



Chapter Three

# Needs and Demands Analysis

Chapter 3

**CHAPTER 3  
NEEDS AND DEMANDS ANALYSIS**

---

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>OVERVIEW .....</b>   | <b>3-1</b>  |
| <b>RECREATIONAL DEMAND ASSESSMENT .....</b>                               | <b>3-1</b>  |
| Recreational Demand Assessment Methodology .....                          | 3-1         |
| Recreation Demand – Metro Twin Cities .....                               | 3-2         |
| Recreation Demand – City of Eden Prairie Data .....                       | 3-4         |
| Community Forum – October 2000.....                                       | 3-4         |
| Community Wide Survey – January 2001 .....                                | 3-12        |
| Survey of Athletic Association Presidents (2001).....                     | 3-14        |
| Athletic Association Task Force (2002) .....                              | 3-14        |
| <b>PARK CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS .....</b>                                | <b>3-16</b> |
| <b>EVALUATION OF NEEDS.....</b>   | <b>3-16</b> |
| Needs Update .....  | 3-16        |
| Evaluation of Parkland Needs.....   | 3-16        |
| Comparison of Existing Parkland to Accepted Standards .....               | 3-16        |
| Development and New Acquisition .....                                     | 3-18        |
| Summary of Parkland Needs .....   | 3-22        |
| Park Service Areas.....   | 3-22        |
| Evaluation of Facilities Needs .....                                      | 3-24        |
| Comparison of Existing Facilities to Accepted Standards.....              | 3-24        |
| Comparison of Eden Prairie Facilities to Similar Second Tier Suburbs..... | 3-24        |
| Trends in Participation Rates of Athletic Teams .....                     | 3-28        |
| Special Facilities .....  | 3-33        |
| Natural Resource Preservation.....  | 3-39        |
| Needs and Demands.....  | 3-39        |
| Support Facilities .....  | 3-39        |
| Conservation Area Management Plans.....                                   | 3-40        |
| <b>CHAPTER SUMMARY.....</b>   | <b>3-42</b> |

## **CHAPTER 3 NEEDS AND DEMANDS ANALYSIS**

---

### **OVERVIEW**

Eden Prairie has grown rapidly over the last 20 years. This rapid growth poses challenges to meet the needs of the current and future residents. Eden Prairie has approximately 55,000 residents today and within 15 years will reach its ultimate growth of approximately 65,000. This chapter summarizes the needs, which currently exist in the community in 2001, and projected needs for the community over the next 20 years.

Understanding the current day needs and demands within the community assists City staff members as they anticipate what the future may bring. However, in addition to understanding current conditions, planners must incorporate projections and estimates of future needs and demands. Extending current trends forward to a future time frame is not necessarily the most accurate approach available to planners. For this reason, Chapter 9, Future Recreation Trends, should be read concurrently with Chapter 3, to understand the basis for policy recommendations made in Chapter 4, Policies.

A number of different techniques were used to analyze and document the park and open space needs within the community. The use of multiple techniques reinforces the needs analysis objectivity and emphasizes the conclusions established. This chapter summarizes the analysis completed, including a summary of Minnesota DNR SCORP data, a comparison to several other similar size second tier suburbs of the Metropolitan Area, public input through a community forum and community wide survey, neighborhood park service area analysis, and use trends on a per capita basis. A summary of each follows.

### **RECREATIONAL DEMAND ASSESSMENT**

#### **Recreational Demand Assessment Methodology**

The single most influential factor in the provision of recreation facilities is public demand, which is typically measured in two ways. The first approach measures the level of participation as a determinant of demand. This is normally accomplished by on-site observation surveys, the number of licenses granted or by user questionnaires. A second method of calculating public demand is to survey the public opinion as to whether additional recreation facilities are desired.

Recreational participation is influenced by two basic factors: age structure and geographic distribution of population. These factors are used to forecast near-term changes in participation patterns. Such societal trends as the aging of the baby-boom generation and the replacement of that generation by the baby-bust generation affect recreational activities. For example, in projected increases in statewide participation and recreational activities, highest increases for summer activities are projected for nature study/birdwatching. This activity has a relatively low participation rate among youthful age classes (younger than 54), including those that are expected to experience population decline. There is a high participation for nature/birdwatching from the older age group, including those forecasted to experience the largest increases in population.

In many cases, current participation data does not describe patterns among different ethnic groups; however, general trends noted in the population should be translated to the demographics of recreational participation, particularly in the Metro Area. For example, it is forecast that Minnesota's aging white population will grow by only 6 percent between 1990 and 2020, with births barely exceeding deaths between 2015 and 2020. The state's younger minority population, with higher birth rates and substantial immigration, which will nearly triple between 1990 and 2020, may have different interests and participation levels for specific recreational activities than traditional recreational participation trends indicate. As the state's population increases, three of every five new Minnesotans in the next 20 years will be persons of color, bringing the state's minority population from six percent to about 13 percent. Minority group numbers have been underrepresented in non-urban, resource-based outdoor recreation activities. While the interests and demands of these groups is unknown at the present time, assessing and meeting needs for this group will continue to be an important component of planning in the Metro Area.

In addition, the number of persons age 45 and older is projected to increase nearly 70 percent, but younger people in their 20s will not replace their elders in the same numbers nor in their interests as patrons of the local or regional parks system. Growth in the state's elderly population and the middle aging of the baby boom generation will push Minnesota's median age from 32.5 in 1990 to age 40 by 2020. Persons aged 55 and older will outnumber children in most Minnesota communities. Statewide, the number of children under age five is projected to decline by 11 percent by 2020. Aging will be especially pronounced outside of the emerging St. Cloud-Twin Cities-Rochester corridor. Recreation participation generally declines sharply with age, even though certain activities maintain a steady participation rate among older participants as among middle-aged participants.

Baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) are entering middle age and their leisure choices will influence recreation patterns. For example, nearly every community with slow pitch softball leagues has seen those leagues decline by as much as half between 1995 and 2000. This trend among young adults who are reducing their commitment to leagues that require an extensive time commitment on a regular basis over a long period of time is reflected in reduction in numbers of other adult leagues, as well.

As people enter middle and senior years, recreation time declines. Recent speculation suggests shifts in recreation preferences between boomers, prior generations and Generation X. All of this could translate into shifts in how people spend both their free time and leisure time. Such shifts have major implications for recreation management. More of the details related to these already occurring demographic shifts is discussed in Chapter 9, Future Recreation Trends.

### **Recreation Demand – Metro Twin Cities**

A 1995 survey conducted by the Metropolitan Council (General Population Leisure Interest Survey, briefing paper published July 25, 1996) evaluated interest in recreation by activity type throughout the seven county Metro Area, and related this data to interest expressed in a similar survey conducted in 1993. These results represented a sample of 5,400 households in the seven county area and the sample achieved a 64 percent response rate. This data was weighted by geographic area, household income and age group to create a more representative sample of the Twin Cities general population.

The results of the 1995 participation survey showed significant increases from 1993 responses for such activities as walking in natural areas and large parks. Informal bird watching and nature study also became more popular, gaining 13 percent in overall participation rates. Small increases in activities such as inline skating, skateboarding, swimming and cycling were also noted in these results. The list included in Table 3.1 below indicates that the top seven activities reflecting participation and interests are shared among approximately 30 percent of respondents. It is important to note that the survey was prepared by planners with an interest in use of regional parks: organized athletic activities were not generally included as part of the survey. The data accounts for a wide interest in these activities, but is silent on the question of how organized and sport-oriented recreation is perceived in the Metro Area.

**Table 3.1  
General Population Leisure Interest Survey (Top Eight Activities)**

| <b>Rank by<br/>1995 Response<br/>(Participation<br/>and Popularity)</b> | <b>Activity</b>                                  | <b>1995 Percent of<br/>Respondents Interested<br/>and Participated<br/>(last 12 months)</b> | <b>Change<br/>from<br/>1993<br/>results</b> |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1   | Walking in natural areas, large parks            | 57%   | 11%   |
| 2   | Picnicking                                       | 52%   | -7%   |
| 3   | Visiting zoos                                    | 49%   | -3%   |
| 4   | Visiting public gardens, Arboretum, Conservatory | 39%   | -1%   |
| 5   | Swimming or sunbathing at beach                  | 35%   | -9%   |
| 6   | Informal bird watching, nature study             | 35%   | 13%   |
| 7   | Camping  | 33%   | 1%  |
| 8   | Fishing  | 29%   | -7%   |

Source: Metropolitan Council, July 25, 1996.

Projections for future metro level recreational demand were created for 2020 and 2050. This data was assembled in the System Analysis of the Regional Recreation Open Space System, prepared by the Metropolitan Council in October of 2001. While it should be noted that the projections generated are based on a regional model created at a national scale, the data is incomplete, given the absence of Census 2000 data for the Metro Area at the time it was developed; however, the model's results assist in understanding what changes can be expected, once demographic, technology, environmental and management trends are accounted for. The model places a heavy emphasis on participation among all age groups for the activities listed here, given the high percentage rates proposed by 2050 even as the baby boomer population diminishes and the less numerous younger generations age.

**Table 3.2**  
**2020 and 2050 Metro Level Recreation Demand Analysis**

| Activity                       | 1995 Actual Participation Rate (Percent) | 2020 Projected Participation Rate (Percent) | 2050 Projected Participation Rate (Percent) |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Walking                        | 72                                       | 83  | 96  |
| Sightseeing                    | 61                                       | 75  | 92  |
| Hiking                         | 57                                       | 63  | 75  |
| Visiting historic places       | 50                                       | 60  | 80  |
| Picnicking                     | 52                                       | 60  | 70  |
| Non-consumptive wildlife       | 40                                       | 48  | 56  |
| Visiting a beach or waterslide | 35                                       | 41  | 51  |
| Non-pool swimming              | 35                                       | 41  | 53  |
| Biking                         | 34                                       | 40  | 54  |
| Developed camping              | 33                                       | 34  | 36  |
| Primitive camping              | 33                                       | 32  | 28  |
| Fishing                        | 29                                       | 32  | 37  |
| Backpacking                    | 29                                       | 29  | 27  |
| Motorboating                   | 23                                       | 26  | 32  |
| Non-motorized boating          | 19                                       | 21  | 28  |
| Cross-country skiing           | 12                                       | 15  | 23  |
| Snowmobiling                   | 10                                       | 11  | 12  |
| Horseback riding               | 6  | 7   | 9   |

Source: Metropolitan Council, October 2001.

### **Recreation Demand – City of Eden Prairie Data**

Eden Prairie invested a significant level of effort and resources in surveying and engaging citizens about their hopes, desires and values for the continued quality of parks and open space facilities in the community. These methods form a strong basis for identifying needs within the community. Three principal tools were used to solicit information from Eden Prairie citizens. They were: a) an electronic brainstorming session focused on parks and open space needs (Community Forum 2000); b) a community wide written survey, following up on the brainstorming session (Worthland Worldwide 2001); and c) interviews with and a task force effort involving Athletic Association presidents/volunteers, to identify facility needs for organized recreational activities in the City. Each of these methods of collecting public input into decision-making is described below.

#### ***Community Forum – October 2000***

The City of Eden Prairie held a Community Forum in which it invited 100 randomly selected residents to spend four hours in an electronic brainstorming session answering questions relating to parks and open space needs. In conducting the Community Forum sessions, Eden Prairie

utilized the Advanced Strategy Lab (ASL) tools that support advanced electronic brainstorming in an anonymous and highly focused methodology. The ASL approach allowed participant groups in the range of 25 participants, all connected via laptop computers in a local area network for simultaneous responses, to key questions and prioritization of the responses.

The one-to-one ratio of laptop to participant allowed for simultaneous response from all participants and ensured an extremely high rate of participation. There were no “dominant voices,” and people generally had an opportunity to express open and extensive views.

There were 93 total participants in the combined four sessions, with a geographic dispersion among four primary age categories. The session participants in each group were as follows: ages 55 and older (26 participants), ages 45-54 (25 participants), ages 35-44 (24 participants), and ages 20-34 (18 participants).

Findings – Use of Parks and Recreation Services

Participants were asked to respond to a lengthy survey on their overall perceptions, usage and assessments of Eden Prairie parks and recreation services. Specific survey responses can be found in the individual session documents. Here are some highlights and observations from the consolidated services:

- Eighty percent (80%) of the participants responded that they were either somewhat informed or well informed about the Eden Prairie park system and facilities. The use rates as shown in Table 3.3 for various programs and facilities reflect this survey finding.
- A resounding 94 percent of the responding participants rate the overall park and recreation facilities, as good or excellent, 6 percent indicated fair, no one indicated poor.

