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SECTION 1

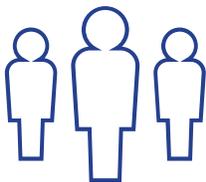
# COMMUNITY INPUT AND VALUE STATEMENT



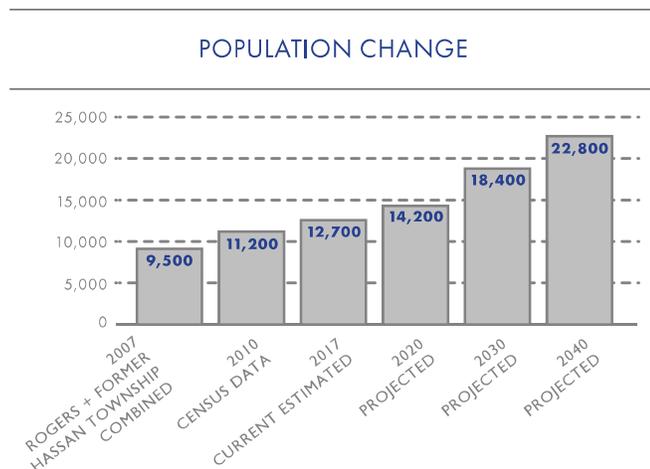
Understanding the needs and desires of the community was one of the first steps in developing the system plan in 2007. Through the public process, citizens and their local representatives on the Joint Task Force, Park and Recreation Advisory Commission, and City Council had a variety of opportunities to provide input and perspectives on planning issues. These findings provided the foundation for developing the parks, open space, and trail system plan. Through these interactions, a strong and consistent public statement was made, which still holds true in 2017. *“Preserve the sense of place and livability of the community in spite of increasing levels of development.”* These values continue to be extensively reflected in the 2017 system plan.

## COMMUNITY GROWTH

The City of Rogers is an emerging suburban community located on the western edge of Hennepin County. The City has grown considerably by both population and overall land mass since the last Parks, Open Space, and Trail System Plan Update in 2007, and as the chart below indicates, forecasts anticipate continued growth.



THE ESTIMATED PERCENT GROWTH OF POPULATION FOR THE CITY OF ROGERS IS AMONG THE HIGHEST WITHIN THE SEVEN COUNTY METRO AREA.



## DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

Household demographics in the City of Rogers have always been somewhat unique compared to other communities in the Seven County Metro Area. In 2016 the average household size in Rogers was 2.99 compared to a regional average of 2.50, which ranks Rogers in the top 10 in the Region. As a growing community, many of the new households will be families with school aged children, likely keeping the average household size above regional averages. Additionally, 45 percent of households in the City have children, of which 24 percent have children ranging from ages 0-5, 27 percent have children ranging from ages 5-10, and 30 percent have children ages 10-20.



**2.99**

ROGERS AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE  
*(Top 10 in the Region)*

**45%**

HOUSEHOLDS HAVING CHILDREN  
*(51% of which are 0-10 years old)*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ **People want to see more, safer trails that connect places where they live and work to places where they want to be.** People crave more informal recreational activities with a trail system. Any future parks, trails, and open spaces should prioritize and emphasize this aspect for community support and buy-in.
- ✓ **People want to see more community gathering places.** This should be an inclusive setting for a variety of different interest groups, age groups and uses. Whether indoor or outdoor, essential components included swimming and a place for seniors. Other important factors to consider are a venue/place for music and festivals. Any future planning efforts should include a community center or central gathering point for people of all ages to enjoy.

## 2014-2015 PUBLIC INPUT

Public input for the Parks, Open Space, and Trail System plan update began in 2014 and extended into 2015. Several methods were used to collect data during the community outreach efforts; community cafe meetings, athletic association interviews, and an online survey.



### Community Café Summary:

Three separate community café meetings were held in the spring of 2014, allowing the public to gather information, participate in brainstorming sessions, and provide feedback on the recreational needs and desires of the community. The meetings were held in various locations throughout the community on April 4, May 5, and May 17. The following highlights the priorities defined during the three meetings.

