ThreeRivers
PARK DISTRICT

BAKER PARK RESERVE

LONG-RANGE PLAN

OCTOBER 4, 2024

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The mission of **Three Rivers Park District** is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system.

Three Rivers Park District was established in 1957 after legislation was enacted in 1955 allowing for the activation of park districts whose primary duties are "acquisition, development and maintenance of large parks, wildlife sanctuaries, forest and other reservations, and means for public access to historic sites and to lakes, rivers and streams and to other natural phenomena" (Minnesota State Statutes, Chapter 398.07).

There are nearly 14.0 million annual visits in 2022 to more than 26,500 acres of park reserves, regional parks and special-use areas in Hennepin and five adjoining counties and over 175 miles of regional trails. Current outdoor-recreation activities in regional parks and trails include camping, hiking, cross-country and downhill skiing, tubing, bicycling, in-line skating, horseback riding, nature interpretation, golfing, fishing and swimming. Three Rivers Park District also operates a natural resources management program, which administers the restoration and perpetuation of both native wildlife and plants in order to provide park and trail visitors opportunities for high-quality recreational experiences.

DISTRICT 1
Marge Beard
Corcoran, Greenfield, Hanover, Independence, Long Lake, Loretto, Maple Plain, Medicine Lake, Medina, Minnetrista, Minnetonka Beach, Mound, New Hope, Orono, Plymouth, Rockford, Rogers, Spring Park, St. Bonifacius, Wayzata

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Brooklyn Park (all precincts except W-1, W-2 & W-3), Champlin, Dayton, Maple Grove, Osseo

DISTRICT 3
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Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park (precincts W-1, W-2 & W-3), Crystal, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony, St. Louis Park

DISTRICT 4
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DISTRICT 5
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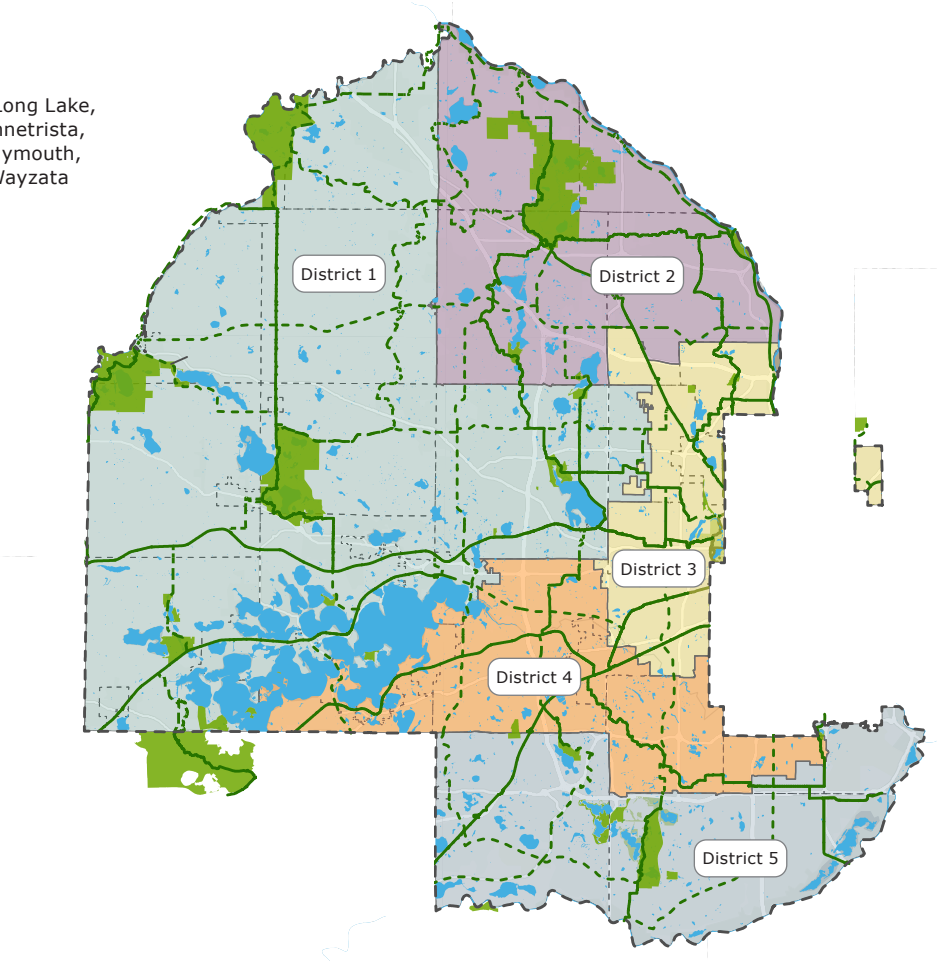

I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LONG-RANGE PLAN

This long-range plan represents the long-term vision and recreation development, natural resources and operation and maintenance plan of Baker Park Reserve in western Hennepin County.

The park reserve is located in or adjacent to the communities of Medina, Independence, Maple Plain and Orono on Lake Independence.

The long-range plan reflects the guidance of existing park users, the general public, underrepresented community groups, Three Rivers' staff and public agencies with a vested interest in this park.

LONG-RANGE PLAN GUIDANCE

Baker Park Reserve is historically important to Hennepin County and Three Rivers Park District. As the first Three Rivers park property, it has been serving the needs of park visitors from the surrounding communities for generations. Baker Park represents the quintessential park within Three Rivers system, offering something for everyone to enjoy. Whether it be for a quick drop-in visit or a longer whole day/multi-day experience, visitors can find a place to:

- Recreate outside
- Access Lake Independence for boating, fishing, and swimming
- Gather with friends and family at a picnic area or campsite
- Play with their kids at a destination play area
- Find solitude on a trail or in a natural area
- Golf at a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary golf course
- Ski miles of trails over rolling hills
- Participate in outdoor education programs

These recreation offerings are all very popular and hallmarks of the park reserve. As a result, proposed

recommendations will not include major changes to existing developed areas but rather improvements that will continue to support, enhance and expand existing offerings.

