. Over the past century, temperatures throughout the state have increased by an average of two degrees Fahrenheit (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2016). By 2050, statewide annual temperatures are likely to be 6-7 degrees above the current averages (Dane County Climate Change Action Council, 2013). Lake Mendota, which used to remain frozen for four months out of the year in the 18th century, now only stays ice-covered for an average of three months (Dane County Climate Change Action Council, 2013).

Climate changes are also predicted to increase the frequency of flooding in Wisconsin. Annual precipitation has increased by five to ten percent in the Midwest over the last half century (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2016). This trend is anticipated to continue in



Photo: Monarch butterfly at Olin Park

upcoming years, and the rain events that do occur are likely to be more intense (US EPA, 2016). Together, these changes pose a number of challenges that the Parks Division must respond to, including:

- increase in extreme heat events and subsequent heat-related illnesses,
- shorter winters impacting winter recreational opportunities,
- shifts in ecosystems and natural habitats,
- increase in vector-borne disease,
- increase in stormwater runoff,
- increase in flooding, and
- increase in algal blooms.

### *Pollinator Decline*

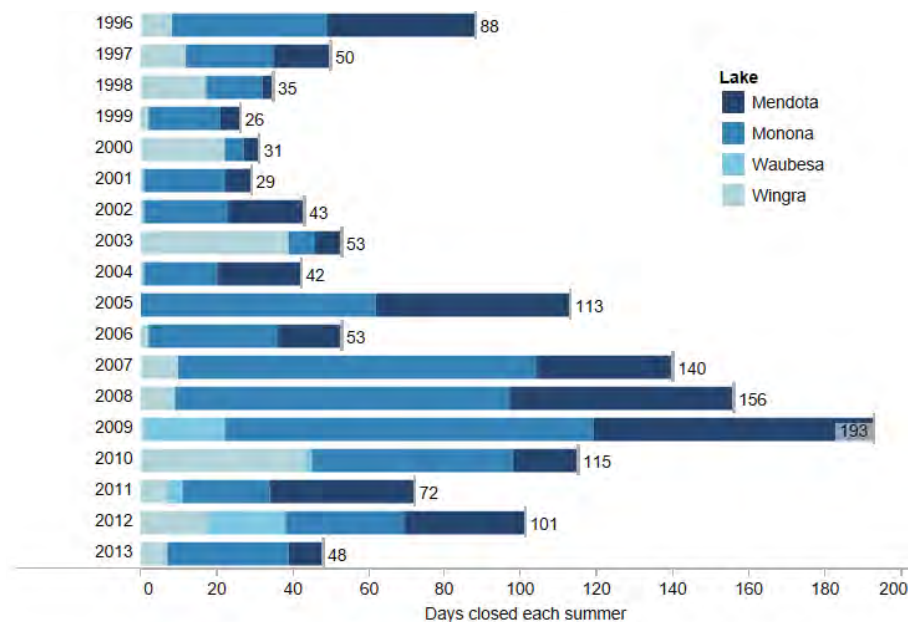
Pollinators such as bees, moths, butterflies, bats, and hummingbirds provide vital services to our ecosystems. Between 75 to 95% of all flowering plants rely on these organisms for pollination (Ollerton, Winfree & Tarrant, 2011). Roughly, one out of every three bites of food a person eats is a result of pollinators (Klein et al., 2007; Buchmann & Nabhan, 1996), and pollinators are estimated to add \$217 billion annually to the global economy (Gallai et al., 2009; Losey & Vaughan, 2006). Additionally, about 75% of the world's food crops rely on pollinators (Harvey, 2016). The decline of the pollinator population holds significant public health implications for Madison residents.

Over the last decade, the United States has experienced a dramatic decline in honeybee hives resulting from colony collapse disorder. The State of Wisconsin has lost over 60% of its honeybee colonies since spring 2014-2015. The state's bumblebee and monarch butterfly populations have also decreased in recent years (City of Madison, 2015). Evidence points to a variety of factors, including climate change and habitat decline, as the cause of pollinator decline in Wisconsin (Pollinator Protection Task Force Report, 2015).

### *Water Quality*

Positioned between the two largest bodies of water in Dane County, Lake Mendota and Lake Monona, monitoring and managing water quality is unquestionably an essential community priority for Madison. The topography of Madison (see Appendix D, Exhibit A) and formation of our lakes was sculpted by the Laurentide Ice Sheet. The

**Figure 2.11: Dane County Water Quality Beach Closures by Year**



Source: Kate Golden, Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

result was the formation of over 23,000 acres of surface water and 52,000 acres of additional wetlands in Dane County (Dane County Office of Lakes and Watersheds, 2008). The five Yahara lakes themselves include 58 miles of shoreline and 22 public beaches (Clean Lakes Alliance, 2016). While the number of annual beach closures in Dane County has declined since 2009, the number remains higher than in the early 2000's (Public Health - Madison and Dane County, 2014).

Threats to the health of Madison's waterways stem mainly from the introduction of pollutants such as phosphorous and nitrogen. Blue-green algae blooms, which can be caused by excess phosphorous levels and warm water temperatures, have plagued Madison's urban waterways for years. These algal blooms decrease water quality and have the potential to cause serious illness. Additionally, harmful bacteria (e.g., E. Coli) and heavy metals drain into Madison's lakes and rivers every year via stormwater runoff.

Long-term exposure to these pollutants can increase the risk of heart disease, kidney disease, and cancer (Public Health- Madison & Dane County, 2014). Improvements in agricultural practices and stormwater management have helped decrease surface-water pollution levels in recent years. Further improvements in reducing phosphorous and other harmful agricultural runoff will be vital towards stemming future algal blooms and dangerous bacteria, particularly as annual precipitation and temperature levels in Madison are projected to increase in upcoming decades.

### *Urban Tree Canopy*

Urban forests provide a variety of benefits to cities, making city trees an especially useful tool for managing the effects of climate change. Urban trees help filter out many common air pollutants, including nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate air pollutants. A well-designed urban tree canopy can substantially lower cooling and heating costs during the summer and winter months. This is particularly important in counteracting the urban heat island effect, which occurs when asphalt and concrete absorb and radiate solar heat, causing cities to be five to ten degrees warmer than their surrounding areas.

**Table 2.3: Economic Impacts of Madison's Urban Forest**

| Madison's Urban Forest        | Annual Benefit |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Per tree                      | \$122          |
| Stormwater Reduction          | \$3,126,965    |
| Pollution Removal             | \$492,489      |
| Sequestered Carbon            | \$399,384      |
| Aesthetics and Other Benefits | \$3,949,689    |
| Energy                        | \$3,766,538    |

Source: Madison Parks i-Tree Inventory: Tool for Assessing and Managing Forests & Community Trees



Photo: Trees at Turville Point Conservation Park

Urban trees also play a large role in reducing stormwater runoff. According to the U.S. Forest Service, a medium-sized maple tree (16" sugar maple) intercepts 1,550 gallons of stormwater per year. Urban forests are important for the public health of city residents. For example, street trees in urban areas are associated with lower asthma rates among children (Lovasi et al., 2008). The shade created by tree canopy also plays a vital role in protecting residents from harmful UV rays (Heisler et al., 1995). Studies have shown that living near urban forests can reduce physical and emotional stress among individuals (Dwyer et al., 2000; Ulrich, 1984).

There are approximately 11,000 acres of public and private tree canopy in the City of Madison, accounting for 22.4% of the City's entire land area. As of 2018, there were 96,074 public street trees in Madison, with each tree providing an estimated \$122 worth of annual benefits. Table 2.3 details the various benefits that the City of Madison receives from its urban forest every year. Not only does Madison's tree canopy provide environmental benefits, the aesthetic value of the trees raises property values and can help reduce neighborhood crime (Martinneau, C., 2011).



Photo:Volunteers removing invasive species

### *Invasive Species*

Invasive plants and animals decrease the sustainability and adaptability of Madison's ecological resources. Plants such as Japanese knotweed, buckthorn, and garlic mustard out-compete native vegetation. Invasive species can be difficult to remove, often requiring multiple herbicide applications for full eradication. Invasive pests such as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and jumping worms can have substantial environmental impacts with significant implications for public health. Studies suggest that the resultant loss of tree canopy from EAB infestations can increase rates of cardiovascular diseases and lower-respiratory tract illness and mortality (AM J Prev. Med. 2013).

### **ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL**

As Madison Parks prepares for the future, it will be necessary to sustain and respond to economic and cultural shifts. Economic cycles and sometimes political shifts influence many municipal funding mechanisms.

A parks system must be fiscally sustainable and adaptable in order to survive economic downturns and partisan funding. For example, the Parks Division utilizes impact fee ordinances (discussed in further detail in Chapter Seven) to supplement the cost of new park development; however, these fees are also closely tied to the health of the economy. In situations of economic stagnation, impact fees will not be a reliable source of funding new parks.

### *Demographic Shifts and Cultural Preferences*

Additionally, the Parks Division must be able to sustain and adapt to cultural shifts. As noted in the previous sections, the City of Madison is becoming both older and more diverse. Residents of different ages and cultures have distinct values for parks and open space; therefore, these

trends have significant implications for park planning. Knowing this anticipated demographic shift, provides opportunities to proactively develop park amenities in anticipation of changing preferences. An adaptable, flexible parks system should evolve in conjunction with changes in its user base.

As part of responding to demographic trends this plan utilized the City of Madison's Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) tool. This tool is designed to "facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-income populations will be affected by a proposed action/decision of the City" (City of Madison, RESJ Tool). The RESJ tool offers a complement to more traditional methods of park planning and is further discussed in Chapter Five.

## 2.4 Conclusion

Madison Parks shall promote equity, contribute to mental, physical and environmental health, and be sustainable and adaptable in light of a variety of new challenges. Viewing proposed and future policies and practices through these lenses requires City parks stakeholders to ask how the policies impact these goals. While the answers may not always be obvious or be fully agreed to, asking the question is essential to informing the dialogue and decision-making in the context of limited resources and competing priorities. These four lenses, used as a frame to review and guide all park and open space planning, assist the Division in achieving its vision of providing residents access to an exceptional park system.

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# Chapter Three: Engagement Strategies and Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment

## 3.1 Engagement Strategies

In this Chapter

This chapter examines recreational needs, demands, and concerns based on community engagement processes. The park and open space planning process incorporated multiple engagement strategies to understand park use and concerns amongst Madison residents. These methods reached a large number of residents, but also began a dialogue with new voices which can contribute to the future planning of the park system. Madison Parks strives to engage all residents to help ensure concerns of all residents are represented.

### ENGAGEMENT METHODS

During the engagement process, participants provided their input on a broad spectrum of topics such as park usage, future needs, environmental initiatives, and specific goals. Six distinct engagement methods gathered input from participants of a variety of ages, races, and socioeconomic status. Each engagement method is described in further detail in the following sections. Recognizing the inherent limitations and bias associated with non-random public input processes, efforts were made to track engagement strategies and comments, and to geolocate responses to evaluate distribution of input and improve future engagement methods. Exhibit 3 identifies the locations of each of the strategies below.



Photo: Hip Hop PARKitecture Workshop

### Comment Cards

The Parks Division distributed comment cards at various locations across Madison to solicit feedback on how people use the parks system. Comment cards were provided at nine City of Madison libraries, 12 community/neighborhood centers, and the Madison Senior Center. Comment cards were collected at 44 different public events and community meetings and respondents could also submit comments electronically. The comment cards were distributed in English, Spanish, and Hmong, and also available in an images-only format. The City received 887 comment cards back from respondents. A summary of the comment card results may be found in Appendix B.

### Online Community Survey

As part of this process, the Parks Division developed an online community survey. The survey aimed at understanding the public's perceptions and priorities regarding the Madison parks system. The survey included nine separate questions about items such as favorite activities, resident needs, and areas of potential improvement, as well as requesting information regarding age and race. The online community survey was completed by 1,609 separate individuals, one of the highest online survey response rates that any city agency has received. As part of the survey, respondents identified their participation in park-related activities. Input from the online survey has been summarized and may be found in Appendix B. A separate recreational survey generated 32 responses from athletic organizations and is discussed further on page 38.

Engagement  
Strategies

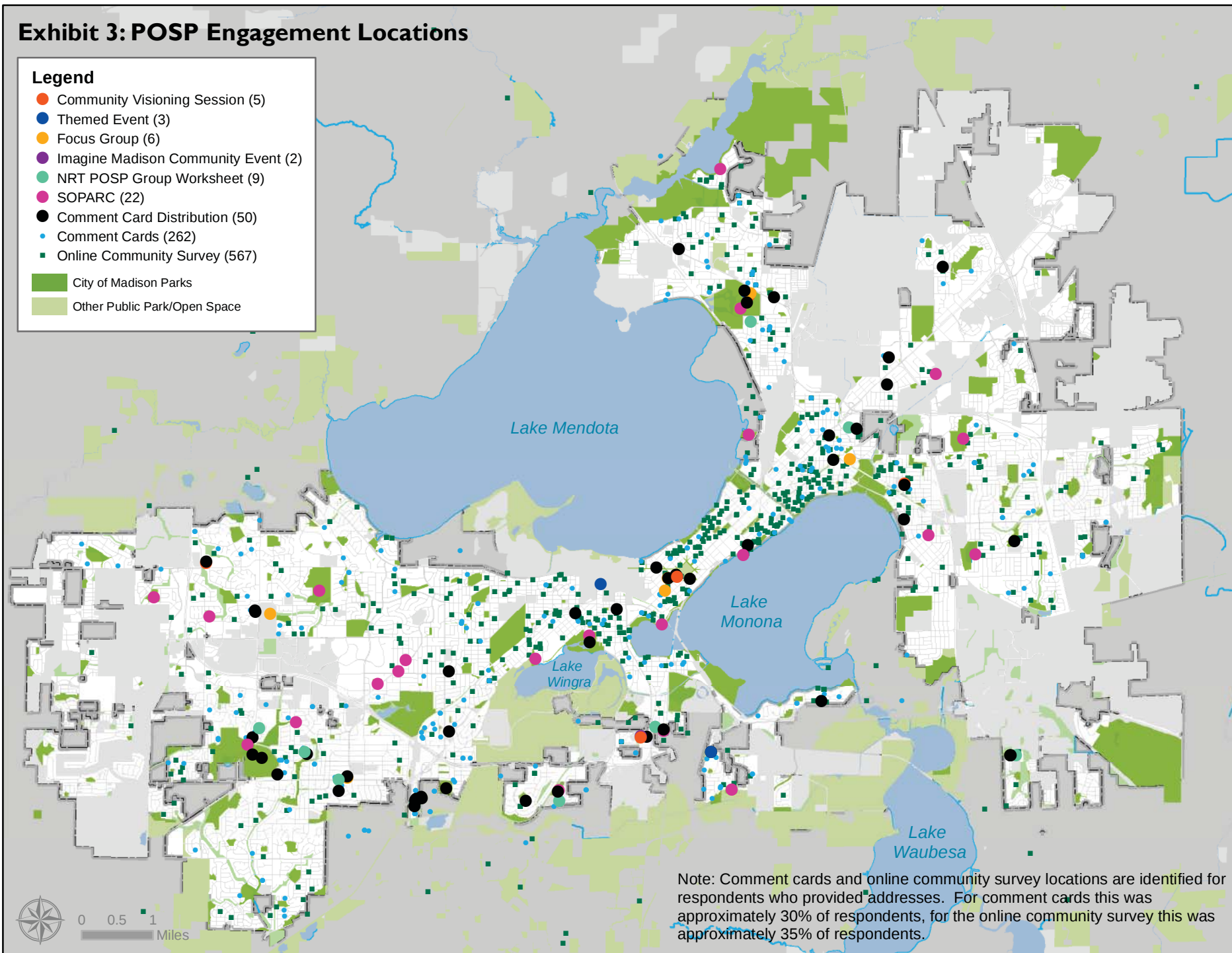
Outdoor  
Recreation  
Needs  
Assessment

Conclusion

### Exhibit 3: POSP Engagement Locations

#### Legend

- Community Visioning Session (5)
- Themed Event (3)
- Focus Group (6)
- Imagine Madison Community Event (2)
- NRT POSP Group Worksheet (9)
- SOPARC (22)
- Comment Card Distribution (50)
- Comment Cards (262)
- Online Community Survey (567)
- City of Madison Parks
- Other Public Park/Open Space



### *System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities*

To gather additional data on park usage, the Parks Division utilized an observational research method called the System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC). The method was developed in 2006 by researchers at San Diego State University and the RAND Corporation to examine how community parks contributed to physical activity (McKenzie et al., 2006). Madison Parks collaborated with student volunteers, City staff, members of the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee, and members of the Board of Park Commissioners to use a modified SOPARC tool to gather data on park usage. Parks chosen for this tool were based on park type, location, and the surrounding neighborhood's income and race/ethnicity demographics to provide a snapshot of park use throughout the City. Data from SOPARC was gathered in 2016 from July through October. During this period, 2,766 residents were observed across 28 different parks. Results from the SOPARC method are summarized in Appendix B.

### *Community Visioning Sessions and Workshops*

With the assistance of the consulting group Urban Assets, LLC, the Parks Division facilitated five community visioning sessions in each of Madison's main geographic regions. The community visioning sessions, listed below, were interactive workshops designed to identify the public's goals and vision for Madison's park system.

- |             |                   |                                         |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| • North:    | January 31, 2017  | Warner Park Community Recreation Center |
| • East:     | February 6, 2017  | Whitehorse Middle School                |
| • South:    | February 13, 2017 | The Village on Park                     |
| • West:     | March 1, 2017     | Alicia Ashman Library                   |
| • Downtown: | March 23, 2017    | Central Library                         |

At the community visioning sessions, Parks staff presented information on the POSP and the purpose of its public engagement strategy. Session participants then engaged in a variety of activities allowing them to provide their input on topics related to park facility and programming needs, areas of potential improvement, and their vision for the Parks system. Individuals were also asked to provide demographic data including their age, race, and how long they have been living in Madison. A total of 120 individuals participated in the community visioning sessions. See Appendix B for a summary of the community visioning workshops comments. In addition to community

### **Figure 3.1 Engagement Numbers**



Photo: Community Visioning Session

visioning sessions, three workshops, listed below, facilitated in-depth discussion and analysis on specific topics. The first workshop, called “Hip Hop PARKitecture” facilitated by Hip Hop Architect Michael Ford, engaged children and communities of color in a fun day of park planning. The second workshop, focused on climate change and environmental pressures, was conducted in partnership with the Clean Lakes Alliance, the Board of Park Commissioners, and the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts. The last workshop was in partnership with Public Health - Madison and Dane County, as well as with local advocates for environmental education, to focus on connecting children to nature. A total of 55 individuals participated in the three workshops.

- Hip Hop PARKitecture. April 22, 2017 - Badger Rock Neighborhood Center
- Madison Parks & Resiliency in the Era of Climate Change:  
May 18, 2017 UW - Union South
- Connecting Kids to Nature:  
June 4, 2017 - Warner Park Community Recreation Center

A report on the engagement efforts of the Community Visioning Sessions and Theme-Focused workshops is available at:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/projects/2018-2023-park-open-space-plan>

### Focus Groups

Acknowledging that public participation must incorporate a variety of methods, the City of Madison collaborated with the University of Wisconsin – Madison and Public Health - Madison and Dane County to conduct participatory research with children and other underrepresented populations across Madison. This strategy was neighborhood-based focused on engaging communities in park planning where they lived. Focus group discussions occurred at the following locations:

- Madison Senior Center
- Vera Court Community Center
- Capitol Center Apartments
- Goodman Community Center
- The Meadowood Neighborhood Center
- The Lussier Community Center

A summary of the focus group discussions may be found in Appendix B.



Photo: Hip Hop PARKitecture

| TOPIC                                           |                                                                                                                           |                                                        |                           |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| What's Working Well                             | Action to Enhance or Maintain                                                                                             | What Isn't Working Well                                | Action to Overcome        |
| 1. Basketball                                   | 1. Full court                                                                                                             | 1. A football field                                    | 1. build a football field |
| 2. PLAY Ground                                  | 2. more items                                                                                                             | 2. Trampoline Park                                     | 2.                        |
| 3. We Want More Trees.<br>Need More Monkey Bars | 3. Trash Cans                                                                                                             | 3. lakes are too dirty to swim in.                     | 3. Clean the lakes        |
| 4.                                              | 4. Food Trucks (poor)                                                                                                     | 4. Dirty Lakes - the lakes are nasty because of cows.  | 4.                        |
| 5. more goals                                   | 5.                                                                                                                        | 5. NO POOL. No Animals. No Pool. Dirty under fountains | 5. Pool                   |
| Other things to consider.                       | Tell supervisor more stuff for kids. Vendors could be trained at 4th Ballgame. New playground equipment → more play games |                                                        |                           |

Photo: Focus Group Exercise from Meadowood Neighborhood Center

Additionally, Public Health - Madison & Dane County conducted 15 one-to-one interviews, and collaborated with Hawthorne Elementary School, Sandburg Elementary School, and Centro Hispano as part of efforts to create the “Youth-Engaged City Planning: Recommendations for the City of Madison, Wisconsin” report. An estimated 110 individuals participated in focus groups, and an additional 150 individuals participated through the City’s Neighborhood Resource Teams (NRT). A summary of input from the NRT focus groups can be found in Appendix B.

### *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan*

The *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* included a public listening campaign launched by the City of Madison as part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. It gathered feedback from a variety of sources including public meetings, online surveys, and resident panels made up of underrepresented segments of the population. Public input was provided on major community issues such as parks, housing, transportation, and economic development. During Phase I and Phase II of the public input process, a total of 135 comments on parks and open space were submitted via the online survey, public meetings, and resident panels. A summary of parks-related input from the *Imagine Madison* process can be found in Appendix B.

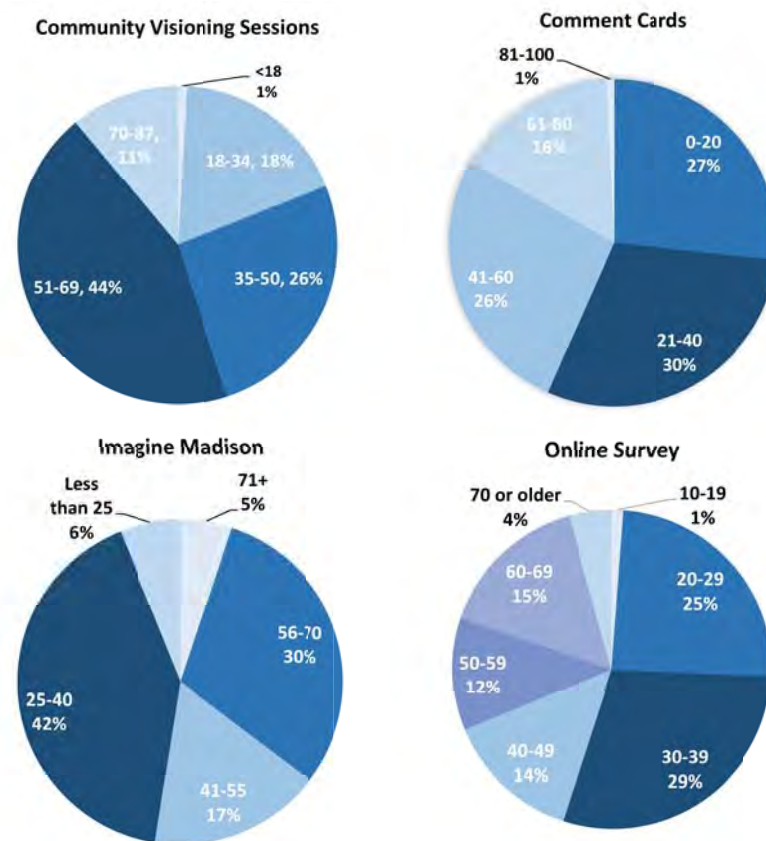
## ENGAGEMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The following discussion seeks to provide perspective on the demographic characteristics of participants engaged in these various methods.

### *Participant Ages*

Figure 3.2 illustrates the age distribution of each engagement method’s participants. Participation by age varied depending on engagement type. An increased youth presence appeared in the data from the comment cards. However, individuals under the age of 20 were nearly absent from both the online community survey and the community visioning sessions. Residents between the ages of 21 and 40 were the most prominent age demographic in the online survey, while residents aged 51-69 were the most prominent age demographic in the community visioning sessions. The *Imagine Madison* data also consisted primarily of adults, with individuals under age 25 accounting for only 6% of all participants.

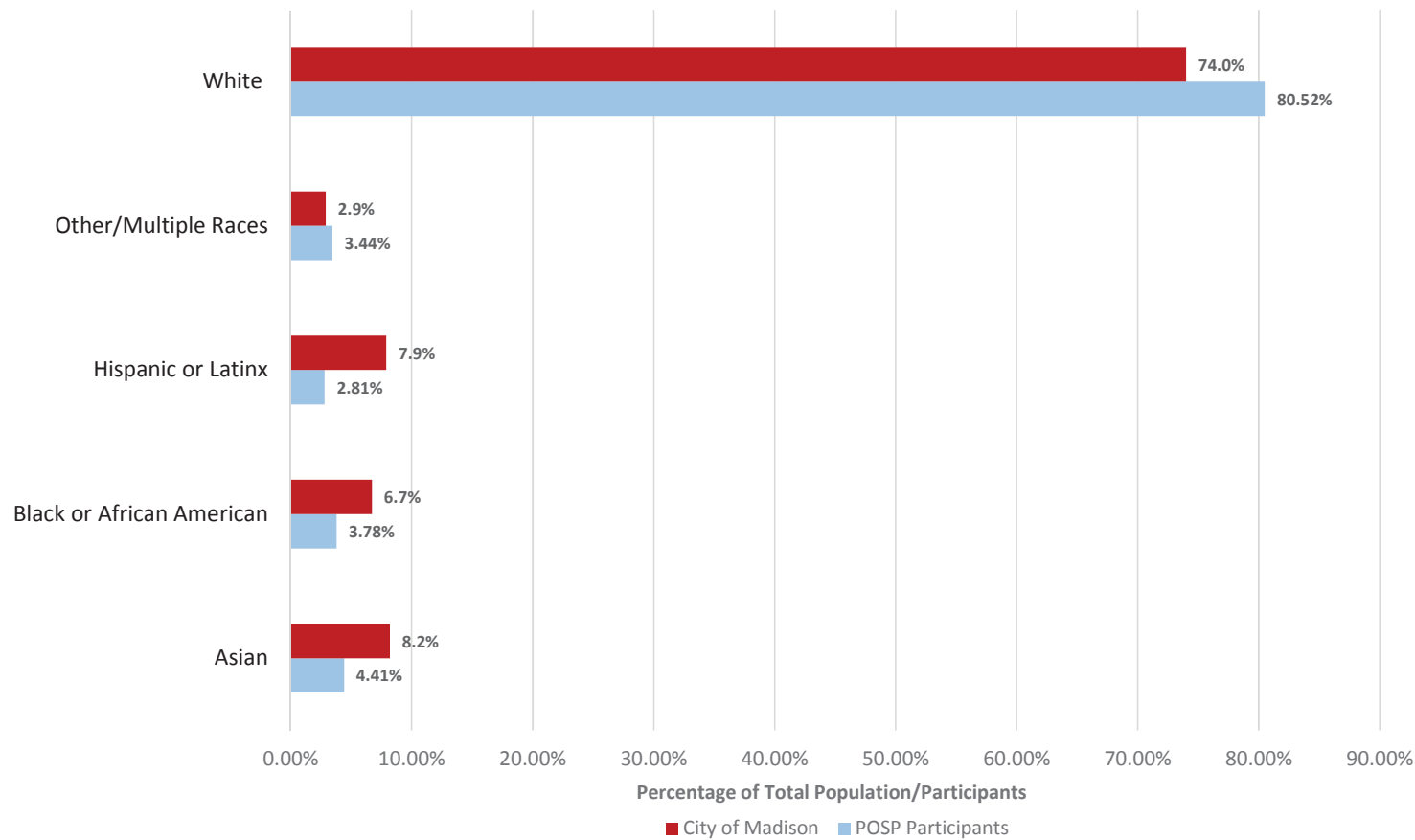
**Figure 3.2: Ages of Respondents from Engagement Methods**



### Participant Race/Ethnicity

Figure 3.3 shows the racial distribution of each method's participants in relation to that of the City of Madison. Demographic information was collected as part of the online survey, community visioning sessions, and through portions of the *Imagine Madison* engagement process. Figure 3.3 illustrates unintentional biases in traditional engagement methods such as public input meetings and online surveys<sup>01</sup>. Recognizing that online surveys and public input meetings may disproportionately engage residents who identify as adult and white/Caucasian, the POSP engagement process also utilized methods, which included focus group discussions, comment cards, and the Hip Hop PARKitecture workshop, specifically designed to encourage participation from historically underrepresented communities. Since the City did not request demographic information from these engagement methods, they are not included in Figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3: Ethnicity/Race Demographics of Engagement Methods**



<sup>01</sup> Data shown in Figure 3.3 do not include demographic information of approximately 4,000 people who provided input via comments cards, theme-focused events, NRT's, focus group discussions, and the recreation league survey. Nor do they include people who were observed as part of the SOPARC study.

### 3.2 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment

An Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment is an analysis used to identify and prioritize future planning efforts for natural areas and outdoor recreational resources. The assessment combines information obtained during the engagement process, and examines past, present, and projected future needs in order to create informed recommendations.

#### ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

This section describes the information derived from the engagement methods described above. Figure 3.4 aggregates information received from the comment cards, online community survey, and SOPARC data. These data help identify trends in preferred recreational activities across different population segments. These recreational activities are defined as either active or passive<sup>02</sup>.

Amongst all engagement methods, the top ten activities shown in Figure 3.4 include a combination of passive recreation activities, such as hiking/biking, and active recreation activities, such as swimming and playing on playgrounds. Some activities, for example biking and walking/hiking, were popular regardless of age group or gender. However, there were some notable differences in the top activities based on the engagement method, which are further discussed in this chapter.

