

JANUARY 5, 2018

# COMPREHENSIVE PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## SPECIAL THANKS

This Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan is the result of ongoing dedication and collaboration among residents and stakeholders. The plan builds upon the Norwalk Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2013 and updated in 2016. The Plan has been shaped by those who have served their community on the Park's Advisory Committee, City Staff and the general public who attended meetings and participated in the public survey. The City of Norwalk staff thanks all of those who have contributed to this plan's conception and completion, which will help guide the future development of parks in Norwalk.

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## CHAPTER 1: Introduction





## PLAN PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan is the planning document used to guide future Norwalk park system improvements and acquisitions recommended by the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission and City Staff. The plan will identify goals and recommendations for the future development of parks and trails within the City of Norwalk and related policies.

## PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

The commission, made up of city residents appointed to a three-year term, advises and makes recommendations to the City Council with reference to improvements, furtherance and appropriate facilitation of parks, community facilities, and recreation within the city.



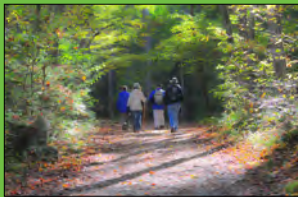
PARKS BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES

City parks and open space improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, and make our communities more desirable places to live and work.



**ECONOMIC**

- Increased Property Value
- Attract and Retain Businesses & Residents
- Increased Visitors to Community who Utilize Local Businesses
- Natural Stormwater Utilites can Reduce Infrastructure Costs



**HEALTH**

- Increased Opportunities for Physical Activity
- Can Improve Mental Health, Reduce Stress and Anxiety
- For Children, “Places to Play” equals “Places to Learn” which can be a Critical Component of Development.



**SOCIAL**

- Help Build a Sense of Community and Stronger Social Ties
- Help Engage Residents in Stewardship, Cultural and Recreational Opportunities.



**ENVIRONMENT**

- Pollution Abatement: Improve Air and Water Quality, Reduce Soil Loss
- Stormwater Management
- Increase Plant Diversity & Provide Wildlife Habitat



### GOALS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

One of the steps in the planning process is to set goals to serve as a basis for future park planning. Goals are general in nature, relating to overall objectives and conditions that shall set the standard for the future improvements and growth. Based on these ideals, a set of goals for the park system was established for the City as follows:

1. Establish a comprehensive plan to guide the acquisition and development of park and recreation facilities and amenities.
2. Determine a park classification system to evaluate park types and establish service area criteria.
3. Identify potential park locations in areas that have been identified as deficient in the park system as future development occurs.
4. Provide a diversity of recreational facilities to allow for equal opportunities for all residents and visitors.
5. Establish accessible facilities which are compliant with current ADA regulations and guidelines.
6. Establish a trail system which enhances the community's walkability, provides safe access to community parks and regional trail systems.
7. Establish a list of improvements to existing park sites and estimate of cost so priorities can be established by the City Staff and Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.
8. Establish a set of needs, priorities and potential costs for key future park improvements.



### In order to project future needs for park, trail and bikeway systems for Norwalk, the following components were analyzed:

- Conduct an inventory of existing parks, trails and amenities
- Review context: Community profile, location and proximity to other communities and recreational resources, as well as local natural resources
- Park classification identification and needs analysis
- Review City of Norwalk Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2013 & 2016 update.
- Review geographic distribution and potential gaps in service coverage
- Gather public input through community event(s), public survey and public open house

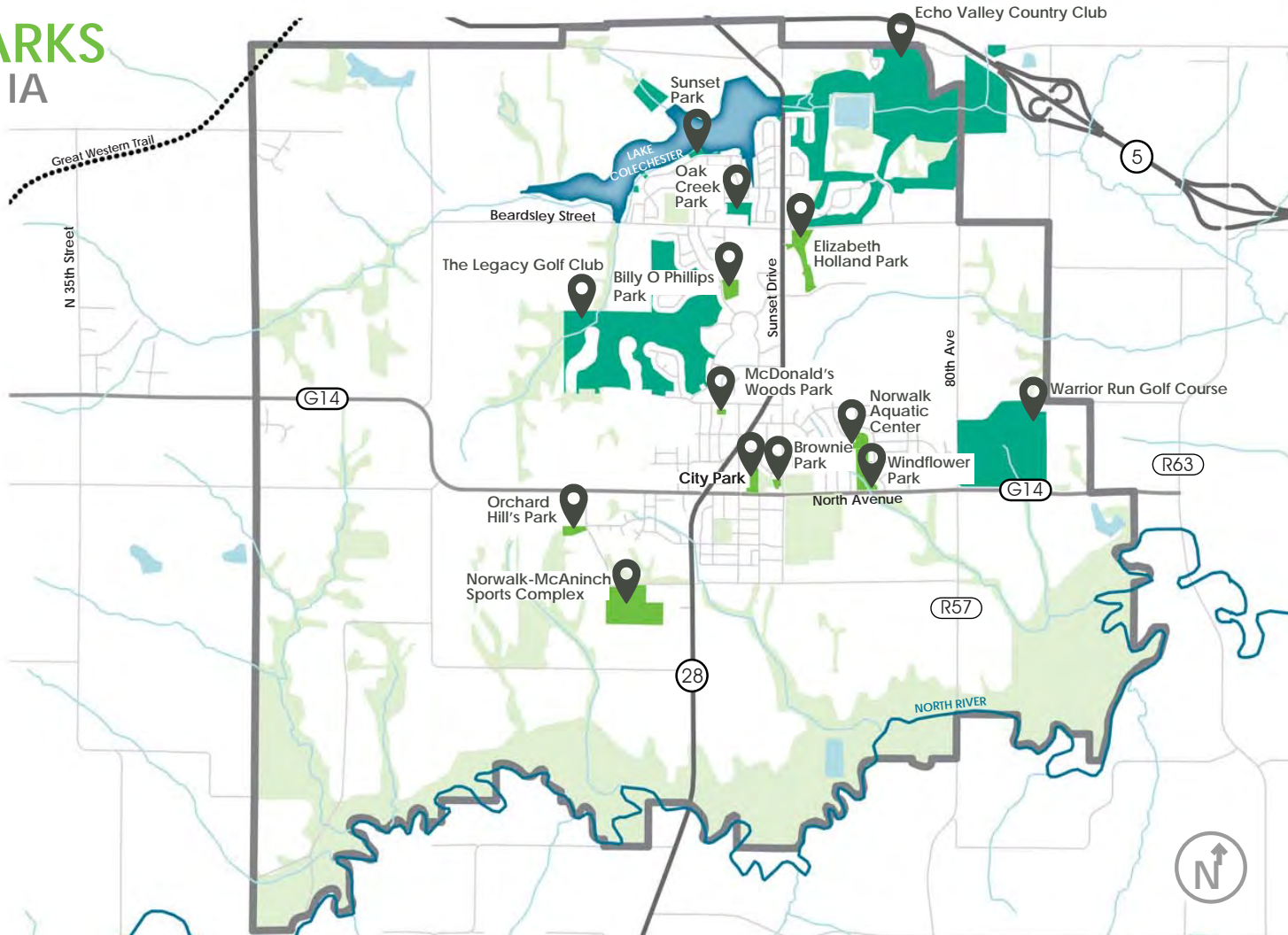
## CHAPTER 2: Needs Assessment

This chapter examines Norwalk's existing park and recreation system, which is managed by the Parks and Recreation Department under the advice of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. Parks are a vital part of life in Norwalk. Residents enjoy access to a variety of local, state and regional park facilities which offer an assortment of recreational activities and programs.





# AREA PARKS NORWALK, IA



## City Park Sites

- CITY PARK**  
NW corner of Main St & North Ave
- MCDONALD'S WOODS PARK**  
708 High Rd, Norwalk, IA 50211
- BILLY O. PHILLIPS PARK**  
2500 Lexington Dr, Norwalk, IA 50211
- BROWNIE PARK**  
NW corner of Main St & North Ave
- NORWALK MCANINCH SPORTS COMPLEX**  
200 Wright Rd, Norwalk, IA 50211

- ORCHARD HILLS PARK**  
West of Orchard Hills Dr & Rellim Dr intersection
- ELIZABETH HOLLAND PARK**  
SE corner of Iowa 28 & Beardsley St
- WINDFLOWER PARK**  
1915 North Ave Norwalk, IA 50211
- AQUATIC CENTER**  
1112 E 18th St, Norwalk, IA 50211

## Private Golf Courses

- ECHO VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB**  
3150 Echo Valley Dr, Norwalk, IA
- WARRIOR RUN GOLF COURSE**  
3089 North Ave, Norwalk, IA 50211
- THE LEGACY GOLF CLUB**  
400 Legacy Pkwy, Norwalk, IA 50211

## Lakewood Village Association Parks

- SUNSET PARK** (neighborhood park)
- OAK CREEK PARK** (neighborhood park)

## Legend

- 2030 City Boundary
- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space
- Designated Open Space or School Site

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Demographic characteristics can influence recreational interests, participation levels and needs within the community. Age and income can play significant roles in an individual's ability to pursue and participate in specific recreational activities. Ethnicity, employment and education levels can also play a minor role.

Location

Nestled in the rolling plains and bounded on the south by the North River. Norwalk is made up of 11 square miles located southwest of Des Moines and east of West Des Moines on the north edge of Warren County. The community lies at the intersection of Iowa Highway 5 and Iowa Highway 28 and 6 miles south of the Des Moines International Airport. This location has helped make the City one of the fastest growing cities in central Iowa.

Population & Demographic Trends<sup>(1)</sup>

The City of Norwalk is currently growing with a population of approximately 10,590 residents as of 2016. This is a 53.8-percent increase since 2000 and 18.4-percent increase since 2010. With Norwalk's proximity to the Des Moines Metro, this type of growth is expected to continue at a rapid rate. The median household income is on the rise since 2000, estimated at \$80,675 as of 2016.

According to the 2010 Census, population density was 832.9 inhabitants per square mile with 43.3% of the households having children under the age of 18 living with them. The median age of the community was 34.3, with 30.2% of residents under the age of 18 and 36.5% between the ages of 18-44. The City of Norwalk updated their City Comprehensive Plan in 2013 and 2016. Population estimates and trends were reviewed during this process. According to the medium series estimate the population in Norwalk could reach up to 15,930 by 2020 and 28,370 residents by 2030.

<sup>(1)</sup> SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Norwalk City, Iowa - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/norwalkcityiowa/PST045216> and [http://www.norwalk.iowa.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_6519743/File/Government/Departments/Economic%20Development/norwalk%20quick%20facts.pdf](http://www.norwalk.iowa.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6519743/File/Government/Departments/Economic%20Development/norwalk%20quick%20facts.pdf)



217% POTENTIAL GROWTH from 2010 to 2030



### Effects on Recreational Needs

The City 2013 Comprehensive Plan also identified existing parks, provided a classification system, and future projections for park facilities were made based on the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) 1995 guidelines and population projections. These recommendations, demographics, public input and the latest information from the 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review findings will help guide the current Parks and Open Space Plan classification system and facility projections.

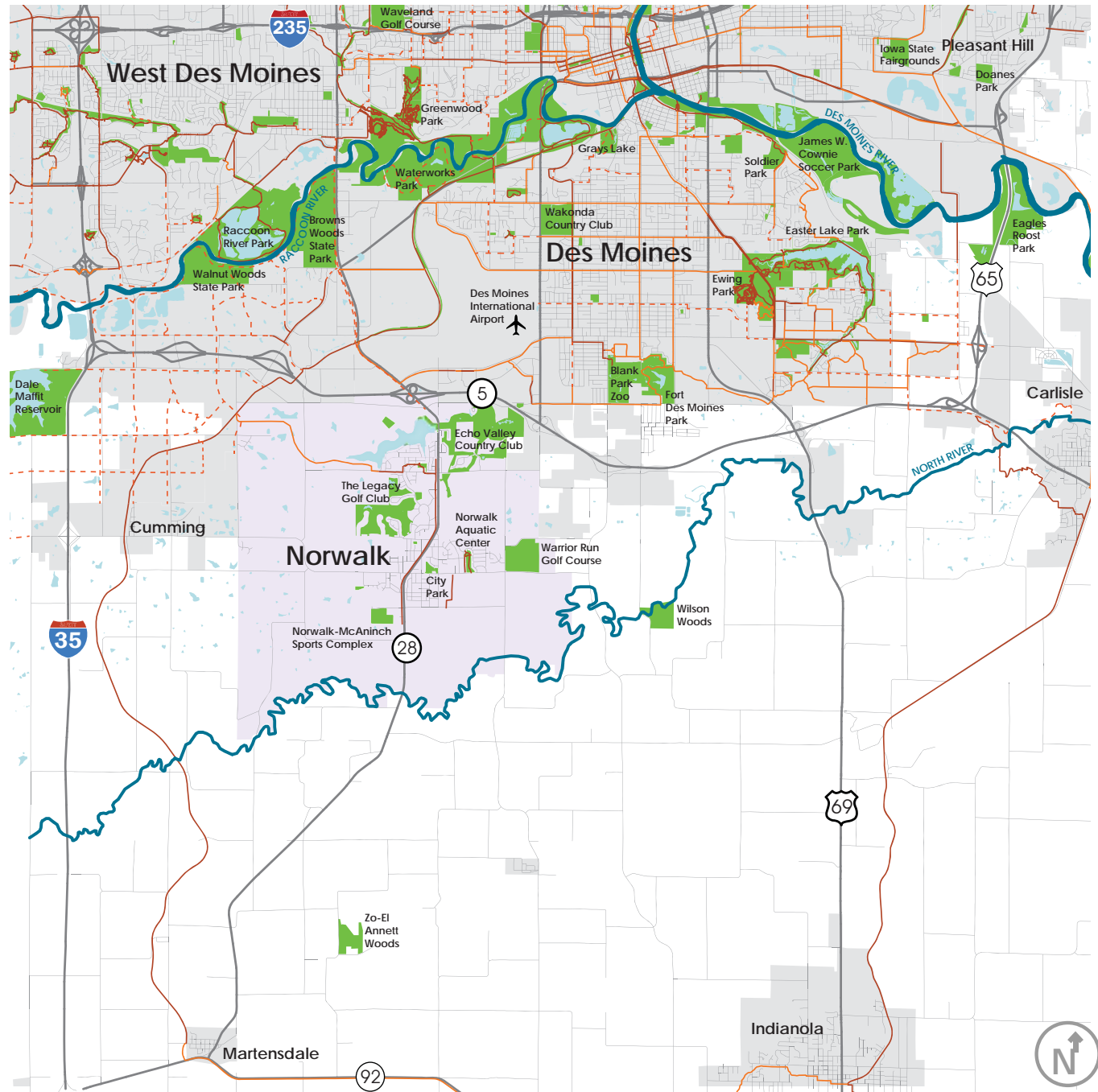
Young families, particularly the youth, tend to participate in recreation activities more frequently than any other age group. Youth often favor more competitive and active recreation activities, such as organized sports. As individuals age, participation in these types of activities tend to decrease and transition to activities such as walking, jogging and cycling. Young adults (18-34) often make up the core of adult competitive and active recreation activities. However, they also typically have less time to devote to organized recreational programs. Their time is often limited to weekends and occasional evenings.

The City of Norwalk has approximately 90 acres of land designated for public park or open space and three privately run golf courses. Norwalk has a series of parks, which meet a variety of recreational needs. However, not all park acres serve area residents in the same capacity. The parks vary in size and amenities provided. The City is also in close proximity to Racoon River Park in West Des Moines, Wilson and Zo-EI Annett Woods managed by Warren County Conservation, as well as Walnut Woods and Browns Woods State Parks.



# CONTEXT MAP

## NORWALK, IA



### Legend

- Incorporated Area
- Norwalk
- Open Space
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Proposed Trail



## CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Another unique aspect of Norwalk’s park system is the amount of park and open space privately owned and managed. The existing park total acreage fall into the following three categories: City owned and managed public parks, shared school facilities and privately owned and managed parks. This plan will only be addressing improvements and future needs of the City owned and/or managed parks; however, it is important to note the needs and services being met by other private entities and school facilities.

*“The measure of any great civilization is its cities and a measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.”*  
– John Ruskin

- **PRIVATELY OWNED NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (48 Acres plus 170 Acre Lake):** defined as privately owned park site managed through a non-profit organization (such as a homeowners’ association) that provides park and recreation services to a select residential neighborhood. Services are often provided to local association residents as part of their annual homeowner association fee, while non-resident members must pay a separate fee for park use. In Norwalk, the Lakewood Village Association, Inc., currently serves 615 single family homes and 2,250 people. The association has common property designated for recreational and open space. It also manages Lake Colchester, a 170 acre lake used for fishing and boating. The common properties include a beach area, four parks, a playground, gazebo and picnic shelters, a full size basketball court, two-net professional sized volleyball courts, a fire pit and patio area, walking/bike trails, camping areas, two fishing piers and five floating fishing docks, 60 dock floating marina, and a boat ramp.
- **SCHOOL FACILITIES USED FOR PARK SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING (65 Acres / 11 Facilities):** These are often considered a subset of parks. They are generally located on school property. They may have limited access or have restricted access during school hours. Depending on the circumstance, combining parks with school sites can fulfill some recreational needs of a community. Particularly elementary schools with playground facilities and general open space. The City is currently working with the school district to use indoor recreation facilities for park services and programs. Currently the playground facilities are off limits for general public use. Other outdoor spaces (i.e. tennis courts, track) have restricted access for public use.
- **PUBLIC CITY PARK SITES (90 Acres):** defined as officially owned and managed by the City for public use. The parks and their amenities are open to the general public at no cost. Fees for some special use facilities, such as aquatic centers, or renting space for private uses (i.e. shelter or sports facilities) are general practice.

Private Park	School Facility	Public Park	Total Acres
48	65	90	203



### PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

#### Community Parks

- **PURPOSE:** Serve the broader community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.
- **GENERAL USE:** They often include areas for intense recreational use, such as athletic facilities for organized sports, large group picnicking, and community gatherings. Sometimes they contain unique types of recreational amenities, such as unique playgrounds or large splash grounds. They may also feature access to significant natural areas; such as wetlands, riparian areas and woodlands.
- **SERVICE AREA:** Community parks often attract users from a greater geographic area. Therefore, support facilities are recommended, such as off-street parking and restrooms. Ideally they should have access from an arterial or collector street. Depending on the services provided, a community park can also meet the needs of a neighborhood park within the ¼ to ½ mile area. Otherwise, they typically serve a community up to a 3-mile radius.
- **DESIRED SIZE:** As needed to accommodate use, typically 30- 50 Acres.

### PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

They are used to facilitate future public park planning, define appropriate service levels and reduce conflicts between users. Facilities are classified according to the size of the facility, amenities provided and the area they serve. A park's classification relates to the service area it provides and helps determine the geographic distribution necessary to eliminate service coverage gaps. Depending on the classification, the park may meet multiple service needs within the community. The following are updated classifications for Norwalk's park system and recreational amenities.



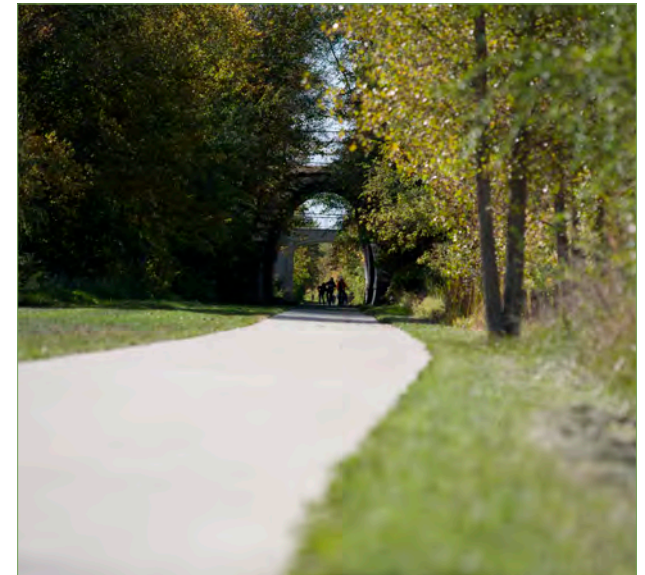
### Neighborhood Parks

- **PURPOSE:** A backbone of the park system. Serves as the recreational and social focus for a residential area.
- **GENERAL USE:** Designed to accommodate unstructured recreation activities. They typically include amenities such as playground equipment, open picnic areas or small picnic shelter, multi-purpose open space, and trails. Sometimes amenities such as small splash grounds, basketball courts and tennis courts are also provided.
- **SERVICE AREA:** They are intended to serve the surrounding neighborhood by providing local access to basic recreation resources. They are located within walking or bicycling distance of most users. Typically this is considered ½ mile radius.
- **DESIRED SIZE:** Typically range in size from 5-10 acres. Parks smaller than 5 acres are sometimes referred to as a Mini Park and provide neighborhood park facilities for residential neighborhoods within 1/4 mile radius. However, Mini Parks are often discouraged due to the additional maintenance challenges of multiple smaller parks vs. fewer larger parks.
- **OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:** Ideally, they should be geographically centered within safe walking and bike access to its service area. This type of park typically does not include amenities that could be a significant draw to park users residing outside the park's service area, such as large shelters or dog parks. These types of amenities can create parking constraints, excessive use and user conflict. Restrooms and on-site parking are optional amenities at these types of parks.



### Linear Parks

- **PURPOSE:** These parks, sometimes referred to as Greenway Parks, include natural and/or built corridors that provide connections between various parks, neighborhoods and community features.
- **GENERAL USE:** They typically support trail-orientated activities, such as walking, jogging, biking and roller skating. They can play a major role in a community's ability to support a healthy lifestyle and regional networks can invite visitors from surrounding communities.





- **OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:** These parks may incorporate smaller-scale neighborhood park amenities, such as picnic areas, exercise stations and play equipment. They can play an essential role in providing safe bicycle commuter routes for residents and children. They may include abandoned railroad lines, designated wildlife corridors, or elongated natural areas such as riparian corridors.
- **DESIRED SIZE:** Varies depending on amenities and natural system it's supporting. Typically 25 ft. width minimum is desired. However, a 200 ft. width corridor is more optimal.

### Special Use Park

- **PURPOSE:** These park system sites serve specific purposes. They serve a unique recreational need within the community, such as an aquatic center, sports complex, golf course etc.
- **SERVICE AREA:** These parks often attract users from a regional area. Therefore, support facilities are required, such as off-street parking and restrooms. Ideally they should have access from an arterial or collector street. They are strategically located based on service provided.
- **DESIRED SIZE:** Varies depending on amenities provided. A sports park typically needs a minimum of 40 acres, but varies in size based on facilities provided and community needs.

### Natural Areas

- **PURPOSE:** These sites are largely undeveloped or developed and managed in a natural state for conservation and stormwater management. They may provide opportunities for passive recreation; however, their primary purpose is to provide stormwater management, protect unique or significant natural features (i.e. rivers, streams, wetlands, wildlife habitat, steeply sloping hillsides, areas and other environmentally sensitive areas). Types of passive recreation these sites can support are trail-related uses, bird and wildlife viewing, photography, environmental interpretation, picnic shelters and education.
- **OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:** These areas provide a number of ecological benefits, including providing habitat, flood hazard protection, filtering stormwater and controlling erosion. Although they may not serve a larger recreational need, protecting these resources is critical to a community's quality of life, economic resiliency and access to clean water.
- **SERVICE AREA:** The service area for these types of parts is based on the natural features it is protecting and less on the recreational services it provides.



### SUMMARY OF PARK LAND NEEDS

This section examines the City-owned and operated recreation areas and any other park with public access. It considers the following:

- **Facilities by Relationship to Population.** The NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) and The Trust for Public Land provide a series of reports and guidelines that are used to examine where an individual community stands in relationship to national medians.
- **Facilities by Classification.** Based on the classifications defined in the previous section each existing park is assigned a classification in order to further understand the level of service provided and area served.
- **Facilities by Geographic Location and Distribution.** Mapping is conducted to analyze the geographical gaps in service areas.

### FACILITIES RELATIONSHIP TO POPULATION

#### *NRPA REVIEW:*

The 2017 NRPA Performance Report states the national median provides 9.6-acres of park land per 1,000. This number increases to 10.5 per 1,000 for systems servicing populations 20,000 or less. The Midwest Region average increases that number again to an average of 11.3 acres per 1,000. The 2017 NRPA Performance Report also states that jurisdictions with 500-1,500 residents per square mile show a median of 9.8 acres per 1000 with the upper quartile of locations studied providing 18.8 acres per 1,000.

#### *The Trust for Public Land REVIEW:*

The Trust for For Public Land has recently been undergoing their own analysis of park land dedication. Their 2016 City Park Facts publication found the Median for all cities study was 13.1 acres of park per 1,000. The Median for Low-Denisty Cities was 23.3 acreas per 1,000.

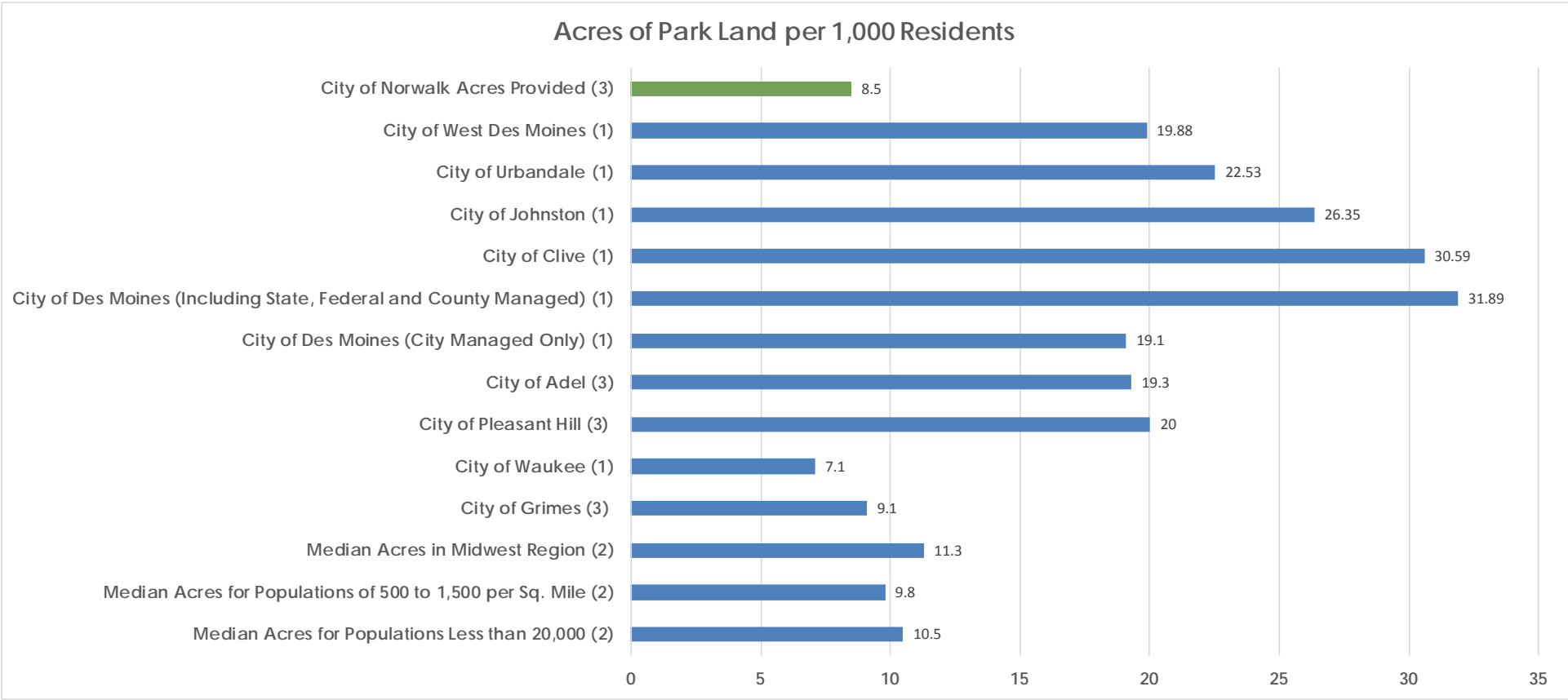
#### *Central Iowa REVIEW:*

It is also important to take into consideration local trends from a regional area. On average similar and neighboring communities tend to be closer to the upper quartile of park space dedication in comparison to national standards. For example, the City of Pleasant Hill averages approximately 20 acres per 1000. The Des Moines Register published in article in 2016 by Kim Norvell providing an anaylsis of local parkland dedication in the Des Moines metro area in comparison to The Trust for Public Land analysis. It was clear the Des Moines metro tends to provide above the national averages. The Cities of Clive and Des Moines breach 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The following page provides a chart showing some of the local cities in comparison to Norwalk and the NRPA medians.

#### *Current City of Norwalk REVIEW:*

Norwalk's current comprehensive plan calls for 10 acres of park and trail land dedication per 1,000 residents. Currently, the City of Norwalk (90 public park acres) is below the national median with an average of 8.5 acres of public park space per 1,000.



