



Chapter 6

Parks & Open Spaces



Introduction

Parks are essential to the quality of life for our community. The parks, open spaces and natural landscapes located here are individually unique and contribute to a healthy, active population and an aesthetically pleasing community. As we grow, it is essential that these treasured places continue to meet the needs of those that live and work here today and in 2040. Thus, our Parks and Open Space vision responds to the Rogers of today and anticipated growth to set forth the plan for the existing parks system, determine future acquisition and development of park land and recreational areas, and identify opportunities to protect and restore sensitive areas and valued natural resources.

A National Recreation and Parks Association survey found that 85 percent of Americans consider high-quality park and recreation amenities an appealing feature when they are choosing where to live. In Minnesota this is especially true. With the many recreational choices available to people, the quality of design, amenities and surroundings that offer life experiences are increasingly important factors for people when determining which parks to use and how frequently to use them. As a still developing community, Rogers has a unique opportunity to capitalize on its already diverse parks systems and abundant natural resources to provide the experiences desired, thereby becoming a more attractive and sustainable community as a result. Creating those experiences depend on the relationships between the built and natural environments to enrich our connection to these places and allow us opportunities to lead healthy, active lifestyles. The vision for our parks and open spaces is a balanced system of parks, athletic facilities and recreational programs within the context of responsible land stewardship, long-term sustainability and economic vitality.

Active Living

A community which promotes Active Living makes it easier for residents to integrate physical activity into their daily lives. Parks are a great investment that supports physical and emotional health. People are more likely to use facilities when they are easy to access. They are also more likely to use them for utilitarian purposes, such as walking or biking to a store, school, workplace, or restaurant, when these facilities are available and accessible and presented as an alternative option within the larger transportation network, connecting people to the places they want to go, including parks. Seizing opportunities to build and maintain a more inclusive parks and trails systems shall be important as the community grows overtime. For Rogers, encouraging more active lifestyles shall be simply based on addressing current, more tangible issues by removing barriers, such as filling gaps in the existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and making sure play structures are accessible by persons of all ages and physical abilities. In addition to a healthier population, promoting more active lifestyles positively benefits the community by supporting the local economy, reducing traffic congestion, bettering the air we breathe, and making more efficient use of our land resources by encouraging more compact development.

Current Parks System

Park and open space offerings for Rogers include 32 City parks occupying 601 acres, and the 2,188-acre Crow Hassan Park Reserve managed by Three Rivers Park District, totaling 2,783 acres of parks and open spaces. The Rogers parks system was developed with neighborhoods in mind. Attractive park facilities, natural areas and open spaces are located throughout the city to maximize the number of residents who are near a recreational area.

Table 6.1 describes the City's existing classification and size for each park. The location for each existing park and open space is shown **Figure 6.1**.



Table 6.1: Total Park & Open Space Acreage

Types of Parks	Acres
Local Parks (City)	601
Active Parks	452
Neighborhood Parks	127
Community Parks	69
Community Playfields	256
Passive & Special Use Parks	36
Forest Preservation Areas (City)	113
Three Rivers Park District Park	2,188
TOTAL	2,789

Park Classifications

The City has several different classifications of parks within the community, ranging from neighborhood and community parks to athletic facilities and the regional Crow Hassan Park Reserve, which allow for two principle forms of activities – active and passive. Each park in the system has been classified based on use opportunities and site amenities and are grouped into categories commonly used to identify similar spaces. Currently, there are 35 acres of parks and open spaces per 1,000 residents in Rogers.