#### *Top Reported Activities for Youth*

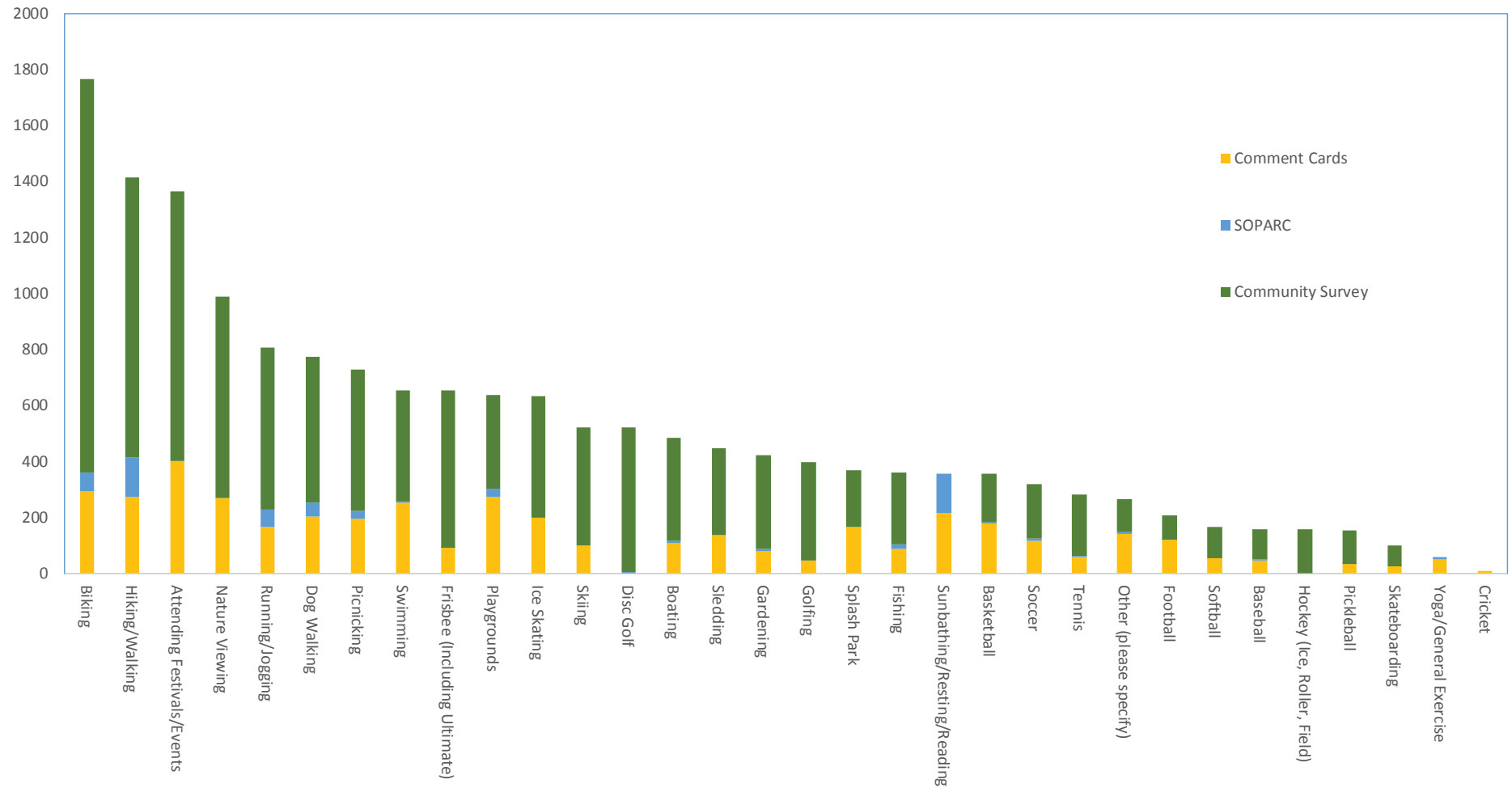
Based on engagement input, younger residents indicated they utilize parks and open space more for active recreation activities. Youth were the primary users of park playgrounds. In the comment card data, playing on a playground was the fourth most popular activity among the under 20 age group, and the second most popular activity among the 21-40 age group (presumably because they take their children to playgrounds). Playing on the playground was the third most frequently observed activity for individuals under 20 in the SOPARC data.

The younger population also makes significant use of parks to engage in team sports such as basketball, soccer and football. In the comment card data basketball and football were ranked as the second and third most popular activities for individuals under age 20, while soccer was ranked 7th. Another activity that appears to be especially popular among youth is swimming.



Photo: Wexford Ridge Playground

<sup>02</sup> The American Heritage Dictionary identifies passive recreation as “Outdoor recreational activities, such as nature observation, hiking, and canoeing or kayaking, that require a minimum of facilities or development and that have minimal environmental impact on the recreational site.”

**Figure 3.4: Top Activities as Reported per Engagement Method**

### *Top Reported Activities for Adults*

Collected data indicate adult residents tend to use parks for more passive recreation such as hiking and snowshoeing. For example, nature viewing was the third most popular activity for comment card respondents above the age of 40. Among online survey respondents, nearly all of whom were older than 20, nature viewing was the fourth most popular activity. Walking, biking, jogging, and dog walking were all activities that were more popular among adults than youth. Adults also appeared to gravitate towards individual sports more than team sports. Pickleball, tennis, and disc golf were all very popular among this group. Additionally, Ultimate Frisbee appears to be a sport growing in popularity for adults, particularly among the 21-40 age group.

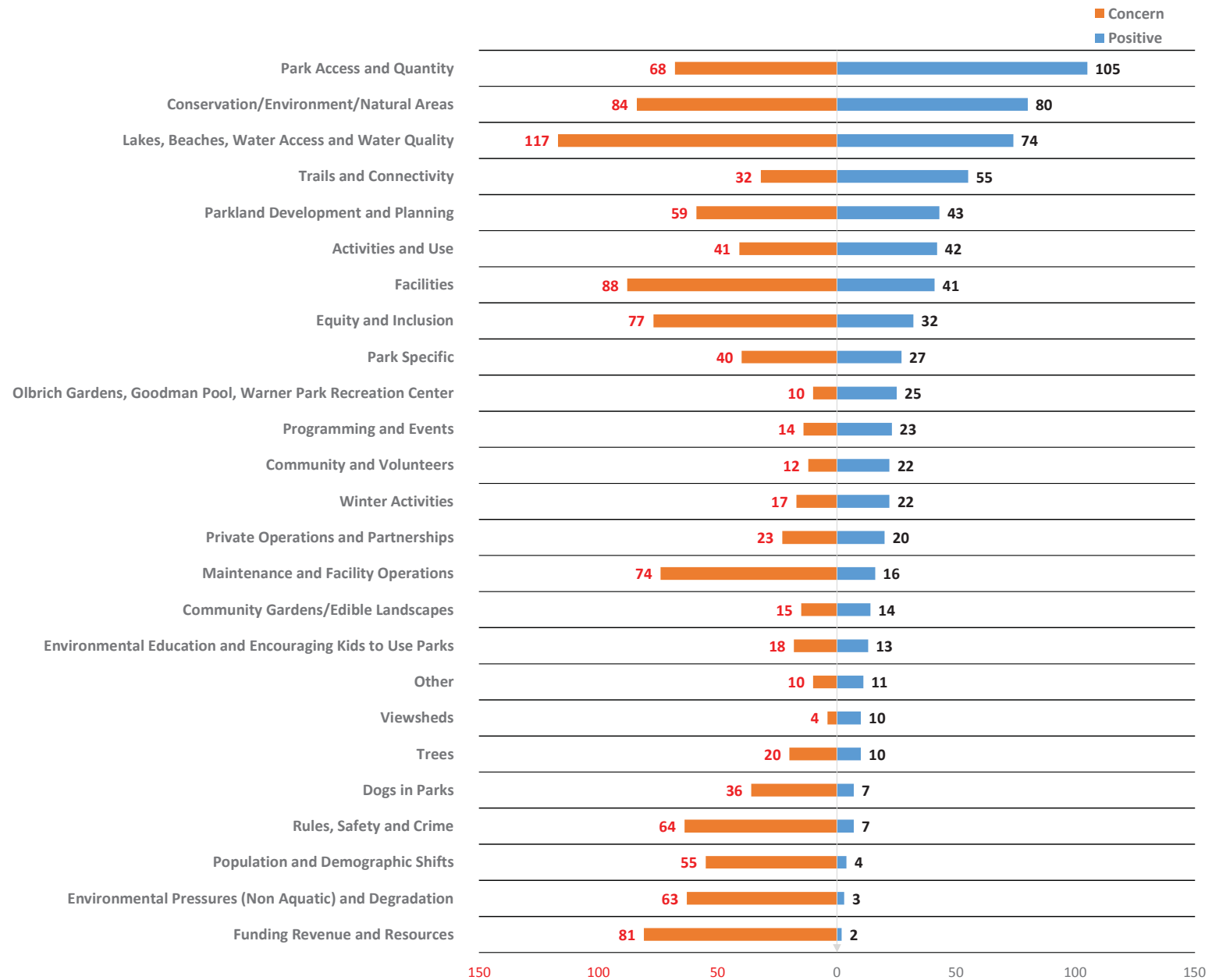
Ice skating was another activity that was listed as a top ten activity, though only in the comment cards. However, it was also popular among online survey respondents, just narrowly missing the top ten, with 26.8% of respondents indicating they use parks for ice skating. It is important to note that a winter activity such as ice skating would not be represented in the SOPARC data because direct observation was only done in the summer and fall.

### **TOP ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

The Parks Division also sought public input on the current state of Madison parks, with the goal of using this information to assess which areas should receive additional focus in the upcoming years. The data presented in Figure 3.5 were gathered via the online community survey, community visioning sessions and workshops, focus group discussions, and from the *Imagine Madison* process. Figure 3.6 shows the combined results from these engagement methods. The data were categorized to identify emerging trends and issues among the public. Each comment was identified as a positive or a concern in relation to the topic being mentioned. Major themes surfaced including: water and the environment, park access, development, and quantity; and facilities and activities that are equitable and inclusive.



Photo: Ice skating at Tenney Park

**Figure 3.5: Top Comments During Engagement Process**

### Water and the Environment

Madison's proximity to water resources and historical wetland habitat has provided numerous opportunities for water-based recreation and natural habitats. A large portion of the feedback received from engagement participants addressed environmentally related topics. "Lakes, beaches, water access and water quality" was the most frequently mentioned issue in the community visioning sessions and the fifth most frequently mentioned in the *Imagine Madison* data. Likewise, "conservation/the environment/natural areas" was the second most frequently mentioned topic in both the community sessions and *Imagine Madison* feedback. In response to the question "What would you like to see more of in Madison Parks," the second most popular choice among online survey respondents was "More natural spaces and conservation areas."

Many of the comments related to the environment were positive. Residents expressed their pleasure with the park system's number of beaches, conservation parks, and the readily available access to water and nature. However, there was significant concern about water quality, pollution, and the future of Madison's lakes and natural areas in the face of continued development and population growth. A common concern voiced in the feedback from all methods was a concern that the Parks Division might lose its focus on conservation and natural areas in an effort to meet the recreational demands of a continually expanding population.

Concerns related specifically to climate change also came up frequently in the comments. Fans of winter activities such as ice skating and skiing were concerned that a shortened season would affect their opportunity to enjoy these activities. Other climate change specific issues were mentioned, such as the increased occurrence of extreme heat events and the proliferation of invasive species. Figure 3.7 displays the results of an online community survey question asking respondents whether they believed that the Parks Division should play a role in addressing these issues.

**Figure 3.6: Online Survey Response**

Should parks play a role in addressing issues such as habitat loss, climate change, and environmental degradation?

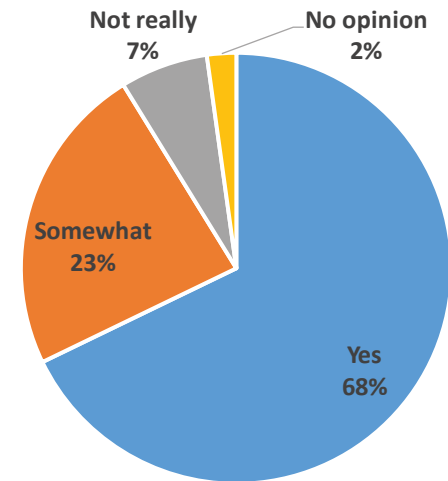
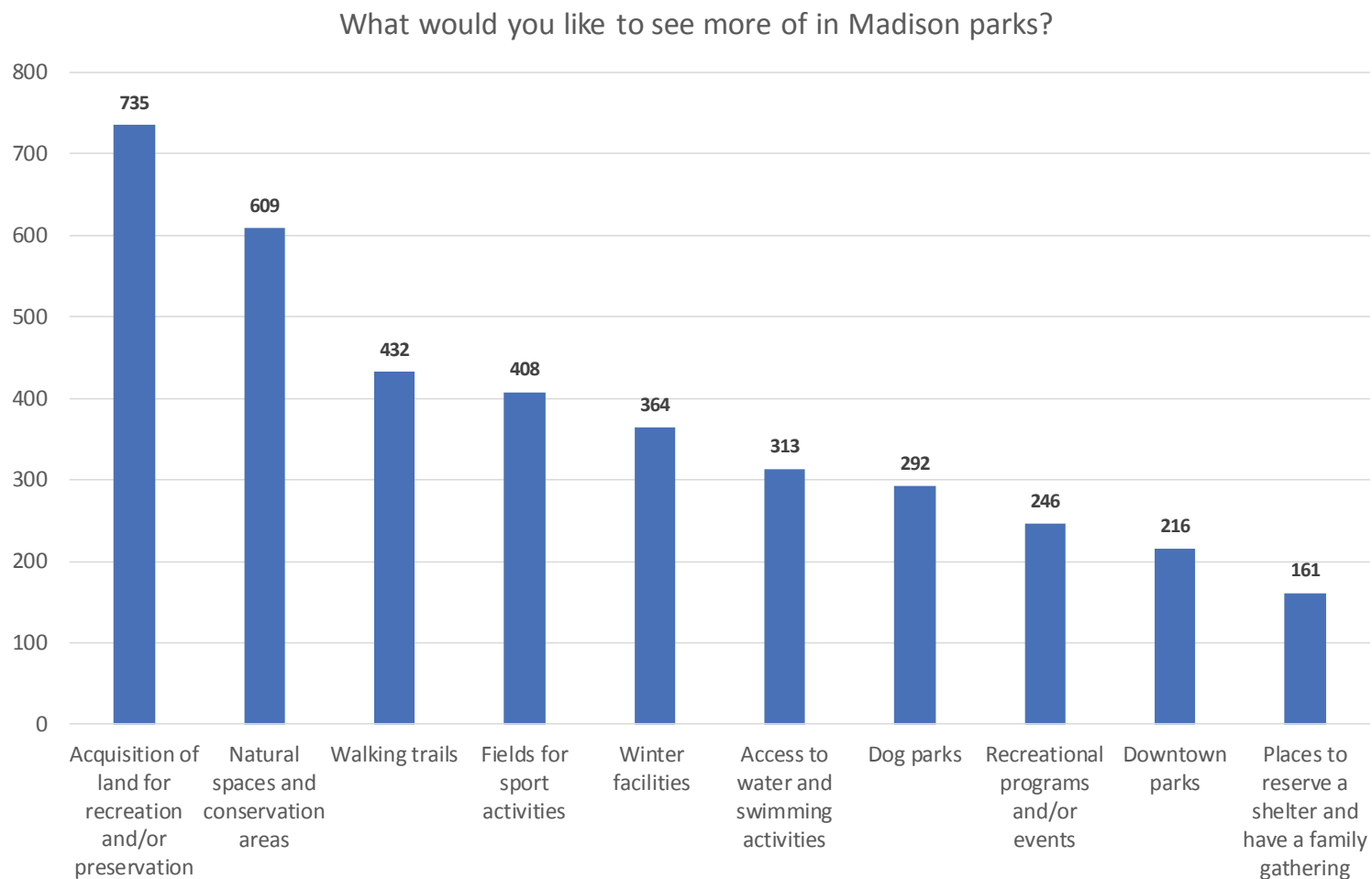


Photo: Learning to canoe

### Park Access and Quantity

The other major theme seen in the results was concern about park access and quantity, primarily related to the City's increasing population. This was the third most frequently mentioned topic in the community session comments and the most frequently mentioned topic in the *Imagine Madison* comments. Residents were concerned with how Madison's continually expanding population would affect their capacity to use the park system. The City of Madison is expected to add 40,000 residents by 2040. Concerns about future overcrowding and diminishing park access were prevalent among participants. Figure 3.5 shows how respondents to the online survey prioritized acquisition of land for recreation and/or preservation.

**Figure 3.7: Online Survey Question Response**



### *Park Equity and Inclusion*

The community visioning sessions, focus group discussions, and *Imagine Madison* engagement methods all identified park equity and inclusion among the most prominent issues. When community visioning session participants were asked “What do you worry about in Madison Parks?” equity and inclusion was the fourth most frequently mentioned topic. Additionally, participants in the meetings with Madison’s senior and underserved populations placed a strong emphasis on equity in the park system. A focus group at the Madison Senior Center revealed that many seniors felt excluded from using Madison parks, as a lack of drinking fountains, crosswalks at entrances, and restroom facilities make parks less welcoming for older residents.

Discussion with low-income individuals and youth from communities of color echoed similar concerns regarding equity and inclusion. Residents in low-income communities expressed concern that nearby parks often were not as safe or well-maintained as parks in wealthier sections of the city. Individuals from communities of color also felt that parks lacked amenities specific to the needs of different cultures. For example, Hmong residents were frustrated at the lack of Tuj Lub (a traditional Hmong game) courts and large picnic tables at parks. Residents also reported that it was difficult to hold large family gatherings at local parks.



Photo: Tuj Lub (Hmong Top Spin Demonstration)

## FACILITY DEMANDS

These data include the date of reservation, facilities reserved, and number of park users anticipated. This section also reviews permit sales from existing data collected through Accela, the City's asset management software, and the results of the athletic organization survey.

### *Athletic Facility Reservations*

The City of Madison provides facilities for year-round athletic activities within the park system, but does not manage athletic recreation leagues. Instead, the City partners with Madison School & Community Recreation (MSCR) and other recreation organizations such as the Madison Ultimate Frisbee Association, Liga Latina Soccer Association, Madison Area Youth Soccer Association, and Southside Raiders Youth Football to program the athletic fields. As part of this plan update, Madison Parks reviewed reservation data and conducted a recreation league survey issued to over 130 organizers who have made park reservations for athletic facilities. A summary of the recreation league survey can be found in Appendix B.

Review of the City's reservation data identifies that activities with the highest number of reservations include tennis, soccer, and softball. These three activities have the highest number of separate organizations that reserve facilities for their sport. However, demand for athletic facilities is growing for pickleball, lacrosse, and cricket, which share facilities with other historically popular sports.

Reservation data also indicate that the most frequently reserved parks include multi-field and multi-court complexes. These types of facilities allow users to host practices, games, and tournaments in a single location instead of spread out over multiple parks. Reserving multiple fields or courts at one park location is beneficial for organizers to accommodate the large size of their leagues, share referees across games, and host multi-game events. Table 3.1 identifies the most park facility reservations by sport. Exhibit 4 identifies the number of athletic field reservations by park.

Park staff suggest that there is demand for lighted fields and facilities that recover quickly from rain events. In particular, there is high demand for athletic field lighting for soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, flag football, and volleyball. Madison Parks has lit softball diamonds, two lit baseball diamonds, one lit soccer and football field, and one lit volleyball location. Users currently take advantage of off-season softball outfields as lit spaces for Ultimate Frisbee and flag football.

**Table 3.1: 2017 Top Park Reservations by Sport**

| Sport                    | Number of Facility Reservations |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Soccer                   | 3653                            |
| Tennis                   | 2844                            |
| Ultimate Frisbee         | 1344                            |
| Softball                 | 1185                            |
| Youth Football           | 283                             |
| Lacrosse                 | 281                             |
| Volleyball               | 117                             |
| Pickleball               | 116                             |
| Baseball                 | 93                              |
| Baseball - Little League | 77                              |
| Football                 | 71                              |
| Cricket                  | 55                              |
| Rugby                    | 49                              |
| Skate Park               | 48                              |
| Kickball                 | 36                              |
| Basketball               | 27                              |

Note: Reservations are based on the number of events at each individual court or field (i.e., a pickleball tournament using all six courts at Garner equates to six reservations). Table 3.1 only identifies facilities that have been reserved, and excludes "pick up games" without reservations.

In addition to reviewing internal reservation data, Madison Parks solicited feedback from a survey sent to over 130 athletic organizations. Of those that responded to the survey, 34% said they had to cancel an event or practice because there were no facilities available for reservation. Additionally, 31% noted that they had to limit the number of participants in their league due to lack of facilities.

**Table 3.2: 2017 Top Twenty Reserved Parks for Athletics**

| Park                  | Number of Reservations | Primary Reservation              |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Quann Park            | 1309                   | Tennis Courts                    |
| Rennebohm Park        | 1081                   | Tennis Courts                    |
| Reindahl (Amund) Park | 878                    | Soccer                           |
| Olbrich Park          | 858                    | Softball, Soccer, Volleyball     |
| Warner Park           | 711                    | Youth Football, Soccer, Softball |
| Garner Park           | 420                    | Lacrosse, Rugby                  |
| North Star Park       | 405                    | Ultimate Frisbee                 |
| Elver Park            | 302                    | Soccer, Softball, Tennis         |
| Country Grove Park    | 280                    | Soccer                           |
| Kennedy Park          | 262                    | Soccer                           |
| Manchester Park       | 254                    | Ultimate Frisbee                 |
| Midtown Commons Park  | 232                    | Ultimate Frisbee                 |
| Demetral Park         | 221                    | Softball                         |
| Goodman Park          | 191                    | Softball                         |
| High Point Park       | 176                    | Soccer                           |
| Duane F. Bowman Park  | 146                    | Baseball, Softball               |
| Wingra Park           | 145                    | Soccer                           |
| Wexford Park          | 129                    | Soccer, Tennis                   |
| Burrows Park          | 118                    | Soccer                           |
| Whitetail Ridge Park  | 113                    | Soccer                           |
| Door Creek Park       | 109                    | Tennis, Soccer                   |

**Table 3.3: Athletic Organization Recreation Survey Results**

|                                                                                                              | Yes | No  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Respondents whose program relies solely on City of Madison Park Facilities for athletic court or field space | 34% | 66% |
| Respondents whose program needs to limit the number of participants due to lack of fields/courts available   | 69% | 31% |



Photo: Ultimate Frisbee at Burr Jones Park

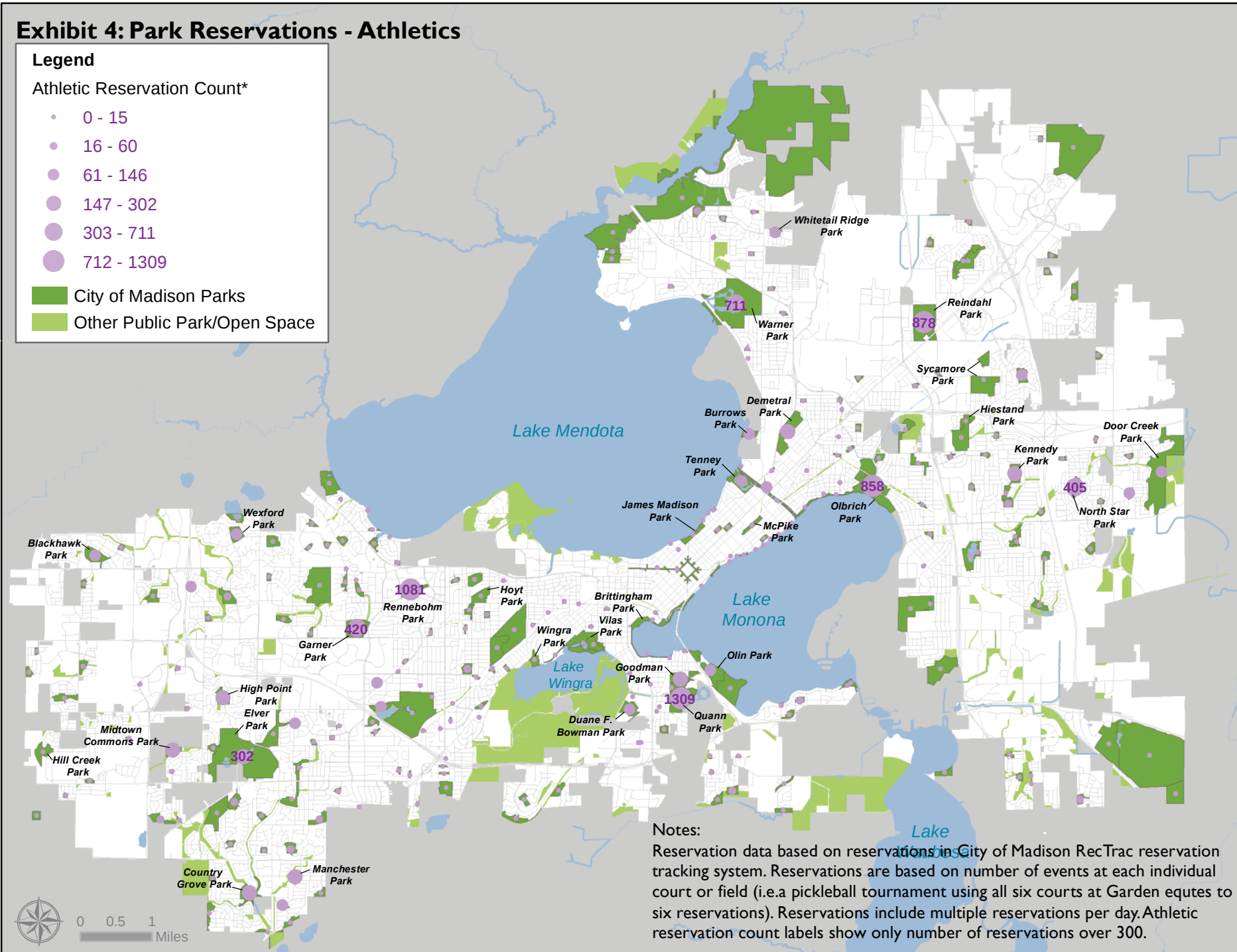
## Exhibit 4: Park Reservations - Athletics

### Legend

#### Athletic Reservation Count\*

- 0 - 15
- 16 - 60
- 61 - 146
- 147 - 302
- 303 - 711
- 712 - 1309

- City of Madison Parks
- Other Public Park/Open Space



### Shelter Reservations

Madison Parks has 83 reservable shelters including six large shelters without restrooms, 19 large shelters with restrooms, one concession/restroom building and 57 sun shelters primarily without restrooms. Large shelters and shelters with restrooms are available mid-April through mid-October. Sun shelters are open year-round. Reservations of shelters are often made for wedding celebrations, family reunions, association/business picnics, and community events. Shelters are typically booked for weekday evenings and weekends. Madison Parks has about 1,900 reservations of shelters each year. The most reserved shelters in the park system are Gates of Heaven at James Madison Park, the large shelter at Elver Park, and the shelter at Garner Park.



Photo: Gates of Heaven at James Madison Park

**Table 3.4: 2017 Top Twenty Reserved Shelters**

| Park                            | Large Shelter Reservations | Sun Shelter Reservations |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Elver Park                      | 191                        | --                       |
| Garner Park                     | 182                        | --                       |
| Warner Park                     | 80                         | 42                       |
| James Madison - Gates of Heaven | 154                        | --                       |
| Olin Park                       | 112                        | --                       |
| Tenney Park                     | 111                        | --                       |
| Vilas Park                      | 111                        | --                       |
| Highland Manor Park             | 108                        | --                       |
| Hoyt Park                       | 105                        | --                       |
| Rennebohm Park                  | 86                         | --                       |
| Brittingham Park                | 81                         | --                       |
| Westmorland Park                | 69                         | --                       |
| Reindahl (Amund) Park           | 60                         | --                       |
| Burrows Park                    | 59                         | --                       |
| James Madison - Large Shelter   | 55                         | --                       |
| Marlborough Park                | --                         | 54                       |
| Marshall Park                   | 42                         | --                       |
| Meadowood Park                  | --                         | 42                       |
| Demetral Park                   | 34                         | --                       |
| Orton Park                      | --                         | 33                       |
| Elvehjem Park                   | 27                         | --                       |
| Lake Edge Park                  | 19                         | --                       |

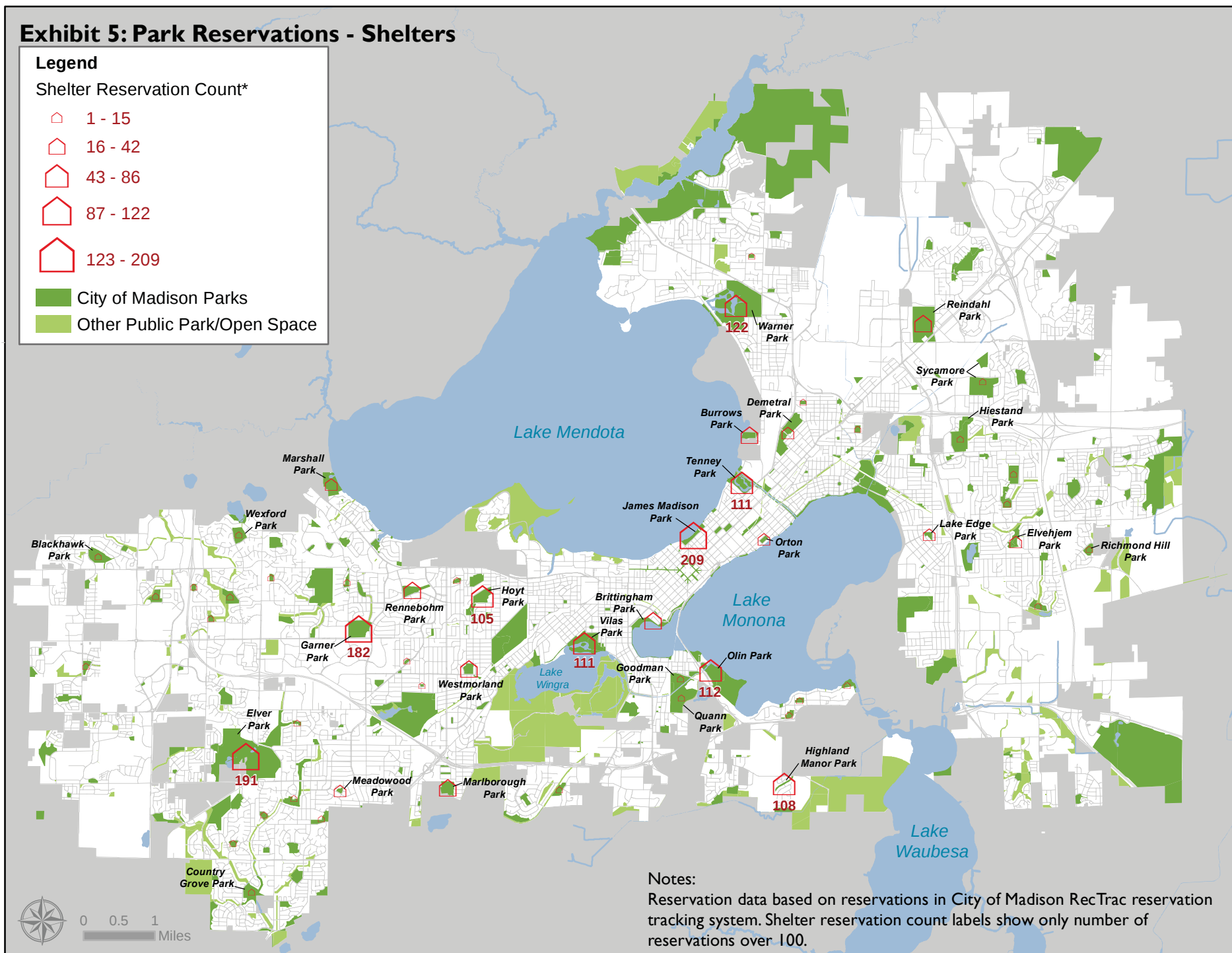
## Exhibit 5: Park Reservations - Shelters

### Legend

Shelter Reservation Count\*

-  1 - 15
-  16 - 42
-  43 - 86
-  87 - 122
-  123 - 209

-  City of Madison Parks
-  Other Public Park/Open Space



*Park and Street Use Event Reservations*

In addition to park athletic and shelter reservations, people frequently request park and street permits for events. In 2017, there were 804 non-athletic events in Madison parks. This number includes the total number of event days. Some events, such as farmer's markets, festivals and concerts are more than one-day or are part of a series. The largest number of reserved park days for events were for State Street/Mall Concourse, Olin Park, Warner Park, McPike Park, and Breese Stevens Field. Exhibit 6 illustrates the number of reservation events days per park. Out of the 804 event days, 204 were produced by Madison Parks. Parks-produced events included Movies in Parks, Learn To Events, Ride the Drive, Westfest, Earth Day Challenge, and Dog Park Clean-Up Day. A full list of events is available in Appendix C, Table I.

