



Chapter Eight
**Capital Improvement
Planning**

**CHAPTER 8
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

OVERVIEW	8-1
INTRODUCTION.....	8-1
ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES	8-1
FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR PARK SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	8-5
General Funds (Annual Levy Limits).....	8-5
General Park Bond Issue	8-5
Cash or Land for Park Fees	8-6
LAWCON/ LCMR Grants	8-6
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	8-6
Incidental Grants	8-7
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	8-7
Department of Transportation Funds	8-7
School District 272	8-7
Private Donations, Gifts or Contributions	8-7
Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	8-8
PLANNING PROCESS AND PROJECT PRIORITIES.....	8-8
PROJECT REVENUE SOURCES.....	8-10
2002 to Year 2008 Capital Improvement Program.....	8-11
Background.....	8-11
Acquisitions	8-11
Park Development.....	8-12
Trail Projects.....	8-15
Future Projects	8-16
CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	8-19

CHAPTER 8

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING

OVERVIEW

This chapter discusses the role of capital improvements planning in implementing Parks and Open Space System projects. The process is long term and incremental and consists of evaluating projects according to objective criteria, assigning priorities and funding them from public revenue sources.

The chapter also discusses the role of funding mechanisms for park system improvements, including funding tools that are traditionally outside the classic City devices, such as State and County funds that provide matching dollars for parks improvement projects.

INTRODUCTION

Capital improvements include the purchase or construction of major community facilities or improvements that provide lasting value. Facilities such as fire stations, parks, and sewer and water facilities are typical of the types of capital improvements planned by communities. In the area of parks and recreation, capital improvements include the acquisition of land and the development or construction of recreation facilities, or the purchase of major equipment needed to maintain those facilities.

Planning for capital improvements enables a city to take a look beyond the immediate horizon to anticipate the need for overall improvements. Evaluating needs and resources over a period of years allows a city to smooth out the peaks and valleys that can occur in spending. The development of a capital improvements program enables a community to anticipate major needs and to schedule them in a manner that is responsive to both demand and sound fiscal policy. When identified needs are greater than City budget revenues can accommodate, Eden Prairie has time to examine and evaluate alternative means for funding long-term improvements, such as through bonding or grant programs.

The Capital Improvements Program is a tool for fiscal management that needs to be sensitive to local needs and resources. It is continually reviewed by City staff, as actual (rather than estimated) costs are determined. It is updated annually by the Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission and the City Council. During the annual review process, the Commission and the Council approve the projects for the upcoming year. At the time each project is proposed for final approval with a final cost estimate, the Commission and the Council compare those costs to the CIP budget.

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

In recognition that there are difficulties in accomplishing needed improvements all at once, it is important to establish priorities for action. Chapter 3, Needs and Demands Analysis outlined improvements needed for the park system as a whole, but did not establish priorities for which actions should be taken first.

To guide actual improvement priorities, the following criteria were established for project review and evaluation. Each criterion are evaluated on a point system and then aggregated to arrive at an overall score or priority ranking by City staff and decision makers. An explanation of scoring and weighting of various criteria follows this list.

1. *Area of Population Growth*

The project is in a service area with evidence of rapid population growth and existing deficiency of recreation facilities.

2. *Relieve Overuse*

The project or elements thereof will relieve a presently overused facility of a similar function within the same neighborhood or recreation facility.

3. *Serves High Density Neighborhood*

The project is in a residential neighborhood of high density or higher-than-average density.

4. *Neighborhood Participation*

There is evidence that the project has the active support of the residents in the neighborhood in which it is located.

5. *Citizen Planning Participation*

The project has had, or will have active citizen participation in its planning and design.

6. *Intergovernmental Cooperation*

The project demonstrates intergovernmental or interagency cooperation in terms of acquisition, development or maintenance, either through planning, staffing, financing or programming.

7. *Compatible with Adjacent Land Uses*

The existing and planned land uses are compatible with the project, and the impact of the project on surrounding land uses is positive.

8. *Project Site Plan*

The project has a staff approved master site plan and all capital improvements are in keeping with such a plan.

9. *Danger of Loss or Forfeit*

The project is in imminent danger of loss to other forms of development, extreme pressures for other uses, or could likely be lost if there is a change in land use. (Imminent: three to five years)

10. *Special Opportunities*

The project involves taking advantage of special circumstances, such as low cost, availability of committed non-City funds, the budgeting of committed public improvements in the area, or the possibility of less-than-fee acquisition techniques, which make it especially advantageous for the public to act with dispatch.