PARK DEVELOPMENT & PROGRAMMING CONCEPT

Baker Park Reserve is largely developed and provides many different facilities and recreation services to its users, including:

- Family campground
- Five group camp sites
- Two swimming beaches on Lake Independence
- Boat launches on Lake Independence and Spurzem Lake
- Shore fishing on Lake Independence, Half Moon Lake and Spurzem Lake
- Group and individual/family picnicking
- Children's play area
- Sledding hill
- Paved loop trails for biking, walking and running
- Horse trails
- Baker National Golf Course
- Cross country ski, snowmobiling, and winter multi-use trails
- Baker Outdoor Learning Center for day and overnight camps and programs

Since this park is successfully meeting the needs of the communities within its service area and fills the role of the quintessential park within the greater Three Rivers System, this long-range plan focuses on taking inventory of existing park facilities, acknowledging ongoing and planned improvements, and making recommendations for minor improvements, enhancements or expansion of existing facilities and resources.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Public engagement for the Baker Long-Range Plan involved several strategies to achieve its goals for engaging targeted populations, park visitors, stakeholders and the general public. The majority of the engagement happened in 2018 when the plan was initiated. Following a pause in the plan in 2020- 22 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and other priorities, engagement focusing on confirming and updating the ideas previously developed in the Recreation Development Plan resumed in 2022.

One of the most frequent themes heard from the public feedback at the park was, "We've been coming here for years. We love the park the way it is." Baker Park Reserve has a loyal and knowledgeable base of visitors who provided insightful comments. Outreach to other targeted groups and the general public provided additional ideas to help ensure the park serves all potential users now and in the future. Common engagement themes include:

- Campground and recreation area are well loved and used
- Desire for more facilities, nature-based programming and interpretation
- Desire to maintain high quality open space and natural resources
- Improve hiking and ski trails
- Desire for more trail connections to adjacent communities and trails

VISITATION

Annual visitation is projected to reach 613,000 without golf visits and 683,000 with golf visits by 2031, if visitation trends remain similar to the past 15 years. As the long-range plan does not recommend any major changes but rather improvements to current offerings, the park visitation is expected to increase comparatively with the service area population growth. Park visitor makeup is anticipated to be similar to the demographics of the area within a 20-minute drive time of the park.

RESOURCE PLAN

Baker Park Reserve is in compliance with the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan with respect to preserving at least 80 percent of the *total* park acreage as undeveloped natural areas. However, Three Rivers policy requires at least 80 percent of the *upland area* to be preserved and restored as a natural area. Baker Park Reserve is not currently compliant with this guidance. As a means to realign the park with this policy, at which point recreation offerings no longer support visitor demand and use, they will be evaluated for removal and the development footprint returned to natural area.

Some of the important natural resource features within Baker Park Reserve include Lake Independence, Lake Katrina, Spurzem and Half Moon lakes, numerous wetland complexes and many acres of mature hardwood forests all of which provide valuable habitat for wildlife. Currently, there are several ongoing natural resource management projects at Baker Park Reserve, including invasive species removal, water quality improvement projects and controlled burns.

ACQUISITION

Three Rivers currently owns 3,147 acres within the Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan boundary. There are 13 existing parcels/inholdings totaling 35 acres with a combined estimated value of $7,801,200 (2024 dollars) which are yet to be acquired. When acquired, the park reserve area will be 3,183 acres.

Additionally, Three Rivers is exploring two new parcels/inholdings totaling 64 acres with a combined estimated value of $1,472,000 (2024 dollars) (see pp. 39-40). Inclusion of these parcels would bring the total acreage to 3,237.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTATION

As a fully developed park, capital improvement projects (see table at right) are limited to updating existing offerings to better serve existing and new visitors - especially those visitors from underrepresented community groups. The proposed projects will be funded through Three Rivers capital improvement program, grants, fundraising and partnerships.

Implementation will occur as funds are secured and at the discretion of Board of Commissioners. The total estimated cost for capital improvements including natural resource restoration and recreation development projects is $8,425,000 (2024 dollars).

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE PLAN

The park will continue to be operated and maintained by Three Rivers generally consistent with its current operation and maintenance levels and procedures. Planned operational improvements include adding signage for trail etiquette around horses and expanding nature-based programming. The annual operation and maintenance cost when all improvements are completed is estimated to be $2,579,730 (2024 dollars).

Total Costs*

Acquisition
$7,801,200

Capital Improvements
$8,425,000
General park-wide, Baker Park Recreation Area, Campground and Baker Outdoor Learning Center

Existing Annual Operating Costs
$2,492,730
Facilities Services, Maintenance & Outdoor Education & Recreation

Additional Proposed Annual Operating Costs
$118,500

One-Time Costs
$75,000

*2024 dollars

Capital Improvements Summary

General Park-Wide Improvements	• Add trail spurs to scenic overlooks • Add interpretive signage • Implement improved wayfinding • Improve Spurzem Lake fishing pier & parking lot • Improve Marshview Group Camp • Improve Public Safety/We Can Ride parking lot • Improve West trailhead • Construct Lake Independence Regional Trail segment • Add drinking water along Lake Katrina loop trail • Improve Lake Independence water quality
Baker Park Recreation Area	• Add small non-reserveable picnic shelter near play area • Add accessible fishing pier near boat launch • Improve Shoreline fishing • Alleviate boat queuing issues • Add large reserveable picnic shelter • Improve Hwy 19 crossing
Campground	• Redesign vehicular circulation around the campground entrance • Add 5 camper cabins • Add and upgrade electrical connections to campsites • Add wifi and charging stations • Add nature exploration play area • Add parking along perimeter drive • Add winter recreation and winter camping • Improve/add new internal paths • Improve grading for C-loop sites • Increase vegetative buffer for E-loop
Baker Outdoor Learning Center	• Improve trail accessibility • Improve the archery range • Improve office storage space • Remove pole barn

"The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value."

Theodore Roosevelt
August 31, 1910

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Three Rivers Park District (Park District) gratefully acknowledges the staff, elected officials, community members and other participants who contributed to the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan. Three Rivers extends a special thank you the individuals listed below who provided guidance, time, questions, and critical insight throughout the process.