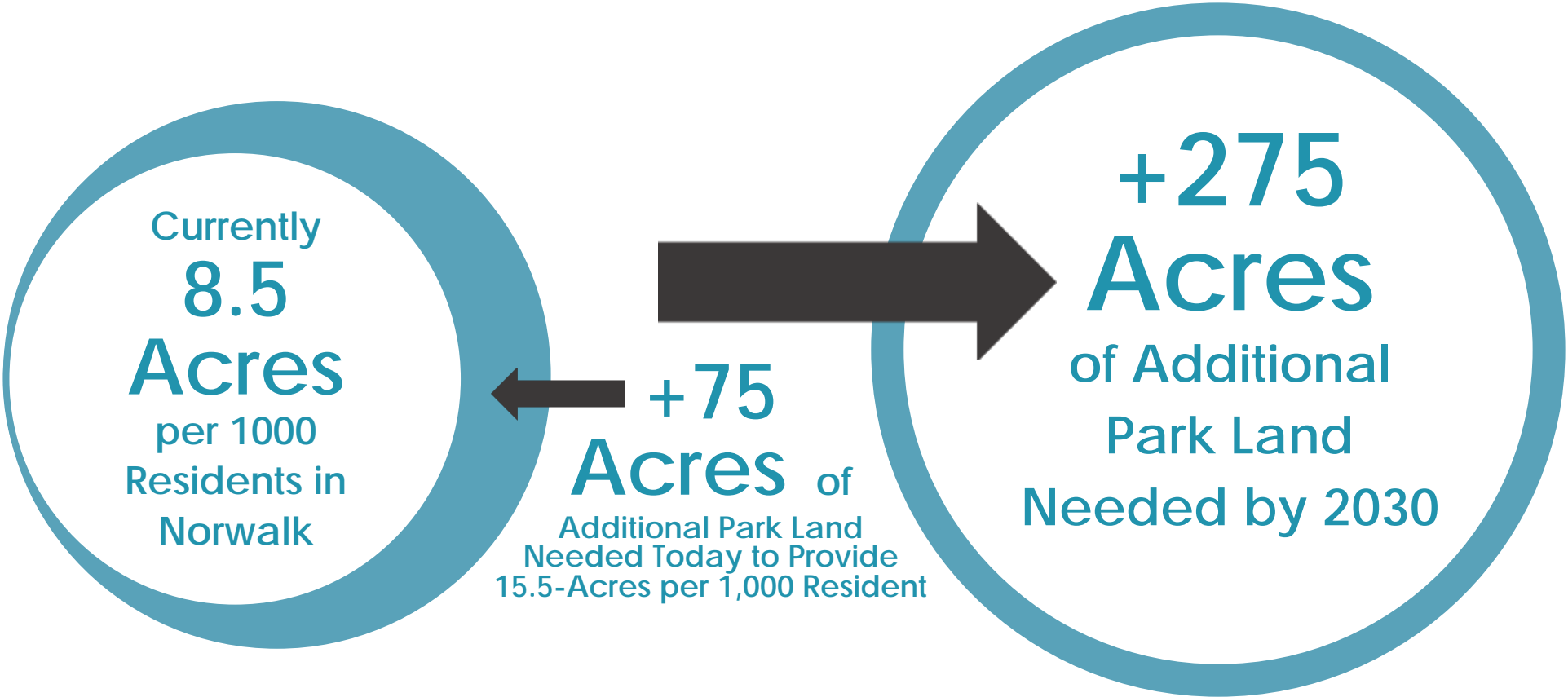


SOURCES:

- (1) <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2016/12/06/parkland-central-iowa-outpaces-majority-large-us-cities/94666060/>
- (2) <http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/>
- (3) Snyder & Associates, Inc. review of City data available from City Comprehensive Plans and Webistes.

It is also important to note many of these communities are considering adding and increasing the amount of park space along greenways and linear corridors, such as the City of Des Moines and Pleasant Hill recently adopted a master plan that includes land acquisitions for properties along Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway. West Des Moines recently unveiled an ambitious 10-year, \$32 million, park plan for the Five Waters Recreation Area include acquiring additional land along the Raccoon River. These corridors provide recreational, flood hazard mitigation, storm water and community trail connectivity benefits.

The City's current Comprehensive Plan recommends a standard of 10 acres of park land and trails per 1,000 residents. Generally, Iowa communities like Pleasant Hill, Adel and Des Moines provide 15 to 20 acres of park space per 1,000. An additional 75 acres would bring the community closer to this average and provide a total of 15.5 acres per 1,000 residents. It is also important to note members of the Lakewood Village Association provide and manage their own neighborhood park space. If you include Lakewood's 13.5 acres serving 2250 residents neighborhood park needs, the total proposed park space per resident goes up to 29 acres per 1,000 residents. However, these same residents still need to be considered in other park classification services (i.e. Community and Special Use Parks).



FACILITIES BY CLASSIFICATION

As outlined earlier, the parks are given classifications in order to better understand the types of park services being provided and the geographical service area they serve. The backbone of the parks system is the neighborhood parks. The City’s current dedication policy requires the equivalent of six (6) acres of land for development of the neighborhood park system for each 1,000 population estimated to inhabit the area to be developed. This is equivalent to 261 square feet of land per resident. Special Use Parks, Natural Areas and Community Parks make up the remaining acres of the community park system. Greenway/Linear Parks tend to be associated with trail development and driven less by park space needs and more by connectivity needs and opportunities within the community. The chart below shows Norwalk currently has a 22.4 acre minimum deficiency in Community Parks and 52.6 acre deficiency in Neighborhood Parks.

Park Classification	Existing Facilities	Recommended Standards for 1000 Residents per Sq. Mile		Existing Demand (Population 10,600)	Future Demand (Population 28,370 in 2030)
Neighborhood Park	11.4 acres	6 acres per	1,000	64 acres	170 acres
Community Park	18.9 acres	9.5 acres per	1,000	101 acres	269.5 acres
Special Use Park	45 acres				
Natural Areas	14.7 acres				
Greenway/Linear Park	0	Varies	-	-	Associated Primarily with Trail Development
Private Park & Open Space (not including golf courses)	48 acres	6 acre per	1,000	13.5 acres (Serves 2250 Residents of Lakewood)	36 acres (Assuming a 6000 resident Population of Lakewood)

It is also important to note the above are minimum goals. Park space needs, particularly Special Use parks, are also often driven by community recreation needs. Based on feedback from City staff and the community, an additional 120 -acres in sports facilities will likely be needed as the community continues to grow. Discussions on relocating the existing 40-acre sports complex were also held. With population predictions showing 28,000 plus, serious consideration should be given to expanding the communities park system, including sports facilities. Communities like Ankeny and Altoona have approximately 150 acres of land dedicated to sport facilities. Pleasant Hill has approximately 50 acres and is developing another 40 acres for sports facilities, for a total of 90 acres. They also have partnerships with the surrounding communities to supplement some of their programming needs.

INDIVIDUAL PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

As part of the needs assessment it is important to identify each existing park's classification. This helps to determine the types of potential future park services these parks can provide. Existing private park, recreation and open space sites are also included in the analysis to better understand what needs are being filled by these entities. Schools and libraries are also included and play an important role in providing recreational programming and facilities. In the future, the City should consider additional joint opportunities with the School District and library.

**EXISTING PARK AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATIONS**  
 The following table provides a breakdown of existing park and open space sites within the community and their assigned classification.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS TABLE 2.1

Parks, Open Space & Community Features	Total Acres	Notes
<b>Community Parks</b>		
Brownie Park	1.5	Although not a large park, Brownie's proximity to the Library and City Park make it an expansion of these two facilities and allows it to provide more community orientated services.
City Park	5.4	City Park is technically undersized for a community park. However, the community is currently utilizing it for various community events and facilities. The adjacency to the Library and Brownie add to the community park classification.
Library Campus	4.6	The library is nestled between two small parks, City and Brownie. The property also offers an arboretum, gazebo, benches and a small pond.
Windflower Park	12.0	Windflower is also undersized for a community park. However, it's adjacency to the aquatic center and unique recreational facilities (i.e. partially enclosed shelter, disk golf & skate park) place it in this classification.
Total Community Park Space in Acres	23.5	

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS TABLE 2.1

Parks, Open Space & Community Features	Total Acres	Notes
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>		
McDonald's Woods	1.1	McDonald's Woods is technically undersized for a neighborhood park. It falls into a sub-classification of Neighborhood Mini-Park. Its service area only provides for 1/4-mile radius and current lack of amenities limit its current use. However, McDonald's Woods offers large shade trees and room for potential neighborhood park amenities.
Billy O. Phillips Park	6.2	This neighborhood park serves mainly the Legacy neighborhoods. Currently this park is heavily used by the community due to the lack of other community park spaces and newer facilities. It is anticipated this park will become more of a neighborhood park as future park sites and more appropriately sized community parks are developed throughout the community.
Orchard Hills Park	4.1	This neighborhood park serves the new Orchard Hill development and some of the other neighborhoods on the western edge of Norwalk. The park site is adjacent to property slated for a future elementary school. The park is technically undersized for a neighborhood park, and potentially expanding it or joint use of future school property should be considered. This park if expanded could potentially help fulfill the City's need for additional community park space.
Total Neighborhood Park Space in Acres	11.4	
<b>Special Use Park</b>		
Norwalk-McAninch Sports Complex	40.0	Currently the only facility providing facilities for little league, recreational ball fields and soccer fields for both adults and children in the City. An expansion or relocation of the facility is being considered by the City due to concerns with capacity limits and current site constraints.
Norwalk Aquatic Center	5.0	The facility was recently updated to address City needs for the next 10 years. However, community input has stressed a desire for additional access to water type activities in the community, either through an expansion, indoor aquatic facilities or splash grounds. Potential locations for splash grounds have been identified in this plan in order to address this need until additional funding is available for expansion to the existing aquatic facility.
Total Special Use Park Space in Acres	45.0	
<b>Linear/Greenway Parks</b>		
Currently None	0.0	This type of park should be considered for future park and trail improvements. This type of park space is important to provide community trail connectivity, walkability and for management of stormwater. These types of parks, however, typically do not provide enough room for neighborhood park activities. Dedicating neighborhood park space adjacent to these types of parks can help build up a community's livability and walkability.
Total Linear Park Space in Acres	45.0	

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS TABLE 2.1

Parks, Open Space & Community Features	Total Acres	Notes
<b>Natural Resource Parks</b>		
Elizabeth Holland Park	16.7	This is a brand new park currently under construction. The park's acres are primarily taken up by stormwater basins. The park space also allows for a trail loop, open picnic areas, open picnic shelter and restrooms. Parking is planned on the southeast end of the park. The park offers the opportunity for the community to showcase and educate the public on best management practices for stormwater management, including the use of native vegetation. Prairie areas are identified in the master plan and the community input shows an interest in a nature playground at this park.
Total Nat. Resource Park Space in Acres	16.7	
<b>School Facilities</b>		
Oviatt Elementary School	8.6	Consideration to opening up some of the exterior playgrounds similar to other communities would potentially help increase neighborhood park type services. However, the maintenance needs and liability of after school hour uses will need to be discussed further as a partnership between the City and the School District. Currently the interior gym space is utilized for City Park programming.
Lakewood Elementary School	15.3	Consideration to opening up some of the exterior playgrounds similar to other communities would potentially help increase neighborhood park type services. However, the maintenance needs and liability of after school hour uses will need to be discussed further as a partnership between the City and the School District. Currently the interior gym space is utilized for City Park programming.
Future School Site	80.0	This future school site offers opportunity to expand community park uses and potentially interior park programming and services through City and School District partnership. The large site offers ample room for an interior recreation facility and additional exterior recreation space. The site's topography may make it difficult to consider for future special use park site expansion (i.e. sports complex).
High School - Middle School Complex	40.0	Currently, the exterior tennis courts are open to the public and used for City Park programming when not in use for School activities. The interior gym space is also utilized for City Park programming. The track is open to members of the public for a small fee.
Total School Facilities in Acres	143.9	
<b>Private Parks &amp; Open Space (including golf courses)</b>		
<i>Privately managed park spaces and golf courses are a great asset to the community and can add to the communities livability and marketability</i>		
The Legacy Golf Club	216.1	Privately Owned and Managed Golf Course
Warrior Run Golf Course	139.9	Privately Owned and Managed Golf Course
Echo Valley County Club	342.8	Privately Owned and Managed Golf Course
Lakewood Village Association	118.0	Association Owned and Managed Park System
Total Private Park Space & Open Space in Acres	816.8	
<b>Total Park and Open Space Acres (Public &amp; Private)</b>		
<b>1102</b>		

### FACILITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION

The following map provides an analysis of 1/4 and 1/2-mile service areas provided by each park site serving neighborhood park needs. These needs can be served by parks of various classifications, as long as they provide amenities typically found in neighborhood parks. Currently, the City's geographical distribution of parks meets the neighborhood park needs at a 1/2-mile radius for much of the community. However, McDonald's Woods is only 1.1-acres in size and classifies as a Neighborhood Mini Park. The size of the park limits the service area to 1/4-mile and creates a need for additional park space in the western edge of town. Also, as areas continue to develop, park spaces will need to be provided for the new neighborhood developments, such as those in the eastern and north-eastern half of the community.

It is important to note major arterials and higher capacity roads can be considered a barrier to park access and affect service areas if safe crossings and sidewalks are not provided. This is reviewed in more detail under the assessment of the community trail network.

The map also shows the 100-year floodplain. Many communities are restricting the type of development and often times setting aside this land for conservation and public recreation uses. Protecting the floodplain helps communities protect themselves from the economic impacts of flood hazards, improves local water quality and often has a positive economic benefit from the livability benefits and recreational opportunities they can provide. Norwalk's 2016 Future Landuse plan identifies this and designates much of this area for Agricultural Reserve/Open Space use. These areas can also be natural locations for greenway trail systems. This is further identified and discussed in the recommendations on trail and bikeway improvements.

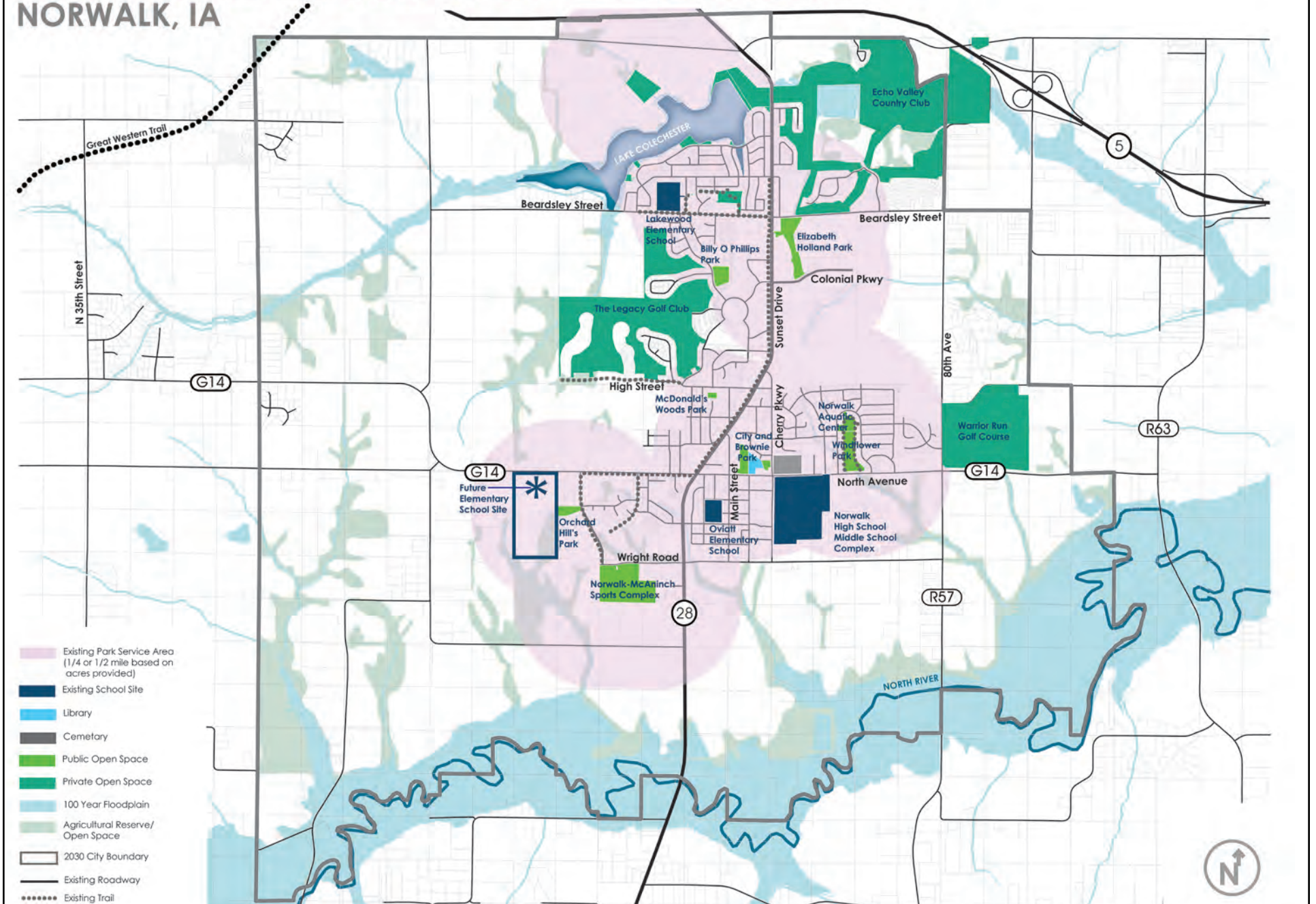
#### **SERVICE AREAS**

**The following map was used to help understand existing service areas, designated open space and flood concerns within the community.**



# EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PARK ACCESS

## NORWALK, IA



MAP 2.3

### SUMMARY OF TRAIL AND BIKEWAY NEEDS

The next page shows a map of existing and currently planned or proposed trail improvements for the City of Norwalk.

Trail recommendations for Norwalk were made based upon the City's current GIS data for existing, planned, and proposed routes. Additional resources including feedback from Norwalk's School District, superintendent, Planning & Zoning commission meeting notes, public survey results, Norwalk's existing Future Land Use Map, and further site evaluations in Google Earth were utilized to provide a basis for understanding the recreational needs of the community.

Areas of specific focus included Cherry Pkwy., Cherry St., Iowa 28/Sunset Dr., North Ave. /Hwy G14, and Sub Area 1 along with areas of currently proposed greenway trail, and the southern portion of the City boundary. With public survey results indicating the desire for more recreational trails and improved connectedness to the regional trail system, attention was given to evaluating the potential for the development of a loop-style greenway trail that would follow the southern portion of the City boundary along the river, and connect with the Great Western Trail on the northwest side of the City.

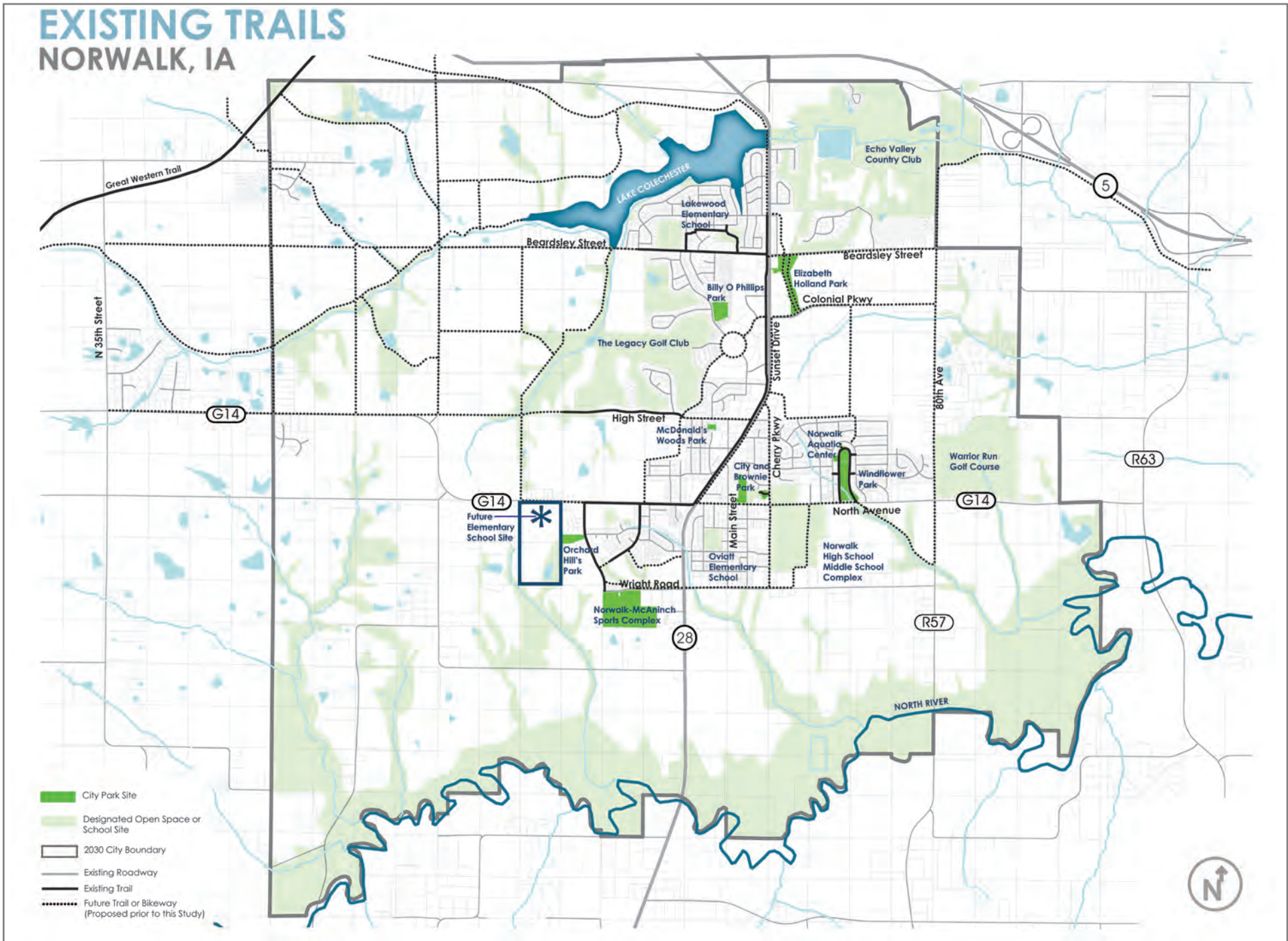
In addition to evaluating the potential for greenway trails, existing on-and-off street bike facilities were assessed to gain a more thorough insight regarding which specific areas could benefit from the addition of features such as buffered or protected bike lanes, shared-lane markings, and sidepath trails. Identifying areas where these features are needed aids in providing opportunities for improving the safety of bicyclists and trail users throughout the City.





# EXISTING TRAILS

## NORWALK, IA



MAP 2.4

### POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS AND OTHER TRAIL PLANS

#### CONNECT: CENTRAL IOWA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN 2020

*Connect* is an action plan developed by the Central Iowa Bicycle & Pedestrian Roundtable of the Des Moines Area MPO and adopted in August 2009. *Connect* is intended to provide a cohesive, well-connected bicycling and walking system within the central Iowa region.

Connect has the capability to<sup>1</sup>:

- Facilitate the development of a regional, connected, comprehensive, safe, and convenient bicycle and pedestrian transportation system;
- Increase awareness and usage of alternative transportation modes;
- Support and promote benefits of alternative transportation modes that encourage active, healthy lifestyles;
- Encourage building a regional system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
- Decrease the number of accidents and injuries by respecting the rights of bicyclists and motorists; and,
- Serve as a framework for comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing planning processes for state agencies, counties, and local governments in planning and developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

An On-Street Bikeway Feasibility Study was also conducted in August 2014. Additional information can be found on the Des Moines Area MPO website: <https://dmampo.org/connect-bike-ped-transportation-plan/>



<sup>1</sup><https://dmampo.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/connect-august-5-2009-final.pdf>



### WATER TRAILS

Currently, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is developing water trail plans for the region. The goal is to provide a roadmap for enhancing the use and experiences along the 150-miles of waterways in the Greater Des Moines region. The Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan includes the North and Middle Rivers to the south of Norwalk and the Raccoon and Des Moines River to the north. Water trails are waterways used for boating and paddling access. Working with potential partners like the MPO and Warren County Conservation will be critical in the development of future greenway and trail systems. These partnerships can help create a unified vision with positive economic impacts for the region. These partnerships can also help increase grant funding opportunities and provide additional funding resources. A copy of the concept plans from the MPO's master plan are found on the following two pages. Additional information about the plans are available on the MPO's website <https://dmampo.org/water-trails/>.

### A Regional Vision

"The water trails and greenways of Greater Des Moines will be a natural haven, healthy ecosystem, signature recreational destination, economic driver and community focal point that welcome people of all ages, abilities, interests, incomes and cultures to connect with their rivers, creeks and greenways."

*-From: A Vision for North and Middle Rivers, Booklet 5 of 8 from the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways 2016 Master Plan.*





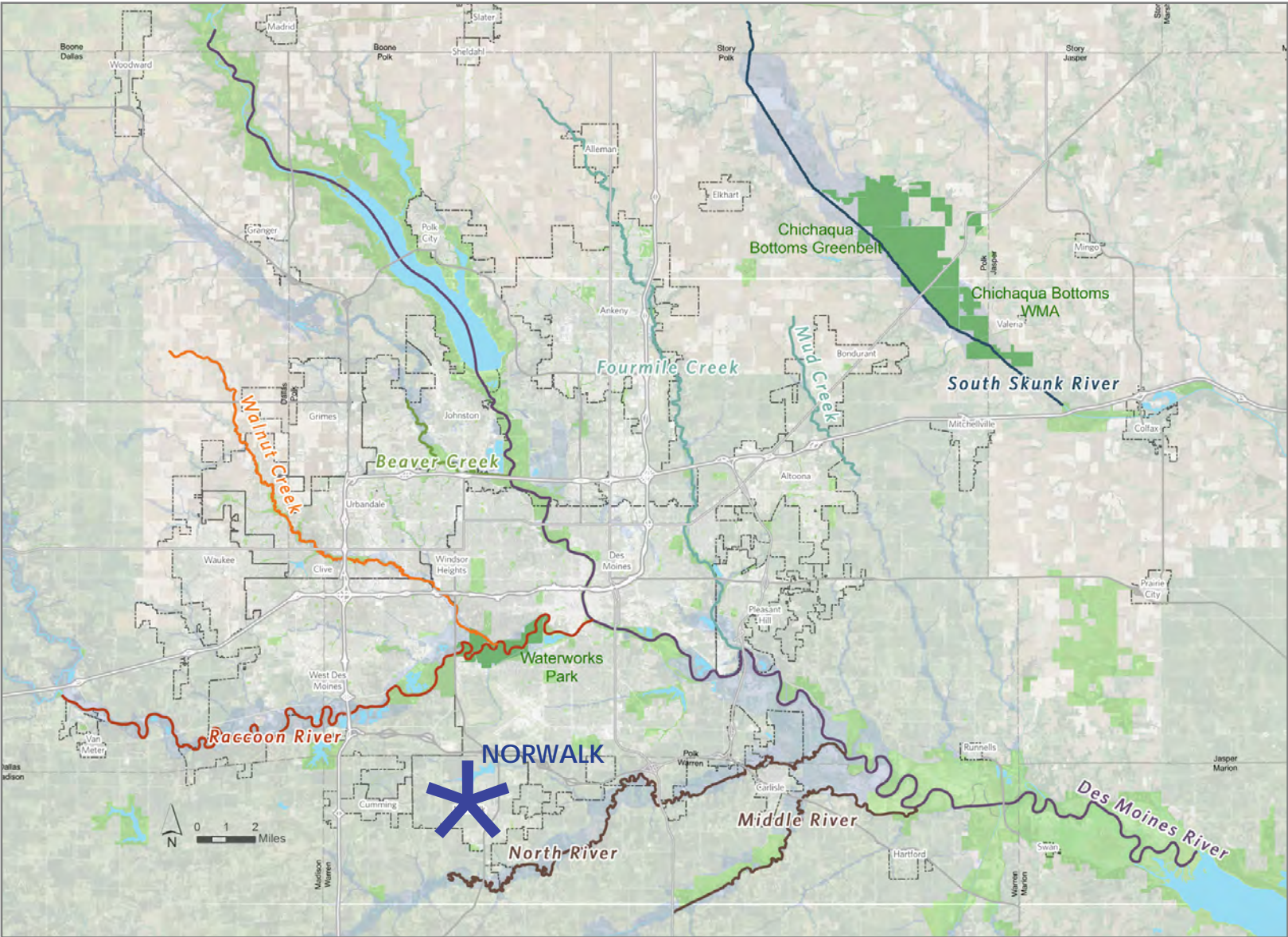


Image Form: "A Vision for North and Middle Rivers, Booklet 5 of 8 from the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways 2016 Master Plan."

# North River

Color Codes		Other Icons	
	Existing		Mile Marker
	Potential		North River
<b>Potential Hubs</b>			County Boundary
	Activity Hub		Conservation and Park Land (Public)
<b>Amenities</b>			100-year Floodplain
	Fishing Access		Conservation Area
	Wading Access	<b>Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities</b>	
	Birding		Existing
	Respite		Future
	Vineyard		
	Livery		
	Water Fountain		
	Parking		



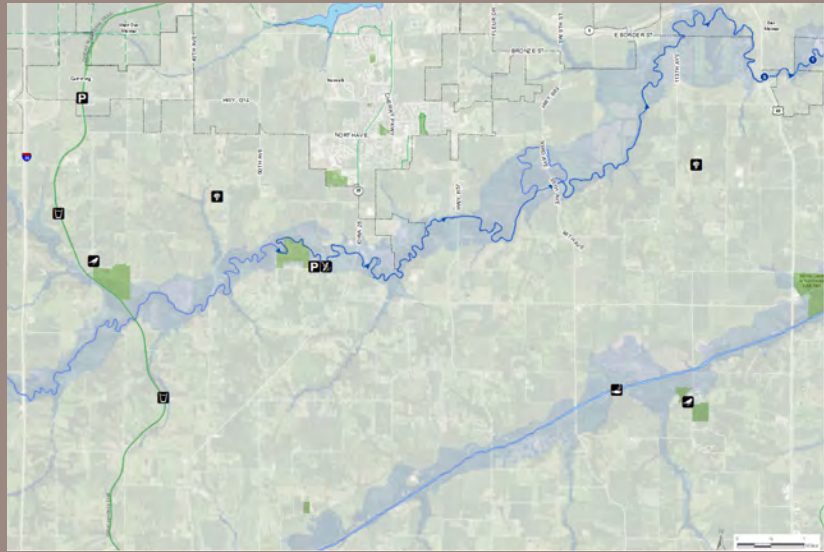
**Potential Water Trail Designation: None**  
**Potential Experience Level: None**

This river is currently navigated by advanced paddlers. Given the volatility of this watershed, there is an extreme amount of logjams that cross the river requiring frequent portaging as well as steep and muddy slopes for access. There is future potential for sections of this to be designated as a water trail after stream conditions stabilize and logjams become less frequent. Other uses such as bird watching, fishing and wading are encouraged.