**Table 3.5: 2017 Top Ten Reserved Parks for Events<sup>03</sup>**

| Park                             | # of Event Days | Most Recurring Event (# of days)                                  |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| State Street/Mall Concourse      | 149             | Dane County Farmers Market (31)                                   |
| Olin Park                        | 70              | Fantasy in Lights (43)                                            |
| Warner Park                      | 63              | Bird & Nature Outings (13), Family Fun Night (10), Run/Walks (10) |
| McPike Park                      | 43              | Farmers Market (26), Central Park Sessions (7)                    |
| Breese Stevens Field             | 39              | Festivals (13), Concerts (7), Bodegas (5)                         |
| Elver Park                       | 32              | Farmers Market (15)                                               |
| Olbrich Botanical Complex        | 31              | Concert Series (13)                                               |
| Vilas (Henry) Park               | 25              | Let's Eat Out (10), Run/Walks (8)                                 |
| Reindahl (Amund) Park            | 21              | Let's Eat Out (10), Anji Play (9)                                 |
| Country Grove Park               | 19              | Let's Eat Out (18)                                                |
| Haen Family Park                 | 19              | Let's Eat Out (10), Anji Play (9)                                 |
| Quann Park                       | 17              | AEC Events Closures (8), Cross Fit Games (5)                      |
| Cherokee Marsh - North Unit      | 17              | Bird & Nature Outings (12)                                        |
| Garner Park                      | 16              | Pickleball Lessons (12)                                           |
| Turville Point Conservation Park | 14              | Bird & Nature Outings                                             |
| Brittingham Park                 | 12              | Colsac Skiers (6)                                                 |
| Nakoma Park                      | 11              | Let's Eat Out (10)                                                |
| Tenney Park                      | 11              | Ice Skating Lessons (6)                                           |
| Olbrich Park                     | 10              | 10 Separate Events                                                |
| Law Park                         | 8               | 8 Separate Events                                                 |
| Odana Hills Golf Course          | 8               | Free Golf Instruction (6)                                         |

<sup>03</sup> Excludes events that are on-going programmed athletic practices and games (e.g. fields used by MSCR, MAYSA, and MUFA, etc.). Also excludes daily programming activities for special facilities such as classes at boat rental facilities, Warner Park Community Recreation Center, and Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Combines street use, amplification and event permits.

Street-use permits and park event permits are the largest number of park permitting events. Street-use permits which are required for any of the following:

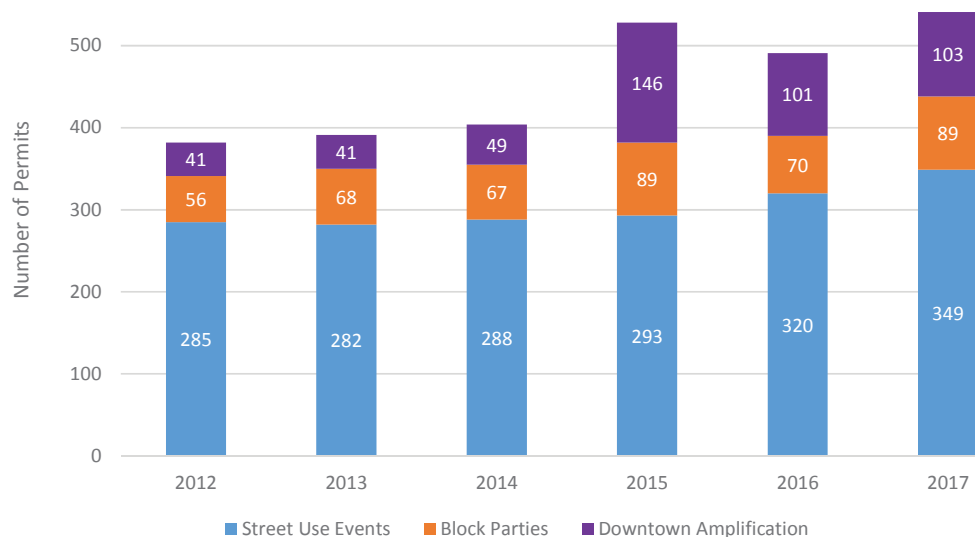
- The event/activity would close or reserve any portion of a Madison street, sidewalk, parking lane or space.
- The proposed time for the event/activity would create more than minimal disruption or rerouting of traffic from the requested street(s).
- The event/activity is scheduled at one of the downtown performance spaces outside of the time periods allowed by an Amplification Permit.

Park Event permits are separate from street-use permits which are required for any of the following:

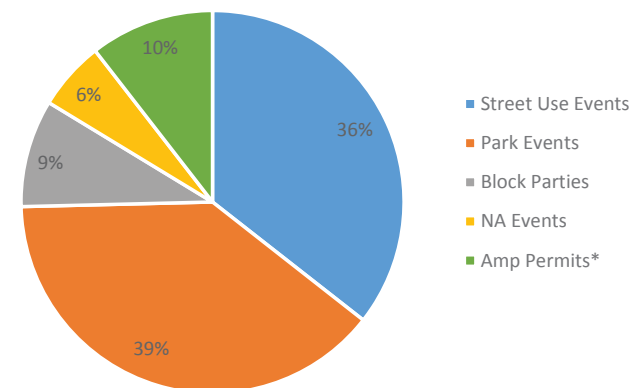
- The event will use extensive space in a park.
- A large number of participants are expected.
- The event will be promoted to the general public.
- Admission will be charged.
- A park not normally used for events, such as a neighborhood park or beach, has been requested.
- Vending will occur.
- The purpose of the event is to raise money, whether for a non-profit/charity or as a commercial venture.

Figure 3.8 identifies the growth in the number of street use permits from 2012-2017. Park event permit tracking changed in 2017 and is more complex to track. However, by April 25, 2018 were 215 proposed street use events, 143 park events and 26 events that have both kinds of permits. A percentage breakdown of permits is identified in Figure 3.9 below.

**Figure: 3.8: 2012-2017 Street Use Permits**



**Figure: 3.9: 2017 Permit Type Breakdown**



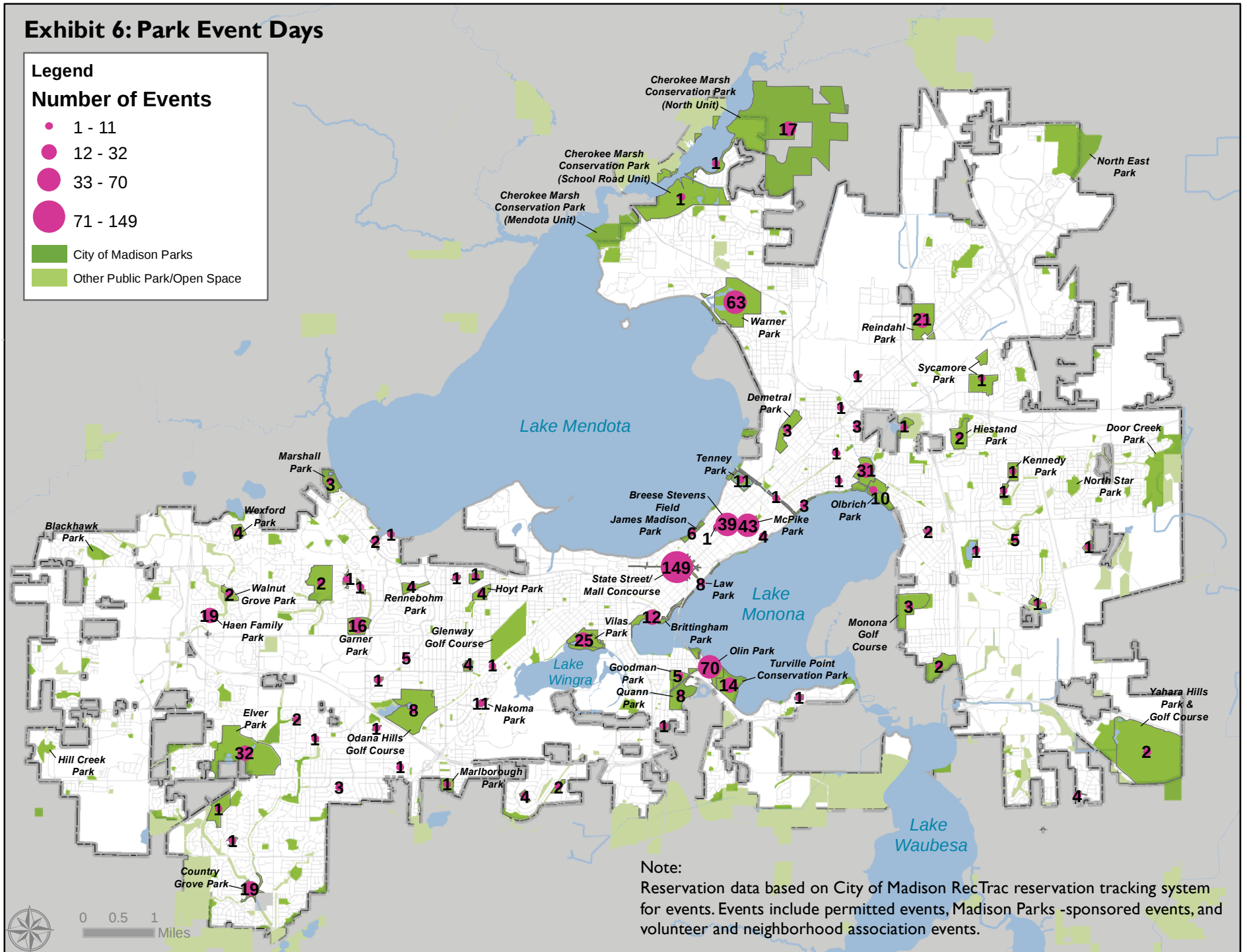
## Exhibit 6: Park Event Days

### Legend

#### Number of Events

- 1 - 11
- 12 - 32
- 33 - 70
- 71 - 149

- City of Madison Parks
- Other Public Park/Open Space

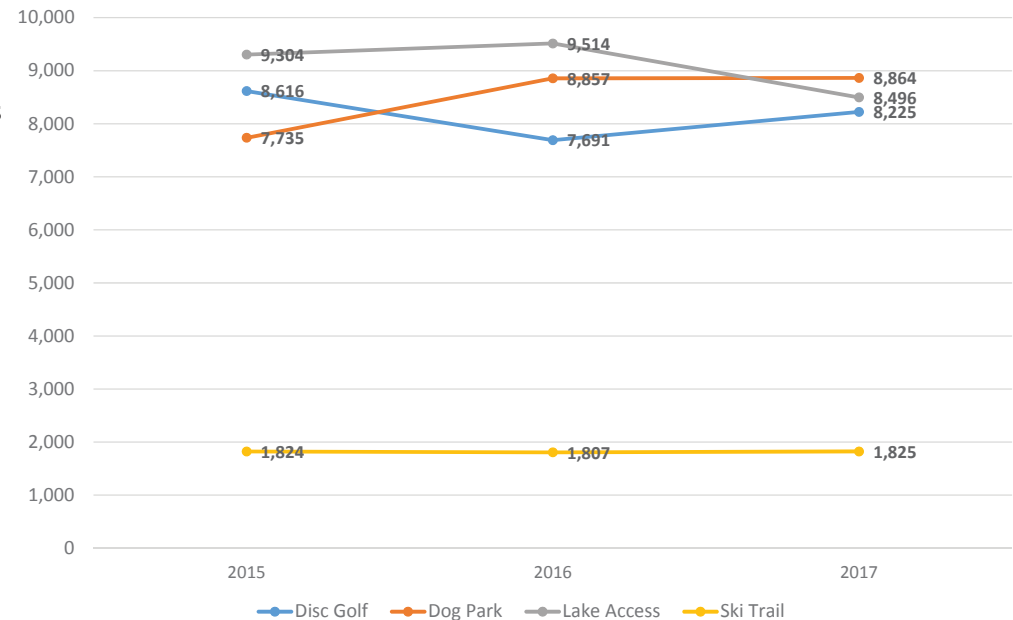


### Park Permit Sales

The City of Madison requires permits for cross-country skiing, disc golf, dog parks, and lake access. Cross-country ski and lake access permits are joint permits for use on any designated site within the City of Madison, City of Monona, and Dane County. Disc golf permits are for use at City of Madison courses including Elver, Hiestand, and the winter course at Yahara Hills Golf Course. The dog park permit can be used at any City of Madison on-leash or off-leash dog parks, Dane County Parks, the City of Middleton, and the City of Sun Prairie pet exercise areas.

In 2015, the City of Madison Parks Division began directly collecting permits and tracking them in Accela<sup>04</sup>. Table 3.6 identifies the annual and daily park permit sales from 2015 through 2017. Park permit sales generally remained steady during this time, with the exception of dog park permits which continue to grow with increasing demand for dog parks.

**Figure 3.8: 2015-2017 Permit Sales**



**Table 3.6: 2015-2017 Permit Sales**

|             | 2015           |               | 2016           |               | 2017           |               |
|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
|             | Annual Permits | Daily Permits | Annual Permits | Daily Permits | Annual Permits | Daily Permits |
| Disc Golf   | 1,420          | 7,196         | 1,443          | 6,248         | 1,456          | 6,769         |
| Dog         | 7,143          | 592           | 8,239          | 618           | 7,972          | 892           |
| Lake Access | 4,099          | 5,205         | 4,322          | 5,192         | 3,559          | 4,937         |
| Ski Trail   | 1,266          | 558           | 1,318          | 489           | 1,325          | 500           |

<sup>04</sup> Accela is one of the City of Madison's resource management software programs.

### 3.3 Conclusion

The engagement process revealed that preferences, issues, and concerns varied depending on the type of method used for gathering input. For example, collectively biking was the top activity reported through the engagement process, but this outcome was primarily driven by online responses. In contrast, attending a festival/event was the top activity for people filling out comment cards which were distributed at events and locations where diverse and youth voices were prevalent. When talking with youth at the Lussier Community Center and The Meadowood Neighborhood Center, their top request was to have food or concessions at parks. The varying perspectives and priorities received during the engagement process point to the importance of using varying methods to obtain input likely to generate diverse perspectives.

Feedback from engagement was supplemented by the review of existing data from Madison Parks databases on reservations, events and permits. Shelter reservations are most in demand at Gates of Heaven (James Madison Park), Elver Park, and Garner Park, while athletic reservations are most requested for Quann, Rennebohm, and Reindahl Park. Event reservation data identify State Street Mall, Olin Park, and Warner Park are the most heavily reserved for special events, while permit sales provide a glimpse into the popularity of disc golf, dog parks, lake access (boat trailer parking permits), and ski trails. The information provided in this section points to the need for varying park facilities to accommodate diverse uses and often competing goals. In general, the growing and diversity of activities that the community would like to engage in a park have been increasing. The number of special event days has also been increasing. Both are seen as an asset and a challenge with need to balance resources with growing demand. Parks will continue evaluate processes for these activities to determine how they can be equitably and sustainably provided.

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# Chapter Four: Parkland Inventory

## 4.1 City of Madison Park Classifications

The City of Madison provides its residents with a wide variety of recreational opportunities, with most public parks including play areas and equipment, landscaping, signage, and seating. As shown in Table 4.1, each park is classified according to property characteristics such as size, service area, amenities offered, programming, or special purpose. Exhibit 7 illustrates the geographic distribution of City of Madison parks by their park classification.

Table 4.1: City of Madison Park Type Classification Descriptions<sup>05</sup>

| Classification     | General Description                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mini Park          | Fewer than 5 acres and used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.                                                                                                                         |
| Neighborhood Park  | Greater than 5 acres, neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the park system. These parks serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood.                                                  |
| Community Park     | Typically greater than 20 acres, these parks serve a broader purpose than a neighborhood park. They focus on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. |
| Conservation Parks | Lands set aside for preservation of sensitive and/or high quality natural resources.                                                                                                                            |
| Sports Complex     | Heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities whose primary purpose is programmed active recreation.                                                                                             |
| Trafficway         | Public right-of-way used as parkland. Development of this land is limited. Trafficway acreage is counted as parkland for the purposes of inventorying quantity of acreage and number of parks.                  |
| Special Use        | The City of Madison considers special use to include parkland whose primary function serves unique recreation opportunities (i.e., golf courses).                                                               |
| Open Space         | Typically undevelopable land that is not of environmental quality to develop as a park and is not intended to be developed as conservation land and is not intended to be developed with park facilities.       |
| Greenways          | Public land owned or administered by City Engineering for stormwater purposes. Greenway acreage within parks is counted as parkland for purposes of inventorying.                                               |
| Other              | Non park facilities. In the City of Madison this category includes the MMSD Pump Station 8 which is located on land owned by the Parks Division.                                                                |

In this Chapter

City of  
Madison Park  
Classifications

Park Facilities

Other Park and  
Open Space  
Facilities

Private  
Recreational  
Facilities

Conclusion

<sup>05</sup> For the purposes of identifying park types, greenways are listed in this table. Greenways are areas of stormwater management within parks.

### MINI, NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS

Mini, neighborhood, and community parks form the core park facilities of most communities throughout the United States. The facilities in these parks usually provide some type of play equipment, athletic field and open green space (see Table 4.2). Amenities within each park are largely developed based on the master plan process, specific physical land constraints, and budget. In the City of Madison, depending on the size and classification of the park, these parks can also include facilities such as community gardens, off-leash dog parks, and ski and hiking trails. There are no guidelines for unique facilities such as sports complexes, trafficways, open space, greenways, or conservation parks.

**Table 4.2: Typical Park Facilities by Park Classification**

| Mini                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Neighborhood                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Community                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Open play area</li> <li>• Benches</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Park sign</li> <li>• Park kiosk/info board</li> <li>• One small recreational amenity (i.e., 1/2 basketball court, small soccer field, volleyball, etc.)</li> <li>• Picnic areas</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Two medium-sized recreational facilities (i.e., softball diamond, soccer field)</li> <li>• One small recreational amenity (i.e., small basketball court, small soccer field, bocce ball, etc.)</li> <li>• Accessible path system</li> <li>• Open play area with space for adult soccer</li> <li>• Benches</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Park sign</li> <li>• Park kiosk/info board</li> <li>• Open air shelter</li> <li>• Small parking area if programmed</li> <li>• Community gardens (based on space available)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground for both two to five and five to twelve year olds</li> <li>• Two to three medium-sized recreational amenities (i.e., softball diamond, soccer field, full-size basketball court)</li> <li>• Accessible path system</li> <li>• Open play area</li> <li>• Benches</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Park sign</li> <li>• Park kiosk/info board</li> <li>• Reservable shelter with restrooms</li> <li>• Drinking fountain</li> <li>• Picnic area</li> <li>• Large parking area</li> <li>• Ice rink with lights</li> <li>• Community gardens (based on space available)</li> </ul> |

### CONSERVATION PARKS

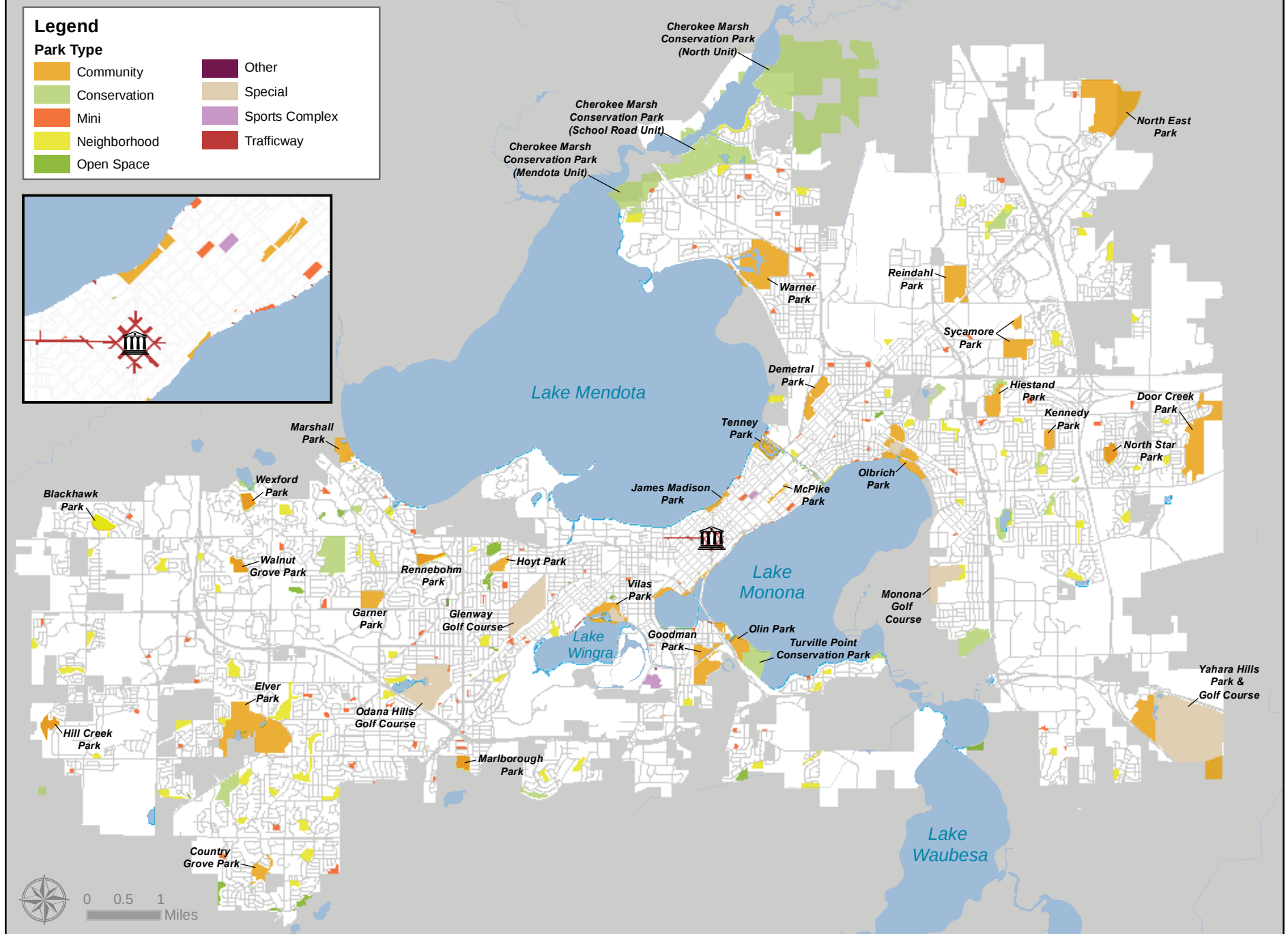
The City of Madison has 20 conservation parks. Conservation parks are managed to preserve native plant communities, wildlife, and significant natural resources. These parks have controlled public access to preserve and restore native plant and animal habitat. The City of Madison currently has approximately 1,752 acres of conservancy land. These facilities are acquired based on environmental quality of land; therefore, nationally recognized guidelines for service areas or acres per thousand do not exist. Despite the lack of formal guidelines issued by the National Recreation and Park Association, the City of Madison highly prioritizes the preservation of these areas and will continue to acquire conservation land to preserve and protect sensitive and high quality natural areas for residents in the future.

## Exhibit 7: City of Madison Parks by Type

### Legend

#### Park Type

|                                                        |                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Community        | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Other        |
| <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Conservation | <span style="color: tan;">■</span> Special         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Mini                | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Sports Complex |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Neighborhood     | <span style="color: red;">■</span> Trafficway      |
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Open Space        |                                                    |



### SPORTS COMPLEX

This category includes the facilities at Breese Stevens Athletic Field and the Duane F. Bowman Park, which function primarily as venues for athletic games and practice, but have also been used for events such as concerts.

### TRAFFICWAYS

City of Madison trafficways are road right-of-ways that function as a public park. These include areas such as the Edgewood Pleasure Drive, certain street ends, and the State Street/Mall Concourse. The City of Madison has 25 acres of parks classified as trafficways, but there are also areas that are road right-of-ways within larger classified parks (i.e., the non-vacated Esther Beach Road right-of-way within Esther Beach Park). The largest trafficway is the area known as State Street/Mall Concourse. The State Street/Mall Concourse includes State Street and Lisa Link Peace Park, and encircles the State Capitol grounds. It has five performing areas, walkways, fountains, biking routes, and numerous passive recreation facilities built into its design. With the shops and restaurants that line State Street, it is a primary destination for students, visitors, downtown employees, residents, and major community events.

### OPEN SPACE

The classification of open space denotes land that does not have active recreation facilities but provides vital space for the community. This category includes lands that function as a park such as former landfill Mineral Point Park, land adjacent to waterways such as the Mud Lake Fishing Access, and heavily wooded slopes such as Highlands East Open Space.

### OTHER

This classification is used for Pumping Station 8, which is used solely by the Water Utility.

### SPECIAL USE PARKS

Specialized facilities intended to serve a unique function are classified as Special Use Parks. These include golf courses, maintenance facilities, Forest Hill Cemetery, the Olbrich Botanical Gardens, and the Henry Vilas Zoo (operated by Dane County).

The largest percentage of land in the special use category includes golf courses. Madison has developed regulation United States Golf Association (USGA) approved courses for the use of its residents and visitors. This open space is used by golfers, walkers, joggers, and cross country skiers. The four courses managed by the Madison Parks Division include Yahara Hills, Odana Hills, Monona, and Glenway Golf Courses. Madison's golf program continues to be financially independent of the levy through the Golf Enterprise Fund.



Photo: Guided tour at Forest Hill Cemetery

The next largest special use facility is Olbrich Botanical Gardens, which operates as a public-private partnership between the Parks Division and the non-profit Olbrich Botanical Society and attracts more than 325,000 visitors each year. The facility features the 10,000 sq. ft. Bolz Conservatory with a collection of tropical plants from around the world, as well as 16 acres of outdoor gardens that feature sustainable horticulture and landscapes suitable to the region. Specialty gardens include the Sunken Garden, the Herb Garden, the Meadow Garden, the Rose Garden, the Rock Garden, the Wildflower Garden, the Starkweather Creek and Atrium Shade Gardens, and the Thai Garden (a gift to the University of Wisconsin-Madison from the Wisconsin Alumni Association-Thailand). Additionally, Olbrich Botanical Gardens displays raingardens, gravel gardens, and a variety of meadows as examples of sustainable horticulture.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens offers the community a broad range of programs and activities, including the Schumacher Library, an education program for adults and families, and a volunteer program that contributes more than 25,000 hours annually to the Gardens. Olbrich Botanical Gardens also offers a number of special events, including Rhapsody in Bloom; GLEAM: Art in a New Light; Blooming Butterflies; three concert series; Crackle: Fire and Froth; and three flower shows.

### GREENWAYS

Greenways are public land managed and administered by the City of Madison Engineering Division. They include lands such as detention ponds and drainage corridors. Greenways are sometimes considered part of the park (e.g., the drainage ponds at Owen Park), but can also be completely separate from Madison Parks (e.g., the retention pond on Mineral Point Drive). The Parks Division occasionally shares mowing and plowing responsibilities with the Engineering division for greenway properties.



Photo: Fall at Olbrich Botanical Gardens



Photo: Thai Pavilion, Olbrich Botanical Gardens

## 4.2 Park Facilities

The City of Madison Parks system has over 270 public parks, providing typical park features such as basketball courts and playgrounds, as well as beaches, community gardens, ice skating rinks, pickleball and tennis courts, golf courses, and the nationally renowned botanical gardens.

Within the Madison park system there are over 8,000 amenities; some examples include athletic fields, buildings, and drinking fountains. Madison has historically ranked high for the quantity of tennis courts, playgrounds, and basketball courts, which for decades have been the core facilities of mini and neighborhood parks.

Table 4.3 below shows a summary of existing facilities within the Madison park system. A detailed summary by park is provided in Appendix C, Table 3.

Madison Parks rank exceptionally well when compared to other cities of similar size across the nation. The Trust for Public Lands - City Park Facts 2017 ranked Madison in the top ten for basketball hoops, beaches, community gardens, dog parks, pickleball courts, and playgrounds as shown in Tables 4.4 through 4.7. The City offers not only a large number of facilities but also a significant variety of amenities and recreational opportunities for residents to enjoy.