11. *Special Groups*

The project or elements thereof were specifically designed to provide recreational opportunity for certain inadequately served groups of the population, e.g., the elderly or the disabled.

12. *Support of Community Development Areas*

The project or elements thereof are in City-designated target areas for community development or the project is important to stimulate private sector growth.

13. *Replace Deteriorative Facilities*

The project will replace or upgrade deteriorative facilities that are having a negative impact in the neighborhood or the community.

14. *Satisfies a Community-Wide Need*

The project will provide recreation facilities or improvements that serve the entire community and will generate immediate facility use.

15. *Public Safety*

The improvement is needed to alleviate public safety and welfare problems where public health or personal injury is at risk. Public liability should also be considered in this criterion.

16. *Operating Costs*

Operating costs will be significantly reduced as a result of the improvement.

These criteria were selected to serve as indicators against which the various projects could be compared. Table 8.1 illustrates that for each criterion, a project should be assigned a score of one to three points, depending on the degree to which the proposed improvement meets the objectives of the criterion. For example, Criterion 14 allows evaluation on the degree to which an improvement would satisfy a community-wide need. A community swimming pool would rank higher on this criterion than would a playground improvement in a neighborhood park. Projects should be compared against all of the criteria, and a total score developed.

**Table 8.1
Capital Improvements Evaluation Criteria**

Criterion	Evaluation Standard	Points Scale of 1-3	Overall Score
Area of population growth	Evidence of rapid population growth (3-5 year period) and deficiency in existing recreation facilities.		
Relieves overuse	Provides additional capacity for an existing overused facility within the same neighborhood or recreation facility.		
Serves high density neighborhood	Location in a high density or higher than average density neighborhood.		
Neighborhood participation	Active support of residents in neighborhood it is located in.		
Citizen planning participation	Active participation in planning and design of project.		
Intergovernmental cooperation	Cooperation related to acquisition, development, or maintenance.		
Compatible with adjacent land uses	Impact of project on surrounding land uses is positive.		
Project site plan	Staff approved master plan in place, all capital improvements are in keeping with master plan.		
Danger of loss or forfeit	Imminent (3-5 years) danger of loss due to development, extreme pressures for other land uses.		
Special opportunities	Low cost, available of committed non-City funds, budgeting of committed public improvements, less than fee acquisition circumstances.		
Special groups	Project specifically designed to meet needs of those who are inadequately served (e.g., elderly or persons with disabilities).		
Support of community development areas	Project is located in target areas, or project is important to stimulate private growth.		
Replace deteriorating facilities	Replace or upgrade facilities that are having a negative impact in the community.		
Satisfies a community-wide need	Facilities or improvements serve the entire community and generates immediate facility use.		
Public safety	Needed to alleviate public safety and welfare problems.		
Operating costs	Will be significantly reduced as a result of the improvement.		

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

The criteria outlined here are intended to serve as a tool for planning park and open space improvements in a manner that is systematic and reflects total community needs. However, the criteria are not absolute. In some cases, one criterion may be so compelling that it overrides the total score a project receives. For example, a large donation or grant may be available for a particular project, which may not be the first priority. Because the funding is a one-time opportunity, implementation of this project may occur sooner than actual priority may indicate. Similarly, a high priority may be given to a major community facility, such as a swimming pool. However, because of the great cost involved, implementation is only possible with outside funding, such as bond and/or grant funds. The criteria and priorities process should be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure that it is responsive to total community needs.

FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR PARK SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Eden Prairie's rapid population growth over the last 30 years will require aggressive park and open space acquisition, reinvestment and facility development beyond the year 2000. Facility improvements and expansion can only be accommodated if preplanning identifies anticipated project costs and funding mechanisms. Current municipal infrastructure improvements are generally formed by local funding due to an absence of state and federal participation. However, it is important to continue to pursue all funding vehicles, thereby moderating the funding burden placed on Eden Prairie's citizens. State and federal participation varies according to the current political administration. Eden Prairie's staff should continue to monitor available grants and aids. The staff has had an excellent track record in obtaining outside funding assistance, and will likely continue to do so.

The following list of funding sources is intended to assist decision-makers in pursuing all available monies. Restrictions and the use of funds by project type, annual availability or matching requirement should be kept in mind in analyzing their use.

General Funds (Annual Levy Limits)

Eden Prairie, similar to virtually all municipalities, has annual levy limits that generate funds based upon property taxes. Subject to constraints and annual increases set by the State of Minnesota, these funds provide the backbone of municipal fiscal policy. Funding for park and open space projects is budgeted on an annual basis as a part of the entire City Council Park Budget. Historically, however, revenues generated from these funds are obligated to operations and maintenance projects rather than acquisition or development. This is due primarily to community sentiment and intense demand for limited funds among a number of important public projects.