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INTRODUCTION
PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Baker Park Reserve is Three Rivers Park District's (Three Rivers) flagship park. It is fully mature, in respect to its natural resources as well as its recreation offerings. The park has stood the test of time and much of the natural areas' focus has moved from restoration to management. While the original, classic recreational offerings may be nearing the end of their useful life, they remain relevant today.

Baker Park Reserve is well known for its large family campground and group campsites, lakeside picnic and recreation area, destination play area, 27-hole golf course, cross-country skiing, overnight outdoor education facility, hiking and biking trails as well as beautiful natural resources. These primary offerings are all very popular and the hallmarks of the park reserve.

The original Baker Park Reserve development concept was approved in 1960 and carried forward through the 1998 Master Plan for a System of Parks. Many of the park's original 1960s goals, including camping, a diverse trail system, prairie restoration, oak forest preservation and wildlife habitat enhancement remain relevant today. This long-range plan, while consistent with past plans, replaces all previous long-range plans and development concepts for Baker Park Reserve.

Complete re-visioning of Baker Park Reserve is not appropriate as it would likely displace many existing visitors and leave a hole within the greater Three River's system of parks and trails that this park currently fills. This plan calls for modest improvements to these offerings serving existing and future generations of park visitors as well as new visitors looking for the classic outdoor, nature-based recreation experience.

This chapter outlines the connection of the Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan to the Region's Park System framework and identifies areas of opportunity for collaboration and support. The Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan is intended to provide acquisition, development and management guidance through the year 2040 and beyond.

This focus was supported through the long-range plan engagement process as well as 2018 Park Visitor Satisfaction Survey as many of the comments noted enhancing existing offerings and not adding new offerings. In fact, many engaged people stated they have been returning to Baker Park Reserve to enjoy its natural beauty, recreation offerings and programs for generations - one of the truest indicators of a successful park experience.

REGIONAL PARK & TRAIL SYSTEM

There are currently 415 regional trail miles and 56 regional parks and park reserves comprising nearly 55,000 acres open for public use within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area's Regional Parks System **(Figure 1)**. Baker Park Reserve is one of 12 park reserves open to the public and is charged with limiting development and protecting distinct natural and ecological features. The Regional Parks System provides a plethora of recreational amenities and educational opportunities for regional residents and visitors alike.

The service range and diversity in development of the region's parks highlight the unique natural resources and landscapes of east-central Minnesota.

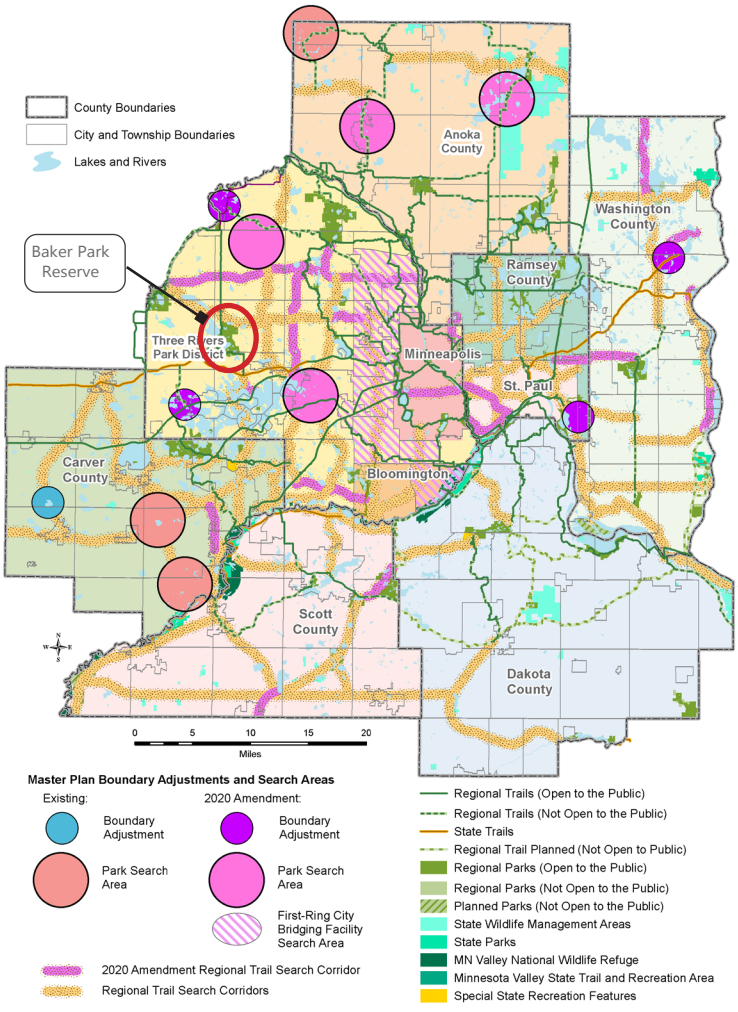
The ongoing value and public support of the Regional Park System is indicated by the high levels of use and planned expansion. There are estimated to be 3.1 million residents within the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area served by Regional Parks System. The Regional Park System hosted an estimated 69 million visits in 2022. The Regional Park System plans to add an additional 2 regional parks, 1 park reserve, and 116 miles of regional trails in coming years to meet the growing demand and increased population forecasts.

The Metropolitan Council, a regional planning agency, provides policy guidance through the Regional Parks Policy Plan and partial acquisition, development and operation funding through several funding programs. The ownership, development, operations, and maintenance of the regional park system falls to ten implementing agencies consisting of six county park departments, three city park departments and Three Rivers.

THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT

Established in 1957, Three Rivers is an independent special park district charged with the responsibilities of acquisition, development and maintenance of regional parks and trails for the benefit and use of the citizens of suburban Hennepin County, the

FIGURE 1 | 2040 REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM
SOURCE: METROPOLITAN COUNCIL



seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area and the State of Minnesota. Three Rivers is comprised of more than 26,500 acres of 7 park reserves, 12 regional parks, 5 special recreation features and 18 regional trails **(Figure 2, next page)**. These parks and trails hosted nearly 14.0 million annual visits in 2022.