**Table 3.3  
Facilities Use Levels, Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Services**

| Facility                         | Average Use Rate (all age groups) | 20-34 age group | 35-44 age group | 45-54 age group | 55+ age group |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Large parks (community parks)    | 93%                               | 100%            | 92%             | 88%             | 92%           |
| Small parks (neighborhood parks) | 65%                               | 83%             | 75%             | 52%             | 56%           |
| Outdoor Center                   | 31%                               | 11%             | 33%             | 36%             | 38%           |
| Community Center                 | 55%                               | 50%             | 75%             | 52%             | 44%           |
| Flying Cloud ballfields          | 26%                               | 11%             | 39%             | 32%             | 19%           |
| Senior Center                    | 10%                               | 0%              | 9%              | 0%              | 30%           |
| Staring Lake Amph.               | 55%                               | 44%             | 52%             | 56%             | 64%           |
| Trails                           | 89%                               | 94%             | 96%             | 92%             | 77%           |
| Beaches (Round/Riley)            | 40%                               | 50%             | 54%             | 32%             | 12%           |
| Beaches (Bryant)                 | 23%                               | 17%             | 42%             | 13%             | 12%           |

Source: Community Forum results, 2000

**Table 3.4**  
**Recreational Program Participation Rates**

| Facility                     | Participation Rate |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Community events             | 67%                |
| Arts programs                | 35%                |
| Youth athletic programs      | 34%                |
| Youth recreational programs  | 26%                |
| Family recreational programs | 23%                |
| Aquatic programs             | 16%                |
| Skating                      | 15%                |
| Adult athletic programs      | 10%                |
| Outdoor education and trips  | 9%                 |
| Adaptive programs            | 9%                 |
| Senior programs and services | 9%                 |

Source: Community Forum 2000 results

Level of Satisfaction with Eden Prairie Park Facilities and Recreation Services

Table 3.5 summarizes the level of satisfaction with various facilities on 1 to 10, low to high basis. Table 3.6 provides the same type of measurement for recreational programs and services, on a 1 to 10 scale.

**Table 3.5**  
**Satisfaction with Eden Prairie’s Parks and Facilities**  
**Scale of 1 – 10 (Low to High)**

| Facility                | Total | 20-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55+  |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Large parks             | 8.01  | 8.56  | 8.00  | 7.86  | 7.74 |
| Small parks             | 7.17  | 7.63  | 7.45  | 6.80  | 6.79 |
| Outdoor Center          | 6.86  | 6.17  | 7.00  | 6.64  | 7.31 |
| Community Center        | 6.78  | 7.09  | 7.22  | 6.93  | 5.79 |
| Flying Cloud ballfields | 5.88  | 6.29  | 5.79  | 5.67  | 5.90 |
| Senior Center           | 5.86  | N/A   | 6.33  | N/A   | 6.58 |
| Staring Lake Amph.      | 8.11  | 7.64  | 7.77  | 8.24  | 8.60 |
| Trails                  | 8.35  | 8.53  | 7.77  | 9.00  | 8.09 |
| Beaches (Round/Riley)   | 5.68  | 6.08  | 6.19  | 6.08  | 3.90 |

Source: Community Forum 2000 results

**Table 3.6**  
**Satisfaction With Eden Prairie’s Recreational Programs and Services**  
**Scale of 1-10 (Low to High)**

| <b>Program/Service</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>20-34</b> | <b>35-44</b> | <b>45-54</b> | <b>55+</b> |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Adaptive programs      | 6.44         | 5.50         | 7.25         | 6.75         | 6.33       |
| Adult athletic leagues | 5.61         | 6.88         | 4.60         | 5.80         | 1.00       |
| Youth athletics        | 7.71         | 6.75         | 8.58         | 7.89         | 5.00       |
| Senior programs        | 5.76         | 4.67         | N/A          | N/A          | 7.30       |
| Youth programs         | 7.64         | 7.40         | 8.27         | 7.17         | 7.00       |
| Family programs        | 7.38         | 7.88         | 8.00         | 6.17         | N/A        |
| Arts programs          | 7.97         | 7.50         | 7.90         | 8.50         | 7.56       |
| Community events       | 7.95         | 8.50         | 7.94         | 7.92         | 7.50       |
| Outdoor education      | 6.17         | 5.33         | 7.83         | 4.60         | 6.25       |
| Aquatic programs       | 5.90         | 6.40         | 6.83         | 5.17         | 4.67       |
| Skating programs       | 6.50         | 7.29         | 6.33         | 5.40         | 7.00       |

Source: Community Forum 2000 results

### Open Space Needs

On the question of open space needs, as well as special use facilities, the response from Community Forum participants was broad ranging. Most (59 percent) believed that there will be sufficient open space in Eden Prairie when the City is fully developed. A large minority (38 percent) believed there would be too little open space once the City had achieved full development.

### Special Use Facilities

The brainstorming session also focused attention on the topic of special use facilities, and produced these findings:

Eighty percent (80%) of respondents believe the City should develop its own special use facilities, even if they are available in neighboring communities; however, 68 percent of respondents stated that the City should develop special use facilities in partnership with other cities to be able to provide these recreational services.

The preferences and priority for special facilities emerged as follows:

- 59% Golf course
- 51% Water park
- 44% Performing arts center
- 25% Third indoor ice rink
- 22% Split between community center; teen center; health club; more baseball and soccer fields; tennis courts

A few final survey questions were asked regarding the overall level of senior programs, teen programs, historical sites, and open space development.

- About 65 percent of the response indicated that there were sufficient programs and services of seniors in Eden Prairie.
- About 65 percent of the response also indicated that there were sufficient programs for teens.

#### Future Needs or Demands: Perceptions of Eden Prairie in the Year 2020

The following list represents some of the headline themes that were called out by participants, describing how Eden Prairie might change in the next 20 years.

- An expectation of increase traffic and congestion.
- Potential loss of open space and green areas.
- Expectation of increased businesses and community build out.
- Average age of our residents will be higher.
- A much more ethnically diverse population.
- A more defined and developed downtown.
- A distinction between neighborhoods on a socio-economic basis.
- A sense that we may look back more and value our history.
- A maturing park system, which has the potential for overuse.

What is clear is that Eden Prairie will get older and the overall diversity will increase and undoubtedly put a strain on the development of services and programs. Overall, though, Eden Prairie has some very unique things that may influence or guide its future:

- Having little land to develop is not a bad thing. What you see is what you get. There is some concern that we may not protect what we have.
- Affluence is not a bad thing. That means a highly educated base and a solid tax base, as well. Citizens will press for ongoing development of new services and programs.
- The perception is that Eden Prairie seems to be well run. The City has a well-utilized and regarded set of recreation services and programs.

With this unique set of factors, the City of Eden Prairie has an opportunity to become a leader in lifestyle, not just a leader in recreation or leisure services. This has the potential to become a significant attribute to attract and retain people who are committed to the quality attributes of Eden Prairie and are willing to pay for them. At the same time, if the City does not provide these, the affluent and well educated and older/wiser population will look for other options.

### Identification of Desired Services in 2010

The following responses describe priorities or desired services that the City should focus on up to 2010. Each of these were scored at least 7.0 of a maximum potential 10.0 by at least one of the four groups participating in the Community Forum:

- Focus on a coordinated transportation system that will allow easy access to the various services and venues offered by the City.
- A program of continuing education for seniors.
- Increased and improved hiking, walking, and biking trails.
- Programs that actively engage seniors into the community.
- Overall maintenance and upgrading of our park facilities.
- Increase affordable physical fitness facilities.
- More activities and support for teens.
- Upgrade the current Community Center.
- Development of more defined downtown.
- Focus on preserving and maintaining open spaces.
- Increase in bike lanes and their safety.
- Cleanup our current lakes and make them swimmable.
- More dining out alternatives (upscale – avoid fast food).
- Expand library and its services.
- City organized services to support the elderly and disabled.
- More City friendly walking.

Citizens of Eden Prairie values its parks and open spaces, trail systems, and quality of life. It also recognizes that the City must do more for a growing set of seniors and offer programs and facilities of interest to its youth. Developing the downtown look and feel is an important priority for the community.

### Implications of Eden Prairie Providing Identified Services

Other services were identified as desirable: on-line registration and information services, water parks, golf course, playhouses, etc. The participants were asked to respond with a statement about the possible implications if Eden Prairie is successful in providing identified services:

- New young families would be attracted because of the City's commitment to quality of life and attractive physical attributes.
- The open spaces, parks and trails become a centerpiece of the lifestyle and a statement of how important they are to our community and lifestyle.

- The price tag might be high in terms of taxes and cost, but it might also be well worth it in terms of preserving the lifestyle.
- The likelihood of families staying long-term in Eden Prairie increases.
- The image of the City would be raised to a higher level.
- It becomes very attractive for selective business development.
- The community would be a more active, healthy place to live.
- What you do for seniors in supporting their lifestyle and development you will get back in terms of their support and vitality in the community.

#### Elimination or Reduction of Current Services

An interesting question in the survey was whether participants could identify any services that could be reduced or eliminated. Overall, the majority of the participants were hard-pressed to take away any of the current services. The most frequently identified were as follows:

- Concern over the expansion of Flying Cloud Airport.
- Some of the youth programs have the potential to contract as the focus is shifted to a lesser number of youth residing in the City, and a greater number of aging citizens.
- Reduction in the number of limited or fast food restaurants
- Resources spent on maintaining swimming beaches might be better spent on the development of a water park.

#### Input on Four Critical Issues in Eden Prairie

One of the forum's most useful elements is the focus it brought to citizen discussions about four areas of interest for the parks and open space system. The comments that emerged around these issues are described below:

##### *Major City Center and Downtown Park*

- The City Center/Downtown Park (Purgatory Creek Recreation Area) could be a major destination for a variety of activities ranging from paddleboats to ice rinks to outdoor gardens, children play areas, and wildlife feeding.
- Aside from ongoing activities, the park could be a staging area for countless community events, concerts, 4th of July, holiday lights, winter festivals, Easter egg hunts, school events and parades.
- This park would distinguish itself with its landscaping, ponds, gardens, green space and general nature theme. The unique character of this place should avoid commercialism at all costs.

### *Flying Cloud Airport Buffer Property*

- The potential use of the Flying Cloud buffer space was outlined and one possibility for use as a public golf course was specifically listed. The majority of the participants would support the golf course and a multi-purpose special use facility if it included more than just a golf course, i.e., cross-country skiing, sledding, meeting room facilities, restaurant, ice skating rink, and mini golf course.
- If Eden Prairie decides to build a golf course, support for it would likely increase with more multi-use amenities, and an emphasis that it helps preserve open space.
- There is substantial support for pure open space, as well, along with some suggestions for more soccer fields, dog (off leash) parks and the like.

### *Improvements to the Community Center*

From the earlier perception survey, we know there is good usage of the Community Center and a reasonable good level of satisfaction. Incremental improvements would undoubtedly increase both usage and satisfaction. The Chaska Community Center seems to be viewed as the model. Suggestions included an indoor walking area, an improved weight room, more support for teen activities, rock climbing, tennis courts, improved locker area, pool, water park, sand volleyball courts, and an indoor golf driving range. The recommendation is for the City to look at model centers and then get survey feedback from the community on specific changes and new facilities. One of the key values described by Community Forum participants was for the City to become a leader in lifestyle choices. Recreation is a major element of this, therefore, the City should consider some services that are not the most popular, but keep a leading edge in appeal to a broad and diversified base.

### *Input on Historical Sites*

Input was gathered on specific programs that might be offered at the J.R. Cummins house, as well as the Riley-Jacques property. The majority of participants (73 percent) supported a lease arrangement as a method to generate additional revenue and defray costs incurred by historic properties yet still maintain control of the historic homes. A smaller majority (54 percent) reported that they would support a sale of these properties. Most agreed that they would support continued preservation and restoration of these historic sites through a public/private collaboration, less than 20 percent felt it was important to support preservation and restoration through tax dollar subsidies.

- For the J.R. Cummins house, suggestions included historical reenactments, holiday events, school programs, gift shop and restaurant, and art shows.
- For the Riley-Jacques property, the more rural and farm like aspect of the property was noted. Such ideas as a petting zoo, private events, such as weddings, summer plays, historical farm and coordination with school field trips and events.

## Final Perception Survey

The final activity for the response was a 28-question, electronic survey that combined the series of specific subject questions with an overall session feedback survey. Here are the highlights from that survey:

- Nearly 80 percent feel that the City should develop its own special use facilities, such as golf courses, indoor ice rinks, even when they are available in neighboring communities.
- Eighty-eight percent (88%) support the idea of developing such special use facilities partnerships with other cities to share costs, if possible.
- Sixty-two percent (62%) support the need for additional Community Center facilities. Aside from incremental improvements, the most noted facility improvement was to build an outdoor water park.
- The response was equally split whether to fund the Community Center via public/private partnership or simply via public funds and user fees.
- On the golf course proposition, the majority (68 percent) supports the golf course, and for those who want a golf course, the clear preference (85 percent) wants an 18-hole course. However, that same 85 percent would take a 9-hole course if it were the only option.
- On the issue on whether there is sufficient cultural and fine arts opportunities in Eden Prairie, a slight majority (61 percent) say that there is.

## ***Community Wide Survey – January 2001***

The City employed Worthland Worldwide, an independent opinion research company, to conduct a citywide household survey in January of 2001. The survey was a tool used to follow up on the comments and perspectives that emerged from the Community Forum exercise.