General Park Bond Issue

Park bond issues are often considered the most expedient way of funding large park improvement projects. Like most bond issues, a referendum is held at which time the public is given an opportunity to vote on the project's acceptance. With an affirmative vote, the City can then issue bonds of indebtedness for land acquisition or financing construction projects. Bonds are sold to private holders and repaid by public tax revenues collected over a predetermined amount of time, normally the project's useful life.

Park bond issues possess a number of attractive characteristics. By public referendum, the community determines whether the public improvements should occur. The bond issue also distributes bond payments not only to current City residents but also to those residents who may move into the City after the improvements have been constructed. Bond issues can vary in size and can include any number of facility types or land acquisitions.

Cash or Land for Park Fees

Most municipalities in Minnesota require property developers to dedicate a fee or land for public use, such as parks, open space and other municipal requirements. Minnesota Statute 462.358 permits any state municipality to obtain such dedications as a part of its subdivision regulations.

The City of Eden Prairie has required a 10 percent of fair market value fee dedication from all property developers. These funds have been typically used to help offset neighborhood parkland acquisition and development costs, thereby benefiting those neighborhoods in which the development has taken place.

LAWCON/LCMR Grants

Eden Prairie has had incredible success in attaining LAWCON/LCMR Grants over the past three decades. These monies, allocated by the state LCMR Board, are funded by state and federal revenues. Criteria established by the Metropolitan Council are used in determining project types for which these monies should be allocated. Communities submit grant applications that are reviewed according to these established criteria. Restrictions exist as to project type and the funds must be spent within a two-year period. These grants require a local funding amount to demonstrate participation.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing is a tool normally associated with community development or redevelopment incentives for the private sector. The concept employs the establishment of a geographical area in which taxes are frozen at a base level. Property taxes increases over and above the established base values are termed the “increment” and can be collected over a period of years subject to Minnesota state statute. This increment is applied to the repayment of bonds used to finance public infrastructure or other projects. Municipalities will often use tax increment financing as a tool to provide incentives for private developers to complete new development in blighted areas or those with significant physical limitations.

Park and open space projects could benefit from tax increment financing if their development was a part of an overall development or redevelopment district. Projects of this type are subject to significant restrictions established by the state legislature and require administrative approval of agencies such as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) or the local Port Authority.

Incidental Grants

A variety of grants and other monies are occasionally available from both public and private agencies or institutions. City staff should regularly monitor and pursue all available funds of this type consistent with all development strategies. Most grants of this type require a local funding amount to demonstrate participation.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Community Development Block Grants are federal funds often targeted to low-income housing programs or similar projects. CDBG monies are intended to assist communities in planning for blighted areas and improving community quality of life. Park and open space projects may be eligible for partial assistance if the park project would be in close proximity to or abut CDBG projects, such as low-income housing.

Department of Transportation Funds

Monies from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) or the Hennepin County Department of Transportation (HennDOT) may be of assistance in constructing Eden Prairie's hikerway and bikeway system. Mn/DOT bikeway money has been available at various times for bike projects. In addition, Mn/DOT funds may be available as a part of trunk highway improvements, such as adjacent trail systems or trails that cross trunk highways. Trail improvements currently considered a part of the TH 5 corridor improvement are an example of such a project.

Hennepin County transportation funds may be available on a similar basis. When Hennepin County roads or county/state aid highways are improved, monies may be available to assist in the improvement or construction of both hikerways and bikeways. Eden Prairie's staff should monitor Mn/DOT and Hennepin County road improvement projects for opportunities to pursue such trail improvements.

School District 272

The City of Eden Prairie has maintained a close working relationship with School District 272 and shares a number of park facilities for both neighborhood and athletic facility use. Maintaining open communications between the two parties will help ensure continued cooperation and assured use of open space facilities. The two parties should communicate on an annual basis about projects planned for the upcoming year and explore opportunities to jointly develop and use open space facilities.

