

Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan 2016



Final

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City of Chatfield, MN

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Acknowledgements

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1.0

1.0 Executive Summary

Purpose and Direction of the Plan

Parks, trails and open spaces provide communities with multiple benefits. The purpose of this Master Plan is to guide Chatfield in planning and maintaining its existing parks and future facilities while meeting the needs of all of its residents. Some of the benefits of completing this study and implementing its recommendations include; economic, health and safety, and social.

The Chatfield Park & Recreational Master Plan is a major long-range plan to help the City acquire and maintain a complete park system consisting of neighborhood, community, and regional parks that will serve the residents as well as draw regional visitors. This Plan has been designed to help implement the City’s Comprehensive Plan to be compatible with other planning efforts such as the Thoroughfare Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Codes.

The Chatfield Park & Recreation Plan should serve as a guide for addressing issues which are important to the City now, while still allowing for flexibility in making decisions on individual projects, as long as they are consistent with the Plan’s goals. In the future, as changes in economic or social conditions occur, updating the Plan should become a priority. The Plan should be updated every five to ten years in order to address future issues in a consistent and proactive manner.

On March 9, 2015 the City of Chatfield adopted an update to their Comprehensive Plan. During this year-long public process, a community survey among other outreach sessions were completed. From this public input, a Community Vision was generated which included the following strong recreational statement which in turn, directed the following goals and policies:

Community Vision:

Chatfield Minnesota... a regional recreation destination known for dynamic and abundant public outdoor spaces that draws regional visitors to experience art, culture, and family activities for all age groups. Where a multi-use trail system is used by residents and visitors to connect neighborhoods, recreational facilities, commercial districts, and other cities.

Comprehensive Plan Goals & Policies

Park & Recreation Goals

Goal 1 To develop and maintain attractive parks and recreational open spaces for all seasons that are safe and healthful.

Policy Maintain an equitable distribution of parks and open space throughout the with sufficient facilities tailored to suit the residents they serve.

Policy Provide both passive and active recreational areas.

- Policy Encourage and promote a diverse range of recreational activities for every season.
- Policy The City should work with local and regional organizations to encourage tourism.
- Policy Continue to develop indoor facilities for recreational purposes and prioritize activities requiring improvements.
- Policy Locate and develop acceptable sites for short-term campers.
- Policy Expand the Joint Powers Board to fill the gap between the park sites and how they are used, improve communications and direction for parks, equipment, and manpower necessary for a more efficient and cohesive park & recreation system for the entire city.

Goal 2 Develop a continuous, interconnected, and comprehensive system of bikeways and trails. To connect to local schools, parks, neighborhoods, and other communities.

- Policy Construct pedestrian and bicycle facilities as shown on the Trail and Sidewalk Plans.
- Policy Enhance maintenance of all sidewalks and trails, and improve maintenance strategies.
- Policy Increase use and safety of the trail and sidewalk network.
- Policy Increase public awareness and education related to sidewalks and trails.
- Policy Continue to obtain easements for future trails along the Mill Creek and Root River corridors.

Goal 3 Develop and market Groen and Mill Creek Park as a regional recreational area with unique amenities and recreational facilities.

- Policy Mill Creek and Groen Park's designation as a trout stream should be recognized as a regional attraction and supported in the redevelopment of those areas adjacent to the creek.
- Policy Maximize the recreational opportunities within the existing parks and semi-public spaces within the community whenever possible.
- Policy Utilize local service clubs and other organizations to assist

Goal 4 Promote development and display of the fine arts.

- Policy Promote the Bandtown USA theme which reflects band activities since the 1880's and continue support of band concerts in the park.
- Policy Support theatrical groups by promoting Potter Auditorium as a home to a theater group.

Natural Resources

Goal 1 Promote land management practices that protect the natural resources in the City including streams, rivers, wetlands, woodland, floodplains, and bluffs.

- Policy Identify and manage the development of sensitive areas, such as floodplain, hillsides, etc., through special zoning or easement control.
- Policy Consult State and Federal natural resource agencies on proposals where soil, slope, sewage disposal and other environmental concerns exist.
- Policy Carefully regulate urban or rural development on steep bluffs to minimize soil erosion.
- Policy Encourage alternative stormwater management techniques that reuse infiltration and reduce infrastructure costs.
- Policy Define and preserve all national, state and regionally significant natural and scientific resources in the City.
- Policy Preserve and enhance the natural amenities within each city park.

Goal 2 Create an urban forest management plan that would create standards for tree selection, installation, maintenance and removal within the park system including boulevard trees throughout the community.

- Policy Reduce the impact and prohibit the planting invasive plant species within the City's landscape.

Existing Conditions

An on-site evaluation of existing parks and amenities provided the basis for formulating future improvement recommendations. Each existing park and open space facility was inventoried in two steps. The first step was to visit the park and document amenities and existing conditions; the second was to determine size, park classification, and what amenities and structures each site included. See Section 2.0 for the complete Parks Inventory and Map.

Parks - In 2014, the City of Chatfield had approximately 2,815 residents as estimated by the Minnesota State Demographic Center. The current city limits include approximately 1,660 acres of land, 64 acres of this area is dedicated as nine city owned parks. These parks include; two Community Parks, Mill Creek and Groen Park, six neighborhood parks, City Park, Floyd Mohawk Park, Jaycee Park, Shade Oak Park, Lonestone Park, and Hilltop Park, one Mini-Park, Hendricks Park.

Recreational Trails– The City's trails map shows three city trail areas including, trails through Mill Creek and Groen Park north to Highway 30, a trail surrounding Chatfield High School, and a trail on the south side of Hillside Drive from Highway 52 to the Elementary School. A proposed creek trail will extend the city trails in Mill Creek Park northward beyond city limits and from Groen Park southward along the Mill Creek and Root River corridor to County Road 5 and beyond. The plan also proposes to re-stripe a portion of the existing rights-of-way along Division Street and Third Street to connect the

downtown areas to the trails system. Longer jogging, biking, and running trails starting within the city limits loop or extend 15-20 miles outside of the city. Parking is available at Mill Creek and Groen Park, along public roadways, or at public school grounds for recreational users.

Lost Creek Trail- The Lost Creek Hiking Trail was built in 2011 and is maintained by **the Bluff Country Hiking Club**, a private organization. The trail runs approximately 6 miles one way with trailheads in Groen Park and Ninebark Road. The trail is open to the public **for** hiking and snowshoeing only.

Mill Creek and Root River Corridor – Approximately two miles of Mill Creek and 0.6 miles of the Root River lies within the Chatfield city limits. These areas provide residents and visitors with recreational uses such as fishing and canoeing. From Orion Township south through the City of Chatfield, the MnDNR has access to more than 116 acres of angling fishing easement totally in over 42,000 linear feet of streambank. See the Regional Public Fishing Access Map.

Golf Course - The Chosen Valley Country Club owns approximately 41 acres which is developed into a nine-hole golf course located at 1801 South Main Street.

School - In addition, the Chatfield School District owns and maintains approximately 101 acres of land including the Chatfield Junior-Senior High School located at 205 Union Street and the Elementary School 11555 Hillside Drive. Their facilities include several playgrounds, softball fields, a baseball field, football field, track, soccer fields, and four tennis courts. The Savanna Spring Nature Area is also located within the high school property.

The combined acreage of city park land, public school land, the Chosen Valley Country Club, and other public facilities within the city limits of Chatfield is approximately 409 acres of public/semi-public recreational or open space or approximately 25% of the total acreage within the city.

Existing Challenges – Following completing a parks and trails inventory process and analyzing interest group and public input, the following challenges have been identified:

- Funding
- Most parks require maintenance
- Lack of a connected trail system
- Highway 52 (Main Street) carries high volumes of traffic and creates a barrier for pedestrians
- Many neighborhoods are isolated from key destinations
-

The Park & Recreation Plan Process –

Citizen Participation - Citizen Participation is critical to ensure that the goals and objective statements in the plan represent the actual needs and desires of the Community. To promote citizen participation, staff organized *interest group meetings with the following groups:*

- *Chatfield Pubic School District*
- *Chosen Valley Golf Course*
- *Lost Creek Trail - (Bluff Country Hiking Club)*

- *Chatfield ATV Trail Club*
- *Chatfield Public Works Director*
- *Chatfield Center for the Arts*
- *Chatfield EDA*
- *Savanna Spring Nature Area*
- *Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*
- *Chatfield Planning & Zoning*
- *Chatfield City Council*
- *Chatfield Music Lending Library*
- *Chatfield Saddle Club*

Plan Format – The Park & Recreation Master Plan outlines goals, objectives, recommendations and a park inventory and map for each city park. The park maps show what recreational elements exist in the parks today and recommended changes for the future.

Park System Goal:

To create a connected, sustainable park system that balances the resident’s needs for natural areas with their needs for active recreation facilities.

Objectives-

- Preserve and enhance the natural amenities within each park
- Promote the Mill Creek Corridor as a regional trout stream
- Create more opportunities for residents to fish in the Mill Creek Corridor
- Promote dark-sky lighting throughout the park system
- Use sustainable methods for construction features and environmentally friendly techniques for turf management practices in the park system
- Strive to make all parks visually and physically accessible to all residents

Recommendations –

- Create a common set of park elements – benches, trash/recycle containers, ornamental lights, etc., that would unify the park system
- Minimize the use of chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers of turf areas and use more environmentally friendly products such as compost
- Create an urban forest management plan that would create standards for tree selection, installation, maintenance and removal within the park system including boulevard trees throughout the community
- Create a plan and guidelines for buckthorn and honeysuckle removal
- Install street trees in all available boulevard areas within the park system
- Remove or treat all ash trees to prevent the spread of Emerald Ash Bore
- Relocated the RV Park in Shady Oak Park to the new Regional Park as shown on the Concept Plan
- Install plastic bag dispensers to encourage people to pick up after their dogs

Total Parkland

Mini Parks

.33 ac. Hendricks Park (Total Parkland)

Neighborhood Parks

1.9 ac. City Park
1.78 ac. Floyd Mohawk Park
3.61 ac. Hillside Park
1.04 ac. Lonestone Park
1.41 ac. Shady Oak Park

9.74 acres Total Parkland

Community Parks

32.0 ac. Millcreek Park
13.92 ac. Groen Park
67.83 ac. Perkin's Park (Future Regional Parkland)

109.75 acres Total Parkland

Public Schools

55 ac. Elementary School Site
46.5 ac. Jaycee Park/High School/SSNA

101.50 acres Total Semi-Public School Land

Private Recreation

41 ac. Chosen Valley Country Club

Fishing Easements

35.7 ac. Total Angling Easements
11,750 linear feet Existing Streambank Access
900 linear feet Proposed Streambank Access

12,650 linear feet Total Streambank Access

Trails

1.53 Miles Mill Creek & Groen Park Existing Trails
?? Community Trails???

6.35 Miles Lost Creek Trails

2.43 Miles Proposed Trails within the Regional Park

308.33 Ac. Total public/semi-public recreation area, easements, and trails

Classification of Chatfield's Parks

The City of Chatfield classifies each park based on use and the users the park serves that was developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to be used as a resource to describe most types of parks. These standards are meant to be modified to address a specific agency and the unique types of parks that a city has to offer. Each park was classified under the category that met the broadest definition of amenities provided and the users it serves. The Chatfield classification system includes: a Regional Park, Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Mini Parks, Private Recreation, and Public Schools.

Mini Neighborhood Parks

Mini parks generally address specific recreation or open space needs. This type of park is usually created of a single lot or irregular piece of land and is intended to serve users directly adjacent to it. Often these parks are too small for recreational use but sometimes may accommodate a small playground and places to sit outside. Mini parks can add value to the adjacent private properties if they fit their surroundings and have desirable uses.

Service Area: Typically the service area for a mini park is less than (0.25) one square mile.

Park Size: Typically these parks cover less than one acre and accommodate no more than one or two users. Often such parks provide only benches or picnic tables.

NRPA standards call for between 0.25 to 0.5 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. Ranging in size from 0.25 acres to 1.4 acres. Hendricks Park is .33 acres and contains a bench for 1-2 people and would fall into the standardized NRPA guidelines.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are considered the basic unit of a community's park system and provide a recreational and social focus for residential areas. These parks desirably provide space for informal active and passive recreational activities. Park space is provided for recreational for recreational activities such as field games, court games, picnic facilities and playground equipment. Neighborhood parks may contain amenities that serve the community as a whole. An example of this is an athletic field that is used by an athletic organization.

Service Area: The typically service radius for neighborhood parks is between (0.25) one quarter and (0.5) one half mile. A neighborhood park should be easily and safely accessed by the neighborhood it serves, uninterrupted by major roads or any other barrier.

Park Size: Neighborhood parks must be a size adequate enough to accommodate facilities that successfully serve a neighborhood. Such parks should contain at least 3 acres if possible. Of this total acreage, 2-3 acres should be relatively flat open space area suitable for a number of activities, including "pick up" ball games and room to run or throw a ball.

NRPA standards call for between 1 to 2 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. Chatfield currently has about 9.74 acres of neighborhood parkland. This translates into 3.74 acres per 1,000 residents.

Community Parks

These types of parks typically include areas of diverse use and environmental quality. Such parks meet community-based recreation needs, may preserve significant natural areas and often include areas suited for intense recreational facilities. These parks may contain significant athletic fields, water features, walking paths, picnic facilities and various other active and passive amenities that meet community needs and site sustainability. Community parks often serve as a venue for community athletic organizations or other recreational or social based community gatherings.

Service Area: Community parks generally serve multiple neighborhoods and depending on amenities provided, they are often intended to serve the entire community. The typically service radius of a community park is approximately 0.5 miles to 1.5 miles.

Park Size: Most often a community park should consist of 10 or more acres. Although, special amenities that provide for the entire community may be located on smaller sites but still serve as a community park. Chatfield has two existing community parks; Mill Creek and Groen Park, and one proposed community park; Perkin's Park. Mill Creek Park is 32 acres, Groen Park is 13.92 acres, and the proposed Perkin's Park has a total of 67.83 acres between the Root River and Mill Creek floodplain. Both Mill Creek and Groen Park are located along Mill Creek. Mill Creek contains many athletic fields, and hard surface courts, and a hockey and ice rink. Groen Park features a more open space design for family-oriented play. Perkin's park will have a combination of uses including; RV campground sites, perimeter trails along the Root River and Mill Creek, natural areas, and fishing.

NRPA guidelines for community park areas call for 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. With a total of 109.75 acres of community park space, Chatfield currently provides for 39 acres per 1,000 residents, which satisfies the NRPA requirements for the current population.

Public School

Public schools provide many recreational opportunities for Chatfield, particularly when located in areas not served by a city park. The playgrounds, open space, athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts at school often function as neighborhood parks and attract area residents. Though these are not owned by the city, school facilities can complement the municipal park system and can help Chatfield meet the NRPA guidelines for specific types of recreational facilities.

The Elementary School and High School properties have been included in the inventories and City-wide park maps.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are not limited to recreational facilities but are a destination that attracts users on a regional level. Even if recreational amenities are not provided; sites categorized as a regional destination or regional park are important community elements. Providing opportunities to access these sites through a recreational non-motorized means of transportation should be explored to expand the communities' access to additional recreational opportunities. This can be provided through a cohesive local trail system that successfully connects with and utilizes the trails. The existing trail system that connects Mill Creek to Groen Park and the future perimeter trail within the Perkin's Park area as well as the existing sidewalk and trail system throughout the City work towards the goal of connecting all of the neighborhoods to the regional park area.

The Chosen Valley Regional Park area has been included as part of the Chatfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Further detailed plans and maps are located in [Section X](#) of this plan.\

Future Park and Open Space Needs

Recreational facilities are important in making communities attractive places to work, live, and invest in. The following table identifies park needs for Chatfield based on local and national standards. Projections for future park needs are based on National Standards and the City’s existing level of service, using a 2030 population of 3,030. Data provided by the Minnesota State Demographer.