The general perceptions and preferences expressed in this survey establish a similar pattern as the trend that emerged among the Community Forum participants, yet the responding population for the survey was much larger and diverse than the Forum participants. The results of the mail in survey are as follows:

### Outdoor Swimming Pool Facilities

- Forty percent (40%) of the respondents preferred swimming in an outdoor pool compared to 32 percent who preferred a lake, and 78 percent of the respondents to the survey would strongly or somewhat support spending tax dollars to improve water quality at Round Lake.

### Municipal Golf Course

- Fifty-five percent (55%) of the respondents believe the City should have a municipal golf course and the same 55 percent would prefer an 18-hole course without a driving range, compared to a 9-hole course with a driving range.

### Senior Center

- Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents believe they would start participating in City sponsored senior programs between age 55 and 75. Only 44 percent believe they would start using those programs between age 55 and 65. The majority of respondents estimated that use of the facility would increase after the age of 65 years.
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of the respondents believe the facility serving seniors should be a multi-generational facility, and 32 percent believe the facility should provide programs and activities for only seniors. The perception that the Center should focus exclusively on seniors jumps to 49 percent when answered by people 55 and older.

### Community Center

- If the City were to expand/renovate the existing Community Center, 60 percent of the respondents believe the most important expansion would be an outdoor swimming pool. The second highest supported facility was a multi-purpose space for teens and youth activities, and other supported improvements included the following in order: better fitness facility, adequate parking, indoor basketball and volleyball courts, child care and a third rink.

### Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services

- Several facilities were strongly supported by the majority of the participants. They included the following: build an outdoor water park, develop an 18-hole golf course, develop more bike trails and nature trails, improve the water quality at Round Lake, expand or renovate the Community Center, and secure additional open space.
- Somewhat supported were the following: develop a nine-hole golf course, build an indoor water park, improve facilities for teens, expand or renovate the park system.
- Lesser support was shown for improving facilities for seniors, improving facilities for cultural and performing arts, renovating historic homes, and building more youth athletic fields.

### Summary of Survey Results

Based on the City Survey and the Community Forum, citizens in Eden Prairie want their community leaders and local government staff to: ensure that the City is protecting its natural resources; complete the trail system, make sure the existing park system does not deteriorate; evaluate the feasibility of an 18-hole golf course; provide expansion or improvements to the Community Center, including an outdoor water park; and provide facilities and programs for seniors as the community ages.

Citizens are supportive of development of a downtown park and the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area and expect that facilities will accommodate a variety of community events that attract people to the downtown area and sustain interest and vitality in Eden Prairie's urban center.

### ***Survey of Athletic Association Presidents (2001)***

The survey was completed by City staff, based on initial data obtained from youth and adult athletic associations, which typically report on program participation at fall appreciation events. The survey focused on actual participation in 1995 and 2001, and also asked association staff to project demand for recreation activities in 2005, 2010 and 2020. Finally, respondents were asked to describe the variables that affect participation rates in their sports.

The responses received indicate that very few associations anticipate much decrease in participation, and almost all representatives suggested that participation rates would be maintained at their current levels and in fact grow slightly in numbers over time. Some sports, such as football, and particularly soccer, expected large-scale participation increases over the next 10 to 20 years.

### ***Athletic Association Task Force (2002)***

This Task Force was formed by the City Council in March 2002. Its charge was to determine youth and adult athletic facility needs for the next 20 years and recommend to the City Council how this plan should be accomplished and funded. Membership on the Task Force consisted of members from associations, community education and a member representing citizens at large.

Two meetings of the Task Force were held in April 2002. The work of the Task Force focused on reviewing past, present and future data related to demographics and population growth. Members also reviewed participation rates for youth and adult sports over the last 10 years, and discussed influential variables that affected changes in participation over time. Their last meeting concluded with a discussion about projected needs and demands for recreation across all activity categories.

The findings of the Task Force work indicated that most of the athletic association organizations had optimistically projected future participation rates. In fact, the data collected from these representatives exceeded the total school enrollment population in consecutive years, starting in 2001 and continuing through 2020. This forecast contradicted the trend of declining school age population noted in 2000 Census age distribution data. The Task Force discussed these projections as a group and agreed that the participation estimates should be reduced on a case-by-case basis in order to arrive at a more conservative set of numbers that more accurately reflected the school age population.

The Task Force work did reveal a growth trend for participation increases in specific sports, understanding that the ability of some associations to use existing facilities effectively is constrained by recreational activities that compete for the same facilities, such as soccer, football and lacrosse. Members of the Task Force agreed that the following facilities are needed to meet projected participation trends:

- One regulation size (90 foot base) baseball field to accommodate the increasing number of players over the age of 14.

- Four, full-size regulation soccer fields (in addition to the two that are under construction at Crestwood Park in 2002). These fields are needed to serve the new lacrosse program, the continued growth of soccer and the strong football program.
- Field improvements to the existing baseball and soccer facilities were also called for.
- A citizens committee to evaluate swimming pool needs prior to committing tax dollars was identified as another key strategy in meeting future demands.

The need for additional facilities for youth programs, a third indoor skating rink and an outdoor pool was recognized by the Task Force. In light of the competing demands and the complexity of needs centered around each of these facilities, the Task Force recommended that the Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission, as well as the City Council, postpone any decisions on funding a major athletic or program facility until the completion of a pool feasibility study, perhaps in preparation for a referendum in the spring of 2003.

**Table 3.7**  
**Recreational Participation by Sport, 1995-2020**  
**Eden Prairie Athletic Association Task Force Findings**

|                           | 1995         | 2001          | 2005          | 2010          | 2020          |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| City Population           | 49,819       | 58,400        | 61,985        | 63,277        | 65,000        |
| School enrollment         | 9,242        | 10,438        | 10,248        | 10,150        | n/a           |
| Baseball association      | 2,100        | 1,800         | 1,800         | 1,800         | 1,800         |
| Boys basketball           | 1,000        | 1,300         | 1,300         | 1,300         | 1,300         |
| Girls basketball          | 880          | 1,100         | 1,100         | 1,050         | 1,000         |
| Girls softball            | 540          | 621           | 620           | 620           | 620           |
| Girls volleyball          | 190          | 375           | 375           | 375           | 375           |
| Football                  | 400          | 930           | 930           | 920           | 920           |
| Hockey*                   | 616          | 818           | 890           | 1,000         | 1,100         |
| Soccer Association**      | 900          | 2,225         | 2,300         | 2,300         | 2,300         |
| Soccer Club               | 345          | 690           | 708           | 700           | 700           |
| Foxjets (swimming)***     | 200          | 250           | 300           | 300           | 300           |
| Wrestling                 | 100          | 75            | 75            | 75            | 75            |
| Figure skating            | 135          | 145           | 150           | 160           | 175           |
| Girls lacrosse****        | N/A          | 100           | 330           | 330           | 300           |
| Boys lacrosse****         | N/A          | 120           | 400           | 380           | 380           |
| <b>Total Participants</b> | <b>7,406</b> | <b>10,549</b> | <b>11,278</b> | <b>11,310</b> | <b>11,345</b> |

\* Hockey shows increase based on approved third rink.

\*\* Soccer Association anticipates percentage of kids playing will increase for 5-10 more years.

\*\*\* Foxjets predict no increases unless new outdoor pool is provided. Increases shown anticipate new pool.

\*\*\*\* Lacrosse can only guess at where interest in their new sport will end.

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

Significant changes in recreational demands and interests are expected over the next 10 to 20 years. It is important for the City to be able to respond to change as it emerges, to propose initiatives and establish a process for decision-making and long-range planning that involves the community and informs key City decision-makers of preferences and priorities. The Task Force model, charged with specific and focused responsibilities, is a good example of one of these tools.

## **PARK CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS**

Eden Prairie's Park system consists of a hierarchy of park and open space elements. These elements include mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community athletic fields, community parks, historic sites, special use sites, and conservation areas. The community's pedestrian and bicycle trails should link these elements and function as the system's backbone.

These park standards are suggested to establish consistency and equality throughout the community's park and open space system. Their purpose is to establish guidelines for park development and redevelopment, such that community's various neighborhoods have equal recreational opportunities and access to the City's system. The standards should not limit individual park design creativity, nor should they dictate park organization. Deviations from standards may be appropriate where community input demands, such as where environmental constraints must be met. A detailed explanation of park standards is found in Chapter 2, Park Inventory.

## **EVALUATION OF NEEDS**

### **Needs Update**

This chapter examines park and open space needs from a variety of perspectives using a number of different techniques. Assumptions were required in some cases to carry out the methodology. The City of Eden Prairie, through its staff or appointed Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission, should review on a regular basis the projections, which have been made and the validity of each technique's assumptions. Monitoring these factors will provide an up-to-date statement of community needs and desires. Priorities for implementation can be reallocated on an annual basis due to this review.

### **Evaluation of Parkland Needs**

#### ***Comparison of Existing Parkland to Accepted Standards***

The City of Eden Prairie presently has approximately 1,058 acres of active use parkland. This figure is comprised of 27 acres of mini-parks, 468 acres of neighborhood parks, 546 acres of community parks and athletic fields, and 17 acres of historic sites and special use sites. The City anticipates acquiring another 135 acres of active use park acreage in the future to assemble an ultimate active park area of 1,193 acres.

**Table 3.8**  
**Gross Municipal Park Acreages by Park Classification**

| <b>Park Functional Classification</b> | <b>Existing Acreage</b> | <b>Proposed <sup>1</sup> Future Additions</b> | <b>Ultimate Acreage</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Mini-parks                            | 27.0                    | 0.0   | 27.0                    |
| Neighborhood parks                    | 467.9                   | 39.5  | 507.4                   |
| Community parks                       | 505.4                   | 60.0  | 565.4                   |
| Community athletic fields             | 41.0                    | 35.0  | 76.0                    |
| Historic sites                        | 14.3                    | --  | 14.3                    |
| Special use sites                     | 3.0                     | --  | 3.0                     |
| Conservation areas                    | 1,441.5                 | 209.3   | 1,650.8                 |
| <b>Totals</b>                         | <b>2,500.1</b>          | <b>343.8</b>                                  | <b>2,843.9</b>          |

<sup>1</sup> City staff recommendations

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

The City has acquired 1,442 acres of conservation land and is anticipating acquisition of an additional 209 acres, mainly along creek valleys and the bluffs. This will total 1,651 acres of conservation acres with a municipal park and open space system of 2,844 acres. This acreage does not include several hundred acres of privately owned land that has been protected by conservation easements.

**Table 3.9**  
**Gross Public and Quasi-Public Open Space Acreage in Eden Prairie**

| <b>Ownership</b>                            | <b>Existing Acreage</b> | <b>Proposed Future Additions</b> | <b>Ultimate Acreage</b> |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Three Rivers Park District                  | 448.0                   | --                               | 448.0                   |
| U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service               | 337.0                   | 1,416.0                          | 1,753.0                 |
| Department of Natural Resources State of MN | 0.9                     | --                               | 0.9                     |
| Metropolitan Airports Commission            | 696.5                   | 144.0                            | 840.5                   |
| School District 272                         | 199.0                   | --                               | 199.0                   |
| Hennepin County Vo-Tech                     | 102.0                   | --                               | 102.0                   |
| <b>Total Acres</b>                          | <b>1,783.4</b>          | <b>1,560.0</b>                   | <b>3,343.4</b>          |

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

These parcels plus municipal parkland totals 4,283.5 acres of existing open space land, and 6,187.3 acres of ultimate open space out of 22,594 acres in Eden Prairie. This amounts to 27 percent of the total community in public owned open space. If the 1,614 acres of lakes and 430 acres of wetland are added to the open space, over 36 percent of Eden Prairie will ultimately be in park and open space land. In addition to this land, there are three private golf courses and several homeowner's association parks not included in these acreages. This compares to a national goal of 10 percent park and open space in a well-preserved community.

Most of the expansion or new acquisition required corresponds to the City's programmed cycle of reinvestment in parks' facilities.

### ***Development and New Acquisition***

Little change is expected in terms of new land acquisition for mini-parks or most neighborhood parks, with the exception of Cedar Hills Park and Rice Marsh Lake Park. At the community park level, Birch Island Park will increase in size, adding approximately 37 acres. Smetana Lake will add approximately 15 acres and a small addition will be made to Staring Lake Park. The Flying Cloud Fields are anticipated to add approximately 35 acres. The greatest growth area in terms of expanded facilities is forecast for linear parks and conservancy areas, such as James A. Brown Conservation Area, Lower Purgatory Creek, the Minnesota River Conservation Area and Riley Creek Conservation Area. Smaller scale additions are anticipated at Birch Island Woods, Edenvale, Prairie Bluff, Purgatory Creek and the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area. This emphasis reflects an interest in preserving conservation areas in order to establish a network of green infrastructure and park, as well as recreational amenities in the community.

