



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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To: Board of Park Commissioners (BPC)

From: Ben Zellers, West Area Plan Co-Manager, Urvashi Martin

Re: West Area Plan Review

Date: August 14, 2024

Background

The [full draft of the West Area Plan](#) was introduced at Common Council on July 16, 2024. The Green and Resilient chapter, which includes parks, starts on page 46. The [West Area Plan](#) team worked with Parks staff to develop the parks portion of the Green and Resilient chapter. The team also visited BPC for check-in meetings on [May 17, 2023](#) and [December 13, 2023](#).

Draft Plan Changes

Changes to Parks-related actions since December 13th are minimal, but include:

- Adding Action #5 regarding increasing connectivity between Zook Park and the Southwest Path.
- Finalizing language regarding creating a neighborhood park south and west of University Avenue and west of Spring Harbor Drive (Action #9).
- Integrating language from the adopted Odana Area Plan regarding parkland acquisition directly into the West Area Plan rather than referencing the Odana Area Plan (Action #11).

In addition to coordinating with Parks staff on the above edits, Planning staff also worked with Parks staff on the introductory text, chart, and definitions contained in the "Parks and Greenways" subsection on pages 46-47. In addition to the City-led actions in the plan there is a section for community-led partnerships that may involve the City. One of the two Green and Resilient partnerships could potentially relate to City parks: "Explore partnership opportunities with community groups to create additional community gardens, especially in proximity to concentrations of multifamily housing."

Request for Board of Park Commissioners

The Board of Park Commissioners may recommend changes to the Final Draft Plan to the Plan Commission (lead). The Plan Commission will review recommended changes from BPC and the other four committees/commissions the Plan was referred to and make a final recommendation to the Common Council. After plan adoption, staff will incorporate Plan changes approved by the Common Council. If the BPC wishes to recommend any changes to the Plan Commission please include the changes in your motion.

Attachment

Board of Park Commissioners presentation

West Area Plan



Board of Park Commissioners: August 14, 2024
Team Members: Linda Horvath • Ben Zellers • Breana Collins • Colin Punt • Urvashi Martin