Type	Existing Ac.	Ac per 1,000 Residents	NRPA Standard per 1,000 Residents	2030 Total Parkland Acres Need <i>(based on Existing Level)</i>
Mini Park	.33	.11	NA	NA
Neighborhood Parks	9.74	3.47	1-2 Acres	.41
Community Parks	109.75 (including the Regional Park)	39.0	5-8	NA
Public Schools	101.5	36.2	NA	NA

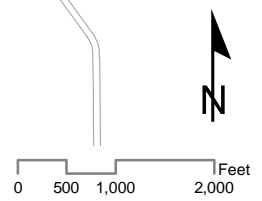
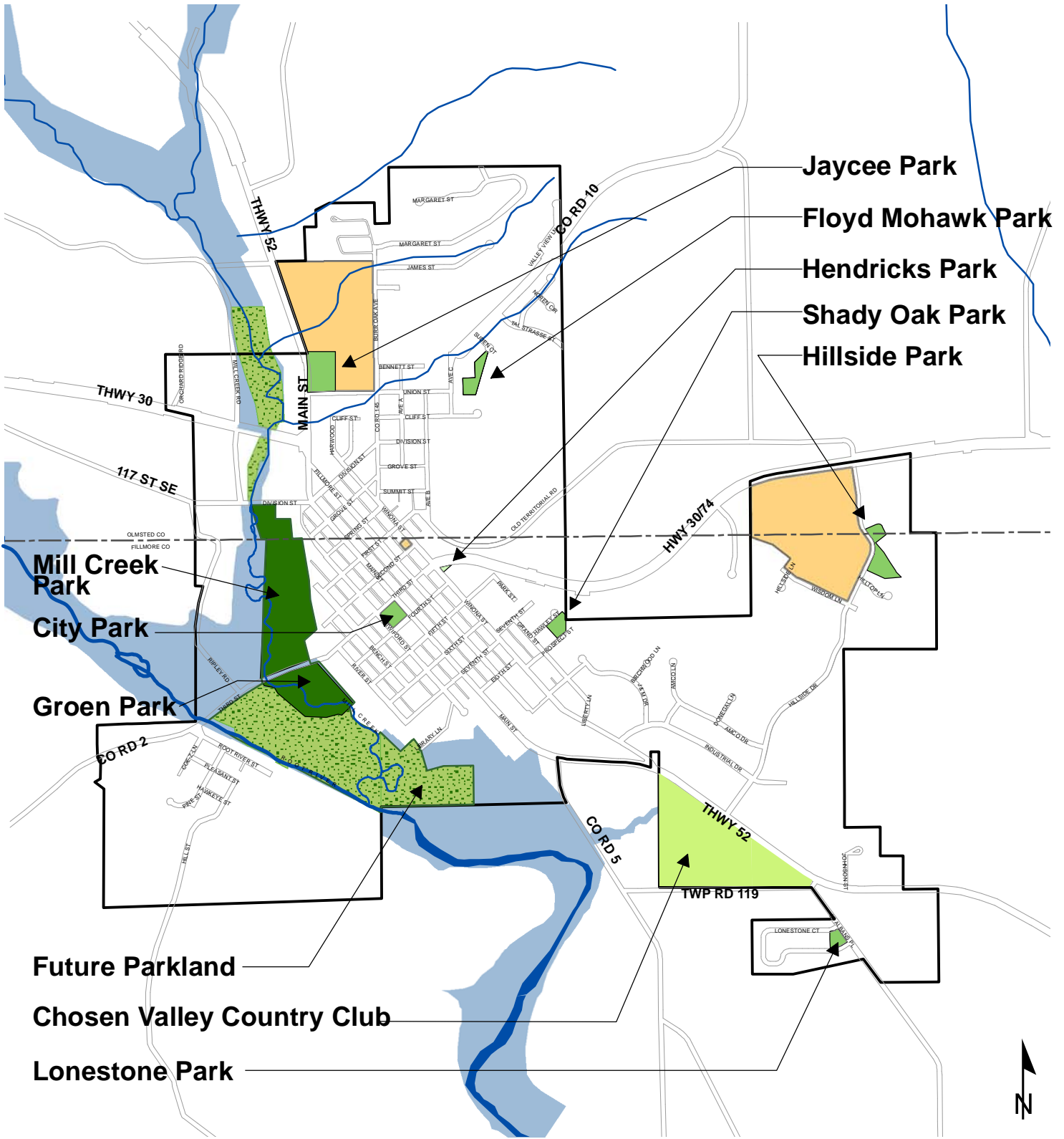
City Parks Maps & Inventories







- ❖ All City Parks
- ❖ Chatfield Elementary School
- ❖ City Park
- ❖ Floyd Mohawk Park
- ❖ Groen Park
- ❖ Hendricks Park
- ❖ Hillside Park
- ❖ Jaycee Park, High School, Savanna
Spring Nature Area
- ❖ Lonestone Park
- ❖ Mill Creek Park
- ❖ Shady Oak Park
- ❖ Chatfield Plaza

2.0



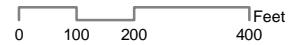
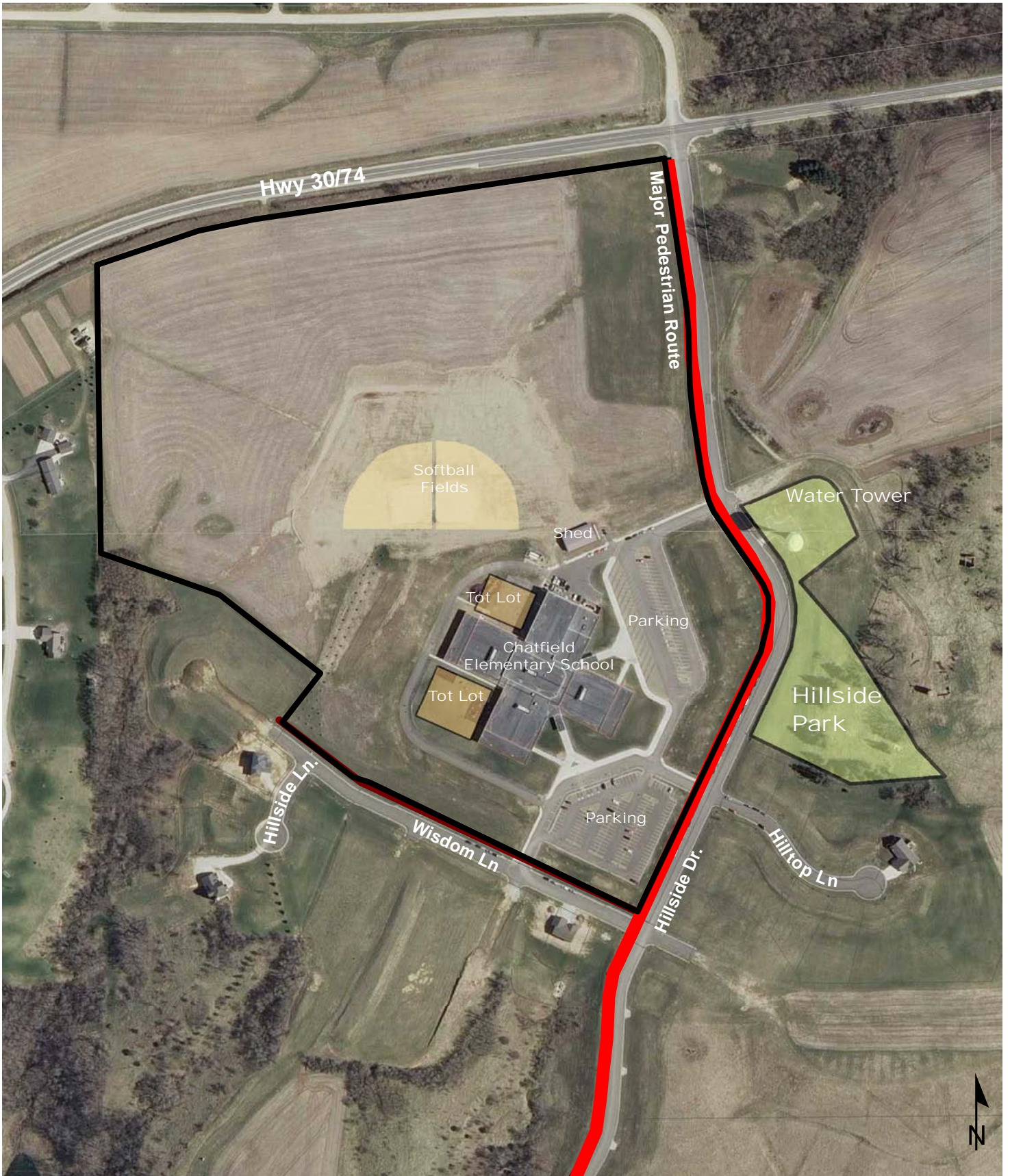
City Parks



- | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|-----------------|
|  | Mini Park |  | Future Parkland |
|  | Neighborhood Park |  | Floodplain |
|  | Community Park |  | Schools |

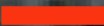
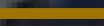


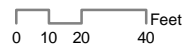
Chatfield Elementary School



City Park



-  Major Trail Routes
-  City Park Sidewalk



City Park Inventory

Size	1.90
Land Cover	Mowed turf, scattered tree cover
Recreational Facilities / Activities	A wooden playground structure, Western Days. Farmer's Market, Veteran's Ceremonies, Summer Concert in the Park Series
Buildings / Shelters	Visitor's Center and the Bank Shell
Pedestrian Accessibility	Perimeter sidewalks, a diagonal sidewalk transecting the park, the Lost Creek Trail Map Kiosk, and connected to the Major Pedestrian Route along Third Street.
Parking	On-street parking
Signage	None
Utility & Capacity Issues	All City Services are available.
Frequency of Use	High
Maintenance Requirements	High
History	The park was built in 1854. Designed by Thomas Twiford. The first year of outdoor concerts was the summer of 1885.
Donations / Gifts and Donor	

Goals:

- To maintain and enhance the existing civic and historic character of the park while keeping and physical elements of the park as open for multiple uses as possible.

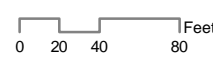
Objectives:

- Maintain and enhance the park area as a recreational and cultural space for city-wide events.
- Strengthen the visual and physical connection to the Chosen Valley Regional Park (Mill Creek and Groen Park)

Recommendations:

- Add historic inspired ornamental lights, benches, and trash/recycle contains as needed.
- Trim, mulch, and maintain the existing trees and plant diversity native trees like oak, maple, basswood, and hackberry.
- Bury the existing power lines and remove poles and remove all unnecessary physical elements in the park.
- Add more moveable chairs to the band shell area as needed, while promoting a much open park area as possible.
- Replace, when needed, the existing diagonal sidewalk with a paving that will provide a historic look. Install an ornamental compass flush with the walk in the center of the park.
- Add water service to Tuper's Goose Fountain and replace the fountain mechanism.
- Add any necessary safety lighting.

Floyd Mohawk Park



Floyd Mohawk Park Inventory

Size	1.78 Acres
Land Cover	Mowed turf near Suden Court, scattered tree cover and unmowed natural area
Recreational Facilities / Activities	Swing Set, merry-go-round
Buildings / Shelters	None
Pedestrian Accessibility	No sidewalks in park or along street
Parking	On-street parking in Suden Court
Signage	Small, wooden sign
Utility & Capacity Issues	
Frequency of Use	Low
Maintenance Requirements	Low
History	
Donations / Gifts and Donor	In memory of Floyd Mohawk, former Police Chief

Goals:

- To amend the park to increase its visibility and accessibility and make it an attractive, functional neighborhood park.

Objectives:

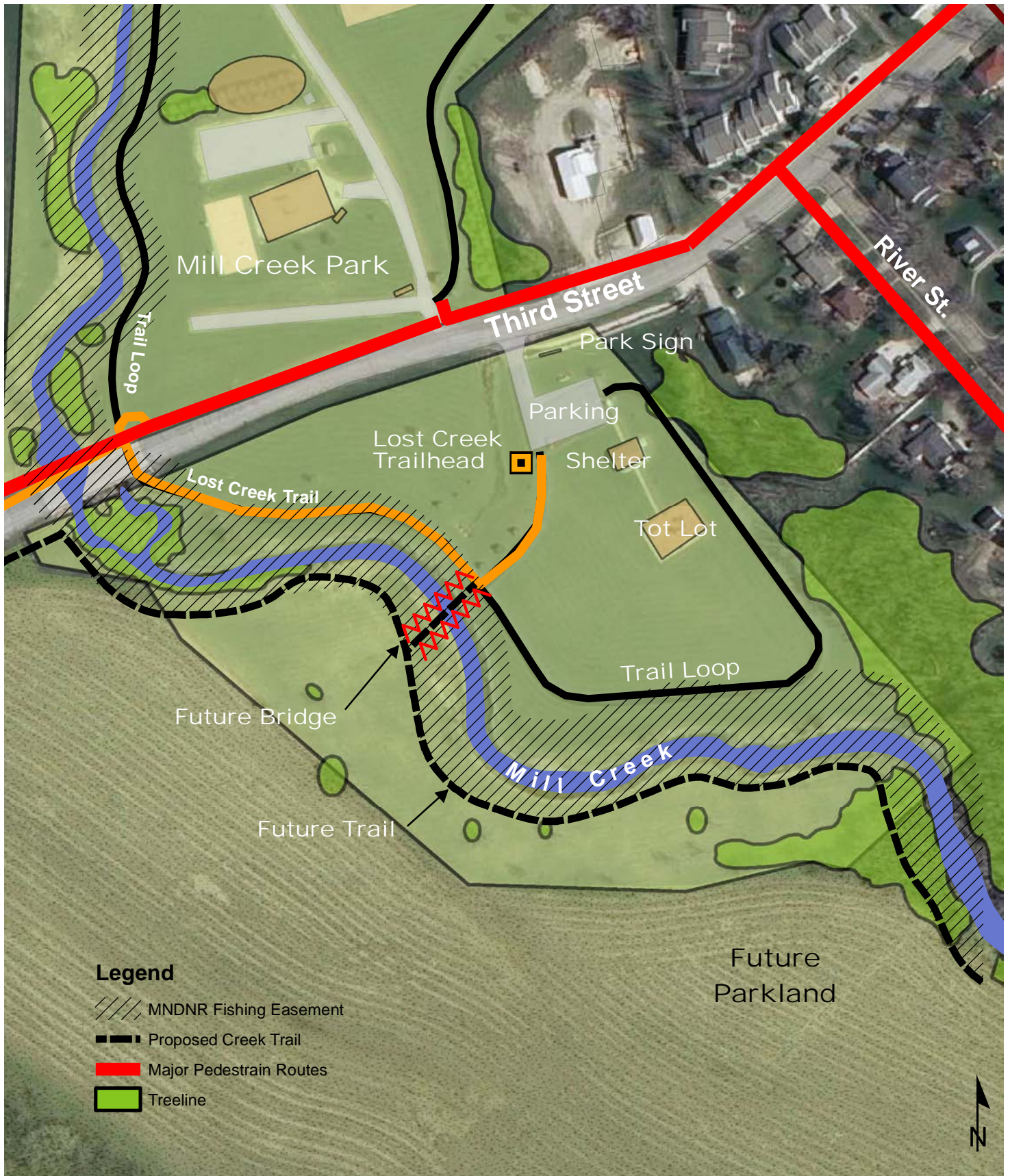
- Raise city-wide awareness and make the park more visible
- Make the park more inviting by adding pedestrian access.
- Better define the park boundary.

Recommendations:

- Install permanent signage
- Develop a neighborhood signage system to guide people to parks.
- Install a handicap accessible public sidewalk from Suden Court to the future picnic pavilion.
- Create a landscape buffer from adjacent residents

- Use shrubs around the park perimeter to define the park's boundary.
- Install proper mulch material under the swing set to improve safety.
- Install new play equipment, benches, and trash/recycle containers.
- Install new picnic pavilion overlooking the tot lot area.

Groen Park



Groen Park Inventory

Size	13.92 Acres
Land Cover	Mowed turf, scattered tree cover, natural creek and drainageways
Recreational Facilities / Activities	Play equipment, swings, and benches
Buildings / Shelters	Picnic Shelter
Pedestrian Accessibility	Trail loop along the perimeter and Trailhead the Lost Creek (a 6-mile private trail) and an under-bridge pedestrian trail connection to Mill Creek Park
Parking	Parking along Third Street
Signage	One monument sign along Third Street and the Lost Creek Trailhead sign
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited
Frequency of Use	High
Maintenance Requirements	High
History	Through the generosity of Alice and Andy Groen's Estate, Groen Park was dedicated as a "Family Park" with no organized sports in 2001
Donations / Gifts and Donor	Numerous gifts and donations of time and materials have been donated to Groen Park over the years by local associations.