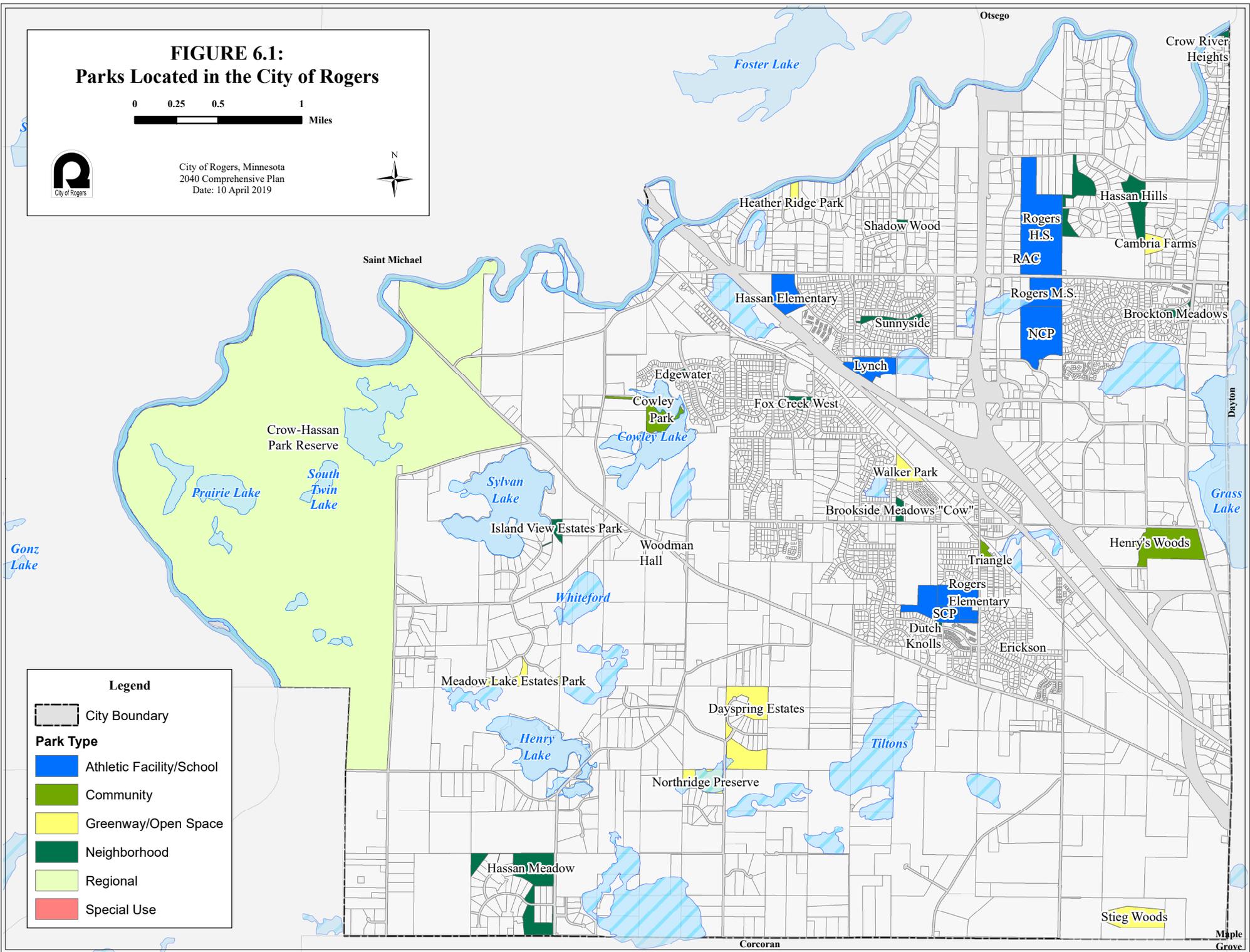
Table 6.2: Parks Classification & Acres

Classification & Parks	Acres	Classification & Parks	Acres
Neighborhood Parks		Athletic Facilities & Schools	
Brockton Meadows Park	3.6	Lynch Park	20.4
Brookside Meadows Park	3.9	North Community Park	50.7
Crow River Heights Park	1.1	South Community Park	26.8
Dutch Knolls Park	0.4	Hassan Elementary School	22.3
Edgewater Park	3.3	Rogers Elementary School	24.5
Erickson Park	1.0	Rogers Middle School	22.7
Fox Creek West Park	5.6	Rogers High School	89.0
Hassan Hills Park	42.8		
Hassan Meadows Park	47.6	Special Use	
Island View Estates Park	5.0	Rogers Activity Center	0.9
Shadow Woods Park	2.4		
Sunnyside Park	10.2	Greenway & Open Space	
Community Parks		Cambria Farms Park	9.1
Cowley Lake Park	17.4	Dayspring Estates Park	45.3
Henry Woods Park	45.9	Heather Ridge Park	5.9
Triangle Park	5.3	Meadow Lake Estates Park	13.2
		Northridge Park	20.0
		Walker Park	9.3

**FIGURE 6.1:
Parks Located in the City of Rogers**



City of Rogers, Minnesota
2040 Comprehensive Plan
Date: 10 April 2019



Legend

- City Boundary
- Park Type**
- Athletic Facility/School
- Community
- Greenway/Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Regional
- Special Use



Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks serve the recreational needs of individual neighborhoods, as well as provide places for local social networks close to home. These parks should have amenities that appeal to a variety of people and interests, yet should not be extensively programmed so that they do not take away from their capacity to serve the day-to-day recreational needs of those living nearby. **Neighborhood Parks** should be no less than **three acres** – ideally **five to 10 acres** – and centrally located within the neighborhood they serve. Each park should be a balance between built environments and naturally occurring open spaces and natural areas. The internal sidewalks and trails systems should connect to the adjacent neighborhoods and larger City pedestrian and bicycle systems.