**Table 4.3: 2017 Facility Inventory Summary<sup>06</sup>**

| #   | Types of Facility                             |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|
| 118 | Ballfield Backstops                           |
| 151 | Basketball Courts                             |
| 12  | Beaches                                       |
| 155 | Bike Racks                                    |
| 1   | Bike Polo Courts                              |
| 32  | Boat Mooring Slips                            |
| 29  | Boat Ramps                                    |
| 1   | Botanical Garden                              |
| 6   | Buildings - Large Shelters without Restrooms  |
| 21  | Buildings - Maintenance                       |
| 8   | Buildings - Olbrich Gardens                   |
| 65  | Buildings - Other                             |
| 1   | Buildings - Recreation Center                 |
| 1   | Buildings - Reservable Kitchenette            |
| 1   | Buildings - Reservable Shelter with Restrooms |
| 24  | Buildings - Restroom Building                 |
| 57  | Buildings - Sun Shelter without Restrooms     |
| 4   | Canoe and Kayak Rentals                       |
| 20  | Canoe and Kayak Launches                      |
| 813 | Community Garden Plots                        |
| 1   | Cricket Field                                 |
| 1   | Cyclocross Practice Trail                     |
| 1   | Disc Golf (Winter) Course                     |
| 1   | Disc Golf (Basket)                            |
| 2   | Disc Golf Courses                             |
| 8   | Dog Off-Leash Exercise Areas                  |
| 178 | Drinking Fountains                            |
| 5   | Horseshoe Pits                                |
| 16  | Ice Skating Rinks                             |
| 1   | Mountain Bike Course                          |
| 1   | Outdoor Fitness Equipment                     |
| 71  | Parking Lots                                  |
| 25  | Pickleball Courts                             |
| 34  | Piers                                         |
| 174 | Playgrounds                                   |
| 1   | Pool                                          |
| 445 | Rentable Canoe/Kayak Racks                    |
| 2   | Reservable Baseball Fields                    |
| 82  | Reservable Multi Use Fields                   |
| 21  | Reservable Softball Fields                    |
| 1   | Skate Park                                    |
| 7   | Ski Trail Locations                           |
| 11  | Sledding Hills                                |
| 3   | Splash Parks                                  |
| 85  | Tennis Courts                                 |
| 162 | Trails/Paths                                  |
| 29  | Volleyball Courts                             |

<sup>06</sup> Current as of January 1, 2018.

**Table 4.4: City Park Facts - Beaches**

| City           | Beaches | Beaches per 10,000 Residents |
|----------------|---------|------------------------------|
| Madison        | 12      | 0.49                         |
| Virginia Beach | 14      | 0.31                         |
| Minneapolis    | 12      | 0.29                         |
| Corpus Christi | 7       | 0.21                         |
| St. Petersburg | 5       | 0.20                         |
| San Diego      | 26      | 0.19                         |
| Long Beach     | 9       | 0.19                         |
| Boston         | 12      | 0.19                         |
| Seattle        | 9       | 0.13                         |
| Cleveland      | 5       | 0.13                         |

Source: 2017 City Park Facts, Trust for Public Lands

**Table 4.5: City Park Facts - Pickleball Courts**

| City                 | Pickleball Courts | Courts per 10,000 Residents |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| St. Paul             | 30                | 1.0                         |
| Madison              | 21                | 0.85                        |
| Omaha                | 31                | 0.70                        |
| Chesapeake, Virginia | 16                | 0.65                        |
| Albuquerque          | 37                | 0.65                        |
| Baton Rouge          | 12                | 0.50                        |
| Minneapolis          | 19                | 0.45                        |
| Virginia Beach       | 18                | 0.40                        |
| Colorado Springs     | 16                | 0.35                        |
| Cincinnati           | 10                | 0.35                        |

Source: 2017 City Park Facts, Trust for Public Lands

**Madison is ranked 1st in the number of basketball hoops and 6th in the number of off-leash dog parks per 10,000 residents, among surveyed cities.**

**Table 4.6: City Park Facts - Playgrounds**

| City                | Park Playgrounds | Playgrounds per 10,000 Residents |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Madison             | 173              | 7.1                              |
| Cincinnati          | 152              | 5.0                              |
| Detroit             | 309              | 4.7                              |
| Omaha               | 193              | 4.4                              |
| Norfolk             | 103              | 4.2                              |
| Virginia Beach      | 189              | 4.2                              |
| Corpus Christi      | 135              | 4.1                              |
| Pittsburgh          | 128              | 4.0                              |
| Glendale            | 97               | 4.0                              |
| Cleveland           | 141              | 3.7                              |
| Arlington, Virginia | 80               | 3.5                              |
| Boise               | 77               | 3.5                              |

Source: 2017 City Park Facts, Trust for Public Lands

**Table 4.7: City Park Facts - Community Gardens**

| City                | Community Garden Plots | Plots per 10,000 Residents |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Portland            | 2,246                  | 36                         |
| Washington, D.C.    | 2,300                  | 35                         |
| Madison             | 739                    | 30                         |
| Milwaukee           | 1,078                  | 18                         |
| Seattle             | 1,113                  | 17                         |
| Arlington, Virginia | 301                    | 13                         |
| Long Beach          | 574                    | 12                         |
| San Jose            | 1,014                  | 10                         |
| Baltimore           | 550                    | 09                         |

Source: 2017 City Park Facts, Trust for Public Lands

### 4.3 Other Park and Open Space Facilities

A variety of university, school, county, and state facilities adds to the availability of park and open space systems within the City of Madison. These facilities are shown in Exhibit 8.

#### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

The University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) contributes both athletic facilities and natural areas to the available open space in the City of Madison. The primary UW public facilities consist of the UW Arboretum and the UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve. These two areas provide over 1,500 acres of publicly accessible land for use.

The UW Arboretum and Lakeshore Nature Preserve provide the City with an additional recreational resource. The UW's Arboretum totals 1,262 acres of conservation land. Its footprint includes gardens, prairies, savannas, deciduous forests, conifer forests, wetlands, and horticultural gardens. The UW Arboretum provides opportunities for hiking, biking, picnicking, jogging, skiing, snowshoeing, and nature viewing.

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve contains 300 acres of preserved land along four miles of the southern shore of Lake Mendota. The Lakeshore Nature Preserve provides opportunities for nature viewing, swimming, picnicking, hiking, jogging, and biking, and has opportunities for launching kayaks, canoes, and small boats. Many people also use points along the Lakeshore Nature Preserve to access the frozen Lake Mendota for ice fishing or cross country skiing.

The UW's private recreational facilities (e.g., the Natatorium, the Nicholas Recreation Center, and Camp Randall Sports Center) include indoor/outdoor tennis courts, an indoor racquetball court, swimming pool facilities, tracks, softball diamonds, soccer fields and basketball courts. These facilities are reserved for the over 60,000 students, faculty, and staff affiliated with the University.



Photo: UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve

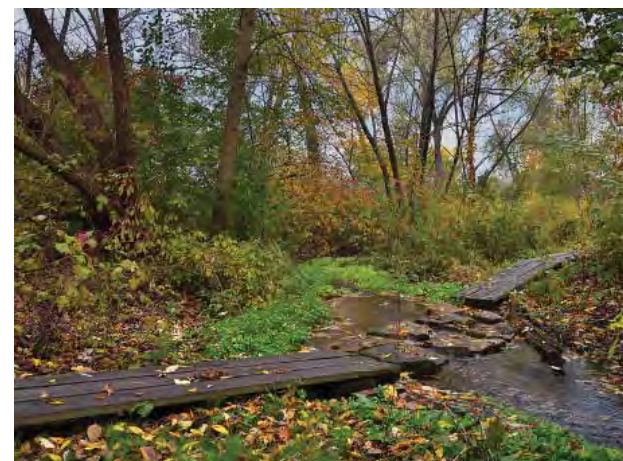
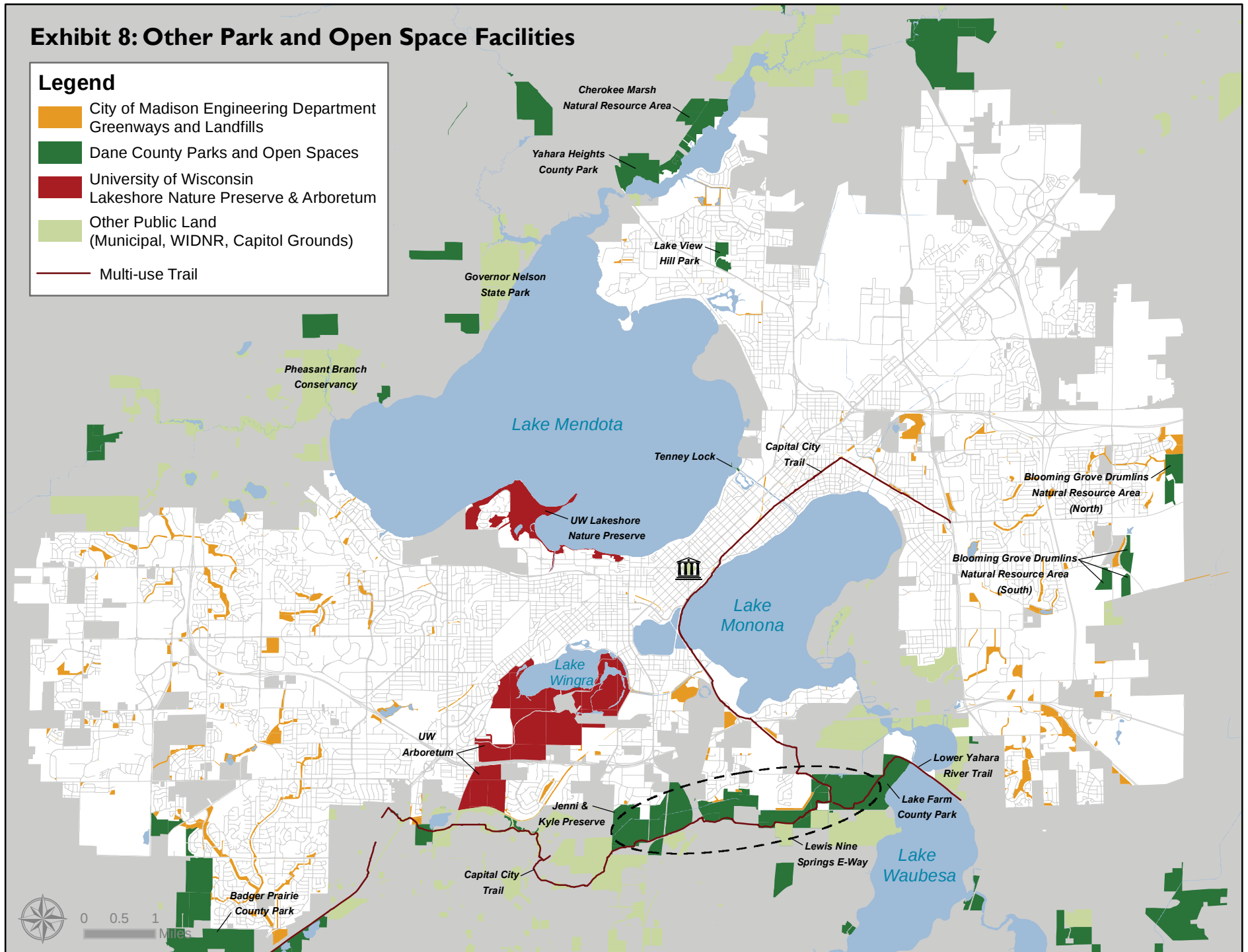


Photo: UW Arboretum

## Exhibit 8: Other Park and Open Space Facilities

### Legend

- City of Madison Engineering Department Greenways and Landfills
- Dane County Parks and Open Spaces
- University of Wisconsin Lakeshore Nature Preserve & Arboretum
- Other Public Land (Municipal, WIDNR, Capitol Grounds)
- Multi-use Trail



## PUBLIC SCHOOL GROUNDS

Public schools are excluded from the City's inventory of existing park facilities but often serve the same functions as mini and neighborhood parks. The Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) serves as the City's primary recreation programming service, providing a wide variety of activities that use both Madison parks and MMSD facilities.

Existing school facilities such as playgrounds and athletic fields are reviewed when evaluating overall City facilities. Using service area analysis, the City can identify whether school parks are able to fill demand in communities which may otherwise lack parkland. Appendix C, Table 4: Schools with Recreation Facilities identifies MMSD school grounds with recreation facilities that are open to the public when not reserved or being occupied by students.

## DANE COUNTY PARKS

Dane County owns and manages over 12,000 acres of park and open space areas throughout the County. These areas are designed to offer recreational opportunities on a regional scale. Some of these parks lie within or partially within the City of Madison limits. These parks are typically conservation-oriented and have specific recreational facilities related to the preservation of and/or education regarding cultural and natural resources. Nearby County parks and facilities that serve Madison residents are described below (see Exhibit 8 for locations):

- **Badger Prairie County Park:** This park is located just east of the City of Verona at the intersection of County Highway PB and US Highway 18 and 151. It serves as the center of the Ice Age Trail Junction Area. The park has a shelter facility, play fields, mountain bike trails, a playground, a dog exercise area, and an aero-modeling field. The park also provides access to Military Ridge State Trail and a segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.
- **Blooming Grove Drumlins Natural Resource Area:** This 1,646-acre area preserves glacial drumlin features that remain from the last glaciation. The site provides opportunities for hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, wildlife observation, foraging, nature study, as well as hunting and trapping through limited-issued permit only.
- **Capital City Trail:** Dane County Parks maintains the 9-mile segment of Capital Trail that traverses through the Capital Springs Recreation Area from Verona Road to Industrial Drive. It provides multiple links around and through Madison between the Military Ridge State Trail and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail. In the City of Madison, the trail follows seven miles of bikeways, from Industrial Drive near Nob Hill, under the Beltline Highway, along John Nolen Drive, past the Monona Terrace Convention Center downtown, and through the east side of Madison. The Capital City Trail is used for bicycling, walking, jogging, and in-line skating.



Photo: Shelter at Badger Prairie County Park

- **Jenni and Kyle Preserve:** A unique park, encompassing 163 acres, intended to provide children and persons with disabilities a place to enjoy outdoor activities. Visitors can learn about natural environments through accessible fishing, wildlife observation, wheelchair swings, and a picnic shelter building. Trails lead around two spring-fed ponds containing trout and panfish.
- **Lake Farm County Park:** This 328-acre park is a unit of the Capital Springs Centennial State Park & Recreation Area, which also includes the Lewis Nine Springs E-Way, Capital City State Bike Trail, and Lower Yahara River Trail. The park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and offers three shelter facilities, play equipment, a barrier-free boat launch with fish cleaning facility, two accessible fishing piers, group camping area, wildlife pond, overlook tower, and hiking and cross-country ski trails. The park also includes the Lussier Family Heritage Center, a reservable event venue, and a campground with 54 reservable sites, including 39 electrical hook ups for RV's, restrooms, and shower facilities.
- **Lake View Hill Park:** This 40-acre park is the highest point on the north side of the City of Madison. The site served as a County tuberculosis sanatorium from 1930-1966. It is classified as a Cultural/Historical Site and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Lake View Hill Park is heavily wooded and also contains restored savannas and prairie.
- **Lewis Nine Springs E-Way:** A 7-mile environmental corridor extending from Dunn's Marsh to Lake Farm County Park. The corridor includes cultural and natural features of wetlands, prairies, sedge meadows, native forests, large springs, and Native American mound sites. It offers opportunities for jogging, hiking, biking, nature study, photography, and cross-country skiing.
- **Lower Yahara Trail:** This nearly 2.5-mile trail opened in August of 2017 and provides an off-road trail connection between the City of Madison and the Village of McFarland. The bridge spans Lake Waubesa to connect the Capital City Trail at Lake Farm County Park with McDaniel Park in the Village of McFarland. The bridge runs alongside an active railroad corridor and includes an accessible fishing pier, rest stops, and multiple observation areas with picturesque views.
- **Yahara Heights County Park and Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area:** The 141-acre Yahara Heights County Park is located adjacent to the Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area. Cherokee Marsh is the largest remaining wetland in Dane County and in Lake Mendota's watershed. The recreational park offers a 20-acre dog exercise area, hiking trails, and a canoe and kayak launch, while the Natural Resource Area serves to preserve wildlife habitat and wetlands that are crucial to the water quality of Madison's chain of lakes. The Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area also contains some of the best examples of Native American mound sites in Dane County.



Photo: Trail Users at Lower Yahara River Trail

- **Tenney Lock:** The first dam at this site was constructed in 1847, to accompany a mill and brewery, and has been reconstructed several times throughout its history. The Tenney lock and dam has been operated and maintained by Dane County since 1981. Prior to this time, it was operated by the City of Madison. The lock structure allows boats to pass between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona and accommodates approximately 10,000 boats annually.

### **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) owns and manages a variety of natural resources. Of closest proximity to the City of Madison is Governor Nelson State Park, a 422 acre parcel located on the north shore of Lake Mendota. As shown in Exhibit 8, the park is a conveniently-located recreational resource for Madison residents. Founded in 1975, this day use park offers amenities including a sand beach, boat launch, picnic areas, prairie restorations, and approximately 8 miles of hiking/cross-country ski trails.

### **OTHER PARKS/CONSERVANCY AREAS**

There are several other municipally owned parks and conservancy areas under the jurisdiction of Madison's neighboring communities that are used by City of Madison residents, including but not limited to the Cities of Fitchburg, Middleton, and Monona. A complete inventory of non-city owned public parks within a 1/2-mile radius of the City boundary is set out in Appendix C, Table 5



Photo: Beach at Governor Nelson State Park

## **4.4 Private Recreational Facilities**

Private recreational facilities provide recreational resources to City of Madison residents who can afford and desire to seek out specialized facilities such as private gyms, pools, and tennis facilities. Additionally, there are several privately owned spaces within the City that are used as public amenities. These areas often provide local neighborhood open space and are owned by private organizations. These facilities have not been included in this plan.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

Residents of Madison are fortunate to live in a place known for great natural resources and recreational amenities. As the largest land owner in the City, Madison Parks play a large role in providing the community these assets. However, they are also supplemented by local and regional public land provided by the University of Wisconsin, Dane County, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. These combined resources create a nationally renowned park system, recognized as one of the top cities for parks by the 2017 Trust for Public Lands.

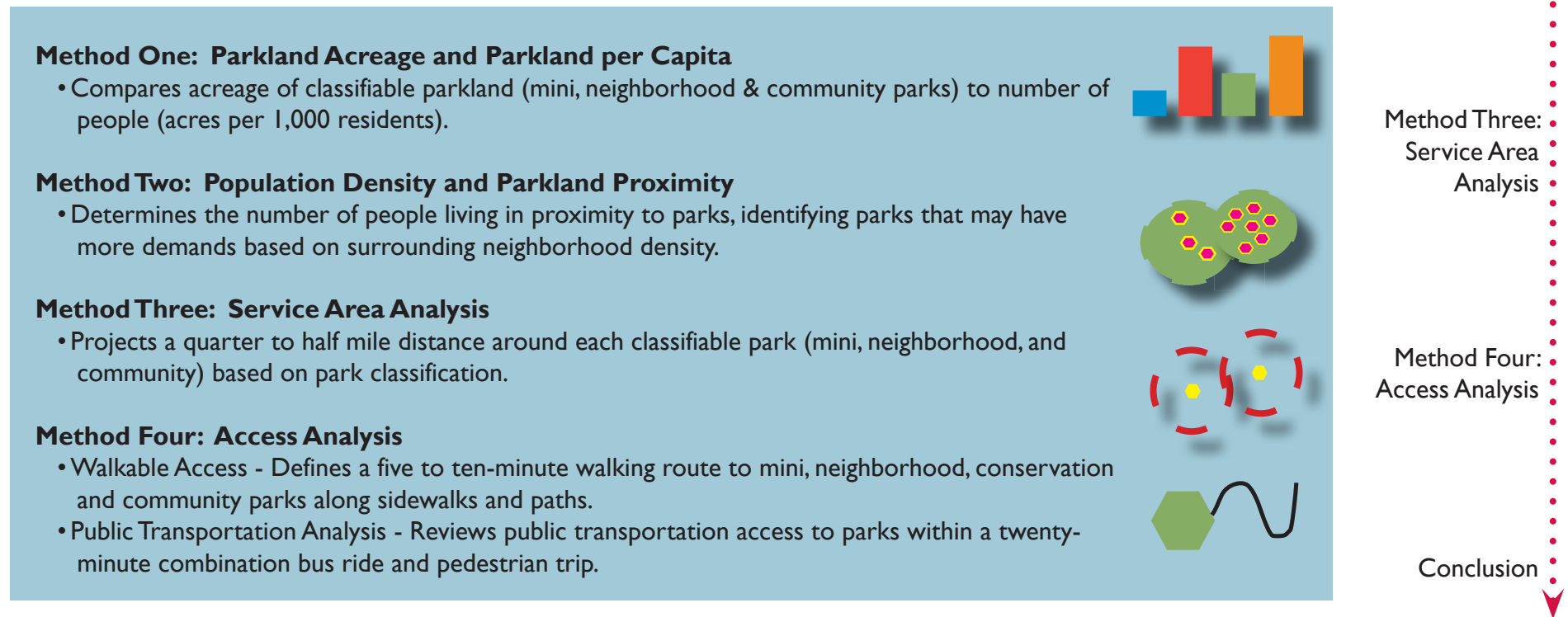
## Chapter Five: Parkland Access

This chapter examines the existing distribution of City of Madison park facilities to ensure adequate, equitable access to parks. This plan evaluates parkland access using four different methods.

The first method compares park acreage with population using the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines (Lancaster, 1983). The second method reviews population density in relation to parkland proximity. The third method considers park access based on park service areas as defined by the NRPA. The last method reviews walkable and public transportation access to parks, and also reviews this access specific to residents living below the poverty line.

These four methods were chosen because they include NRPA standardized park metrics, but also address specific concerns heard through the engagement process related to walkability and demand in high density neighborhoods. While these comparisons are widely adopted methods for reviewing parkland access, they do not account for cultural preferences, park use, or household type. Acknowledging and understanding the limitations of these tools are essential, as they are only a few of the many tools used in developing new facilities and parkland in the City of Madison.

**Figure 5.1: Parkland Access Analysis Methods**



## 5.1 Method One: Parkland Acreage and Parkland per Capita

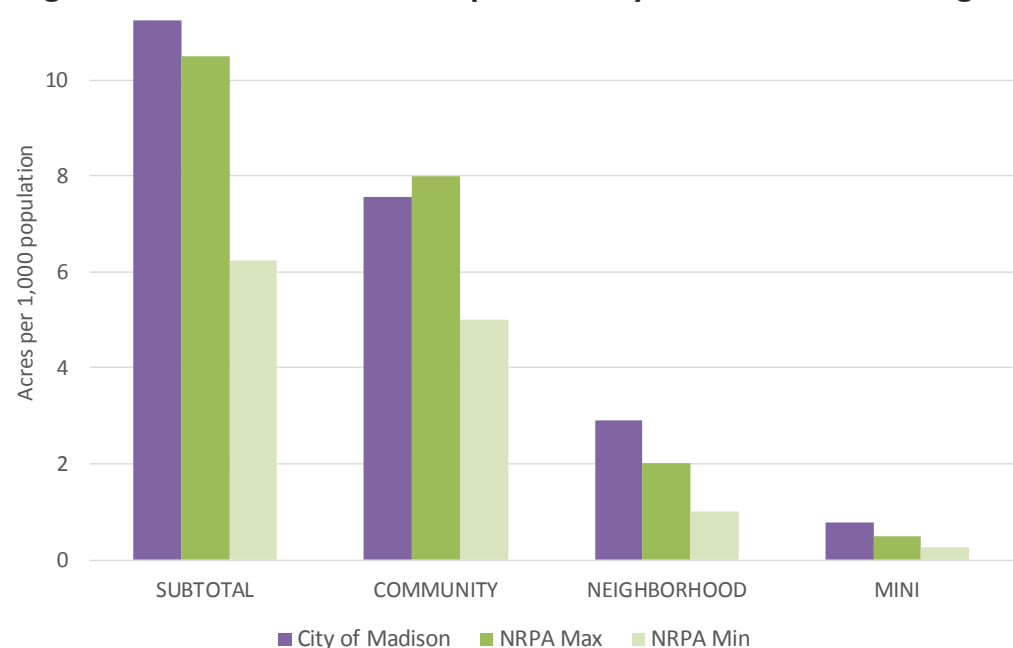
Mini, neighborhood, and community parks are intended to meet the core recreational demands for playgrounds, fields, shelters, and courts. The NRPA provides communities with a recommended range of acreage per 1,000 residents as a guideline to ensure these recreational needs are met.

The City of Madison has approximately 2,812 acres of NRPA categorized parkland or approximately 11 acres per 1,000 residents based on a 2017 population estimate of 250,073. When including the total amount of public park land owned by the City of Madison, the City has approximately 22 acres of public land per 1,000 residents. As illustrated in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.2, the City of Madison falls within the NRPA guidelines of facilities for community parks, and exceeds the NRPA targets for mini, neighborhood, and total parkland.

**Table 5.1: NRPA Metrics Compared to Madison Park Acreage**

| Park Type    | NRPA Guidelines |              |                           | City Adopted Standards    | 2017 Actual               |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|              | Service Area    | Size (Acres) | Acres per 1,000 residents | Acres per 1,000 residents | Acres per 1,000 residents |
| Mini         | 1/4 mile        | < 5          | 0.25 -0.5                 | As appropriate            | 0.8                       |
| Neighborhood | 1/2 mile        | 5+           | 1.0-2.0                   | 3.75                      | 2.9                       |
| Community    | 2 mile          | 20+          | 5-8                       | 6.25                      | 7.6                       |
| <b>Total</b> |                 |              | <b>6.25-10.5</b>          | <b>10+</b>                | <b>11.2</b>               |

**Figure 5.2: NRPA Guidelines Compared to City of Madison Park Acreage**



Park classifications are continuously updated and reviewed, taking into consideration the amount of area dedicated to greenways, active park space, and natural areas. For instance, parks that have acreage amounts within the community park range may be classified as a neighborhood park if a large portion of that acreage is dedicated to stormwater ponds<sup>07</sup>.

Of these core park types, mini parks are the most prevalent type of park in the Madison park system. Table 5.2 shows that mini parks provide 3% of the total parkland but 36% of the total number of parks. These are typically small parks, less than five-acres in size with a playground, open field, and/or basketball court. Madison's high number of mini parks contributes to a system with an abundance of smaller-scale park amenities such as playgrounds and half basketball courts. Parks less than five-acres in size can be valuable open space; however, they typically lack larger recreational amenities such as sport courts and multi-use fields. Maintaining several small parks requires more resources and energy than maintaining the same acreage contained within a larger park. Chapter Four provides a more in-depth description of the specific features included in mini, neighborhood, and community parks.

**Table 5.2: City of Madison Parkland Acreage<sup>08</sup>**

| Park Type             | Number of Parks Based on Classification | Acres (percentage of total parkland) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mini Parks            | 99 (36%)                                | 194.7 (3%)                           |
| Neighborhood Parks    | 76 (28%)                                | 729.0 (13%)                          |
| Community Parks       | 31 (11%)                                | 1888.6 (34%)                         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>       | <b>206 (75%)</b>                        | <b>2812.3 (50%)</b>                  |
| Conservation          | 20 (7%)                                 | 1752.5 (31%)                         |
| Trafficways           | 14 (5%)                                 | 25.7 (0.4%)                          |
| Other                 | 1 (0%)                                  | 0.6 (0%)                             |
| Open Space            | 22 (8%)                                 | 110.8 (2%)                           |
| Special               | 10 (4%)                                 | 884.2 (16%)                          |
| Sports Complex        | 2 (1%)                                  | 27.9 (.5%)                           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>       | <b>69 (25%)</b>                         | <b>2801.7 (50%)</b>                  |
| <b>TOTAL PARKLAND</b> | <b>275</b>                              | <b>5614</b>                          |



Photo: Opera in the Park event at Garner Park, which is classified as a Community Park

<sup>07</sup> Blackhawk Park is one example; although the stormwater ponds provide passive recreation, they represent 12.7 acres of the total 28.7 acres for the park, which is classified as a neighborhood park.

<sup>08</sup> Park acreages current as of 1/1/2018.

## 5.2 Method Two: Population Density and Parkland Proximity

Both increasing density and shifts in housing trends affect which parks have the highest neighborhood demand and competition for meeting community needs. Using population data from the U.S. Census, Table 5.3 illustrates which parks have the highest number of people within a half mile of the park, potentially increasing the demand for park use at these facilities. However, the most recent GIS data available at the time of this analysis was extrapolated from the 2010 US Census Block Data. Within the last eight years, the downtown has seen growth in multi-story multifamily apartments and condominiums. This analysis will be updated as more accurate census data are released.

**Table 5.3: Parks with Highest Number of People Within Half Mile**

| Park Name             | Approximate Population |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Brittingham Park      | > 15,000               |
| James Madison Park    | > 10,000               |
| Vilas (Henry) Park    | > 5,000                |
| Hoyt Park             | > 5,000                |
| Huegel-Jamestown Park | > 5,000                |
| Tenney Park           | > 5,000                |
| Warner Park           | > 5,000                |
| Olbrich Park          | > 5,000                |
| Yahara Place Park     | > 2,500                |
| Central Park          | > 2,500                |

Exhibit 9 illustrates the population density served by each park. Many of the parks located on or near the isthmus are surrounded by a higher density of residents, and experience greater demands for space and amenities, than the parks located on the periphery of the City.

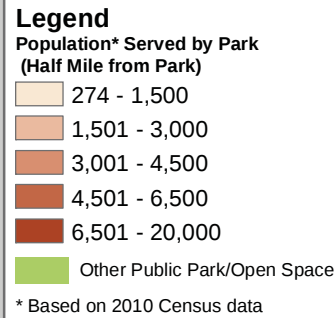
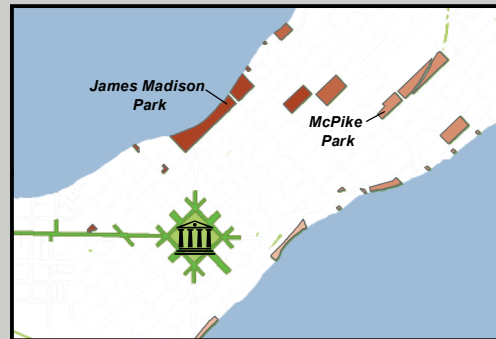


Photo: A busy day at Brittingham Park



Photo: Enjoying Warner Park beach

## Exhibit 9: Population Served by Park



Note: Population data based on 2010 U.S. Census



### 5.3 Method Three: Service Area Analysis

A standard NRPA method for reviewing parkland access is the park service area analysis. The size of a park's service area is determined according to park classification as defined by the NRPA (Lancaster, 1983), shown in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: NRPA Service Area by Park Type**

| Park Type    | Service Area (Radius) |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Mini         | 1/4 Mile              |
| Neighborhood | 1/2 Mile              |
| Community    | Two miles             |

The intent of NRPA service area analysis is to identify existing gaps in traditional core facilities. This analysis only evaluates service areas for parks classified as mini, neighborhood, or community. Special parks, conservation parks, trafficways, greenways, open space or other are not covered in this analysis.

The park service area analysis is a commonly used method for determining park deficiencies but should not be used exclusively. This analysis method does not include other important factors such as population density, geographic or cultural limitations, or household type or size. For instance, the park needs in a neighborhood with backyards large enough to have gardens and play equipment are undoubtedly different from the needs of downtown areas which are comprised primarily of multifamily apartments and condominiums with few or no backyards. Acknowledgement and understanding of these limitations must be included in the analyses to identify park needs for differing communities.