Goals:

- Continue to develop this park as a 'family park'

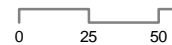
Objectives:

- Encourage the physical connection and signage to Mill Creek Park
- Make the children's experience at the park a priority when considering what type of amenities to add
- Maintain large areas of open space as informal play areas for kids.
- Make the pedestrian connection to the Root River and Mill Creek stronger so it becomes an integral part of the park.

Recommendations:

- Stripe the parking lot for safety and efficiency
- Add native plantings to the creek area but still leave areas accessible to people
- Plant native trees near the play equipment and along the creek and drainageways
- Work with the DNR to complete stream bank improvements

Hendricks Park



Hendricks Park Inventory

Size	.33 Acres
Land Cover	Turf and landscaped beds
Recreational Facilities / Activities	Bench and table
Buildings / Shelters	None
Pedestrian Accessibility	Sidewalks along Winona Street and directly connected to the Major Pedestrian Route located along Winona and Hwy 30/74.
Parking	No parking
Signage	No sign
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited
Frequency of Use	Low
Maintenance Requirements	Low
History	Hendricks Foundation “Entrance to the City”
Donations / Gifts and Donor	In honor of Jennie Bemis Hendricks’ generous bequest to the Chatfield Women’s Community Club. Volunteers maintain the flowers and shrubs.

Goals:

- To maintain Hendricks Park that as a visual gateway to the City form the east.

Objectives:

- Add visual cues to the park property on the north side of Hwy. 30/74 to raise public awareness that this is parkland.
- Visually separate the Hendricks Memorial Park with the adjacent house.

Recommendations:

- Add a permanent entrance monument sign along Hwy. 30/74.
- Add a low hedge or fence to define the southern edge of the park property.
- Maintain an inviting place to sit with a bench and table.

- Improve the landscaping to include more perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, and spring bulbs.
- Continue to work with the Women's Community Club and other interested organizations on the plantings and maintenance of the landscaping.

Hillside Park



 Major Trail Routes

0 20 40 80 Feet



Hillside Park Inventory

Size	3.61 acres
Land Cover	Mowed grasses
Recreational Facilities / Activities	None
Buildings / Shelters	None
Pedestrian Accessibility	Sidewalks are located on the south side of Hillside Drive and a 10' pedestrian trail is located on the north side of Hillside Drive. The trail is part of the Major Pedestrian Route near the Chatfield Elementary School along Hillside Drive.
Parking	None
Signage	None
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited on-site but available
Frequency of Use	Low
Maintenance Requirements	Low

Goals:

- To develop this park as a neighborhood family gathering spot with ample open space for flexible uses.

Objectives:

- Encourage people to walk to the park by making good pedestrian connections.
- Make the park inviting, comfortable, and beautiful by adding landscaping on the perimeter.

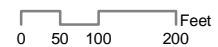
Recommendations:

- Develop the park by adding a tot lot, benches, and trail that connects to Hillside Drive.
- Add native overstory and understory trees and shrubs along the perimeter.
- Add trash/recycle containers adjacent to the play area.
- Add a permanent park monument sign.

Jaycee Park, School, Savanna Spring Nature Area



Major Trail Routes



Jaycee Park / High School / Savanna Spring Nature Area Inventory

Size	46.5 Acres (<i>Owned and maintained by the Chatfield School District</i>)
Land Cover	Mowed turf, tree cover, and natural areas
Recreational Facilities / Activities	Tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, running track, swimming pool, two tot lots, BBQ pits, and a football field
Buildings / Shelters	High School, storage buildings, picnic shelter, pool house, greenhouse, and dugouts <i>Public Pool (Maintained by the City of Chatfield)</i>
Pedestrian Accessibility	Perimeter sidewalks and an internal trail system, hard surface and mowed loops trails in Savanna Spring Nature Area, and surrounded by the Major Pedestrian Route.
Parking	Multiple parking lots surrounding the school, adjacent to the pool, tennis courts, and between the softball fields along Burr Oak Avenue.
Signage	Signage for the High School at Union and Burr Oak and Highway 52, Signage for Savanna Spring , and signage for Jaycee Park and Pool along Highway 52.
Utility & Capacity Issues	Water and Sewer are available on-site
Frequency of Use	High
Maintenance Requirements	High
History	The Chatfield Independent School District #227 owns the property which includes the High School, Jaycee Park, and the Savanna Spring Nature Area. However the property is cooperatively managed by the City of Chatfield and the Chatfield School District
Donations / Gifts and Donor	

Goals:

- To maintain Jaycee Park at its amenities with the continued cooperation with the Chatfield School District.
-

Recommendations:

- A complete evaluation of the public pool was completed in 2015.
- The City of Chatfield will review and discuss several options including repair and/or replacement of the pool in 2016.

Lonestone Park



Lonestone Park Inventory

Size	1.04
Land Cover	Mowed turf
Recreational Facilities / Activities	A tot lot area and one table
Buildings / Shelters	None
Pedestrian Accessibility	Sidewalks are located adjacent to the park along Lonestone Court and the park is connected to the Major Pedestrian Route on St. Albans Place
Parking/Signage	None
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited
Frequency of Use	Medium
Maintenance Requirements	Medium
History	Granted to the City on June 9, 2003
Donations / Gifts and Donor	

Goals:

- To develop this park as a neighborhood family gathering spot with ample open space for flexible uses.

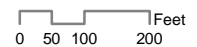
Objectives:

- Encourage people to walk to the park by making good pedestrian connections.
- Make the park more inviting, comfortable, and beautiful by adding landscaping on the perimeter.
- Add a fire pit to encourage social interaction amongst residents.

Recommendations:

- Create a permanent sign that incorporates the large 'stone' on site with some landscaping.
- Add native overstory and understory trees and shrubs adjacent to the tot lot and along the perimeter.
- Add trash/recycle containers adjacent to the play areas.
- Improve the soil before planting landscaping around the perimeter of the park including the wet soil area in the southwest corner of the park.

Mill Creek Park



Mill Creek Park Inventory

Size	32.0
Land Cover	Mowed turf, scattered tree cover, natural creek and drainageways
Recreational Facilities / Activities	Baseball and Softball fields, Soccer fields, Volleyball courts, horseshoe pit, Skating/Ice Rink, Hockey Rink, Playground (tot lot) areas, Horse Arena, Fishing, Skate park, Basketball courts
Buildings / Shelters	Warming house, Picnic Shelter, Public restrooms, Storage shed
Pedestrian Accessibility	Trail access along Division Street, internal trail loop system and under-bridge access to Groen Park and the Trailhead to the private 6-mile Lost Creek Trailhead.
Parking	Two gravel parking lots on the south end, two asphalt parking lots with handicap parking on the north end.
Signage	Two monument signs with additional directional signs within the park
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited
Frequency of Use	High
Maintenance Requirements	High
History	Mill Creek Park was purchased from Eugene C. Jack and Mary Ann Jack on January 30, 1985. MNDNR was granted an easement along Mill Creek on September 15, 1993.
Donations / Gifts and Donor	Numerous gifts and donations of time and materials have been donated to Mill Creek Park over the years by local associations.

Goals –

- To enhance the common areas between the existing active recreation elements that would complement those facilities and establish a better connection to Mill Creek

Objectives –

- Maintain and enhance the existing trail system
- Strengthen the visual and physical connection to Mill Creek
- Establish diverse native landscaping along the creek
- Increase the safety and comfort of the park users
- Ensure that there is adequate hard surface parking available for sport events

Recommendations –

- Add permanent public restroom facilities
- Expand hiking trails to include smaller, closed loops and a linear trail along Mill Creek
- Add ornamental, dark sky friendly, lighting to improve pedestrian comfort/safety
- Repair or replace the existing wooden footbridges
- Make the connection to the canoe launch area as shown on the Regional Park Master Plan
- Maintain and expand the use of the City Hockey Rink
- Replace and/or expand the Warming House, Bleachers on berm between light poles
- Add more garbage/recycle containers
- Add drinking fountains along the trails and near public restrooms
- Add more hard surface parking
- Put the ballfield, hard courts and hockey/skating area light systems on automatic timers
- Plant native trees near the play equipment, along the creek, and randomly throughout the park
- Install future fishing piers
- Need better enforcement of dog leash laws
- Install plastic bag dispensers to encourage people to pick up after their dogs
- The Volleyball Courts should be relocated to just south of the Skate Park or on the north end of the Soccer Field as the courts are too near the baseball field and kids have been hit by balls.

Shady Oak Park



0 20 40 80 Feet



Shady Oak Park Inventory

Size	1.41 Acres
Land Cover	Mowed turf and oak tree cover
Recreational Facilities / Activities	A tot lot area, benches, fire pit, sand volleyball court, sandbox, removable restrooms, and RV Camping area.
Buildings / Shelters	Small covered sandbox and a shelter-concrete pad
Pedestrian Accessibility	No sidewalks, some steep grads along Prospect Street
Parking	Parking Prospect Street
Signage	One monument sign along Prospect Street
Utility & Capacity Issues	Limited
Frequency of Use	Medium
Maintenance Requirements	Medium
History	
Donations / Gifts and Donor	

Goals:

- To create a neighborhood park that is easily accessible and provides for a variety of family friendly activities.

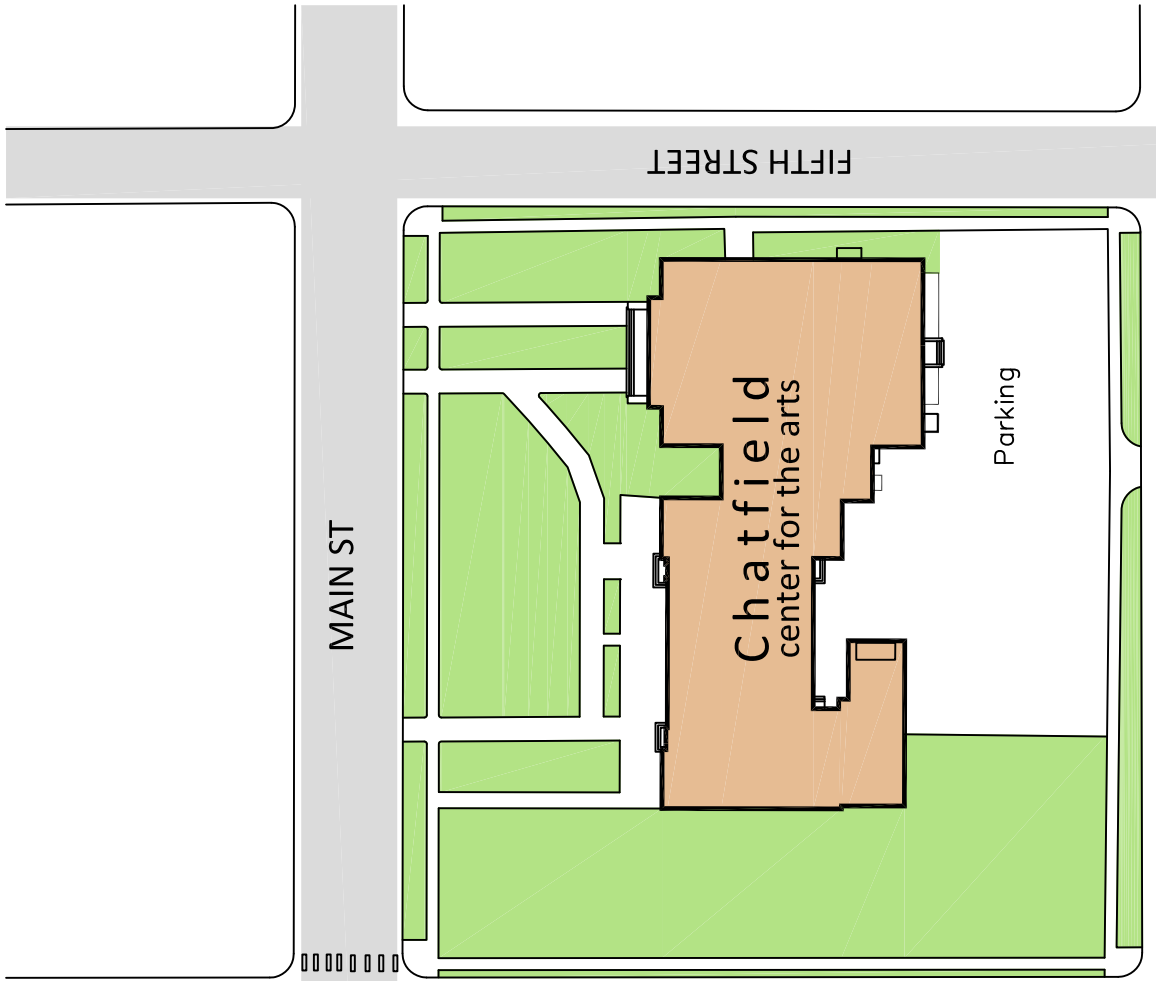
Objectives:

- Remove and improve park facilities to encourage family use.
- Phase out the RV Park sites as other sites are established in other park areas in Chatfield.
- Make the park safer and easily accessible for pedestrians.

Recommendations:

- Install a new picnic shelter in the same location of the previous pavilion
- Remove the RV camping amenities and restore the area to turf.
- Remove the old fire pit and restroom when RV camping is removed.
- Add picnic tables throughout the park.
- Improve the vitality of the grass by trimming some lower branches of the oaks, removing some small areas of grass and increasing the level of turf maintenance.

- Add a connecting trail from the Park to John and Mary Drive along the easement as shown on the map.
- Install shrubs along the perimeter adjacent to the private homes and yards to enhance the park's definition.
- Maintain the Oak Stands and watch for Oak Wilt.
- Plant other varieties of trees.



Scale 1"=80'

Chatfield Plaza

Goal:

- To create a connected civic arts district in downtown Chatfield.

Recommendations:

- Encourage strong visual and physical connections such as improved crosswalks to connect the Library and Fire Station block to City Park, and the Chatfield Center for the Arts block.
- Allow Fourth Street to continue to function as a public street as well as closing it between Main Street and Twiford Street for specific events during the year.
- Improve parking signs and directional signage for larger event parking needs.
- Encourage consistency in signage, lighting, and amenities to further connect the three-block Chatfield Plaza area.
- Keep large, open spaces available for outdoor community gatherings.

Trails

- ❖ Trail System
- ❖ City Trails
- ❖ Regional Trails
- ❖ Trail Recommendations
- ❖ Designing Complete Streets

- ❖ Maps

- Major Pedestrian Routes
- Sidewalks
- City Trails
- Lost Creek Trail
- Savanna Spring Nature Area Interpretative Trail
- ATV Trail
- Snowmobile Trail

3.0

3.0 Trails

The City of Chatfield’s Comprehensive Plan has outlined a number of types of trails, depending on location, constraints, and trail user needs. Among the trail types that the City and/or private land owners have developed include: off-road hiking, interpretive trails, bicycle trails, snowshoe or cross country skiing trails, and snowmobile and ATV trails.

Trail System

Trails play an important role beyond recreation. They also serve as a means of transportation and access for residents to navigate their community. Identifying intended users and determining a priority for developing missing links is a critical aspect of the overall park system.

City Trails

Major Pedestrian Routes – The City has existing and proposed pedestrian access through a series of trails, sidewalks, and striped bike lanes and is a key part of the Major Pedestrian Routes defined in the Chatfield Comprehensive Plan. See the attached Pedestrian Route Map.

Creek Trail - The Creek Trail follows Mill Creek from the north end of town through the City southward towards the City of Fountain. The trail is constructed between Mill Creek Park beginning at Division Street to Groen Park, just south of County Road 2 or Third Street. The Creek trail north of Division Street follows along the west side of Mill Creek with a proposed underpass pedestrian trail under Highway 30 and then travels southward along Mill Creek Road. The Creek trail south of Groen Park will follow Mill Creek to the confluence of the Root River and then travel northward along the east side of the Root River towards Fountain. Several pedestrian bridges are proposed within the Chosen Valley Regional Park to connect Groen Park and Mill Creek Park to the Creek Trail.



Park Loop Trails - Several internal trails are already constructed within Mill Creek and Groen Park as shown on the Master Plan. A new proposed natural loop is proposed to be located southeast of Mill Creek and northwest of the Root River along with a connecting trail to a trailhead located on Library Lane.



Regional Trails (private, semi-public, and public)

Lost Creek Trail– A six-mile natural trail begins in Groen Park. A trailhead sign is located near the parking lot that outlines the route. This trail is privately owned and maintained by the Bluff Country Hiking Club. The goal of the trail is to provide residents and visitors opportunities for recreational and education while enjoying the scenery and wildlife of the areas. The trail is open

to the public with use limited to hiking and snowshoeing, as the trail surface is natural soil and grass.

