Chapter 3: Plan Purpose, Vision and Mission Statement

3.1 Plan Purpose

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) informs 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 helps guide 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 2025-2030 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.

The Park and Open Space Plan intends to be evidence-based and therefore 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 POSP is updated every five years to stay current with changing recreational trends, demographics, and park needs. Maintaining a current Park and Open Space Plan is also a prerequisite for participation in Federal and State park and open space grant programs. To accomplish many of the objectives laid out in this plan, it is important for the City to maintain its eligibility for these grant programs.

3.1 Planning Process

The planning process for 2025 to 2030 Madison Parks and Open Space Plan (POSP) took place over the following three phases:

<u>Phase I: Plan & Assess</u>

From fall 2023 to January 2024, the Parks division evaluated current data and existing conditions within the park system, changes to the park system since the last POSP update and identified key themes and issue areas to explore in the next iteration of the plan. The Parks Division also identified a consultant team to assist with the development of the plan and community engagement.

<u>Phase II: Develop Plan</u>

Over the course of 2024, the Parks Division and consultant team collaborated to develop the 2025-2030 POSP. Each chapter of the plan, including text, figures, tables, and mapping exhibits, were developed individually and reviewed by the Long Range Planning Committee (LRP) on a monthly basis.

Additionally, the Parks Division worked with the UW Survey Center in early 2024 to develop and distribute a survey to randomly selected households throughout Madison. In April and May 2024, the Parks Division held four Public Input Meetings (PIM) to solicit feedback from the general public on the

planning process and priorities for the parks System. Additional engagement with communities historically left out or marginalized during planning processes occurred over the course of late spring to early summer 2024. A detailed summary of the community engagement process and feedback are detailed in Chapter 5 (pg # TBD).

Phase III: Adopt & Communicate

Beginning in October 2024, the 2025-2030 POSP began its review by City Committees and Commissions, namely the LRP, Board of Parks Commissioners, and finally the Madison Common Council. The plan was formally adopted on [DATE TBD], 2025. Throughout 2025 the Parks Division will work to communicate the major themes, issues, and findings of the plan to the broader Madison Community.

3.2 Vision & Mission Statement

Vision Statement

- To provide the ideal system of parks, natural resources and recreational opportunities which will enhance the quality of life for everyone.

Mission Statement

- *Our Mission is* to provide an exceptional system of safe, accessible, well-planned and maintained parks, facilities, public cemetery, natural areas and public shorelines.
- *Our Mission is* to provide affordable opportunities for recreational and educational experiences.
- *Our Mission is* to preserve and expand our urban forest resources through a well-planned and systematic approach to tree maintenance, planting and natural area management.
- *Our Mission is* to preserve and promote parks' historic legacy.
- *Our Mission is* to provide opportunities for cultural interaction by facilitating community and ethnic festivals and through the display of public art.