Community Parks

Community Parks typically serve a broader purpose than **Neighborhood Parks**. Their focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Amenities typically found in **Community Parks** are similar to **Neighborhood Parks**, but also include uses and facilities on a larger scale, such as: larger picnic shelters, enclosed three- and four-seasons buildings, outdoor performance venues and special use facilities; outdoor winter activities and water play features; outdoor learning and educational opportunities; and more extensive trails systems.

Special Use Areas & Facilities

Special Use Areas and Facilities are places of variable sizes and locations for which standards are sometimes difficult to formulate and are typically dependent on the specific uses. They could include athletic facilities, lake access, greenways, trails, and any other facilities.

Athletic Facilities

Current and future **Athletic Facilities** rely heavily on ongoing collaboration between the City and School District to fulfill recreational needs within the community. Currently, some of the athletic fields are utilized jointly by both community recreational groups and School District. Due to a large amount of economic development in the region, the School District may be expanding in the near future and relocating fields closer to the school campuses. These are opportunities for the City to develop new athletic fields or re-purpose current sites for other recreational uses.

Regional Parks

The Crow-Hassan Park Reserve, owned and operated by Three Rivers Park District, is the only **Regional Park** within the City of Rogers. This Park is located along the Crow River on the west side of the City. At approximately 2,600 acres total, which includes acreage within the City of Hanover, the space is defined by the large uninterrupted native landscapes. With 600 acres of restored prairies the Park Reserve is an outstanding place for enjoying the wilderness and solitude and viewing wildlife. Deer, fox, coyotes, trumpeter swans, hawks and bald eagles are frequently spotted from the many miles of naturally surfaced trails. The Park District is currently working on a master plan for the Park Reserve. The City of Rogers is exploring a “Sister Park” concept in collaboration with the Park District that would create opportunities for more active play and recreation, adjacent to the more passive recreation opportunities found at the Park Reserve.



Greenway System & Natural Areas

The Greenway System and Natural Areas envisioned as part of the 2040 vision relate to undeveloped areas within the City. Setting aside some portion of these lands as development occurs for open space preservation and trail corridors was a major goal of the 2007 Parks System Plan and continues to be a major goal today. Within the current city limits, the opportunity to set aside land for open space is relatively limited. The identified greenway system consists of a mix of publicly-owned and privately-owned lands that would be perpetually preserved as natural open space, likely through the use of conservation easements negotiated with developers and landowners as development occurs, or land dedicated or acquired via park dedication.

Table 6.3: Rogers Park Amenities Information

Parks	Baseball/Softball	Basketball	Canoe Launch	Cross Country Skiing	Frisbee Golf	Gardens	Handicapped Play Area	Trails	Tennis Courts	Hockey	Ice Skating	Natural Area	Picnic Area	Playground	Rental Facilities	Restrooms	Sledding Hill	Soccer/ Football	Volleyball Court
Brockton Meadows								●					●	●		●			
Brookside Meadows		●						●				●	●	●		●			
Cambria Farms								●				●					●		
Crow Hassan Reserve			●	●				●				●	●		●	●			
Crow River Heights												●	●	●					●
Dayspring Estates								●				●							
Dutch Knolls													●	●					
Edgewater							●	●				●		●					
Erickson							●					●		●					
Fox Creek West	●							●					●	●		●			
Hassan Elementary	●	●				●								●		●	●	●	
Hassan Hills								●				●	●	●		●			
Hassan Meadow	●	●			●			●				●	●		●	●			
Henry's Woods						●		●				●	●						
Lynch Park	●							●				●				●		●	
North Community Park	●							●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rogers Activity Center										●	●				●	●			
Rogers Middle School	●	●						●	●							●		●	
Rogers High School	●							●							●	●		●	
Shadow Wood												●							
Sunnyside													●	●		●			
Triangle Park	●	●				●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●			



Recreation & Recreational Programming

Rogers manages more than 325 recreation and senior programs and community events each year with more than 3,500 individual participants. In addition, many more people utilize the Rogers Activity Center for activities. Recreational programming includes:

Table 6.4: Recreation Programs

Recreation Programs		
Entertainment in the Park	Adopt-A-Park	Breakaway Hockey
Movie at Dusk	Farmers Market	Mite Jamboree
Family Fun Night	Community Garden	Learn to Skate
Playground Program	Senior Programs	Glow N Skate
Minnesota Twins Baseball Clinic	Senior Dining	Skate with Santa
Softball Leagues	Middle School End of Year Party	Teen Loft Events

Local Trails System

Trails, sidewalks and bikeways enhance the quality of life for Rogers residents by providing recreational, fitness, and transportation opportunities for multiple users, including walkers, cyclists and in-line skaters. The local trail system plan plus regional and county trail plans provide a cohesive, networked system for the community.

Local sidewalks and trails form the backbone of the larger system, connecting neighborhoods to commercial areas, adjoining communities, regional parks, and other types of facilities in the trail system. Rogers has 26.6 miles of sidewalks and 15.4 miles of off-street trails. It does not currently have existing on-street bikeways. The Trails System Plan for Rogers identifies 22.1 miles of off-street trails and 5.7 miles of planned on-street local bikeways.

Hennepin County currently has over 2.5 miles of on-street bike facilities in Rogers, and has more planned facilities identified in the Hennepin County 2040 Bicycle Transportation Plan, including 11 miles of off-street bikeways. Efforts to provide regional trails is led by Three Rivers Park District in collaborate with the City and other agencies. Two approved regional trail master plans are approved for Rogers – Crow River Regional Trail and Rush Creek Regional Trail. The Rush Creek trail currently links the Elm Creek Park Reserve to Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park and is planned for eventual expansion to Crow-Hassan Park Reserve. The Crow River Regional Trail has a proposed route that stretches from the Luce Line State Trail in Watertown Township, through Rogers, and over to the West Mississippi River Regional Trail in Dayton.

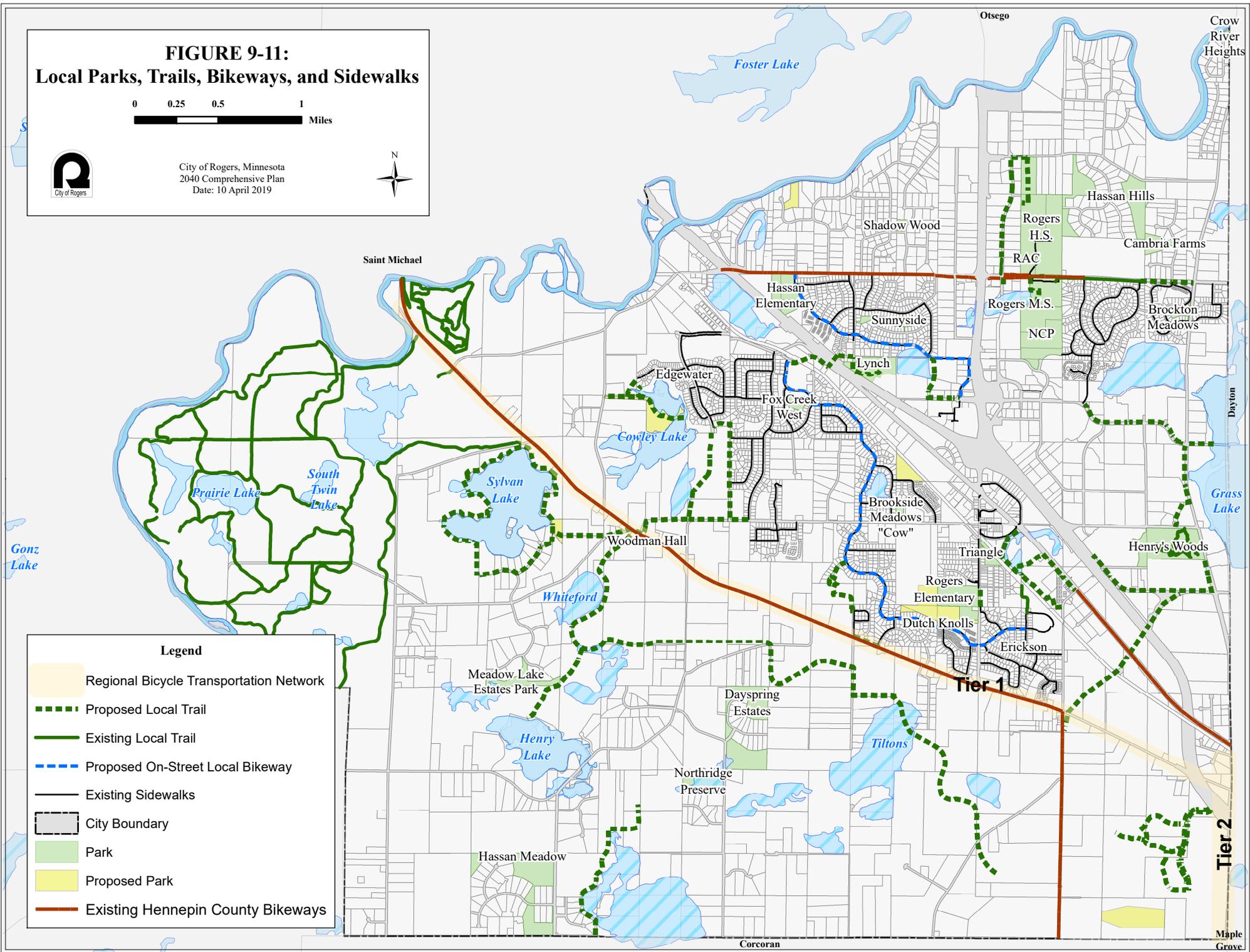
A 2014 community survey clearly identified trail system development as the top priority for Rogers residents. Trails, sidewalks and bikeways enhance the quality of life for residents by providing recreational, fitness, and transportation opportunities for multiple users, and users of any age and ability. The two most prevalent and underlying values of a successful trail system are safety and convenience. A growing subset of the population increasingly views trails as a transportation option for commuting to work or school. Thus, proper trail design and maintenance and proximity to trails themselves determine their use and recreational value and utilitarian purposes, such as errands, shopping or traveling between home and other local destinations. As the population ages and diversifies, and lifestyle preferences evolve and become more focused on the health and social benefits of active living, a value proposition facing Rogers is to invest in assets and amenities that make it a walkable, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly community, and will coordinate with regional partners. The [Transportation chapter](#) and [2017 Parks, Open Spaces and Trails System Plan](#) outlines the process for building out bicycle and pedestrian network in Rogers.