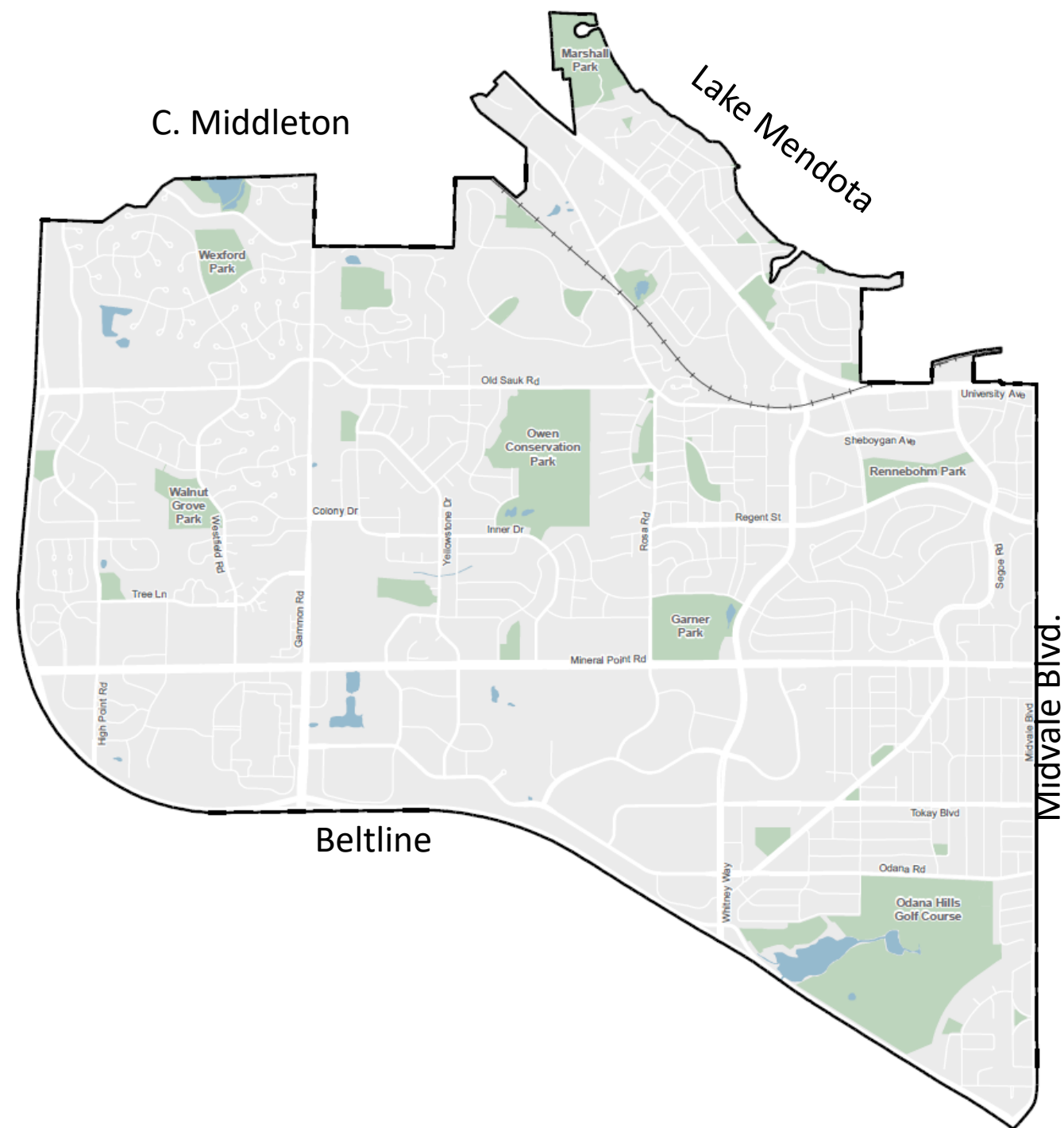