Savanna Spring Nature Area, Interpretative Trail - This 10 acre site is located just north of the Chatfield High School along Highway 52. A hard surface trail leads from the kiosk near the parking area and runs by Big Spring and through the prairie. The top loop of the trail is a mowed path leading to further prairie areas, and to the oak savanna, hardwood forest, and outdoor classroom/picnic area. Brochures are available at the kiosk describing the bluebird trail, providing a map and explaining the yellow and black signs that identify the ecosystems and learning areas throughout the SSNA.



Chatfield ATV Trails - is a 25-mile trail developed by a group of neighbors with a passion for ATVs. The trail is entirely on private land and leads riders through backdrops of farm fields, pasture, ponds, and woods. The trail has an “easy” rating and is suitable for all ages and skill levels. Class II ATV’s (side-by-side machines) are allowed on the trail. The trail is provided by a group of generous local landowners and maintained by the Chatfield ATV Trails Club in cooperation with the Minnesota DNR. The Chatfield Trail map can be found at the MnDNR’s website under “Recreation”. The trail usually opens in May, depending on trail conditions, and closes at the end of October due to hunting season. The trail is located 1.5 miles east from Chatfield city limits on Hwy 30/74. A Parking lot and restrooms are on the south side of the highway and a picnic area is located along the southern trail loop on the north side of Highway 30/74.



Chatfield Snowmobile Trails – The Hiawatha Sno-Seekers is located in the area S.E. of Rochester Minnesota. We maintain approximately 100 miles of beautiful trail utilizing the valley and open fields of S.E. Minnesota. Current membership is 100+ families. We strongly support youth education for safer snowmobiling. We also work with the local law enforcement to provide safe trails for all users. We offer education scholarship to our members and landowners immediate family.

Trail Recommendations

This Master Plan recognizes that the community is comprised of residents and visitors with various skill levels with trail use; including walking, hiking, in-line skating and bicycling. The three common skill levels are: children, basic walkers and bicyclists and avid or experienced trail users. Although the trail system should be designed to accommodate all three groups as much as possible, children and basic walkers/bicyclists will likely be the primary users of the City’s trail system.

Skill level and Connectivity Recommendations:

- Develop an overall trail system providing opportunities for residents of various skill levels
- Establish trail route loops throughout the community connecting community parks, downtown, and neighborhoods for use by various skill levels.

Children

This group is comprised of school age children (elementary / middle school) who routinely walk or ride bikes to and from school, visit friends and neighbors, go to parks, and attend school activities. This group of walkers and cyclists tend to have less experience negotiating traffic and is not always aware of potential hazards. They often disobey traffic laws and traffic control devices and tend to prefer the shortest route possible to get from place to place. Children also tend to prefer bike lanes and bike paths to riding on the street. Younger bicyclist typically have difficulty following a straight track and frequently weave while biking. Detached trails that have ample separation from auto traffic is ideal for this skill group.

Basic Walkers & Bicyclists

Basic walkers and riders are typically young and older adults or younger riders who are less confident in their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions. They are comfortable riding at lower traffic volume streets and separated trails and prefer designated bike lanes, sidewalks or wide shoulders on quiet streets. This group uses walks or bikes as a preferred mode of transportation, provided that destinations are reasonably close and good walk/bike route exists. Working adults, retired adults, high school students and parents with younger children make up a majority of this group. These walkers and bicyclists want a safe and efficient route and will likely not choose a route near lots of traffic or routes that are not maintained

Avid or Experienced Hikers, Snowshoeing, Bicyclers, and Skaters

This group generally uses bikes or skates as others would use an automobile. They ride or hike for convenience or exercise. Their routes typically include existing streets including heavy traffic areas and off-road public and private long-distance trails. Bikers and skaters typically choose routes that are relatively uninterrupted. Snowshoeing and hikers typically choose isolated off-road challenging routes that get them out into nature.

Designing Complete Streets

It is important to consider pedestrian friendly amenities as both stand alone projects as well as integrated with street construction projects (both rehab and new) in the future to accommodate the various users and skill groups using the sidewalks and trails. Multi-modal transportation is a complete way to look at the transportation network and includes pedestrians, runners, vehicles, etc... when designing a transportation corridor. This may include bike lanes, traffic calming on busy streets or separate trails with the end result being a system allowing for safe use by multiple groups.

Complete Street Recommendations:

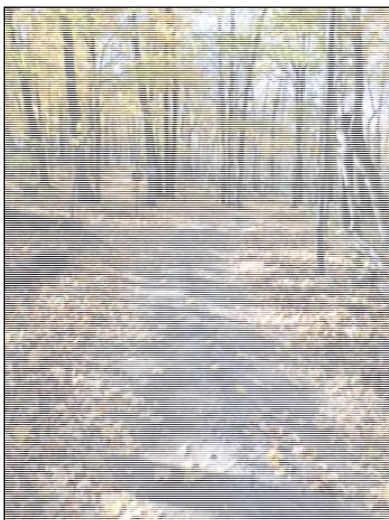
- Follow the Major Pedestrian Routes plan outlined in the Comprehensive Plan which connects residential streets as routes between community destinations.
- Provide traffic calming along designated streets and visual cues, when needed, to help automobile and pedestrian traffic use the corridor safely.

- Improve sidewalk infrastructure (width, materials, ADA) throughout the community as funding allows.
- Provide amenities and signage encourage identity and increased use of trails and sidewalks throughout Chatfield.

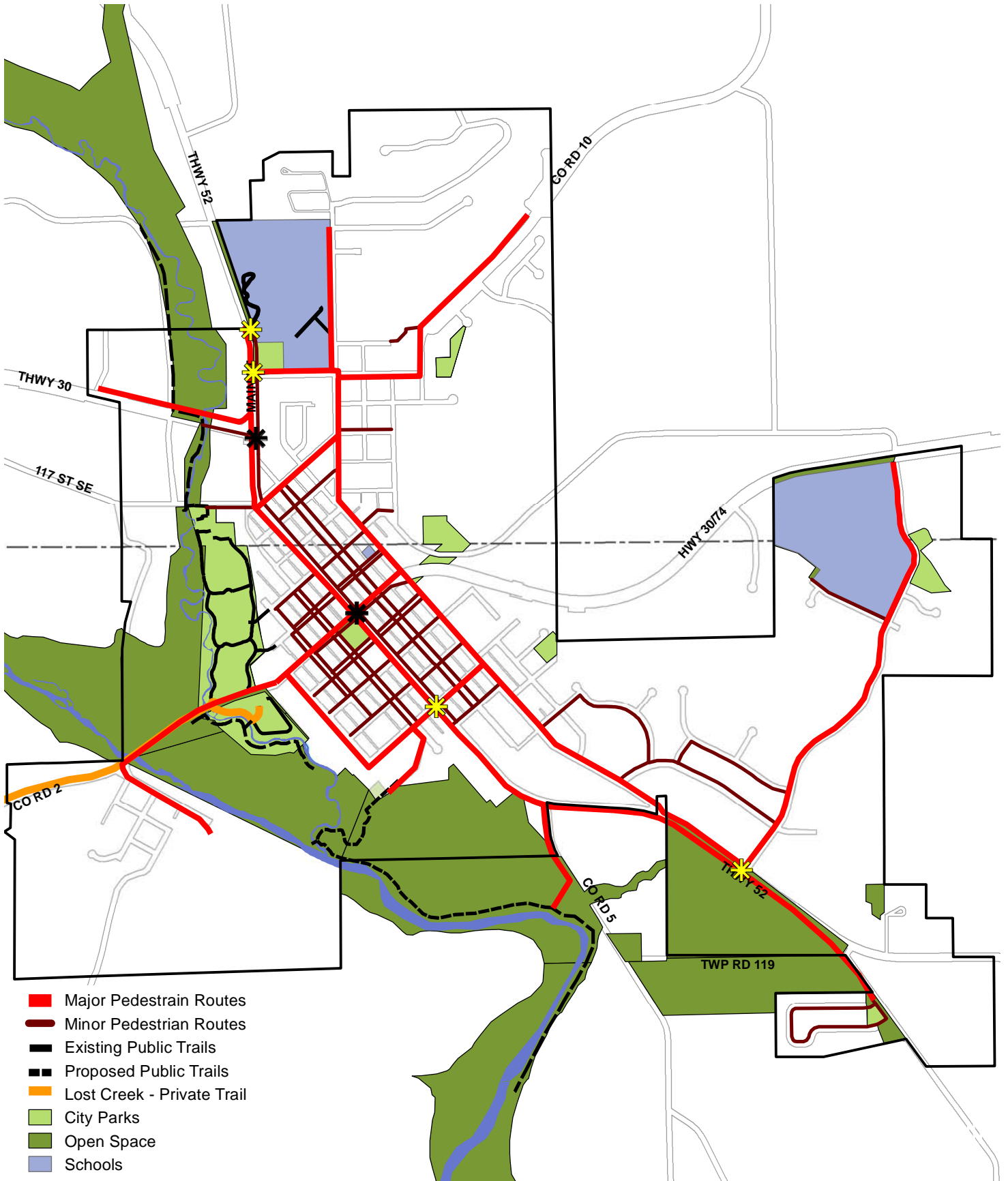
The City should have plans for various types of trails, depending on location, constraints and trail user needs. Trail types could include: off-road hiking, interpretive trails, bicycle trails, snowshoe or cross country skiing trails, snowmobile trails, and sidewalks. User needs and safety should be the critical factor in all types of trails.

Trail Type Recommendations:

- Striped or marked bike lanes include a painted symbol on the roadway surface and associated signage along the right-of-way and can be an inexpensive way to add facilities where spaces on existing streets allow these.
- Widened shoulders should be at 2-3 feet in width for separation where shoulders are used as trails.
- Trails and sidewalks serve as extensions of road networks and connect neighborhoods to community features.
- Nature trails typically run through natural areas and can be used for multiple types of recreation.



Pedestrian Routes



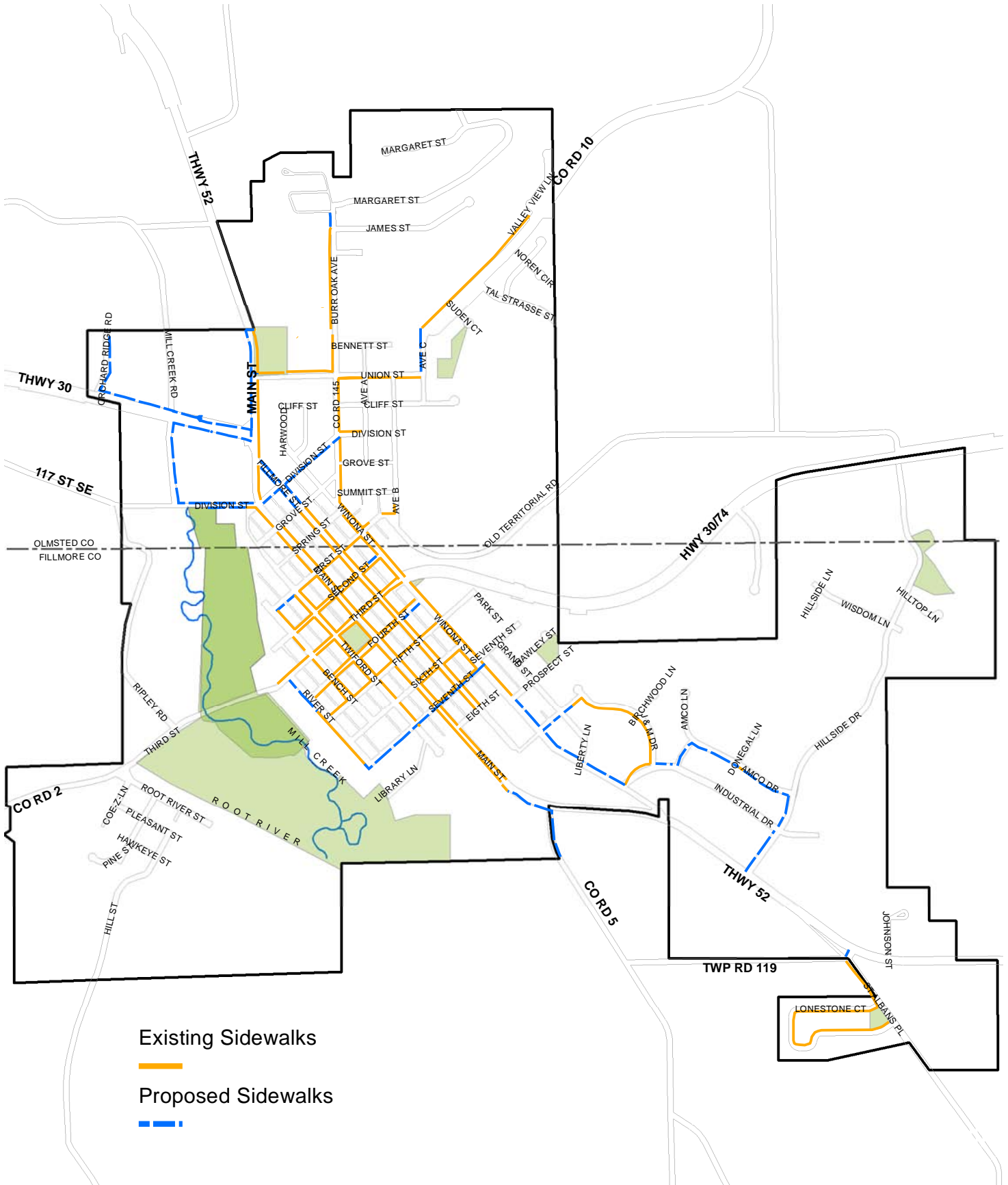
- █ Major Pedestrian Routes
- █ Minor Pedestrian Routes
- Existing Public Trails
- Proposed Public Trails
- █ Lost Creek - Private Trail
- City Parks
- Open Space
- Schools