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## COMMUNITY CAFE PRIORITIES

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### #1

TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT  
*(ranked #1 by a significant margin)*

### #2 and #3

AQUATIC AND/OR COMMUNITY CENTER  
*(that can accommodate the needs of a wide range of age groups)*

### #4

PLAYGROUND AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARK  
DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

### #5

LAND ACQUISITION FOR COMMUNITY PARKS  
*(specifically south of Interstate 94)*

### LOWER PRIORITIES

OPEN SPACE/PASSIVE RECREATIONAL AREA DEVELOPMENT  
RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING  
OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FACILITIES



### *Athletic Association Interview Summary:*

The City held interviews with various athletic associations that serve the community of Rogers in order to determine existing and potential future needs of the associations.

*THE OUTCOME OF THE INTERVIEW SESSIONS SHOW THE GREATEST NEED IS, AT A MINIMUM, ONE ADDITIONAL SHEET OF ICE AT THE ROGERS ACTIVITY CENTER AND AN INDOOR GYMNASIUM SPACE AND DRY LAND TRAINING FACILITY.*

With the recent approval of the school referendum in 2014, there may be potential future opportunities for partnerships for additional gymnasium space which may improve the availability of indoor facilities, but it still may not be enough to meet the current demands and the additional gym space may create more demand. The other high priority need is adequate outdoor field space. At the moment the existing fields are barely meeting the needs of the associations and it appears to be a very carefully balanced scheduling process that is making it work, along with use of fields in adjacent communities, such as the VFW fields, and church facilities. The high demand on the existing fields also limits recovery time needed for fields.

Given the comments from the interviews, the reduction or modification of even just one field will highly affect the associations. The other comment that came across time and again during the interviews was the generally poor maintenance practices of the fields located on the Independent School District 728 properties. There were numerous complaints about improper mowing, striping and poor field grades.

### *Online Park & Recreational Survey Summary*



An online survey containing 10 questions was created and placed on the City of Rogers website to gather additional information from the community. There were approximately 1,150 responses to the survey, most of which appeared to consist of households living in the City of Rogers with children still in the household. The questions and responses below provide a snapshot of the key takeaways.

#### MOST UTILIZED FACILITIES

- 1 ROGERS ACTIVITY CENTER
- 2 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS  
*(typically the ones closest to where respondents lived)*
- 3 LIONS CENTRAL PARK  
*(highly used for a variety of reasons)*
- 4 TRAILS  
*(for walking)*
- 5 NORTH COMMUNITY PARK & SCHOOL SITES

#### PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO IMPROVE OR ADD

- 1 COMMUNITY CENTER AND POOL FACILITIES
- 2 BETTER TRAIL SYSTEM AND SAFER PATHS
- 3 ADDITIONAL SHEET OF ICE AT THE ROGERS ACTIVITY CENTER

#### MOST IMPORTANT PARKS AND RECREATION ISSUE TO ADDRESS

- 1 INDOOR FACILITIES  
*(gyms, ice, training, etc.)*
- 2 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CONNECTIONS  
*(trails and sidewalks)*
- 3 ADEQUATE SPORTS AMENITIES  
*(fields, courts, etc.)*

## 2017 SURVEY TOP PRIORITIES

THE TOP PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY RESIDENTS INCLUDE:

### ✓ TRAILS

- Loops
- Connections
- Destinations

### ✓ PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- I-94
- CSAH 144
- High and Middle Schools
- Regional Trails

### ✓ AQUATICS

- Indoor Pool
- Outdoor Pool
- Splash Pad

### ✓ COMMUNITY CENTER

- Exercise and Fitness

## 2017 PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY

Working with the framework from the 2014-2015 public input process, the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission recommended a scientifically valid community survey be conducted. In 2017 the City worked with Morris Leatherman Company to conduct the survey. The survey focused on residents opinions related to property taxes, quality of parks, trails, facilities, and City programs offered.