\*See appendix regarding more detailed considerations and implications of these designations.

## Warren County Conservation

Warren County has the opportunity to expand the greenway through land conservation and floodplain management strategies. Over time, this could also provide recreational opportunities such as soft trails and river access. The map below highlights the 100-year floodplain, which is a priority conservation area.

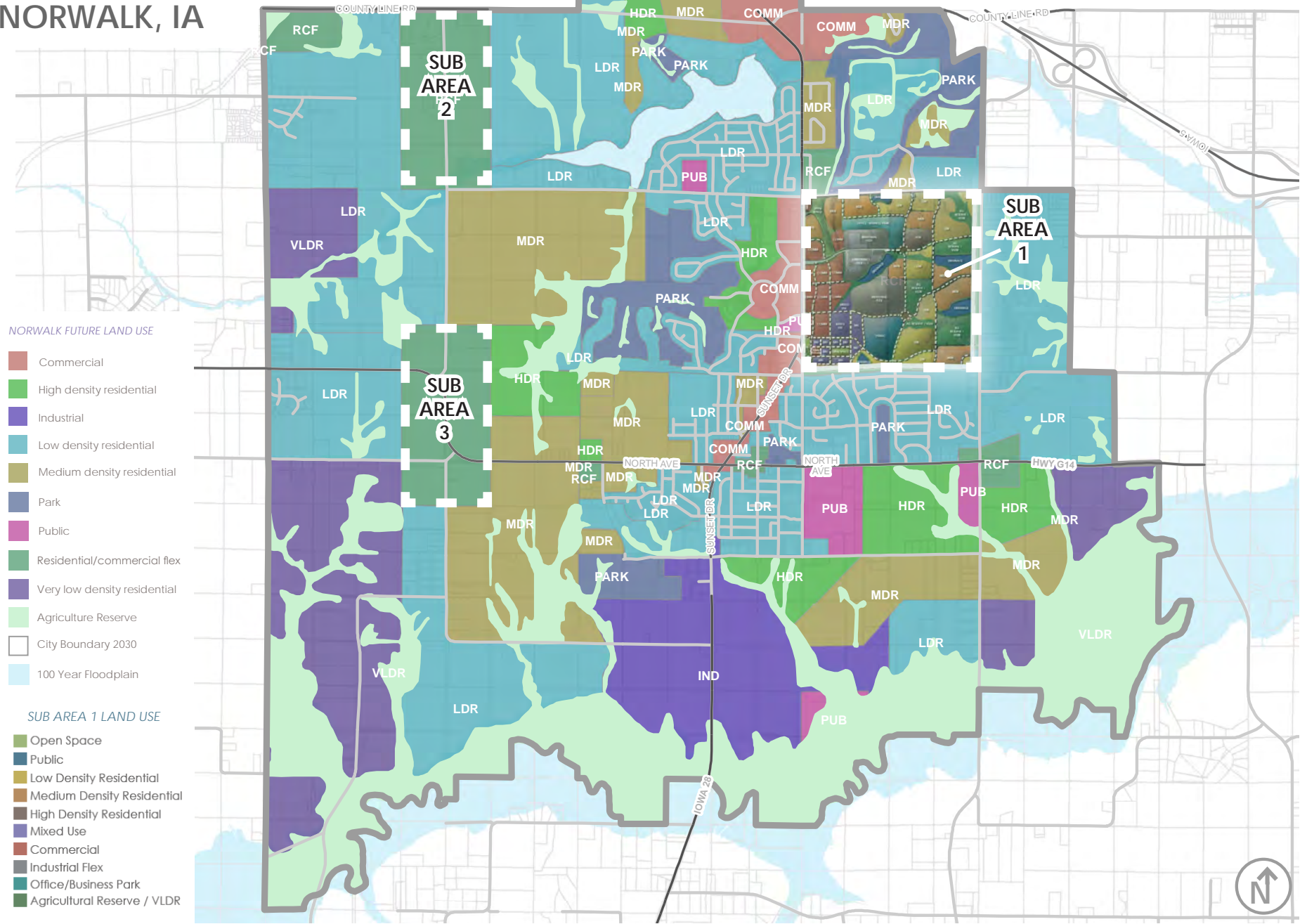




### FUTURE LAND USE

As the City continues to grow, taking into consideration the future land use plan will be critical in determining the location of future park sites. The next page provides a map of the current community land use plan updated as part of the 2016 Update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. Sub Area 1 was further defined as part of the 2016 update and is anticipated to become a community hub and town center. A copy of the Sub Area 1 land use plan is also included for reference following the overall map. This future community hub offers potential locations for additional community park and civic space. Future parks should be located so all residential areas are within 1/2-mile or less of a park site with neighborhood park amenities. A future community park or civic space within Sub Area 1 should be located and sized appropriately to accommodate larger community gatherings and events.

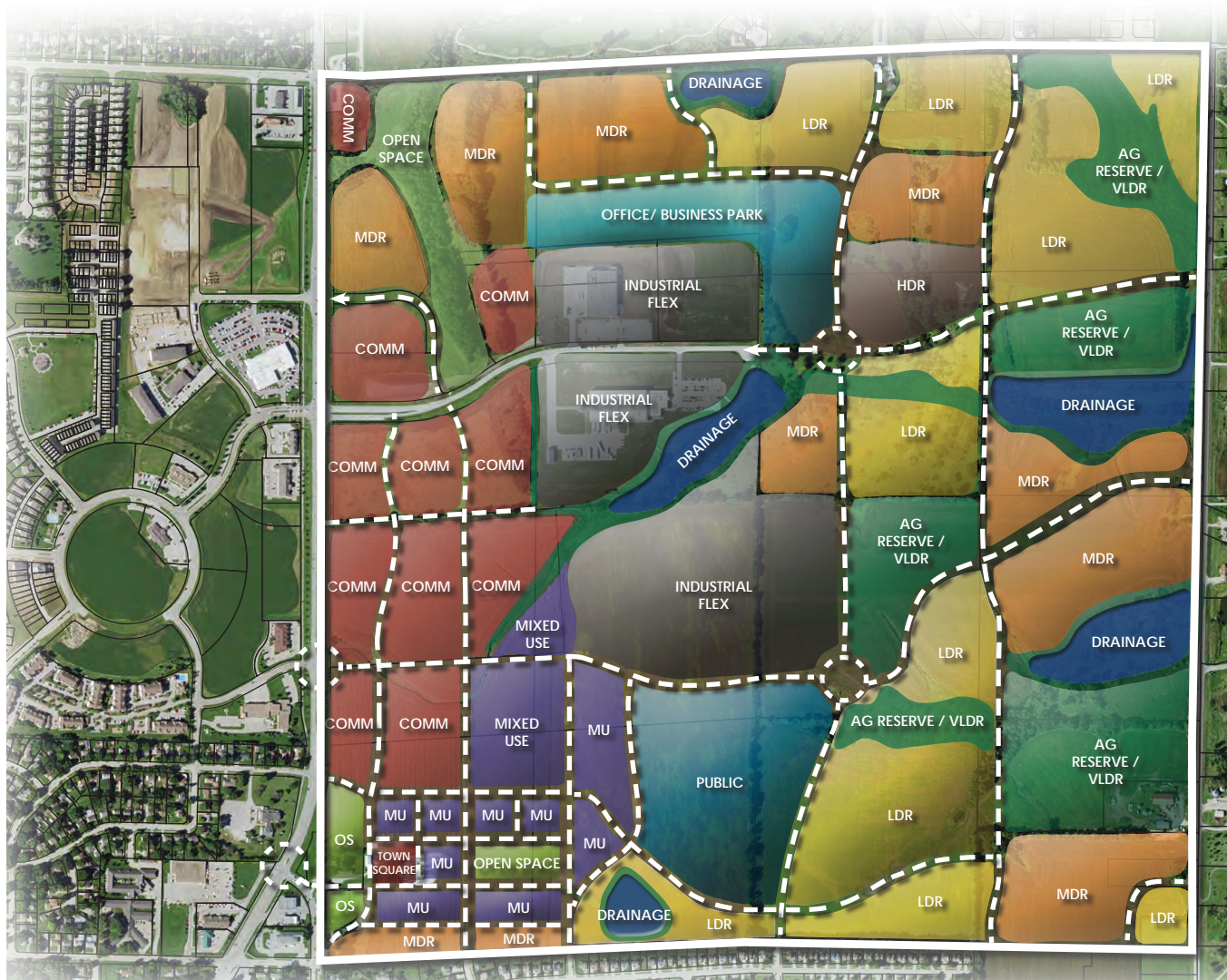
# SUB AREA 1 NORWALK, IA



MAP 2.4

# SUB AREA 1 LAND USE PLAN

## NORWALK, IA



### PLAN OVERVIEW

The land use plan for Sub Area 1 encompasses current zoning conditions and distinguishes individual uses based on color. Incorporated are a mix of uses including low, medium, and high density residential, commercial space, mixed-use locations, office space, drainage districts, industrial flex space, agriculture reserve/VLDR; and existing park and recreational areas.

Determining the highest and best uses for these land segments regarding accommodation of future growth will involve thorough analysis of the City's current land use plan in tandem with evaluation of elements such as projected population growth, community demographics, and anticipated demand

### LEGEND

- Open Space
- Public
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial Flex
- Office/Business Park
- Agricultural Reserve / VLDR

\* Information on this page is from September 2016 Sub Area 1 Master Plan prepared by Confluence



# CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DESIGN PROCESS

Demographic characteristics can influence recreational interests, participation levels and needs within the community. However, the primary influence on recreational amenities is public input and local trends. The City of Norwalk currently has a strong and growing set of outdoor youth sports programs. The City works with local clubs and leagues to help support this need. The fastest growing programs are the little league baseball/softball and soccer leagues. The current little league fields located at the McAninch Sports Complex are currently over capacity.

### Jazz in July

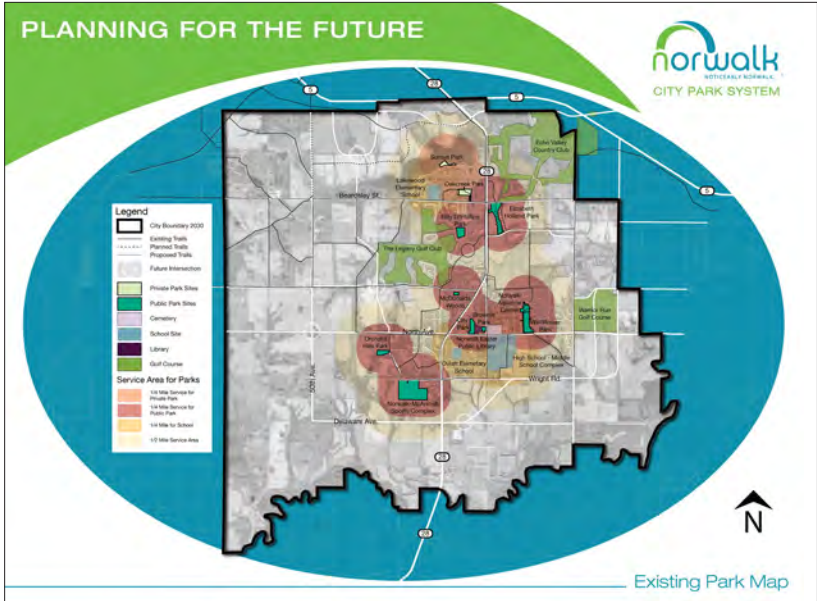
Snyder & Associates set up a booth at the local Jazz event at City Park. Approximately 300-400 people attended the event. 60+ participants stopped by to discuss the community park system and provide input.

### Public Input Survey

A public input survey was conducted early on in the design process to gather more information about the local communities' wants and needs for existing and future park improvements. Over 344 people responded to the survey.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Understanding the parks and recreation needs of residents is vital to creating a vision for the future of Norwalk and to the success of the Comprehensive Plan. A public input survey was conducted and a public meeting was held to collect feedback. A full summary of the survey results can be found under Appendix A. Comments received from the Public Meeting can be found under Appendix B.



Pool Needs MORE SWIMERS & STAFF FOR YOUNGER AGES

Better use for Caboose!

restrooms close to roadway or access point.

Mountain biking skills course 'Variety of rec. activities'

Wise young children play areas in the parks

Commit walking around wind-blown roller-blading biking.

Mountain biking course @ Windblown

Younger Age playground areas.

Free adult driving range

splashpads!

More splash pads / water for little kids

splashground 'water play'

Need a large community size park

FIX UP THE CABOOSE!

Challenge Course or Ninja courses

MORE SEATING AT MOUNTAIN BIKE COURSE

Inclusive Play Outdoor Recreational Equipment

Mountain Biking Skills Course

Destination Playground

EXERCISE X SPLASH PAD

Splash Grounds

mountain biking skills course

MIRACLO Park

mountain bike trail

Destination Park

Playground for young children

Ninja courses

More bike trail connections

Drive inn

MORE INCLUSIVE PLAY AREA FOR CHILDREN

norwalk  
NOTICABLY NORWALK.

**I imagine a park where I can...**  
(add your own response)







## CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Park Amenities/Improvements

Park improvements identified as having a higher priority include adding more accessible play areas, enhanced trail connections within the parks, more water recreation in the form of splash grounds at multiple parks, and more off-street parking.

### Sports Complex Meeting

After the open house, a meeting was held with the different groups that use the Norwalk/McAninch Sports Complex to gather their input and discuss the possible expansion of the complex. Individuals representing the main user groups attended the meeting and a number of items were discussed. A summary of these discussions follows:

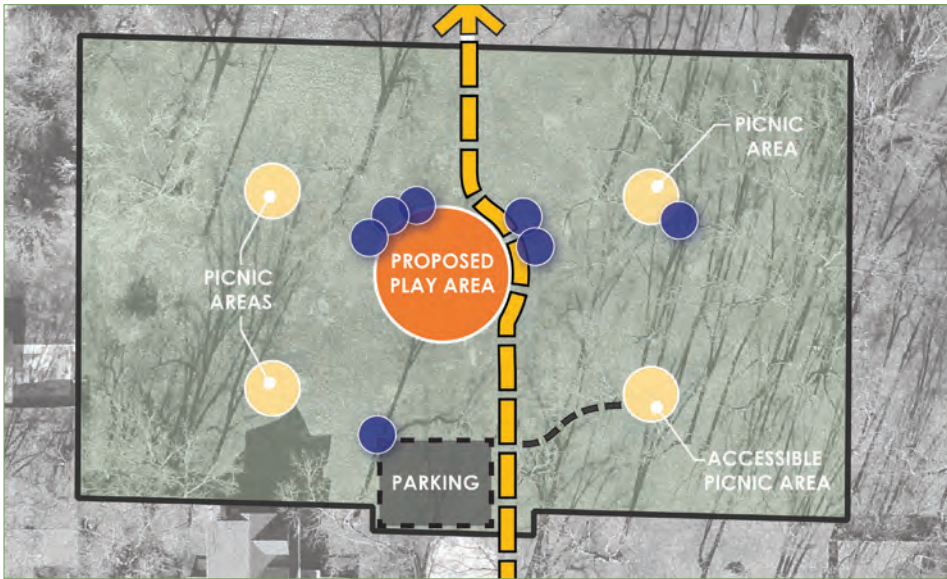
- The overall consensus from the group was there is a very large need for both additional ball fields and open field space. All groups felt confident that if there were additional fields, there would be a strong participation for scheduling the fields for use.
- The construction costs for updating the existing complex are estimated at \$3.9 million (as per Snyder & Associates). There was considerable discussion about whether to use these dollars to start a new complex on a larger piece of property, or invest in the existing complex.
- The group identified an immediate need for a total of 80 acres dedicated to sports field to meet current demands.
- The group discussed opportunities for potential locations to acquire property for a new complex. Most areas discussed were located on the west side of Norwalk.





# CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Examples of Public Input at November 9 Open House





### Needs Identified Through Observations and Public Input:

- **Increase focus on trail connectivity and maintenance:** The public survey results identified 'Trails' as a top priority in terms of the quantity and quality of existing parks and recreation facilities. When asked what types of outdoor recreation features are most needed in Norwalk, over 60% of respondents indicated that there was an insufficient amount of paved multi-use trails in the community. Similarly, when asked which existing parks and recreation facilities they felt needed improvement or additional facilities, nearly 50% of respondents recorded that the most significant features in need of improvement were the trails in the area. Special focus should be placed on monitoring pavement quality of paved multi-use trails. Trail improvements related to biking were also identified as an area of high importance. Respondents indicated that they desired bike trails connecting to other regional trails as well as increased connectivity throughout the community. Other individuals noted that they would like to see greater focus placed on running and walking trails. A variety of trail types should be considered, such as soft surface or natural surface trails for hiking and trail running. Improving the quality and quantity of multi-use trails throughout the community not only promotes walkability and active lifestyles among residents, but also encourages greater utilization of the area's existing facilities and programs through increased proximity to parks and recreation amenities.
- **Emphasize the equal dispersal of park amenities:** Survey participants indicated that the two parks they use the most are Norwalk-McAninch Sports Complex and Norwalk City Park. Responses also showed that McDonalds Woods and Brownie Park were disproportionately underutilized when compared to other parks in the area. Evaluation of these two parks revealed a significant difference in on-site amenities, likely serving as a contributing factor to decreased resident use. Neither park contains playground structures, sport courts or fields, or restroom access. Both parks feature minimal seating and are lacking the amenities needed to attract residents and visitors in the community. Both McDonalds Woods and Brownie Park would benefit from additional amenities and recreational facilities; located within close proximity to single-family and two-family residential, these areas are a seemingly good fit for features that attract families and children such as play areas and shaded picnic areas. Maintaining even dispersal of recreational amenities helps to ensure that local parks do not become neglected and unused.
- **Improve maintenance of on-site amenities:** Recreational facilities in need of improvement were another common theme revealed in the survey. Local picnic shelters and playgrounds ranked among the highest categories as 'most-used' facilities, and also ranked highly as 'recreational facilities in need of maintenance and improvement. Since these features are heavily utilized by park visitors, it is recommended that they be maintained on a regular basis to prevent weather damage, structural compromise, and unfavorable aesthetics. Focusing on maintaining and improving the quality of existing park features prevents the need for more frequent replacement, contributes to creating a sense of place, and works to evoke community pride.
- **Increase diversity of future park types and facilities:** When asked what prevented them from using Norwalk park facilities and services more frequently, 40% of survey respondents indicated it was because there was, 'Not enough desirable activities or facilities.' In a related question, participants were asked to rank their desired future park types and facilities from most to least desirable. Responses showed that the park types and facilities most desired were: An Indoor Recreational Facility, Off-Street Bicycle Paths and Trails, Special Use Parks, Athletic Facilities, additional Neighborhood Parks. These responses help to identify focus areas and can assist in guiding the decision making process as it relates to future park and recreation facilities in Norwalk. By providing a diverse range of park types and facilities, residents are more encouraged to visit parks within the city instead of traveling outside of corporate limits to engage in their desired activities. A diverse parks and trails system also serves to attract outside visitors and provide economic benefits for the local economy.

### PARK PROGRAMS AND RENTAL FACILITIES

#### ADULT PROGRAMS

- Intro To Adult Pickleball
- Coed Slow Pitch Softball League
- Adult Coed Volleyball- A And B League
- Junk In Your Trunk
- Men's Flag Football League
- Adult Pick-Up Basketball Games
- Adult Women's Volleyball League
- Adult Coed Volleyball- A & B League
- Ballroom Dancing
- Line Dancing
- Step Bench Aerobics/Interval

#### YOUTH PROGRAMS

- Minor Baseball & Softball (3rd, 4th, & 5th Grade)
- Coach Pitch- Baseball & Softball (1st & 2nd Grade)
- Pee Wee Tee Ball (Kindergarten)
- Bam Bam Blast Ball (Pre-K)
- Summertime Tennis Lessons
- Junior Golf Lessons
- Junior Golf Camp
- Junior Golf Club Rental
- 3rd-5th Flag Football
- Kindergarten Soccer
- Fall Youth Soccer 2017
- PeeWee Flag Football
- Menacce Soccer Camp
- Just For Kicks
- Mad Science 'Big Jump Start' Camp

- Mad Science of Iowa
- Mad Science Summer Camp Forensics & Physiology
- Babysitting Clinic
- LEGO X
- Tractors Trucks And Cars That Go!
- Family Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt
- Jazz In July
- Bike Safety Day
- Chess Summer Camp
- Art In The Park
- Norwalk Junior Police Academy
- 5th and 6th Grade Boys/Girls Basketball
- Little Hoopers
- Dream Team
- Little Dribblers
- Beginner Warrior Wrestling Club
- Just For Kicks
- Kindergarten Soccer
- Youth Soccer
- Mad Science of Iowa
- YEL (Youth Enrichment League)

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

- Live Healthy Iowa Kids Track Championship
- Trick or Treat Night (Ghostly Good Times)
- 4Th-5th-6th Grade Volleyball
- Jr. Warrior Chefs Clubs
- Lakewood School Intramurals

#### EARLY OUT ACTIVITIES

- Craft Club
- Creative Art Classes

#### ADULT PROGRAMS/FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- Circuit/Bootcamp Sensation
- Early Bird Body Sculpting
- Norwalk Family Taekwondo

#### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- Monster Dash 5k Fun Run
- Community Open Gym
- Family Open gym
- Family Bingo Night
- Pickle Ball
- Boy's Night Out With Mom

#### PARK PROGRAMS

The City of Norwalk currently offers several programs and rental facilities through the Parks and Recreation Department. This page provides a comprehensive list.



## CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### WATER FITNESS PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

- Parent & Child (Baby Lessons: 18 Months to Age 2)
- Preschool Aquatics (Ages 3 And 4)
- American Red Cross Lifeguard Training
- Private Swim Lessons
- Lap Swim Hours For Adults
- H2O Workout For Adults
- End of Summer Family Splash Bash
- Family Swim Hour
- We Have Gone To The Dogs
- "Dive-In Movie"

### FITNESS PROGRAMS

- Step Bench Aerobics/Interval
- Early Bird Body Sculpting
- Circuit Bootcamp Sensation
- Norwalk Family Taekwondo

### LIBRARY/PARK INFO

- Norwalk Easter Public Library
- Provides a variety of programmed activities for seniors, adults and children.

### RENTAL FACILITIES

- Field space for tournaments, league play, scrimmages, and practices, etc.- Norwalk-McAnich Sports Complex
- Open picnic shelter- Billy O. Phillips Park
- Open picnic shelter- Norwalk City Park
- Picnic shelters with kitchen available- Windflower Park







**RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND AMENITIES**

The NRPA, National Recreation and Parks Association, encourages communities to seek local input and provide levels of services which achieve locally designed standards. Previously, communities often based their park facility planning on the NRPA Standards. In 1996 the NRPA recommended these no longer be the driving factor for communities, since each community is unique. Since 2010, the NRPA has been collecting data through a web-based database tool called PRORAGIS. This data allows jurisdictions, like the City of Norwalk, to see where their community park facility needs compare to other similar communities. However, since each community is unique, it is important to only use these as a comparable and instead set standards based on local needs.

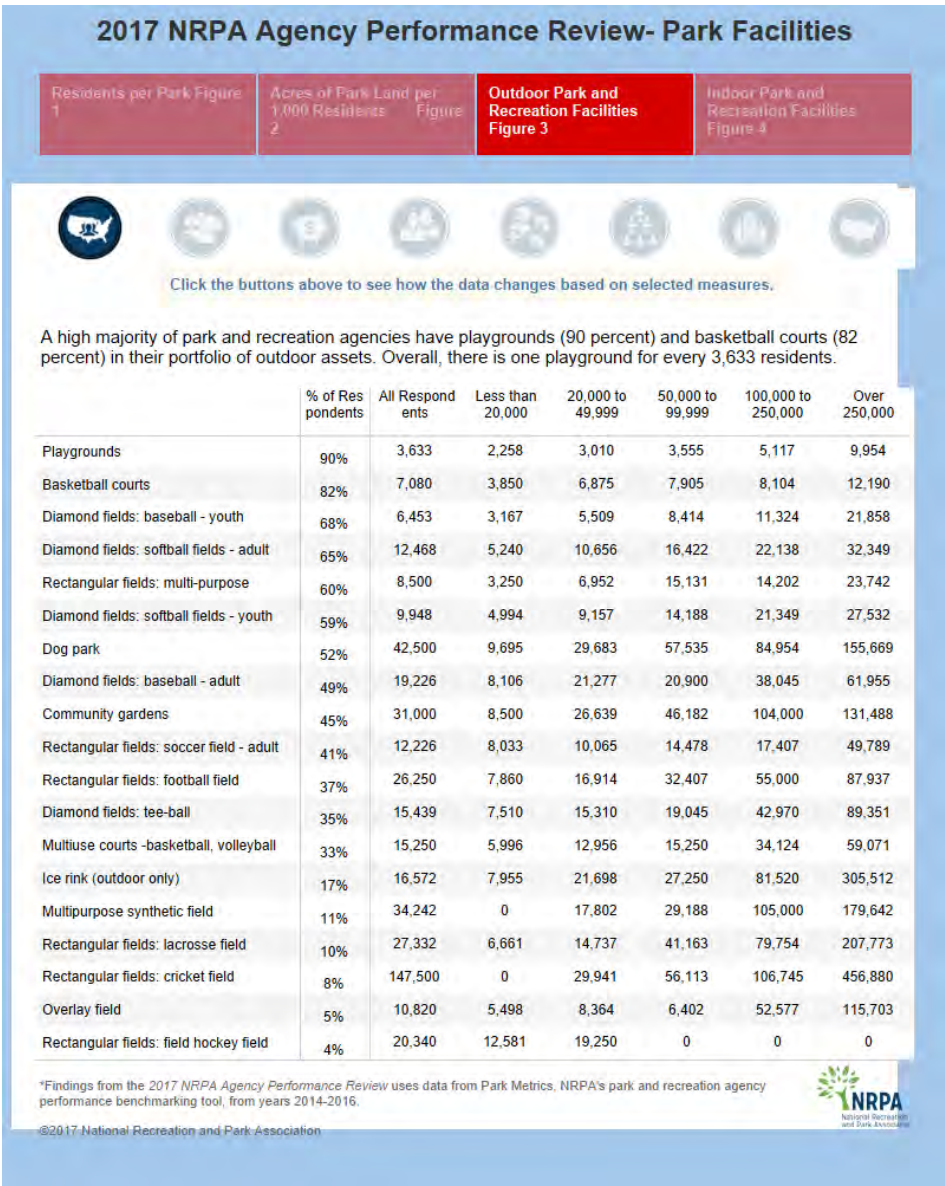
Also, consideration should be given to whether a recreational facility provides services and draws park users from a larger region, such as the existing aquatic center and sports complex. These types of facilities can bring people into the community and have positive economic benefits when those individuals support local businesses.

**PARK FACILITIES**  
The City of Norwalk currently offers several park facilities within its park system. Communities often provide fairly typical facilities, such as playgrounds and sports fields. However, many parks departments serve other community needs, such as protecting historical, cultural, and natural features.



In order to project future needs for park facilities for Norwalk the following components were analyzed:

- Anticipated growth over the next 5 years.
- Pre-1996 NRPA Standards for recreation facility service levels.
- Recent NRPA data. See adjacent chart from the 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review.
- Current facility service levels.
- Similar community facility service levels.
- Public open house and surveys.





# CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PARK FACILITIES TABLE 2.2

Facility Type	Existing Quantity for Population of 10,600	Existing Number of Residents Served per Facility	Recommended Standard	Quantity Deficient	Existing Location Facility is Supported	Park Classification Facility is Typically Supported
<b>Park Amenities</b>						
Open Picnic Shelter (Group Picnic Area)	4	2,650	2,500	0	Windflower Park Norwalk City Park Billy O'Phillips Park Brownie Park	Community Park, Neighborhood Park, Special Use Park
Playgrounds	4	2,650	2,000	0	Norwalk City Park Windflower Park Billy O'Phillips Park Orchard Hills (Proposed)	All Park Sites
Performace Stage/Amphitheater	0	0	40,000	1		Community Park, Community Feature or Special Use Park
<b>Sports Fields**</b>						
(180'-300')Diamond Field: Baseball Youth	Currently Shared with Softball	-	2,500	4	Norwalk McAninch Sports Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park
(180'-300')Diamond Field: Softball Youth	4	2,650	2,500	0	Norwalk McAninch Sports Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park
Diamond Field: Tee Ball	Currently Shared with Softball	2,650	8,000	0	Norwalk McAninch Sports Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park
(280'-300')Diamond Field: Adult	2	5,300	5,000	0	Norwalk McAninch Sports Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park
(195'x330')Rectangular Field: Multipurpose**	4	2,650	2,500	0	Norwalk McAninch Sports Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park
Stadiums (Football & HS Soccer Field/Track)	Currently use School District Facilities	10,600	12,000	0	Norwalk High School (Track open to Public during non-school use for small fee)	Community Park or Special Use Park
<b>Other Athletic Facilities</b>						
Basketball Courts	4	2,650	4,000	0	Windflower Park City Park	Community or Neighborhood Park
Skate park	1	10,600	65,000	0	Windflower Park	Community Park
Tennis Court	11 (Partnership with School)	960	2,500	0	Norwalk High School & Middle School Complex	Community Park or Special Use Park



# CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Aquatic Facilities						
Splash Grounds (Assumes Multiple Small Splash Grounds vs. one larger based on Public Input)	0	0	5,000	2		All Park Sites (Size varies depending on type of park)
Aquatic Center	1	1	35,000	0	Norwalk Aquatic Center	Special Use Park
Other Facilities						
Indoor Recreation Center	0	0	20,000	1		Special Use Park or Community Park
Gymnasium	Currently use School District Facilities	10,600	20,000	0	Existing School Facilities for a Fee	Special Use Park or Community Park
Fitness Center	0	0	30,000	1		Special Use Park or Community Park
Community Center	Currently use School District Facilities & Library	10,600	25,000	0		Special Use Park or Community Park
Senior Center	Currently use School District Facilities & Library	10,600	30,000	0		Special Use Park or Community Park
Teen Center	Currently use School District Facilities & Library	10,600	30,000	0		Special Use Park or Community Park
Nature Center/Interpretive Center	0	0	30,000	0		Community Park, Natural Area Park
Dog Park	1	10,600	30,000	0	Norwalk City Park	Community Park, Natural Area Park or Special Use Park
Indoor Track	0	0	30,000	1		Special Use Park or Community Park
Community Garden	0	0	10,000	1		All Park Sites

\* Recommended Standard:  
 Number of Residents Served per Facility. 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review Uses data from Park Metrics, NRPA's park and recreation agency performance benchmarking tool from years 2014-2016. It is important to note that this is based on responses received from Park Metrics. Decisions should be based on mainly on local needs and trends.