- ✱ Existing Marked Crosswalks
- ✱ Proposed Marked Crosswalks

0 250 500 1,000 Feet



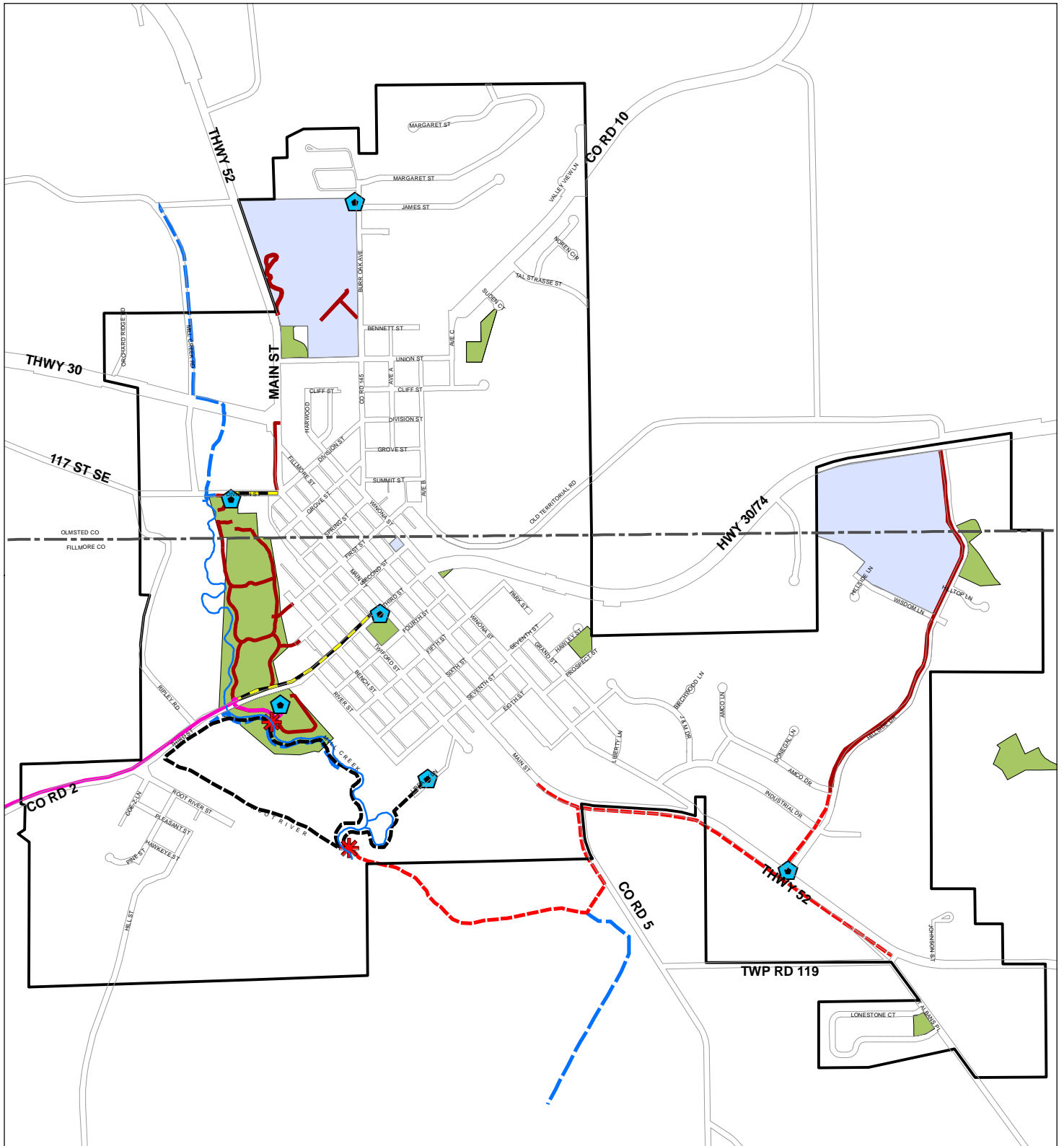
Sidewalk Plan






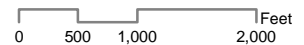
Existing Sidewalks

 Proposed Sidewalks


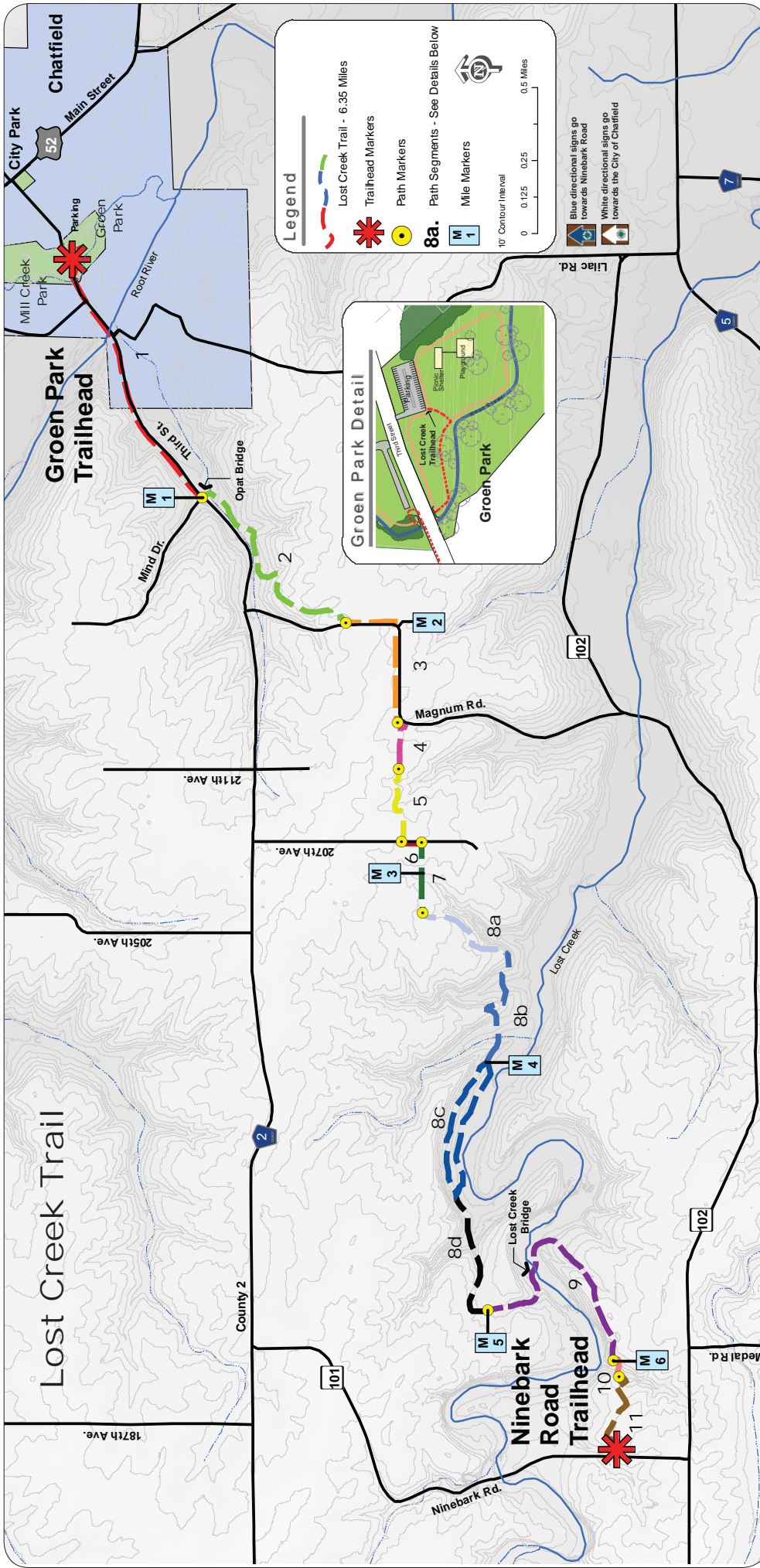


City Trails



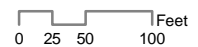
-  City Trailheads
-  Future Bridges
-  Lost Creek Trail
-  Proposed County 5 Loop
-  Proposed Root River Loop
-  Proposed Creek Trail
-  Proposed Street Striping
-  Schools
-  Public Parks
-  City Trails



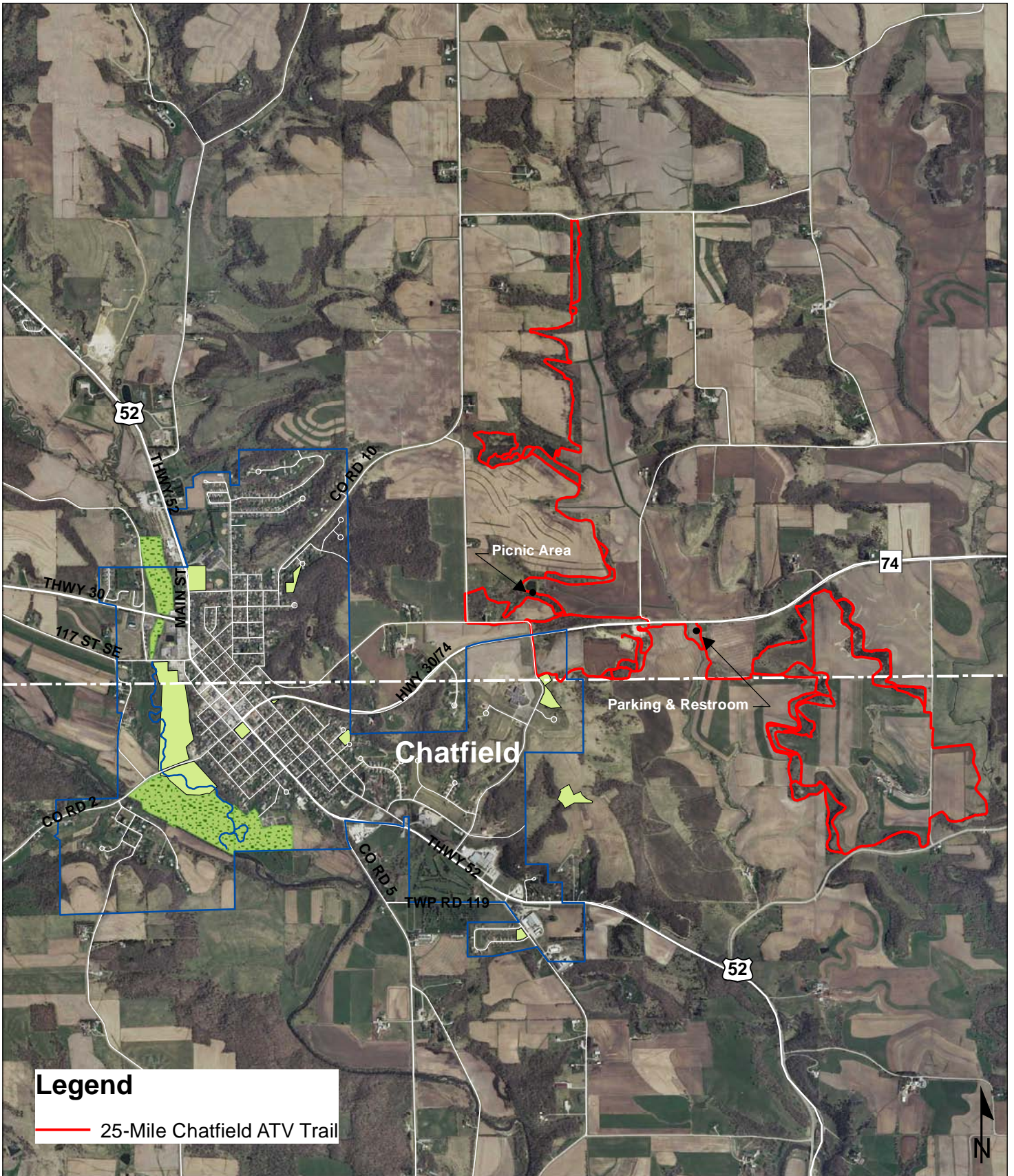


- Green Park Trailhead** - parking available, follow signs on paved path to Co. Road 2.
- 1. Fillmore County Road 2 Hiking Path** - Follow marked hiking path along County Rd. 2. Caution during road crossing. Please follow marked signs. *Easy Hike.*
- 2. Carson-Green Wildlife Sanctuary** - Cross County Rd. 2 to "Opat Bridge". Follow logging road then wooded path through mature forest. *Moderate hike.*
- 3. Magnum Road Path** - Approximately a half mile of gravel road, frequently traveled. Hike on left side of the road, watch for traffic and look carefully for re-entry into woods. *Easy hike.*
- 4. Narveson Farm Path** - Mowed area along agricultural field. *Easy hike.*
- 5. Horsman Farm Path** - Mowed area along agricultural field with short wooded stretch. *Easy hike.*
- 6. 207th Path** - Short stretch of gravel road. *Easy hike.*
- 7. Jordan Township Public Cartway Path** - Well maintained cartway. Please keep noise to a minimum as you are close to a home. *Easy hike.*
- 8a. Bailey Brothers' Prairie** - Mowed path through recreated prairie that follows the line of the woods. Watch for occasional uneven areas of the path. *Easy to moderate hike.*
- 8b. Bailey Brothers' Forest** - Enters forest again. Watch signs carefully as other paths are present and are not authorized for use. Steep climbs down towards creek. Look for "Sarah's Crossing" with a hidden fossil in one of the limestone rocks. *Difficult hike.*
- 8c. Bailey Brothers' Cattle Pasture** - This area of the trail splits into the "high road" heading east towards Chatfield and the "low road" heading west towards Ninebark Road. The high path follows the top of the limestone bluff while the low path follows the creek through the grassy pasture. *Easy to moderate hike.*
- 8d. Bailey Brothers' Brook Valley** - Enters mature forest and descends into a beautiful valley. Look for the Resting Log and "Jayme's Crossing" and continue uphill. *Difficult hike.*
- 9. Thorn Apple Valley Path** - Follow mowed path by dam and continue on pioneer road to the creek valley. Follow signs to wooden bridge (crossing Lost Creek) and continue uphill into woods. *Moderate to difficult hike.*
- 10. Carlson Farm Path** - Narrow forest path descending into a stream crossing, ascending up switch backs to a mowed path. *Difficult hike.*
- 11. Thorn Apple Hill Path** - Mowed path along tree and prairie plantings and agricultural fields to Ninebark Road Trailhead. *Gently rolling easy to moderate hike.*
- Ninebark Road Trailhead** - limited parking. Maps and brochures available.

Savanna Spring Nature Area- Interpretative Trail



ATV Trails

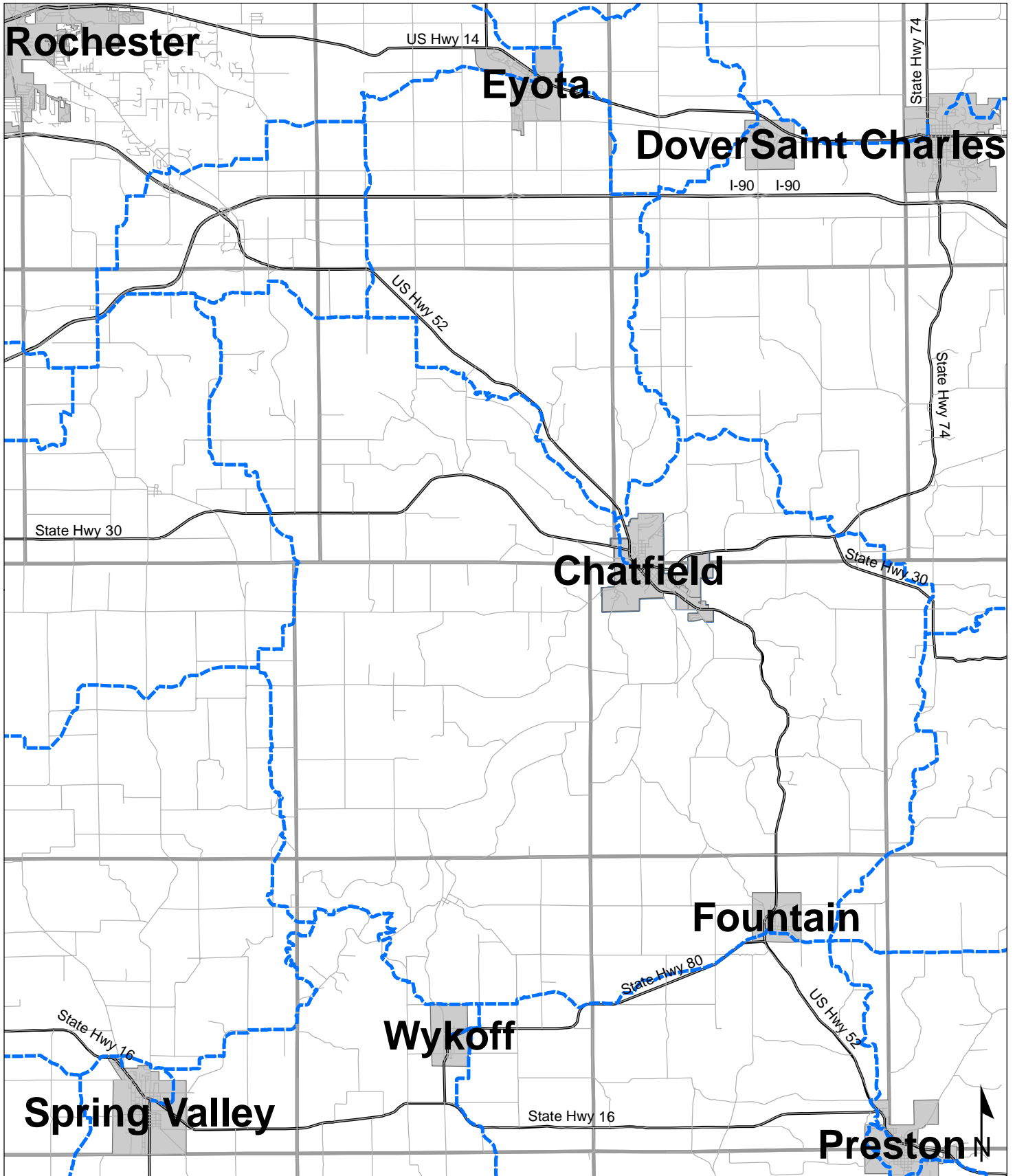


Legend
— 25-Mile Chatfield ATV Trail

0 5001,000 2,000 Feet



Snowmobile Trails



----- Snowmobile Trails

0 2,500 5,000 10,000 Feet



Chosen Valley Regional Park

❖ Plan Overview, Goals & Objectives

- Project Introduction
- Regional & Site Context
- Park Uses
- Parking
- Trails

❖ Maps

- Regional Park Overview Map
- Regional Park Master Plan Map
- Parkland & Public Access
- Regional Trails
- Regional Public Fishing Access
- County-Wide Parks
- DNR – Mill Creek Easement Map

4.0



4.0 Chosen Valley Regional Park Plan

Project Introduction

The Chosen Valley Regional Park flows through two of Chatfield’s Community Parks; Groen Park and Mill Creek Park. The Regional Park also connects the Chatfield Music Lending Library and parking area for anglers, City Park and the Chatfield Center for the Arts, and the six-mile private Lost Creek Trail which begins in Groen Park. This corridor serves not only the citizens of Chatfield but also has a regional draw primarily due to the popularity of trout fishing, hiking, and natural areas.