The usable active park acreage in Eden Prairie is effectively reduced due to a number of factors. First, the youth athletic complex situated adjacent to Flying Cloud Field is land leased on a short-term basis from the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC). The future of this parcel is never certain due to the 90 day lease agreement between the City and MAC; however, current airport expansion plans do not anticipate the use of this land in the next 20 years. Second, most neighborhood and community active park elements within Eden Prairie are reduced by the amount of wetland, steep slopes or other natural constraints abundant within the community.

**Table 3.10  
Existing and Future Park Acreage by Site**

|                           | <b>Developed/<br/>Active Acreage</b> | <b>Existing<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Future<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Mini-Parks</b>         |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 1. Bluffs West #1         | 1.2                                  | 1.2                         | —                         | 1.2          |
| 2. Bluffs West #2         | 1.6                                  | 1.6                         | —                         | 1.6          |
| 3. Edgewood               | 0.5                                  | 7.1                         | —                         | 7.1          |
| 4. High Trail Estates     | 1.3                                  | 1.3                         | —                         | 1.3          |
| 5. Holasek Hill           | 2.0                                  | 4.0                         | —                         | 4.0          |
| 6. Mitchell Point         | 0.0                                  | 1.7                         | —                         | 1.7          |
| 7. Overlook               | 0.5                                  | 6.3                         | —                         | 6.3          |
| 8. Sterling Field         | 1.9                                  | 1.9                         | —                         | 1.9          |
| 9. Topview                | 1.9                                  | 1.9                         | —                         | 1.9          |
| <b>Total Mini-Parks</b>   | <b>10.9</b>                          | <b>27.0</b>                 | <b>0.0</b>                | <b>27.0</b>  |
| <b>Neighborhood Parks</b> |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 1. Carmel                 | 4.3                                  | 14.8                        | —                         | 14.8         |
| 2. Cedar Hills            | 0.0                                  | 42.0                        | —                         | 42.0         |
| 3. Creekwood              | 6.0                                  | 25.9                        | —                         | 25.9         |
| 4. Crestwood              | 11.6                                 | 11.6                        | —                         | 11.6         |
| 5. Eden Lake              | 12.4                                 | 12.4                        | 24.5                      | 36.9         |

**Table 3.10**  
**Existing and Future Park Acreage by Site (continued)**

|   | <b>Developed/<br/>Active Acreage</b> | <b>Existing<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Future<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Neighborhood Parks (continued)</b>       |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 6. Eden Valley                              | 5.4                                  | 8.5                         | —                         | 8.5          |
| 7. Edenvale                                 | 9.0                                  | 9.0                         | —                         | 9.0          |
| 8. Forest Hills                             | 30.0                                 | 57.0                        | —                         | 57.0         |
| 9. Franlo                                   | 20.0                                 | 20.0                        | —                         | 20.0         |
| 10. Hidden Ponds                            | 15.0                                 | 39.2                        | —                         | 39.2         |
| 11. Homeward Hills                          | 16.0                                 | 41.0                        | —                         | 41.0         |
| 12. Nesbitt Preserve                        | 27.6                                 | 27.6                        | —                         | 27.6         |
| 13. Pheasant Woods                          | 15.0                                 | 15.0                        | —                         | 15.0         |
| 14. Pioneer Park                            | 22.2                                 | 29.2                        | —                         | 29.2         |
| 15. Prairie East                            | 4.0                                  | 10.2                        | —                         | 10.2         |
| 16. Prairie View                            | 8.6                                  | 8.6                         | —                         | 8.6          |
| 17. Red Rock Lake                           | 4.0                                  | 4.0                         | —                         | 4.0          |
| 18. Rice Marsh Lake                         | 20.1                                 | 35.1                        | 15.0                      | 50.1         |
| 19. Rustic Hills                            | 4.0                                  | 4.0                         | —                         | 4.0          |
| 20. Willow                                  | 7.3                                  | 42.0                        | —                         | 42.0         |
| 21. Wyndham Knoll                           | 8.0                                  | 10.8                        | —                         | 10.8         |
| <b>Total Neighborhood Parks</b>             | <b>250.5</b>                         | <b>467.9</b>                | <b>39.5</b>               | <b>507.4</b> |
| <b>Community Parks</b>                      |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 1. Birch Island                             | 3.0                                  | 28.3                        | 37.0                      | 65.3         |
| 2. Miller                                   | 103.7                                | 103.7                       | 2.0                       | 105.7        |
| 3. Riley Lake                               | 36.6                                 | 36.6                        | —                         | 36.6         |
| 4. Round Lake                               | 103.0                                | 103.0                       | —                         | 103.0        |
| 5. Smetana Lake                             | 5.0                                  | 46.4                        | 15.0                      | 61.4         |
| 6. Staring Lake                             | 68.7                                 | 187.4                       | 6.0                       | 193.4        |
| <b>Total Community Parks</b>                | <b>320.0</b>                         | <b>505.4</b>                | <b>60.0</b>               | <b>565.4</b> |
| <b>Community Athletic Fields</b>            |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 1. Flying Cloud Fields                      | 41.0                                 | 41.0                        | 35.0                      | 76.0         |
| <b>Total Community Athletic Fields</b>      | <b>41.0</b>                          | <b>41.0</b>                 | <b>35.0</b>               | <b>76.0</b>  |
| <b>Conservation Areas</b>                   |                                      |                             |                           |              |
| 1. Richard T. Anderson<br>Conservation Area | 3.0                                  | 121.0                       | 2.3                       | 123.3        |
| 2. Birch Island Woods<br>Conservation Area  | 1.0                                  | 31.6                        | 4.0                       | 35.6         |
| 3. James A. Brown Conservation Area         | —                                    | 76.7                        | 80.0                      | 156.7        |

**Table 3.10**  
**Existing and Future Park Acreage by Site (continued)**

|  | <b>Developed/<br/>Active Acreage</b> | <b>Existing<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Future<br/>Acreage</b> | <b>Total</b>   |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Conservation Areas (continued)</b>                              |                                      |                             |                           |                |
| 4. Cardinal Creek Conservation Area                                | —                                    | 38.2                        | —                         | 38.2           |
| 5. Edenbrook Conservation Area                                     | 0.5                                  | 237.1                       | —                         | 237.1          |
| 6. Edenvale Conservation Area                                      | 0.5                                  | 181.0                       | 10.0                      | 191.0          |
| 7. Lower Purgatory Creek Conservation Area                         | 0.5                                  | 119.2                       | 23.0                      | 142.2          |
| 8. Mitchell Marsh Conservation Area                                | 2.0                                  | 38.2                        | —                         | 38.2           |
| 9. Nine Mile Creek Conservation Area                               | 3.0                                  | 89.7                        | —                         | 89.7           |
| 10. Prairie Bluff Conservation Area                                | —                                    | 56.0                        | 10.0                      | 66.0           |
| 11. Purgatory Creek Recreation Area                                | 6.0                                  | 142.0                       | 18.0                      | 160.0          |
| 12. Red Rock Conservation Area                                     | 0.5                                  | 34.0                        | —                         | 34.0           |
| 13. Riley Creek Conservation Area                                  | —                                    | 61.8                        | 62.0                      | 123.8          |
| 14. Timber Creek Conservation Area                                 | —                                    | 70.0                        | —                         | 70.0           |
| 15. Westgate Conservation Area                                     | —                                    | 24.0                        | —                         | 24.0           |
| 16. Miscellaneous Conservation Parcels                             | —                                    | 121.0                       | —                         | 121.0          |
| <b>Total Conservation Areas</b>                                    | <b>17.5</b>                          | <b>1,441.5</b>              | <b>209.3</b>              | <b>1,650.8</b> |
| <b>Historic Sites</b>  |                                      |                             |                           |                |
| 1. J.R. Cummins Homestead  | 3.0                                  | 3.0                         | —                         | 3.0            |
| 2. Edenwood Center   | 7.5                                  | 7.5                         | —                         | 7.5            |
| 3. Fredrick-Miller Spring  | 0.1                                  | 0.1                         | —                         | 0.1            |
| 4. Riley-Jacques Homestead   | 2.0                                  | 2.0                         | —                         | 2.0            |
| 5. Smith-Douglas-More House  | 1.7                                  | 1.7                         | —                         | 1.7            |
| <b>Total Historic Sites</b>  | <b>14.3</b>                          | <b>14.3</b>                 | <b>0.0</b>                | <b>14.3</b>    |
| <b>Special Use Sites</b>   |                                      |                             |                           |                |
| 1. Community Center  | *                                    | *                           | —                         | —              |
| 2. Community Garden Plots (2)<br>(Pioneer Trail and Pioneer Park*) | 3.0                                  | 3.0                         | —                         | 3.0            |
| 3. Outdoor Center  | *                                    | *                           | —                         | —              |
| 4. Purgatory Creek Recreation Area Entry                           | *                                    | *                           | —                         | —              |
| 5. Senior Center   | *                                    | *                           | —                         | —              |
| <b>Total Special Use Sites</b>                                     | <b>3.0</b>                           | <b>3.0</b>                  | <b>0.0</b>                | <b>3.0</b>     |

\* Acreage included in parks

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

**Table 3.11**  
**Per Capita Park Acreage Standards**

|                   | <b>Existing Eden Prairie Standards<br/>Acres/1,000 Population</b> | <b>NRPA Standards<br/>Acres/1,000 population</b> |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Mini-park         | 0.49  | 0.25 – 0.50                                      |
| Neighborhood park | 7.60*   | 2.50 – 3.50                                      |
| Athletic field    | 0.75*   | 2.00 – 2.50                                      |
| Community park    | 8.00*   | 5.00 – 8.00                                      |
| <b>Totals</b>     | <b>16.84</b>  | <b>9.75 – 14.5</b>                               |

\* Neighborhood parks and community parks provide athletic fields within their acreage (range is designated as minimum to desirable).

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

National acreage standards by functional classification for park facilities are summarized in Table 3.12. The purpose of the standards is to provide a general comparison with national trends in community parkland area. The standards assume park parcels with minimal constraints and maximum active area use. Therefore, to obtain an accurate measure of usable parkland, the gross acreages in Eden Prairie’s active area parks must be reduced commensurate with their amount of actual usable area and future land control. For example, the gross active parkland citywide, which amounts to 1,058 acres, should be reduced by 41 acres to accommodate the MAC Flying Cloud property lease agreement. Furthermore, the gross area should be reduced by approximately 30 percent to compensate for the abundant physical constraints (steep slopes and wetlands) occurring within active park parcels. Other factors to consider are that Eden Prairie uses neighborhood parks and community parks to provide community playfields; therefore, the total acreage of neighborhood parks, athletic fields and community parks should be considered. Based upon these assumptions, Eden Prairie’s net usable parkland equals approximately 712 acres. This amount is consistent with the upper range of national standards for Eden Prairie’s existing population.

**Table 3.12**  
**Park Acreage Recommendation by Per Capita Standards**

| <b>Functional Classification</b> | <b>Ac./1,000 Population<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>2002 Actual Acreage</b> | <b>2002 Acreage<sup>1</sup> Needs</b> | <b>Ultimate Pop.<sup>2</sup> Needs</b> | <b>Additional Acreage Needed</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Mini-parks                       | 0.5                                     | 27.0                       | 27.5                                  | 32.5                                   | 5.0                              |
| Neighborhood parks               | 2.5 – 3.5                               | 467.9                      | 137.2 – 192.2                         | 162.5 – 227.5                          | 25.3 – 35.3                      |
| Athletic fields                  | 2.0 – 2.5                               | 41.0                       | 109.8 – 137.2                         | 130.0 – 162.5                          | 20.2 – 25.3                      |
| Community parks                  | 5.0 – 8.0                               | 505.4                      | 274.5 – 439.2                         | 325.0 – 520.0                          | 50.5 – 80.8                      |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                    | <b>8.0 – 14.5</b>                       | <b>1,041.3</b>             | <b>549.0 – 796.1</b>                  | <b>650.0 – 942.5</b>                   | <b>101.0 – 146.4</b>             |

<sup>1</sup> Based upon 2000 population of 54,900

<sup>2</sup> Based upon an ultimate population of 65,000

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

Based upon population projections and park acreage standards, year 2020 needs will range between a total of 650 and 942 acres. Once again, these projections assume park acreage, which are nearly 100 percent usable. Tabulations of park acres, which include undevelopable parcels, should be reduced previous to comparison to the national trends. Based on the useable acreage of 712 acres, the City will have sufficient land to meet the low end of the range if the City's population reaches a maximum of 65,000 residents.

### ***Summary of Parkland Needs***

In summary, Eden Prairie's active park facilities are adequate to meet the community's present needs based upon national trends. The City has established a strong neighborhood/community park system to which future additions can logically be made. The existing park parcels generally meet the needs of the existing population due to Eden Prairie's forethought in preserving parks consistent with development trends.

Today the remaining area of the City that is underserved by the City's parks system is the south central portion of the community. If Eden Prairie is to maintain its present quality of life and its level of park service, additional parkland must be acquired to develop a facility in this location. Most of the needed acquisition is underway as of 2002. The new neighborhood park, Cedar Hills Park, is expected to be developed by 2004.

