

CHASKA 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PARKS SURVEY SUMMARY
DRAFT
09.04.2018

Chaska's parks survey:

- Survey was open from 8/6/2018 – 9/4/2018
- Survey Monkey online platform was utilized
- 1,267 total responses (most of the responses, 774, were submitted on 8/14/2018)
- 79% of the responses were from Chaska residents

Key Findings:

- Residents are engaged – there is a high level of interest from Chaska's residents and visitors in the future of the parks, recreation, and trails system
- Residents and park users value the existing biking and walking trails more than other parks and recreation facilities, and building more paved trails is a high priority for park and trail users
- Protection of natural resources was identified as the highest priority among a list of 19 choices for future initiatives – 44% of respondents strongly agreed it should be a priority, and 34% agreed it should be a priority.
- After protection of natural resources, the initiatives that more than half respondents agreed or strongly agreed should be priorities include: add more paved trails, improve biking and walking-friendly areas in downtown Chaska, improve park and trail wayfinding with signs and maps, expand indoor recreation facilities for winter use, update the Community Center, update existing playgrounds and park shelters, expand outdoor winter recreation facilities, and add more off-road, mountain bike/hiking trails. Initiatives that were lower on the priority list included adding more parks, athletic fields and facilities, expanding recreation programming, and improving the quality of athletic fields
- Residents are interested in continued maintenance of the existing system (especially trails) before building new facilities.
- The word cloud below identifies the most used words in the open-ended question listed above it:

**CHASKA 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS
DRAFT Goals, Policies, and Action Items
09.04.2018**

GOALS

The following goals are broad, high level statements that reflect the values of the Chaska community regarding parks, recreation, and trails. The statements are written to reflect the end results or desired scenarios for the City of Chaska's parks, recreation, and trails system.

- **PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK GOAL:** Chaska contains a fully connected pedestrian and bicycle network with multiple paved trails that connect residential neighborhoods to community destinations and provide multiple loops for leisure linear recreation and various experiences.
- **COMMUNITY CONNECTION GOAL:** Chaska's parks and recreation department maintains a strong connection with its community residents and visitors through attentive service, responsiveness to residents' needs, and engaged staff members.
- **HEALTH & WELLNESS GOAL:** The health and wellness of Chaska's residents are supported by parks and recreation. Residents are healthy and active through their use of parks, trails, and open spaces, and their participation in the City's and its partner organizations' recreation programs.
- **TRENDS GOAL:** Chaska's parks and recreation department stays aware of current recreation trends and continuously evaluates its system for new programs and facilities to meet the needs and desires of its changing population.
- **NATURAL RESOURCES GOAL:** Chaska's parks and open spaces contain natural resource areas that are protected and conserved for the purposes of wildlife habitat, ecological function, environmental services, and aesthetic interest.
- **ACCESSIBILITY GOAL:** Chaska's parks and recreation facilities are designed based on the principle of universal design, providing all-inclusive facilities that are able to be used by people of all ages and abilities.
- **TECHNOLOGY GOAL:** Chaska's parks, trails, and recreation facilities incorporate technological advances, such as interactive signage and wayfinding, wifi, lighting, and security measures. Recreation programming and information is delivered using sophisticated technological methods.
- **ARTS AND CULTURE GOAL:** Chaska's parks, facilities, and recreation system includes spaces and programs that support and promote the arts and reflect the culture of its diverse population.

- Chaska shall optimize preservation of natural resource corridors in Greenbelt areas, with any subdivision of land or change of use, particularly new residential conservation/cluster development proposals.
- Chaska shall support preservation of and connections to the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area and Trail within the lower Minnesota River Valley.
- Chaska shall support preservation of and connections to the Chaska Lake Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.
- Chaska shall ensure that the Community Trail system is connected to the Regional, State and Federal trail systems.
- Chaska shall require land dedication for the remaining segments of the City's 2040 Trail System as property is platted and developed.
- Chaska shall complete the trail system throughout the Community Linear Park System through the acquisition of additional right of way outright or by easement. The types of pathways and attendant development, such as rest areas and signs, should be complementary to the desired natural setting.