\*\* Multipurpose Fields/Overlay Field based on space available to form the sq. ft. required for a high-school level soccer field. This space may not be in a consecutive area, but provides space for smaller rectangular fields that add up to the same sq. ft.

### RECREATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

#### Recreational and Sporting Trends

- Splash Grounds
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Health and Fitness
- Dog Parks
- Pickleball
- Tennis
- Bocce ball
- Community Gardens
- Mountain Biking Training Courses / Single Track Trails
- Archery
- Play Areas: Nature Play, Inclusive Play, Younger Ages (6-months to 5-years), Destination/Regional Attraction

#### Environmental Awareness

The general public's awareness of environmental issues is on the rise. Issues such as clean water, air and energy efficiency are putting demands on communities to provide more quality natural resource areas and protect existing waterways. People often associate these quality natural resource areas with healthy environments in their cities. Parks departments are increasingly expected to be leaders in fostering sustainable practices in the community and show leadership in advancing environmentally sensitive practices. Examples of these include native & low-maintenance landscaping, best management practices for storm-water management and energy efficiency.





## CHAPTER 3: Recommendations and Implementation

This chapter provides recommendations for existing park improvements and park acquisitions.





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### FUTURE PARK OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the City continues to grow, additional park land will need to be set aside and developed in order to accommodate the growing population. As part of the planning process a review of the current City dedication ordinance requirements was completed. It is recommended the park site dedication requirements and policies be updated under the guidance of the City Attorney. Consideration should be given to modifying the requirements so they provide more direction and guidance on the community's expectations of parks. See below for a list of policy items to consider:

#### Policy Review and Considerations

1. The City should conduct a thorough review of the existing parkland dedication ordinance and update it under the consultation of the City Attorney. The ordinance should continue to provide the City with mechanisms to work collaboratively with developers and allow other forms of participation in lieu of land dedication. The updated policies should consider reflecting the goals of this comprehensive plan.
2. Distribute neighborhood parks throughout the community so the majority of households are within ½ mile or less. Encourage land designation for neighborhood parks that provide consecutive park space of no less than 5-acres. Parks smaller than 5-acres should only be implemented if a larger park is not feasible. These smaller parks should be considered mini-parks and only serve a 1/4 mile radius.
3. Distribute community parks or special use parks throughout the community so the majority of households are within 3 miles or less. Otherwise provide community parks, such as Sub Area 1, when compatible with surrounding landuse and they meet a particular civic or recreational need for the community (i.e. sports complex).
4. Encourage parks to be a central or defining feature of a neighborhood. This helps create community identity.
5. Provide adequate access to parks by locating them with at least one side fronting a public street. A minimum of 40 feet of street frontage should be encouraged.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

6. Encourage interior trail systems within the parks and neighborhood trail connections that help encourage safe park access, a healthy lifestyle and more universal accessibility to park amenities.
7. Encourage the protection of existing riparian areas and drainage ways as a natural stormwater management utility. However, the protection of these areas should not be the primary purpose of dedicated parks sites, unless the park is dedicated as a Natural Area Park. Ample room should be available to develop the park site in a way that meets the community's expectations of a park as described within this plan. For example, dedicated public parkland for neighborhood park use may include waterways and ponds. However, the area of any pond or waterway should not be used to satisfy the amount of public parkland required.
7. Similar to pond and waterway restrictions, consider adding slope requirements or restrictions for park land allowed to meet dedication requirements.
8. The City Ordinance currently requires an adequate amount of park space dedication at 6 acres per 1,000. This is comparable or slightly higher than surrounding communities. However, to catchup to the City's current park goals and needs, additional consideration should be given to acquiring additional parkland through other resources; such as City funding, grant funding, public and private partnerships.
9. Encourage the placement of dedicated parkland adjacent to undeveloped lands so the public parkland can be increased in size when adjacent property develops and minimize the development of several undersized neighborhood parks that can increase maintenance cost and lower the effectiveness of open space dedications.
10. Consider the use of tax abatements to encourage the contribution of additional park funds or higher quality land for park dedication. The specifics of this would need to be reviewed with the City Attorney.



### FUTURE PARK SITE & TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following pages provide recommendations and potential locations for future parks and trails based on 1/2 – mile service areas and the communities desire to have improved walkability and trail connectivity.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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### Increase Park Accessibility

Making parks and recreation facilities accessible for individuals with disabilities improves the quality of park experiences for everyone. Currently the City should meet current standards set by the Department of Justice and Department of Transportation in accordance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). As a state or local government, the City is considered a Title II entity. Standards are provided in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (SAD) and 2006 Department of Transportation (DOT) ADA Standards. The current standards provide requirements for curb ramps, detectable warnings, play areas and recreational facilities; however, they do not fully address all outdoor recreation amenities, such as outdoor constructed features (i.e. benches, grills, picnic tables), camping areas, trails, viewing areas, etc. The City of Norwalk is required to provide general non-discrimination prohibition and program accessibility for these entities, even if they are not specifically discussed in the 2010 SAD or 2006 DOT Standards.

The Access Board has proposed additional guidelines for outdoor developed areas under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA). These accessibility standards became required for Federal agencies and federally funded projects in 2013. It is anticipated some or all of these guidelines will be included in future SAD regulation updates. In the absence of regulations within the 2010 SAD, it is recommended the City utilize the ABA guidelines for the development of future park improvements and facilities. It is also important to note the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board has also issued accessibility guidelines for pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way (PROWAG) which also apply to shared use paths such as trails in the public right-of-way. These too have not been officially adopted but should be utilized as best practice.

Additional information, standards and guidelines can be found on the following website [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Parks and Community Health

Park systems play a critical and an increasing role in our community's health. To reach the maximum benefit on community health, it is important to provide facilities that accommodate the diversity of cultures within the community as well as abilities.

According to the NRPA's Position Statement on "The Role of Parks and Recreation On Health and Wellness" parks can<sup>1</sup>:

- Help reduce obesity and incidence of chronic disease by providing opportunities to increase rigorous physical activity in a variety of forms;
- Provide a connection to nature, which studies demonstrate relieves stress levels, tightens interpersonal relationships, and improves mental health.

Connecting individuals to the outside, and the integration of park visits into disease treatment and prevention, is on the rise.



### Parks and Children's Health

*"Current evidence suggests that children have much to gain from time spent outdoors and much to lose from a lack of park access. In addition to myriad health benefits offered by physical activity in general, research has shown that outdoor exercise in nature can enhance emotional well-being and amplify the benefits of physical exercise. And for kids in particular, being in or near green spaces has been found to be associated with better test scores, improved self-discipline and cognition, and reduced behavioral problems and symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)."*

-From: Environmental Health Perspectives; DOI:10.1289/ehp.123-A254 Just What the Doctor Ordered: Using Parks to Improve Children's Health.  
<https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/123-a254/>

### Strategies

- Continue to grow and support park development and programming.
- Make parks accessible to all users (i.e. all-inclusive playgrounds, paved trails).
- Provide a diversity of park programs, amenities and types in order to encourage diversity of users to use the park system.
- Encourage programming that helps residents live an active lifestyle.
- Continue to partner with the Norwalk Easter Public Library for programming.
- Continue to partner and contract with other agencies and service providers to offer a wide variety of programming.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/role-of-parks-and-recreation-on-health-and-wellness/>

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Provide Accessible and High Quality Natural Areas

Local park and recreation agencies often play a vital role in the protection and management of the communities green infrastructure and peoples connection with nature. It is important the City's park system provide accessible and sustainable landscapes that help cleanse our air, replenish the aquifers, protect wildlife habitat, improve water quality and reduce stormwater runoff. Parks can play a critical role in the economic well-being of communities as well as safe, affordable and healthy way one appreciates and experiences the natural world.

### **NRPA Position Statement "Role of Parks and Recreation in Conservation"**

*"Parks are key to ensuring the health of our environment because they play a critical role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, providing clean water and clean air, and enabling conservation of natural resources. Park and recreation professionals should become leaders in protecting open space for the common good, and actively lead in sustainably managing and developing land and resources for public use and environmental conservation for the benefit of the public and the resources. In addition, park and recreation professionals should provide education and interpretation of the value of conservation to the public, connect children and youth to nature and the outdoors, and coordinate environmental stewardship with other public and nonprofit entities."*

*-From: <http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/role-of-parks-and-recreation-in-conservation/>*

### Strategies

- Increase multi-use trail access to natural areas.
- Create policies and develop regulations that encourage the protection of unique and critical natural resources.
- Coordinate with private and public partners in order to moderate commitments of staff and budgets (i.e. Warren County Conservation Board and efforts to enhance the North River water trail corridor).
- Develop greenway systems along waterways throughout the community. These systems can provide trail corridors for community connectivity while improving and protecting water quality in the region. These greenways can be developed through property acquisitions or stream buffer protection ordinances.
- Expand educational programming and activities in natural park settings. Elizabeth Holland Park is a future park site that can have the potential to expand this kind of programming. Day trips could also be planned to nearby state and county parks.





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

- Encourage the use of stormwater best management practices (i.e. bioswales and permeable pavement). Consider using park infrastructure to showcase this type of development and education tool. This type of development can often be supported by grant funding and local partnerships.
- Utilize volunteer programs to help maintain natural areas (i.e. invasive species management).
- Incorporate nature-based amenities (i.e. nature play areas).
- Regional detention is an idea promoted by watershed management authorities as an effective way to address water quality concerns. When placed appropriately, these basins can be effective and a community asset. As future areas of the City are developed, such as Sub Area 1, it will be important to consider the placement and incorporation of stormwater basins. Consider highlighting and designing the basins as a community feature with ample space to accommodate community trail connectivity and recreational benefits.

# 95% of Americans

say it is important for their local park and recreation agency to protect the natural environment by acquiring and maintaining parks, trails and green spaces.

-From: <http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/Engagement/>





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Athletic Fields and Sports Complex

Sports complexes can host a wide range of recreation opportunities for a community. Most programming for these facilities revolves around organized youth sports. Successful sports complexes don't limit their expansion to the addition of more sports fields, but also include the expansion of spectator and support services that are properly sized for the activities planned for the complex.

Based on our review of the existing Norwalk/McAninch Sports Complex, the expansion of both field facilities and support services will be required to keep up with the expected growth. Currently the existing complex consists of approximately 40 acres of total area dedicated to organized sports. For cities with populations similar to Norwalk's, 80-100 acres of outdoor sports fields would be necessary to provide the number of fields and area for the activities associated with these youth sports. As the population grows over the next 20 years, Norwalk will likely need to establish between 120-150 acres of area dedicated to organized sports.

Investment in additional field maintenance and regular updates and improvements to the sports field themselves will be required. This commonly consists of the replacement of fencing, infield materials, irrigation system components and dugout areas for baseball and softball fields. Soccer and other field sports commonly require soil conditioning and aeration, drainage improvements and over-seeding to maintain playable conditions.

The improvement plan for the Norwalk/McAninch Sports Complex included in the chapter includes a number of these improvements. Spectator improvements include accessible walkways, outdoor seating areas, expanded concessions and restrooms and hard-surface parking. These necessary improvements will need to be considered in any expansion or new complex planning to service the growing community.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



Local and regional park agencies' \$32.3 billion in operations spending and \$22.4 billion in capital spending led to nearly

**\$140** billion

in economic activity and almost

**1 million** jobs in 2013

<http://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f568e0ca499743a08148e3593c860fc5/economic-impact-study-summary.pdf>

### Strategies

- Maintain high quality sport facilities that can host revenue generating tournaments.
- Consider future needs for growing trends in athletics (i.e. lacrosse fields, adult soccer programs or ultimate frisbee)
- Look for opportunities to develop additional sport facilities to meet increased usage.
- Consider providing more non-programmed field space for casual pick ups or over-flow practice space. (i.e. large flat open space or backstop located in a neighborhood park)
- Additional analysis on needs, including costs for building and maintenance/management requirements, is necessary to determine the feasibility of such a facility.
- An economic impact study and feasibility study should be conducted to further understand the potential benefits and impacts from such an expenditure.

Iowa alone saw

**\$964** million

in economic activity and

**8,497** jobs in 2013

<http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/the-economic-impact-of-local-parks/parkeconreport-state-charts/>



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Community and Indoor Recreation Facility

The City currently does not have a primary indoor recreation center. The community currently utilizes the Norwalk Community School District facilities for gymnasium space. Programming of activities is currently coordinated through private groups and the City. Other fitness facilities are currently privately run and operated. The Norwalk Easter Library facilities are also currently used to support community programs. The public has shown interest in an indoor recreation facility. The facility could benefit both the school district and public.

**“85% of Americans seek high-quality parks and recreation amenities when they are choosing a new place to live.”**

*-From: <http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/Engagement/>*

### Strategies

- If the library relocates to a new municipal town center in Sub Area 1, consideration should be given to utilizing the existing library space as a community center.
- The future elementary school property along G14 (North Ave.) is a potential location for expanding Orchard Hills Park and creating a community park site. This park site could be a potential location for a future indoor recreation facility that could benefit the school district and community. The site may also support some outdoor sports recreation facilities, but would be limited by terrain and waterbodies.
- The new town center in Sub Area 1 would be another potential location for a indoor recreation and community center.
- Additional analysis on needs, including costs for building and maintenance/management requirements, is necessary to determine the feasibility of such a facility.
- An economic impact study and feasibility study should be conducted to further understand the potential benefits and impacts from such an expenditure.

Local Survey Respondents felt:

**18%**

1st Most Desirable Future Park Facility or Park Type

**22%**

2nd Most Desirable Future Park Facility or Park Type





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Aquatics and Water Bodies

People are drawn naturally to water. Access to water can be provided in many forms throughout the community.

### Local Survey Respondents felt:

**78%** Aquatic Center Needed Improvement

**65%** Splash Grounds are a desirable feature most needed in Norwalk

### Strategies

- Provide multiple smaller splash grounds at neighborhood parks. These splash grounds should be push button activated to minimize water usage.
- A large splash ground as a potential expansion to the aquatic center could be considered. This type of facility addition would provide access and water play opportunities for younger age groups and individuals of varying abilities.
- The largest water body in the community is privately managed and has restricted access. As a community, increasing access to water bodies and streams should be considered. Angler access should be considered as well (i.e. Orchard Hills Park).
- The public has shown interest in an indoor pool as a desirable amenity to add to the community. The pool could be used by both the school district and public and incorporated into a larger indoor recreation facility. Additional analysis on needs, including costs for building and maintenance/management requirements, is necessary to determine the feasibility of such a facility.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Playgrounds

Playgrounds are often considered a basic amenity in neighborhood parks for good reason. Playgrounds are one of the primary tools we use to encourage children to play. Play is a critical component of how children gain the basic skills to be successful. New playgrounds should provide a diversity of components and play experiences which help children of various abilities and age to further develop physical, cognitive, sensory and social skills.

### Encourage Play

*“Play is the highest form of research” Albert Einstein*

### Strategies

- Include a nature-based play feature (i.e. Elizabeth Holland Park) in future park improvements
- All play structures should be fully ADA accessible. Consider an all-inclusive play structure with a diversity of developmentally appropriate and sensory rich play features.
- Ensure there is playground equipment for all ages equally distributed throughout the park system. Divide age groups in accordance with ASTM playground standards. Play equipment is provided in the following age group categories (6-24 month, 2-5 year and 5-12 year)
- If engineered wood fiber is utilized as a safety surface, maintenance cost required to maintain proper depths and access to meet ASTM and CPSC standards should be taken into consideration. Heavy use playgrounds should consider the use of a poured-in-place or tile type system that requires less daily/weekly maintenance.
- At a minimum, conduct safety checks on all play equipment. Checks should be conducted by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). These inspections can help provide recommendations for minor repairs and anticipate future needs for play equipment replacements
- Provide seating areas and shade near playground areas.
- Consider re-visiting partnerships with the local school district to increase playground access. Can an agreement to provide public access to school playground facilities after school hours be reached?





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Basic Park Amenities and Services

Basic park amenities play a critical role in successful parks. Well maintained and appropriately placed park amenities can help create a more welcoming place for users.

*“Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us. We need hours of aimless wandering or spates of time sitting on park benches, observing the mysterious world of ants and the canopy of treetops.” - Maya Angelou*

*Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now, 1993*

### Strategies

- Provide benches along trail systems and in parks.
- Increase the amount of shade in the parks. Especially provide shade at seating areas and near designated play areas and high use zones.
- At minimum provide restrooms at heavily used parks. A growing trend is to provide accessible family style restrooms in order to accommodate families with small children.
- Provide drinking fountains in high use areas. A growing trend is to provide fountains that accommodate bottle filling and dog bowls.
- Continue to provide litter receptacles in high use areas and near picnic locations.
- Consider providing new amenities to support the community trail network as it is developed further (i.e. bicycle repair stations at trail nodes or trailheads).
- Consider creating a set of standards or style guide for park amenities (i.e. shelters, restrooms and signage). This can help provide consistency between the neighborhood parks, simplify the decision making process when improvements are proposed and help create a sense of identity.
- Provide consistent and adequate way-finding signage for trail and park users. Assess park signage needs and prepare a signage plan for the park and trail system.





## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

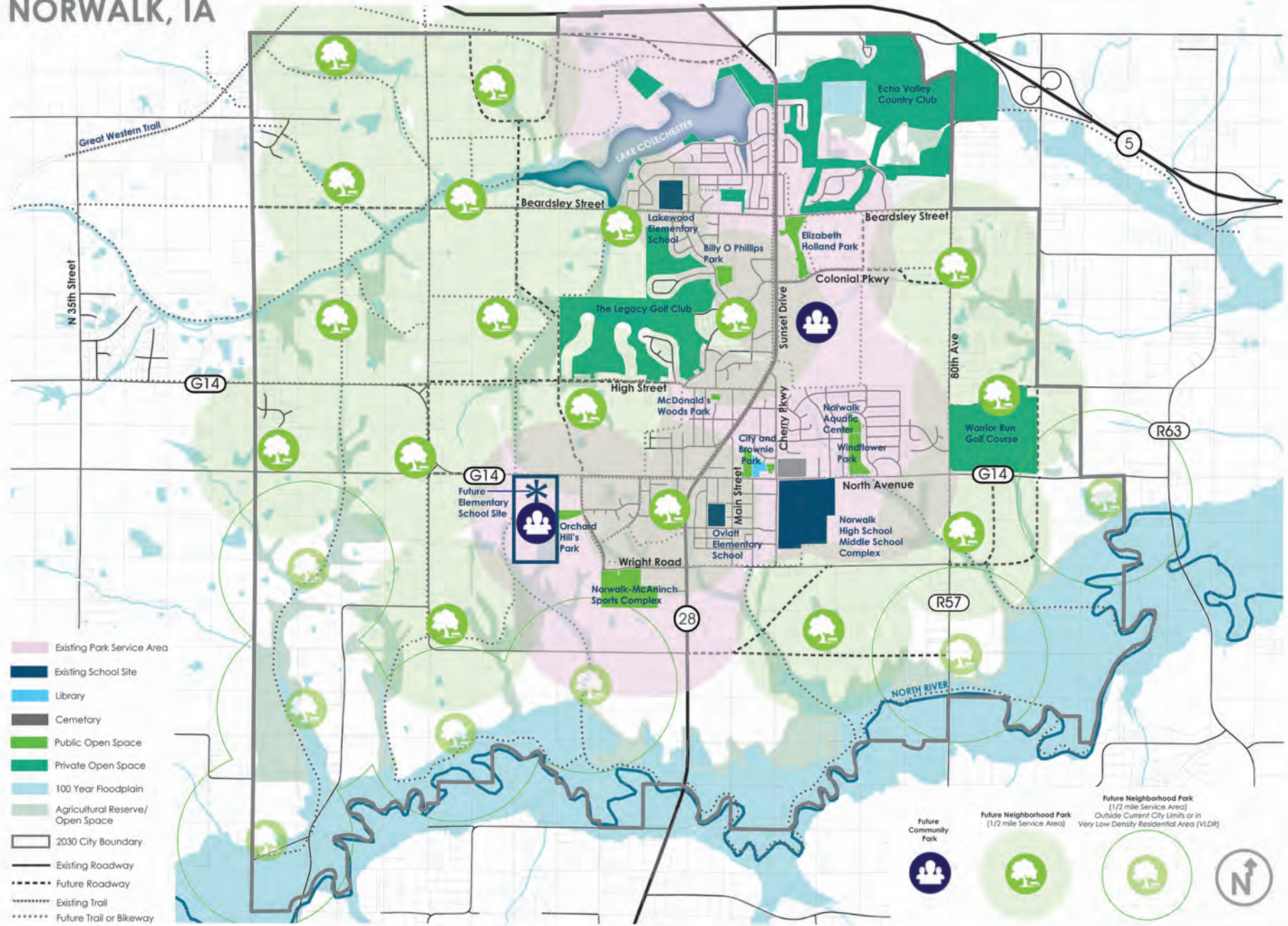
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### FUTURE PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND FLOODPLAIN ANALYSIS MAP

The following map shows open space identified in the recent land use plan update, 100 Year Floodplain, and the existing and proposed locations for designated park and community open spaces. The needs assessment identified needs for additional park space to meet the existing population. This need for additional park space will only increase as the community continues to grow.

# FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK ACCESS

## NORWALK, IA



MAP 3.1



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### FUTURE PARK DESIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### Diversity of Choice

- Provide a suite of parkland that offers a range of activities and landscape types.
- Provide a range of recreation opportunities that meet the needs of all communities members from young children to seniors, from cyclists to walkers and those seeking to relax in nature or participate in an organized sport activity. Places offering a diversity of experiences are more likely to be well-received, increase use and value to the community.

#### Landscape Setting

- Provide a range of parkland settings ranging from natural and semi-natural places to more highly modified and manicured sites.
- Retention of existing trees and establishment of new trees in strategic locations to help provide shade and other environmental benefits.
- Use the parkland sites natural features and ecology to inform design and appropriate uses.
- Locate facilities with clear lines of sight, providing appropriate lighting and ensuring placement of vegetation does not block paths can help improve the perception of safety.

#### Other Considerations

- Ensure stormwater management infrastructure and other utility areas are well-placed to minimize impacts to parkland functionality or recreational value.
- Ensure maintenance requirements are considered and integrated into the initial design process. Encourage the use of long-lasting, low maintenance, locally sourced materials.
- Incorporate universal design and social inclusion principles in order to provide facilities that cater to people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.
- Review placement of new improvements with consideration of existing neighboring residents and potential user conflicts.





# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## EXISTING PARK SITE RECOMMENDATIONS



**EXISTING PARK SITE RECOMMENDATIONS**  
The following pages show information and site observations regarding the existing park sites. Included are the recommendations on how each park can be further improved to meet the comprehensive plan goals. Cost estimates are also provided for each existing park so the City of Norwalk can set phasing goals and budgets for existing park needs.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 5.4-acre Community Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This well-established park consists of 5.4 acres and is located near the original main street area. Improvements include a historic Burlington caboose monument, playground, picnic areas, shuffleboard and sports court and is home to the Norwalk Dog Park.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Open shelter and sport court are in poor condition and need to be replaced.
- Limited sidewalk connections to park amenities.
- Playground lacks curbing and consistent safety surfacing.
- Poor access to dog park.
- Playground area and restroom facilities require additional maintenance.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Open Picnic Shelter
- Playground Area
- Historic Burlington Railcar Monument
- Dog Park
- Basketball Courts
- Signage
- Two Paved Parking Areas
- Restroom Facility
- Picnic Tables
- Benches
- Shuffleboard Court

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Trail Loop & connection to Library
- New Shelter
- Updated picnic areas
- Caboose re-purpose & small event gathering space
- Existing playground improvements (surfacing/edging)
- New playground with diverse age level (2-5 elements)
- New sport court
- Renovate Restrooms

**CITY PARK**  
Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					City Park
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$90,000	\$ 90,000.00
2	Grading/Earthwork	3375	CY	\$8	\$ 27,000.00
3	Water Service	1	LS	\$13,000	\$ 13,000.00
4	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$35,000	\$ 35,000.00
5	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$50,000	\$ 50,000.00
6	5" PCC Trail	2225	LF	\$55	\$ 122,375.00
7	Renovate Restroom Building	1	LS	\$95,000	\$ 95,000.00
8	Playground Improvements	1	LS	\$300,000	\$ 300,000.00
9	Large Shelter	1	LS	\$150,000	\$ 150,000.00
10	Sport Court	1	LS	\$85,000	\$ 85,000.00
11	Amphitheater Area/Tree Trimming	1	LS	\$22,000	\$ 22,000.00
12	Caboose Renovation	1	LS	\$90,000	\$ 90,000.00
13	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
14	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 1,099,375.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 164,906.25
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 1,264,281.25</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):					\$ 189,642.19
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 1,453,923.44</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 1.5-acre Community Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This 1.5-acre park is located adjacent to the City library and serves as a community display garden space. A sidewalk connects from the library through Brownie Park to Cherry Parkway. The park has a significant slope from Cherry Parkway down to the library parking area.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Arbor and planting areas require additional maintenance.
- Arbor/entry area has limited clearance.
- "Butterfly" benches are in isolated locations.
- Acts as a pass through area and lacks a destination park amenity.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Arbor with Bench Swing
- Signage
- Picnic Tables
- Flower Garden Beds
- Trail access to Library
- Gazebo
- Arbor and Fenced Entryway
- Butterfly Sculpture Benches

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Children's Garden
- Linear play area with Garden Whimsy Theming
- Reconstructed accessible route from library
- Small Gazebo/Shelter
- Future splashground, restroom shelter, and parking

**BROWNIE PARK**  
Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					Brownie Park
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$100,000	\$ 100,000.00
2	Demolition	1	LS	\$35,000	\$ 35,000.00
3	Grading/Earthwork	3000	CY	\$8	\$ 24,000.00
4	Water Service	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
5	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$40,000	\$ 40,000.00
6	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$35,000	\$ 35,000.00
7	Children's Garden	6	EA	\$22,000	\$ 132,000.00
8	Small Shelter	1	LS	\$65,000	\$ 65,000.00
9	25 Stall Parking (Library)	1	LS	\$105,000	\$ 105,000.00
10	20 Stall Parking	1	LS	\$80,000	\$ 80,000.00
11	5" PCC Trail	2350	LF	\$55	\$ 129,250.00
12	Splash Ground (Medium-sized)	1	LS	\$150,000	\$ 150,000.00
13	Restroom Shelter	1	LS	\$200,000	\$ 200,000.00
14	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$12,000	\$ 12,000.00
15	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 1,132,250.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 169,837.50
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 1,302,087.50</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):					\$ 195,313.13
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 1,497,400.63</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 5 Acre Special Use Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

The Aquatic Center is located on the north side of Windflower Park. This facility consists of the pool and supporting buildings, the adjacent parking lot, and open space areas to the north and east. Although the aquatic center components and amenities are not being reviewed as a part of this project, the surrounding sidewalks and park spaces are included.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- There are poorly-draining areas that are affecting the usefulness of the surrounding open space.
- Additional sidewalks should be added to connect the aquatic center and parking area to the park amenities.
- There are a number of abandoned playground areas that can be re-purposed for new uses.
- There are a number of trees in poor condition.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Aquatic Center Pool and Slide
- Open Picnic Table Area
- Locker Rooms
- Paved Parking
- Benches
- Disc Golf Course continuation from Windflower Park
- Paved Trail Access from east and west

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Paved trail connections to adjacent neighborhood & Aquatic Center
- All Inclusive play area & younger age play area with open shelter
- Future parking
- Expanded Aquatic Center with future Splash Ground area

**NORWALK AQUATIC CENTER**  
Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					Norwalk Aquatic Center
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$136,080	\$ 136,080.00
2	Grading/Earthwork	3000	CY	\$8	\$ 24,000.00
3	Water Service	1	LS	\$12,000	\$ 12,000.00
4	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$85,000	\$ 85,000.00
5	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$24,000	\$ 24,000.00
6	5" PCC Trail	1833	LF	\$55	\$ 100,815.00
7	Medium Shelter	1	LS	\$100,000	\$ 100,000.00
8	25 Stall Parking Lot	1	LS	\$105,000	\$ 105,000.00
9	Splash Ground (Medium-sized)	1	LS	\$180,000	\$ 180,000.00
10	All Inclusive Playground	1	LS	\$350,000	\$ 350,000.00
11	2-5yr Playground	1	LS	\$150,000	\$ 150,000.00
12	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
13	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 1,291,895.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 193,784.25
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 1,485,679.25</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):					\$ 222,851.89
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 1,708,531.14</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 12-acre Special-Use Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This community park is situated on 12 acres with a large creek area bisecting the park into two areas. The east area is pastoral and informal; the main park amenities are located on the west side of the creek. There is a gravel loop drive circling the park. The Norwalk Aquatic Center is located on the far north end of the park.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- The gravel trail should be paved and connected to provide better park circulation, accessibility and access to park amenities.
- Playground lacks curbing and consistent safety surfacing.
- There are a number of abandoned playground areas that can be re-purposed for new uses.
- There are a number of trees in poor condition.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Open Picnic Shelter with Restrooms & Kitchenette
- Playground Areas
- Basketball Courts
- Skate Park
- Signage
- Paved Parking Area Access on north and south
- Restrooms & Kitchenette
- Picnic Tables
- Benches
- Disc Golf Course
- Gravel Bike/Walking Trail
- Drinking Fountain
- Adjacent to Aquatic Center
- Trail Connection to Neighborhood