The study contained the results of a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected adult residents living in the City of Rogers. Survey responses across the community were gathered by professional interviewers between May 18 and June 12, 2017. The non-response rate was 4.0%. The average interview took 16 minutes. In general, random samples such as this yield results projectable to the entire universe of adult Rogers residents within ± 5.0 percentage points in 95 out of 100 cases.

The information gathered will:

- Guide City of Rogers Officials in implementing publicly accepted and sustainable funding sources.
- Provide an excellent baseline for the on-going planning efforts to increase the City's Park and Recreational opportunities
- Help guide this plan.

In the future the City of Rogers will continue to use quantitative surveys and public outreach methods that will help steer prioritization of projects and funding sources.

The following highlights the key findings.

### Community Ratings

Rogers residents are both pleased and satisfied with their community; in fact, positive quality of life ratings, favorable ratings of park and recreational facilities, positive value of city services, and high transparency ratings received good ratings.

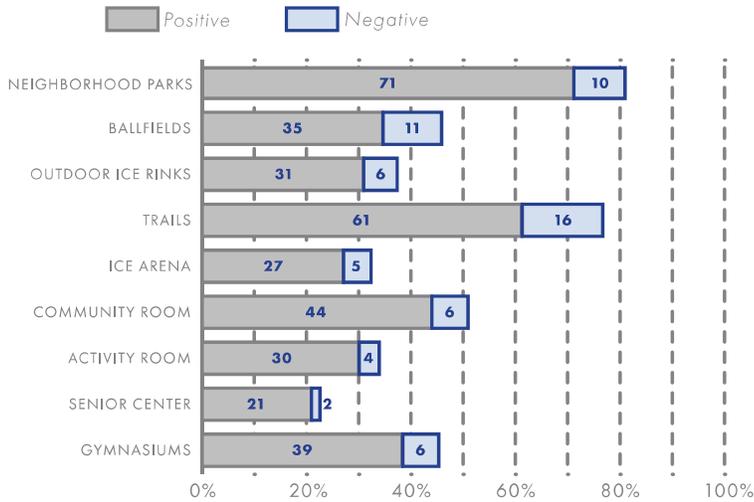
#### MOST VALUED COMMUNITY ASPECTS

- 1 SAFETY
- 2 SMALL TOWN FEEL
- 3 HOUSING STOCK

#### TOP COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- 1 HIGH TAXES
- 2 RISING CRIME
- 3 RAPID GROWTH  
*(Boosterism – the level of core support who see no serious issues currently facing the community – is twice the suburban norm, at 14%.)*

PARK USAGE AND RATINGS



**75%**

Consider park and recreation facilities to be either very important or important.

**81%**

Identically rate the importance of park and recreation facilities to the value of their home.

**86%**

Think the current mix of recreation or sports facilities meet the needs of members of their household.

**89%**

Think the current mix of sports leagues and recreational programs available by the City meet the needs of members of their household.

**21%**

Report household members regularly leave the city for recreational or sports facilities in another city.



PROPERTY TAX + SERVICE VALUES

**77%**

Of respondents to the survey indicated that their **perception** of property taxes within Rogers was either "very high" (39%) or "somewhat high" (38%).

**66%**

Of respondents stated that the value of city services are either "good" (49%) or "excellent" (17%).

**43%** ARE "MUCH MORE LIKELY" TO SUPPORT A SALES TAX INCREASE BECAUSE IT CAPTURES SALES TAX FROM CITY RESIDENTS AND ALSO FROM PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE CITY WHO MAKE PURCHASES IN ROGERS.