- 113.75 Acres of Parkland Area
- 35.7 Acres of Fishing Easement along Mill Creek and the Root River
- 10.31 Miles of Trails (6 miles are private)

Regional Context

The City of Chatfield is located in Southeastern Minnesota in Olmsted and Fillmore Counties along the Mill Creek/Root River corridor. Chatfield is approximately 21 miles southeast of Rochester, 9 miles south of Fountain, and 15 miles south of Preston. The Regional Park runs along a stretch of Mill Creek south of Division Street to the confluence of Mill Creek to the Root River.

Site Context

The Regional Park includes Mill Creek and Groen Parks. The inventory of these park are located in the Summary section of the Plan. The Regional Park also includes a connective trail to the DNR’s fishing easement along Mill Creek and the Root River to a parking lot located at the west end of Library Lane. A bike/walk lane along the north side of the Third Street will connect City Park and the Chatfield Center for the Arts to the Regional Park.

Proposed Regional Park Uses

The proposed park uses focus on natural area hiking/walking trails along Mill Creek and the Root River with access to the streams for fishing, and connectivity to the Canoe Launch located along the south end of the park adjacent to Third Street. A public access road is also proposed to provide access to several campground/RV sites to be located along the wooded area near the Root River. Several pedestrian bridges are proposed to cross Mill Creek and the Root River connecting Groen and Mill Creek Park to the rest of the Regional Parkland area. See the Regional Park Master Plan for detailed locations.



Parking

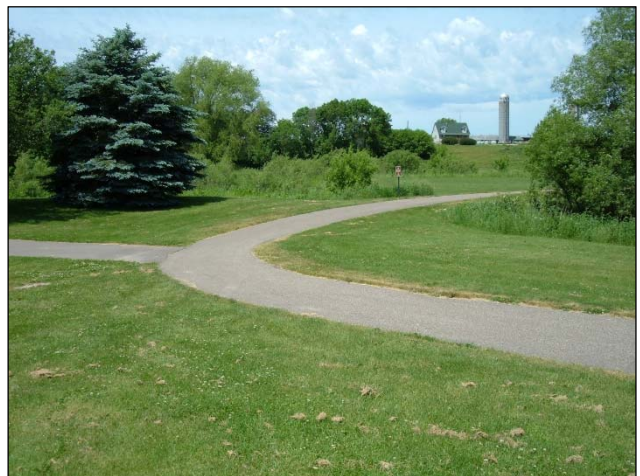
Several parking areas are located at the north end Mill Creek Park as well as a long loop roadway with handicap accessible parking near **the** softball field. Additional parking is located on the south end of Mill Creek Park near the hockey rink. In Groen Park, there is a parking lot located along the entrance near Third Street. Finally, there is a parking lot located at the southeast end of Library Lane which has fairly close access to Mill Creek and the Root River for fishing. The parking lot is shared with the Chatfield Music Lending Library. No additional parking is proposed in the natural areas near the Root River other than seasonal camping/ RV parking areas as shown on the Master Plan.

Trails

Major Pedestrian Trails - The Regional Park is connected to the rest of the City of Chatfield through a series of trails, sidewalks, and proposed striped bike lanes and is a key part of the Major Pedestrian Routes defined in the Chatfield Comprehensive Plan. See the attached Pedestrian Route Map.

Creek Trail - The park area is also part of a proposed Creek Trail that will follow Mill Creek from the north end of town through the City southward towards the City of Fountain.

Park Loop Trails - Several internal trails are already constructed within Mill Creek and Groen Park as shown on the Master Plan. A new proposed natural loop is proposed to be located southeast of Mill Creek and northwest of the Root River along with a connecting trail to a trailhead located on Library Lane.



Lost Creek Trail - A six-mile natural trail begins in Groen Park. A trailhead sign is located near the parking lot that outlines the route. This trail is privately owned and maintained by the Bluff Country Hiking Club. The goal of the trail is to provide residents and visitors opportunities for recreational and education while enjoying the scenery and wildlife of the areas. The trail is open to the public with use limited to hiking and snowshoeing, as the trail surface is natural soil and grass.

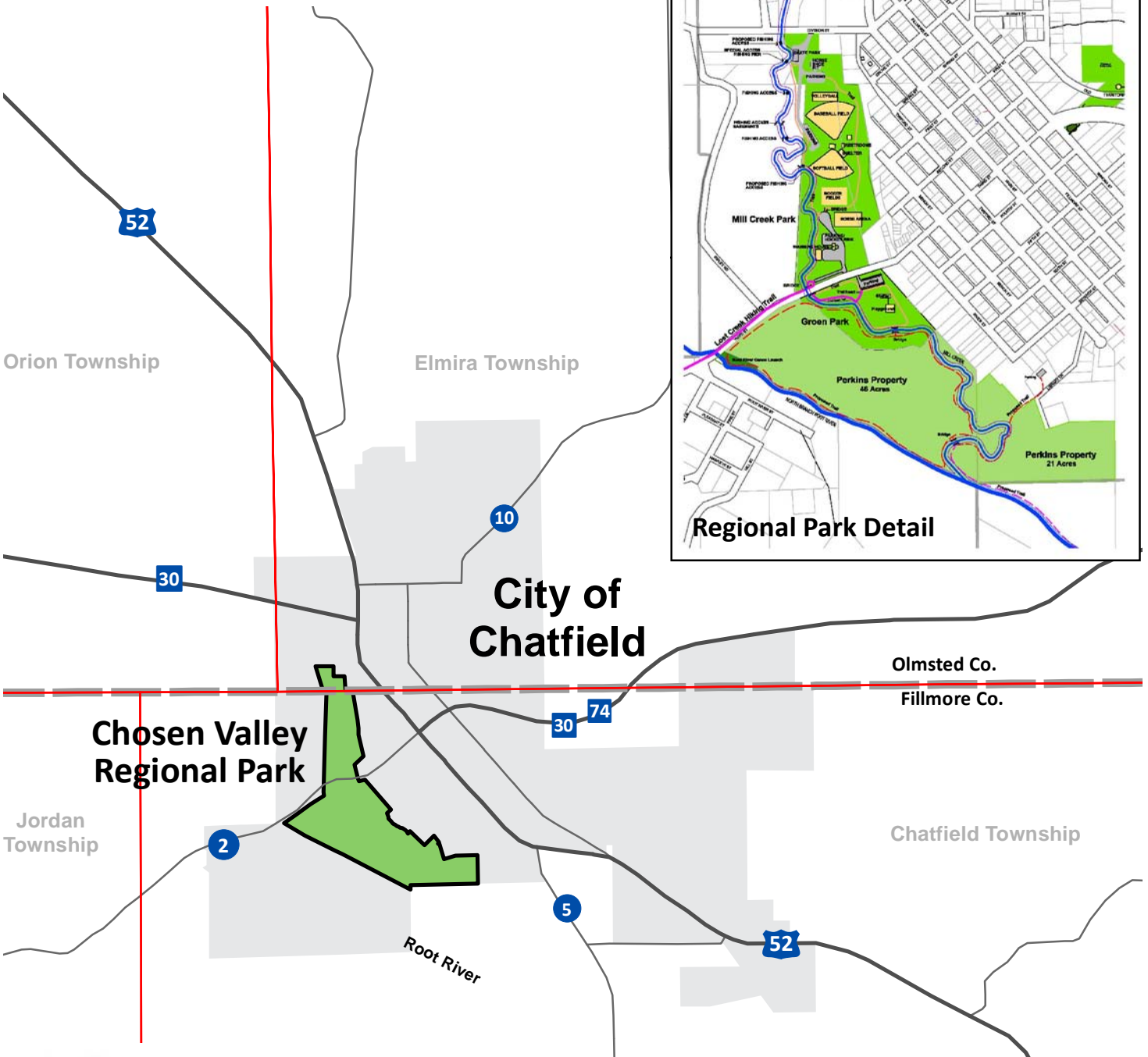


Existing Mill Creek and Groen Park Amenities



Regional Park Overview

Chosen Valley Regional Park



Parkland

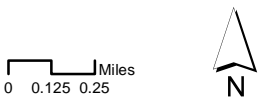
32.00 Mill Creek Park
 13.92 Groen Park
 67.83 Perkins Property
113.75 Total Acres

Trails

1.53 Miles - Park Trails
 6.35 Miles - Lost Creek Trail
 (Privately Owned)
 2.43 Miles - Proposed Trails
10.31 Total Miles

Fishing

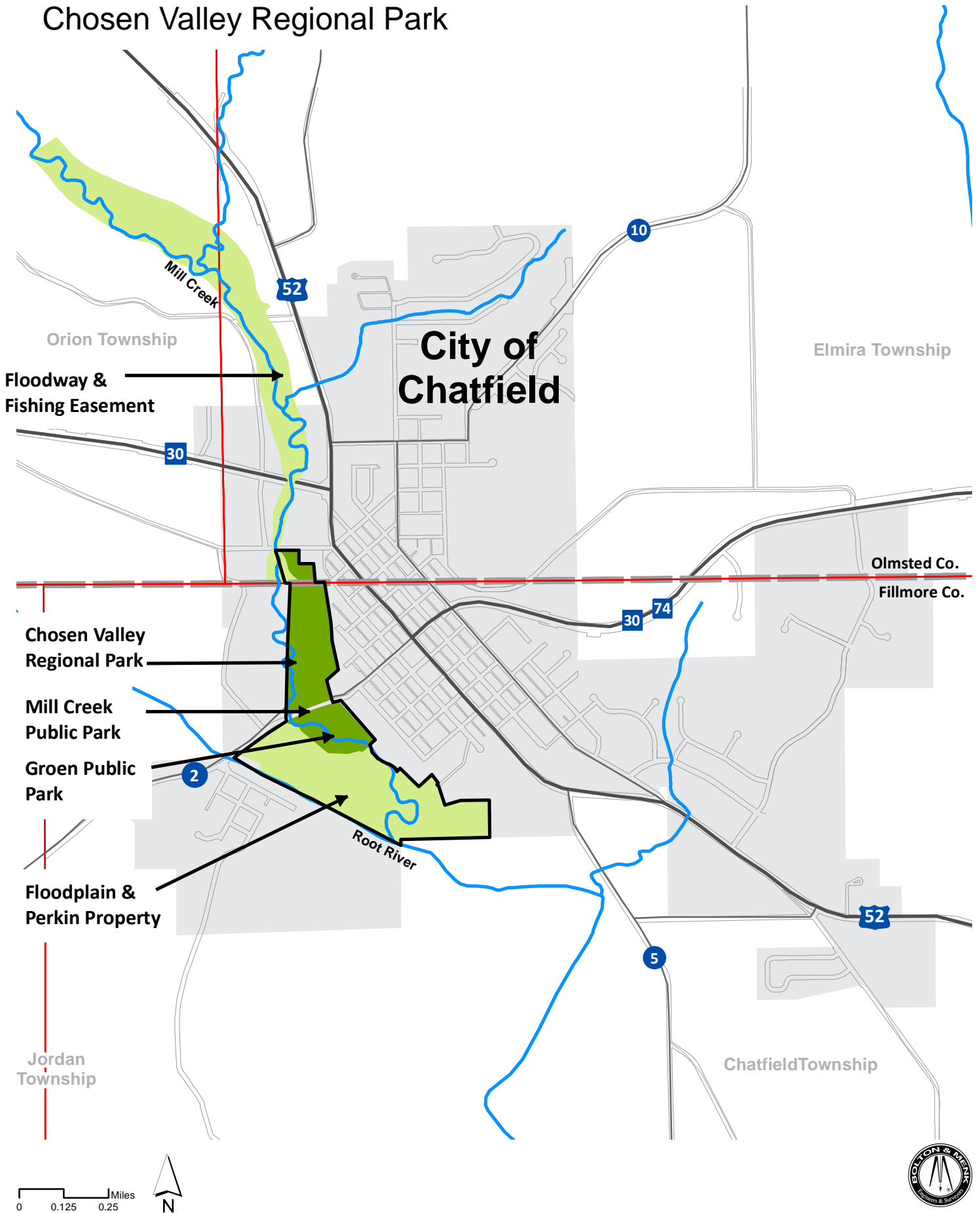
11,750 Current Stream Ft. of Angling
 900 Proposed Stream Ft. of Angling
35.7 Total Acres of Angling Esmt.





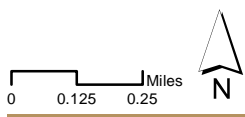
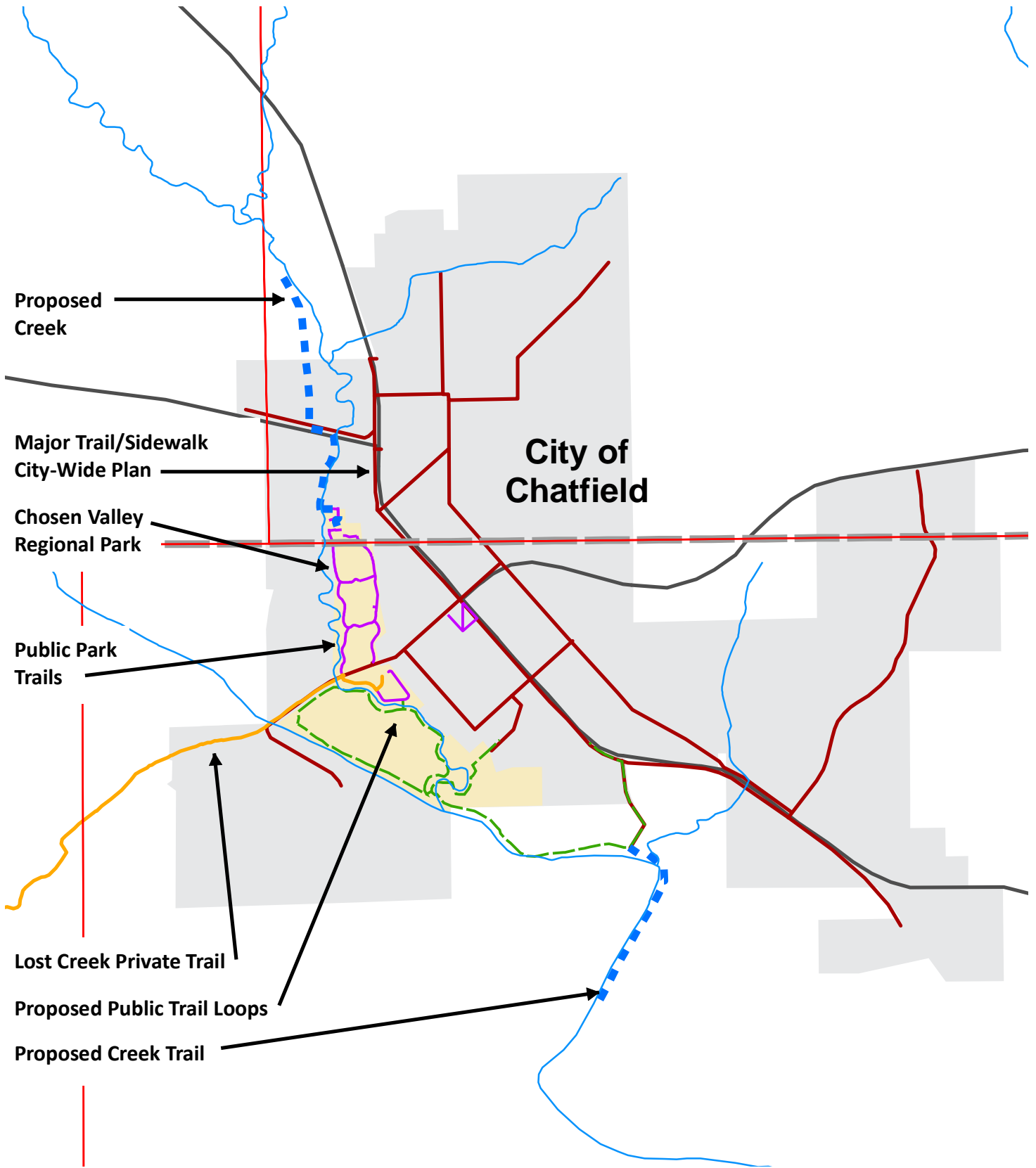
Parkland & Public Access