Private Donations, Gifts or Contributions

Potential may exist in Eden Prairie to obtain gifts for park and open space purposes, such as land, cash, goods or volunteer labor. Gifts and donations can be encouraged by keeping the community informed of needs and potential tax benefits for corporations or individuals. Community groups may

seek out avenues for community services or recognition. To encourage donations, the City may publish as a part of its regular newsletter a “wish list” of materials, projects or other items, which individuals or civic groups could contribute. In addition, regular contact with civic groups will help convey the need for contributions to Eden Prairie’s Park and Open Space System. The Eden Prairie Foundation, several local civic organizations and several of the athletic associations have contributed a significant amount of money toward a variety of park improvement projects over the last 30 years.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Each Eden Prairie service area annually revises a six-year CIP that provides a mid-term vision of projects. The program assists staff and decision-makers in determining project priorities and spending limitations.

Eden Prairie’s rapid growth makes related facility requirements difficult to implement on a short-term basis. Large parcel acquisition and development projects are costly and require long-term financial strategizing to accomplish. Priorities must be established to complete these projects on an incremental basis based upon prudent use of available funding and a priority that reflects the community's best interest.

Ultimately, the citizens of Eden Prairie must determine priorities for capital improvements to the park system. Their participation will occur by providing input to the City Council, the Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission and City staff, in public meetings and hearings dealing with the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, the community may also participate by public bond referendums to finance land acquisition or park development.

PLANNING PROCESS AND PROJECT PRIORITIES

The planning process outlined in this plan exposes a variety of factors that influence the community’s Park and Open Space System needs, the anticipated costs and related timing for implementation. These factors are complex and somewhat subjective given individual priorities and interpretation of existing information. Nevertheless, the following specific recommendations and priorities for open space improvements are recommended.

1. *Land acquisition* for neighborhood parks has been Eden Prairie’s most critical and challenging park and open space issue for the last 30 years. The community's rapid development is reducing the opportunity for future park or recreation sites, and negatively affecting the opportunity to preserve critical parcels and sensitive landscaped areas. In addition, this rapid development is escalating land prices, thereby, dramatically increasing the cost of park facility development. The City should move quickly to preserve sites for the remaining neighborhood parks to fulfill a half-mile service radius, a public golf course and preservation of sensitive passive open space. Once the land is preserved, facility development can wait until the residents demand the park services or development funding becomes available. If parkland is not purchased to preserve these options, it may never be available or affordable.

Acquisition of conservation areas along Riley Creek and the remaining portions of Lower Purgatory Creek will undoubtedly be met with resistance from some of the residents adjoining these properties. It will take strong leadership and a community wide “grass roots” education effort to acquire these parcels, which will be necessary to ensure preservation of these linear greenway corridors.

The southcentral neighborhood is not serviced by a neighborhood park at this time. A parcel for the southcentral neighborhood should be acquired as soon as possible to guarantee a location and land compatible with the abutting neighborhood’s needs.

If the City decides to change the guide plan to allow residential development in lieu of office development in the Golden Triangle area, the City should determine what land is available to serve the park and open space needs of those residents. Land should be acquired and developed to provide recreation facilities similar to services provided other residential development in Eden Prairie.

2. *Flying Cloud Fields and youth athletic facilities* should be the community’s second priority. The improvement to the access and the expansion of parking facilities are critical to improving the safety requirements of this complex. The MAC 20 year plan indicates no future need of the area for airport use, and the City has no other options to expand and improve these vital facilities; therefore, it is imperative that this complex be expanded, as it is the City’s only option for providing additional athletic fields.
3. *Neighborhood park improvements* must keep pace with Eden Prairie’s continued residential development. Improvements to the entire neighborhood park system are of equal priority and necessary to provide adequate neighborhood recreation for Eden Prairie. These improvements include landscaping, updating playground facilities and facilitating site improvements.
4. *Trail system development* should continue consistent with land development trends and roadway improvements. Where necessary, linear parks or construction areas should be obtained by dedication or purchased outright to preserve the trail corridors and provide an environment compatible with user needs. Linking existing or planned park facilities with linear parks or trails whenever possible is also a high priority for the City.
5. *Resolution of the Community Center function* and its physical improvements are important to provide adequate recreation programs for those portions of the community in need of its facilities. An ad hoc task force should review the Center’s function and recommend specific physical improvements as soon as possible. Building or equipment improvements would follow when funding is available.
6. *Golf course development* is an opportunity that may slip by unless immediate steps are taken. An in depth study to address the project’s feasibility should be undertaken immediately. This analysis is crucial to examining where the golf course should be located, its financial feasibility, and implications for abutting land use. Actual golf course development may not

occur as a short-term priority, however, that opportunity must be preserved by identifying a preferred site and ensuring that the required land is available. Due to high land costs and rapid development, the only feasible opportunity remaining appears to be around the Flying Cloud Landfill site.