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Paved perimeter trail loop & fitness course
- All Inclusive play area & younger age play area with open shelter
- Sport court
- New play area near south shelter
- Skate park expansion
- Future parking

**WINDFLOWER PARK**  
 Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					Windflower Park
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$100,000	\$ 100,000.00
2	Demolition	1	LS	\$50,000	\$ 50,000.00
3	Grading/Earthwork	5625	CY	\$8	\$ 45,000.00
4	Water Service	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
5	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$53,000	\$ 53,000.00
6	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$105,000	\$ 105,000.00
7	5" PCC Trail	3850	LF	\$55	\$ 211,750.00
8	35 Stall Parking Lot	1	LS	\$140,000	\$ 140,000.00
9	Sports Court	1	LS	\$85,000	\$ 85,000.00
10	Skate Park Expansion	1	LS	\$260,000	\$ 260,000.00
11	5-12yr Playground	1	LS	\$180,000	\$ 180,000.00
12	Shelter Repairs	1	LS	\$65,000	\$ 65,000.00
13	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
14	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 1,334,750.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 200,212.50
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 1,534,962.50</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):					\$ 230,244.38
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 1,765,206.88</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 6.2-acre Neighborhood Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This area serves as a neighborhood park for the Legacy development. This park contains a playground area with large open shelter and parking along Kingston Avenue.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Perimeter sidewalks should be continued to improve park access.
- Playground area, shelter and planting beds require additional maintenance.
- Open space and backstop areas require additional drainage improvements.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Open Picnic Shelter and Grill Area
- Playground Area
- Signage
- Paved Parking Areas
- Restroom Facility with Drinking Fountain
- Picnic Tables
- Benches
- Drinking Fountain
- General Open Space with Backstop

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Off-street parking
- Small shelter & restroom building
- Splash Ground
- Drainage improvements in ballfield
- 2-5 year play area
- Additional shade trees & street trees

**BILLY O'PHILLIPS PARK**  
Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					Billy O'Phillips Park
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$65,000	\$ 65,000.00
2	Grading/Earthwork	4200	CY	\$8	\$ 33,600.00
3	Water Service	1	LS	\$18,000	\$ 18,000.00
4	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$18,000	\$ 18,000.00
5	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$20,000	\$ 20,000.00
6	5" PCC Trail	575	LF	\$55	\$ 31,625.00
7	Shelter/Restroom	1	LS	\$200,000	\$ 200,000.00
8	25 Stall Parking Lot	1	LS	\$105,000	\$ 105,000.00
9	2-5yr Playground	1	LS	\$150,000	\$ 150,000.00
10	Splash Ground (Small-sized)	1	LS	\$85,000	\$ 85,000.00
11	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$10,000	\$ 10,000.00
12	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$5,000	\$ 5,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 741,225.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 111,183.75
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 852,408.75</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration:					\$ 127,861.31
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 980,270.06</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 1.1-acre Neighborhood Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This is an isolated neighborhood park with little to no parking. This park is under-utilized with limited picnic areas and a large tree grove. A paved trail connects to the north side of the park.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Trail extensions can improve park accessibility.
- Lacks neighborhood park amenities.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Open Lawn
- Signage
- Bench
- Grill
- Grove of Trees

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Parking Improvements
- Trail connectivity
- Small play area for surrounding neighborhoods
- Picnic tables on concrete pads

**MCDONALD'S WOODS**  
 Norwalk, Iowa



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS					McDonald's Woods
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (10%)	1	LS	\$30,000	\$ 30,000.00
2	Grading/Earthwork	800	CY	\$8	\$ 6,400.00
3	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$5,000	\$ 5,000.00
4	Electrical Service/Trail Lighting	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
5	5" PCC Trail	650	LF	\$55	\$ 35,750.00
6	10 Stall Parking Lot	1	LS	\$45,000	\$ 45,000.00
7	5-12yr Playground	1	LS	\$180,000	\$ 180,000.00
8	Site Furnishings	1	LS	\$8,000	\$ 8,000.00
9	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$6,000	\$ 6,000.00
Subtotal:					\$ 331,150.00
Contingency (15%):					\$ 49,672.50
<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>					<b>\$ 380,822.50</b>
Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):					\$ 57,123.38
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>					<b>\$ 437,945.88</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 40-acre Special-Use Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

40-acre sports complex serves youth and adult sport clubs for the City of Norwalk. A combination of paved and gravel parking is located on the north side of the site, with ball fields and restroom/concession facilities centrally located. Soccer and practice field areas are located in lower areas to the west and south.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Lacks paved walkways to larger ball fields and northwest and southeast soccer fields.
- Poor accessibility to spectator areas and most field areas.
- Restroom and concession buildings are in poor to fair condition.
- Long walking distances from some soccer fields to restroom facilities.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Paved & Gravel Parking Areas
- Park Signage
- Benches
- Picnic Tables
- Restrooms
- Bleachers
- Concessions Area
- Youth Soccer Fields
- Youth Baseball Fields
- Adult & Youth Softball Fields

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Update ball field fencing, dugouts and backstop
- Renovate concessions & restroom buildings
- Expand & pave spectator areas for better accessibility
- Add sidewalk connections
- Add small restroom building to serve east field areas

**MCANINCH SPORTS PARK**  
Norwalk, Iowa



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE PROJECT COSTS				McAninch Sports Complex	
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	EXTENDED PRICE
1	Mobilization (5%)	1	LS	\$150,000	\$ 150,000.00
2	Demolition	1	LS	\$95,000	\$ 95,000.00
3	Grading/Earthwork	15000	CY	\$8	\$ 120,000.00
4	Water Service	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000.00
5	Storm Sewer Improvements	1	LS	\$35,000	\$ 35,000.00
6	Electrical Service/Transformer	1	LS	\$80,000	\$ 80,000.00
7	Septic/Sanitary	1	LS	\$50,000	\$ 50,000.00
8	Small Shelter	1	LS	\$65,000	\$ 65,000.00
9	5" PCC Trail	4500	LF	\$55	\$ 247,500.00
10	Parking Lot	1	LS	\$350,000	\$ 350,000.00
11	Spectator Area	1	LS	\$165,000	\$ 165,000.00
12	Field Lighting (2 Fields)	1	LS	\$400,000	\$ 400,000.00
13	210' Fields	4	EA	\$175,000	\$ 700,000.00
14	300' Fields	2	EA	\$205,000	\$ 410,000.00
15	Batting Cages	2	EA	\$25,000	\$ 50,000.00
16	Concession/Restroom Renovations	1	LS	\$400,000	\$ 400,000.00
17	Restroom Building	1	LS	\$200,000	\$ 200,000.00
18	Site Restoration	1	LS	\$12,000	\$ 12,000.00
				Subtotal:	\$ 2,932,500.00
				Contingency (15%):	\$ 439,875.00
				<b>CONSTRUCTION TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 3,372,375.00</b>
				Engineering, Construction, and Administration(15%):	\$ 505,856.25
				<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST:</b>	<b>\$ 3,878,231.25</b>

This Opinion of Cost is based on 2017 pricing.



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 16.7-acre Natural Area

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This future greenbelt park is located adjacent to a developing commercial area and consists of storm water improvement areas to support regional development. Improvements from the concept plan include walking trails, prairie areas, a lake overlook area, open shelter, restrooms and parking.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Consider continuing walkway access to Sunset Drive.
- Locate parking area closer to shelter for better access for events.
- Consider educational programming for proposed storm water and environment improvements.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

Currently under construction  
Retention Ponds  
Scenic Overlook off of Beardsley Street  
Future Proposed Features:

- Trail Loop
- Parking
- Picnic Shelter and Restroom Building
- Walking Bridge
- Parking Lot

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Nature Play Area
- Adjacent open shelter with restrooms
- Paved Trail Loop
- Trail Easements or property line review

**ELIZABETH HOLLAND PARK**  
Norwalk, Iowa





# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



**PARK CLASSIFICATION:**

- 4.1-acre Neighborhood Park

**OBSERVATIONS:**

This new neighborhood park contains a large storm water defention pond with proposed trail improvements, playground areas, parking areas and an open picnic shelter. This park area requires additional grading, retaining walls and utility extensions to accommodate significant amount of park improvements currently proposed on the 2016 concept plan.

**General Comments & Concerns:**

- Parking areas could be reduced to allow for more open space.
- The amount of playground amenities proposed are more typical of a community park.
- Consider eliminating sidewalk along the north end of the pond to eliminate retaining wall costs.

**EXISTING PARK AMENITIES:**

- Open Space Lawn
- Stormwater Retention Pond

**Future Proposed Features:**

- Play Areas Ages 2-5 & 5-12
- Parking Areas
- Restroom Facility with Drinking Fountain
- Trail connection to school

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Accessible circulation trail
- Seatwalls to accomodate grade changes
- Restroom building & parking
- Previously-selected Challenge course location
- Central open shelter
- Fishing dock & access
- Play areas suited to multiple age groups

## ORCHARD HILLS PARK

Norwalk, Iowa





# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY OF COST INCREASE OVER TIME

PARK IMPROVEMENT CONSTRUCTION COSTS				City of Norwalk
Park	2017 Construction Cost	2022* Construction Cost	2027* Construction Cost	2037* Construction Cost
<b>City Park</b>	\$1,453,923	\$1,497,541	\$1,542,467	\$1,588,741
<b>Brownie Park</b>	\$1,497,400	\$1,542,322	\$1,588,592	\$1,636,249
<b>Norwalk Aquatic Center</b>	\$1,708,531	\$1,759,787	\$1,812,581	\$1,866,958
<b>Windflower Park</b>	\$1,765,206	\$1,818,162	\$1,872,707	\$1,928,888
<b>Billy O'Phillips Park</b>	\$980,270	\$1,009,678	\$1,039,968	\$1,071,167
<b>McDonald's Woods</b>	\$437,945	\$451,083	\$464,616	\$478,554
<b>McAninch Sports Complex</b>	\$3,878,231	\$3,994,578	\$4,114,415	\$4,237,848

\*Increased 3% Annually

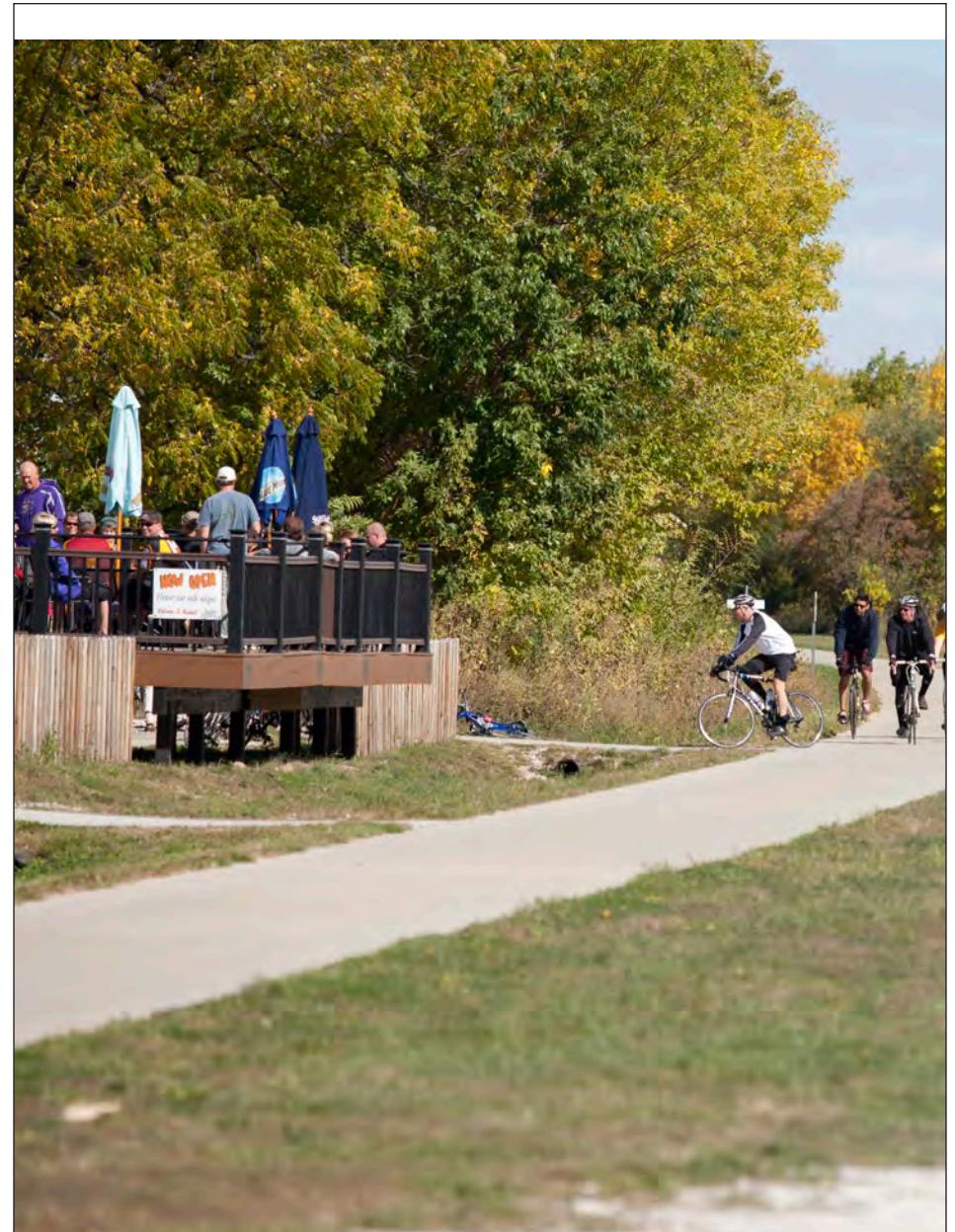
## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### FUTURE TRAIL AND ON-STREET BIKEWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Trail and bikeway systems help tie the community together and help ensure safer pedestrian and bicyclist access. They are a critical element in helping engage the community in an active lifestyle and help provide access to the community's parks, schools, commercial hubs, natural amenities and other community destinations. They are also an essential part of creating a multimodal transportation system. A healthy and resilient economy provides diverse transportation options for people of all ages and abilities.

#### Policy Review and Needs

1. Connect trails to destination areas (schools, parks, public facilities, regional trails and economic centers/downtown square)
2. Multiple trail entrances to a park are encouraged
3. Trails and Bikeways should be developed in accordance with current standards and guidelines.
4. All developments should include provisions for a minimum 5' width sidewalk along public streets.
5. Grade separated crossings or intersections with designated crossings should be included whenever a trail must cross a major collector or arterial road.
6. Consider a diversity of trail types in parks (i.e. cross-country skiing & single track trails for mountain bikes)
7. New developments should accommodate proposed connections to the greater trail network. The City's current Ordinance requires dedicated land for trails or trail easements. This land can be used to satisfy parkland dedication requirements. Consideration to including a requirement of the developer to install the trails to the width and specifications required by the City should be considered. Any updates should be reviewed by the City Attorney.





# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## Types of Trails and Bikeways

There are a variety of trail and bikeway types a community should consider when trying to improve connectivity, bikability and walkability. The following pages provide an overview of different trail and bikeway types for Norwalk to consider based upon location and site conditions.

### **Trails/Shared Use Paths**

Trails are designed for people walking, running, biking, skating, or just enjoying the outdoors. Trails accommodate two-way traffic flow and are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Trails should be at least 10 feet wide, with 8 feet allowed only in constrained circumstances. Some communities prefer 12-foot wide trails because the extra width allows bicyclists and pedestrians to travel side-by-side without obstructing oncoming users, and allows for easier passing of slower trail users. The preferred location for a trail is in an area that is completely removed from vehicular traffic, but with various locations to connect into a sidewalk and on-street bike facility network.

#### Greenway Trails

Trails located in an independent right-of-way often follow waterways (greenways), utility corridors, or former railroad lines.

*Photo 3.1- Greenway Trail (Ames, Iowa)*



#### Sidepaths

Sidepath trails are located along the side of a road, essentially functioning as a wide sidewalk.

*Photo 3.2 - Sidepath Trail (Ames, Iowa)*



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Cautionary Note on Side Paths

While sidepath trails may be one of the simplest ways to accommodate both bicyclist and pedestrians, they are often not the best way to accommodate both of these types of trail users. Because bicyclists travel much faster than pedestrians, bicycle travel along a sidepath trail can be fraught with many challenges.

Perhaps the most serious challenge is mitigating the danger associated with cyclists traveling against the vehicular traffic flow while on the sidepath.

Right turning drivers (Driver A in Figure 1) look left more frequently than they look right, thus failing to notice cyclists coming from the right<sup>1</sup>. Contra-flow cyclists must be diligent to not bike into the path of a car preparing to make a right turn. The risk for cyclists on the sidepath due to cars turning from the parallel roadway onto the intersecting street or driveway is also increased over those travelling with the direction of traffic on the street. Figures 2 and 3 depict these turning movements. traveling against the vehicular traffic flow while on the sidepath.

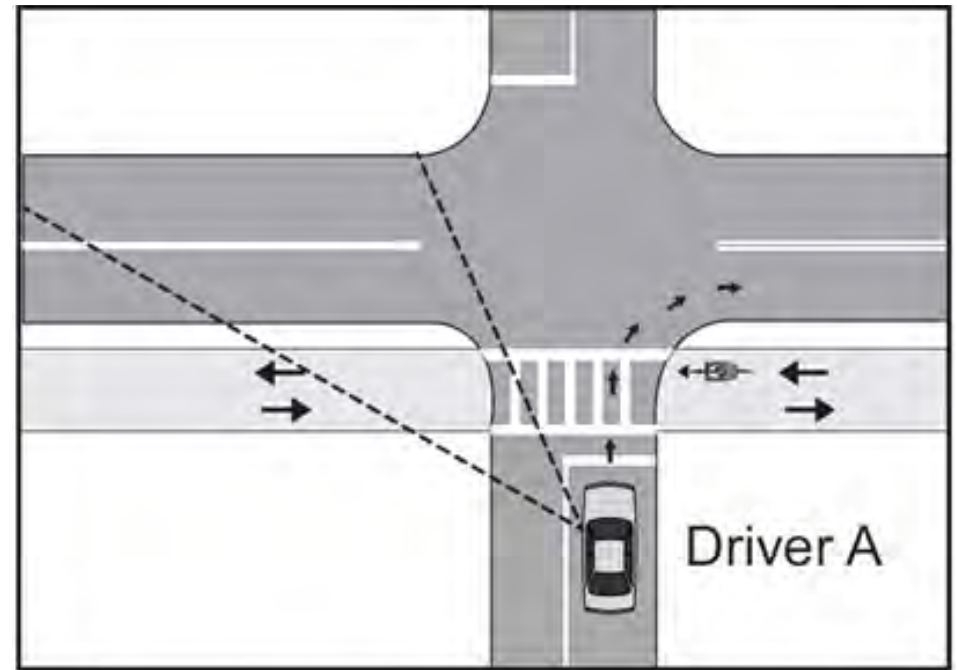


Figure 3.1 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO, 2012

Right turning Driver A is looking for traffic on the left. A contraflow bicyclist is not in the driver's main field of vision.

<sup>1</sup> Summala, Pasanen, Rasanen, Sievanen. Helsinki, Finland, 1996



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Studies on Increased Crash Risk

Overall, studies have shown that the crash rate of bicyclists using sidepath trails can be between 1.8 and 3 times higher than riding on a road. One study found that of cyclists on sidepaths, those travelling contra-flow had a 4 times greater risk than a cyclist traveling on-street in the direction of traffic. See Table 3.1 for studies and findings.

**TABLE 3.1 Studies Indicating Increased Crash Risk for Cyclists on Sidepaths**

Indicated Risk	Study
2.8 x greater than on minor road	Kaplan, J.A., USDOT, "Characteristics of the Regular Adult Bicycle User." 1975-77
2.6 x greater than on major road	
1.8 x greater than on road	Wachtel and Lewiston, "Risk Factors for Bicycle-Motor Vehicle Collisions at Intersections," ITE Journal, Palo Alto, CA, September 1994.
2.5 x greater risk than on road	Pasanen and Rasanen. "Cycling Risks in the City of Helsinki." Helsinki, Finland, 1999 <sup>2</sup>
3.0 x greater at intersections	
4 x greater for contra-flow sidepath than on road with traffic	Hiles, Jeffrey A. Listening to Bike Lanes: Moving Beyond the Feud. September 1996

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bikexpert.com/research/pasanen/helsinki.htm#txt5a>

Figure 3.2 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO, 2012

Left turning Driver B is looking for traffic ahead. A contraflow bicyclist is not in the driver's main field of vision.

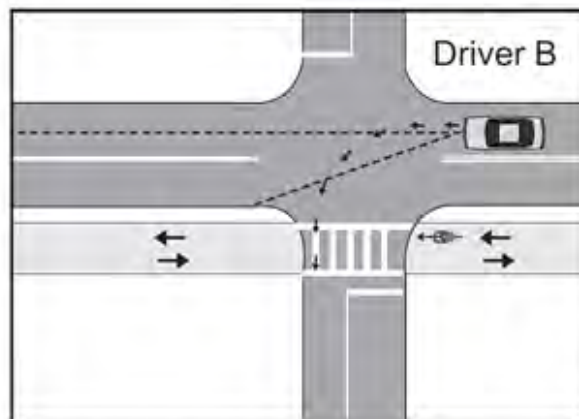
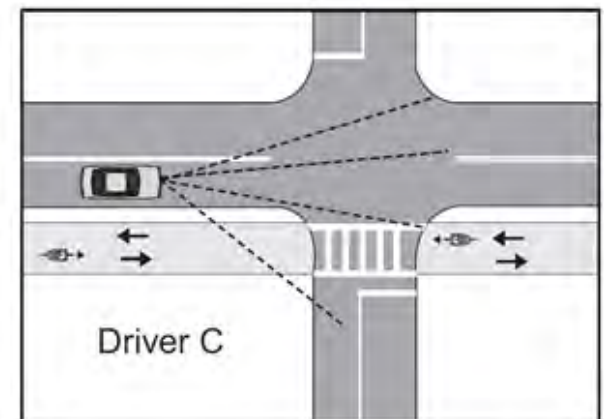


Figure 3.3 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO, 2012

Right turning Driver C is looking for left turning traffic on the main road and traffic on the major road. A bicyclist riding with traffic is not in the driver's main field of vision.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Additional Challenges Cyclists Face with Sidepaths

- Sidepath design encourages wrong-way riding on street where path begins or ends
- Signage and signals are not oriented toward contra-flow cyclists
- Creates difficult left turns for cyclists
- Vehicles may block path at street or driveway crossings, forcing the cyclists to stop or go around
- Cyclists may choose to bike in the vehicular lane regardless of the sidepath, which may cause confusion and frustration in motorists.
- Attempts to get cyclists to stop at street or driveway crossings are often inappropriate and ineffective<sup>3</sup>

Figure 3.4 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO, 2012

Stopped motor vehicles on side streets or driveways may block the path.

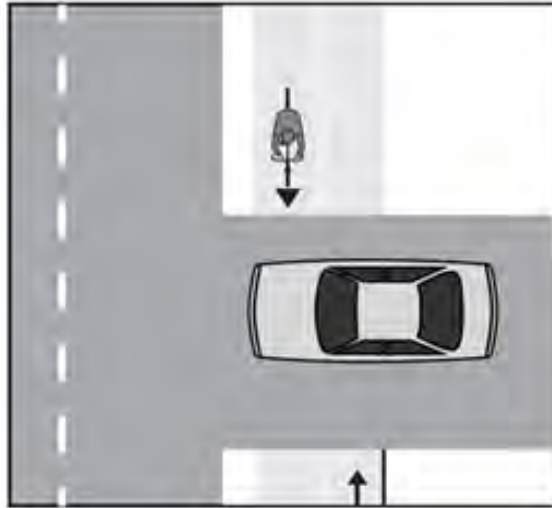
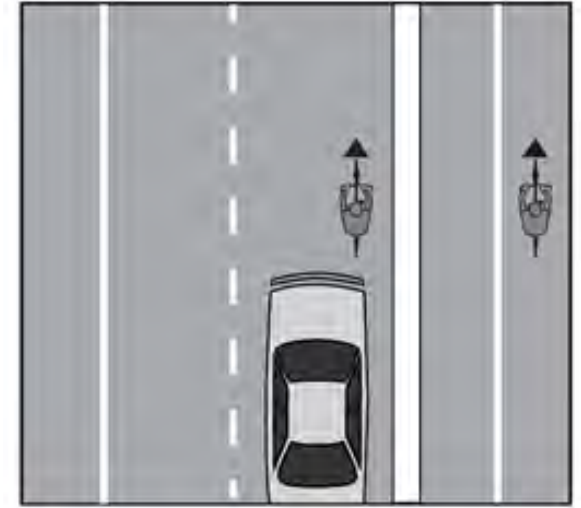


Figure 3.5 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO, 2012

Some bicyclists may find the road cleaner, safer and more convenient. Motorists may believe bicyclists should use a sidepath.



Because of the numerous and potentially dangerous challenges associated with sidepaths for cyclists, planners must consider several factors when deciding whether a sidepath is an appropriate facility type for a particular corridor.

<sup>3</sup> AASHTO, Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 2012



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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### Considerations for Determining whether a Sidepath is Appropriate for a Particular Corridor

- Traffic volume and speed
  - Lower speeds and lower traffic volumes are more conducive to on-street bicycle facilities than higher volume and speed roadways. Cyclists may be safer on the sidepath when vehicular speeds are over 40 mph<sup>4</sup>.
- Number/frequency of intersections & driveways
  - Each driveway or intersection creates multiple conflict points. Sidepaths are most appropriate when they parallel long stretches of roadway with no (or very limited or low volume) intersections, such as along a body of water, golf course, cemetery, or agricultural field. Sidepath designs which encourage the cyclists to slow down as they approach the intersection can help to mitigate the potential conflict<sup>4</sup>.
- Ability to accommodate bicyclists on the roadway
  - If cyclists can be safely accommodated on the roadway through shared lane markings or a type of bike lane appropriate for the speed of the roadway, then this on-street accommodation may be the preferred facility over the sidepath. Cyclists may also be safer on a sidepath when there are fewer road lanes<sup>4</sup>; if there is only one lane in each direction, the motorists may be reluctant to pass into the oncoming lane to pass the cyclists. In this case, the motorist may pass too close to the cyclist. If there are two lanes, then the motorist can use the left lane to pass and provide plenty of room for the cyclist. Pedestrians may still need a wide sidewalk for accommodation.
- Ability for cyclists to use alternative route/parallel streets
  - If cyclists can easily take a parallel road to fulfill the same connection, providing an appropriate facility on the parallel route may be the preferred solution.
- Number of pedestrians
  - If there is a high volume of pedestrians along the corridor, such as in a downtown area, bicyclists are better accommodated on the street for the safety of the pedestrians and the convenience of the cyclists.
- Number of cyclists
  - If the area is expected to have a high volume of cyclists, a facility dedicated specifically to cyclists, rather than shared with pedestrians, would be most appropriate.
- Location of destinations
  - Cyclists will want to be able to access destinations along the route. If a sidepath is the best solution, it should be on the same side as the destinations (however, this may be in conflict with the point about avoiding driveways and intersections). If destinations are on both sides of the roadway, a better solution may be to provide a bicycle facility on each side of the roadway as well.

<sup>4</sup> Petrisch, Landis, Huang, Challa. "Sidepath Safety Model: Bicycle Sidepath Design Factors Affecting Crash Rates." March 21, 2006. *Transportation Research Record Journal of the Transportation Research Board*.

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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Generally, sidepath trails should not be considered the best solution for accommodating bicyclists without careful consideration of risks and alternatives. These same risks do not hold true for pedestrians along the same corridor, since they travel at a slower rate and can stop immediately.



*Photo 3.3 - Sidepath trails may be supplemented by an on-street bicycle facility. This allows pedestrians and slower cyclists (e.g. children) to use the sidepath, while faster cyclists may choose to bike on the street.*

*(Indianola Ave., Des Moines, IA)*



*Photo 3.4- Sidepath trails may be appropriate along rural roadways with a few low-volume driveways or intersections.*

*(Gay Lea Wilson Trail)*



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## On-Street Bikeways

### Quiet Streets (Bike Boulevards)

Quiet streets are low-volume and low-speed streets where motorists and bicyclists share the same space. There are increasing levels of implementation for a quiet street. At the most basic level, a quiet street may include shared lane markings and wayfinding signage to establish the bicycle-friendly route. If vehicular speed is an issue, traffic calming techniques may be incorporated. If vehicular volume is an issue, traffic diversion may be used to prohibit certain turning movements by motorists, but not by bicyclists or pedestrians. A complete quiet street should also provide sidewalks for pedestrians.

Quiet streets work best in well-connected street grids where riders can follow reasonably direct and logical routes and motorists can choose to take alternate routes. By calming and possibly diverting traffic, quiet streets also improve conditions for pedestrians.

Quiet streets attract bicyclists who do not feel comfortable on busier streets and prefer to ride on lower traffic streets.