Three Rivers' mission is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system. It remains the only special park district in the State of Minnesota and its primary focus reflects its taxing jurisdiction: suburban Hennepin County. Though an independent agency, Three Rivers works cooperatively with local communities, counties, public agencies, the Metropolitan Council and the State Legislature to maintain a high level of park service and to ensure long term park planning strategies complement regional planning efforts.

Three Rivers is charged with preparing long-range plans for each park and trail unit which adhere to the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy Plan, as well as other local, county, regional, state and national plans. In addition, each long-range plan is developed to be consistent with Three Rivers' Mission, Policy Statement, System Plan and existing projects.

Three Rivers' 2040 System Plan work envisions a world where all people can connect with nature everyday, emphasized by the following goals:

- You belong here
- Parks matter
- Lead by example

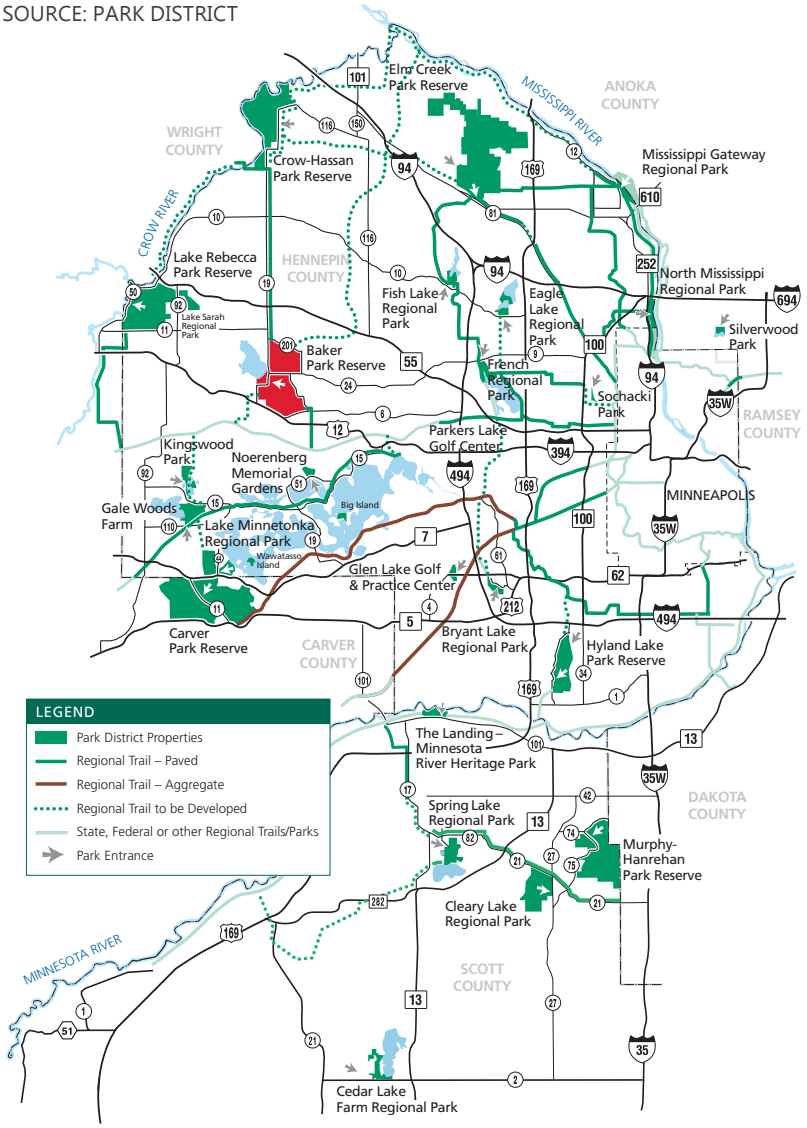
This long-range plan replicates these goals at a park level to further emphasize adherence to this vision through focused natural resource management, comprehensive community visioning, forward-thinking outdoor recreation development and systems oriented sustainability practices.

Park Reserve Guidelines

Three Rivers manages its lands under four categories of regional open space: **park reserves**, regional parks, special recreation features and regional trail corridors. In addition, Three Rivers utilizes a recreation opportunity spectrum of parks and trails to ensure a wide variety of park settings and offerings are preserved within the broader park system. This essentially provides a framework to classify parks

by type and purpose, preventing parks from becoming mirror images of each other. Within the recreation opportunity spectrum, Baker Park Reserve is designated as one of five park reserves considered 'semi-developed.' Semi-developed park reserves, including Baker Park Reserve, focus on protecting natural resources while supporting nature-based recreation and education offerings. This category allows a few concentrated areas of development surrounded by large, intact natural areas with at least 80% of the upland remaining natural. In addition, parks within this classification help bridge visitors between more fully developed regional parks to minimally developed park reserves. With this in mind, the developed areas often function and feel more similar to a regional park but the natural areas, minus the trail pavement and visitation patterns, function and feel more similar to parks with minimal development and lower visitation patterns **(Figures 3 & 4, following pages)**.

FIGURE 2 | THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT SYSTEM
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



Park Reserve Development Policies

Three Rivers plans and manages its park reserves using a system of three land-use zones - each with specific development guidelines, which are defined below and graphically shown on the adjacent page **(Figure 5)**. Significant natural resources within the Natural Areas and Lakes & Wetland Area land use zones are further characterized into sanctuary areas, wildlife preservation areas, or key environmental components as shown in **Table 25** and **Figure 21** of Chapter 5.

- **Developed Areas**
  Active use areas have high recreational potential and represent those areas where the most extensive and intensive recreational development and active use will occur. Natural resources within these areas are managed to provide a setting that is safe and attractive, and can withstand intensive recreation use. Recreational development areas include, but are not limited to, facilities such as picnic grounds, swimming beaches or swim ponds, creative play areas and trails. Other developed areas include support facilities such as maintenance shops, roads, and parking areas.

What do we mean when we say:

Park Reserves: Larger parks that prioritize natural area protection over active use development and programming. Managed to ensure resilient natural habitats and foster an appreciation for and enjoyment of natural resources.