7. *The Purgatory Creek Recreation Area development* is instrumental in providing community identity and maintaining an open space amenity, which complements abutting commercial activities. The City should continue to commit the necessary funds for the project, thereby preserving the project's future development phases.
8. *An outdoor swimming facility* was desired by a large number of citizens in the community-wide survey. A feasibility study should be completed to determine if this type of facility is financially viable and to identify a location for the project. The project's exact design and facility type should be explored if it is determined to be a feasible project.
9. *Water quality improvement* of Round Lake is necessary in order to continue the operation of a swimming beach on that lake. The water quality has deteriorated to the point that without improvements, the beach will not meet State recommended water quality levels for public swimming. The continued operation of two swimming beaches (three counting the Three Rivers Park District operation at Bryant Lake) will impact the feasibility of an outdoor swimming facility.
10. *Special use facilities* complete the list of recommendations and priorities. These projects will respond to special user groups within the community and reinforce Eden Prairie's quality of life. Projects include community gardens, ornamental gardens, interpretive areas, fishing piers, boat ramp sites, day camp and the Outdoor Center.

Based on Capital Improvement Program and funding sources, certain projects among those listed here can only be funded by referendum, such as the water park. Other initiatives, such as additional ball fields at Flying Cloud as recommended by the Athletic Association Task Force, must be reconciled with competing recommendations and desires (such as an interest in making improvements to the Community Center).

Significant trail projects, such as the system proposed through the Purgatory Creek Valley, are likely beyond the capacity of park dedication fees given the relative little new development anticipated, or the effectiveness of grants, which are less numerous and often require matching funds from local communities. The referendum tool will become an increasingly important device.

PROJECT REVENUE SOURCES

The City's 2002 to year 2008 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is presented below. The CIP lists estimated revenue sources and amounts available to fund park projects for the next six years (2002 to 2008). It should be emphasized that these revenue sources and the amounts are estimates

based on Eden Prairie's history of use of tax increment financing, ability to obtain grants, pass referendums and estimates of development projections over the next five years. Obviously, the laws could change regarding TIF, grants could be eliminated by the legislature, and the economy could change dramatically, which would alter citizen support for any referendum and would alter the amount of revenue from development (cash park fees).

2002 to Year 2008 Capital Improvement Program

Background

Each year, the Parks and Recreation Department provides an updated Six Year Capital Improvement Program that projects costs for acquisition and development of the park system. The majority of the items on this plan are funded with use of cash park fees; however, additional sources of projected funds include the use of fees collected for park improvements from adult athletic teams, tax increment financing that has been budgeted for specific park improvement projects, projected federal and state park and recreation grants, projected donations, interest accrual from Fund 31, revenue bonds for projects that staff believes could likely be funded from that source of funding, and some use of General Fund money when that source of funds would be required to assist in completing the proposed projects.

This Six Year CIP plan does not project any bond referendums; however, staff does foresee that there will be need for a referendum for funding some improvement projects that may be developed within the next six years. A list of those projects is attached to the Capital Improvement Plan.

It should be noted that the figures used in this plan are merely estimated costs. They are not based on any plans or specifications. Final costs could vary significantly based on the program approved by the City Council and plans and specifications that would provide a great deal more detail regarding each project.

Acquisitions

Cedar Hills Park

The City anticipates acquiring approximately 42 acres of land for a neighborhood park to serve the Cedar Forest/Hilltop neighborhood. The City has evaluated several sites south and east of Hilltop and Cedar Forest neighborhoods. The MAC has acquired the majority of those sites for its runway protection zone. Staff have requested confirmation from MAC that the City could lease or purchase land in the B Zone for a neighborhood park. The City has a tentative agreement with MAC that would provide a long-term commitment for this. The proposal anticipates an expenditure of \$400,000 for this park acquisition. This neighborhood park may consist of more preservation land than most neighborhood parks, but it should provide some basic active play areas, including at least one soccer field, a playground structure, a basketball court and a tennis court. The park would be located on Riley Creek, west of Eden Prairie Road.

Riley Creek Linear Park

Staff has anticipated that at sometime in the future, the City will have to purchase some segments of land along Riley Creek in order to complete the proposed trail corridor between County Road 1 near Riley Lake Park, south and easterly to Fredrick-Miller Spring. The majority of the property should be acquired through dedication when adjacent land is developed; however, there are a number of small parcels that are privately owned that will have to be acquired to develop the trail along the creek. Staff anticipates that when the Settler's Ridge property is developed there will be demand for a trail along Riley Creek to the north to connect to Riley Lake Park and to the east to connect to Riley Creek Woods and Crestwood Neighborhood Park. The connection to Crestwood Drive should be constructed as soon as possible. The plan projects this connection in 2003.