Chosen Valley Regional Park



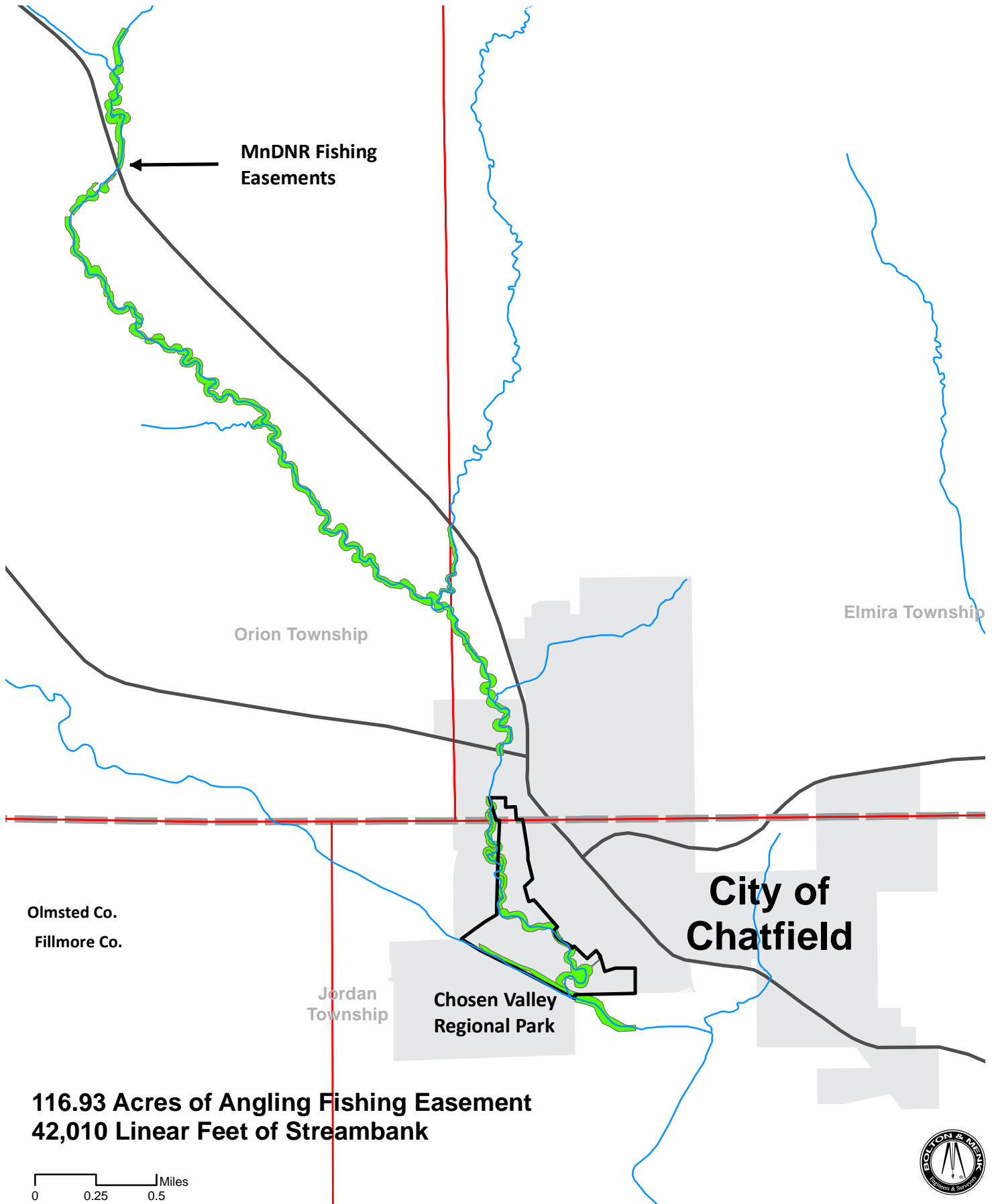
Regional Trails

Chosen Valley Regional Park



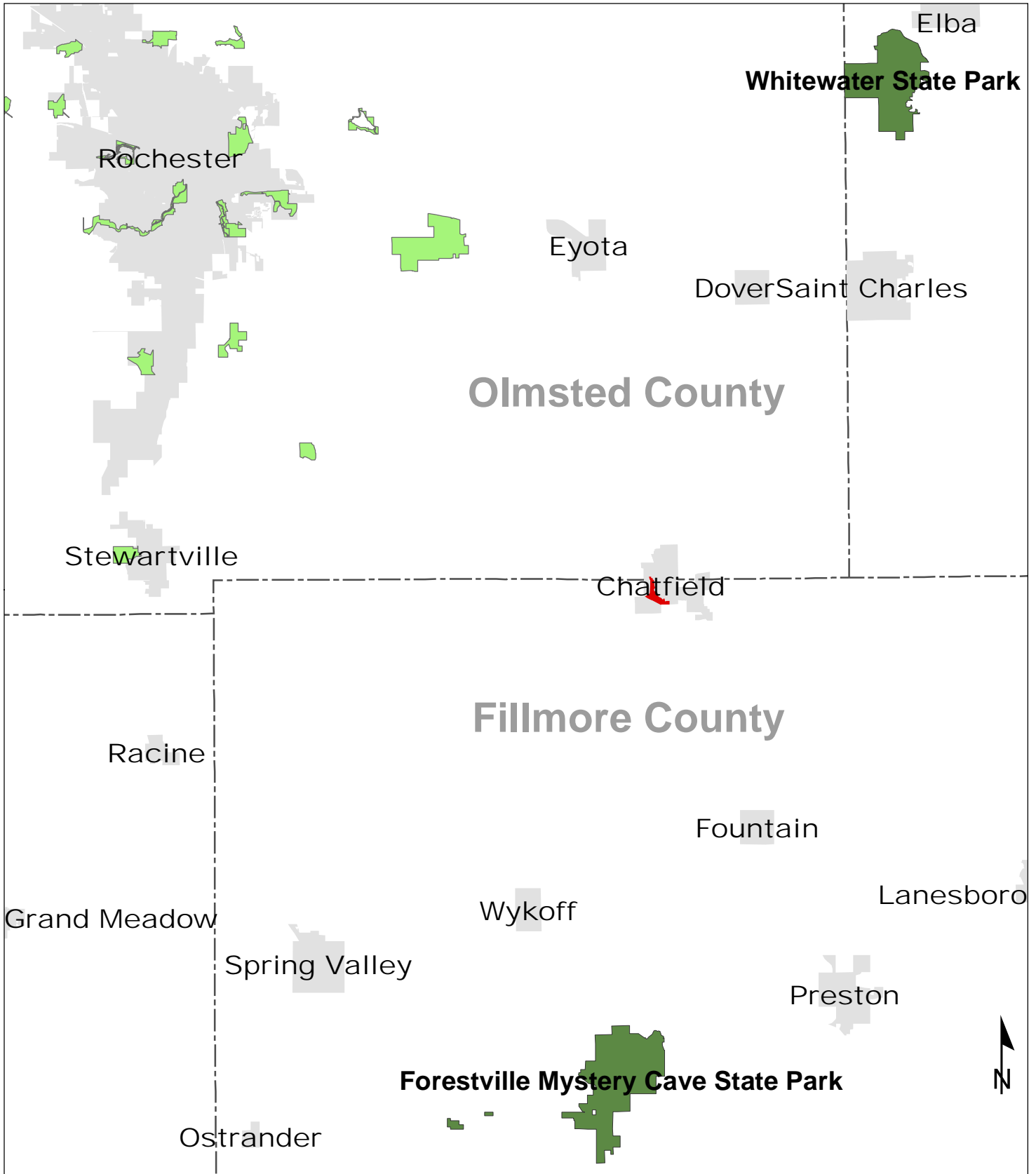
Regional Public Fishing Access

Chosen Valley Regional Park

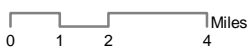


116.93 Acres of Angling Fishing Easement
42,010 Linear Feet of Streambank

County-Wide Parks



-  Regional Park Boundary
-  MN State Parks
-  Ol. Co. & Rochester +100 Ac Parks



Mill Creek

M-009-034

Date: August 19, 2014

Map for: Chatfield City Easements

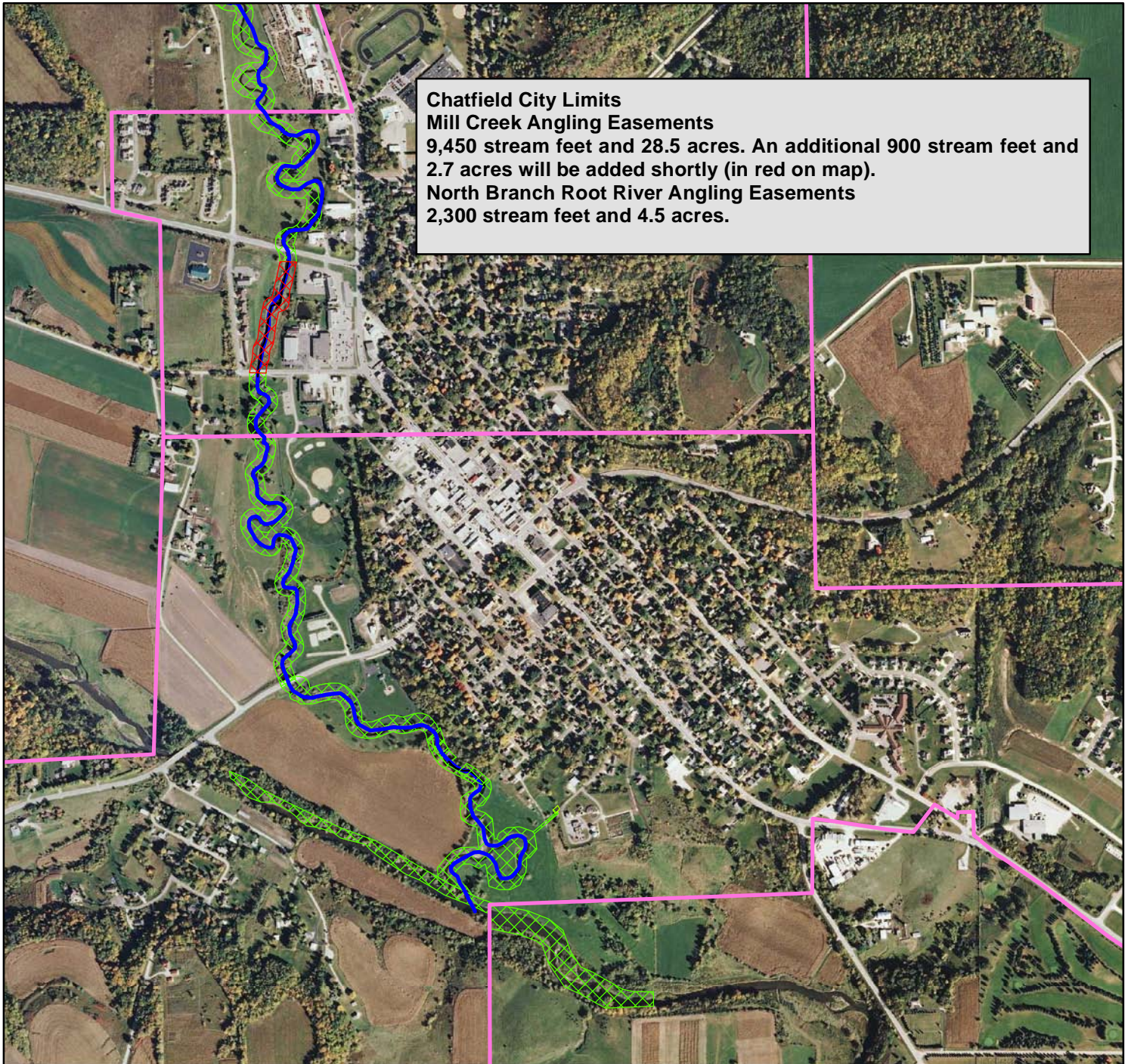
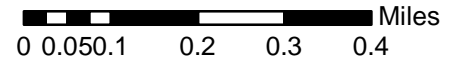
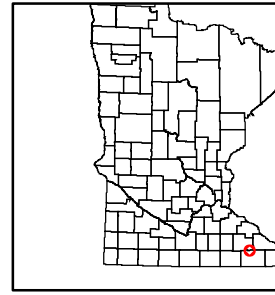
Prepared By: Jim Melander

Fisheries Office: Lanesboro

Mouth TRS: 104N-11W-S6

Source TRS: 106N-12W-S35

Counties: Olmsted, Fillmore



Wildlife Management Areas

- ❖ Wildlife Management Areas
- ❖ Birding
- ❖ Fishing
- ❖ Root River State Water Trail
- ❖ Canoeing & Kayaking
- ❖ Camping

- ❖ Maps
 - Wildlife Areas
 - Mill Creek & Root River Access Map

5.0

5.0 Wildlife Management Areas

A Wildlife Management Area is an area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation, such as viewing wildlife habitat, fishing, boating, camping, and trail usage. Though these areas may include active play areas, 80% of the land in wildlife management areas is typically reserved for conservation and natural resource management, with less than 20% used for recreation development. The nature-oriented areas in Chatfield are significant and serve the larger Southeastern Minnesota regional area.

Birding in Chatfield

Minnesota lies between several major landscapes; prairie, grasslands, deciduous woods, coniferous forest and aspen parkland. Each area has distinct habitats for plants and animals and offers unique opportunities for viewing wildlife. The City of Chatfield has 1,660 acres or 2.59 square miles of diverse habitat including the Root River and Mill Creek valleys, meadows, prairies, wetlands, springs, and bluffs. Chatfield's river and creek valleys, parks, and open spaces include over 19% or approximately 308 acres of public and semi-public parkland and trails where wildlife thrive.

One of Chatfield's largest public open spaces is located at the community parks of Mill Creek and Groen Park which are part of the Chosen Valley Regional Park. Mill Creek and Groen Park have excellent looped trails that provide great sites for birding all year around. Canoeing is also a great way to enjoy the outdoors and watch birds. A canoe launch is located off of Third Street (County Road 2) on the east side of the Root River, at the southwest corner of the Regional Parkland area.



Other birding sites in Chatfield include the 10-acre Savanna Spring Nature Area and the 6.35 mile Lost Creek Trail. These areas are identified in the Birding Area Map.

Resources for Minnesota Birding include:

- *Audubon Minnesota*, website: <http://mn.audubon.org/>
 - o Their mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity
- *Zumbro Valley Audubon Society*, website: <http://www.zumbrovalleyaudubon.org/>

- o ZVAS is the local chapter of Audubon Minnesota located in Rochester. They support environmental education of our youth, develop an appreciation and, advocate efforts to pursue environmentally positive activities and policies, and encourage members to participate in decision-making processes concerning environmental issues
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, website: http://dnr.state.mn.us/nature_viewing
 - o MnDNR's resources include, Identified native birds in Minnesota, Species by County, Landscaping for Wildlife, Wild about Birds, and a Traveler's Guide to Wildlife in Minnesota.
- Bob Ekblad's Birding-Minnesota. Website: <http://www.birding-minnesota.com/>
 - o This website includes the revised 4th edition of A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO MINNESOTA by Kim Eckert. The guide is a county-by-county guide to over 1,000 birding locations. It includes references and resources, more than 200 maps, and an annotated list of 427 Minnesota birds.

Fishing

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has 11,750 linear feet of public Angling Easement along the Root River and Mill Creek in Chatfield. The DNR's future plans are to add an additional 900 linear feet of easement in the near future for a total of 35.7 acres of Angling Easement in the Chatfield area. See the attached Fishing Map for locations and details.



Creating these large connected fishing easements with public access is a top priority for the MnDNR. These easements are only for fishing, not hunting, hiking, or picnicking. Pets are not allowed because they might scare cattle. Easements are marked with brown signs and allows anglers to fish the area as well as the DNR to do habitat improvements. The southeastern region now has about 185 miles of easements on private land and miles of trout fishing opportunities in parks and on state forestland.