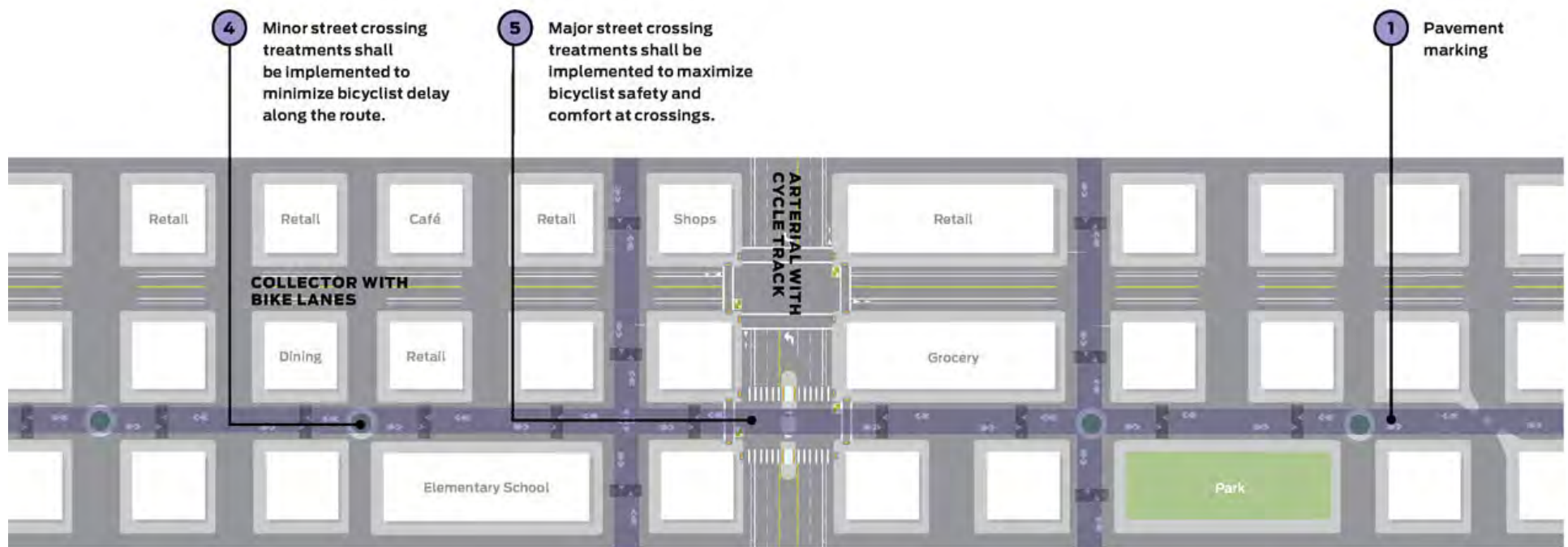


Figure 3.6 Bike Boulevard Design Guidance (Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO)  
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/bicycle-boulevards/route-planning/>

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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*Photo 3.5 - Midblock median calms traffic through horizontal deflection.*

*(SW 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa)*



*Photo 3.6 - A raised crosswalk slows traffic through vertical deflection and makes pedestrians crossing the street more visible.*

*(SW 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa)*



# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## On-Street Bikeways

### Shared Lane Markings

Shared-lane markings are pavement markings applied to a thoroughfare with vehicular speeds and volumes low enough to allow cyclists to move safely with motor vehicles. Shared lane markings are high-visibility pavement markings that help position bicyclists within a shared vehicle and bicycle travel lane. Shared lane markings may be supplemented by “share the road” type of signage.

The suitability of a shared roadway decreases as motor vehicle traffic speeds and volumes increase. For a local street to function acceptably for bicyclists as a shared roadway, traffic volumes should not be more than 3,000 vehicles per day, and speeds should be 25 mph or less. If traffic speeds and volumes exceed these thresholds, separated facilities (bicycle lanes) should be considered, or traffic calming and diversion techniques should be applied.

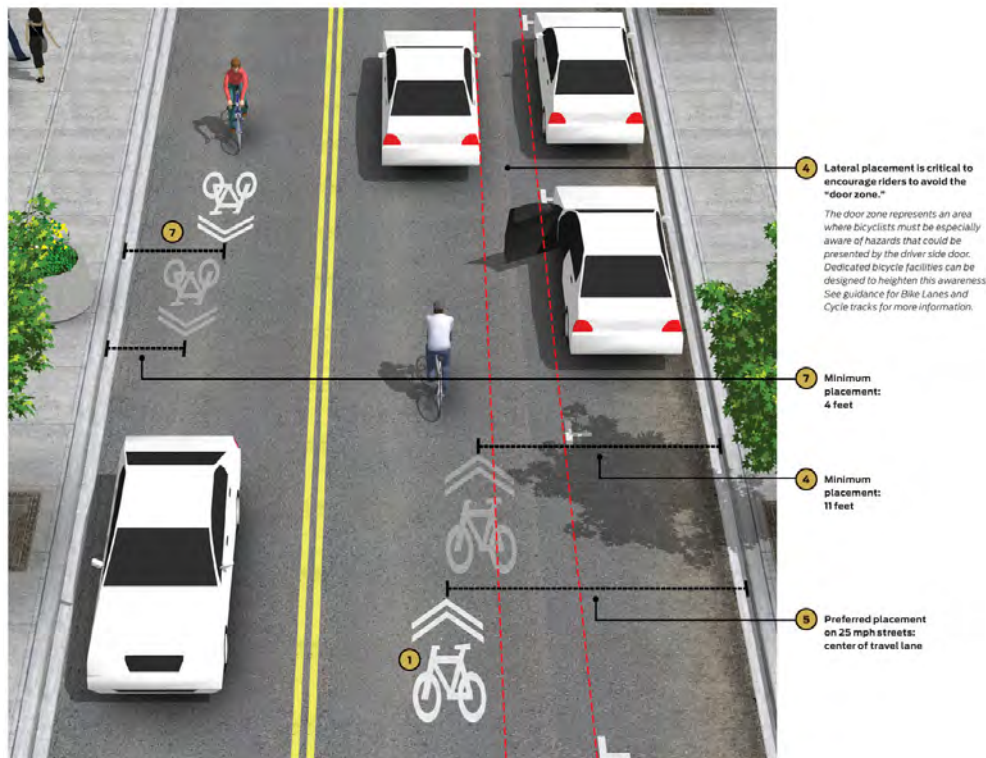


Photo 3.7- Shared Lane Markings (Mason City, Iowa)

Figure 3.7- Shared Lane Marking Guidance (Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO)  
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/bikeway-signing-marking/shared-lane-markings/>

# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## On-Street Bikeways

### Conventional Bike Lanes

A bicycle lane is that portion of the roadway that has been designated by striping, bicycle symbols, and signage for the exclusive use of bicyclists. Bicycle lanes enable bicyclists to position themselves where they will be visible to motorists and promote predictable behavior and movements between bicyclists and motorists.

Bike lanes are most appropriate on arterial and collector streets where higher vehicle traffic volumes and speeds warrant greater separation between bicyclists and motorists. Bike lanes should be at least five-feet wide. If there is on-street parking, it is important to situate the bike lane outside the “door zone” to avoid crashes involving motorists opening vehicle doors to exit as bicyclists are passing by.

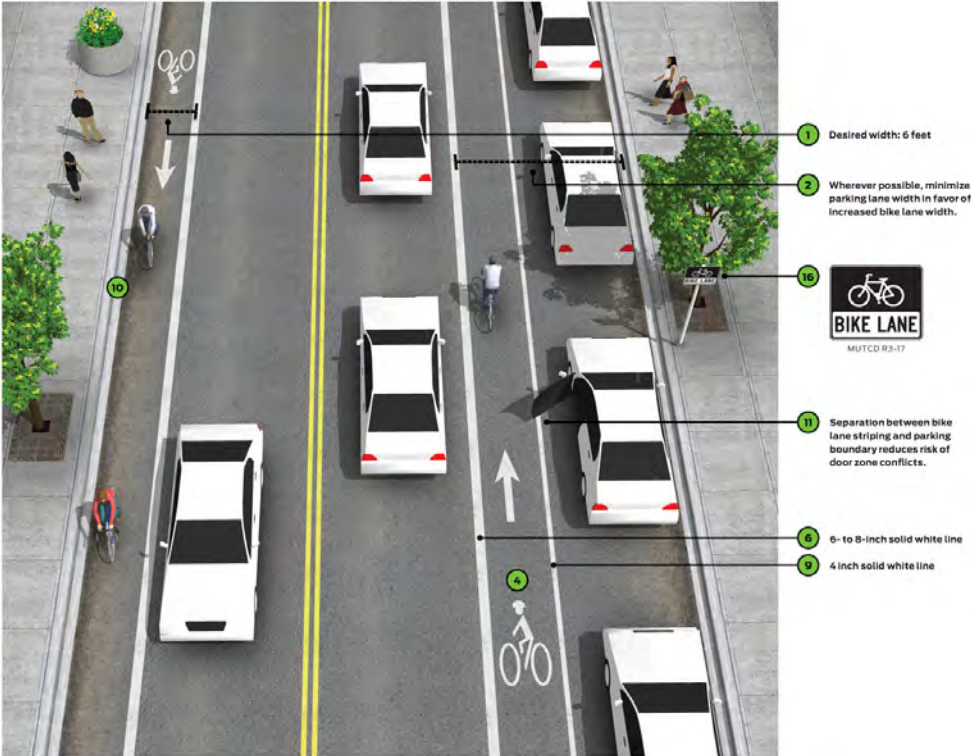


Figure 3.8- Conventional Bike Lane Guidance (Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO)  
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/bike-lanes/conventional-bike-lanes/>



Photo 8- Conventional Bike Lane (Fort Dodge, Iowa)



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### On-Street Bikeways

#### Buffered Bike Lanes

Bike lanes can also be designed with a painted buffer between the lane and adjacent vehicular traffic or parked vehicles. Buffered bike lanes are typically applied on streets with high travel speeds, volumes and/or high amounts of truck traffic, on streets with an extra lane or lane width, or anywhere a standard bike lane is being considered. Buffered bike lanes provide space for bicyclists to pass another bicyclists without encroaching in to the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane, and encourages bicycling by contributing to the perception of safety among users.

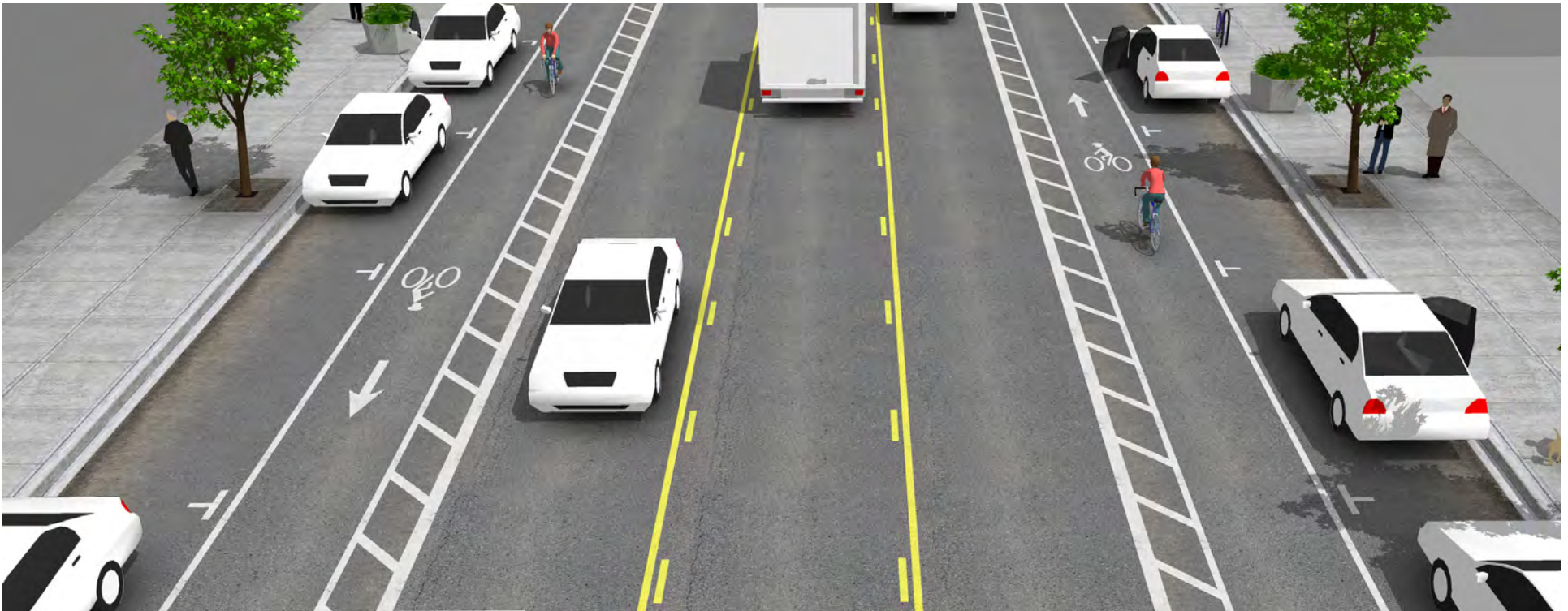


Figure 3.9 - Buffered Bike Lanes Design Guidance (Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO)

<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/bike-lanes/buffered-bike-lanes/>

# CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## On-Street Bikeways

### Protected or Separated Bike Lanes (Cycle Tracks)

Bike lanes can also be designed with a painted buffer between the lane and adjacent vehicular traffic or parked vehicles. Buffered bike lanes are typically applied on streets with high travel speeds, volumes and/or high amounts of truck traffic, on streets with an extra lane or lane width, or anywhere a standard bike lane is being considered. Buffered bike lanes provide space for bicyclists to pass another bicyclists without encroaching in to the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane, and encourages bicycling by contributing to the perception of safety among users.

### Alternate Protection Strategies

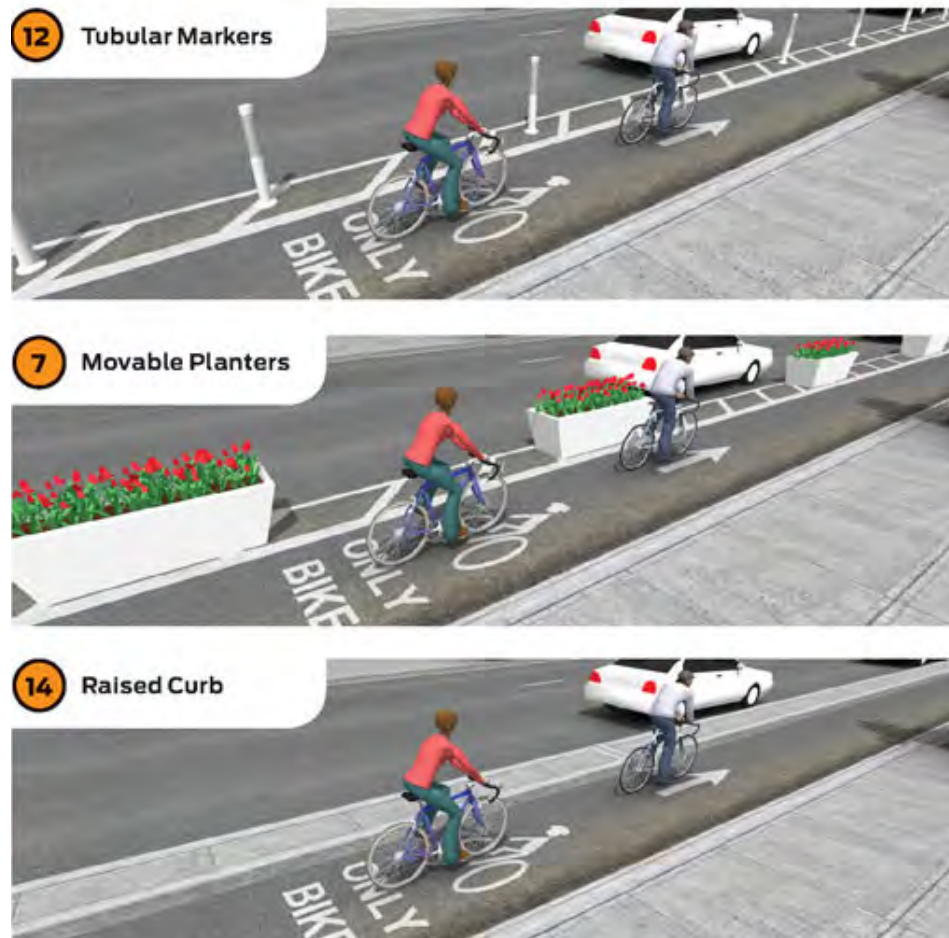


Figure 3.10 - Cycle Track Design Guidance  
(Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO)  
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/cycle-tracks/one-way-protected-cycle-tracks/>



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### On-Street Bikeways

#### Advisory Bike Lanes (Dashed Bike Lanes)

Advisory bike lanes are still an experimental treatment for bicycle facilities. They are designed to be used under certain conditions when a standard bike lane cannot be used due to narrow roadway width. Advisory bike lanes guide cyclists to stay to the side of the road and encourage motorists to provide sufficient room when passing. They should only be used where traffic volumes are less than 6,000 AADT and not with a truck or bus route. They should also not be interspersed with one-way traffic.

Advisory bike lanes are often, but not always used in conjunction with centerline removal. There should be a minimum of 16 feet between the dashed lines. Motorists may enter the bicycle lanes to negotiate oncoming traffic, but only when the lanes are not occupied by cyclists<sup>7</sup>.

These are different than conventional bike lanes because motorists are allowed to travel within the bike lane area, and only need to exit the lane when there is a bicyclist in the lane. These are also different than shared lane markings which would typically guide cyclists to travel in line with motorists.



Photo 9 - Advisory bike lanes. Source: Streets.MN

<sup>7</sup>[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/guidance/mutcd/dashed\\_bike\\_lanes.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/mutcd/dashed_bike_lanes.cfm)

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

**Table 3.2 Recommended On-Street Bicycle Facility Types**

The following chart provides a breakdown of recommendations for on-street bicycle facility types along potential multimodal corridors.

Street	Start-End Points	Estimated Pavement Width*	Recommendation
80th Ave.	Beardsley St. to 83 Rd.	24'	Advisory Bike Lanes
83rd Ave.	Hwy R57 to Hwy R63	20'	Shared Lane Markings
Bristol St.	Colonial Cir. to High Rd.	29'	Advisory Bike Lanes or Shared Lane Markings
Cherry Pkwy	Sunset Dr. to High Rd.	Varies	Buffered to Conventional Bike Lanes
Cherry Pkwy	High Rd. to North Ave.	19'	Buffered or Protected Bike Lanes
Cherry Pkwy	Maple Ave. to Coolidge St.	29'	(5' bike lane -2' buffer -12' vehicular)
Colonial Cir.	Colonial Pkwy. to Bristol St.	42'	Shared Lane Markings
Colonial Pkwy	Iowa 28 to Colonial Cir.	29'	Bike Lanes or Buffered Bike Lanes
E 20th St.	Merle Huff Ave. to Casady Dr.	26'	Buffered or Protected Bike Lane
High Rd.	Bristol St. to Sunset Dr.	26'	Shared Lane Markings
North Ave.	Sunset Dr. to Center St.	44'	Advisory Bike Lanes or Shared Lane Markings
North Ave.	Center St. to Cherry Pkwy	28'	Shared Lane Markings

\*Pavement widths shown in the table above are based upon an approximate measurement from aerial photography

It is suggested that the proposed trail recommendations be cross referenced with planned development within the city limits to determine the level of feasibility. Additionally, input from further public meetings may contribute toward accurately determining the most desirable locations for future trail development and phasing. The next page provides a map showing potential trail and bikeway improvements based on initial assessment of the network. It is suggested that the proposed trail and on-street bikeway recommendations be cross referenced with planned development with the City to determine the level of feasibility. Sidepath recommendations should be reviewed carefully with consideration of future development along each corridor, using the "Considerations for Determining Whether a Sidepath is Appropriate for a Particular Corridor" provided earlier in this chapter for guidance. Additionally, input from further public meetings may contribute toward accurately determining the most desirable locations for future trail development and phasing.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### Trail and On-Street Bike Facility Design Guidance

There are several guidelines and requirements to consult when designing off-street trails and on-street bicycle facilities. Following these guidelines helps to develop safe and functional bicycle facilities that reflect the most recent research and best practices. Additionally, all designs ensure that trails and on-street facilities are equally accessible to all residents.

#### *Guidelines and Requirement References:*

- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD)
  - U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - [http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf\\_index.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm)
- Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
  - American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
  - [https://bookstore.transportation.org/collection\\_detail.aspx?ID=116](https://bookstore.transportation.org/collection_detail.aspx?ID=116)
- Urban Bikeway Design Guide
  - National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
  - <http://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/>
- Urban Street Design Guide
  - National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
  - <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/>
- Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS)
  - Institute for Transportation, Iowa State University
  - <http://www.iowasudas.org/>
- The Essentials of Bike Parking
  - Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
  - <http://www.apbp.org/?page=publications>
- Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide
  - U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/separated\\_bikelane\\_pdg/page00.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/separated_bikelane_pdg/page00.cfm)
- Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks
  - U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/small\\_towns/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/)



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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### FUTURE TRAIL MAP

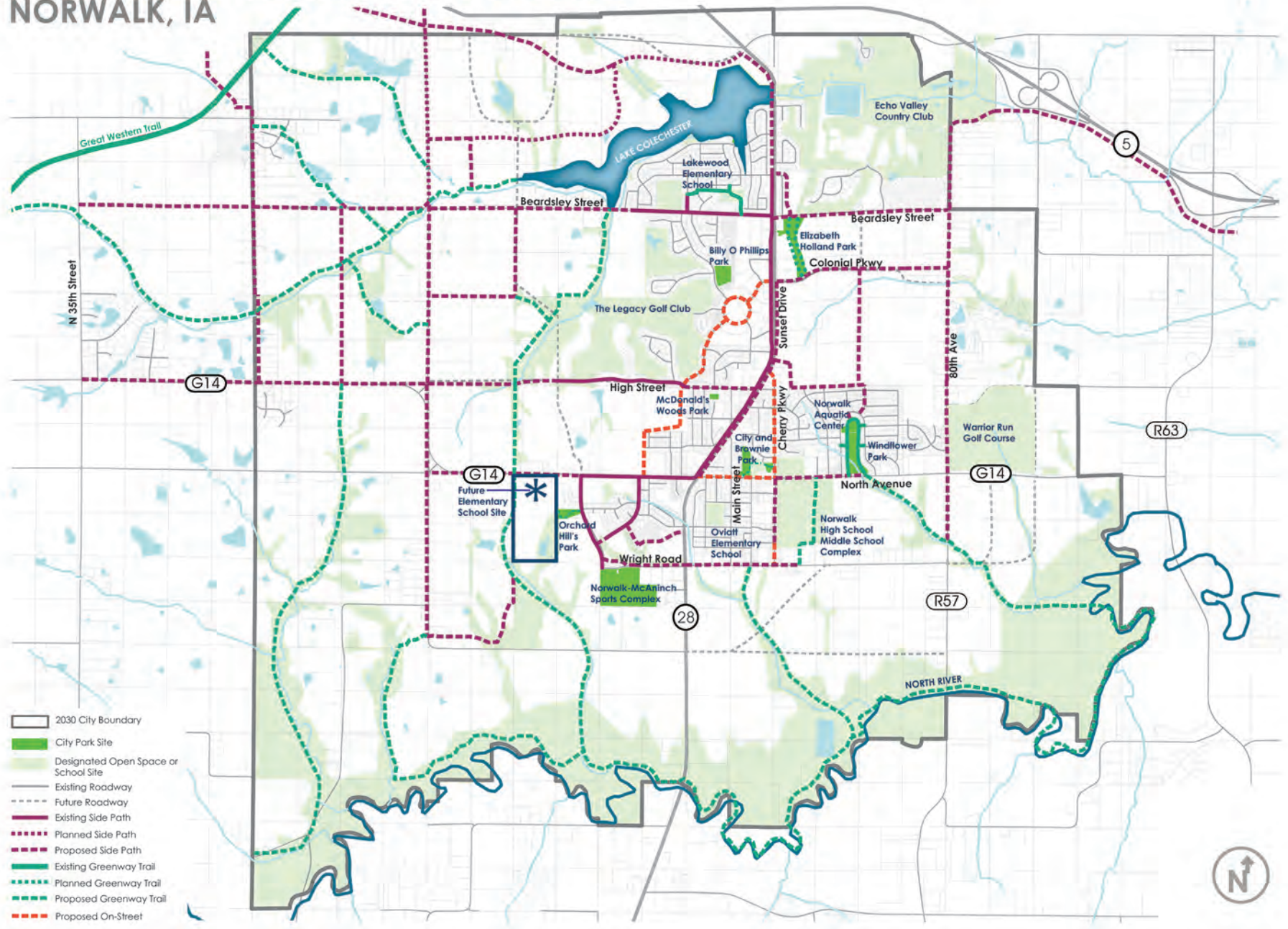
The following map shows potential trail improvements based on trail types.





# PROPOSED TRAILS & BIKEWAYS

## NORWALK, IA



MAP 3.2

Vibrant, safe and successful parks require appropriate operational and administrative support.

## PARK AND RECREATION STAFFING

Park and recreation staffing often includes full-time, part-time and seasonal staffing. Staffing is often affected by the size and quantity of parks maintained, as well as local population.

### National Staffing Comparable

According to the 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review park and recreation agencies have the following medians for equivalent full-time employees (FTEs) provided through a mix of full-time and part-time staffing:

1. Agencies serving jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people have a median of 10.2 FTEs on staff. This increases to 26 FTEs for populations between 20,000 and 49,999.
2. Median of 12.7 FTEs when maintaining 10 parks or less. This increases to a median of 22.9 when managing 10-19 parks.
3. Median of 13.9 FTEs for agencies maintaining 250 acres or less.
4. Median of 15.8 FTEs for agencies in communities with populations per sq mile of less than 500. This increase to 31.5 for communities with populations per sq mile of 500-1,500 per square mile.

### Other Staffing Factors

Other factors, such as the type of facilities (i.e. sports complex, aquatic center or indoor recreation facility) being maintained will also affect the number off staff required. In summary, staffing will need to be taken into consideration to meet the needs of maintaining existing park and public facilities and as the City continues to grow.

### Staff Distribution Comparable

The average distribution of FTEs responsibilities in park and recreation agencies are fairly even between maintenance, operations programmers and administration. The 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review provides the following percentage of total FTEs per responsibility based on agencies serving populations 20,000 or less.

Maintenance <b>27%</b>	Operations <b>25%</b>
Administration <b>20%</b>	Programmers <b>25%</b>

### Engage the Community

Increase, organize and market volunteer opportunities in the City park system. Volunteer programs can be created to help maintain and make improvements to existing parks.

Encourage the development of a "Friends of the Norwalk Parks" organization. This is a volunteer based organization that helps to fundraise, promote and coordinate volunteer projects. They can also qualify as a Community Foundation with tax advantages to donors and allow funding of park related improvements which can be gifted to the community.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION

An important aspect of park planning is the realization that every project, once constructed will have future operations and maintenance costs. Identifying these costs for each project should be discussed during project design.

Maintenance costs are often affected by the selection of materials and construction methods for the proposed improvements. This is important to understand during park planning. While a materials initial cost may be lower, the long term maintenance cost may be higher.

Operational costs are affected by decisions made during the design of the project. This includes hours of operation, operation methods and facility controls. Typical operational costs include full-time, part-time staffing, utilities and outside needs.

It is recommended that as projects are selected and move forward that operations and maintenance costs are identified so proper budgeting, funding and expectations can be met by the City of Norwalk and the community.

### BUDGETS

According to the 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review park and recreation agencies have the following medians for annual operating expenditures:

1. Populations less than 20,000: \$917,000
2. Agencies maintaining 250 acres or less: \$1,340,000
3. 10 parks or less: \$1,010,000 (10 to 19 Parks increases to \$2,480,000)
4. Populations per sq mile of less than 500: \$1,516,000 (Increases to \$2,686,000 for communities with populations per sq mile of 500-1,500 per square mile.

The 2017 NRPA Performance Review provides medians for annual operating expenditures per capita and acres maintained.

Based on populations less than \$20,000:

**\$8,073** per acre

**\$100-150** per person

Based on Midwest Region:

**\$11,000** per acre

**\$170** per person

<http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/budget/>

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Norwalk is committed to building and maintaining a park system that coincides with its goal to be a community where residents have a high quality of life and ability to thrive. In order to achieve this, community leaders and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission members realize the importance of outlining an organized strategy for funding and implementing this plan. The goals set forth in this booklet are long term goals and are all not anticipated to be completed within the next 5-10 years. The intent of the plan is to provide guidance as future development and community growth occurs, and to identify needs within the existing park sites.

While some recommendations will be implemented through the annual budget process and City Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), additional funding sources will be necessary to fulfill all of the park, trail and bike-way needs. Funding assistance for improvements is available from a variety of different sources. The plan provides a resource for seeking funding through grant and private donations. Some of the following are potential sources of funding outside the City's general fund and capital improvements funds. Any funding resources and methods should be reviewed with the City Attorney prior to utilizing.



### User Supported Fees

The City relies on fees and charges for recreation resources and programming to offset maintenance and staffing expenses. Fees should be market-driven and reasonably affordable. Examples include:

- *Reservations*: The right to reserve designated public property for a set amount of time, such as a picnic shelter.
- *Equipment Rental*: Some communities and park agencies offer the rental of equipment such as tables, chairs, tents, snow shoes, bicycles etc.
- *Parking Fee*: A fee is applied for parking at selected destinations or events to help offset capital and operational costs.
- *Program Fees/Admission Fees*: A fee is applied to access specific facilities or program for select activities to help offset operational costs. (i.e. dog park or aquatic center)
- *Security and Clean-up Fees*: A fee for groups or individuals hosting special events within public property that require additional security or clean-up.

### Local Taxpayer Supported Sources

- *General Obligation Bonds*: Bonds issued for general public and capital improvements. Public approval may be required through an election depending on the cost, size and nature of the project.
- *Hotel, Motel & Restaurant Tax*: A tax based method based on gross funds from on services rendered from hotel, motel and restaurants. These funds may be used to build and operate park and recreation facilities.
- *Revenue Bonds*: Bonds used for capital projects that will generate revenue for service. The fees are then utilized to support repayment of the bond.
- *Local Option Sales Tax*: A common revenue source for funding park and recreation agencies. The normal sales tax rate is one cent for operations and one half cent for capital. This method requires public approval and a referendum.
- *Surcharge Fees*: A fee is charged on top of the regular charge for specific conveniences (i.e. using a credit card). The fee is then used to help off set improvement or operational costs.