Birch Island Woods

Hennepin County agreed to sell Birch Island Woods to the City for \$600,000 through a five-year, contract for deed beginning in 2002. It is critical to obtain an option on the Picha property north of Birch Island Road, as well. This property is as important to the "woods" as the "developable" land within the County-owned site. Acquisition of this site will require a referendum or a reduction of other proposed acquisition or development projects in the CIP. The City should also investigate the feasibility of acquiring the wooded hill owned by the Twin Cities and Western Railroad.

Lower Purgatory Creek

The City only has two parcels to acquire to complete the acquisition of the trail connection along Lower Purgatory Creek from Creekwood Park, south to the Minnesota River trail. The City has not completed any appraisals for these two sites but has budgeted \$200,000 per year in 2007 and 2008 for this purpose.

Park Development

Community Center¹

In the past, the Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission has recommended that the City find some funding methods to improve and expand the locker rooms at the Community Center. Several years ago, the City Council authorized an architect study to expand the locker rooms and approved the locker room expansion and front entry expansion plan, but it did not authorize funding at that time. Staff indicated that there is demand for expansion of locker facilities, improvements to the entry, expansion of fitness facilities, and demand for an outdoor pool and a third rink. Any expansion of the Community Center that would include the majority of these facilities would most likely require a bond referendum. In 2002, \$25,000 was budgeted for a feasibility study to evaluate the needs for an outdoor pool and Community Center improvements.

¹ A referendum must be considered to address some of these needs.

The Hockey Association submitted a request to complete a feasibility study to use revenue bonds for a third rink. The City Council accepted a report of a citizens committee that indicated a third rink was only feasible with a donation of \$2.5 million to \$3 million. The Council approved the Hockey Association to seek sponsors willing to contribute to that project. This CIP does not provide any additional funding for an ice arena.

Round Lake Park

The water quality in Round Lake has been diminishing over the last 15 years due to phosphate loading, and the beach has had to be closed early in five of the last six years due to high coliform counts caused by geese. This beach was closed in 2000 in order to install fixtures to deter geese and improve water quality in the swimming area. The beach re-opened in 2001, and the City initiated an experimental algae and weed control treatment using bacteria provided by Greener Pastures, Inc. The results of the first year of the three-year study indicated an improvement in water quality and goose management. (The swimming beach remained open until Labor Day in 2001, but had to close by August 9, 2002.)

To better accommodate two-way bicycle and pedestrian traffic, \$200,000 is budgeted in 2005 to widen the trail around the lake to a 12-foot trail.

Staring Lake Park

In 2003, \$30,000 is budgeted to construct an outdoor archery range that provides safety shields to ensure arrows cannot leave the range. Staff is recommending construction of this range north and east of the Grill ballfields. Archery users would share the parking facilities at the Grill ballfields.

In 2007, \$100,000 is budgeted for expansion of the existing park shelter.

Miller Park

In 2002, \$350,000 was budgeted for the construction of a concession/restroom/storage facility for the baseball fields located in the northeast portion of the park. The City anticipated \$150,000 of this cost to be funded by the Baseball Association.

In 2004, \$350,000 is budgeted for a soccer/football facility building (restrooms, concessions, and storage facility). The City anticipates the Soccer Club and the Football Association to contribute \$150,000 towards the construction of this facility.

In 2006, \$350,000 is budgeted for a softball facility building (concessions, restrooms and storage facility). The City anticipates the Softball Association to contribute \$150,000 towards this facility.

Dates and costs for these facilities could be revised based on the need and funding assistance from various associations.

In 2008, \$250,000 is budgeted for a grandstand and restrooms for the baseball field. The CIP projects a \$150,000 contribution toward this facility.

The park plan anticipates grants or gifts totaling \$600,000 to accomplish all of these improvements.

Purgatory Creek Recreation Area¹

In 2002 and 2003, \$900,000 and \$200,000, respectively, are budgeted for the City's matching portion of the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area. This \$4 million project began in the fall of 1998 with the construction of the first lift of the dike. Approximately \$1.2 million of tax increment financing money is budgeted for this project. In 2001, the City approved a concept plan for development of the 5.5 acre City site that will constitute the entry to the recreation area. The City Council appointed a Citizens Task Force to work with a consultant to develop a program and concept plan that can be developed in phases, as funding is available. The first phase of the City's project should be completed in 2003. Future phases will require significant funding commitments, probably depending on a referendum.