PARTNERSHIPS, ENGAGEMENT, AND MARKETING POLICIES

- Chaska shall encourage the continued use of school district, Jonathan, County and other available recreational facilities by the general public.
- Chaska shall make efforts to ensure the community residents are engaged during park planning processes in order to incorporate the desires and needs of residents into new parks and facilities.
- Chaska shall provide current park maps and easily accessible parks and recreation information on its website.
- Chaska shall utilize partnerships and joint use agreements with other agencies, private organizations and businesses, athletic associations, volunteers, and other groups in order to provide efficient recreation services.

6. Explore opportunities to provide improved access to neighborhood parks/playgrounds for existing neighborhoods that rely on mini-parks for their neighborhood park uses.
7. Explore opportunities to expand existing community parks that do not meet the desired size standard for community parks.
8. Develop a plan to improve walkability and bikeability in downtown Chaska.
9. Develop a plan to complete the trail system throughout the Community Linear Park System.
10. Develop a list of parks that do not have park master plans, and begin a process of creating park master plans for them.
11. Develop a plan to add handicapped accessibility to the golf courses.
12. Identify parks and trails in need of repair and replacement and establish a timeline for repairs.
13. Identify areas of the city that are underserved by parks, such as densely populated areas, and establish a plan to build new parks and expand trail connections to existing parks.
14. Identify areas within parks and open space for potential soft surface hiking/nature trails and mountain bike trails.
15. Identify needs for winter recreation – indoor and outdoor facilities and programs – and a plan to implement them.
16. Work with Carver County and the Met Council to realign the proposed Hwy 41 Regional Trail corridor from along the road to utilize existing trails around the lakes west of Hwy 41.
17. Develop a plan for disc golf improvements.

Capital Investments

18. Implement the future planned Community Park/Playfield in the SW Chaska growth area. Future facilities to include: ballfields, Miracle field, mountain bike trails, potential community event support facilities. Is there a master plan for this park?

- Downtown Chaska east of T.H. 41 is underserved by neighborhood parks. City Square is located in the area but is designed as a passive use facility. The original two-acre Firemen's II Neighborhood Park was eliminated by courthouse expansion in the 1990's. It was replaced with a new one acre Firemen's II "mini park" north of the Carver Scott Co op. While it is a valuable facility, its small size and isolated location limit its effective use and service area.
- Downtown West Future Neighborhood Park – **IS THIS HICKORY PARK?**
 - The portion of Downtown west of T.H. 41 is within the service area of Firemen's I Park but is separated from the facility by heavily traveled Chaska Blvd. The other three west side parks (Athletic, Winkel, and Riverbend) do not contain neighborhood park facilities, particularly for younger children. In 1998, the City acquired two vacant lots on Hickory Street, which are adjacent to the dike trail/open space system. The landward side of the levee features a significant linear open space that was acquired by the City as part of the flood control project.
These two lots, together with the levee linear open space, should be developed into a west side play area.
- SW Chaska Growth Area - Future Neighborhood Parks – **IS THIS NEED MET ALREADY WITH THE SW CHASKA GROWTH AREA PLAN??**
 - Figure ___ shows two future neighborhood parks to serve the future residential development in the SW Chaska growth area — one is the expansion of existing Highland Park to serve the eastern portion of the area and one is a new neighborhood park to serve the northern portion of the area. Neighborhood park needs for the southern portion of the area would be met by the future community park adjacent to the Big Woods natural area. Various options exist for combining future neighborhood parks with other potential facilities:
 - With a future community park;
 - With a future community playfield;
 - With a future elementary school;
 - With existing upland wooded areas; and/or
 - Two or more of the above.
 - Careful planning of the SW Chaska growth area is needed to ensure that this important future residential area is properly served with needed park/recreation school facilities conveniently accessible to the resident population. Efforts to combine facilities to maximize their attraction and minimize costs of development and maintenance should be pursued.