Another area of the City that may see an emerging need for park space over the long term is the Golden Triangle area in the City's northeast quadrant. Historically, this area has been overwhelmingly non-residential, supporting office, manufacturing and light industrial activity. More residential development has occurred in the area in the last three to five years, creating demand for trails and other parks facilities. This need is likely to emerge in the short term as the area becomes more populated and the limited facilities offered at present day no longer satisfy residents' recreational interests.

Deferring property acquisition until the actual system-wide needs exist will cost the City both money and the ability to adequately service its constituency. Particularly with reference to large-scale recreation facilities, it may be necessary for the City to pursue alternative methods that meet its recreation demands. For instance, on the subject of additional athletic fields, the fact that steep terrain makes up the majority of the undeveloped portion of Eden Prairie, and that large acreages of flat land are needed to accommodate athletic fields, the only solution may be to lease additional land from MAC if the fields are needed. The FAA may discourage or not allow additional use of MAC property for "non aviation" use. The park plan assumes that MAC will lease 42 acres in the Cedar Hills neighborhood park and approximately 35 additional acres for expansion of the Flying Cloud Ballfield complex.

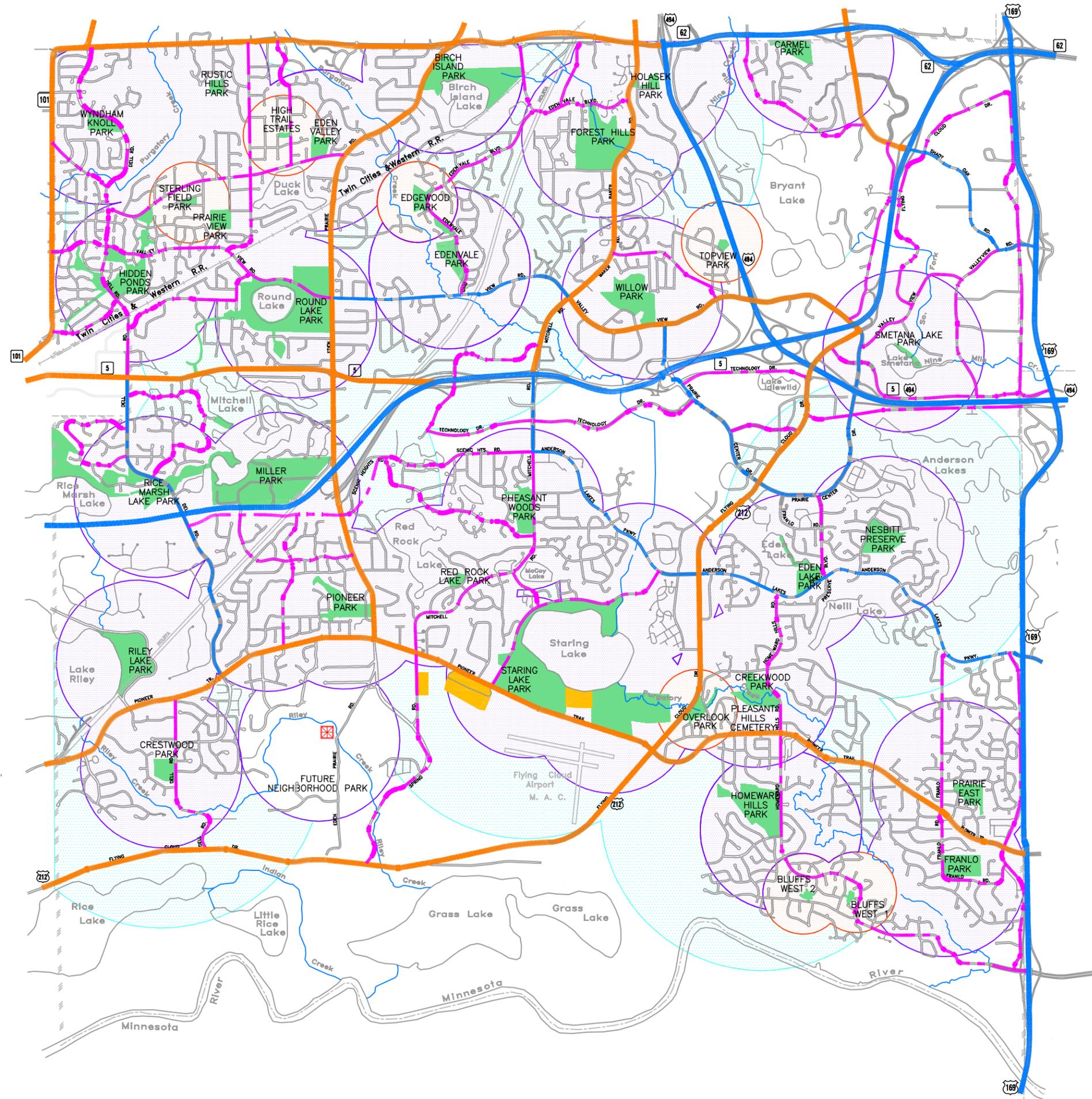
### ***Park Service Areas***

Eden Prairie has established a strong framework of neighborhood parks, which serve a vast majority of existing residential areas within the community. As summarized by the neighborhood park standards, these facilities should service a radius of approximately one-half mile uninterrupted by principal roadways or other major physical barriers. Figure 3.1, Park Service Areas depicts one-quarter, one-half mile and one-mile service areas. Principal roadways or major physical impediments, such as creek valleys, must be recognized as service area interruptions, and boundaries drawn accordingly to ensure access to park facilities.

# PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM PLAN

The City of  
*Eden Prairie*

Figure 3.1



## PARK SERVICE AREAS

-  1/4 Mile (Mini-Park)
-  1/2 Mile (Neighborhood Park)
-  1 Mile (Ice Skating)
-  Principal Arterial
-  Intermed. Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Collector

NORTH 



500 FT    1/2 MILE  
0    1000 FT    1 MILE

LAST UPDATED JANUARY 10, 2003

Based upon this analysis, most existing residential neighborhoods are adequately served by neighborhood park facilities. The south central area of the City, west of Flying Cloud Airport and south of County Road 1, requires a neighborhood park of 15 to 20 acres (11-12 useable acres) to attain Eden Prairie's standard of park service. The proposed Cedar Hills Park (42 acres) will meet this neighborhood need.

## **Evaluation of Facilities Needs**

### ***Comparison of Existing Facilities to Accepted Standards***

The use of standards in assessing recreation demand and level of service has both its strengths and weaknesses. On the positive side, standards can provide a ready rule of thumb for judging the overall adequacy of facilities and service. In addition, standards can help to promote an equitable distribution of facilities throughout the community and its members. On the negative side, standards tend to take a blanket approach and ignore local factors, which are unique to the community, thus missing the real issues. The use of standards should not imply uniformity among recreation areas. Rather, it is the variety and individuality of park areas that make them interesting and inviting places to relax, renew, and refresh oneself. Recreation is an experience, not just a facility. Standards are intended to stimulate thought, not substitute for it.

The issues that confront Eden Prairie policy and decision-makers regarding the use of standards is how the standards relate to community quality and to what extent the standards should be applied. It has been a policy decision in Eden Prairie to choose a quality of life and community service standard above the national norm. Community development standards, the school system and most community services are a higher level of quality than those in similar size communities. This higher level of quality is expected and often demanded by Eden Prairie's professional upper-income resident. Recent surveys indicate that residents appreciate this level of service and expect it to continue.

Table 3.12, Park Acreage Recommendation by Per Capita Standards, summarizes by activity the physical design standards, per capita recommendations and service radius specifically for parklands. These standards can be applied to existing conditions, but their real benefit is as a planning tool that establishes needs for future planning horizon years. Application of the standards will occur in subsequent analysis sections to reaffirm community trends or as a tool in guiding Eden Prairie decision-makers.

### ***Comparison of Eden Prairie Facilities to Similar Second Tier Suburbs***

An additional method to evaluate the need for athletic facilities is to compare the number of facilities provided per 1,000 residents in similar sized communities with a somewhat similar population structure in terms of income and age. Table 3.13 lists Eden Prairie's existing indoor and outdoor athletic facilities. Table 3.14 compares these facilities on a per capita basis to several other second tier suburbs, including: Plymouth, Eagan, Apple Valley, and Burnsville. (Includes Public School and City Facilities that are "unduplicated" i.e., not overlaid or shared).

The population in these suburban communities in year 2000 ranges from 47,425 to 85,172 with Eden Prairie's year 2000 population at 54,901. The comparisons indicate that Eden Prairie may be lacking in soccer/football fields, which justifies the premise supported by the growth indicated in Table 3.12. This survey also shows that Eden Prairie has comparable unlighted facilities, such as soccer fields and baseball fields, but fewer lighted facilities than these other communities. The explanation for fewer lighted facilities stems from the fact that the City has committed to a policy of only providing lighted athletic facilities at community parks, where the noise and the lights can be situated farther away from most residential units.

**Table 3.13**  
**Existing Indoor and Outdoor Athletic Facilities**

| Facility               | Softball / Baseball |   | Baseball 75-90' |    | Soccer/Football |    | Sand Volleyball |   | Indoor Volleyball |   | Outdoor Hockey Rinks |    | Indoor Hockey Rinks |   | Indoor Soccer/Football |   | Outdoor Basketball Courts |   | Indoor Basketball Courts |   | Tennis Courts |    | Indoor Pool |   | Outdoor Pool |   |   |
|------------------------|---------------------|---|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|---|-------------------|---|----------------------|----|---------------------|---|------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|---------------|----|-------------|---|--------------|---|---|
|                        | L                   | U | L               | U  | L               | U  | L               | U | L                 | U | L                    | U  | L                   | U | L                      | U | L                         | U | L                        | U | L             | U  | L           | U | L            | U |   |
| <b>CITY FACILITIES</b> |                     |   |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Carmel                 | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Community Center       |                     |   |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    | 2                   |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             | 1 |              | 1 | W |
| Creekwood              | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Crestwood              |                     |   |                 |    | --              | 2  | --              | 1 |                   |   | 1                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Eden Lake              | --                  | 2 | --              | 1  |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 6 |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Eden Valley            | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Edenvale               | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   | 1 | --                   |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Flying Cloud           | --                  | 7 | --              | 1  | --              | 26 |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Forest Hills           | --                  | 2 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   | 1                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Franlo                 | --                  | 1 | --              | 1  | --              | 2  |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Hidden Ponds           |                     |   | --              | 1  | --              | 1  |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Holasek Hill           |                     |   |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               | -- | 4           |   |              |   |   |
| Homeward Hills         | --                  | 1 |                 |    | --              | 1  | --              | 2 |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Miller                 | 4                   | 3 | 1               | -- | 3               | 2  |                 |   |                   |   | 1                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Nesbitt Preserve       | --                  | 2 |                 |    | --              | 4  | --              | 1 |                   |   | 1                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Pheasant Woods         | --                  | 1 |                 |    | --              | 1  |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Pioneer                |                     |   |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               | -- | 2           |   |              |   |   |
| Prairie East           | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               | -- | 2           |   |              |   |   |
| Prairie View           | --                  | 2 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   | 1                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   |               |    |             |   |              |   |   |
| Red Rock               |                     |   |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Rice Marsh Lake        | --                  | 1 |                 |    | --              | 1  |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Riley Lake             | --                  | 2 |                 |    |                 |    | --              | 4 |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Round Lake             | 2                   | 4 | --              | 1  |                 |    | --              | 2 |                   |   | 2                    | -- |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 8  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Rustic Hills           | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    | --              | 1 |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 2  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Staring Lake           | --                  | 2 | --              | 1  | --              | 1  | --              | 1 |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   | --                        | 1 |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |
| Sterling Field         | --                  | 1 |                 |    |                 |    |                 |   |                   |   |                      |    |                     |   |                        |   |                           |   |                          |   | --            | 1  |             |   |              |   |   |