Birch Island Park

In 2004, \$150,000 is budgeted to construct a sun shelter, playground equipment and improve the parking lot to accommodate small groups and to serve the neighborhood.

Birch Island Woods Conservation Area

In 2003, \$20,000 is budgeted for the development of a parking lot and trail improvements.

Edenbrook Conservation Area

In 2004, \$55,000 is budgeted for construction of a small parking lot access and kiosk as the trailhead for the conservation area. The trail will be a turf trail with some woodchip sections in low areas. The estimated cost for construction of the trail is \$50,000 and will be completed in 2005. The majority of the trail system should already be developed through Eagle Scout projects.

Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area

The construction of the access road, northern parking lot and the initial trail system was completed in 2000. In 2003, \$50,000 is budgeted for construction of the main parking lot and additional trail signage. Additional expenses, such as redevelopment of the trout pond, should be a cooperative project with the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District.

In 2003, \$25,000 is budgeted for removal of the existing house and out buildings and landscaping at the entry.

Fredrick-Miller Spring

In 2002, \$40,000 was budgeted for renovation of Fredrick-Miller Spring, which would include upgrading the parking lot and improving the design of pedestrian access to the spring. This location is also the trailhead location for the Prairie Bluff Conservation Area. This project is long overdue; however, staff has delayed this project to address concerns about affecting Fredrick-Miller Spring without any major changes to the piping system and concerns for the historical impact on the site.

¹ A referendum must be considered to address some of these needs.

Cedar Hills Park

In 2004, \$150,000 is budgeted for grading and seeding Cedar Hills Park. In 2004, \$300,000 is budgeted for construction of a park shelter, irrigated soccer field, irrigated baseball field, lighted hockey rink and skating rink and parking lot. In 2005, \$150,000 is budgeted for construction of the playground structure, tennis court and basketball court and final landscaping.

Crestwood Park

In 2002, \$650,000 was budgeted for grading and seeding and construction of the parking lot, and for construction of the park shelter, hockey rink, skating rink, basketball court and tennis court. In 2003, \$50,000 is budgeted for construction of the playground equipment.

Forest Hills Park

In 2003, \$30,000 is budgeted for renovation of the playground site at Forest Hills School/Park. Staff anticipates the school will request the City to regrade the large hill and renovate the playground site to eliminate problems the school has had regarding erosion, etc. Staff anticipates the majority of this cost to be provided by the School District. In 2004, \$300,000 is budgeted for replacement of the park shelter.

Smetana Lake Park

In 2002, \$400,000 was budgeted for Phase II of the Smetana Lake Improvement Project, specifically the construction of the trail on the north and west side of Smetana Lake, and development of the park on the north side of the lake. Approximately \$300,000 was the City's share, with the remaining funded by the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District.

Flying Cloud Ballfields¹

Staff would also recommend evaluating the need for an expansion of the ballfields west to Spring Road to provide access to Spring Road. The final estimates for additional field needs will be determined through the needs evaluation that will be completed later this year with the update of the Park and Open Space System Plan. This project could cost from \$2 million to \$3 million based on the number of facilities and amenities, such as irrigated fields, paved parking lots, storage facilities, etc.

Trail Projects

Rice Marsh Lake Park – In 2003, \$10,000 is budgeted for making the trail connection to the north side of the lake.

In 2004, \$100,000 is budgeted for making the trail connection around the south side of the lake.

¹ A referendum must be considered to address some of these needs.

Riley Creek Trail System – The paved trail connection from the Settler’s Ridge development, easterly across the Riley Creek Conservation Area to Crestwood Terrace should be constructed in 2003 in order to provide pedestrian and bicycle access for the neighborhood to Crestwood Park. Over two years (2006- 2007), \$250,000 is budgeted for developing an aglime trail from County Road 1, south to Frederick-Miller Spring.

Lower Purgatory Creek Trail – The walking trail from County Road 1, south to the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge and Recreation Area along Purgatory Creek should be developed as soon as the City is able to acquire the last segment of the trail (the land immediately north of Riverview Road). The largest expense for this type of trail would be the bridges that would have to be installed to accommodate a trail adjustment to the creek. Although \$250,000 is budgeted over two years (2007-2008), no firm estimate can be made until the land is acquired and a plan is developed.

Hidden Ponds – The trails in Hidden Ponds Conservation Area were constructed by the developer of those subdivisions. The City became the owner of the sites in 2001. The trails are in poor condition and should be repaired and maintained or removed. The cost for the project will be determined in 2002. A public hearing should be held to determine what should be done with those trails and how the project should be funded.