- 1,000+ acre minimum
- Comply with the 80/20 development ratio: 80% managed as natural lands that protect the ecological functions of the natural resource landscape and 20% remaining can be developed for recreational areas.

FIGURE 3 | BAKER PARK RESERVE - SUMMER MAP
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

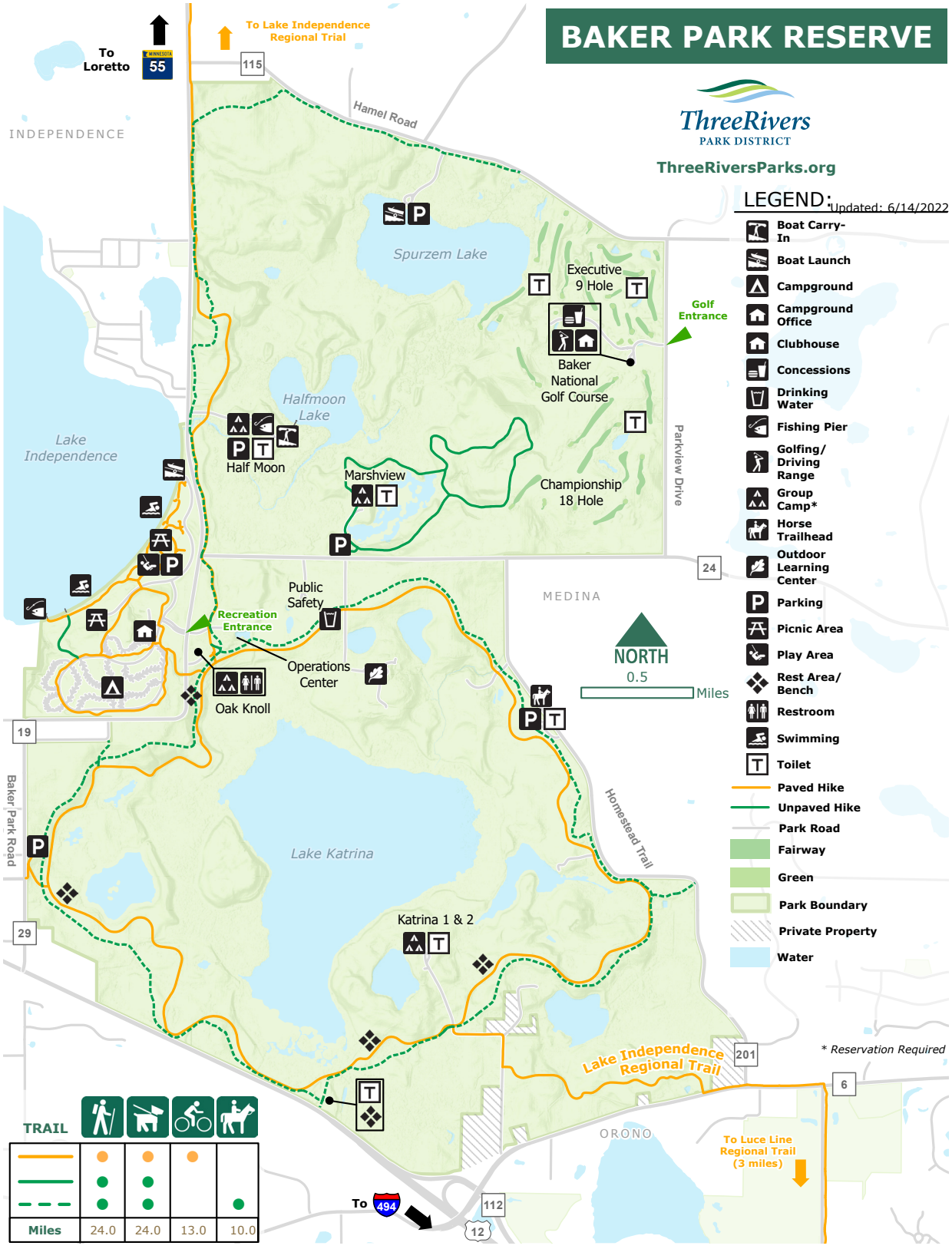
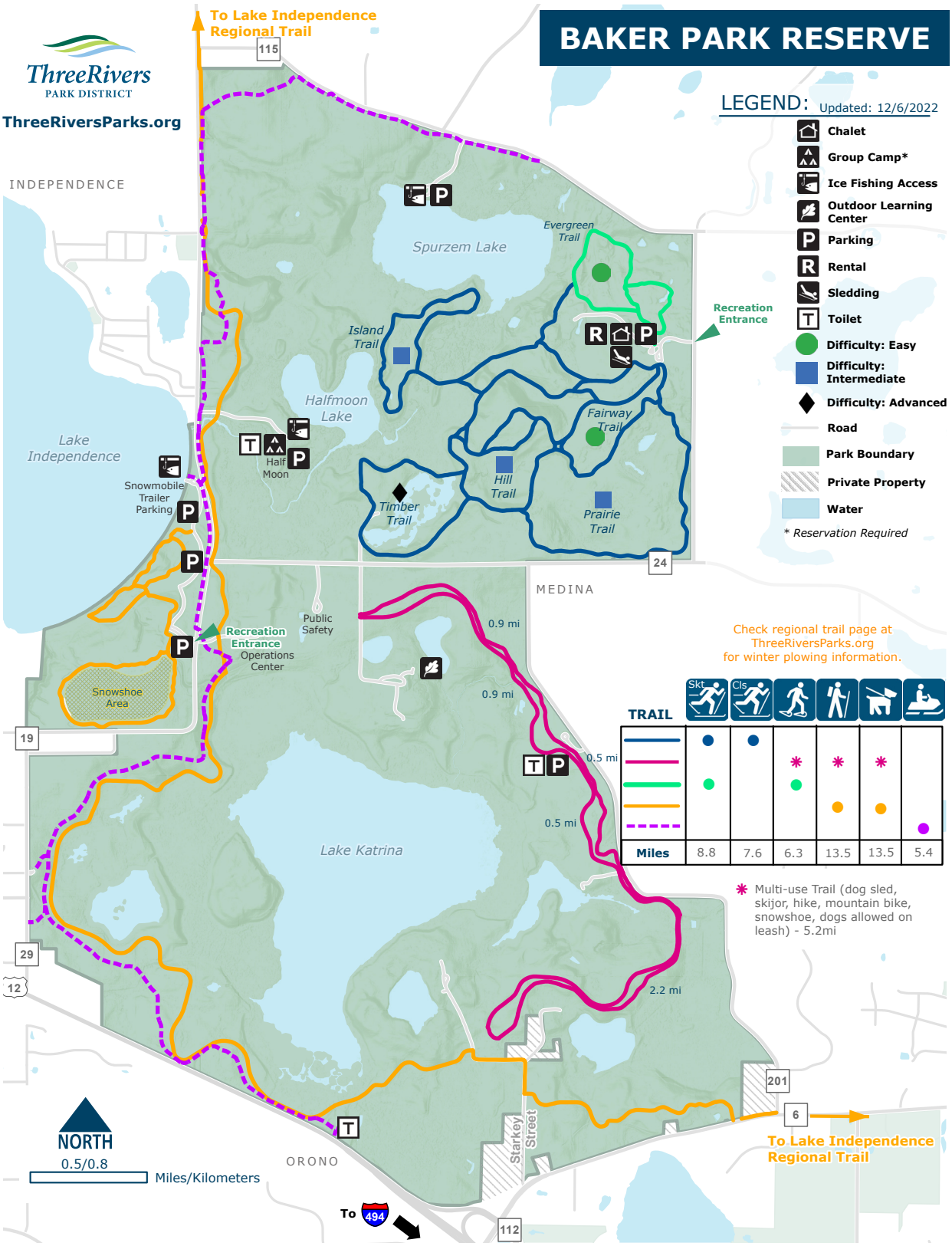