#### MINI AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

Mini and neighborhood park deficiencies are present if a residential area is not within a quarter-mile radius of a mini park or a half-mile radius of a neighborhood park or community park<sup>09,10</sup>. The City of Madison provides most core facilities in neighborhood parks. Mini parks are intended to fill voids between neighborhood park service areas, or in areas where land uses or geographical boundaries limit development of larger neighborhood parks.

The City has mini and neighborhood park coverage for 93% of the City of Madison residential areas, excluding areas within the Neighborhood Development Plans that are not fully developed. The areas that lack mini and neighborhood park coverage are shown in Exhibit 10.

<sup>09</sup> This analysis excluded neighborhoods that have adopted Neighborhood Development Plans or Special Area Plans that are not fully developed.

<sup>10</sup> For this evaluation, community parks have a half-mile service area, serving as neighborhood parks to their immediate neighborhood.

As part of the service area analysis, school facilities were reviewed to evaluate their contribution to eliminating park deficiencies. Public schools often serve their adjoining residential areas by providing play fields and playground facilities. Exhibit II identifies park deficiencies when a quarter-mile service area radius is applied to elementary schools and a half-mile service area radius is applied to middle schools. This analysis excluded high schools, which are typically heavily utilized by the high school during the day and after school hours.

The schools with the greatest contributions to eliminating park deficiencies include:

- Lindberg Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- Muir Elementary School/Jefferson Middle School
- Orchard Ridge Elementary School/Toki Middle School
- Glendale Elementary School/Sennett Middle School
- Mendota Elementary School
- Sherman Middle School
- Hawthorne Elementary School
- Allis Elementary School
- Olson Elementary School



Photo: Lindberg Elementary School



Photo: Muir Elementary School

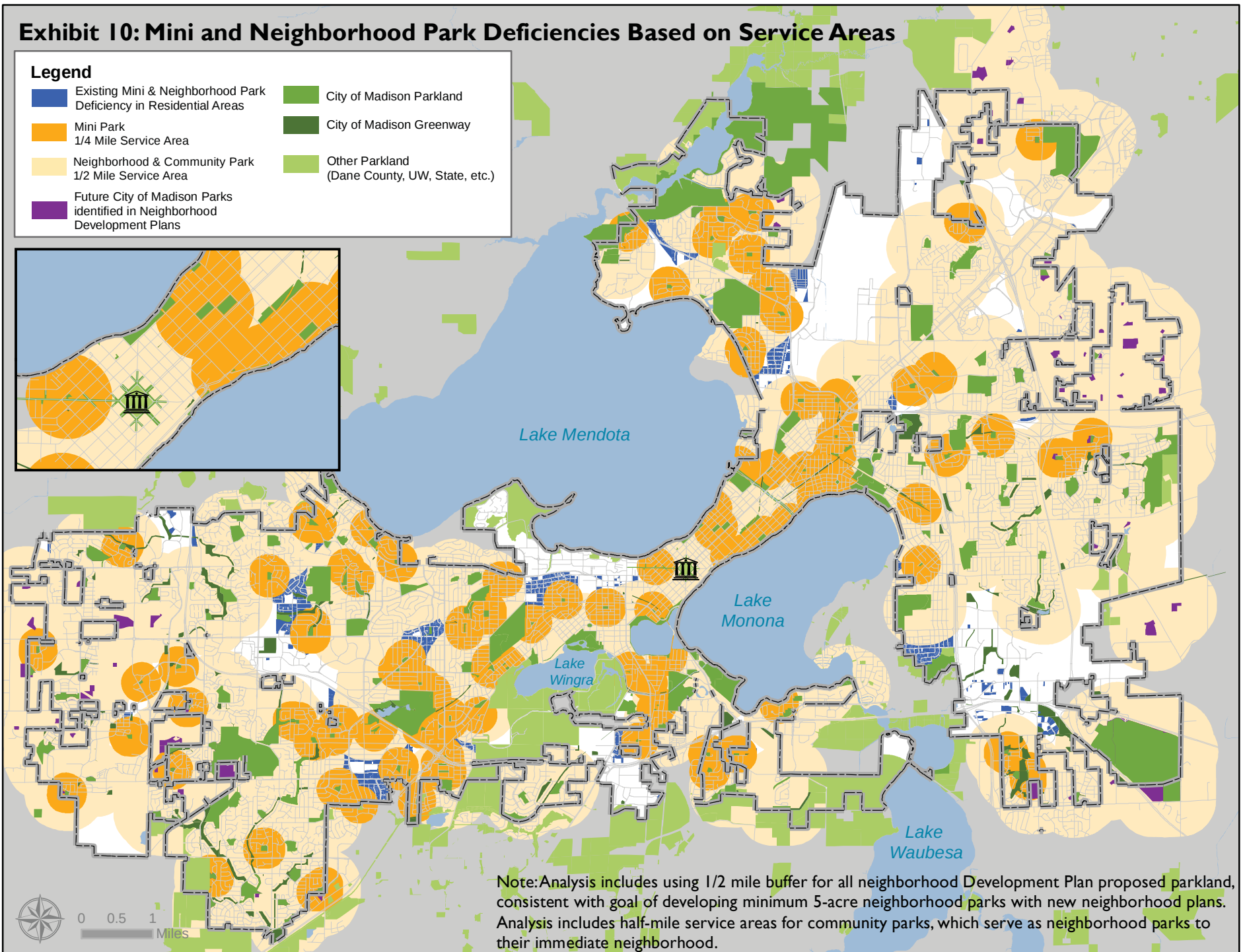
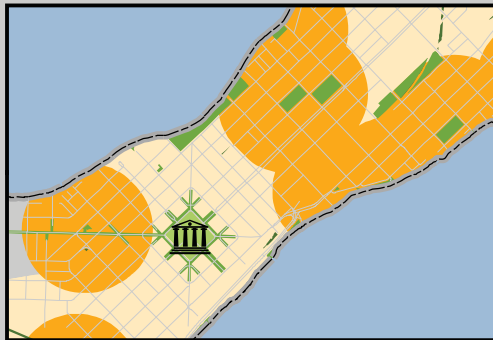


Photo: Glendale Elementary School

## Exhibit 10: Mini and Neighborhood Park Deficiencies Based on Service Areas

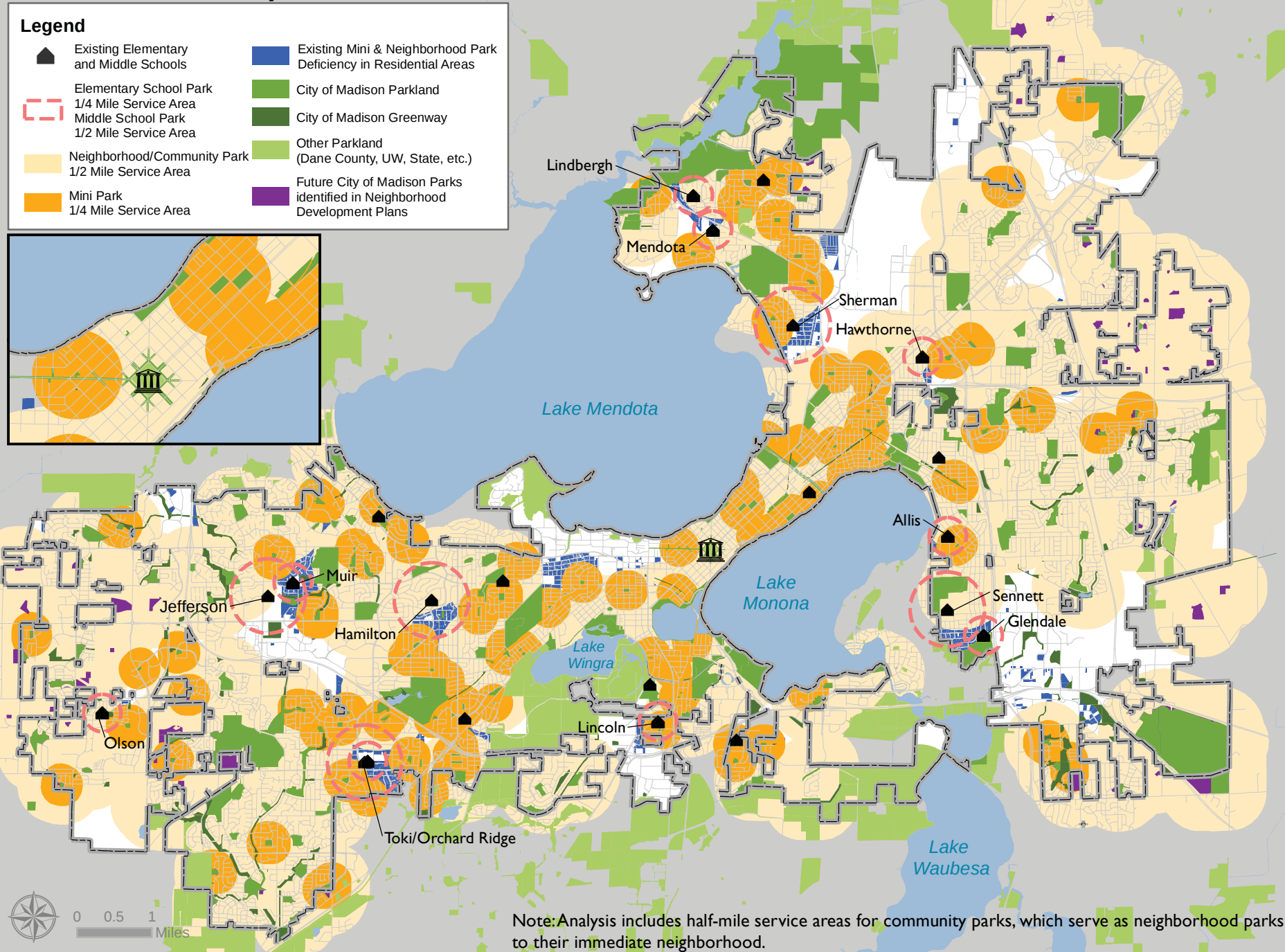
### Legend

- Existing Mini & Neighborhood Park Deficiency in Residential Areas
- Mini Park 1/4 Mile Service Area
- Neighborhood & Community Park 1/2 Mile Service Area
- Future City of Madison Parks identified in Neighborhood Development Plans
- City of Madison Parkland
- City of Madison Greenway
- Other Parkland (Dane County, UW, State, etc.)



Note: Analysis includes using 1/2 mile buffer for all neighborhood Development Plan proposed parkland, consistent with goal of developing minimum 5-acre neighborhood parks with new neighborhood plans. Analysis includes half-mile service areas for community parks, which serve as neighborhood parks to their immediate neighborhood.

# Exhibit I I: Elementary and Middle School Influence on Park Deficiencies



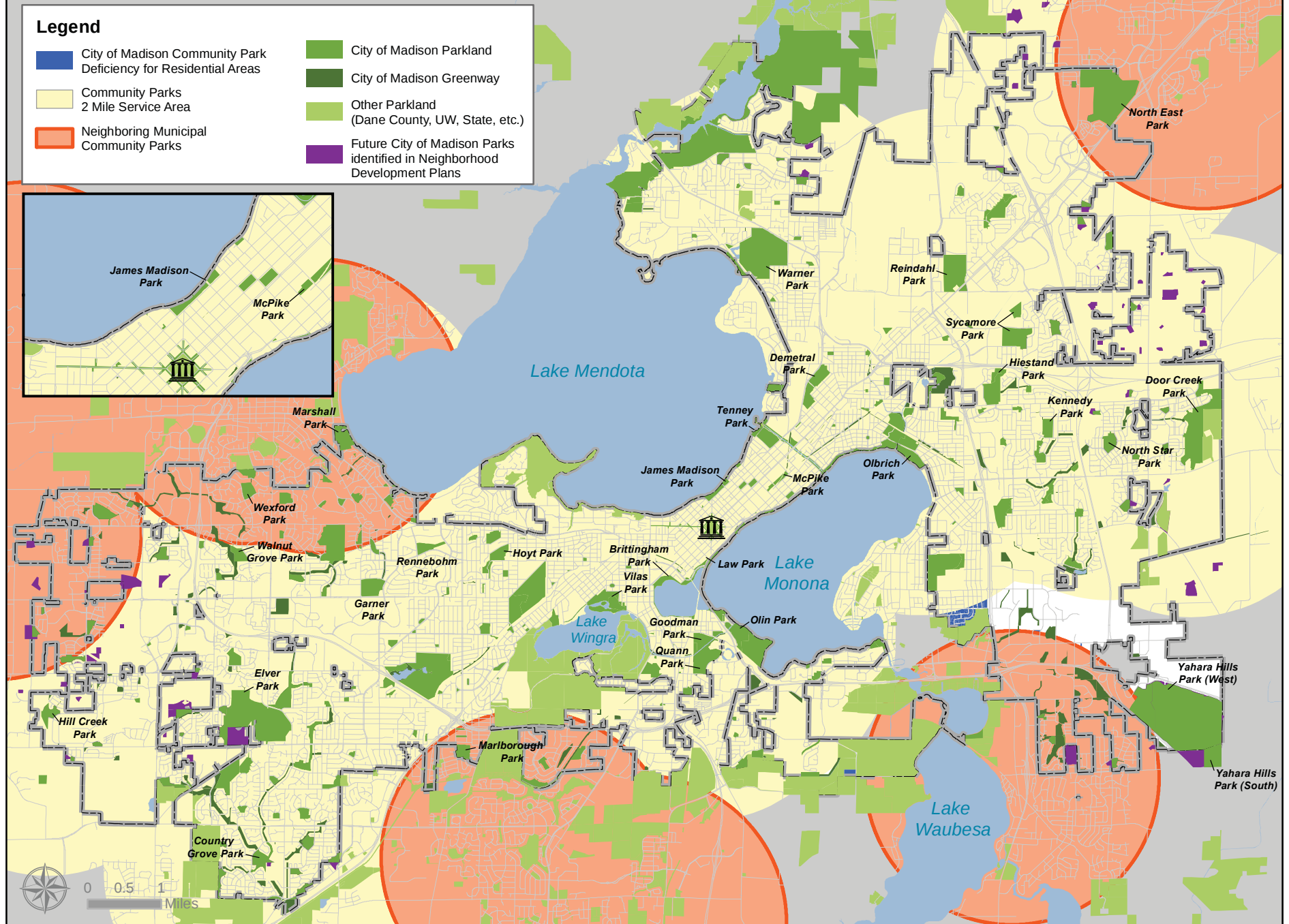
**COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS**

The City provides community park service area coverage for approximately 97% of all areas of residential land use, including Neighborhood Development Plan areas. Areas that are deficient in community park coverage are shown in Exhibit 12. Community park development relies on regional efforts when evaluating coverage; thus community parks from neighboring municipalities are included in the analysis.



Photo: James Madison Park by Denise DeSerio

## Exhibit 12: Community Park Deficiencies Based on Service Areas



## 5.4 Method Four: Access Analysis

An emerging method for evaluating the distribution of parkland is by examining walkable and public transportation access to parks. Walkable access analysis evaluates the general accessibility of mini, neighborhood, community, conservation parks, and public elementary and middle schools within communities based on a five- to ten-minute walk along a sidewalk or path. While both schools and conservation parks are excluded from the NRPA service area standards, they play an important role in providing access to playgrounds, playing field games, nature-viewing, environmental education, imaginative play, hiking, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, and thus have been included in this analysis.

**“Parental safety perceptions of safe walking routes have decreased throughout the decades.”**

**(J Transp Health. 2014 Jun; 1(2): 108–115.).**

**“Declines in walking have been greatest among elementary-aged children and for children who live within one mile of their school” (Ibid.).**

### WALKABILITY

Walkable access to mini, neighborhood, community and conservation parks assumes the following:

- Mini parks and elementary schools serve the community within a five-minute walk to the park.
- Neighborhood parks and middle schools serve the community within a ten-minute walk to the park.
- Community and conservation parks function as neighborhood parks, serving the community within a ten-minute walk to the park.

The walkability analysis excludes walking routes where the pedestrian has to cross a road with speeds greater than 35 mph and only evaluates walkability within residential or mixed use areas along sidewalks and paths. In addition, this evaluation specifically excludes agricultural, military, or industrial properties and properties owned by Dane County, other municipalities, or the University of Wisconsin. Walkable access within Neighborhood Development Plan Areas are excluded, as the network of pedestrian routes, parks, and paths is not yet fully developed.

A geographic analysis of walkability for mini, neighborhood, community, and conservation parks reveals that most residential neighborhoods in Madison are within a five- to ten-minute walk to a mini, neighborhood, community, or conservation park. Areas that lack walkable access to these facilities are identified in Exhibit 13.



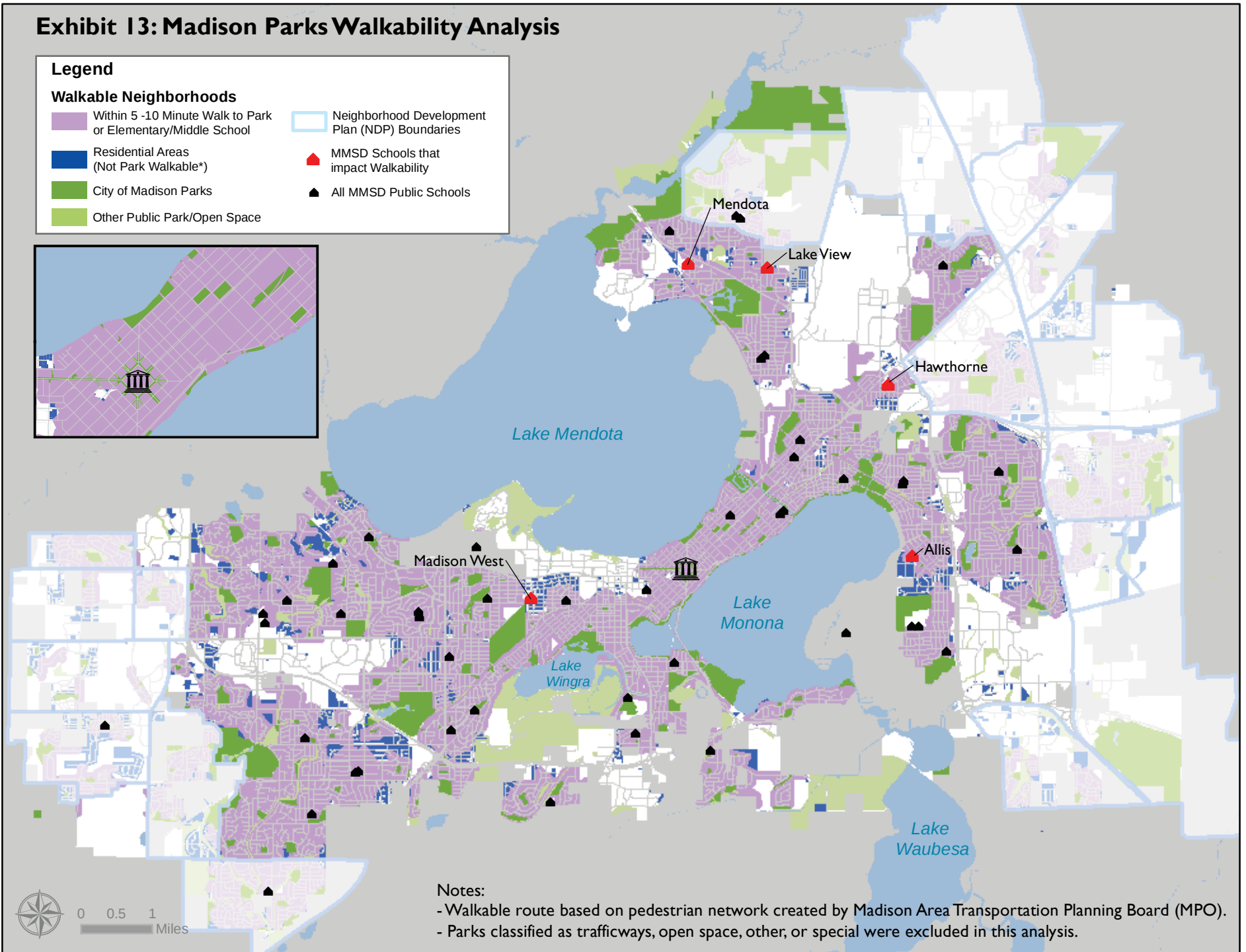
Photo: Enjoying a stroll in a park

## Exhibit 13: Madison Parks Walkability Analysis

### Legend

#### Walkable Neighborhoods

- Within 5-10 Minute Walk to Park or Elementary/Middle School
- Residential Areas (Not Park Walkable\*)
- City of Madison Parks
- Other Public Park/Open Space
- Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP) Boundaries
- MMSD Schools that impact Walkability
- All MMSD Public Schools



#### Notes:

- Walkable route based on pedestrian network created by Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO).
- Parks classified as trafficways, open space, other, or special were excluded in this analysis.

### *Walkability Results in Areas Below the Poverty Line*

The Parks Division worked with staff and members of the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee, using the City's Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) tool to analyze the distribution of park facilities across Madison. The RESJ tool was developed as part of the City's Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative and is designed to "facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-income populations will be affected by a proposed action/decision of the City" (City of Madison, RESJ TOOL). The Parks Division then examined these analyses to understand deficiencies in the distribution of park facilities and walkability to people living below the poverty line.

Exhibit 14 illustrates disparities in walkable access by poverty level. While some of these areas lack access to mini, neighborhood, conservation, and community parks and schools, they do have access to other forms of public open space, such as public land owned by the University of Wisconsin, Dane County, and other municipalities. Areas along the periphery of the City within identified Neighborhood Development Plans have been excluded, since existing demographic data do not reflect recent development in these areas.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Exhibit 15 identifies areas of higher concentrations of poverty that are not within a 20-minute combination bus ride/walking route to a park. These areas generally match the areas identified above in the walkability analysis. Areas of neighborhoods with high concentrations of families living below the poverty line, which lack both walkable access and public transportation to parkland are especially vulnerable to public health conditions.

This exhibit uses existing Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization data to evaluate public transportation on a mid-day weekend, when both parents and children typically may be able to spend time to travel to a park. Bus routes frequently change to meet customer demands, and the most up-to-date routes may not always be reflected in the MPO data.



Photo: Using the Madison Metro Rack-n-Roll bike racks

**SCHOOL INFLUENCE ON WALKABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION ACCESS**

As discussed in the park service area analysis section of this chapter, schools often provide open space and recreational amenities similar to parks. The walkability analysis suggests that the following schools may alleviate park deficiencies in areas that are not within a park service area, a five to ten minute walk to a park, or a 20-minute combination bus/ride to a park.

**Table 5.5: Comparison of School Influence on Parkland Access and Demand**

| Park Service Area                                  | Walkability Analysis        | Walkability Analysis - Residents Below Poverty Level | Public Transportation Analysis - Residents Below Poverty Level |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allis Elementary School                            | Allis Elementary School     | Madison West High School                             | Badger Rock Middle School                                      |
| Glendale Elementary School                         | Hawthorne Elementary School |                                                      | La Follette High School                                        |
| Hamilton Middle School                             | Lake View Elementary School |                                                      | Lincoln Elementary School                                      |
| Hawthorne Elementary School                        | Madison West High School    |                                                      | Sennet Middle School                                           |
| Jefferson Middle School                            | Mendota Elementary School   |                                                      |                                                                |
| Lindberg Elementary School                         |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Lincoln Elementary School                          |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Mendota Elementary School                          |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Muir Elementary School                             |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Olson Elementary School                            |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Sennett Middle School                              |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Sherman Middle School                              |                             |                                                      |                                                                |
| Toki Middle School/Orchard Ridge Elementary School |                             |                                                      |                                                                |

## Exhibit I4: Madison Parks Walkability Analysis - Residents Below Poverty Level

### Legend

#### Walkable Neighborhoods

Within 5-10 Minute Walk to Park or Elementary/Middle School

#### Residential Areas (Not Park Walkable)

##### # of Families below Poverty Level

0 - 1

2 - 17

18 - 47

48 - 79

80 - 120

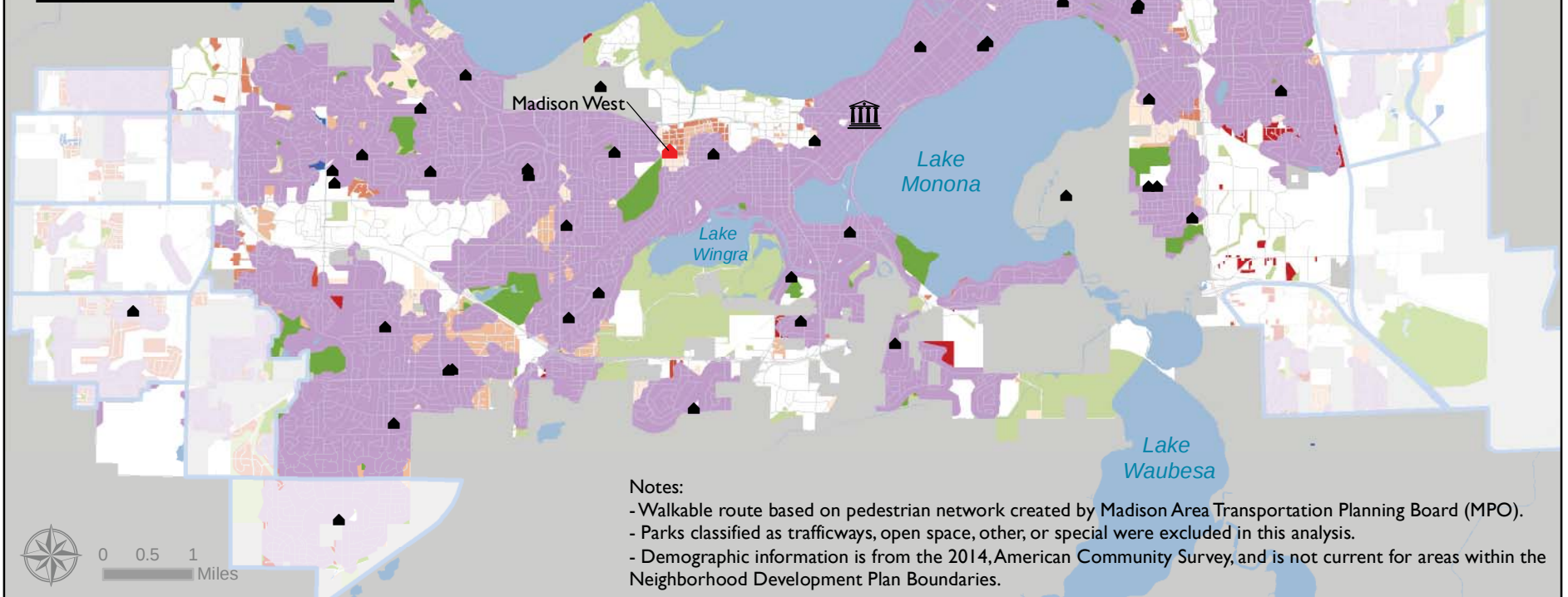
City of Madison Parks

Other Public Park/Open Space

Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP) Boundaries

MMSD Schools that impact Walkability in Areas with Residents Below Poverty Level

All MMSD Public Schools



## Exhibit I5: Public Transportation Analysis - Residents Below Poverty Level

### Legend

Areas within a 20-minute  
Combination Bus/Walk to Park

City of Madison Parks

Other Public Park/Open Space

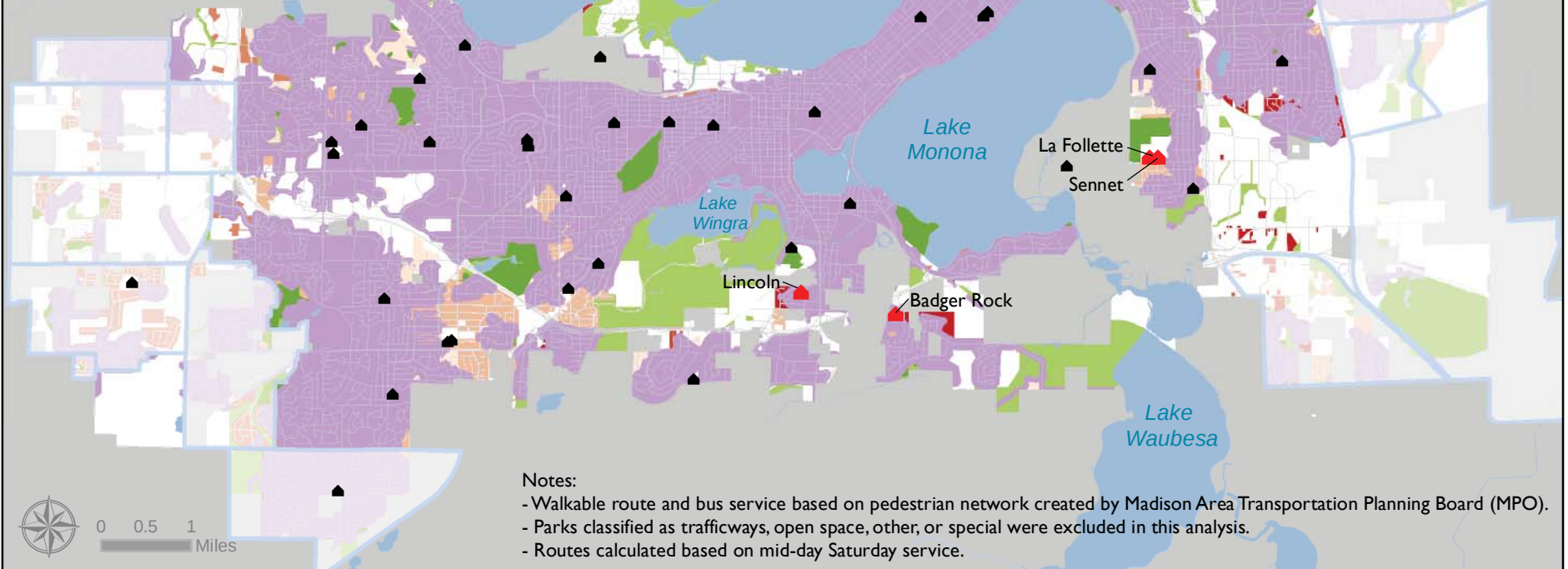
### Residential Areas (Not within 20-Minute Bus Ride) # of Families in Poverty

Neighborhood Development  
Plan (NDP) Boundaries

MMSD Schools that impact  
Walkability in Areas with  
Residents Below Poverty Level

All MMSD Public Schools

0 - 1  
2 - 17  
18 - 47  
48 - 79  
80 - 120



### Notes:

- Walkable route and bus service based on pedestrian network created by Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO).
- Parks classified as trafficways, open space, other, or special were excluded in this analysis.
- Routes calculated based on mid-day Saturday service.