**FIGURE 9-11:
Local Parks, Trails, Bikeways, and Sidewalks**

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles



City of Rogers, Minnesota
2040 Comprehensive Plan
Date: 10 April 2019



Legend

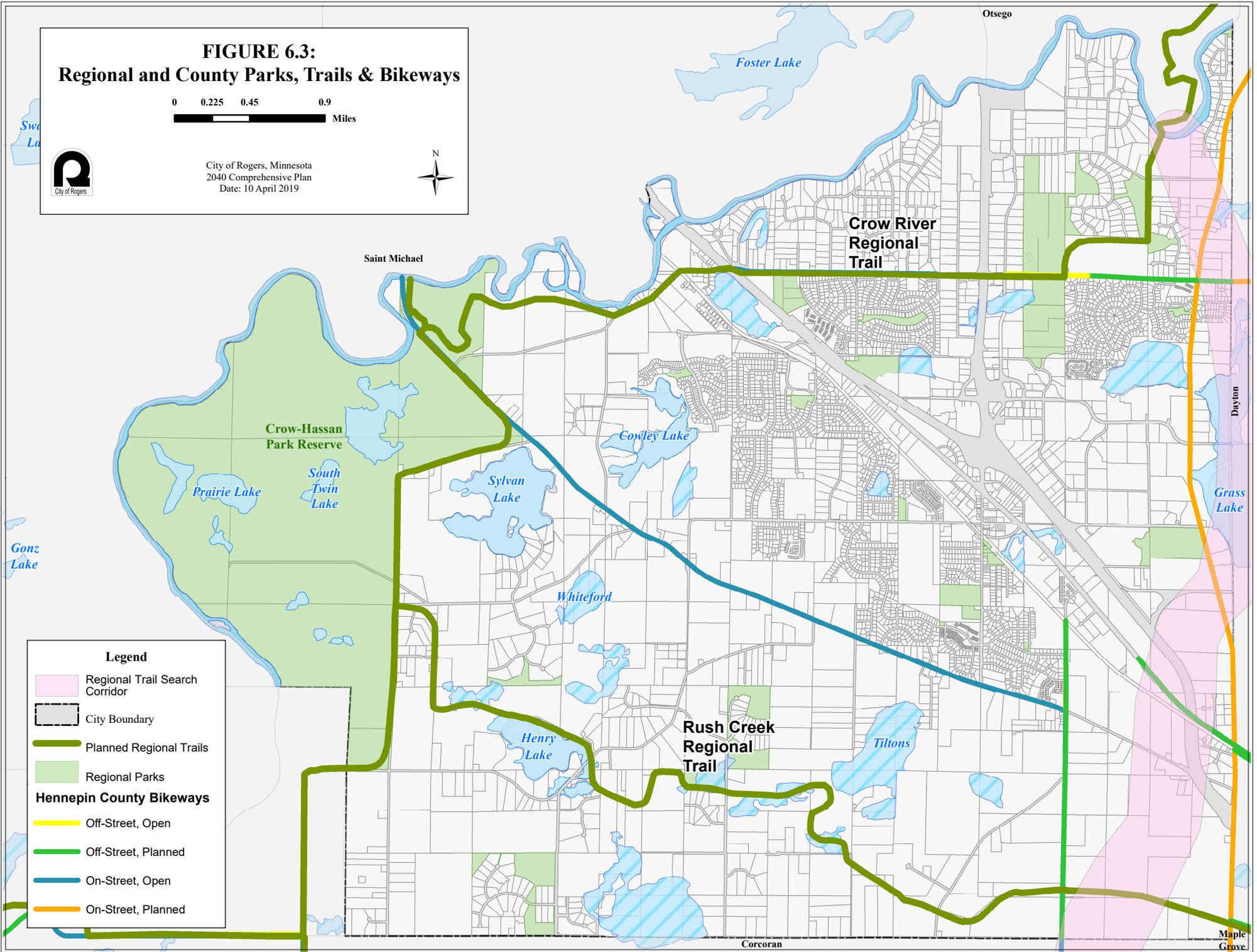
- Regional Bicycle Transportation Network
- Proposed Local Trail
- Existing Local Trail
- Proposed On-Street Local Bikeway
- Existing Sidewalks
- City Boundary
- Park
- Proposed Park
- Existing Hennepin County Bikeways