FIGURE 4 | BAKER PARK RESERVE - WINTER MAP
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



- **Natural Areas**
  All land within park reserves zoned as Natural Areas must make up at least 80 percent of the upland acreage. Within these areas, the natural resources are managed, restored and preserved to establish diversity of native plant communities and viable, diverse, native-wildlife populations.

  Natural processes and desirable ecological change should be allowed to take place, except where management techniques must be used to mitigate human influence or to maintain desired successive stages.

  Natural Areas are identified first in the long-range planning process and are not merely what remains after development areas are delineated for recreation and support facilities. Careful planning in the early stages is designed to ensure a quality 80 percent as well as a quality 20 percent.

- **Lakes & Wetland Areas**
  Lakes and wetland are important natural resources that are protected through governmental laws and Park District regulations. Dispersed recreational facilities such as turf or paved trails may pass through these natural areas as long as they do not compromise significant natural resources.

Park Reserve 80/20 Policy

As shown in **Table 1**, the Baker Park Reserve developed areas acreage are compliant with Met Council's 80/20 Policy but exceed Three Rivers' 80/20 policy. This is prohibited by Three Rivers policy and additional background and options for rectifying this are discussed in Chapter 6 | Design Guidance.

TABLE 1 | BAKER NATURAL & DEVELOPED ACREAGES
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Metropolitan Council Policy (total acreage)		
Natural Areas (including lakes & wetlands)	2,577.6	82.4%
Developed Areas	550.3	17.6%
TOTAL	3,127.9	

Three Rivers Park District Policy (upland acreage only)		
Natural Upland Areas (excluding lakes & wetlands)	1,440.7	72.4%
Developed Areas	550.3	27.6%
TOTAL	1991.0	

SERVICE AREA & LOCAL PARK SYSTEMS

The park service area serves as a planning tool to understand the demographic composition of those intended to be served by Baker Park Reserve and ensure that these geographic areas and community members are served and have convenient access to Three Rivers offerings **(Figure 6)**.

As a semi-developed park, 50% of visits are expected to originate from within a 20-minute drive-shed, commonly referred to as the ideal core service area, and 75% of visits are expected to originate from within a 30-minute drive-shed, commonly referred to as the ideal primary service area. Generally, Baker Park Reserve meets the ideal core and primary service area goals.

The 2021 Golf Survey and 2018 Park Visitor Study indicates that 50% of summer visitors drive 19.8 minutes and 75% of all summer visitors drive 29.2 minutes to access Baker Park Reserve. Further details regarding service area demographics are defined in Chapter 2.

The service area also includes other ancillary outdoor recreation and open space opportunities provided primarily by local city providers in the form of community and neighborhood parks and athletic playfields. These local parks provide active recreation opportunities including flexible open-spaces, playgrounds, picnic areas, walking trails and athletic facilities (i.e. basketball courts, baseball diamonds, striped playfields etc.). Baker Park Reserve's nature-based recreation offerings provide a complement to these local park facilities.