---

## 5.5 Conclusion

A variety of data-driven metrics can assist in evaluating park systems. This chapter incorporated both NRPA standardized park metrics to review parkland per capita and park service areas, and also included analysis of population density and walkable and public transportation-based access to parks.

The parkland acreage and parkland per capita analysis identified that Madison exceeds the NRPA guidelines of parkland per capita for mini parks, neighborhood parks, and total parkland and is within the guidelines for community parks. In general, mini parks provide the largest number of different park properties, whereas conservation parks provide the largest number of total parkland.

The population density and parkland proximity analysis found that certain parks, primarily on or near the isthmus, serve densely populated neighborhoods, pointing towards higher demand and use of facilities in these parks.

When reviewing park services areas for mini, neighborhood, and community parks. This chapter identified that 93% of residential areas are within the NRPA defined service area of a mini and/or neighborhood park, and that some MMSD schools contribute to providing recreational amenities in areas that lack park service coverage. When reviewing community park coverage, 98% of residential areas are within 2 miles of a community park, leveraged by the adjoining community parks in the Town and City of Middleton, City of Sun Prairie, and Village of McFarland.

Lastly, when reviewing walkable access to parks along bike paths and sidewalks, there's a larger deficiency of walkable access compared to park service area deficiencies. Comparing this information with data on communities living in poverty from the U.S. Census Bureau, there did not seem to be a disproportionately large portion of communities living in poverty without walkable access. Madison West High School does help to increase access to recreational amenities in an area identified as having residents living below the poverty level. When reviewing access to parks through public transportation, in general most neighborhoods are within a 20-minute combined walk/bus route to a Madison park. Similar to the walkable access analysis, communities living in poverty are not disproportionately without public transportation access to parks, and are aided by three public schools that provide recreational amenities.

# Chapter Six: Relevant Plans

## 6.1 How this Plan Relates to Other Plans

The Park and Open Space Plan provides analysis and recommendations regarding the overall system of parks in Madison. The plan reviews city-wide parkland distribution, structure, funding mechanisms, and relationships to changing demographics, land development, and future growth across the City. The plan works in conjunction with other planning documents, such as master plans, neighborhood plans, and special area plans, to inform the development of the park system. This plan does not include specific recommendations for individual parks. Figure 6.1 illustrates the relationship of the Park and Open Space Plan to the over 60 planning documents that may include recommendations for parkland. The recommendations contained in the Park and Open Space Plan will be included as a supplement to *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan*.

**Figure 6.1: Planning Document Organizational Hierarchy**



## 6.2 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) completes a study of outdoor recreation resources, called the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP), every five years. The SCORP examines outdoor recreation supply, demand, trends, and issues, both on a state-wide and regional basis. This study provides broad guidelines and data to governments at all levels, communities, and organizations on recreation needs and opportunities. The 2017-2022 SCORP was not completed at the time this plan was written, so the previous 2011-2016 SCORP is referenced for this Park and Open Space Plan. However, this plan does incorporate the draft 2018 *Recreation Opportunities Analysis* which will inform the updated SCORP.

The regional profiles section in the 2011-2016 SCORP reviews social, development, and economic factors influencing public use and accessibility to outdoor recreation. Each regional profile includes a chapter on population trends, economic context, land use perspective, and recreation outlook. Madison falls within the WDNR's Southern Gateways region (Region 9), which includes Richland, Sauk, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Green, and Rock counties. See Appendix D, Exhibit B for a map of the Southern Gateways Region. The State of Wisconsin manages a variety of resources, primarily conservation-oriented, within this region. The management goals of the 20 state parks/recreation areas, 6 trails, and 36 state wildlife areas are available to view at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/RecAnalysis/>. The recreation outlook analysis for the Southern Gateways region indicates the top 10 uses include (listed in descending order of demand): picnicking, boating, visiting a beach, swimming, snow/ice activities, visit a wilderness or primitive area, day hiking, freshwater fishing, motorized boating, and developed camping.

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 from the 2011-2016 SCORP identify regional recreation supply shortages for the Southern Gateways Region including: backcountry/walk-in camping, boat launches, natural areas, parks, public water access, trails for hiking, bicycle, and horseback riding, educational camps, dog parks, ice skating rinks (2005 only), nature centers, picnic areas, sailboat clubs/rentals, and tennis courts, and associated programs. The study also suggests that tourists from Chicago and the Twin Cities use the Southern Gateways region for downhill skiing, sightseeing, picnicking, camping, bird watching, and hiking.

Tables 6.3 and 6.4 present information from the draft 2018 *Recreation Opportunities Analysis* (ROA). The ROA is a study, conducted by the WDNR, of existing outdoor-based recreation opportunities and future recreation needs in each region of the state. Based on extensive public input, the ROA is routinely updated and informs the SCORP. These two tables present frequently identified and anticipated future demand for recreation opportunities in the Southern Gateways region according to the ROA results.

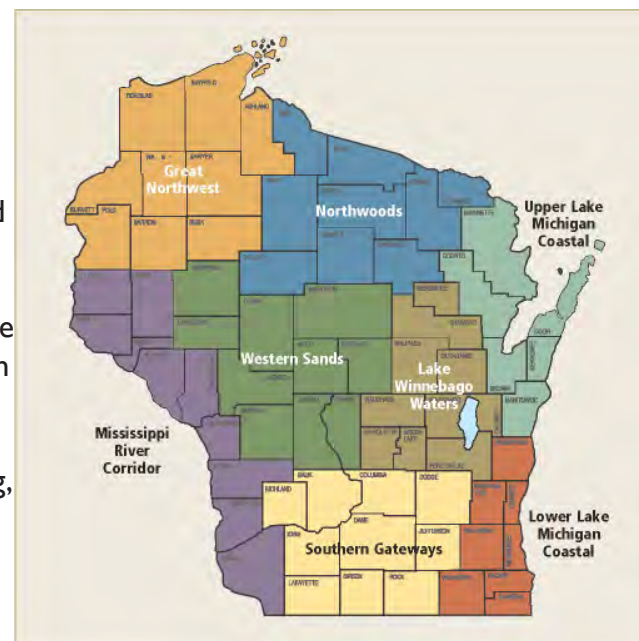


Photo: Regional planning boundaries used for the SCORP, image courtesy of WDNR

**Table 6.1: 2005 Regional Recreation Supply Shortages for the Southern Gateways Region**

| Nature-based                | Developed Settings          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Backcountry/walk-in camping | Boat launches - trailerable |
| Boat launches               | Camps - educational         |
| Natural areas               | Dog parks                   |
| Parks                       | Ice Skating Rinks           |
| Public water access         | Nature Centers              |
| Trails-hiking               | Picnic Areas                |
| Trails-horsebackriding      | Sailboat clubs/rentals      |
|                             | Tennis courts               |
|                             | Tennis programs             |
|                             | Trails - bicycle            |

**Table 6.2: 2011 Regional Recreation Supply Shortages for the Southern Gateways Region**

| Nature-based                | Developed Settings          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Backcountry/walk-in camping | Boat launches - trailerable |
| Boat launches - carry-in    | Camps - educational         |
| Natural areas               | Dog parks                   |
| Parks                       | Nature Centers              |
| Public water access         | Picnic Areas                |
| Trails-hiking               | Sailboat clubs/rentals      |
| Trails-horsebackriding      |                             |

**Table 6.3: Draft 2018 Recreation Opportunities Analysis- Top 10 Most Frequently Identified Recreation Opportunities Needed in the Southern Gateways Region**

| Activity                                                                      | # of responses |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| More trails for motorized recreation (ATVs, UTVs, off-road motorcycles, etc.) | 1182           |
| More hiking/walking/running trails                                            | 1001           |
| More natural surface (dirt) biking trails                                     | 724            |
| More paved bicycling trails                                                   | 676            |
| More rustic/quiet campgrounds (pit toilets, no electricity or generators)     | 618            |
| More public shore access to lakes and streams                                 | 618            |
| More developed campgrounds (electric hook-ups, flush toilets, showers)        | 489            |
| More local parks and playgrounds                                              | 405            |
| More horse trails                                                             | 401            |
| More public shooting ranges                                                   | 399            |

Based on public input gathered during the ROA process.

**Table 6.4: 2018 Draft Recreation Opportunities Analysis- Anticipated Future Recreation Needs for the Southern Gateways Region**

| Future recreation needs in the Southern Gateways Region- High | Future recreation needs in the Southern Gateways Region- Medium | Future recreation needs in the Southern Gateways Region- Low |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| ATV/UTV riding                                                | Bicycling- fat tire/snow biking                                 | Dog sledding/skijoring                                       |
| Bicycling- bicycle touring/road riding                        | Cross country skiing                                            | Dog training                                                 |
| Bicycling- mountain biking/off-road biking                    | Fishing- ice fishing                                            | Dog trialing                                                 |
| Bird or wildlife watching                                     | Fishing- lake fishing from a boat, canoe, or kayak              | Horse cart driving                                           |
| Camping- developed                                            | Fishing- river fishing from a boat, canoe, or kayak             | Hunting- migratory birds                                     |
| Camping- primitive                                            | Fishing- stream/river fishing from shore or wading              | Hunting- small game                                          |
| Canoeing or kayaking                                          | Four-wheel vehicle driving                                      | Sailing, windsurfing, rowing, stand-up paddling              |
| Fishing- lake fishing from shore or a pier                    | Geocaching                                                      | Scuba diving/snorkling                                       |
| Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.                               | Horseback riding                                                | Trapping                                                     |
| Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking                   | Hunting- big game                                               | Whitewater rafting                                           |
| Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)           | Hunting- turkey                                                 |                                                              |
| Picnicking                                                    | Nature photography                                              |                                                              |
| Snowshoeing                                                   | Off-highway motorcycle riding                                   |                                                              |
| Swimming in lakes and rivers                                  | Participating in nature-based education programs                |                                                              |
|                                                               | Rock climbing                                                   |                                                              |
|                                                               | Snowmobiling                                                    |                                                              |
|                                                               | Target shooting- archery                                        |                                                              |
|                                                               | Target shooting- firearms                                       |                                                              |
|                                                               | Visiting a beach, beach walking                                 |                                                              |

Based on public input gathered during the ROA process.

The SCORP regional profile brings together extensive amounts of information regarding demographics, land use patterns, and projected recreational trends. The summary of this analysis identifies the following important recreation issues for the Southern Gateways Region.

- The region is densely populated and experiencing rapid population growth. Dane and Sauk counties are growing the fastest, with over 10% population growth between 2000 and 2008.
- “As a whole, Region 9 is slightly more educated, has a higher median income and is considerably younger than the state as a whole. While the region is currently relatively young, the population is expected to age considerably over the next decade with the 65 and older group projected to increase in size by 49%. The rapidly increasing over 65 age class will increase demand for more passive types of recreation and more easily accessible facilities” (p. 24, Regional Profile: Region 9, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources).
- “The population of the region is somewhat more diverse than the state as a whole; 14% of the state’s minorities live in the region. Dane County is the most diverse with its minority population steadily increasing. The region is home to over 19% of the state’s Asians and has a rapidly growing Hispanic population. The diverse and growing ethnic populations typically have somewhat different recreation preferences and rates of participation than whites. For example, the Hispanic community tends to heavily use various facilities for family gatherings”(p. 24, Regional Profile: Region 9, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources).
- In comparison to the state of Wisconsin overall, the region has a greater proportion of agricultural land. The economic vitality and population growth subjects agricultural land to intense development pressure, resulting in high land values, parcelization, and decreasing opportunities for significant recreational and conservation land acquisition.
- “With its proximity to Wisconsin’s population centers, Region 9 offers some of the most accessible recreational opportunities in the state. Public lands and waters are very heavily used and demand for recreation is rapidly exceeding the capacity of existing facilities and resources. Supply shortages were identified by SCORP for back country/walk-in camping, boat launches (carry-in and trailerable) and other public water access, parks and natural areas, hiking and horseback riding trails, picnic areas, and nature centers. Addressing these recreational supply shortages will take additional effort, and the high demand, cost, and parcelization of land in the region will make it increasingly difficult to acquire significant amounts of additional recreation land”. (p. 24, Regional Profile: Region 9, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources).



Photo: Warner Park boat launch

The 2011 *Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand Report*, developed by the WDNR, also presents information on statewide recreation trends relevant to the City of Madison. The report describes the results of the 2005-2009 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). The NSRE was initiated by the federal government in 1960 and has since conducted eight surveys. The NSRE is an in-home phone survey, which gathers data from over 90,000 households across all ethnic groups throughout the United States. Chapter three of the *Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand Report* lists activity trends and activity popularity for the State of Wisconsin. Tables 6.5 through 6.10 are from the *Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand Report*. These data do not take into consideration regional differences within the state of Wisconsin, and should not be construed as data that are specific to local municipalities such as Madison. For more information on recreational trends in Wisconsin, refer to <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/scorp/>

**Table 6.5: 10 Most Popular Outdoor Recreation Activities**

*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                              | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Walk for pleasure                     | 87.7            | 3,947                            |
| Gardening or landscaping for pleasure | 65.4            | 2,944                            |
| View/photograph natural scenery       | 65.3            | 2,939                            |
| Attend outdoor sports events          | 65.0            | 2,926                            |
| Family gathering                      | 63.5            | 2,858                            |



Photo: An organized nature walk at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park

**Table 6.6: Participation Rates for Developed-setting Land Activities**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                              | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Walking for pleasure                  | 87.7            | 3,947                            |
| Gardening or landscaping for pleasure | 65.4            | 2,944                            |
| Family gathering                      | 63.5            | 2,858                            |
| Driving for pleasure                  | 52.8            | 2,377                            |
| Bicycling                             | 48.7            | 2,192                            |

**Table 6.7: Participation Rates for Outdoor Sports**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                         | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Attend outdoor sports events     | 65.0            | 2,926                            |
| Golf                             | 41.8            | 1,881                            |
| Running or jogging               | 32.1            | 1,445                            |
| Handball or racquetball outdoors | 23.5            | 1,058                            |
| Tennis outdoors                  | 8.5             | 383                              |

**Table 6.8: Participation Rates for Snow and Ice-based Activities**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                       | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Snow/ice activities (any type) | 45.9            | 2,066                            |
| Sledding                       | 28.2            | 1,269                            |
| Snowmobiling                   | 18.3            | 824                              |
| Ice skating outdoors           | 13.5            | 608                              |
| Ice fishing                    | 13.1            | 590                              |

**Table 6.9: Participation Rates for Nature-based Land Activities**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                             | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Day hiking                           | 36.7            | 1,652                            |
| Visit a wilderness or primitive area | 33.7            | 1,517                            |
| Mountain biking                      | 30.7            | 1,382                            |
| Developed camping                    | 25.4            | 1,143                            |
| Hunting (any type)                   | 22.2            | 999                              |

**Table 6.10: Participation Rates for Viewing/Learning Activities**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                                 | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| View/photograph natural scenery          | 65.3            | 2,939                            |
| Visit nature centers, etc.               | 63.5            | 2,858                            |
| View/photograph other wildlife           | 57.9            | 2,606                            |
| View/photograph wildflowers, trees, etc. | 52.4            | 2,359                            |
| Sightseeing                              | 50.6            | 2,278                            |

**Table 6.11: Participation Rates for Water-based Activities**  
*2011 Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand*

| Activity                         | % Participating | Number of participants (1,000's) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Boating (any type)               | 47.3            | 2,129                            |
| Visit a beach                    | 42.3            | 1,904                            |
| Swimming in lakes, streams, etc. | 41.7            | 1,877                            |
| Freshwater fishing               | 37.4            | 1,683                            |
| Motor boating                    | 36.0            | 1,620                            |

### 6.3 Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan

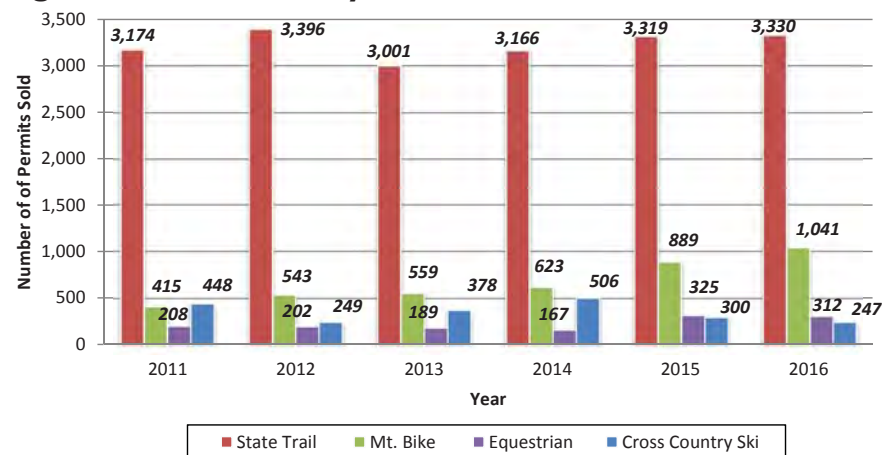
Similar to the City of Madison, Dane County completes a Parks and Open Space Plan (POSP) every five years. The goal of the County's 2018-2023 POSP is to identify significant cultural, historical, and natural resources to be considered for protection, preservation, or restoration. In addition, the plan seeks to analyze recreation needs and demands on a county-wide level. See Appendix D, Exhibits C and D for maps related to the County's POSP.

The County's POSP drew information from the *Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, Bicycle Transportation Plan (published by the Madison Area Transportation Planning Board), and the Outdoor Recreation Participation Report (published by The Outdoor Foundation). Dane County also gathered input through an online survey and examined trends in activity participation rates based on past permit sales (disc golf, dog park, lake access, etc.).

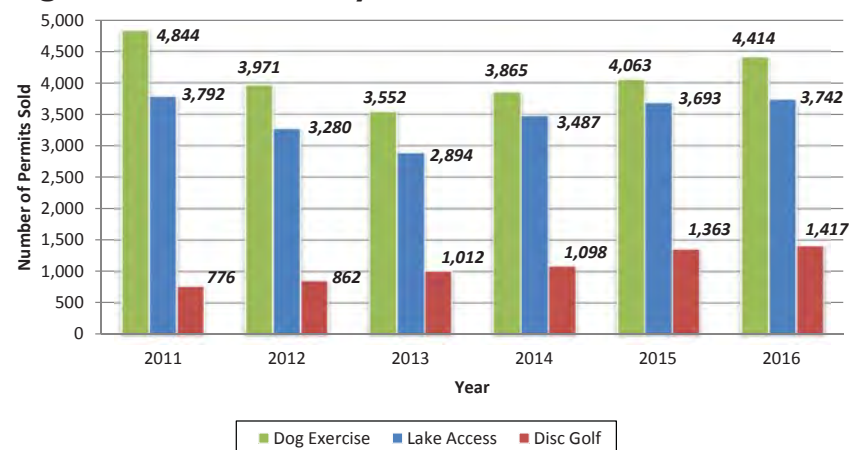
The goal of the County's online survey was to gauge user satisfaction, recreation trends, barriers, and areas of potential improvement. Overall, survey responders indicated that they would be most interested in seeing more of the following: land acquisition and natural resource management, trails (hiking, bicycle/pedestrian, and mountain bike), dog parks, walk-in or rustic camping, disc golf courses, activities to attract youth, facilities for the elderly and disabled, and greater overall connectivity of land, trails, and facilities.

Tracking of annual permit sales allows the County to monitor recreation user numbers, demand for facilities, and trends over many years. The following graphs, provided by Dane County Parks, illustrate the quantity of permits sold per year. Overall, there have been steady increases in the demand for mountain bike trails, dog exercise areas, lake access points/boat launches, and disc golf courses.

**Figure 6.2: Dane County Annual Trail Permit Sales**



**Figure 6.3: Dane County Annual Recreation Permit Sales**



Dane County has several natural resource areas and park properties that lie within the City of Madison limits. These properties are identified in Chapter Four and include the Jenni & Kyle Preserve, Lake Farm County Park, Lake View Hill Park, the Nine Springs E-Way, the Capital City Trail, the Lower Yahara River Trail, Yahara Heights County Park, the Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area and the Blooming Grove Natural Resource Area.

#### 6.4 Intergovernmental Agreements

In addition to parkland dedicated in conjunction with new residential development, Madison will acquire existing parkland in neighboring communities as part of intergovernmental agreements. The City of Madison has intergovernmental agreements with the Towns of Blooming Grove, Burke, Madison, and Middleton to attach parcels in these communities to the City of Madison. This will result in the City of Madison obtaining several new parks that were previously in other municipalities. The City of Madison anticipates seven new parks will become part of the City of Madison park system by 2027. The City has also reached agreements with three neighboring communities to acquire 14 new parks by 2036. See Exhibit 16 for new City parcels and future City of Madison parks due to Intergovernmental Agreements.

- Town of Madison - Final Attachment in 2022
  - Three new parks.
- Town of Blooming Grove - Phased Attachments in 2020 and 2027
  - Three new parks
- Town of Burke - Final Attachment in 2036
  - Eight new parks

## Exhibit 16: Intergovernmental Boundary Agreements

### Legend

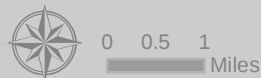
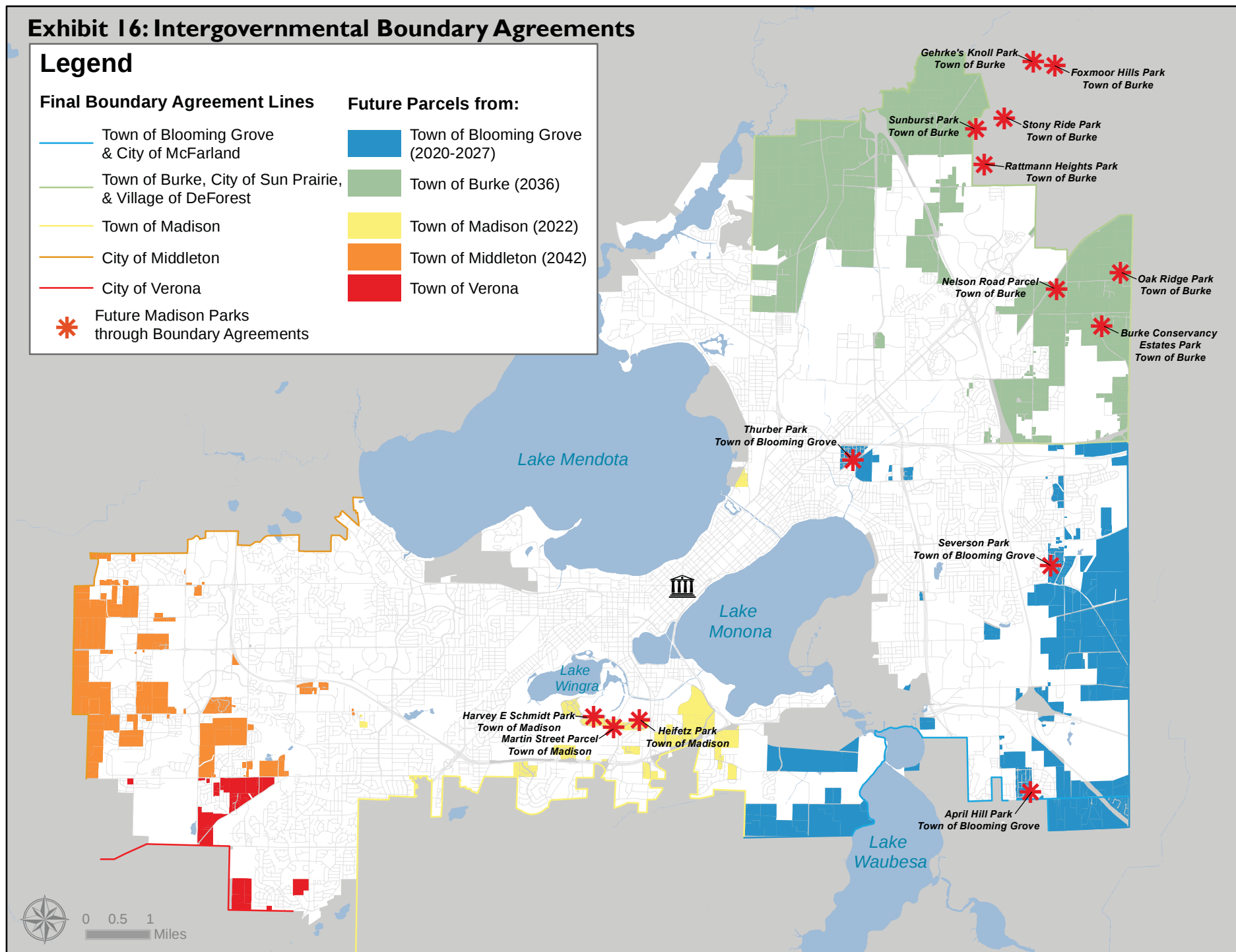
#### Final Boundary Agreement Lines

- Town of Blooming Grove & City of McFarland
- Town of Burke, City of Sun Prairie, & Village of DeForest
- Town of Madison
- City of Middleton
- City of Verona

#### Future Parcels from:

- Town of Blooming Grove (2020-2027)
- Town of Burke (2036)
- Town of Madison (2022)
- Town of Middleton (2042)
- Town of Verona

✱ Future Madison Parks through Boundary Agreements



## 6.5 Imagine Madison: City of Madison Comprehensive Plan

Wisconsin State Statutes Section 66.1001 mandates local governments to create, maintain, and update a comprehensive plan every 10 years. The City of Madison is currently in the process of developing the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan*, and expects to adopt this plan in the summer of 2018. Since this plan is not yet adopted, the discussion in this section is based on the draft plan. Maps corresponding with the draft plan may be found in Appendix D; see Exhibits E and F.

Development of the draft *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* included a robust public commentary campaign, starting in Fall 2016. This plan included over 13,900 comments collected through community meetings, resident panels, and Neighborhood Resource Teams. This information was synthesized into major themes and trends, which were used to draft the Plans goals, strategies, actions and priorities.

The City's Park and Open Space Plan was developed at the same time as the Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan. Engagement efforts of both the Comprehensive Plan and the Park and Open Space Plan informed the interrelated recommendations of these two documents.

Several themes emerged which inform development of City of Madison Parks including: changing demographics, changing preferences in housing and neighborhoods, continued desire for public transportation and trails, strong community value in culture and character of neighborhoods, and continued concerns regarding the environment.

### CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Both the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* and this plan identify that Madison's demographics are changing. Baby boomers are aging, millennials are moving to Madison in large numbers, and racial and ethnic diversity continues to increase. Madison Parks must be able to accommodate these changing demographics and provide recreation opportunities for diverse community groups.

### CHANGES IN HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The comprehensive plan also identifies that Madison is facing increased development and density. These changes will increase the demand for parks and open spaces, especially in downtown areas. The plan estimates that the City will grow by another 70,000 residents by 2040, and a majority of residents surveyed through *Imagine Madison* supported accommodating a majority of this growth through infill and redevelopment.

### DESIRE FOR TRAILS AND INCREASED CONNECTIVITY

*Madison in Motion*, the City of Madison's Transportation Master Plan identifies existing and proposed sidewalks and paths. This plan is the City's adopted pedestrian plan that identifies priorities for improving the City's connectivity and eliminating gaps. Some of these paths are located in parks, reviewed, and budgeted for as part of the annual budget processes.

### **STRONG COMMUNITY VALUE IN CULTURE AND CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

As increasingly diverse population contributes to cultures and experiences to the community, the City's investment in opportunities that provide for a broad range of users is increasingly important. The comprehensive plan identifies that places such as cultural and entertainment venues, historic and special places, and vibrant community spaces add to the value of communities.

### **CONCERNS REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENT**

Similar to the Park and Open Space Plan engagement process, *Imagine Madison* heard concerns from the public about environmental health, specifically to lakes, streams, urban canopy, biodiversity, agriculture, landfills, energy usage, and drinking water. Parks play a vital role in preservation of natural habitat, and rely significantly on healthy lakes and streams for community recreation. On-going efforts to improve our environment under increasing environmental pressure will be a priority of the City.

## **6.6 Neighborhood Development Plans**

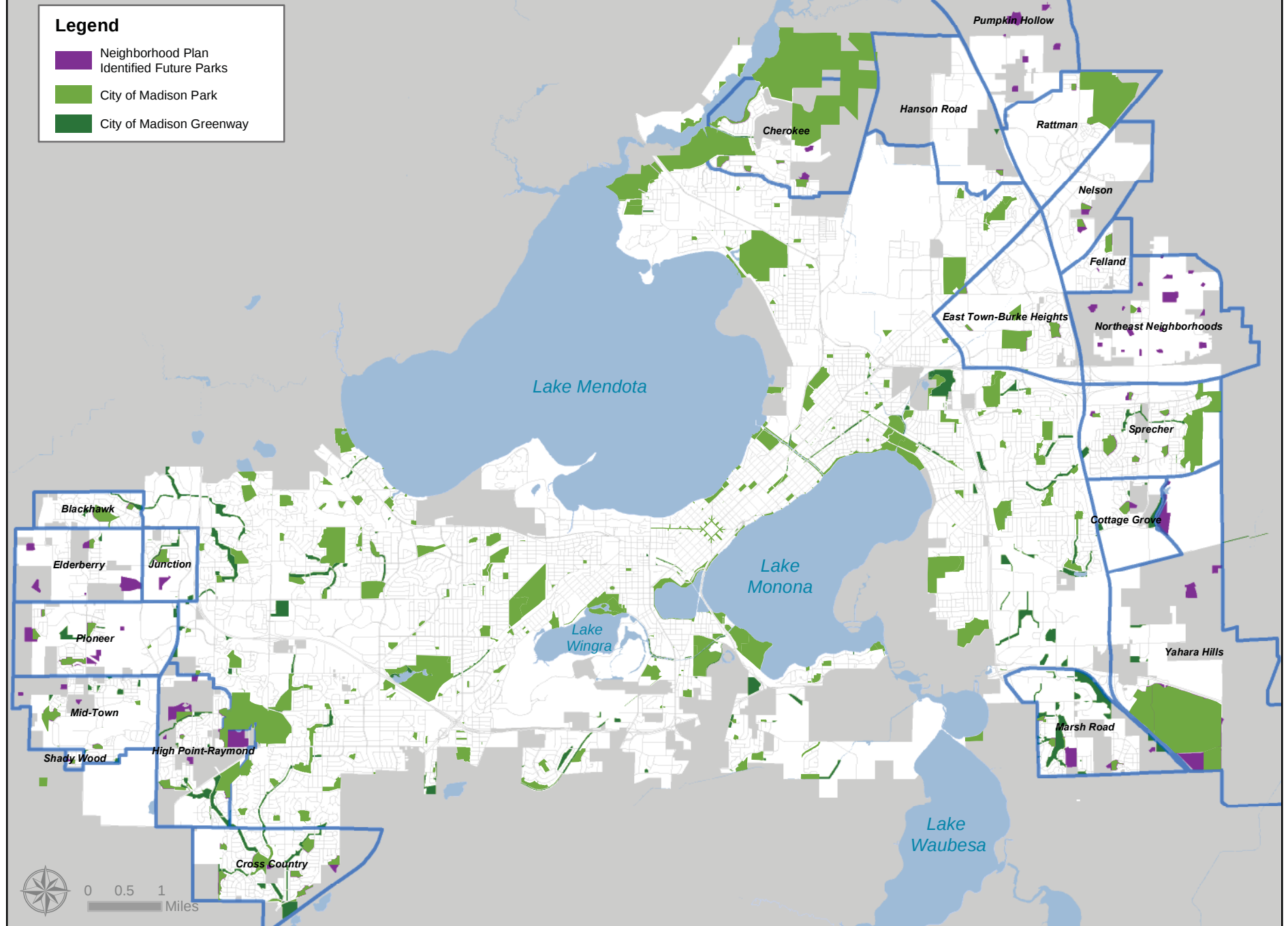
Neighborhood Development Plans (NDPs) identify land use and proposed parkland along largely undeveloped lands at the City of Madison's periphery. The plans provide a framework for the growth and development of the City's peripheral urban expansion areas where development is expected to occur in the near future. NDPs are created through an extensive planning and public input process. New parkland proposed by NDPs is shown in Exhibit 16: New Parkland Identified in Neighborhood Development Plans.