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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### Grant Resources

Grant funding can be a great resource for funding. It is important to note, however, that most funding must be supported by local matching funds. (i.e. Iowa Economic Development Funding Assistance, Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship offer various grant opportunities)

- *Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funds (STP)*: Federal funds distributed through the state. Available for transportation related projects, including trails and bikeway improvements.
- *Land & Water Conservation Fund*: Federal National Park Service funds are provided for acquisition and development of parks, outdoor recreation and related facilities administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- *Water Recreation Access Grant*: Also administered by the Iowa DNR for improving boat access facilities to Iowa's lakes, rivers and streams.
- *Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Grants*: Funding administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for the acquisition and development of parks and open space.
- *Iowa Great Places Program*: A funding resource through the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs for projects with cultural initiatives and projects that help create a sense of place or make a community unique.
- *Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant & RECAT Grant*: Funding administered by the Iowa Department of Economic Development for projects that provide recreational, cultural, entertainment or educational amenities or attractions.
- *Park and Recreation Association Grants*: The NRPA and similar associations also offer several small grant opportunities.

### Philanthropic Resources

- *Volunteerism*: Persons donate time to assist with improvements, programming, or maintenance. This can help reduce City costs and help promote and build ownership of the system. Consider creating a volunteer program with a volunteer coordinator position to help facilitate and manage the program. Volunteer programs should have clear communications with systems in place for training and rewarding volunteers.
- *Friends Associations & Foundation/Gifts*: Groups formed or used to raise money or promote specific causes or activities. They can be used to fund a variety of projects.
- *Maintenance Endowments*: An endowment set up for individuals or groups to invest in on-going maintenance and infrastructure needs.
- *Land Trust*: Land trusts can be set up to help secure funds for the cost of acquiring land that needs to be preserved for natural resources protection. Warren County Conservation Board and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation are potential resources.
- *Life Estates*: These can be used when an individual wants to leave their property to the City. They are allowed to remain living on the property until their death and receive tax deduction benefits.
- *Memorial Program*: Norwalk already has several items donated as memorials, including tables and benches. This program can continue to provide benefits to the City. A city-wide tree planting plan or bench location plan can help provide amenities where they are most needed.
- *Irrevocable Remainder Trusts*: A trust often created for wealthy individuals interested in donating a portion of their wealth to the City. The trust is allowed to grow over a period of time and then is made available to the City to use some of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs as designated by the original trustee.

## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

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### Private Partnerships

This can include businesses, private groups/associations (i.e. Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, etc.), or individuals who seek to make a profit from using City facilities or programs. This also applies to partnerships where a private partner wants to develop a facility on park property and/or provide a service on the City's behalf.

It is important when creating these partnerships that the City protects its mission and goals when working with a private partner to meet their financial objectives.

- *Resource Development Partners: an organization or group where their primary purpose is to leverage private sector resources, other public funding, grants, and from individuals within the community, to support specific and mutual goals and objectives.*
- *Service Partners: Entity that supports City efforts by providing programming, events or serving specific populations.*
- *Operational Partners: Entity that supports City efforts by maintaining facilities or assets, promoting park usage, providing programs or events, maintain park resources through in-kind labor, equipment or materials.*
- *Co-Branding Partners: For-Profit organizations or corporations that can gain brand association, notoriety or tax benefits as supporters of City improvements. This is provided in exchange for sponsorship or funding events, marketing material, or specific park improvements. Examples include naming rights, promotional campaigns, or advertising opportunities.*
- *Round-up Programs: An agreement with another agency (i.e. local utility providers) where consumers can voluntarily round-up their bill to an even dollar amount to support specific improvements.*

### Public Partnerships

- Two or more agencies partner to jointly fund development and/or operational costs. Partners develop revenue jointly, share risk, operational costs, and management based on each agencies' strengths and weaknesses. Inter-local agreements, Memorandum of Understandings (MOU), or 28-E agreements are often used to facilitate these agreements.

### Sale of Franchise/Development Rights

- *Agricultural Leases: Land owned by the City can be leased for agricultural purposes. This can help protect land until the funding and resources are available to develop the site for conservation or recreational use.*
- *Land Swaps: The trading of City property for more desirable property.*
- *Cell Towers: Placed in strategic locations, these can provide revenue as a one-time payment or annual lease.*

### Operational Sources

- *Cost Avoidance: Every community and City is different. Each City decides which facilities to provide and which to outsource. Although it is important to be responsive to the public's needs, some Cities choose to provide facilities and services by partnering, outsourcing, or deferring to another provider. The City saves on the cost to construct, manage, and maintain the facility.*
- *Surplus Sale of Property of Equipment by Auction: Cities often hold auctions to sell off property or equipment that is no longer needed.*



## CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### SUMMARY

This comprehensive plan is just one of the initial steps in developing a bold vision for the City of Norwalk's park system. A vision that will have a lasting impact on the local community as it grows and the members it serves. The vision and successful implementation will require considerable amount of continued support and multiple actors. The large-scale ideas put in place within this plan will continue to be interpreted and developed further as the community implements the plan.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & REFERENCES

#### National Organizations and Associations:

These are national organizations and associations that provide lots of resources and information about parks and trail benefits, best practices, and national standards.

#### NATIONAL PARK AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

<http://www.nrpa.org/>

Resource Library <http://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/>

#### THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

<https://www.tpl.org/>

#### AMERICAN TRAILS ASSOCIATION

<http://www.americantrails.org/ee/>

Resource Library <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/index.html>

#### AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

<https://www.planning.org/>

#### Local Partners:

##### WARREN COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

<http://cdiowa.org/iowa-soil-and-water-conservation-districts>

<https://www.facebook.com/Warren-County-Soil-and-Water-Conservation-District-330054773822844/>

WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD <http://www.warrenccb.org/>

DES MOINES AREA MPO <https://dmampo.org/>



#### Articles and White Papers on Parks, Economics and Planning:

Crompton, J. (2010). Measuring the Economic Impact of Park and Recreation Services. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

Edited by Constance T.F. de Brun (2007). The Economic Benefits of Land Conservation. San Francisco, CA: The Trust for Public Land.

Anton, P. (2005). The Economic Value of Open Space: Implications for Land Use Decisions. Saint Paul, MN: Wilder Research.

Levitz, Dena. (2014). The Role of Parks in Shaping Successful Cities. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association and Chicago, IL: American Planning Association

Center for Regional Analysis (2015). The Economic Impact of Local Parks: An Examination of the Economic Impacts of Operations and Capital Spending on the United States Economy. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

NRPA (2017). 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

NRPA (2017). 2017 NRPA Americans' Engagement with Parks Survey. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

Center for City Park Excellence (2016). 2016 City Park Facts. San Francisco, CA: The Trust for Public Land.

# APPENDIX



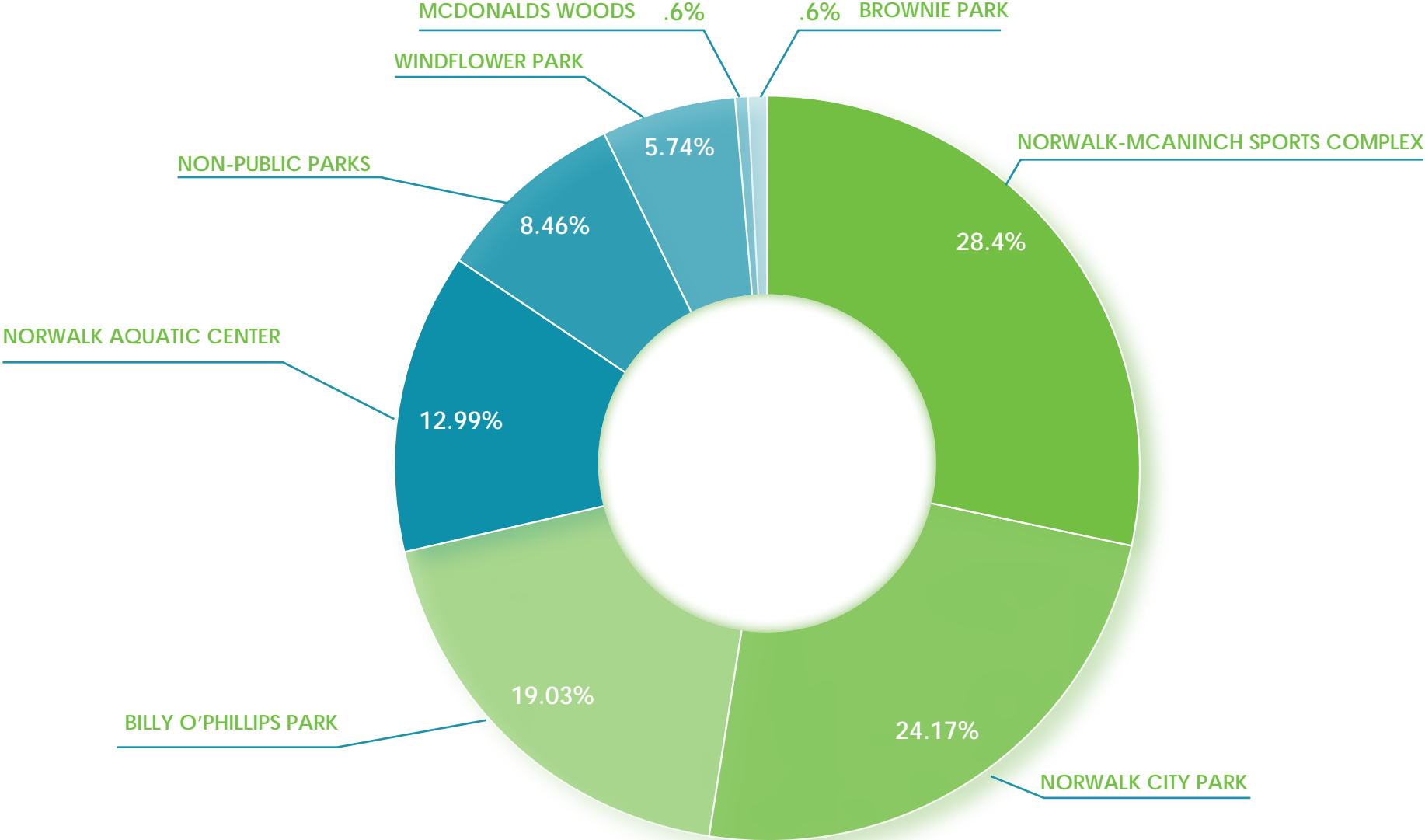


### PUBLIC SURVEY SUMMARY

The following pages are a summary of collected survey responses from the community and Norwalk park users.

WHICH PARK DO YOU VISIT MOST?

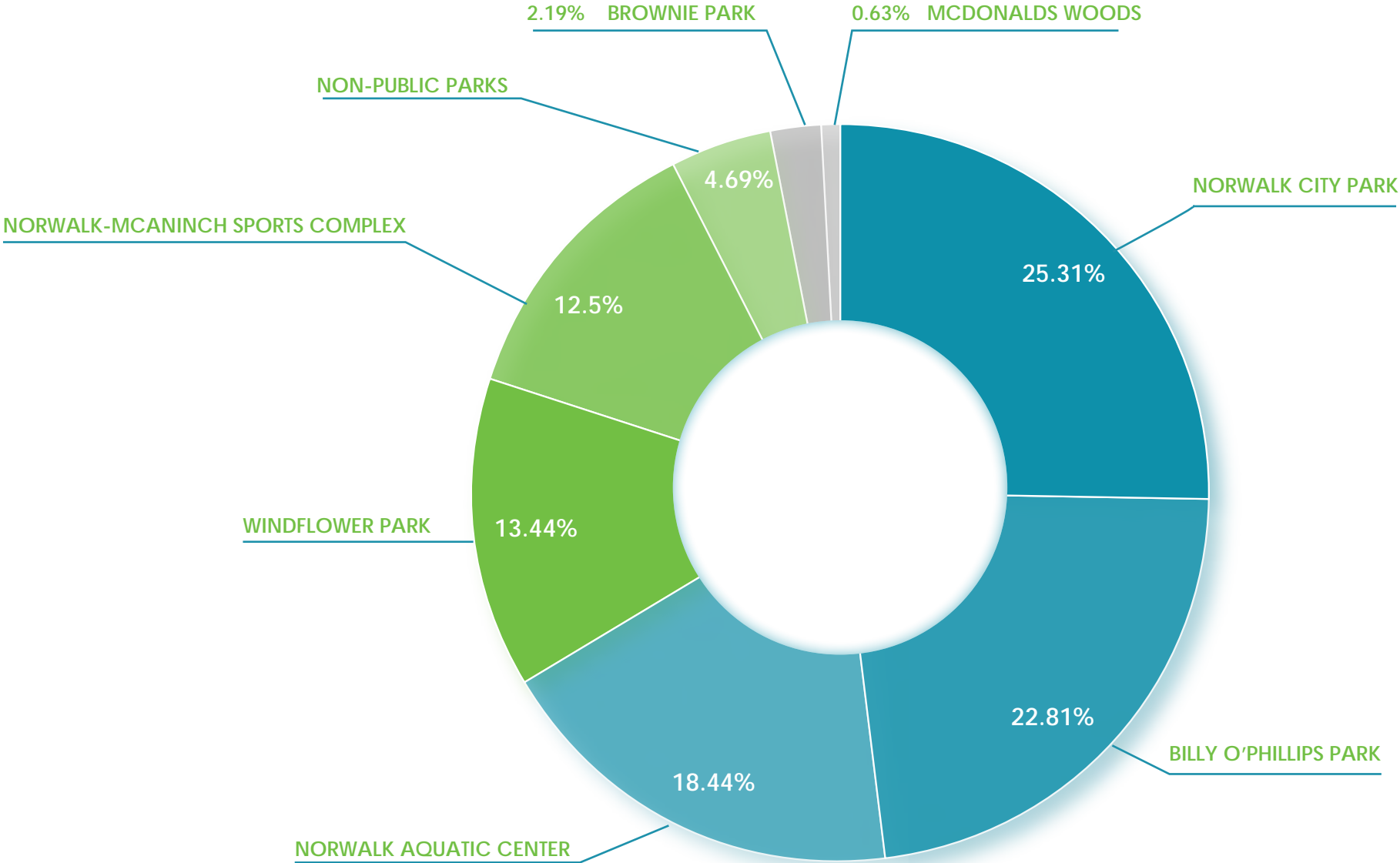
Results based on 331 answers, 13 skipped.





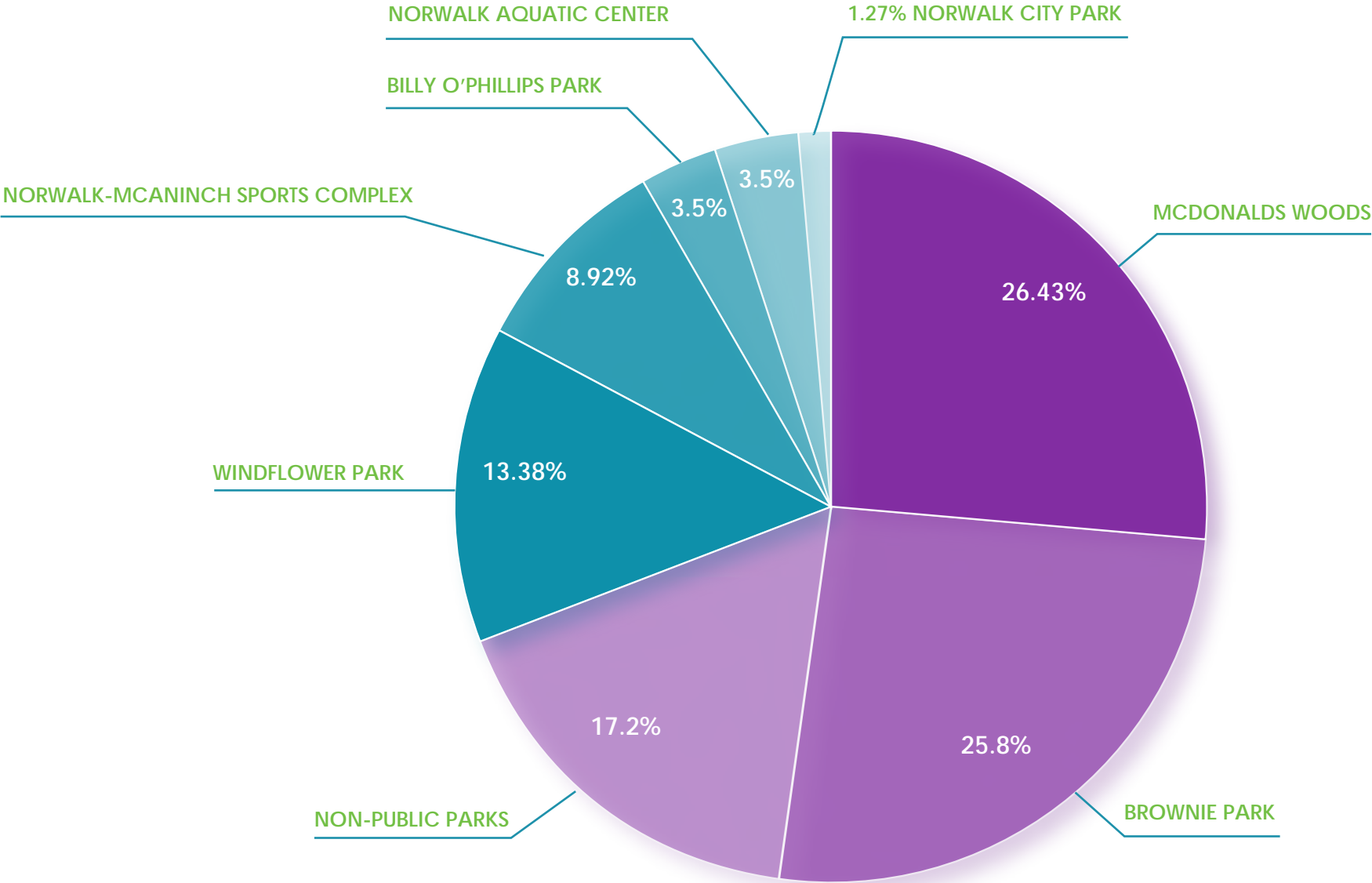
WHICH PARK DO YOU USE THE SECOND MOST?

Results based on 320 answers, 24 skipped.



WHICH PARK DO YOU USE THE LEAST?

Results based on 314 answered, 30 skipped.

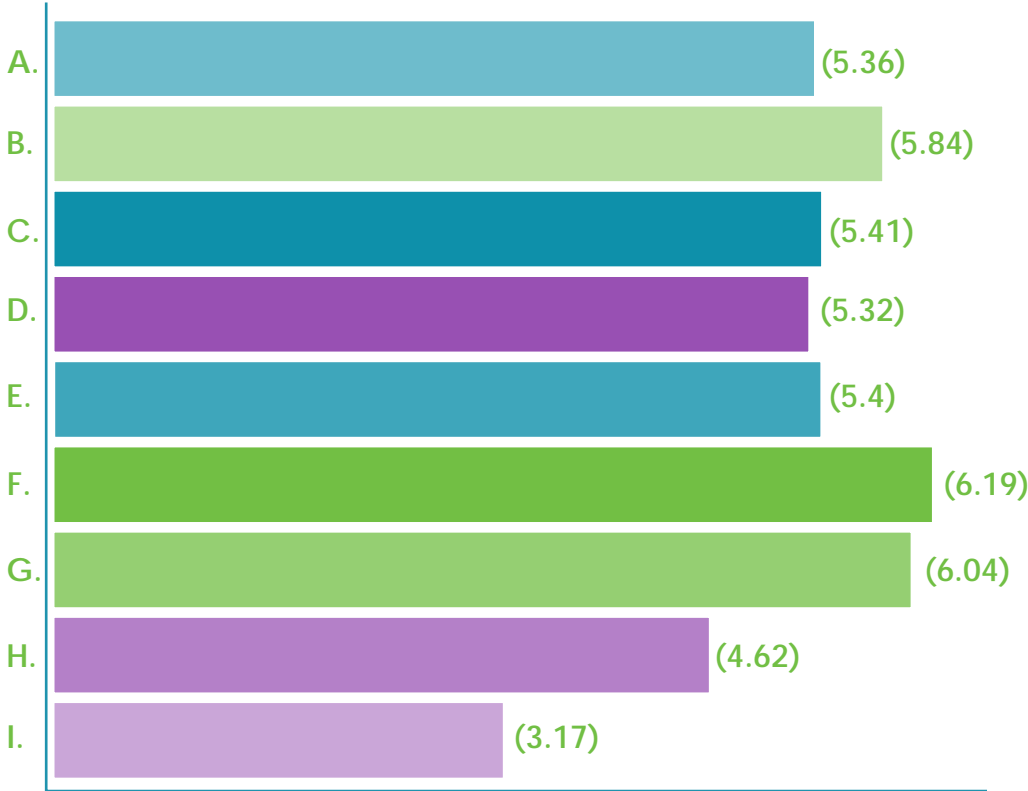




**RANK YOUR DESIRED FUTURE PARK TYPES AND FACILITIES FROM MOST DESIRABLE TO LEAST, WITH (1) AS MOST DESIRABLE AND (9) AS LEAST DESIRABLE.**

Parks are often categorized by park types depending on the facilities they provide. Below is a brief description of typical park categories or types:

- A. Natural Resource Area:** An area (size varies) nestled in a natural area with trails, interpretive signage about natural features, picnicking, fishing, water access. Linear parks, often called greenways, can fall into this category.
- B. Large, Multi-Use Community Park:** A 20-acre or more park offering multiple features and services, they often have unique features such as small stage or pavilion, community gathering spaces or a large playground.
- C. Small, Neighborhood Park:** A 5-10-acre park, typically in walking distance, offering basic park amenities such as playgrounds, trails, and picnic facilities.
- D. Athletic Facilities for Competitive Sports Fields:** Varies in size depending on community sports programming and need.
- E. Special Use & Regional Park:** Size varies, typically a distinct destination with features that attract users city-wide and even the larger region; such as a large events plaza, aquatic center, destination playground or historical site.
- F. Indoor Recreation Facilities:** Varies in size depending on community programming and needs. Currently the City and the Norwalk Community School District work together to provide indoor recreation services.
- G. Off-street Trails:** Typically a 8-12'width paved trail located along a roadway (i.e. Sunset Drive) or within a greenway or park area for walking, running and biking.



**DESIRED FUTURE PARK TYPES AND FACILITIES CHART**

**H.Improvement and Renovation of Existing Parks**

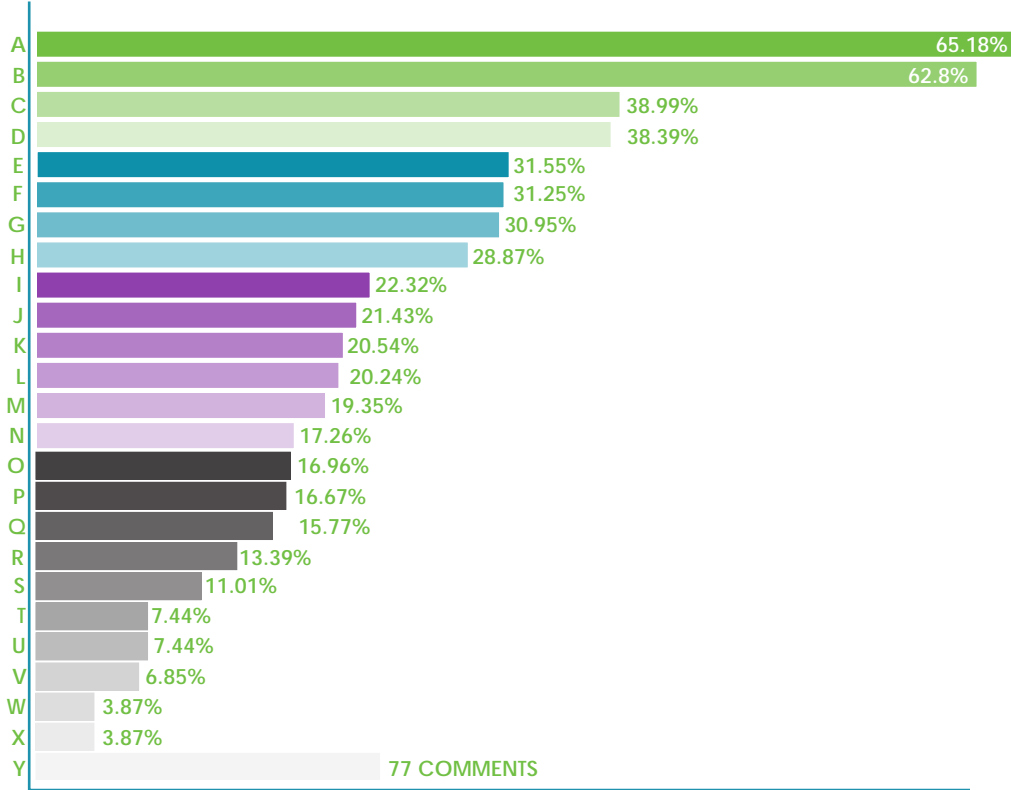
**I. Other:** Comments are provided in additional document.

Results are based on 329 answers, 15 skipped.

# APPENDIX : SURVEY RESULTS

## PARKS INCLUDE DIFFERENT AMENITIES AND FEATURES. WHAT TYPES OF OUTDOOR RECREATION FEATURES ARE MOST NEEDED IN NORWALK? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

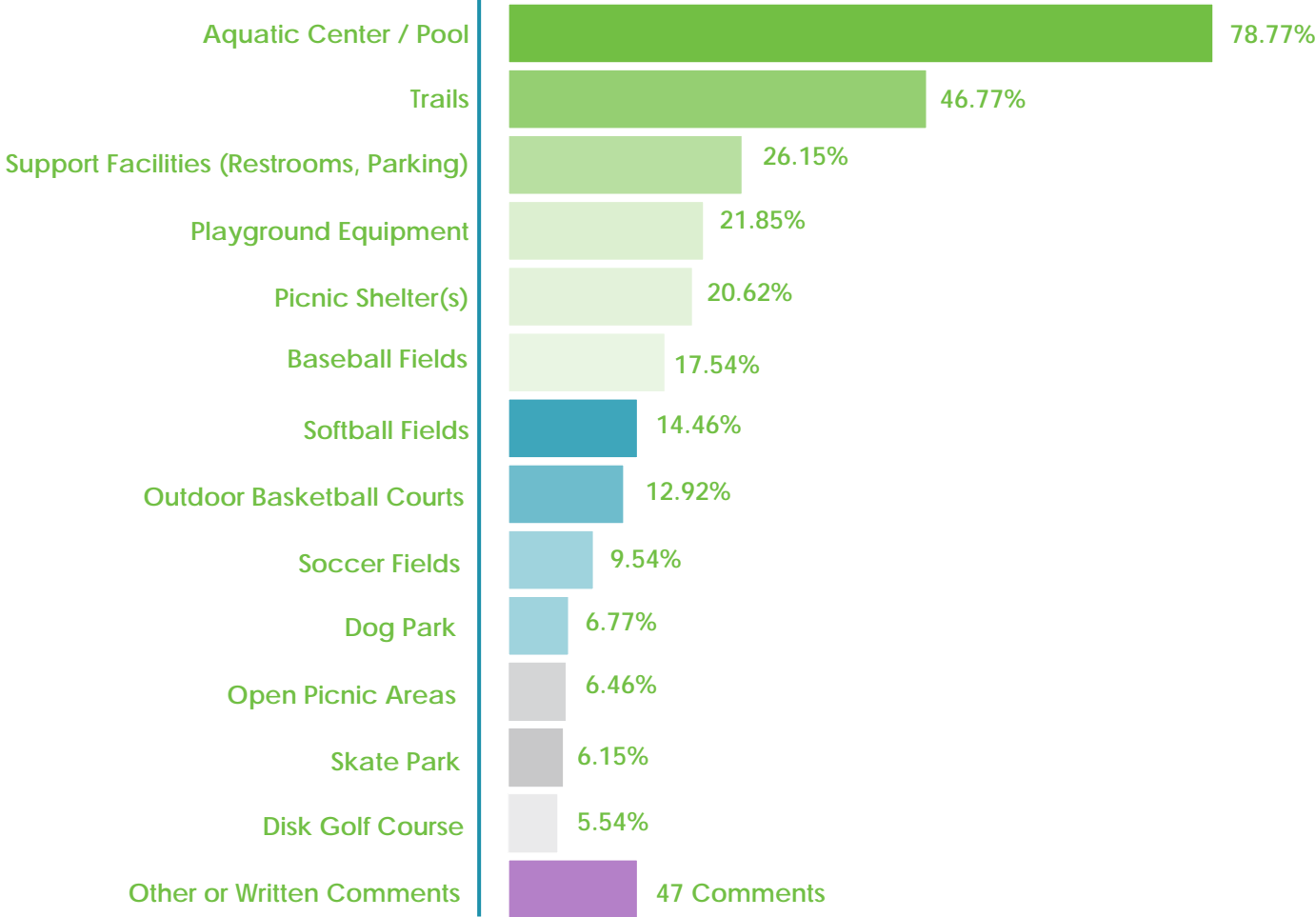
- A. Splash Grounds
- B. Paved Multi-User Trails
- C. Soft Surface Trails for Hiking & Trail Running
- D. Access to Fishing & Water Activites
- E. Playgrounds
- F. Pavilion, Stage or Amphitheatre
- G. Outdoor Fitness Trail or Equipment
- H. Picnic Shelters
- I. Sand Volleyball
- J. Adventure or Challenge Course
- K. Basketball Court(s)
- L. Ice Skating
- M. Educational Opportunities
- N. Community Gardens
- O. Art/Sculpture
- P. Additional Athletic Facilities
- Q. Tennis or Pickleball Court(s)
- R. Wildlife Watching
- S. General Open Space
- T. Horseback Riding
- U. BMX or Mountain Biking Training Course
- V. Geocaching
- W. Golf
- X. Skateboarding
- Y. Other or Written Comments



## TYPES OF OUTDOOR RECREATION FEATURES MOST NEEDED IN NORWALK

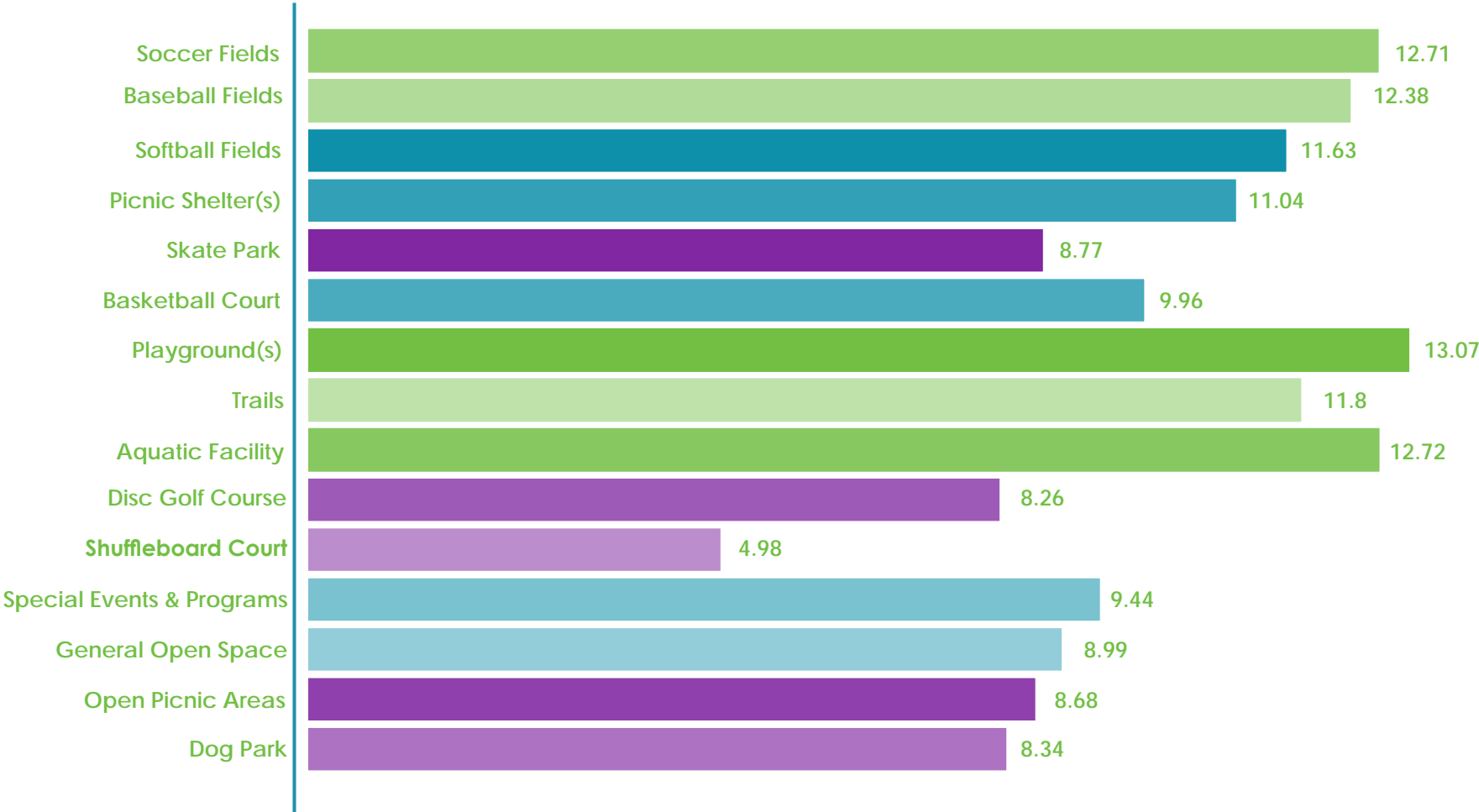
Y. "Other or written comments" provided in additional document.