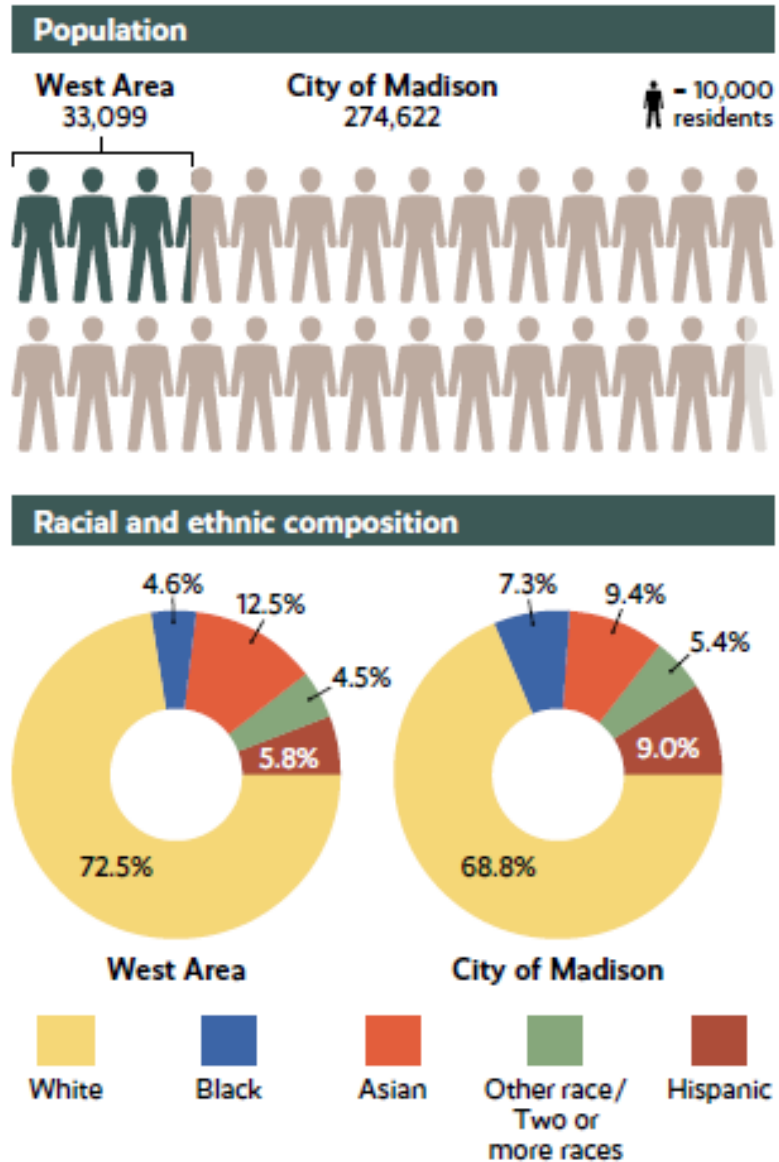
Agenda