PREFERRED SOURCE OF FUNDING

(To use for development and expansion of park and recreation facilities)

**54%**

Reacted positively to an increased sales tax

**12%**

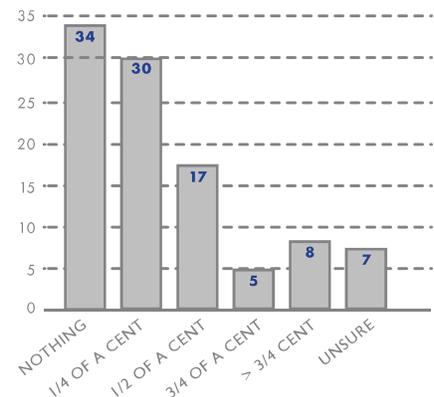
Reacted positively to a property tax increase



**26%**

Prefer no increase to either

WILLINGNESS TO RAISE SALES TAX



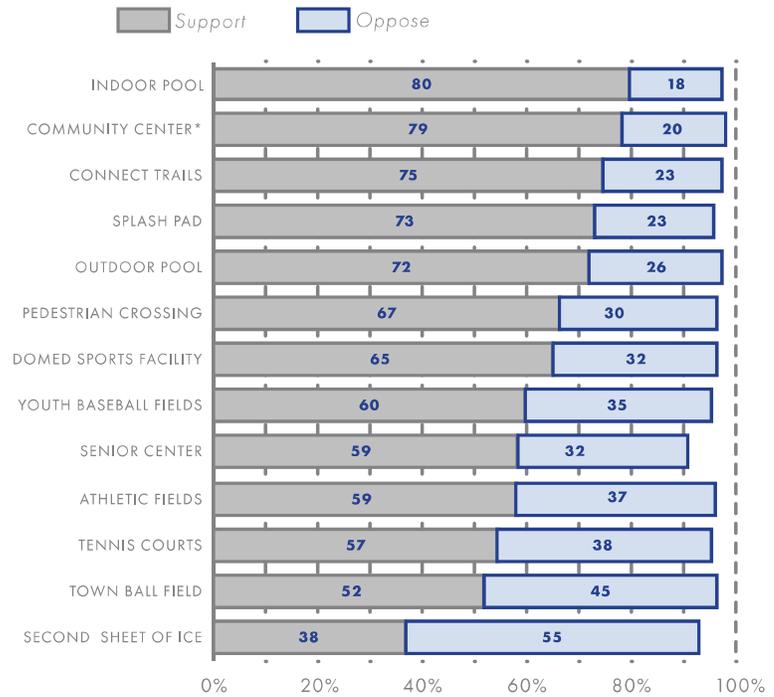
## BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Quality parks, along with schools and access to transportation, are typically the top three criteria people consider when choosing a place to live.

- ✓ **Health:** A healthy recreation and park system equals healthy residents. When people have access to parks, trails, and recreation, they exercise more. Increased exposure to natural areas has been linked to improved physical and mental health.
- ✓ **Cultural:** Parks preserve natural and cultural heritage, and significant natural features.
- ✓ **Social:** Parks also have important social benefits. Parks are often the focal points of neighborhoods. As places for neighborhood activities, celebrations, and informal interaction they provide places for community members to come together.
- ✓ **Natural Resources:** Parks and open space provide environmental benefits. Trees and vegetation found in parks, preserves, and open spaces improve air and water quality. These areas also play a role in managing stormwater runoff and protecting natural areas.
- ✓ **Property Values:** Parks and open space increase property values. Numerous studies show that proximity to parks, trails, and open spaces increases residential property values. Parks and open space can also positively affect commercial property and can be catalysts for redevelopment.
- ✓ **Beauty:** Parks contribute to aesthetics. Parkways, tree-lined streets, gardens, lush landscaped areas, views of rivers and lakes, stately woods, and public art are all things that make a city a beautiful place to live, work, play, and shop. They make essential contributions to a city's livability and vitality.

### SALES OR PROPERTY TAX INCREASE SUPPORT

(most to least supported components if a referendum was proposed)



\* The current population of Rogers is unable to sustainably fund the operational costs of a Community Center.