Current NDPs identify 52 new parks along the City's periphery totaling 384 acres. Of the seventeen developed Neighborhood Plans, ten plans call for new parkland development, with 20 of the 52 proposed new parks in the Northeast Neighborhoods Development Plan. The proposed quantity of new parks in each NDP are as follows:

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| • Cherokee: 1      | • Midtown: 3        |
| • Elderberry: 5    | • Northeast: 20     |
| • Felland: 1       | • Pumpkin Hollow: 9 |
| • Junction Road: 1 | • Sprecher: 5       |
| • Marsh Road: 1    | • Yahara Hills: 6   |

New parkland identified in NDPs is determined by using parkland dedication requirements for new residential development. Reviewing the existing NDP proposed population build-out, in comparison with the City's standard for parkland dedication, many of these neighborhoods would fall short of the City's standards for parkland dedication once the neighborhood is fully developed. Staff will continue to work with City agencies involved in developing these plans to ensure that future neighborhoods have adequate parkland to meet future population growth.

## Exhibit 17: New Parkland Identified in Neighborhood Development Plans



**Table 6.12: Neighborhood Development Plan Proposed Park Acreages as of 1/1/2018<sup>11</sup>**

| Neighborhood Development Plan | Estimated Population at Build-Out | Existing City of Madison Parkland | Proposed City of Madison Parkland | Mini, Neigh, & Community Parkland at Full Build Out | Park Acreage per 1,000 residents |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cherokee                      | 5,236                             | 44.07                             | 6.11                              | 50.18                                               | 9.58                             |
| Cottage Grove                 | 5,262                             | 10.25                             | 3.77                              | 14.02                                               | 2.66                             |
| Cross Country                 | 7,803                             | 63.86                             | 5.99                              | 69.85                                               | 8.95                             |
| Elderberry                    | 9,441                             | 4.6                               | 46.28                             | 50.88                                               | 5.39                             |
| Felland                       | 2,747                             | 13.52                             | 0.59                              | 14.11                                               | 5.14                             |
| Hanson Road                   | 917                               | 3.03                              | 0.90                              | 3.93                                                | 4.29                             |
| High Point-Raymond            | 12,155                            | 285.9                             | 19.86                             | 305.76                                              | 25.15                            |
| Junction                      | 4,139                             | 14.33                             | 8.89                              | 23.22                                               | 5.61                             |
| Marsh Road                    | 4,699                             | 13.32                             | 5.72                              | 19.04                                               | 4.05                             |
| Midtown                       | 7,189                             | 31.88                             | 7.90                              | 39.78                                               | 5.53                             |
| Nelson                        | 3,642                             | 11.15                             | 9.43                              | 20.58                                               | 5.65                             |
| Northeast Neighborhoods       | 18,433                            | 4.75                              | 50.96                             | 55.72                                               | 3.02                             |
| Pioneer                       | 9,340                             | 16.73                             | 26.78                             | 43.51                                               | 4.66                             |
| Pumpkin Hollow                | 10,779                            | 0                                 | 40.85                             | 40.85                                               | 3.79                             |
| Shady Wood                    | 301                               | 2.16                              | 1.98                              | 4.14                                                | 13.74                            |
| Sprecher                      | 11,177                            | 204.57                            | 4.89                              | 209.46                                              | 18.74                            |
| Yahara Hills                  | 6,856                             | 43.59                             | 138.30                            | 181.89                                              | 26.53                            |
| Grand Total                   | 120,116                           | 762.96                            | 383.96                            | 1146.92                                             | 9.55                             |

## 6.7 City of Madison Downtown Plan

The purpose of the *Downtown Plan* is to describe the desired future for Madison's downtown and to provide a framework to help achieve it. It establishes a decision making framework to ensure that incremental actions made over time (such as budgeting and land use decisions) achieve a common vision for the future. The City of Madison *Downtown Plan* was adopted in July 2012.

The recommendations proposed in the *Downtown Plan* were prepared and developed through a 3+ year planning process based on a vigorous public input process. The public comments and suggestions from this process may be viewed at the City's website for the *Downtown Plan* at: [https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/Downtown\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/Downtown_Plan.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> This table will be updated with the anticipated 2018 adoption of Junction, Elderberry & Pioneer NDP's. NDP's without increase in proposed parkland are excluded from this table.

The *Downtown Plan*'s recommendations regarding parks and open spaces are primarily found in the sections entitled "Key 1: Celebrating the Lakes" and "Key 8: Expanding Recreational, Cultural and Entertainment Offerings". Notable recommendations include.

- Expanding the eastern portion of Law Park to create a signature city park and public gathering place, including a shelter based on Frank Lloyd Wright's boathouse design for this park, short term boat docking and land bridge/plazas connecting the park to the heart of Downtown.
  - . This is currently in progress with \$500,000 allocated to the Parks Capital Budget in 2018.
- Completing the Lake Mendota pedestrian-bicycle path by acquiring the remaining parcels and constructing the segment between Butler Street and Lake Street. This segment will complete the remaining 25% of the 3-mile long lakeshore path from James Madison Park to Picnic Point.
- Creating a gateway entrance in that portion of Brittingham Park along John Nolen Drive between Bedford Street/North Shore Drive and Broom Street. This area is proposed to be redesigned to include greatly enhanced landscaping, expanded use opportunities, and a redesigned dog park.
  - + This work is currently in process with the redesigned Brittingham dog park anticipated to be completed in 2019.
- Restoring Brittingham Beach and reactivating the existing shelter, including the potential rental of small sailboats, canoes and kayaks, a new fishing pier and possibly establishing food service.
  - + The Madison Parks Division partnered with Brittingham Boats in 2013 to improve the shelter, and provide rentals for kayaks, canoes, stand up paddle boards, row boats, and paddle boats, and a small cafe.
- Establishing a new neighborhood park near Bassett Street and West Johnson Street intersection to meet the needs of the under served high-density housing at this location.
  - + City is currently reviewing options for developing a new neighborhood park.
- Preparing new master plans for James Madison Park and Brittingham Park.
  - + The Parks Division is currently conducting a robust master planning effort for James Madison Park, with anticipated completion in 2018.

## 6.8 Conclusion

There are over sixty planning documents that include recommendations related to parks. This plan reviewed six of the most relevant planning documents related to broad recreational trends and anticipated park development including the 2011-2016 SCORP, the 2018-2022 Dane County POSP, Intergovernmental Agreements, the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan*, Neighborhood Development Plans, and the City of Madison *Downtown Plan*. Recreational preferences were primarily identified in the 2011-2016 SCORP, the 2018-2023 Dane County POSP, and through the engagement process of the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan*. Common themes throughout these plans include:

- a strong desire for increased connectivity of land, trails, and facilities;
- demand for public lands continue to grow; and
- concern for environmental health.

Three of these planning documents point to new parkland acquisitions through Intergovernmental Agreements, Neighborhood Development Plans, and the City of Madison *Downtown Plan*. Additionally, the Future Land Use Map in the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* suggests increasing residential infill development which will require acquisition of new parkland.

# Chapter Seven: Park Development Resources

Resources are continuously needed to build new parks, improve and maintain facilities, and update infrastructure within City parks. The Capital Budget is the primary funding mechanism that supports these projects. This section discusses the Capital budget, which is the main resource for park development as well as partnerships that help create some of Madison’s popular park facilities.

## 7.1 Parks Division Capital Budget

Each year, the Parks Division develops and updates its Capital Budget and corresponding five-year Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvement Program and the budget are based on a review of existing and emerging infrastructure needs, planned development, and resident and aldermanic input. Depending on funding availability and priorities, projects are identified each year to move forward for review and approval as part of the City’s Capital Budget process. This annual adjustment reflects changes in available funding and shifting needs, as well as infrastructure improvements required as part of adopted master plans.

The Capital Budget is primarily funded using ten-year obligation bonds. General obligation bonds between 2012-2018 funded approximately 40% to 70% of the budget. Other large revenues for capital projects came from impact fees, private donations, and grants. These sources, on average account for approximately 30% to 60% of the annual Capital Budget. Table 7.1 contains the adopted Parks capital budgets for the period 2012-2017; the Parks Division’s Capital Budget has grown by nearly 67% during this time period, which has helped to address some of the deferred maintenance needs in the park system.

Table 7.1: 2012-2017 Capital Budget

| Year                            | 2012        | 2013         | 2014         | 2015         | 2016         | 2017         |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| General Obligation Debt         | \$4,284,500 | \$5,299,500  | \$8,530,500  | \$8,521,250  | \$6,791,000  | \$6,838,240  |
| Park-Land Impact Fees           | \$250,000   | \$250,000    | \$250,000    | \$250,000    | \$7,750,000  | \$250,000    |
| Park-Infrastructure Impact Fees | \$495,000   | \$1,660,000  | \$1,480,000  | \$2,165,000  | \$1,263,000  | \$2,042,000  |
| Donations/Contributions         | \$237,500   | \$650,000    | \$210,000    | \$305,000    | \$30,000     | \$4,703,000  |
| Grants                          | \$3,150,000 | \$1,390,000  | \$15,000     | \$0          | \$15,000     | \$49,000     |
| Other                           | \$429,900   | \$1,774,000  | \$1,107,000  | \$1,230,000  | \$423,000    | \$868,000    |
| Total                           | \$8,846,900 | \$11,023,500 | \$11,592,500 | \$12,471,250 | \$16,272,000 | \$14,750,240 |

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) shown in Table 7.2 is a plan of future expenditures for Parks capital needs. The CIP is subject to annual appropriation as part of the Capital Budget process. The CIP identifies significant increases and decreases over the next five years due to large anticipated projects budgeted in future years.

In this Chapter

Parks Division  
Capital Budget

Funding the  
Capital Budget

Conclusion

**Table 7.2: 2018 Adopted Capital Budget and 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Program**

| Source                  | 2018         | 2019         | 2020         | 2021         | 2022         | 2023         |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| General Obligation Debt | \$4,617,075  | \$6,579,000  | \$8,625,750  | \$8,370,000  | \$12,558,750 | \$9,108,750  |
| Other                   | \$7,809,384  | \$3,806,000  | \$5,521,000  | \$2,113,000  | \$5,147,250  | \$2,201,250  |
| Total                   | \$12,426,459 | \$10,385,000 | \$14,146,750 | \$10,483,000 | \$17,706,000 | \$11,310,000 |

## 7.2 Funding the Capital Budget

The Parks Capital Budget is funded by multiple sources including general obligation bonds, impact fees, donations/contributions, grants, and other revenues such as special assessments, tax incremental financing (TIF) funds, revenues from leases, etc.

### GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

Capital improvement projects are funded primarily using ten-year general obligation bonds issued by the City with the debt service being paid by the property tax levy. As mentioned previously, general obligation funding typically ranges between 40% to 70% of the Capital Budget. In 2018, approximately 37% of the adopted Capital Budget is funded through levy support (general property tax funding), which is slightly lower than previous years. State legislative changes in 2013 enacted levy limits that define the maximum a town, village, city and county may implement as a property tax levy. These changes allow a municipality to increase its levy over the amount it levied in the prior year by the percentage increase in equalized values from net new construction. Since new construction has allowed Madison to increase levy support, these legislative changes have not impacted levy support significantly between 2012 to 2018.

### PARKLAND DEDICATION AND IMPACT FEES

The requirements codified in the General Planning and Impact Fee Ordinances provide both fiduciary support to the Capital Budget as well as new parks through parkland dedication and impact fees. Wisconsin State Statutes permit local governments to enact ordinances requiring developers to provide land (or fees in lieu of) and impact fees for the development of public parks. The City of Madison codified these developer obligations in Chapters 16: General Planning and Chapter 20: Impact Fee Ordinance. Impact fee funding identified in the Capital Budget varies and is contingent upon fees received and anticipated projects. From 2012-2017 impact fee funding represented between 9% and 55% of the Capital Budget.

#### *Parkland Dedication*

The Capital Budget typically includes development of facilities in new parks created through parkland dedication. Parkland dedication is the requirement in the Madison General Ordinance that mandates developers of residential properties dedicate a specific amount of land area for public parks as part of the subdivision approval process. This amount of land is based on a formula relating the parkland area to the number of proposed dwelling units.

The City completed a Public Facility Needs Assessment in 2016 that recommended new parkland dedication requirements and fees. The Needs Assessment was prepared using data gathered from around the nation and within Wisconsin, the City's 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan, and the City's existing park inventory. Recommendations from the Needs Assessment were enacted on November 1, 2016 through Legislative File 43500, amending sections of the Madison General Ordinances. Implementation of the new park impact fees based on this Needs Assessment began on January 1, 2017 and will be fully implemented over a three-year period (80% in 2017, 90% in 2018, and 100% in 2019 and beyond). The new impact fee ordinance added a category for large multifamily units (four bedrooms or more), as well as updating the requirement for age-restricted units and group living quarters reflective of housing development trends. The new ordinance also provided exemptions for low-cost housing and updated requirements for accessory dwelling units, which became permissible with enactment of the new Zoning Code in 2013.

**Figure 7.1: Comparison of 2002 and 2016 Parkland Dedication Requirements**



These updated parkland dedication requirements ensure that new residential development will provide parkland at the current level of service of 10+ acres/1,000 residents (previous land dedication requirements fell short of meeting this standard as shown in Figure 7.1<sup>12</sup>). The new parkland dedication requirements by unit type are shown in Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3: Parkland Dedication Analysis<sup>13</sup>**

| Unit Type                                          | 2017 Dedication Required (sf) | 2002 Dedication Required | 2017 Park Ac./1,000 Residents | 2002 Park Ac./1,000 Residents |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Single Family Dwelling Unit (Detached)             | 1081                          | 1100                     | 10.13                         | 9.71                          |
| Multi Family Dwelling Unit (fewer than 4 bedrooms) | 734                           | 700                      | 10.40                         | 8.46                          |
| Multi Family Dwelling Unit (4 bedrooms or more)    | 1424                          | 700                      | 9.85                          | 8.46                          |
| Age Restricted Multifamily                         | 573                           | 350                      | 10.12                         | 8.46                          |
| Group Living Quarters                              | 410                           | 350                      | 10.12                         | 8.46                          |

<sup>12</sup> Based on analysis of 100 proposed units of each dwelling type.

<sup>13</sup> The 2002 land dedication requirements did not differentiate between multifamily units with more than 3 units and group living quarters.

*Impact Fees Used for Acquisition of Park Land*

In situations where the City of Madison determines it is not feasible or desirable to acquire additional parkland through parkland dedication, developers are required to pay a monetary amount (Park-Land Impact Fee) in lieu of the land. The Park-Land Impact Fee ensures that when a development does not dedicate parkland within its property, the developer provides funding to the City to independently purchase parkland. This requirement assures that the City has funding to purchase parkland outside of the property tax levy to meet park demand, which is critical to maintaining the existing service level of 10+ acres/1,000 residents.

Park-Land Impact Fees have been a reliable source of park acquisition funding for the past five years. Table 7.4 outlines the annual Park-Land Impact Fees collected from 2012 through 2017.

**Table 7.4: 2012-2018 Collected Park-Land Fees**

|                       | 2012        | 2013        | 2014        | 2015        | 2016        | 2017        |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Park-Land Impact Fees | \$1,280,182 | \$3,521,143 | \$1,682,318 | \$4,158,798 | \$3,658,532 | \$3,179,735 |

The Park-Land Impact Fee is determined based on the average assessed value of the certified tax roll and it does not account for the higher cost of land in the downtown and other rapidly developing urban areas. As Madison continues to grow, additional parkland will be required to meet community needs. The City is already experiencing increased park demands with new residential infill development in the downtown area and East Washington Avenue corridor. Increasing density and infill development are identified in both the Downtown Plan and the Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan. As Madison plans for the future, it is important to note that the cost for parkland to meet these needs will be more expensive than the cost of land on the periphery of the City, and will disproportionately consume the land acquisition budget compared to properties in other areas of the City.

Since 2012, parkland dedications and/or Park-Land Impact Fees have resulted in the following park acquisitions or park expansions:

- Acer Park
- Allied Park
- Cherokee Marsh Expansion
- Galaxy Park (formerly Camar Park)
- Hill Creek Park Expansion
- Jeffy Trail Park
- Kestrel Park
- McPike Park (formerly Central Park) Expansion
- Merrill Springs Park Expansion
- North Star Park Expansion
- Sugar Maple Park
- Thousand Oaks Park
- Woods Farm Park

### *Impact Fees Used for Park Infrastructure*

Park-Infrastructure Impact Fees provide a significant source of funding in the Capital Budget. The Madison General Ordinance Chapter 20 – Impact Fee Ordinance requires developers to pay a Park-Infrastructure Impact Fee to offset costs necessary to develop parkland to accommodate new residential development. This fee funds park development at a comparable level to existing park facilities and is based on the number of units and type of housing developed. As recommended in the Needs Assessment (2016), this fee was updated in 2017. Table 7.5 identifies Park-Infrastructure Fees collected from 2012-2017. The yearly variations reflect the differing number and type of new residential development projects that are constructed each year.

**Table 7.5: 2012-2017 Collected Park-Infrastructure Fees**

|                                 | 2012      | 2013        | 2014      | 2015        | 2016        | 2017        |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Park-Infrastructure Impact Fees | \$558,551 | \$1,371,752 | \$812,433 | \$1,662,660 | \$1,864,063 | \$2,187,331 |

Impact fees must be spent in the district where they are accumulated. Prior to 2017, and based upon development patterns within the City, this resulted in some districts receiving significantly higher levels of impact fees than others. The ordinance amendments implemented on January 1, 2017 reduced the existing 11 benefit districts to four districts to create a more equitable distribution of impact fee funding. In addition, 20% of all Park-Infrastructure Impact Fees are placed into a City-wide benefit district to be used throughout the City. The end result of these changes to the benefit districts will create a more equitable distribution of impact fees throughout the City.

The City's Annual Capital Budget includes statements regarding each impact fee district, including fees collected and expenditures. This information is available at: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/budget/documents/>

While park impact fees help to offset park development costs, they typically do not fund the entire park development. For example, using the City's standard of 10+ acres/1,000 residents, a new 10-acre neighborhood park for 1,000 residents would require a payment of between \$530,000 and \$640,000 in Park-Infrastructure Impact Fees (see Appendix C, Table 6). As shown in Figure 7.2, compared to the cost to develop a 10-acre neighborhood park, the impact fees collected may only offset the park development costs by an average of 74% depending on the type of housing development.

Additionally, impact fees provide a much smaller fraction of park development funding when looking at improvements in community parks or historic parks. Community parks often provide specialized amenities such as splash pads, skate parks, and boat launches. These facilities are more costly to both construct and operate compared to mini and neighborhood parks.

Likewise, the City of Madison has 61 parks that have features or the park itself is on the National Register of Historic Places and 20 parks with facilities that are designated City Landmarks (see Appendix F - Historic Resources). Parks with historic resources must meet strict guidelines for improvements to historic structures, typically costing more than improvements to similar non-historic facilities to meet local and national regulations.

It should also be noted that the ordinance has a provision that allows developers to construct park improvements on parkland dedicated through a subdivision plat rather than pay park-infrastructure fees. This process requires an approved developer's agreement (approved by City staff and the Common Council) to construct park amenities identified in the adopted master plan and constructed to City standards. This process allows developers to expedite parkland development by constructing the park along with the subdivision development, rather than having the City develop the park through the Capital Budget process. Since the 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan, the City has entered into developer agreements for construction of Sugar Maple Park and Thousand Oaks Park. Sugar Maple Park was constructed and opened in 2017, and Thousand Oaks Park is anticipated to be completed in 2018.

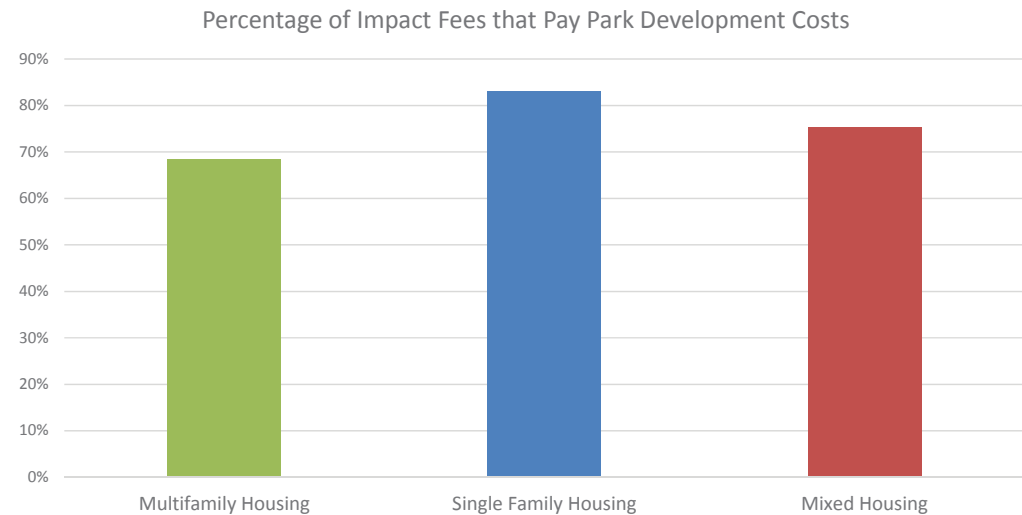
### DONATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Over the past several years Madison Parks has been successful with creative place-making initiatives, many of these place-making projects which would not have been possible without public-private partnerships. These partnerships facilitate and in many cases fund repairs to aging infrastructure. Entities that enter into agreements/contracts with Parks for these type of uses are held to high standards and specified goals, operations, and reporting procedures. Several of the City's most popular destinations are enhanced by these partnerships including Olbrich Botanical Gardens; Warner Park Community Recreation Center; Mallards Stadium; boat rentals at Wingra, Olbrich, Marshall, and Brittingham Parks; the Biergarten at Olbrich Park; and athletics and events at Breese Stevens Field. Several of these groups are required to invest their own funding into improving existing park facilities specific for their needs including expediting upgrades to electrical and plumbing systems, bathroom fixtures, painting and water projection, and landscaping.

#### *Madison Parks Foundation*

The Madison Parks Foundation (MPF) plays a significant role in securing donations for the Madison park system. The Madison Parks Foundation is a private non-profit organization founded in 2003 as the non-profit partner of Madison Parks. The intended purpose of the MPF is to acquire financial resources via grants and other contributions to make park improvements. The resources of the MPF are not intended to replace or substitute for tax revenues generated for the annual ongoing maintenance activities of the Madison Parks Division. The Madison Parks Foundation has been instrumental in fund-raising and providing neighborhood resources for significant park projects such as the Goodman Pool, Period Garden Park Improvements, the Goodman Skatepark, the pickleball complex at Garner Park; Elver and Reindahl splash parks, and

**Figure 7.2: Example Scenario of Park Impact Fees vs. Park Development Costs**



playground improvements at Nakoma, Sunset, Odana Hills, and Reger Parks, among others. The Foundation also coordinates donor memorial benches, picnic tables, memorial tree requests, and other donation naming opportunities within the parks.

Voluntary contributions are increasingly used to fund park development projects. Many of the City's largest park projects include significant levels of private contributions. Table 7.6 identifies the total capital donations and contributions received from 2012 through 2017. Parks staff and the Madison Parks Foundation work together with neighborhood associations and other groups to approve projects and identify potential private fund-raising sources and goals. The Parks Division can leverage these funds with existing City resources to move projects forward more quickly. Projects partially funded through these means vary, but some examples are additional playground equipment, landscaping, and shelters.

**Table 7.6: 2012-2017 Collected Donations/Contributions**

| Category                | 2012     | 2013     | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Donations/Contributions | \$99,725 | \$91,682 | \$137,219 | \$383,391 | \$471,382 | \$171,814 |

## GRANTS

Grants vary from year to year, depending on funding availability from the grantor and whether or not the grant application is awarded. Significant grant awards that Madison Parks received for capital improvements between 2012-2017 include:

- 2012 - \$3,150,000 WisDOT federal earmarked funds for transportation-related facilities at McPike Park (formerly Central Park);
- 2012 - \$200,000 WDNR Knowles Stewardship funding for Expansion of Merrill Springs Park;
- 2013 - \$1,372,184 FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management funding for community safe room at Highland Manor Park;
- 2014 - \$80,000 Dane County PARC program for Reindahl and Elver splash parks; and
- 2015 - \$295,308 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for the Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Skatepark at McPike Park.

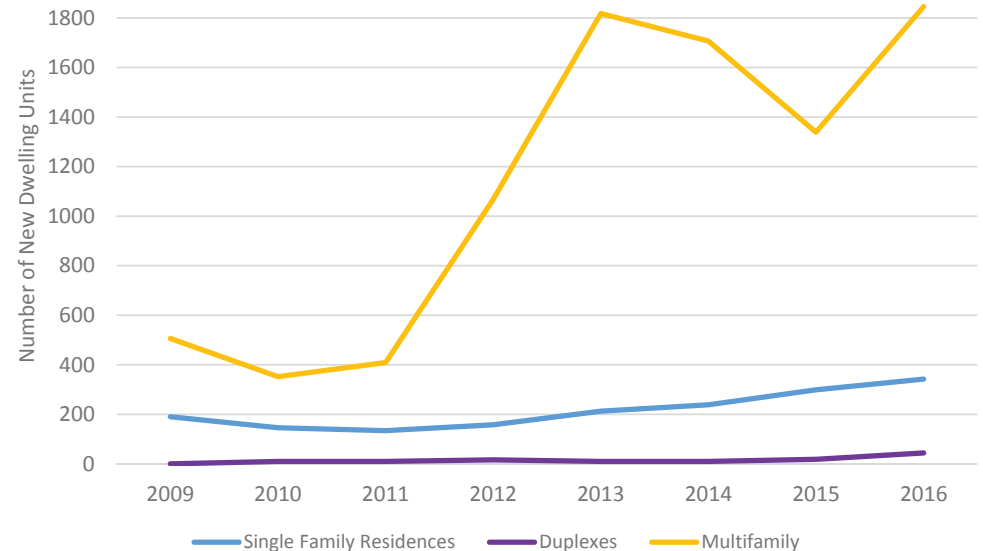
## OTHER

Other funding includes special assessments, revenues from leases, TIF funding, etc. Special assessments are generally between \$120,000 and \$150,000 in the Capital Budget and include funding for street trees in newly developed areas. TIF has been utilized for street tree improvements as well as improvements to parks.

### 7.3 Conclusion

The primary funding sources of the Capital Budget are levy support through property taxes and impact fees. Both of these sources are reliant on a healthy real estate economy. Within the past few years, Madison's population growth and strong real estate market have helped keep the tax levy stable and provided impact fee funding generated from new residential development. When forecasting long-term capital funding, the budgetary outlook of the Parks Division will closely mirror the City's real estate economy; during slower periods of growth funding for capital projects will be reduced. Figure 7.3 illustrates Madison's changing real estate economy between 2009 and 2016, for 2009 there was a market downturn, and 2011 when the market began seeing a dramatic increase in the number of residential building permits issued.

**Figure 7.3: 2009-2016 City of Madison New Residential Construction**



As Madison plans for the next five years, accommodating Madison's rapid growth will be an important aspect of parkland development. From 2015-2016 Madison and Dane County more than doubled the national growth rate for the year (Wroge, Logan; "Madison, Dane County lead the state population growth in the latest U.S. Census Estimates." Wisconsin State Journal 5, May 2017). Madison is growing both in development of single family homes on the periphery of the City, but also in the number of new multifamily residential complexes in the City's existing urban areas. Parkland on the periphery will likely be acquired through parkland dedication identified in neighborhood development plans. However, as the City continues to increase the density of existing developed areas, the it may rely more heavily on acquisition and development of developed sites for parkland as opposed to agriculture land. Park development to convert an existing developed property to parkland (especially in the downtown area) will incur significant costs including acquisition, demolition, and potential site remediation. As can be seen in Appendix D, Exhibit G: DNR Inventory of Contaminated Properties, properties in developed areas may have contamination issues. Depending on the proposed construction and existing contamination, remediation of the site can cost anywhere from several thousand to several hundreds of thousands of dollars per acre.

Overall, if Madison continues to experience a strong local real estate market and if external revenue streams to the City are not significantly reduced, the Parks Division's budgetary outlook for the next several years is positive. The healthy real estate economy has allowed Madison Parks to invest in both infrastructure improvements and development of new facilities. Infrastructure improvements will continue to be a large portion of the Capital Budget in order to continue addressing the backlog of deferred maintenance, as well as providing new facilities for Madison's growing and diversifying population.

As the major funding source for the Capital Budget, levy support needs to remain consistent with growth. However, understanding that the majority of the Capital Budget is tied to a healthy real estate economy it is also important that Madison Parks prepares for future market downturns. This includes investigating resources to diversify revenue streams for capital projects such as grants, donations, changing user fee structures, and reviewing any other potential funding sources that could supplement levy and impact fee funding. Other forms of income and partnerships are critical to helping to protect the future of the City's park system.