1. Background
2. Planning Process
3. Public Feedback
4. Draft West Area Plan
Recommendation Highlights
5. Next Steps



Background



Planning Process



Planning Process and Public Engagement



Meetings and Outreach



In-Person Community Meetings



Community Surveys



Open Houses



Community



Overall Feedback Themes



- Tree canopy/conservation
- Development process concerns/mistrust
- Bike infrastructure connectivity
- Housing density – preserve single-family neighborhoods vs. adding housing

What We've Heard

Some of the comments we've received on the DRAFT West Area Plan:

Like redeveloping commercial areas to increase housing density

Do not want higher density of residents

Bring more diversity to neighborhoods

Multi-family units impact safety of current residents and changes character of neighborhood

Plan does not go far enough to increase multi-family housing



Overall Feedback Themes



- Mix stores, services with housing
- Vary size/scale of new buildings
- Exclusive views are loudest
- Welcome new people, while respecting established residents

What We've Heard

Some of the comments we've received on the DRAFT West Area Plan:

Take up rezoning at the time of an actual proposal

Want small apartment buildings/mixed-use sprinkled throughout neighborhood

Need to allow more small stores so neighborhoods are walkable, too much driving is required to get groceries

Expanding mixed-use in residential areas would help property values

Expanding mixed-use in residential areas would hurt property values



Draft Plan Format

Land Use and
Transportation

Neighborhoods
and Housing

Economy and
Opportunity

Culture and
Character

Green and
Resilient

Effective
Government

Health and
Safety

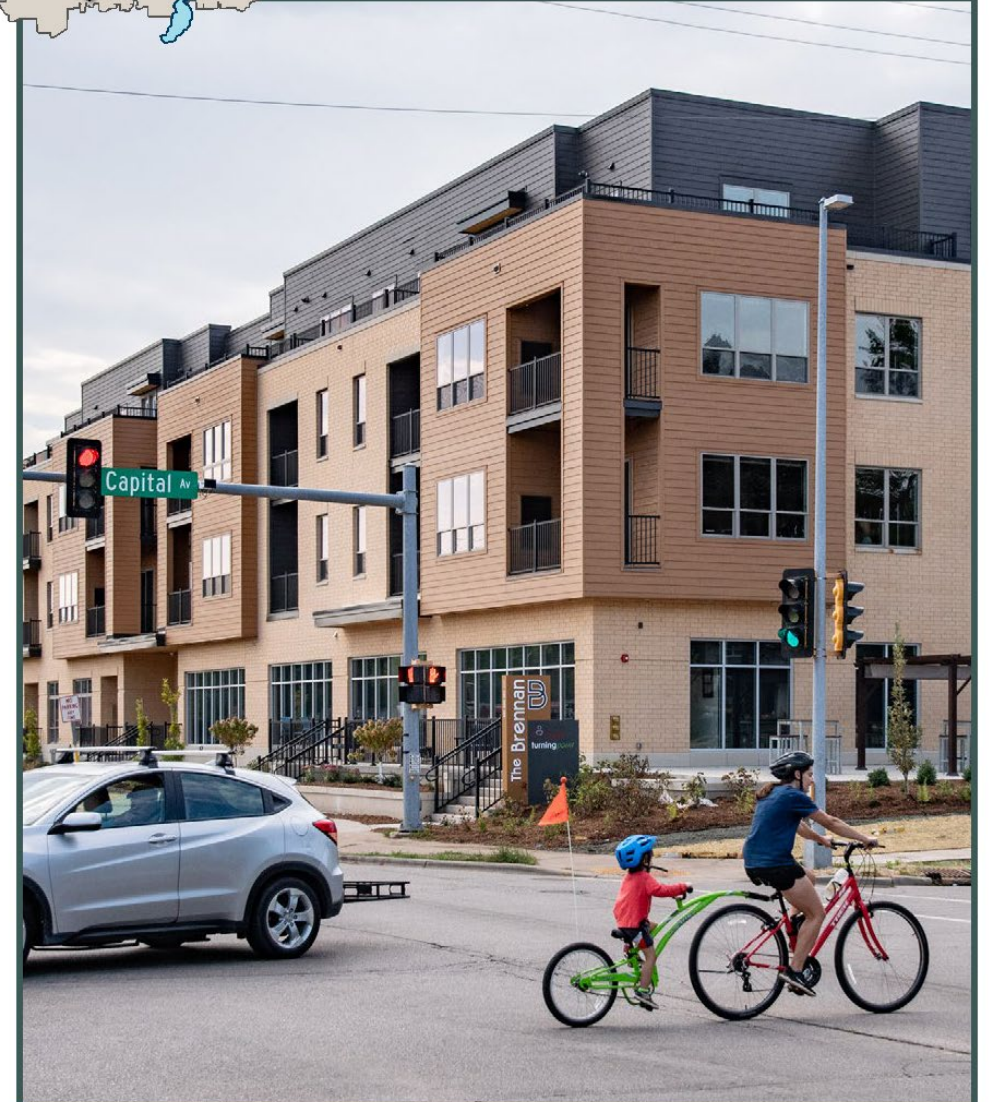
Chapter Contents

- What we heard
- Actions – led by the City
- Partnerships



West Area Plan

Introduction Draft | July 8, 2024

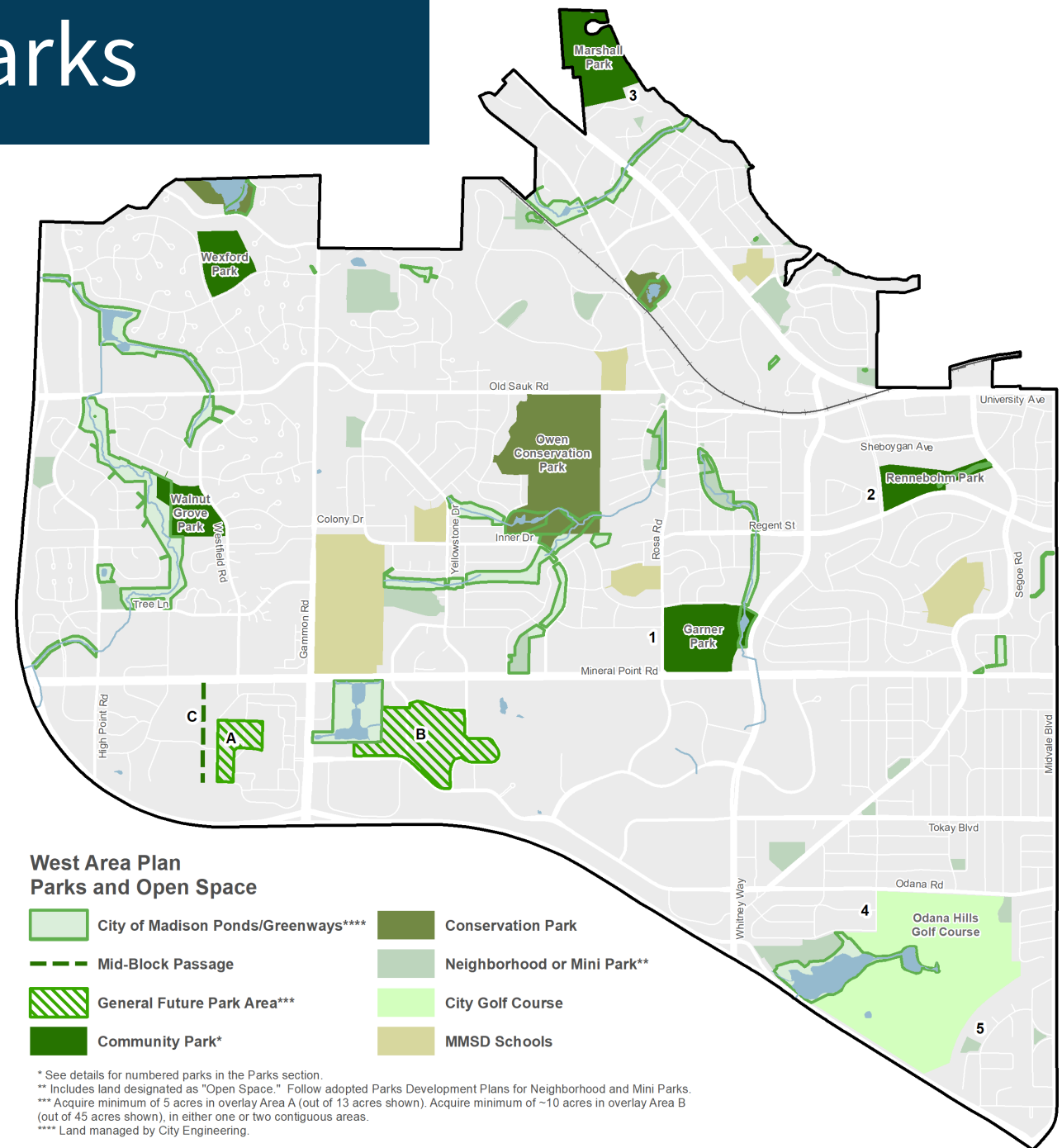


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Green and Resilient: Parks

- 18 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents
- 78% of households are within ¼ mile of a park

Type of Park	# of Parks	Acres in West Area
Mini Parks	14	28
Neighborhood Parks	8	65
Community Parks	5	140
Conservation Parks	3	118
Golf Course (Odana Hills)	1	171
Open Space/Not Classified	4	18
Total	36	540