**LEGEND:** L = Lighted U = Unlighted Ind = Indoor W = Wade

**Table 3.13  
Existing Indoor and Outdoor Athletic Facilities (continued)**

| Facility                                 | Softball / Baseball |           | Baseball 75-90' |           | Soccer/Football |           | Sand Volleyball |           | Indoor Volleyball |           | Outdoor Hockey Rinks |           | Indoor Hockey Rinks |           | Indoor Soccer/Football |           | Outdoor Basketball Courts |           | Indoor Basketball Courts |           | Tennis Courts |          | Indoor Pool |           | Outdoor Pool |           |
|--|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
|  | L                   | U         | L               | U         | L               | U         | L               | U         | L                 | U         | L                    | U         | L                   | U         | L                      | U         | L                         | U         | L                        | U         | L             | U        | L           | U         | L            | U         |
| Willow                                   |                     |           | --              | 1         |                 |           |                 |           |                   |           |                      |           |                     |           |                        |           | --                        | 1         |                          |           | --            | 2        |             |           |              |           |
| Wyndham Knoll                            | --                  | 1         |                 |           | --              | 1         |                 |           |                   |           |                      |           |                     |           |                        |           |                           |           |                          |           | --            | 2        |             |           |              |           |
| <b>Total: City Facilities</b>            | <b>6</b>            | <b>38</b> | <b>1</b>        | <b>7</b>  | <b>3</b>        | <b>42</b> | <b>--</b>       | <b>12</b> | <b>--</b>         | <b>8</b>  | <b>-</b>             | <b>2</b>  | <b>--</b>           | <b>--</b> | <b>23</b>              | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>                 | <b>44</b> | <b>1</b>                 | <b>1</b>  | <b>W</b>      |          |             |           |              |           |
| <b>EP SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>                |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           |                   |           |                      |           |                     |           |                        |           |                           |           |                          |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Eden Prairie High School                 |                     |           | --              | 1         | 1               | 5         |                 |           | 14                |           |                      | --        | 1                   |           |                        |           |                           |           | 9                        |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Eden Prairie Middle School               | --                  | 2         | --              | 1         | --              | 3         |                 |           | 5                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 3                        | --        | 8             |          |             |           |              |           |
| Oak Point Intermediate School            | --                  | 2         |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 4                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 2                        |           |               |          | 1           |           |              |           |
| Cedar Ridge Elementary                   | --                  | 2         |                 |           | --              | 1         |                 |           | 3                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 1                        |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Eden Lake Elementary                     |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 3                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 1                        |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Forest Hills Elementary                  |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 2                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 1                        |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Prairie View Elementary                  |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 3                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 1                        |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| <b>Total: School District Facilities</b> | <b>--</b>           | <b>6</b>  | <b>--</b>       | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b>        | <b>9</b>  | <b>--</b>       | <b>--</b> | <b>34</b>         | <b>--</b> | <b>-</b>             | <b>--</b> | <b>1</b>            | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>              | <b>18</b> | <b>--</b>                 | <b>8</b>  | <b>1</b>                 | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>     | <b>1</b> | <b>--</b>   | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>    | <b>--</b> |
| <b>PRIVATE FACILITIES</b>                |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           |                   |           |                      |           |                     |           |                        |           |                           |           |                          |           |               |          |             |           |              |           |
| Flagship Athletic Club                   |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 2                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 1                        | 10        | ind           | 1        | 1           | --        |              |           |
| Northwest Athletic Club                  |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           | 2                 |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           | 2                        | 4         | ind           | 1        | 1           | --        |              |           |
| Preserve Association                     |                     |           |                 |           |                 |           |                 |           |                   |           |                      | --        | --                  |           |                        |           |                           |           |                          | 4         | --            | --       | --          | 1         |              |           |
| <b>Total: Private Facilities</b>         | <b>--</b>           | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>       | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>       | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>       | <b>--</b> | <b>4</b>          | <b>--</b> | <b>-</b>             | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>           | <b>--</b> | <b>--</b>              | <b>3</b>  | <b>18</b>                 | <b>--</b> | <b>2</b>                 | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b>      | <b>1</b> | <b>--</b>   | <b>1</b>  | <b>--</b>    | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Grand Total (All Facilities)</b>      | <b>6</b>            | <b>44</b> | <b>1</b>        | <b>9</b>  | <b>4</b>        | <b>51</b> | <b>--</b>       | <b>12</b> | <b>38</b>         | <b>8</b>  | <b>-</b>             | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b>            | <b>--</b> | <b>23</b>              | <b>21</b> | <b>18</b>                 | <b>52</b> | <b>4</b>                 | <b>3</b>  | <b>1</b>      |          |             |           |              |           |

**LEGEND: L = Lighted U = Unlighted Ind = Indoor W = Wade**

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

**Table 3.14**  
**Comparison of Indoor and Outdoor Athletic Facilities (Public Facilities)**  
 Per 1,000 Population (2000 Population Estimates)

| Facilities/<br>population                       | Eden Prairie<br>population<br>54,910 | Plymouth<br>65,894 | Eagan<br>63,557 | Apple Valley<br>42,000 | Burnsville<br>60,220 | Edina<br>47,425 | NRA Standard<br>Per 1,000<br>population | Comments  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Unlighted fields multi-use<br>softball/baseball | 44<br>1/1,300                        | 31<br>1/2,100      | 52<br>1/2,000   | 46<br>1/900            | 67<br>1/900          | 15<br>1/3,200   | 1/5,000                                 | All surveyed communities<br>exceed national standards.  |
| Lighted fields multi-use<br>softball/baseball   | 6<br>1/9,200                         | 11<br>1/6,000      | 6<br>1/10,600   | 5<br>1/8,500           | 8<br>1/7,500         | 5<br>1/9,500    | N/A                                     |   |
| 75'-90' Baseball fields<br>unlighted            | 9<br>1/6,100                         | 3<br>1/22,000      | 8<br>1/8,000    | 7<br>1/6,000           | 5<br>1/12,000        | 5<br>1/9,500    | 1/5,000                                 | Eden Prairie would need two<br>additional fields to get to<br>1/5,000 population.   |
| 75'-90' Baseball fields<br>lighted              | 1<br>1/55,000                        | 5<br>1/13,000      | 2<br>1/32,000   | 1<br>1/42,000          | 3<br>1/20,000        | 2<br>1/24,000   | 1/15,000                                | Total Soccer Fields   |
| Jr. soccer/football fields                      | 36<br>1/1,500                        | 0<br>0/65,000      | 19<br>1/3,300   | 35<br>1/1,200          | 17<br>1/3,500        | 7<br>1/6,800    | 1/10,000                                | Eden Prairie 55 1/1,000<br>Plymouth 32 1/2,000  |
| Unlighted regulation<br>soccer/football fields  | 15<br>1/3,700                        | 19<br>1/3,500      | 16<br>1/4,000   | 23<br>1/1,800          | 45<br>1/1,300        | 6<br>1/8,000    | 1/10,000                                | Eagan 36 1/1,800<br>Apple Valley 61 1/700   |
| Lighted regulation<br>soccer/football fields    | 4<br>1/13,800                        | 13<br>1/5,000      | 1<br>1/63,000   | 3<br>1/14,000          | 5<br>1/12,000        | 4<br>1/12,000   | 1/20,000                                | Burnsville 67 1/900<br>Edina 17 1/2,800   |
| Sand volleyball courts                          | 12<br>1/4,600                        | 9<br>1/7,000       | 4<br>1/16,000   | 20<br>1/2,000          | 14<br>1/4,000        | 2<br>1/23,000   | 1/5,000                                 | There is no increased demand<br>for more courts.  |
| Outdoor hockey rinks                            | 8<br>1/6,900                         | 11<br>1/6,000      | 13<br>1/5,000   | 12<br>1/3,500          | 16<br>1/3,750        | 11<br>1/4,000   | 1/2,000                                 | The use of the facilities<br>continues to decrease.   |
| Indoor hockey rinks                             | 2<br>1/27,500                        | 2<br>1/33,000      | 2<br>1/32,000   | 2<br>1/21,000          | 2<br>1/30,000        | 3<br>1/16,000   | 1/15 min<br>travel<br>time              | The Hockey Association has<br>petitioned for a third rink.  |
| Outdoor pools                                   | 0<br>0/55,000                        | 1*<br>1/65,000     | 1<br>1/63,000   | 2<br>1/21,000          | 0<br>0/60,000        | 1<br>1/47,000   | 1/20,000                                | There are outdoor pools at<br>Flagship Athletic Club,<br>Northwest Athletic Club &<br>the Preserve.                                       |
| Indoor pools                                    | 2<br>1/27,500                        | 5**<br>1/13,000    | 3**<br>1/21,000 | 3<br>1/14,000          | 4<br>1/15,000        | 3<br>1/16,000   | N/A                                     | There are also indoor pools at<br>Flagship Athletic Club and<br>Northwest Athletic Club.  |
| Tennis courts                                   | 52<br>1/1,100                        | 47<br>1/1,400      | 28<br>1/2,300   | 44<br>1/1,000          | 51<br>1/1,200        | 36<br>1/1,300   | 1/2,000                                 | Eden Prairie has 18 private<br>tennis courts available<br>through Northwest Athletic<br>Club, Flagship Athletic Club<br>and the Preserve. |
| Indoor basketball gyms                          | 18<br>1/3,100                        | 34<br>1/1,900      | 14<br>1/4,600   | 28<br>1/1,500          | 16<br>1/3,750        | 16<br>1/3,000   | 1/5,000                                 | Six additional courts<br>available through Flagship<br>Athletic Club and Northwest<br>Athletic Club.                                      |
| Beaches   | 3                                    | 4                  | 1               | 0                      | 2                    | 0               |   |   |

\* Life Time Fitness(Public/Private)

\*\* Life Time Fitness & School District (Public/Private)

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

### ***Trends in Participation Rates of Athletic Teams***

During the 1980s and until the mid 1990s, Eden Prairie's adult athletic leagues and youth athletic associations witnessed rapid growth, and typically had a higher participate to population ratio than communities of similar population. This rapid growth rate was directly proportionate to the growth rate of the City, and the higher participate to population ratio was related to the relatively young age of the average family in Eden Prairie. Projecting future demands for facilities by future participants is a difficult task because of the variables involved and uncertainties in their assumptions. A methodology, which applies future population projections and established user trends, may provide the best indicator for facility needs.

This methodology is based upon a per capita ratio of user occasions (or teams) according to recreational activity. For example, trends established in the previous four or five years provide a per capita factor, which can indicate future facility use based upon assumed population projections.

The strength of the approach is its use of inherent community participation rates rather than national norms or those of other municipalities. However, its accuracy is contingent upon:

1. City population projections as they affect age classifications
2. Consistency in user participation through future users
3. Stability of Eden Prairie's private associations and the leadership of those associations
4. Continued City and School District support for providing and maintaining the City's youth and adult athletic facilities
5. The possible consequences of increased user fees
6. Policy changes pertaining to resident/non resident participation
7. The popularity and success of Twin Cities' area professional sport franchises, and the performance and success of national and Olympic teams, and local high school teams.

Projections for athletic participation in the years 2001 through 2010 were based upon the per capita participation rate approach. A summary of changes in participation rates follows.

**Table 3.15**  
**Trends in Participation Rates in Athletic Teams**

| Sport                 | 1995 # teams & # players/team   | 2000 # teams & # players /team  | 1995 teams per 1,000 residents | 2000 teams per 1,000 residents | General trend/1,000 residents |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Outdoor</b>        |   |   |                                |                                |                               |
| Youth Baseball        | 167 teams<br>12 players/team  | 158 teams<br>12 players/team  | 3.35                           | 2.90                           | 14% decline                   |
| Adult Baseball        | 2 teams<br>14 players/team  | 3 teams<br>14 players/team  | 0.04                           | 0.05                           | —                             |
| Youth Softball        | 48 teams<br>12 players/team   | 55 teams<br>12 players/team   | 0.96                           | 1.01                           | 5% increase                   |
| Adult Softball        | 301 teams<br>17 players/team  | 228 teams<br>17 players/team  | 6.04                           | 4.19                           | 31% decline                   |
| Youth Soccer          | In-house:<br>150 teams x 2 seasons<br>9 players/team<br>Travel: 32 teams<br>15 players/team | In-house: 267<br>teams x 2 seasons<br>9 players/team<br>Travel: 49 teams<br>15 players/team | 3.01/season                    | 4.90/season                    | 62% increase                  |
|                       |   |   | 0.64                           | 0.90                           | 41% increase                  |
| Adult Soccer          | 3 teams<br>14 players/team  | 4 teams<br>14 players/team  | 0.06                           | 0.07                           | —                             |
| Youth Football        | 22 teams<br>20 players/team   | 45 teams<br>20 players/team   | 0.44                           | 0.82                           | 86% increase                  |
| Adult Football        | 8 teams<br>14 players/team  | 23 teams<br>8 players/team  | 0.16                           | 0.42                           | 162% increase                 |
| Adult Broomball       | 30 teams<br>15 players/team   | 31 teams<br>15 players/team   | 0.60                           | 0.56                           | 7% decline                    |
| Adult Sand Volleyball | 73 teams<br>8 players/team  | 53 teams<br>8 players/team  | 1.46                           | 0.97                           | 34% decline                   |
| <b>Indoor</b>         |   |   |                                |                                |                               |
| Youth Basketball      | 52 girls teams<br>10 players/team<br>110 boys teams<br>10 players/team                      | 54 girls teams<br>10 players/team<br>130 boys teams<br>10 players/team                      | 1.04 girls                     | 0.99 girls                     | 8% increase                   |
|                       |   |   | 2.21 boys                      | 2.38 boys                      |                               |
| Adult Basketball      | 63 teams<br>10 players/team   | 50 teams<br>10 players/team   | 1.26                           | 0.91                           | 28% decline                   |
| Youth Volleyball      | 20 teams<br>10 players/team   | 20 teams<br>10 players/team   | 0.40                           | 0.36                           | 10% decline                   |
| Adult Volleyball      | 203 teams<br>12 players/team  | 188 teams<br>12 players/team  | 4.07                           | 3.45                           | 16% decline                   |
| Youth Hockey          | 54 teams<br>15 players/team   | 49 teams<br>15 players/team   | 1.08                           | 0.90                           | 17% decline                   |
| Foxjets               | 250 swimmers  | 265 swimmers  | 5.02 ind.                      | 4.87 ind                       | 3% decline                    |
| 2000 population       | 54,438  |   |                                |                                |                               |
| 1995 population       | 49,819  |   |                                |                                |                               |

Source: Athletic Association Reports at Annual City Recognition Banquet 1995 and 2001

This table indicates that youth soccer and youth football are the only youth sports showing a continued significant increase per capita over the last five years. Soccer has increased from 3.01 teams per 1,000 residents to nearly five teams per 1,000 residents, while football has doubled from 0.44 teams per 1,000 residents to 0.82 teams per 1,000 residents. These two sports must share the same fields during the fall, resulting in increased competition and physical impact on available fields.