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# Chapter Eight: Park Operational Resources

The Parks Division has numerous responsibilities including planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining the City’s park system as well as programming and coordination of special events and registrations. Citywide Operations staff are responsible for maintenance and care of over 270 parks citywide and facilities including 82 reservable shelters (including sun shelters); approximately 500 athletic facilities such as ball diamonds, tennis courts, and athletic fields; 174 playgrounds (Madison continues to lead the country in both the number of playgrounds and beaches in cities of similar size according to the Trust for Public Land – City Park Facts 2017); and many other recreational amenities. Parks Conservation staff are responsible for managing over 1,700 acres of conservation parks. Forestry is part of the Parks Division and is responsible for street trees in public rights-of-way and overall guidance regarding park trees. The Parks Division also manages non-traditional facilities such as the State Street Mall Concourse, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Forest Hill Cemetery, four golf courses, and the Warner Park Community Recreation Center. The Parks Division is also responsible for snow plowing 65 miles of bike paths and sidewalks; snow removal at 336 bus stops; and litter pickup, mowing, and trimming of 123 acres of medians. These responsibilities steadily increase as Madison’s population grows and new parks and facilities are developed. This chapter discusses the operational resources necessary for a growing City of Madison park system.

## 8.1 Parks Division Operating Expenses

The annual City of Madison Operating Budget provides resources for the staffing, supplies, services, utilities, and other operational expenses. The Parks Division’s Operating Budget is funded through multiple revenue sources including General Park Revenues, Other Restricted Funds, and Permanent Funds, with the General Fund (primarily through the property tax levy) providing the remaining amount needed to offset the annual expenses of the Parks Division. Table 8.1 details the actual expenses from 2012-2017 for the Parks Division and what portion of the expenses were supported by revenues or the General Fund. General Fund support for the Parks Division has decreased while revenues have nearly tripled during the same six-year period.

In this Chapter

Parks Division Operating Expenses

Golf Enterprise Operating Expenses

Parks Division Staff

Partnerships and Volunteers

Conclusion

**Table 8.1: 2012-2017 Parks Division Operating Expenses by Funding Source**

| Year                      | 2012         | 2013         | 2014         | 2015         | 2016         | 2017         |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| General Revenues          | \$2,138,046  | \$2,233,456  | \$2,303,836  | \$3,120,307  | \$4,895,334  | \$5,928,475  |
| General Fund Levy Support | \$14,358,839 | \$14,690,132 | \$15,391,012 | \$15,252,378 | \$14,263,909 | \$13,388,362 |
| Total Expenditures        | \$16,496,885 | \$16,923,588 | \$17,694,848 | \$18,372,686 | \$19,159,243 | \$19,316,837 |

Revenues clearly provide an important funding source for the growing park system. General Park Revenues are generated through many mechanisms. Lease/Use Agreements (e.g., Marshall Park Use Agreement with Marshall Boats) require annual payments as well as reimbursement of expenses such as utilities. Other revenues in this category are generated from boat launch permits; catering and concessions; facility rentals, admissions, program revenues and memberships at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Goodman Pool, and Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC); swim, skating, and ski lessons; cross-country ski passes; contributions and donations; ranger fees to support shelter reservations and other park uses; trade-in allowance for equipment; and State Street Mall Concourse Special Charges charged to local businesses and property owners within the defined service area. The actual revenues received by section for the last three years are shown in Table 8.2 (in 2015 the City of Madison began using a new financial system which provided this breakdown by section).

**Table 8.2: 2015-2017 Operating Budget Revenue Support by Section**

| Category                  | 2015        | 2016        | 2017        |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Forestry                  | \$1,004,125 | \$2,503,174 | \$3,111,066 |
| Olbrich Botanical Gardens | \$278,024   | \$313,180   | \$708,768   |
| WPCRC                     | \$400,745   | \$313,524   | \$322,942   |
| Aquatics                  | \$262,160   | \$335,416   | \$325,051   |
| Other Park Revenues       | \$1,175,252 | \$1,430,040 | \$1,460,648 |
| Total                     | \$3,120,307 | \$4,895,334 | \$5,928,475 |

Other Restricted Funds support the Parks Division Operating Budget. These include revenues from off-leash dog park permits and disc golf permits. Revenues from use agreements with athletic groups such as the Madison Ultimate Frisbee Association (MUFA) and the Urban Forestry Special Charge are also included under Other Restricted Funds.

The Common Council has recognized some of the unique expenses and revenue aspects of Parks Operations and have authorized supplemental funding streams. Starting in 2015, the City of Madison imposed an Urban Forestry Special Charge on city parcels to offset operational costs to maintain the urban forest in the city. This is a special charge on all real property in the City, established to allow the City to recover its costs in performing the services associated with the City's Urban Forestry Program. The City services provided by the City's urban forestry program ensure a healthy, vibrant and sustainable urban forest, which benefits all residents and properties in the City. The special charge partially offset Forestry operational costs in 2015 and 2016. The majority of Forestry operational expenses were offset in 2017. The fee determination is annually approved by the Common Council as adopted in MGO Sec. 4.095 and is collected as part of the municipal services bill issued monthly by the Madison Water Utility.

In 2017, Olbrich Botanical Gardens began receiving revenues from the Room Tax, authorized by state law to be used for tourism promotion and tourism development per Wis. Stat. 66.0615.

Resources identified under the Permanent Fund in the 2018 adopted Parks Operating Budget include the Olin Trust Fund and the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund. The Parks Division oversees the management of the Olin Trust Fund (a total value of approximately \$700,000), established in 1924 by John M. Olin for the purposed of beautification and enhancement of the City's parks. Each year, the Trust provides approximately \$25,000 of the revenue from this fund for parks beautification efforts. The Parks Divisions also manages the Forest Hill Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund, which is funded with proceeds from lot sales. An annual allocation is made towards the maintenance of the cemetery from this fund. Trust and donation funds are used for appropriate projects and improvements pursuant to the terms of the donation or trust and with the Board of Park Commissioners' approval. Annually this represents approximately \$300,000 of the total revenues in the adopted budget.

The Parks Division also generates revenues that help to support the General Fund. Cemetery fees generate between \$250,000 and \$300,000 annually to the General Fund. Parks Use Charges generate approximately \$600,000 in revenue for the General Fund. The sources of these revenues include shelter reservations and other associated permits, athletic field reservations, vending permits, etc.

## 8.2 Golf Enterprise Operating Expenses

Golf is budgeted to cover all expenditures with golf course revenues and does not receive levy support. Table 8.3 details the 2012-2017 Golf Enterprise Operating Budget for the four city golf courses (Glenway, Monona, Odana Hills and Yahara Hills).

**Table 8.3: 2012-2017 Golf Enterprise Operating Budget<sup>14</sup>**

| Year          | 2012        | 2013        | 2014        | 2015        | 2016        | 2017        |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Revenues      | \$2,447,580 | \$2,798,144 | \$2,666,954 | \$3,065,705 | \$3,217,296 | \$2,859,254 |
| Expense       | \$2,452,094 | \$3,051,566 | \$3,004,360 | \$3,016,580 | \$3,610,671 | \$3,232,037 |
| Profit (loss) | \$(4,514)   | \$(253,422) | \$(337,406) | \$49,125    | \$(393,375) | \$(372,783) |

The 2016 Annual Report for the Golf Enterprise discusses in detail the current financial situation and provides a number of recommendations to address future infrastructure needs. Discussions are currently underway to evaluate these options.

## 8.3 Parks Division Staff

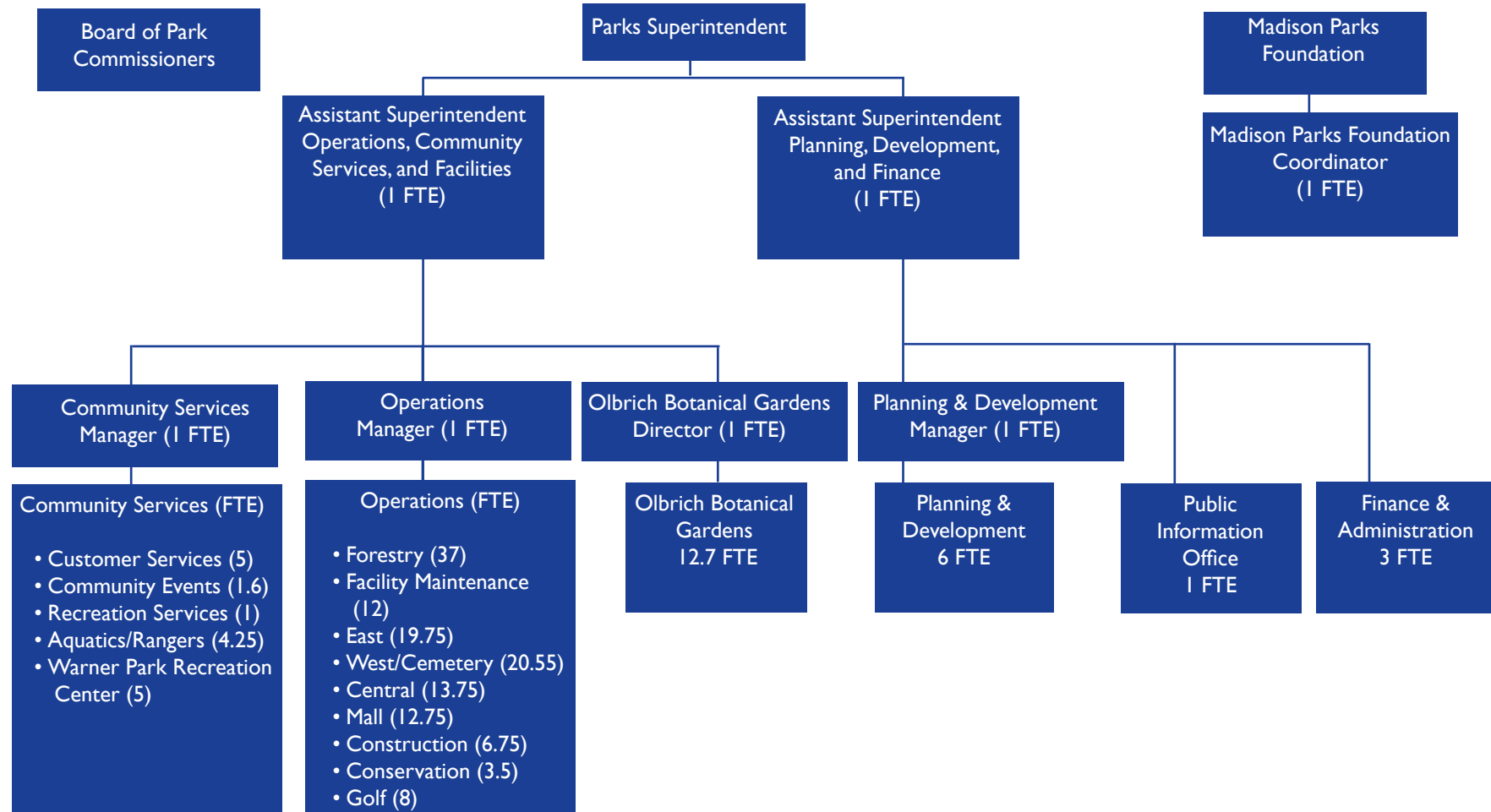
The Parks Division employs 180 full time employees (FTEs) and 370 seasonal employees who are responsible for the development, maintenance, and care of over 5,600 acres of parkland and over 270 parks. The Parks Division also manages non-traditional facilities, such as the State Street/Mall Concourse, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Goodman Pool, Forest Hill Cemetery (on the National Register of Historic Places), four golf courses, city street trees, and the Warner Park Community Recreation Center. Table 8.4 includes actual expenditures per section within the Parks Division for 2015-2017 using data from the City's new financial system.

**Table 8.4: 2015-2017 Parks Operating Expenses by Section**

| Year                      | 2015         | 2016         | 2017         |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Community Services        | \$2,646,791  | \$2,650,226  | \$2,745,742  |
| Operations                | \$13,667,127 | \$14,331,557 | \$14,189,733 |
| Olbrich Botanical Gardens | \$1,524,622  | \$1,476,690  | \$1,698,717  |
| Planning and Development  | \$534,145    | \$700,770    | \$682,645    |
| Total                     | \$18,372,686 | \$19,159,243 | \$19,316,837 |

Figure 8.1 outlines the various branches and sections within the Parks Division. The two main areas are Operations, Community Services and Facilities; and Planning, Development, and Finance. A general description of the main responsibilities of each section follows Figure 8.1.

<sup>14</sup> Golf expenditure authority covers salaries, benefits, supplies, and services.

**Figure 8.1: Parks Division Organizational Structure**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Community Services coordinates all special events and festivals on public land including State Street/Capitol Mall Concourse, as well as coordinates new community event initiatives, use agreements, and schedules athletic field and shelter reservations, and processes permitting such as vending, lake access, dog park, disc golf, and public amplification. Community Services also coordinates volunteer programs and manages operations of aquatics, park rangers, Warner Park Community Recreation Center and use agreements.

### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Parks Finance and Administration manages payroll, purchasing, revenue billing, budgeting, and administrative policy. It also coordinates hiring procedures, human resource tasks, and employee onboarding.

### **OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS**

The Olbrich Botanical Gardens provides 16 acres of sustainable outdoor gardens and a 10,000-square foot tropical conservatory. The garden is operated as a public/private partnership between the Parks Division and the non-profit Olbrich Botanical Society. Olbrich Botanical Gardens serves more than 325,500 visitors throughout the year and provides education programming for adults and families as well as garden-related exhibitions and events.

### **OPERATIONS**

Parks Operations is in charge of operations and maintenance of all parks, the State Street Capitol Mall Concourse district, and the Forestry Section. Responsibilities of Operations staff are vast and include facility construction, maintenance and repairs, shoreline cleanup and maintenance of beaches, boat ramps, docks, boathouses, and sailboat storage facilities; mowing and maintaining athletic facilities; and maintenance of buildings and parking lots. Parks Operation staff also maintain the City's cemetery, conservation lands, four public golf courses, and several closed landfills used as parks. Parks Operation staff also remove snow from bike trails, bus stops, and mow medians throughout the City.

As a component of the Parks Operations, the Forestry Section manages the care, installation and removal of all street trees. They provide professional tree care and planting for over 100,000 street trees along Madison's 700 miles of city streets. Forestry is also responsible for public safety by responding to broken limbs or storm damaged trees that pose a risk to the public. Plans and recommendations regarding urban forestry and specific concerns regarding Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) are not addressed in this plan. The City's EAB Task Force addresses these issues separately.

### **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Planning and Development oversees all aspects of park planning and development, including involvement with neighborhood development plans, long range planning and policies, park master planning, design and construction of parks, and intergovernmental coordination of policies and ordinances. Planning and Development also assists with the site design approval process related to the dedication of parkland and park impact fees, including collection of park impact fees.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

The Public Information Office oversees communications by managing the Parks Division's website, blog posts, social media, news releases, photo library, and publications such as the annual calendar, the Parks newsletter (Out & About), kiosk messaging, and promotional materials. The Public Information Office also coordinates responses to media inquiries.

## **8.4 Partnerships and Volunteers**

In the City of Madison, the Parks Division is separate from recreation programming services. Primary recreation programming is the responsibility of Madison Community and School Recreation (MSCR) run by the Madison Metropolitan School District, which has had a recreation program since 1926. MSCR provides the organization and coordination for a variety of athletic organizations that use City of Madison Park recreational facilities. MSCR typically has over 80,000 participants in its recreation programs. The primary Madison park facilities used by MSCR are softball, baseball, and kickball fields, tennis courts, and docks for pontoon rides. MSCR also uses the City of Madison Park's Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC) for various programs ranging from fitness to art classes. The partnership between Madison Parks and MSCR provides a large portion of the recreational programming in Madison Parks.

In addition to MSCR, there are dozens of other organizations that program activities such as baseball, football, Ultimate Frisbee, and soccer that, combined with MSCR, add up to over 11,000 recreational programming reservations each year. Organizations such as Southside Raiders, cricket clubs and Liga Latina De Futbol connect communities and expand recreational programming to a wider audience.

In addition to recreational programming, Madison Parks has had success with creative programming through public-private partnerships. Entities that enter into agreements/contracts with Parks for these type of uses are held to high standards and specified goals, operations, and reporting procedures. Example of these initiatives include the Wingra, Brittingham, Marshall, and Olbrich boat rentals and camps, the Mendota and Camp Randall Rowing Clubs, the Biergarten at Olbrich Park, and the Mallards Baseball Stadium at Warner Park and Breese Stevens Field.

Over the past several years Madison Parks has collaborated with the Madison Parks Foundation and has had success with programming initiatives such as the Madison Parks Foundation "Learn To" series, scholarships at Goodman Pool, and the Connecting Children to Nature program.

### **THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

The Board of Park Commissioners is the policy-making and recommending body for the Parks Division and consists of seven members: five appointed citizens and two Alder persons. Within its purview is the acquisition and/or maintenance of general recreation parks, conservation parks, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Warner Park Community Recreation Center, forestry, golf courses, beaches, municipal swimming pool, cemetery, athletic fields, boulevards, greenways, and boating. To assist its decision-making and establishment of level of service standards, the Commission requires long range planning, needs assessments, and strategic planning.

### **THE MADISON PARKS FOUNDATION**

Founded in 2003, the Madison Parks Foundation is the non-profit partner of Madison Parks that acts as the fiduciary agent for contributions, grants, and donations to fund park improvements and support park programming. As the non-profit partner of Madison Parks, the Madison Parks Foundation helps the Madison community conserve, promote and enhance its parks. The Madison Parks Foundation provides an innovative opportunity to fund parks, with successes including securing more than \$300,000 for the Elver and Reindahl Splash Parks and awarding the annual Goodman Pool Swimming Scholarships.

### MADISON PARKS AND VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a crucial role in maintaining our vibrant park system, contributing either on a one-time basis or an ongoing commitment. In 2017, Madison Parks had 1,994 volunteers who provided over 30,000 hours of time towards improving and enhancing the park system. Of these volunteers, Olbrich Botanical Gardens has the largest volunteer base, with over 579 volunteers providing over 27,000 hours of volunteer service. There are over twenty “Friends of” groups that actively volunteer in Madison Parks and numerous individuals that contribute outside of “Friends of” groups. Including five individuals alone who provided over 830 volunteer hours in parks. These donated hours supplement a significant amount of Parks staff time and budget, which allows Madison Parks to provide an even greater level of service to the community.

Table 8.5 summarizes some of the notable volunteer programs and events of 2017.

**Table 8.5: 2017 Notable Volunteer Events**

| Name                  | Dates               | Number of Parks | Number of Volunteers |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Adopt Ice             | Jan. & Feb.         | 7               | 30+                  |
| Dog Park Cleanup      | Sat., March 24      | 4               | 66                   |
| Earth Day Challenge   | April 28            | 27              | 907                  |
| Flower Garden Program | May - Sept.         | 14              | 33                   |
| Ride the Drive        | Sun., June 3        | 3               | 87                   |
| West Fest             | Sat., July 14       | 1               | 9+                   |
| Pickleball Lessons    | June 19 - Oct. 4    | 1               | 4                    |
| Bird & Nature Walks   | Sundays, year-round | 8               | 100                  |

Madison Parks strives to involve individuals and organized groups such as neighborhood associations, corporations, Friends groups and other affiliated organizations to commit on an ongoing basis to a specific park or project. These sustained engagements encourage collaboration between Madison Parks’ staff and volunteers to address large scale improvements and other initiatives. Conservation Parks have long been a recipient of extensive volunteer efforts; outreach by parks staff has helped continue to grow these programs.

## 8.6 Conclusion

Overall, there are four primary factors increasing operational expenses:

- development of new parks citywide,
- citywide development due to population growth,
- historic facilities with specific requirements for maintenance, and
- facilities that require higher levels of maintenance such as splash parks.

The City's adopted Neighborhood Development Plans, Intergovernmental Agreements, and the Downtown Plan project that the number of Madison parks will grow by 25% at full build out with a combined 67 new parks identified in these plans. While development of these parks is incremental, the past several years have seen rapid growth in both new and infill development that has outpaced the increase in operational funding. Development of these parks will require additional staff to plan and design these parks, and also to maintain, schedule, and coordinate their activities.

City-wide development also increases demand on operational resources to maintain the boulevards, bike paths, bus stops, medians, and sidewalks. In 2010, the City of Madison Streets Division, Engineering Division, and Parks Division divided maintenance of these transportation-based city facilities. Since then, the number of transportation-based facilities maintained by Madison Parks has increased, including an additional 308 bus stops, 14 acres of medians, and 20,000 linear feet of sidewalk and bike paths. As these new facilities develop, they continue to draw upon the resources in the Parks Operating Budget.

The number of historic facilities owned and maintained by the Parks Division requires significant resources to manage and maintain. Additional levels of review are required before infrastructure needs can be addressed and improvements can occur. Costs to maintain historic facilities are significantly higher than regular park facilities. A list of historical resources including historic buildings maintained by Madison Parks is included in Appendix F. This list includes Gates of Heaven in James Madison Park, Breese Stevens Field, and Forest Hill Cemetery.

An additional draw on operational resources is development of recreational facilities that have higher maintenance demands. Park facilities such as dog parks, ice rinks, shelters with restrooms, and splash parks require higher levels of maintenance. Additionally, athletic fields for popular sports such as flag football, ultimate frisbee, and soccer require higher maintenance so they remain playable throughout the year. While the role of volunteers is important in assisting with maintenance, significant coordination is required by staff to manage these volunteer resources.



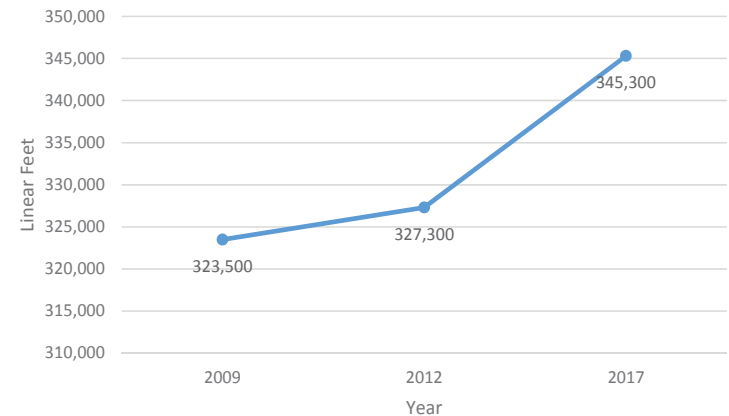
Photo: Family Fun Night at Warner Park Community Recreation Center

Current funding levels are not sufficient to sustain the existing and growing park system and other facilities the Parks Division is required to maintain such as medians. Madison Parks needs to evaluate how future development, as well as the increasing number of facilities, effects operational resources. The location of operating facilities and staff to serve Madison's growing park system will become more of a concern as development continues along the periphery of the City. For example, parks on the far west side periphery, such as Thousand Oaks Park are approximately seven miles from the Madison Parks facility that houses the staff and equipment needed to maintain this park. Improvements in technology and efficiency will likely play a role in reducing staff hours, and metrics such as Results Madison and Performance Excellence should be used to inform a comprehensive analysis of operational needs and resources to maintain an expanding park system.

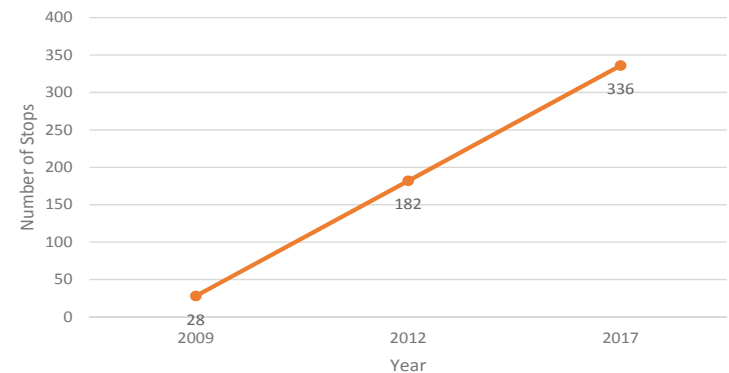
The Golf Enterprise Operating Budget has sustained losses in most years since 2003. Additionally, the golf program has not reinvested in capital assets over the past 16 years. The City is currently reviewing the existing golf program to address the overall liquidity problem of this program. On January 10, 2018, a Financial and Operational Analysis of Course Closure and Hole Reduction was presented to the Golf Subcommittee which reviewed golf course closure options as a potential solution to the golf program's negative net income. Additionally, a restructuring analysis framework was presented to the Board of Park Commissioners on April 18, 2018 and an anticipated business plan will be presented to the Board later in 2018. These supporting documents will aid in decision-making regarding future funding of the golf program.

The City's system of parks and open spaces must continue to address the demands of an ever-growing population with diverse needs. Providing resources to meet these demands requires cash and in-kind support to cover additional operational expenses necessary to design, construct, maintain, and operate these facilities.

**Figure 8.2: Parks Division Maintenance Sidewalk and Path Snow Plowing Linear Feet vs. Year**



**Figure 8.3: Parks Division Maintenance Bus Stop Maintenance Plowing Number of Stops vs. Year**



## Chapter Nine: Recommended Strategies

The following list includes recommended strategies for the City of Madison park system. The recommendations and analysis discussed in this plan relate to park development, management of core facilities, and broad concepts in park system planning. These strategies reflect values, opportunities, and concerns identified in this planning document. This plan uses information from the engagement process and outdoor recreation needs assessment, relevant planning documents and park analyses and using data supported research on equity, public health, sustainability, and adaptability, to develop data and information driven strategies. Each recommended strategy below includes a guiding lens symbol. The symbols and corresponding definitions identified in Chapter Two are provided here to help orient readers regarding the guiding lens that influenced each strategy. The predominant guiding lens addressed by the strategy is boxed.



**Equity:** The inherent worth of each individual in Madison should be esteemed and fostered, enabling them to reach full potential.



**Sustainability:** Management of resources to promote welfare and equity for current and future generations.



**Public Health:** The access and contribution to mental and physical health of a community.



**Adaptability:** Preparedness and ability to respond to and recover from hazards and threats with minimal damage to safety, health, security, and the economy.

### STRATEGY: IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO LAKES.



- Connect the community to water by designing areas for increased water access on public lands, including access for low income populations.



- Provide opportunities for water recreation.
- Support efforts to improve water quality in Madison's lakes and waterways.

### STRATEGY: DESIGN PARK FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE DIVERSE ACTIVITIES AND POPULATIONS.



- Provide flexible spaces that can respond to changing recreational trends.
- Incorporate spaces and facilities appropriate for different cultures, age groups, and abilities.
- Provide sufficient fields and courts to accommodate tournaments and other multiple field or court competitions.



### STRATEGY: PROTECT AND ENHANCE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.



- Manage invasive species in high quality natural areas.
- Continue to acquire conservation parkland to preserve unique habitats.
- Develop native plant habitats and ecosystems within parks, increasing biodiversity.
- Continue to recognize, preserve, and enhance historic parks.
- Preserve landmark vistas from public access areas.
- Respect and protect tribal sacred sites.

**STRATEGY: ACQUIRE PARKLAND TO REDUCE PARKLAND DEFICIENCIES AND ADDRESS INCREASING RESIDENTIAL DENSITY.**

- Review and revise parkland dedication and park impact fees every ten years to maintain funding to support future population and density demands.
- In areas of high residential density, preserve undeveloped land for open space or acquire new parkland on existing developed property, where feasible.
- Ensure that Neighborhood Development Plans identify adequate parkland for proposed residential density.
- Where there is no walkable access to mini, neighborhood, conservation, or community parkland, but there are other public recreation spaces that provide outdoor recreation amenities, partner with these groups to enhance outdoor recreation for the surrounding community.

**STRATEGY: ENSURE THAT NEW PARK DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN A FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE MANNER.**

- Minimize the number of mini parks along the City's periphery by requiring dedication of larger, minimum five-acre parks for new residential developments.
- Investigate opportunities to expand existing parkland.
- Ensure adequate funding is available to provide necessary infrastructure improvements for parks acquired by the City through intergovernmental agreements.
- Seek out and utilize innovative sources of support to enhance parkland and amenities.

**STRATEGY: ENSURE THAT EXISTING LEVELS OF SERVICE ARE MAINTAINED AND SUPPORTED THROUGH THE PARK SYSTEM AND ARE INCREASED AS NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES ARE DEVELOPED.**

- Seek adequate funding for the Parks Division through the budget process.
- Pursue grant opportunities and other funding sources to support programs and park maintenance.
- Evaluate operational resources including staffing and location of operational facilities to optimize resources for new city facilities.
- Evaluate operational resources for park and street use events to ensure sustainable and equitable opportunities for building and promoting community.
- Provide technical and administrative support to volunteers whose work supplements park maintenance and improvements.

**STRATEGY: CREATE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND FUNDING FOR PARKS.**

- Remove barriers to engagement.
- Identify and develop parkland and amenities that create inclusive park experiences.
- Incorporate public engagement methods and partnerships during the park planning process to help ensure all members of the Madison community are represented.
- Ensure funding is allocated equitably for development of new facilities, upgrading of existing infrastructure, and acquisition of new parkland.

**STRATEGY: IMPROVE THE PARK SYSTEM'S CAPACITY TO WITHSTAND FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES.**

- Improve the Parks Division's capacity to analyze and plan for the impacts of climate change and other environmental pressures.
- Ensure best management practices for stormwater runoff and infiltration to reduce impacts of increasing storm severity.
- Ensure park design and amenities are flexible to accommodate dynamic climate patterns.
- Design and support opportunities for winter activities that are less impacted by climate change.

**STRATEGY: INCREASE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN PARKS TO ENHANCE ACCESS.**

- Work with other city agencies as well as Dane County and neighboring communities to create a comprehensive system of greenspace connections by means of pedestrian, biking, and water trails through parks.
- Connect parks with other city amenities through trails and public transportation.

**STRATEGY: DEVELOP A HEALTHY AND DIVERSE URBAN TREE CANOPY ON STREET TERRACES AND WITHIN PARKS.**

- Improve the City's resiliency through increasing tree canopy diversity.
- Recognizing environmental and public health benefits of trees by promoting and expanding the urban tree canopy.

**STRATEGY: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS AND DEVELOP NEW ONES.**

- Strengthen opportunities and partnerships dedicated to engaging diverse communities in parks.
- Improve existing partnerships to ensure efforts are equitably distributed across geographic regions of the City and that efforts are aligned with identified land management strategies and master plans.
- Encourage engagement within parks through Friends Groups and other volunteer groups, support the efforts of such groups, and recognize their contributions to the park system in development and maintenance of park facilities.
- Develop joint-use agreements with organizations that provide recreational amenities that can fill recreation demands.

**STRATEGY: PURSUE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS TO REGIONAL ISSUES.**

- Where possible, enhance or develop regional recreation facilities identified by the Wisconsin SCORP for the Southern Gateways Region to address supply shortages.
- Continue joint planning efforts with Dane County to implement recommendations of the Dane County Park and Open Space Plan on property within the City of Madison.
- Collaborate with park advocacy organizations to meet park and recreation demands.

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