### Special Referendum

If a special referendum for parks and recreational facilities was proposed, 30% of the city residents would be projected to vote. Based on the outcome of the survey results the following constraints should be considered for such proposal to be successful:

- No property tax increase for these purposes would find sufficient support at the polls.
- 60% of likely voters would support a ¼ cent increase in the local sales tax for twenty years to fund construction.

At the outset of any referendum campaign, core opponents are more motivated to vote than core supporters. Both an aggressive grass roots persuasion and motivation campaign as well as a solid information campaign by the City will be required to convince sufficient persuadable voters to secure passage.

Note: Sales tax referendums must be held in general elections.

## GENERAL PARK AND TRAIL TRENDS INFLUENCING PLANNING OUTCOMES *(regional, state-wide, and national)*

Historically, residents of Minnesota support and value the parks and trails within the state and find them important to their quality of life. Satisfaction ratings of visitor experiences are high. However, outdoor recreation has seen a steady rate of decline since the 1990's, especially among young adults, and accommodating new trends is becoming increasingly important to bringing new populations to recreation areas. Like high quality design and experience, users are also expecting high service items such as programs that cater to children and the opportunity to rent equipment and attend special events when they visit these areas and facilities.

*MAINTAINING PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE A CORE CHALLENGE FACING ALL PARK AGENCIES .*

The following highlights barriers and challenges as well as offers potential solutions to maintaining and increasing participation.

PARTICIPATION BARRIERS & CHALLENGES	IDEAS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION
<p><b>"TECHNOLOGICAL RECREATION"</b> <i>(is taking over the larger percentages of youth (and adult) free time, diminishing the perceived time available to get outdoors)</i></p>	<p><b>BETTER QUALITY FACILITIES</b></p> <p><b>PROVIDE ATTRACTIVE AND QUALITY EXPERIENCE TRAILS</b> <i>(four values rising to the top: scenic quality, quietness/peacefulness, place for exercise, being away from motorized vehicles)</i></p>
<p><b>"VIRTUAL REALITY"</b> <i>(experience being used as a surrogate for real outdoor experiences )</i></p>	<p><b>LOWER ENTRY FEES FOR PARKS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES</b></p>
<p><b>TIME MANAGEMENT ISSUES</b></p>	<p><b>EXPAND PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES</b></p>
<p><b>LACK OF ADULT DESIRE</b> <i>((habit)to participate and lack of parents influencing children to play in the outdoors)</i></p>	<p><b>PROVIDE RELIABLE ACCESS TO WIFI</b></p>
<p><b>DESIRE FOR COMFORTS AND CONVENIENCES</b></p>	<p><b>REINFORCE THE VALUE OF THE OUTDOORS TO PARENTS</b></p>
<p><b>LACK OF TRANSPORTATION</b></p>	<p><b>INTEGRATE THE OUTDOORS IN SCHOOL CURRICULA</b></p>
<p><b>ENTRY FEES AND OTHER COSTS</b> <i>(like camping gear and specialized activity equipment)</i></p>	
<p><b>SAFETY CONCERNS</b> <i>(personal sense of security and worries about injury)</i></p>	

Source: *Recreational Trends and Themes, Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, 2016*

## KEY PLANNING THEMES TO ENHANCE AND INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

- ✓ Create Vibrant "Destination" Parks and Trails

*The setting and characteristics of a park or trail is important; design quality and attention to detail is also vital in taking full advantage of site opportunities. This will be especially critical when designing and planning for the development of key community parks, athletic facilities and trail connections within Rogers.*

- ✓ Novelty of the user experience will initially entice people to visit the park or trail; quality of experience will get them to return time and again

*All neighborhoods parks within Rogers should include a unique play feature, which prompts the initial visit, but the overall park, amenities, and experience must be of high quality for people to return.*

- ✓ Parks and trails must be well-positioned as a regional "cornerstone" amenity and an integral part of the larger local and regional public infrastructure

*Looking beyond the boundaries of Rogers is especially important when designing and planning for the development of key community parks, athletic facilities and trail connections within Rogers.*