Recently, the City staff has heard that several hundred young people in Eden Prairie are now playing lacrosse and a youth athletic association for that sport may be formed in the near future. These teams would compete with soccer for fields in the spring of the year. Considering these factors, the City may well have to consider developing as many new soccer/football fields as it can on existing parkland. The City may also want to consider renting additional land at the intersection of County Road 1 and Spring Road from the Metropolitan Airports Commission to develop more of these fields to meet additional needs as the City continues to grow. The high growth rate for sports such as soccer, lacrosse and football that use these fields constitute an identified need and consequently score high on the City's priorities for new and improved facilities.

#### Adult Softball Participation

Adult softball participation in Eden Prairie is divided into a number of leagues, including men's open, men's industrial, women's, coed/recreational, and church. Since 1995, the number of teams in these leagues has been declining, especially in the men's open league. City staff anticipates a loss of approximately 15 teams per year for at least the next few years. It is difficult to predict whether this trend will continue or reverse; however, City staff anticipates the trend to continue for the next few years and then probably level off. Staff anticipates that within five years all adult softball leagues could be accommodated on fields 1-4 at Round Lake Park. This would leave fields 5 and 6 at Round Lake, and fields at Staring Lake and Riley Lake available for youth programs, or to be considered for renovation to accommodate baseball, soccer, football or lacrosse needs. Static or declining growth in these activities suggests that there will be a reduction in demand for adult softball facilities over time.

#### Youth Athletic Facilities

A similar methodology to that was used for adult softball participation was applied to determine youth baseball, softball, soccer, football, outdoor hockey, and indoor hockey needs. A description of each trend follows and is summarized in Table 3.15.

#### Baseball/Softball

The Baseball Association experienced dramatic increases after the Minnesota Twins World Series successes in 1987 and 1991. The trend in boys' baseball is for boys to stay in the program longer and thus provide a greater demand for regulation size baseball fields. The City currently has two lighted regulation baseball fields (including the high school field) and four unlighted fields with 90-foot base paths.

The City currently has two adult “over 35” baseball teams and initiated a “town team” in 2001 consisting of college age and older players.

With trends showing a continuing decline in adult softball and little or no growth in youth softball or baseball, it is likely that no new softball/baseball fields will be required in the near future. However, with the increase in older baseball teams it is likely the City will need one or two additional regulation baseball fields. The following actions should be taken to ensure these needs are met in the future:

- Flexibility in design is key in developing baseball and softball facilities. These sports pose scheduling and facility development challenges.
- Efficiency in games is an effective way to maximize field usage. This is best illustrated by adult softball leagues. Baseball and fast pitch softball, however, can be difficult to schedule and keep on schedule. Fast pitch organizers will be encouraged to utilize ways of maximizing efficiencies of games.
- Monitoring participation trends is the best way to stay ahead of future needs, especially in sports such as these, that may vary in participation based on external influences. By continuing to work with various athletic associations, the City can predict the needs of participants and be prepared if they show an increase in participation.
- One or two existing softball fields that have potential for expansion to 90-foot baseball field should be renovated within the next year.
- The City should encourage the proposed private effort to develop the baseball field at Miller Park into a “City Field” that provides some of the character of the small town ballfields in rural Minnesota. These fields can be a great place for family outings and a wonderful place to watch a ballgame. Proposed amenities include covered bleachers, restrooms, concession stand, concrete dugouts, etc.

### Soccer/Football Fields

Soccer continues to be the fastest growing sport in Eden Prairie over the last 10 years, and this reflects a statewide and national trend. Football has also received increased participation since the success of the Eden Prairie High School teams. The participation rates are likely to follow the population curve for growth in the near future and compound the demand for fields that are currently shared by those participating in soccer and football. In the short term, staff anticipates the development of a Lacrosse Association. This association would request soccer-type fields for youth lacrosse leagues. The City should take the following actions to meet this future need.

- Develop two soccer fields at Crestwood Neighborhood Park and provide a sufficient amount of parking to accommodate league soccer/football/lacrosse play at this facility.
- Artificial turf should be considered at one or more of the fields at Miller Park due to the high use of those fields. (Meet with youth association representatives prior to any decision on athletic turf.)

- Maintenance and field care can drastically increase the quality and longevity of joint use soccer/ football fields. By properly caring for the fields, especially goal mouths (soccer) in between the hatch marks (football), and by enforcing rainouts, the City can use its fields to full advantage without having to reconstruct them too frequently.
- Consider rotating fields out of use for a season on a regular basis to allow for field maintenance and restoration. This will be difficult to accomplish with the existing and projected field shortage.
- If the City is able to acquire a sufficient amount of playing field space in the Cedar Hills Neighborhood Park, two or more soccer/football fields should be developed.
- Monitor the growth of the lacrosse program at the High School and begin planning for strategies to accommodate that new sport.

### Hockey Rinks

The City currently has a two-mile service area radius for skating rinks with warming houses. Although the Hockey Association and the Figure Skating Club have maintained membership over the last five years, the participation usage of outdoor hockey rinks has fallen off during that same time period. Figure skating programs rely totally on indoor ice, and hockey programs rely more each year on indoor ice. Many surrounding communities have significantly reduced the number of outdoor ice skating rinks over the last five years as communities add more indoor facilities. Although the City of Eden Prairie may add an occasional free skating rink, as residents petition for those facilities, records do not justify any more outdoor hockey rinks or warming houses beyond the facilities completed at Crestwood Park. Few of the skating rinks without warming house get more than occasional weekday use and light use on weekends. The City should resist adding any more outdoor free skating rinks where there is not a warming house and lights. Due to a combination of these factors, no new outdoor hockey facilities are recommended in this plan.

There is, however, expressed demand in the community for additional indoor rink time, which cannot be gained from the existing two-rink facility. In 2000, the City appointed a Task Force that evaluated the feasibility of constructing a third indoor ice rink at the Eden Prairie Community Center. That task force determined that if the criteria for adding a third ice rink was that the facilities pay its annual operating costs and construction costs, there would be a \$2-3 million deficit. The City Council indicated that if the Hockey Association and the Figure Skating Club could raise that amount in private donations, the City would add a third rink at the Community Center. The City should take the following actions to address needs for future ice facilities.

- Monitor activity levels to track trends in hockey and figure skating based on population of youth.
- Monitor adjacent communities development of additional indoor ice facilities and track the amount of ice time rented at those facilities

- Monitor the amount of parking available at the Community Center and High School during multiple events to determine if there is sufficient parking at that site to add a third rink without eliminating a baseball or softball field.

### Gymnasiums

The School District opened a new eight-gymnasium facility in 2000 at the High School. This facility, along with other gymnasiums available in the school system, should meet the needs of the adult and youth basketball and volleyball for the foreseeable future. The City should continue to consider development of a gymnasium at the Eden Prairie Community Center in order to meet youth, teen, and family program needs at that facility, which would serve a more family oriented population than is currently served at the School District gymnasium facility

### *Special Facilities*

Special facilities are unique recreation amenities not included in the programs of a typical park and are intended to increase the recreational capacity of the park system. The special facilities may be part of an existing park or a stand-alone facility. Table 3.16 identifies special facilities in Eden Prairie.

**Table 3.16  
Existing Special Facilities**

| <b>Facility Type</b>          | <b>Provider/Location – City of Eden Prairie</b>   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Community Gardens             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pioneer Park</li> <li>• Site at County Road 1 and 212 (MAC Property)</li> </ul>  |
| Community Nursery             | Round Lake Park   |
| Sliding Hill (lighted)        | Staring Lake Park   |
| Amphitheatre                  | Staring Lake Park   |
| Artesian Well                 | Fredrick-Miller Spring  |
| Non Motorized Boat Rental     | Round Lake  |
| Historical Interpretation     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J.R. Cummins Homestead</li> <li>• Riley-Jacques Farm</li> <li>• Smith-Douglas-More House</li> </ul>                      |
| Racquetball Courts            | Community Center  |
| Ice Arena                     | Round Lake Park/Community Center  |
| Fitness Facilities            | Community Center  |
| Indoor Pool(s)                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round Lake Park/Community Center</li> <li>• Oak Point Intermediate School</li> </ul>                                     |
| Disc Golf                     | Staring Lake Park (Future at Cedar Hills Park)  |
| Skate Park                    | Round Lake Park (Future at Homeward Hills Park)   |
| Fishing Piers                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staring Lake (2)</li> <li>• Round Lake</li> <li>• Mitchell Lake</li> <li>• Lake Riley</li> <li>• Smetana Lake</li> </ul> |
| Environmental Learning Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Water Plant</li> </ul>  |

**Table 3.16**  
**Existing Special Facilities (continued)**

| Facility Type                | Provider/Location – City of Eden Prairie   |
|------------------------------|--|
| In-line Skating              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miller Park (hockey rink)</li> <li>• Forest Hills Park (hockey rink)</li> <li>• Round Lake Park (skate park)</li> <li>• 89 miles of asphalt trails</li> </ul>   |
| Archery Range                | Flying Cloud (Spring Road) (Future at Staring Lake Park)   |
| Group Picnic Facilities      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round Lake Park</li> <li>• Staring Lake Park</li> <li>• Homeward Hills Park</li> <li>• Riley Lake Park</li> <li>• Outdoor Center</li> <li>• Miller Park</li> </ul>  |
| Public Boat Ramp             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round Lake Park (electric motors only)</li> <li>• Red Rock Lake (10 hsp.)</li> <li>• Mitchell Lake (10 hsp.)</li> <li>• Duck Lake (no motors) (carry in watercraft)</li> <li>• Lake Riley</li> <li>• Smetana Lake (electric motors only)</li> <li>• Staring Lake (MnDNR)</li> <li>• Bryant Lake (within Bryant Lake Regional Park)</li> </ul> |
| Indoor Tennis                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flagship Athletic Club</li> <li>• Northwest Athletic Club</li> </ul>  |
| Miniature Golf               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birdie’s (private)</li> </ul>   |
| 18-Hole Golf Course          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bearpath (private)</li> <li>• Olympic Hills (private)</li> <li>• Bent Creek (private)</li> </ul>  |
| Outdoor Swimming Pool        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Center Wading Pool</li> <li>• Flagship Athletic Club (private)</li> <li>• Northwest Athletic Club (private)</li> <li>• Preserve Homeowner’s Association (private)</li> </ul>  |
| Indoor Swimming Pool         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Center</li> <li>• Oak Point Pool</li> <li>• Flagship Athletic Club (private)</li> <li>• Northwest Athletic Club (private)</li> </ul>  |
| Performing Arts Stage        | <p><b><u>School District</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School (2)</li> <li>• Middle School</li> <li>• Administration Building</li> <li>• Hennepin Technical College</li> </ul>   |
| Indoor Gymnasiums            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School District (18)</li> <li>• Flagship Athletic Club (1) (private)</li> <li>• Northwest Athletic Club (2) (private)</li> </ul>  |
| Indoor Soccer/Football Field | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> </ul>  |

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

The level of use and prominence of special facilities varies significantly. Some facilities provide unique services not accessible to some members of the community, such as a public boat ramp, components of the Community Center or an environmental learning center. Others, such as historical interpretative sites or a performing arts center, are cultural in their purpose and activities and permit residents to partake of a distinct recreational experience.

### Community Center

The Eden Prairie Community Center was constructed in 1981 to provide family oriented indoor recreation facilities. In 1990, the City Council sold revenue bonds to fund the second rink, which opened in 1992. The Center's ice rinks and indoor swimming pool have been the facility's major activity anchors, supported by community rooms, the fitness center, and three racquetball courts.

Since 1985, the Flagship Athletic Club and the Northwest Athletic Club have been developed in response to a growing and adult facility market. These private facilities provide interior and exterior court games, swimming facilities, program to workout areas, and support facilities in an amenity-rich environment. Each of these private clubs are fee-driven and do not cater to youth or young family activities. Adult use of the Community Center decreased dramatically with the advent of the Flagship and Northwest Clubs. The athletic clubs offer adult services, equipment and programs in an attractive environment, which are difficult for a municipal facility to provide. Adults between 18 and 65 within Eden Prairie's average or above average incomes will continue to be attracted to the private facilities.