FIGURE 5 | BAKER PARK RESERVE - DEVELOPMENT AREAS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

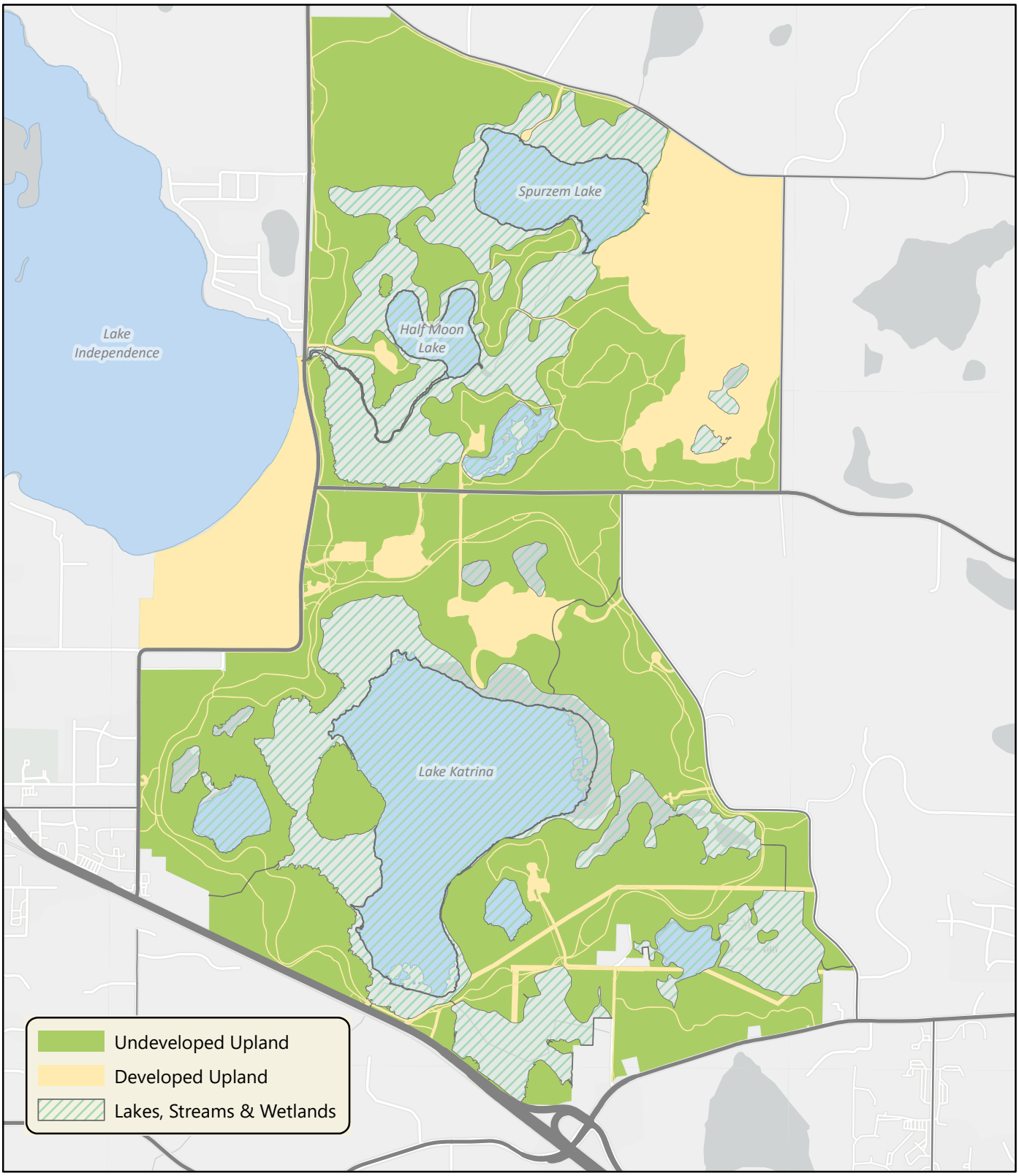
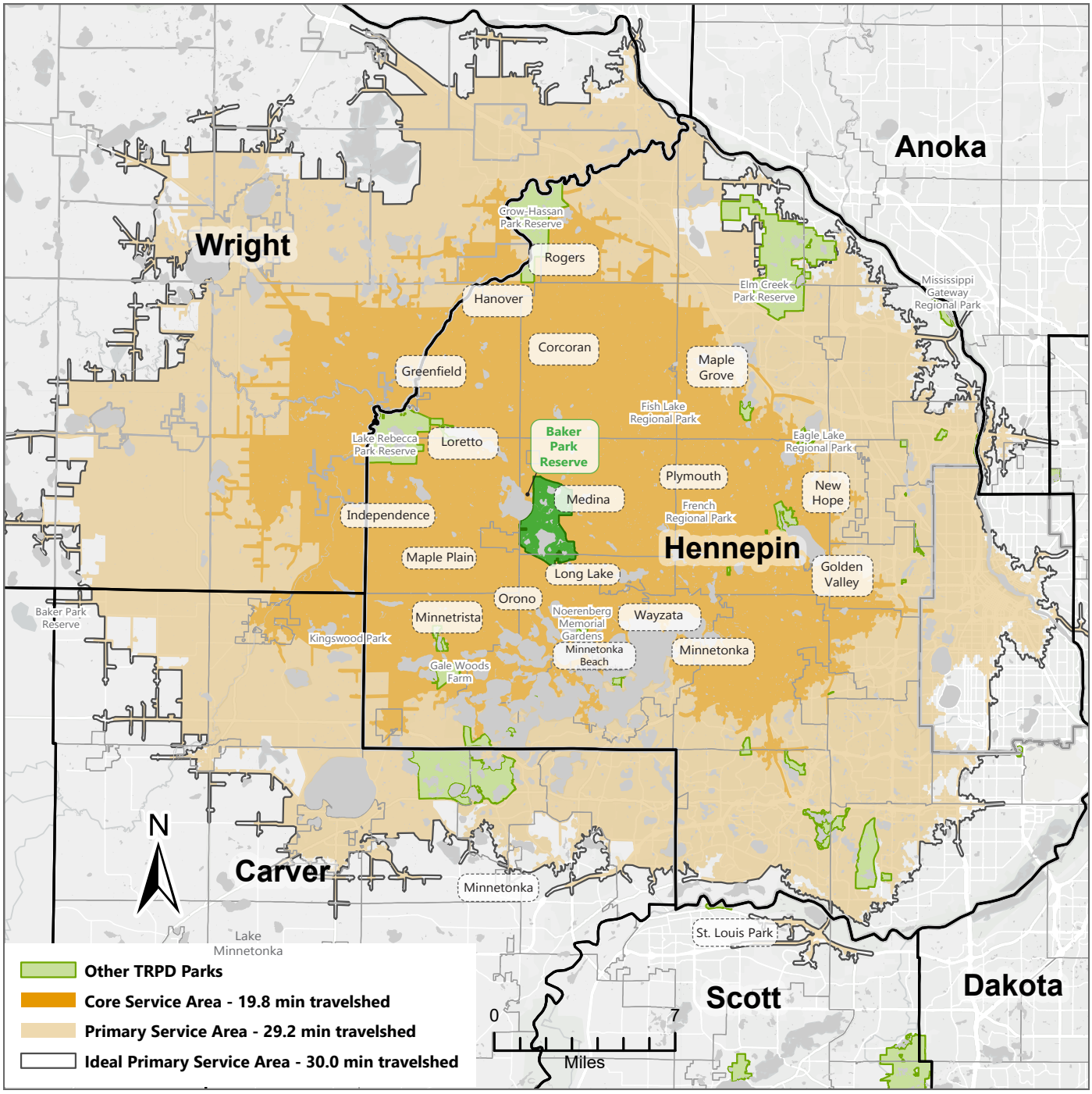


FIGURE 6 | BAKER PARK RESERVE SERVICE AREA
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



What do we mean when we say:

Service Area is determined by park user surveys asking how far visitors traveled to get to the park. It serves as a planning tool to understand the area and demographics a park serves and to guide park recommendations.