Prairie Bluff Conservation Area – The trail from Frederick-Miller Spring east through the Prairie Bluff Conservation Area should be constructed when it can be connected to a public trail on the bluff. Staff anticipates this connection to be feasible in 2004 and estimated the cost to be \$50,000.

Future Projects

There are a number of relatively large projects that may or may not be initiated within the next five years. These projects are not included in the proposed Five Year Improvement Project because they may require either bond referendums or should be initiated by citizens desiring the service, rather than staff. Those projects include the following:

Outdoor Aquatic Center – The need for an outdoor swimming pool was evaluated in 2002 by a citizens committee as the demand for a clean outdoor swimming facility is expressed. The City has received more and more complaints about the water quality, especially at Round Lake beach, and questions why a city of this size does not have an outdoor swimming pool available to the public. Successful outdoor swimming pools require a variety of exciting experiences, such as water slides, water playgrounds, wave pools, etc. Costs for an outdoor pool could vary from \$3 to \$7 million, depending on the size of the pool and facilities offered. The pool could be located at the Community Center or Round Lake Park (would require loss of at least one ballfield). The feasibility study should be completed by early 2003.

Golf Course/Driving Range – The City should evaluate the feasibility of developing a golf course and driving range on the BFI Landfill site. An 18-hole golf course with a driving range would require a minimum of 200 acres. The BFI site is the only remaining potential new golf course site. If sufficient land cannot be acquired to construct an 18-hole course, the City should consider a large driving range, putting course and 9-hole course. This type of facility would be heavily used by

beginners, senior golfers and by individuals who would like to practice their strokes and improve their game. Funding for this type of facility would have to be generated from revenue bonds, or through a public/private partnership. A feasibility study should be completed prior to any public funding for any type of golf course project.

Trout Ponds – The City may have an opportunity to develop ponds that would sustain trout in the southeast corner of the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area. Trout ponds were developed by the previous owners and were viable ponds until the “1987 super storm,” which destroyed the ponds. If the City is able to acquire the east half of that valley from the adjacent property owner, this project would be a joint project between the DNR, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District and the City of Eden Prairie to offer trout fishing in this community.

Community Center Expansion – The City of Eden Prairie was one of the first cities in the state to have a multi-use community center. That facility has never reached its potential to be a true community center because the facilities were limited to skating and swimming with a limited fitness center. The new concepts for community centers emphasize spacious locker rooms, large fitness facilities, gymnasiums, running tracks and water parks that encourage people of all ages to enjoy swimming together. The City should evaluate the potential for developing a true community center. The existing Community Center site has limited potential for expansion due to the limited parking facilities and the new facilities at the High School may eliminate the need for any new gymnasiums in the City. The most likely expansion to be supported by residents would be an outdoor recreational pool, expanded locker rooms, fitness center, and a multi-use area for exercise classes and youth recreation programs. The presence of two private health clubs within this community may have reduced the demand and feasibility of an expanded Community Center.

Westgate Conservation Area – The City should attempt to acquire the Mn/DOT property on the north side of Venture Lane to provide good public access to the Westgate Conservation Area. Staff would recommend negotiating with Mn/DOT as soon as possible for this property.

Birch Island Woods – The City should consider purchasing the Picha property to own the entire frontage on Birch Island Road. This would probably have to be a referendum-funded project. An option should be secured prior to a referendum. The City should also assess the feasibility of acquiring the hill owned by the Twin Cities and Western Railroad.

Tier II Skate Park – The City should consider a Tier II skate park near or adjacent to the Community Center, so existing staff can monitor it during and after hours of operation.

This page has
been intentionally
left blank

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Capital improvement planning is one of a local municipality's most effective tools in anticipating and responding to community needs. However, the tool is most effective when used in combination with other funding mechanisms, sometimes from other sources (such as County or State funds). The facility needs for the park system must be met in the immediate term and the long term. In some cases, there may not be sufficient local funds to complete a project in the time frame desired: in these situations, outside source funds become critical to project success.

The chapter describes criteria used to prioritize capital projects, and highlights 10 areas of interest that rank highest on the combined criteria. They are:

- Land acquisition for new facilities
- Flying Cloud Field and expanded youth athletic facilities
- Neighborhood park improvements (maintenance and new development when appropriate)
- Trail system development
- Resolution of the Community Center role/function
- Golf course development
- Purgatory Creek Recreation Area development
- Development of an outdoor swimming facility
- Water quality improvement at Round Lake
- Special use facilities (maintenance and new development when appropriate)