As a result, the function and facilities of the Community Center should be reviewed to reestablish its mission and to evaluate the City's future needs, and it may be necessary to redesign and renovate the facility based on this assessment. The Community Center will continue to encounter difficult competition from private enterprise. Populations prohibited by age restrictions, finances, or facility needs should be served by the Community Center.

The Community Center, as a result, may attract and should service the following populations and market niches:

1. Youth activities and groups too young to be services by private clubs.
2. Elderly individuals desiring group workouts and instruction.
3. Young families who desire family recreation or cannot afford private membership dues.
4. Underprivileged community members.
5. Individuals or groups requiring special facilities, such as hockey.

The Community Survey completed in January 2001 indicated that the majority of Eden Prairie residents expect the City to make improvements to the Community Center. The majority of those residents support an outdoor water park as the highest priority improvement, followed by a multi-use area to provide youth and teen programs and services, as well as expanded fitness facilities.

It is expected that the Community Center's future functions will be targeted towards youth and family programs. User fees should be nominal to attract these young families in the community, which may not be able to afford the amenities offered by private sector clubs. Specific facilities that should be considered in a redesign or redevelopment of the Community Center include the following:

1. Adequacy of existing locker space, its functions and existing conditions.
2. Need for a multi-purpose youth activities room.
3. Gymnasium space for various indoor athletic games.
4. Revisions to the existing weight room consistent with workout needs of future users.
5. Storage room needs.
6. Need for childcare.
7. Offices for staff and entry design to control access and direct users to the appropriate part of the buildings.

The existing parking facilities that accommodate this building should be evaluated, to accommodate current demand and respond to conditions for any future additions.

The issues and objectives listed above should be considered by a City Council appointed Task Force whose prime function should be to evaluate and make recommendations on the following issues:

1. Evaluate the Community Center's market niche given recent competition from the private sector.
2. Identify primary users within the community through the year 2020.
3. Evaluate existing facilities consistent with the identified market niche.
4. Recommend specific facility improvements and prepare an estimate of their expense.
5. Identify funding mechanisms to meet those needs.
6. Identify a strategic plan to accomplish these Center improvements, including timing and responsibilities.

The Task Force should be formed as soon as possible so that any existing Community Center needs can be integrated into a comprehensive approach to facility renovation and improvements planning.

#### Potential Future Special Use Facilities

The development of special use facilities relies heavily on resident desires. A variety of special use facilities are possible as shown in Table 3.17 and described below. These special use facilities should be provided by the City only to respond to demonstrated need. With the exception of the Art Park/Sculpture Garden concept for the Purgatory Creek facility currently under construction, none of the facilities described below have received specific funding, design or construction approval.

**Table 3.17**  
**Possible Future Special Use Facilities**

| Facility                    | Potential Provider                     |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Outdoor Pool/Water Park     | City of Eden Prairie                   |
| Off-leash Dog Area          | City of Eden Prairie                   |
| Art Park (Sculpture Garden) | City/Partnership with Private Provider |
| Living History Farm         | City/Partnership                       |
| Indoor Playground           | City/Partnership                       |
| Golf Course                 | City/Partnership                       |
| Tier II Skate Park          | City of Eden Prairie                   |

Source: City of Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Department, 2002

Outdoor Pool/Water Park

Outdoor pools and water parks have become very popular in the Metro Area. The City of Eden Prairie has two swimming beaches (Round Lake and Lake Riley) plus a swimming beach operated by Three Rivers Park District at Bryant Lake Park. The City has an indoor pool at the Community Center and an outdoor wading pool at that same facility, and jointly operates the Oak Point pool at the Intermediate School. The number of people using the swimming beaches has decreased over the last five years due to the decreasing quality of the water. Weather can also fluctuate from year to year and influence the participation rates at public beaches.

Outdoor pools or water parks must provide a variety of features in order to attract today’s swimmers. Zero depth entry for the very young and the very old, a variety of water slides and water play features are required for pools to be successful today. Modern bath houses, concessions stands and large deck areas that provide shade umbrellas and eating areas are desirable in order to make it comfortable for adults to join their children at these facilities. Sites that should be considered for an outdoor water park include the Community Center and Round Lake Park. The City may also wish to discuss a cooperative program with the Preserve Association for public use of their swimming facilities.

Prior to making a decision on an outdoor pool the City should consider a feasibility study to determine the type, size and location of an outdoor pool, and what could be expected in terms of construction and operation cost versus expected annual revenue.

Off-leash Dog Area

Off-leash dog areas are a relatively new phenomenon in Minnesota. These facilities were originally developed on the East and West Coasts, and provide areas where residents can let their dogs run off leash. The demand for these types of parks is high and the facilities that do exist are used extensively. A potential site for an off-leash dog area would be the west end of the Westgate Conservation Area. Other sites to consider would be airport property adjacent to Homeward Hills Park and a portion of the old BFI Landfill site. Off-leash dog areas can be from five to twenty acres in size or larger depending on the site. The site should be fenced with at least a four-foot high fence.

### Sculpture Garden

A sculpture garden or park area designated for permanent display of sculptures must be located in an area that is highly visible and preferably in a more urban setting. Sculptures should be located on a site where people can sit and enjoy the art. They can be incorporated into fountains, flower gardens or simply a feature in a public plaza. A site that is being considered for a sculpture garden is the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area entry. Other potential sites are in Round Lake Park at the intersection of Valley View and County Road 4, or at the Community Center Entry Plaza.

The schematic master plan for Purgatory Creek Recreation Area is designed to accommodate both large and small scale public art elements in prominent areas within the park, such as open lawn areas, within the formal garden and at the termination points of site lines through the park. The proposed building within the park is being considered a potential site to house a center for the arts. The schematic design calls for the integration of public art into infrastructure elements and park furniture. Currently, a tribute to the City's previous mayor, Jean Harris, is being designed for installation into the park.

### Living History Farm

A living history farm can simultaneously protect natural resources, retain agricultural land and interpret history. A living history farm is a family-oriented facility and offers high quality educational opportunities to children. Living history farms are becoming even more important as farmland becomes more rare in the Metropolitan Area. A living history farm could produce vegetables, flowers or other plants for sale to Eden Prairie residents and farm visitors, and could provide a site for community gardens and other farm-related activities. Possible locations for a living history farm are the Picha farm immediately south of Birch Island Woods, the Riley-Jacques farm within Riley Lake Park, or the Dvorack, Marshall or Peterson farms.

### Indoor Playground

Indoor playgrounds have been successful in the Twin Cities area. They offer the benefits of active and various play experiences, the safety of a controlled environment and the advantage of accessibility even during inclement weather. Indoor playgrounds require a large indoor space, but could be implemented in conjunction with other future facilities, such as a gym building, or could be provided in cooperation with a private or public partner. There is a small indoor playground at the Eden Prairie Shopping Center.

### Golf Course

A public 18-hole golf course is one of the highest priorities supported by residents in the recently completed Community Survey. Although the City does have three private 18-hole golf courses, the only public course remaining in Eden Prairie is a portion of the Glen Lake par three course located in Minnetonka with two holes located in Eden Prairie. There is potential for a public golf course on the buffer land around the former Flying Cloud landfill. A public course on that property could be developed and operated by either the City of Eden Prairie or a private operator. Prior to making a decision on such a facility, the City would have to have the support of the MPCA, BFI, Allied Waste and GRS, the company mining the methane gas. The City would then contract for a feasibility study to determine what investment could be supported by fees generated by the course.

## Tier II Skate Park

A tier II or high-level skateboard park provides ramps and jumps above 30 inches in height. For liability reason these skateboard parks are required to be fenced and supervised, thus, generally requiring a fee for participants. The City should monitor the use of the tier one park at Round Lake, as well as the use of other tier two parks throughout the Metropolitan Area to determine if the popularity continues or levels off. If the popularity for these facilities continues to grow, the City should consider development of a facility in Eden Prairie at a site where there is existing staff such as the Community Center.

## Remote Control Boats

The operation of remote controlled boats is slowly increasing in popularity, but it demands an environment free of other disturbances such as swimmers, large waves, anglers, power lines or tree cover. Probably the best location for this type of activity would be either the pond at MTS on the north side of Technology Drive or the future pond at the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area.

## **Natural Resource Preservation**

### ***Needs and Demands***

Eden Prairie has established community policy with commitments to a preservation of sensitive areas such as creek valleys, wetlands, unique bluff areas, and sensitive vegetation. Dating back to 1968, the City Council has consistently mandated preservation of these resources by developer dedication, City ownership or scenic easements. Eden Prairie should continue to receive and pursue developer dedication of designated parcels as abutting areas are developed. The City should also commit its resources to assemble other critical parcels by purchase and, if required, condemnation to maintain a continuous open space system.

The intention of resource preservation is to preserve unique areas, minimize environmental impact, ensure a high quality of life in the community and provide opportunities for citizen exposure to its natural resource base. These goals can only be accomplished if citizens are given an opportunity to enjoy the natural resource experience and develop an awareness of its sensitivities.

### ***Support Facilities***

Support facilities for these passive uses should be developed within the preservation areas. The backbone of these facilities should be trails, which provide for interpretive, walking and cross-country skiing functions in a manner that has minimal resource impact. Trailheads should be developed to provide convenient access points from neighborhoods to the open space parcels. These trailheads should include informational mapping, rest stops and natural resource education exhibits in kiosk structures. Trails designations, such as viewing towers, overlooks and interpretive stops, could be developed in a manner compatible with the trail system and the educational objectives previously mentioned. Such trailheads could be developed at the Birch Island Woods Conservation Area, Edenbrook Conservation Area, Edenvale Conservation Area, Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area, Prairie Bluff Conservation Area, Lower Purgatory Creek Conservation Area, and the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area.

Complimenting these trailheads should be an interpretive nature center within the Outdoor Center located on Staring Lake and the Environmental Learning Center at the Eden Prairie Water Plant. These two facilities should be the focus for environmental education programs offering educational workshops for both adults and children activities. Coordinated with the School District, the Environmental Learning Center offers rotating exhibits depicting the aquatic and lake system, wetlands and City's Water Management Plan. The Outdoor Center is staffed by a part-time individual and supported by volunteers and part-time staff who assist with tours, education programs and support activities. The Outdoor Center also provides programs and services for citizens interested in bird-watching, wetland preservation and environmental awareness.

Funding and budget limitations are always a challenge for facilities such as these. The intent of the Environmental Learning Center and the Outdoor Center is to be passive in nature without requiring intense facilities for expensive operation budgets. A combination of City funding, School District participation and volunteer assistance are the primary components to labor funding requirements.

The goal of the Outdoor Center is to provide a facility and program that allows residents of this community to learn more about the world they live in and provide a wide variety of opportunities to experience outdoor recreation. Residents who have never had the opportunity of having someone teach them how to hunt or fish, plant a garden, plan a trip to the boundary waters, or take a day canoe trip on a Northern Wisconsin River, have experts to show them how to enjoy all of these resources.

### ***Conservation Area Management Plans***

The City has already developed management plans for the majority of its conservation areas. A management plan should be developed for the remaining conservation areas, as well as the natural resource based community parks, such as Staring Lake Park, Round Lake Park, Riley Lake Park, and Birch Island Park. These management plans should include recommendations for managing the natural resources, and for developing and controlling public access and interpretive signage throughout the system so people learn to appreciate these resources.

The City should develop a separate budget to accomplish the goals of the management plan and development and maintenance of the parking lots and nature trails that provide access to these sites.

This page has  
been intentionally  
left blank

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

Today, the City's active park facilities are sufficient to meet the community's present day needs, based on national and local trends. The established, strong mini-, neighborhood and community park structure is well suited to accommodate future additions. Additional parkland facilities, including a neighborhood park of 15-20 acres, 11-12 of which need to be useable space, are required to serve the south portion of the community. The best potential site for new playfields has been identified as Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owned land adjacent to Flying Cloud Airport.

Standards established to guide investment in parks facilities are generally higher in Eden Prairie than in other similarly sized communities throughout the nation. In comparing Eden Prairie to similar communities in the Metro Area, surveys demonstrate that the scarcity of facilities is notable for lighted athletic facilities at community parks. This statistical reality is driven by the City's desire to protect residential areas from undue light and noise associated with recreational facilities such as playfields.

Participation rates for athletic associations are a key factor influencing facility demands and needs.

Based on the per capita participation rate, it appears that many of the indoor facility sports are increasing at slow and steady rates. There are a few activities that use outdoor facilities that appear to be growing rapidly. Many of these sports are competing with each other for additional facility space or time to host their activities. One of the most evident pressures is between the growing youth soccer and football associations, which are both experiencing growth and must share the fields with lacrosse during the fall playing season.

Two additional regulation baseball fields are anticipated. Two soccer fields at Crestwood Neighborhood Park are also called for, in addition to two or more soccer/football fields at Cedar Hills Neighborhood Park. A new indoor ice rink may be supported with public monies, but no new outdoor skating facilities are justified, based on current records and trends.