WHAT EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES DO YOU FEEL NEED IMPROVEMENT OR ADDITIONAL FEATURES? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



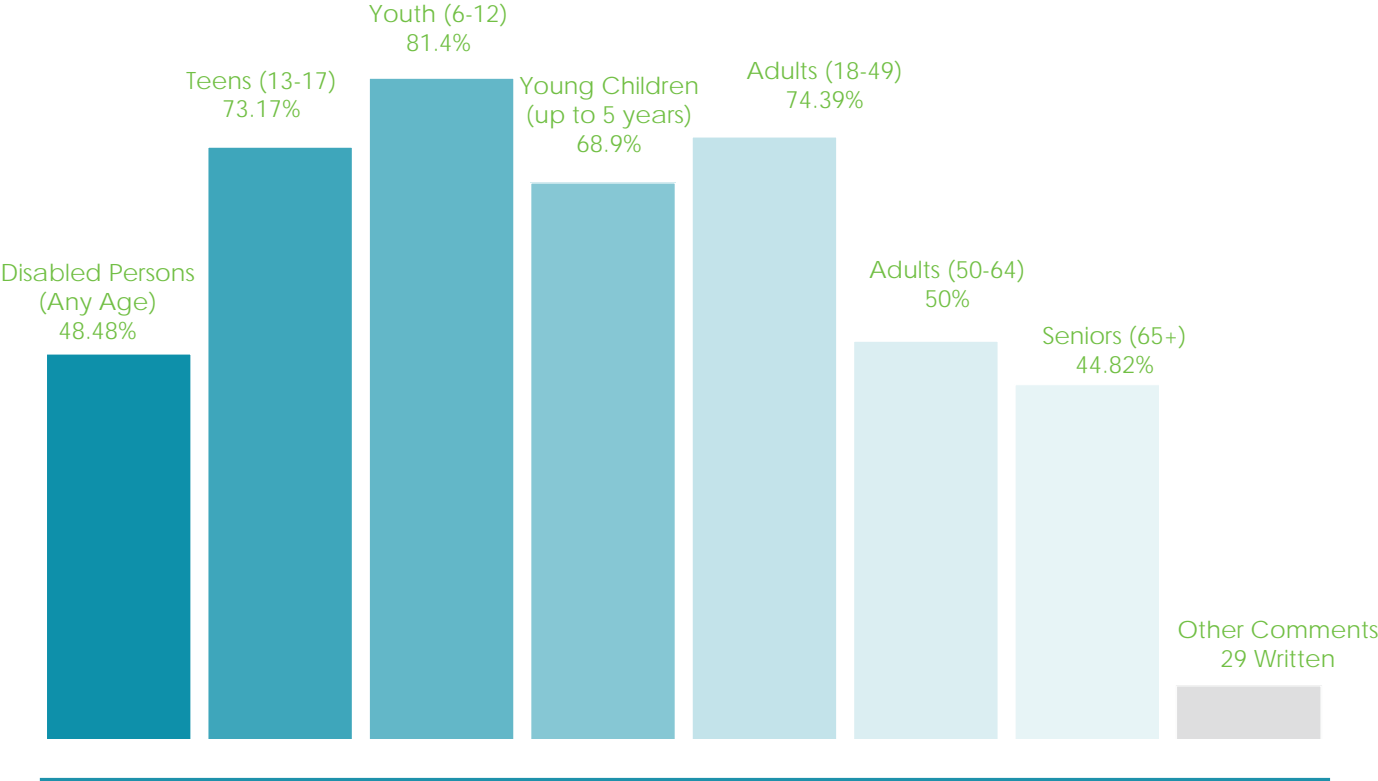


WHAT EXISTING PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES DO YOU USE THE MOST? RANK THE USE WITH (1) BEING MOST USED. RANK (N/A) IF YOU DO NOT USE.



WHAT GROUPS WOULD BENEFIT FROM ADDITIONAL OR IMPROVED RECREATION SERVICES IN NORWALK? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Written responses are provided in an additional document.



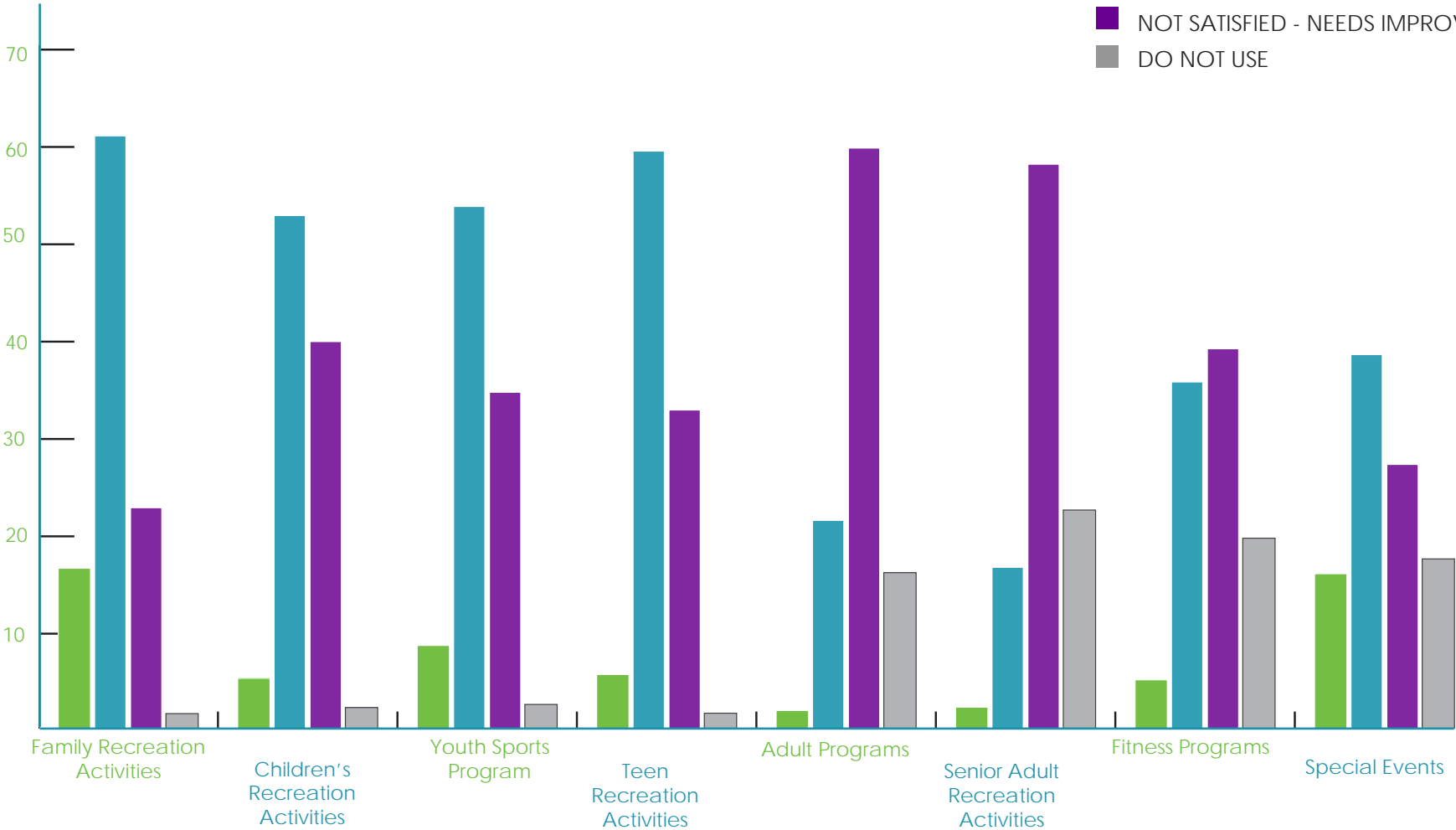
# APPENDIX : SURVEY RESULTS

## RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

Written responses are provided in an additional document.

KEY:

- VERY SATISFIED
- SOMEWHAT SATISFIED
- NOT SATISFIED - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
- DO NOT USE

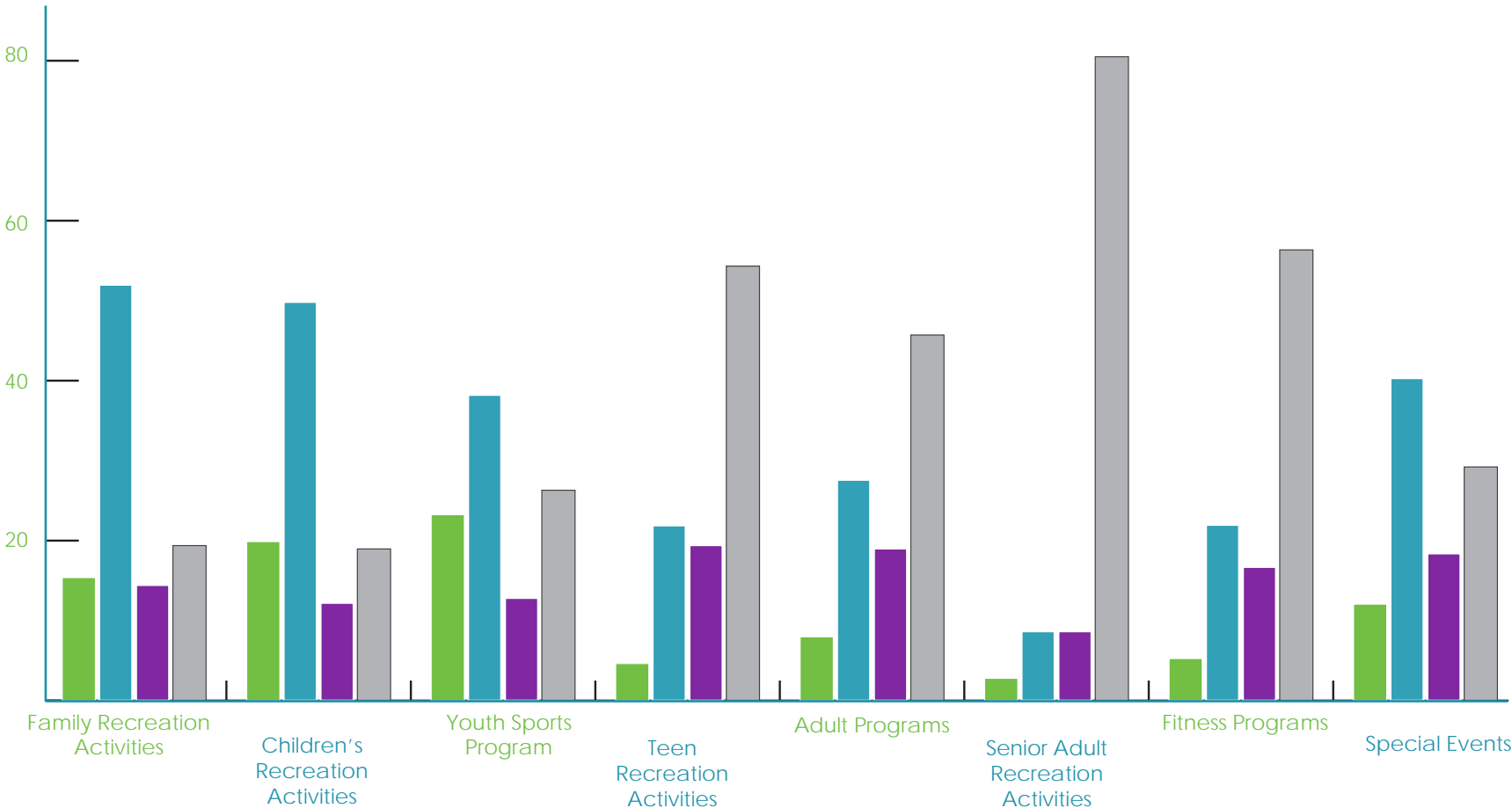




RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

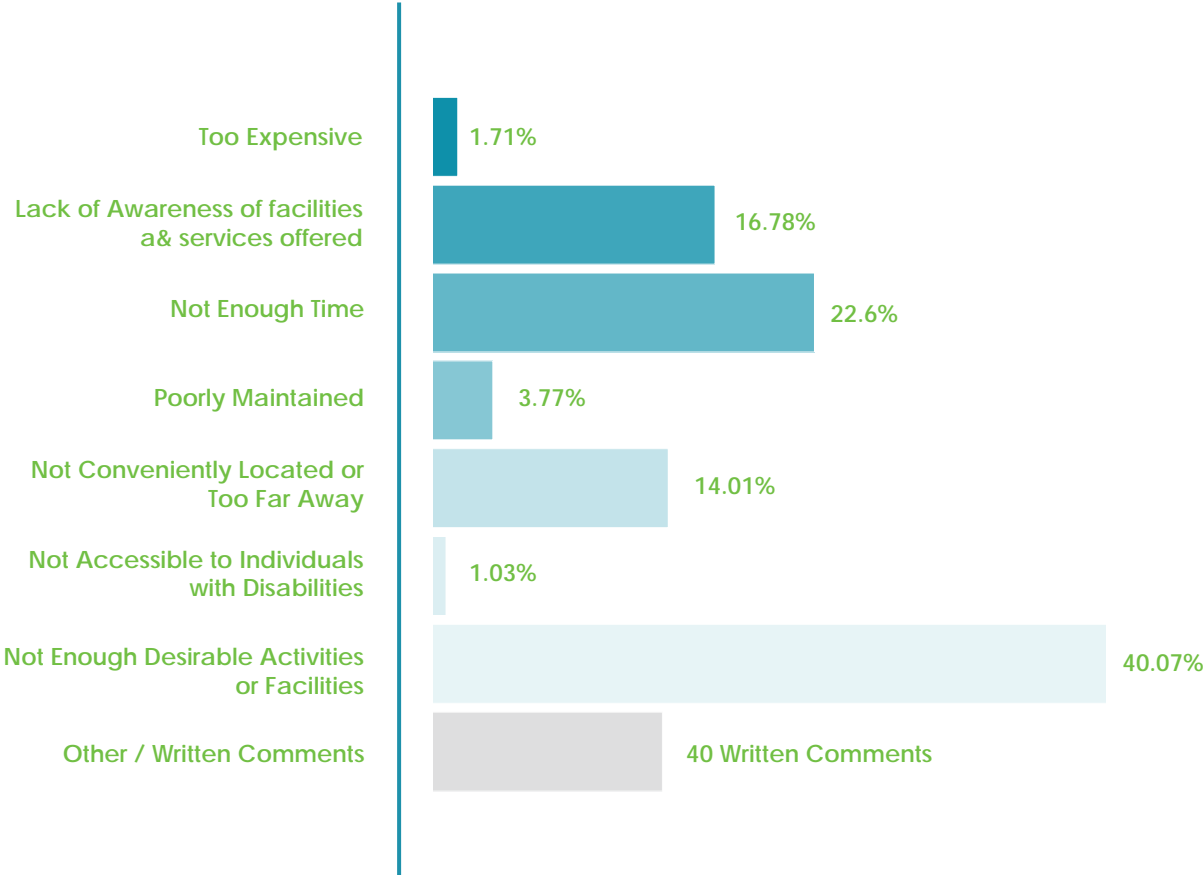
Written responses are provided in an additional document.

- KEY:
- VERY SATISFIED
- SOMEWHAT SATISFIED
- NOT SATISFIED - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
- DO NOT USE



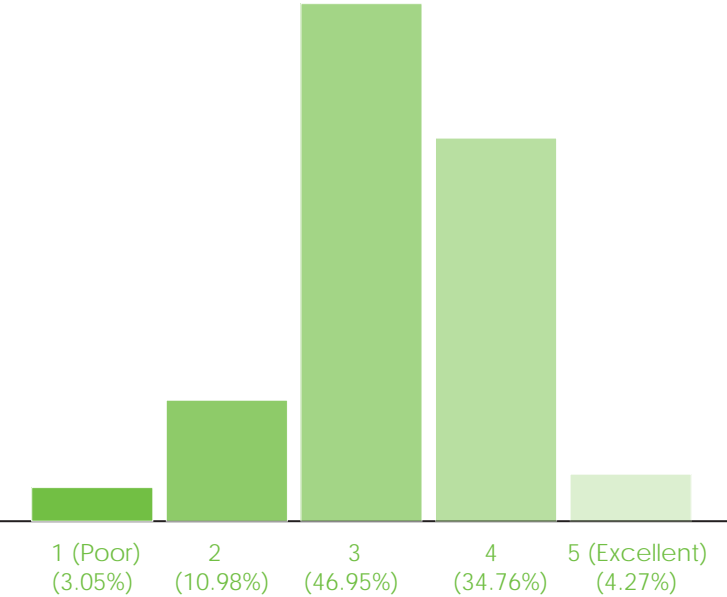
WHAT PREVENTS YOU MOST FROM USING NORWALK PARK FACILITIES AND SERVICES MORE FREQUENTLY?

Written responses are provided in an additional document.



ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES OFFERED BY THE CITY? (I.E. PROGRAMS, PARKS, FACILITIES)

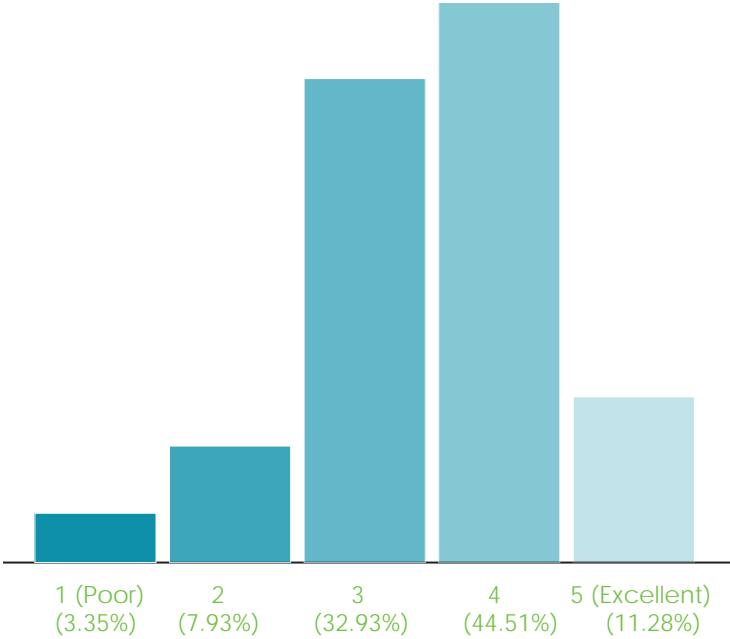
Written responses are provided in an additional document.



**3.26** Average Score

ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PARK MAINTENANCE?

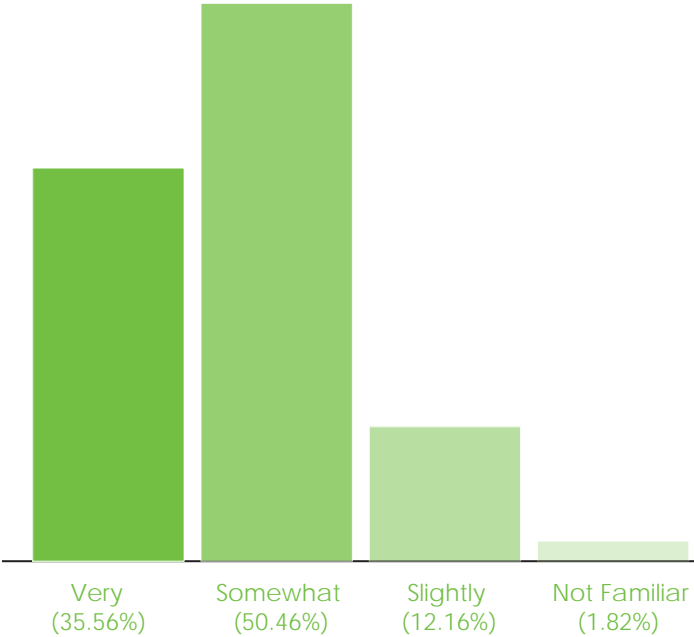
Written responses are provided in an additional document.



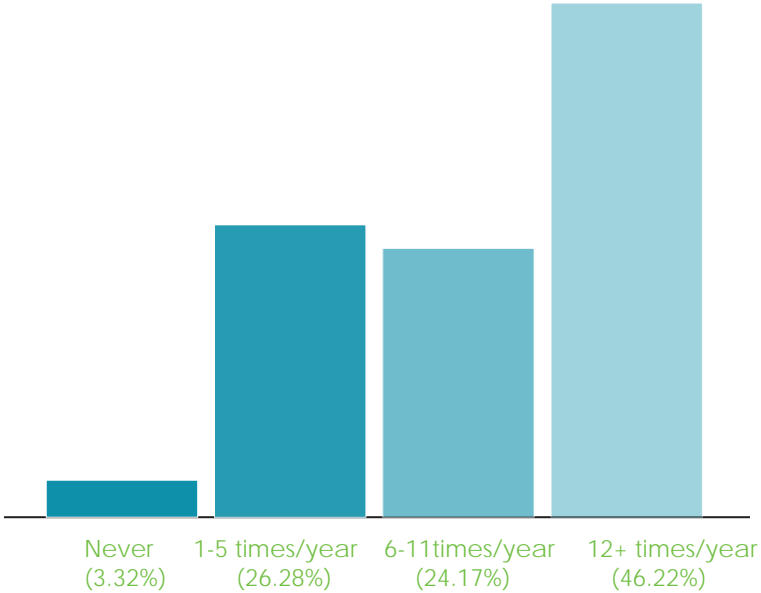
**3.52** Average Score



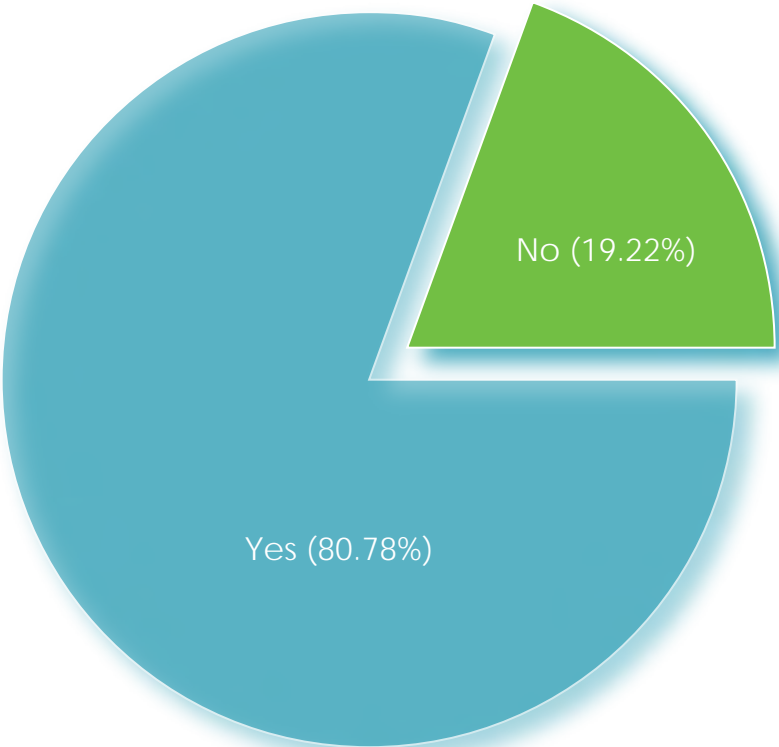
HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH THE CITY'S PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES?



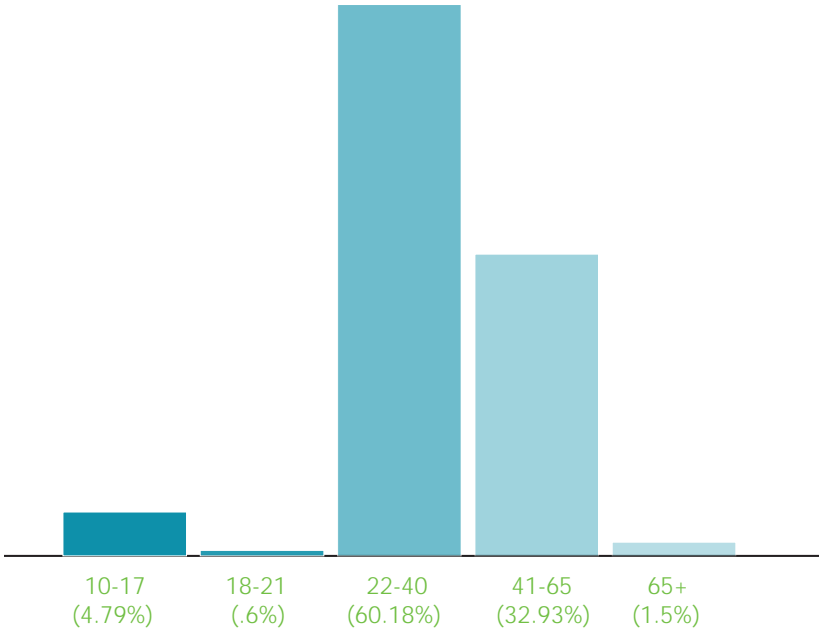
HOW OFTEN DO YOU UTILIZE THE CITY'S PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES?



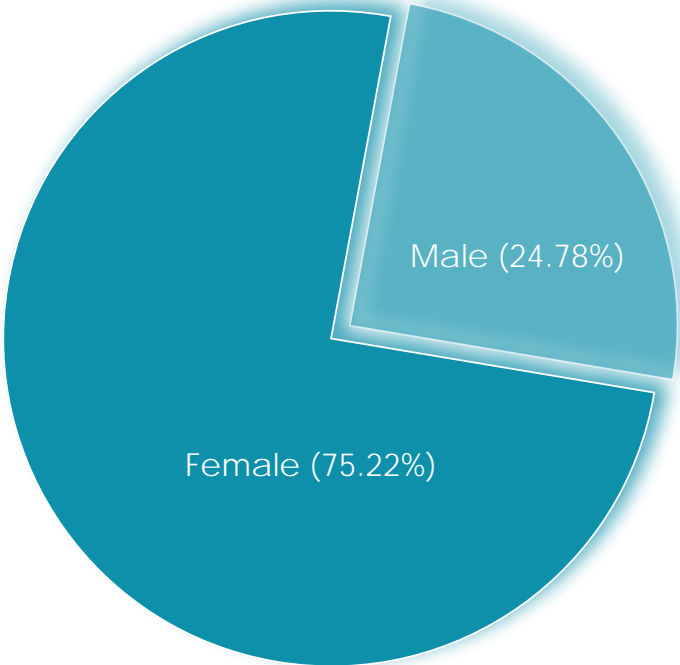
DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?



YOUR AGE RANGE IS BETWEEN...



YOU ARE... (MALE / FEMALE)



DO YOU LIVE IN NORWALK?

Written responses are provided in an additional document.