Green and Resilient: Parks Actions Summary

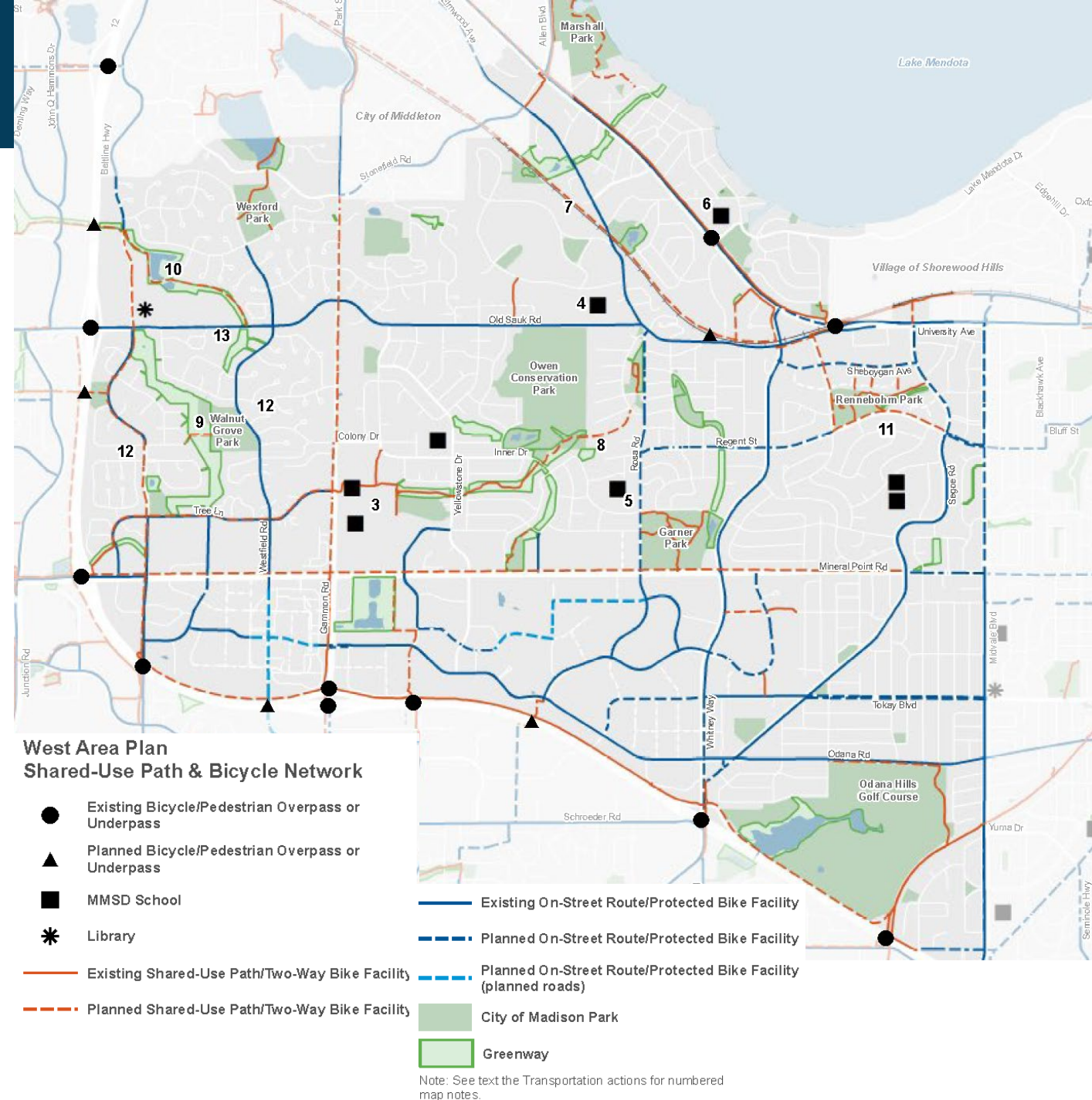


- Park-specific actions for Garner, Rennebohm, Marshall, Odana Hills Golf Course, Zook (+ reference to adopted PDPs for other parks)
 - Expand Rennebohm Park
- Improve lake access north of Mendota Drive
- Recommendation for new parks: areas A, B, and southwest of University Ave. & Spring Harbor Dr.
- Look for opportunities to install recreational biking facilities in the area



Paths & Bikes

- Biggest change: removal of north-south Sauk Creek Greenway path in favor of side path along High Point and buffered bike lanes on Westfield
 - Change would require reduction in on-street parking on both streets.
 - East-west path across greenway retained.



Draft Plan Review – Next Steps



- ✓ July 16 – **Common Council** introduction
- ✓ July 17 – **Economic Development Committee**
- ✓ July 31 – **Transportation Commission**
- ✓ August 5 – **Landmarks Commission**
- ✓ August 14 – **Urban Design Commission**
- ✓ August 14 – **Board of Park Commissioners**
- ❑ August 26 – **Plan Commission**
- ❑ September 10 – **Common Council**