The Root River State Water Trail

Water flow -The water flow on the Root River ranges from gentle to moderate. From Chatfield to the Mississippi River the river falls 310 feet for an average drop of 3.4 feet per mile. River levels peak in mid-March and once again in June. Though the watershed has many spring-fed clear water tributaries including the South Branch, the Root River is somewhat cloudy due to erosive soil types in the watershed.

Fish and wildlife -There are many species of fish in the Root River including smallmouth bass, channel catfish, rock bass, sunfish, crappies, and rough fish. Most of these can be found in the active stretches of pooled areas of the river. Brown trout can be found in the clearer and colder spring-fed streams, as well as the western end of the South Branch.

The Root River supports over 40 species of birds. It is quite common to see blue herons, egrets, and wood ducks moving about the river's edge. Raptors in the area include red-tailed hawks, osprey, turkey vultures, and bald eagles. Wooded shores harbor mammals such as deer, gray fox, red fox, coyotes, raccoons, woodchucks, squirrels, weasels, and badgers. River otters and beaver can be found in the water. Lizards such as the skink, racerunner, and many species of snakes, including the timber rattlesnake, can be found along the banks and outcrops.

**Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, State Water Trails*

Canoeing & Kayaking

Canoeing and kayaking is one of the most satisfying recreational experiences and the Root River is one of Southeastern Minnesota's most treasured natural resources. The river has gently to moderate flow with a few riffles, although the water level can vary with rainfall.

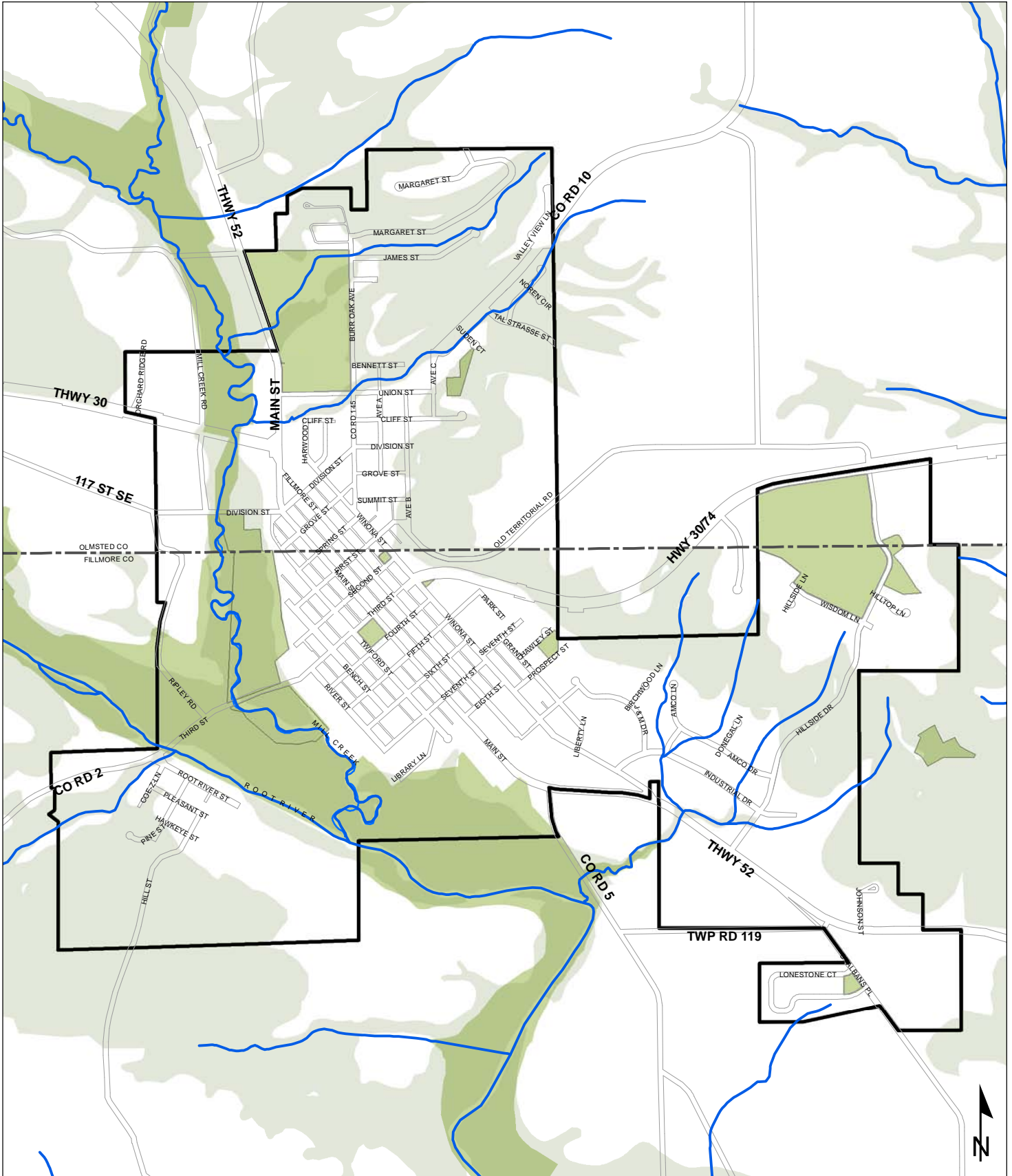


The Chatfield Canoe/kayak launch is located on the northern limits of the Root River State Water Trail on the east side of the Root River on County Road 2 just west of Mill Creek and Groen Park. From the Chatfield Canoe Launch, you could paddle along the South Branch of the Root River to Preston and along the North Branch of the Root River to the Mississippi River. The Root River Water Trail Interactive Water Map and current water levels and conditions can be found on the MnDNR's website; <http://dnr.state.mn.us/watertrails/rootriver/index.html>.

Camping

Several RV camping sites are available in Shady Oak Park for daily and weekly rental. The Shady Oak site currently provides water and sewer hookups as well as electricity and portable restroom facilities. A proposed RV camp site is shown as part of the Chosen Valley Regional Park along the east side of the Root River. This new area would require an extension to the current water and sewer mains but would provide sites that are more centrally located, quick access to the Root River Water Trail and access to the Regional Park and City Trail system while only being blocks away from restaurants and other commercial areas located downtown and the Chatfield Center for the Arts. See the Shady Oak Park Map and the Chosen Valley Regional Park Master Plan for RV/campsite details.

Wildlife Areas

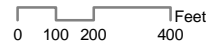


- Public & Semi Public Open Space
- Steep Slopes & Wet Soils
- Rivers & Streams

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet



Mill Creek and Root River Access Map



Maintenance & Implementation

- ❖ Maintenance Recommendations
 - Ground Maintenance
 - Building Maintenance
- ❖ Administration & Operation
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Volunteer
- ❖ Implementation Strategies
 - All City Park Recommendations

6.0

6.0 Maintenance Recommendations

Maintenance is a crucial component to successful park system. The location, type of maintenance and purpose of the space or facility all play a role in determining the time and effort involved in a specific maintenance plan. The help understand the level of maintenance necessary for a successful park and trail system, the section divides maintenance into two sections, ground and building maintenance.

General Recommendations:

- Choose materials and products that have extended life under extreme wear and tear to prolong replacement schedules
- Manage invasive species in natural areas
- Implement a tree replacement program to ensure diversity and health of trees within City-owned property

Ground Maintenance

Grounds maintenance is maintaining and establishing standards of care for outdoor spaces, such as parks, trails, and sidewalks. This is important to address due to the visual impression parks, trails, and sidewalks provide to both park users and people who view these amenities from public streets. If a park and trail system is aesthetically pleasing, it will tend to make the space safer and more enjoyable for both the user and passerby. If proper maintenance is not followed, property issues and concerns grow as does the time and money to fix them. A maintenance plan usually incorporates all of the following tasks: mowing, weed control, pest control, athletic field grooming, snow removal, leaf removal, maintaining playground surfaces and equipment, parking lot repair, controlling surface water runoff, trash removal, planting, pruning, plant removal, watering and fertilizing.

Building Maintenance

Building maintenance refers to the upkeep of indoor and outdoor facilities. This would include spaces such as the Chatfield Pool and buildings in Jaycee Park, pavilions, restrooms, hockey rink, and various other outdoor picnic facilities. The main benefit from maintaining a solid building maintenance plan is to extend the life cycle of the facility or building. If proper care and maintenance are performed, chances are the facility or building will continue to provide assets within the system with minimal unscheduled maintenance throughout its lifespan.

The building maintenance plan may include the following tasks: trash removal, plumbing, heating and cooling and electrical systems, mopping, vacuuming, sweeping, replacing lights, windows and doors, carpet, handrails, and ice sheet maintenance.

Scheduled maintenance includes routine maintenance for daily or weekly activities; *Preventative maintenance* is used to prevent or avoid park and trail amenities from breaking down and causing safety concerns and issues, and *cyclical maintenance* is for tasks that require a full cycle of activities that need to be managed on a scheduled cycle such as mowing.

Maintenance Recommendations:

- Evaluate the existing maintenance practices at least every 2 years to determine if they need to be adjusted to meet the changing needs of the Community and maintenance budgeting.

- Determine if there are ways to reduce maintenance costs by engaging public/private partnerships, enlisting and training volunteers, or focusing resources based on community needs and use patterns.
- Prioritize maintenance needs for Chatfield's public parks and trails in the existing system. Determine first the 'base' needs of each park and then prioritize for all additional needs.
- Develop an action plan for the additional needs given available resources and effort.

Administration and Operation

Developing effective administrative techniques will guide Chatfield's Park Department in efficient operations and will assist in keeping in-line with the interests of the community.

Recommendations:

- Develop consistent approaches to all public procedures and services so the public becomes familiar with these procedures.
- Staff should continue to participate in community projects and civic organizations to develop working relationships throughout the community.

Collaboration

Developing strong relationships and good rapport among other Parks & Recreation staff, City Officials, other agencies, and the public is an important key to the overall future success of Chatfield's parks and trail system.

Recommendations:

- Maintain open communication and understanding of common goals and interest of various community groups.
- Commit to collaborating with the Chatfield School District, Bluff Country Hiking Trail, Savanna Spring Nature Area, Chatfield ATV Trails Club, and others for the mutual benefit of projects.
- Encourage participation and funding opportunities with intergovernmental agencies.
- Work closely with Chatfield's Community Education staff to orchestrate and schedule maintenance and use of public parks and trails.

Volunteer

Volunteers are a major factor in current park system maintenance practices and will continue to be a critical element to the success of the parks and trail system and programming efforts. Though coordination of volunteer does require staff time but the rewards quickly outnumber this commitment.

Recommendations

- Recruit young volunteers through school and youth organizations.
- Increase the visibility of volunteers' opportunities to give the programs greater presence and appeal.
- Maximize the use of volunteers with special events, general park and trail maintenance activities, and when engaging other organizations (schools and churches, etc.) to assist in annual clean-up events and tasks.

Implementation Strategies

One of the most important aspects of the Master Plan is the discussion on implementation. This section provides potential funding opportunities, define priorities, and suggests recommended monitoring methods. This plan also makes an appeal to public partners and citizen groups to provide oversight and to be actively involved in implementation. Residents, local government, the Chatfield School District, law enforcement, healthcare, local businesses, developers, and other agencies will need to work together for Chatfield’s vision for its parks, trails, and open spaces system to be successful.

This section of the Mater Plan combines the recommendations from all individual parks inventories to create a “Master List” of recommendations.

Chatfield Plaza

- Encourage strong visual and physical connections such as improved crosswalks to connect the Library and Fire Station block to City Park, and the Chatfield Center for the Arts block.
- Allow Fourth Street to continue to function as a public street as well as closing it between Main Street and Twiford Street for specific events during the year.
- Improve parking signs and directional signage for larger event parking needs.
- Encourage consistency in signage, lighting, and amenities to further connect the three-block Chatfield Plaza area.
- Keep large, open spaces available for outdoor community gatherings.

City Park

- Add historic inspired ornamental lights, benches, and trash/recycle contains as needed.
- Trim, mulch, and maintain the existing trees and plant diversity native trees like oak, maple, basswood, and hackberry.
- Bury the existing power lines and remove poles and remove all unnecessary physical elements in the park.
- Add more moveable chairs to the band shell area as needed, while promoting a much open park area as possible.
- Replace, when needed, the existing diagonal sidewalk with a paving that will provide a historic look. Install an ornamental compass flush with the walk in the center of the park.
- Add water service to Tuper’s Goose Fountain and replace the fountain mechanism.
- Add any necessary safety lighting.

Floyd Mohawk Park

- Install permanent signage
- Develop a neighborhood signage system to guide people to parks.
- Install a handicap accessible public sidewalk from Suden Court to the future picnic pavilion.
- Create a landscape buffer from adjacent residents.
- Use shrubs around the park perimeter to define the park’s boundary.
- Install proper mulch material under the swing set to improve safety.
- Install new play equipment, benches, and trash/recycle containers.
- Install new picnic pavilion overlooking the tot lot area.

Groen Park

- Stripe the parking lot for safety and efficiency
- Add native plantings to the creek area but still leave areas accessible to people
- Plant native trees near the play equipment and along the creek and drainageways
- Work with the MnDNR to complete stream bank improvements

Hendricks Park

- Add a permanent entrance monument sign along Hwy. 30/74.
- Add a low hedge or fence to define the southern edge of the park property.
- Maintain an inviting place to sit with a bench and one table.
- Improve the landscaping to include more perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, and spring bulbs.
- Continue to work with the Women's Community Club and other interested organizations on the plantings and maintenance of the landscaping.

Hillside Park

- Develop the park by adding a tot lot, benches, and trail that connects to Hillside Drive.
- Add native overstory and understory trees and shrubs along the perimeter.
- Add trash/recycle containers adjacent to the play area.
- Add a permanent park monument sign.

Jaycee Park

- A complete evaluation of the public pool was completed in 2015.
- The City of Chatfield will review and discuss several options including repair and/or replacement of the pool in 2016.

Lonestone Park

- Create a permanent sign that incorporates the large 'stone' on site with some landscaping.
- Add native overstory and understory trees and shrubs adjacent to the tot lot and along the perimeter.
- Add trash/recycle containers adjacent to the play areas.
- Improve the soil before planting landscaping around the perimeter of the park including the wet soil area in the southwest corner of the park.

Mill Creek Park

- Add permanent public restroom facilities
- Expand hiking trails to include smaller, closed loops and a linear trail along Mill Creek
- Add ornamental, dark sky friendly, lighting to improve pedestrian comfort/safety
- Repair or replace the existing wooden footbridges
- Make the connection to the canoe launch area as shown on the Regional Park Master Plan
- Maintain and expand the use of the City Hockey Rink
- Replace and/or expand the Warming House, Bleachers on the berm between the light poles

- Add more garbage/recycle containers
- Add drinking fountains along the trails and near public restrooms
- Add more hard surface parking
- Put the ballfield, hard courts and hockey/skating area light systems on automatic timers
- Plant native trees near the play equipment, along the creek, and randomly throughout the park
- Install future fishing piers
- Need better enforcement of dog leash laws
- Install plastic bag dispensers to encourage people to pick up after their dogs
- The Volleyball Courts should be relocated to just south of the Skate Park or on the north end of the Soccer Field as the courts are too near the baseball field and kids have been hit by balls.

Shady Oak Park

- Install a new picnic shelter in the same location of the previous pavilion
- Remove the RV camping amenities and restore the area to turf.
- Remove the old fire pit.
- Add picnic tables throughout the park.
- Improve the vitality of the grass by trimming some lower branches of the oaks, removing some small areas of grass and increasing the level of turf maintenance.
- Add a connecting trail from the Park to John and Mary Drive along the easement as shown on the map.
- Install shrubs along the perimeter adjacent to the private homes and yards to enhance the park's definition.
- Maintain the Oak Stands and watch for Oak Wilt.
- Plant other varieties of trees.

Creek Trail

- Purchase and develop a trail south of Mill Creek between Highway 30 and Division Street and work with private owners along Main Street to connect sidewalks to the Mill Creek Trail.
- Plan and construct all necessary pedestrian bridges and underpasses to connect the Creek Trail northward under Highway 30 and eastward over Mill Creek to Main Street.

Park Loop Trails

- Maintain and enhance the trails.
- Add half-mile and mile markers along the trails.

Lost Creek and Savanna Spring Nature Area Trail, & Chatfield ATV Trail

- Continue to support and coordinate with the various trail groups to promote their efforts.

Sidewalks

- Continue to maintain and construct sidewalks following the Major Pedestrian Route and Safe Routes to School Plan.