FIGURE 6.3:
Regional and County Parks, Trails & Bikeways

0 0.225 0.45 0.9
 Miles



City of Rogers, Minnesota
 2040 Comprehensive Plan
 Date: 10 April 2019



Legend

- Regional Trail Search Corridor
- City Boundary
- Planned Regional Trails
- Regional Parks
- Hennepin County Bikeways**
- Off-Street, Open
- Off-Street, Planned
- On-Street, Open
- On-Street, Planned



School District & Community Partnerships

The Rogers parks and recreation system and recreational and community event programming is intrinsically interconnected with the School District, Community Education and many of the community groups and organizations. The partnership with the School District, specifically, has included cooperation on land acquisition, development, and operations and maintenance of various athletic facility sites. Continuing this relationship remains important to reduce duplication of services, leverage funding, and maximize the efficient use of land and funding resources to meet current and long-term community needs. Continued success of this partnership relies on formalizing the commitments and responsibilities of each party through partnership agreements, which will become increasingly essential as both the City and School District reach their respective population and enrollment threshold. The City also partners with several other community organizations, such as the Rogers Lions Club, Rogers Rotary Club and several athletic youth associations to deliver recreational and athletic programs.

Natural Resource Management

The success of Rogers parks and recreation areas and programs to create experiences people seek depend on the continued health of the very ecosystems that strengthens the character and charm of the community. The 2017 Parks, Open Space and Trails System Plan sets forth Natural Resources Stewardship Plan that establishes a framework for community action and investment. The plan focuses on achieving a sustainable landscape quality through community education and involvement, public-private partnerships to preserve, restore and manage natural areas and wildlife habitats, and find balance between future development and resource protection.

Greenway: a strip of undeveloped land near an urban area that is set aside for recreation uses and protection of valuable environmental areas.

Greenways & Open Spaces

The abundant and diverse ecosystems and open spaces found in Rogers are evident in the 2040 Land Use map. Many of these areas are natural, others, such as park lands, for example, have emerged as the City developed overtime. These greenways logically follow a patchwork of wetlands, lakes and streams, floodplains, and large tracts of publicly- and privately-owned land that benefit humans, wildlife and native plants. These greenways create opportunities to connect the community between active and passive recreational areas, and between neighborhoods and employment and shopping centers. The 2017 Parks, Open Spaces and Trails System Plan has identified a greenway corridor stretching across the southern portion of the community. The greenway route proposes a mix of existing natural areas and current City-owned park lands and private property to not only protect valuable habitat and the historic native landscapes, but also capture the essence of the community context to create a truly unique experience for Rogers and within the Twin Cities metropolitan area.