PRECEDENT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan is consistent with the planning visions of associated regional and state agencies.

Met Council 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

The Metropolitan Council, under Thrive MSP 2040, identified a vision for the region's future which includes a focus on expanding and diversifying the regional park system to better meet the needs of the growing Twin Cities' communities.

Specific objectives include:

- Providing a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high quality resources, increases climate resiliency, fosters healthy outcomes, connects communities, and enhances quality of life.
- Strengthening equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents, across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

Thrive MSP 2040 forecasts project that over the next 20 years, growth and redevelopment will occur throughout the region. Forces driving this change are the region's aging population, new residential preferences among younger households, and increasing interest in sustainable lifestyles. These demographic changes, emerging preferences, and shifting development patterns are elevating the importance of maintaining and expanding regional parks and trails, such as Baker Park Reserve, which serves the most developed and developing parts of the region.

Local Communities

This long-range plan is consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plans for communities within Baker Park Reserve's service area. These planning documents identified Baker Park Reserve as a regional destination, complementing existing local park systems.

Regional Trails

This long-range plan complements the long-range plans of three regional trails that connect to and run through Baker Park Reserve:

Lake Independence Regional Trail Long-range Plan

Lake Independence Regional Trail currently connects Crow-Hassan Park Reserve, Baker Park Reserve, Crow River Regional Trail and Luce Line State Trail through the communities of Corcoran, Medina, Loretto and Orono in western Hennepin County. The regional trail will also connect directly to the Dakota Rail Regional Trail, Diamond Lake Regional Trail and Noerenberg Memorial Gardens when fully complete. The full build-out of paved Lake Independence Regional Trail will measure about 19 miles including 3 miles through Baker Park Reserve which will also be part of the future Diamond Lake Regional Trail.

Baker-Carver Regional Trail Long-range Plan

The Baker-Carver Regional Trail will measure 17 miles from the Lake Independence Regional Trail in Baker Park Reserve to the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail in Carver Park Reserve through the Hennepin County communities of Medina, Maple Plain, Independence and Minnetrista, and the Carver County community of Victoria. The regional trail will connect to Baker and Carver Park Reserves, Gale Woods Farm, and Kingswood Park in addition to Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, Dakota Rail and Lake Independence Regional Trails, Luce Line State Trail and indirectly to Lake Minnetonka Regional Park.

Diamond Lake Regional Trail and Dakota Rail-Luce Line Connector Long-range Plan

The Diamond Lake Regional Trail will extend about 28 miles from Goodin Park and the West Mississippi Regional Trail in Dayton through Rogers and Corcoran to the existing Lake Independence Regional Trail and future Baker-Carver Regional Trail in Baker Park Reserve in Medina. The Dakota Rail-Luce Line Connector will extend 0.9-miles from the Luce Line State Trail in Orono to the Dakota Rail Regional Trail in downtown Wayzata.

2
DEMAND FORECAST
TREND ANALYSIS

A variety of different trends and desires will impact the future use and development of Baker Park Reserve. The demand forecast estimates the number of potential future park users in order to plan for facilities operation and management. The demand forecast for Baker Park Reserve includes a consideration of the following elements:

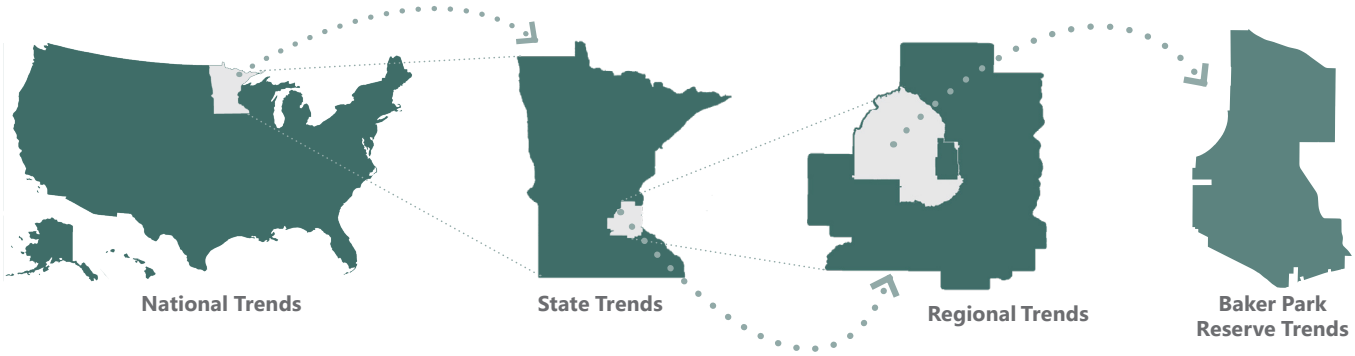
- Analysis of national, state and regional trends in recreation and demographic changes
- Baker Park Reserve's service area demographics
- Analysis of current park user data 2018

NATIONAL TRENDS

The following are identified nationwide trends regarding outdoor recreation activities. Examples include:

- Hiking/Walking
- Biking
- Camping, especially RV and trailing camping
- Shoreline fishing
- Being in/experiencing Nature

Climate change is also an increasing topic in relation to park and trail flooding, impact on recreation patterns as a result of warmer and wetter conditions and changing and reduced resiliency of our natural resources. Planning with these changes and potential mitigation and adaptation strategies is critical to reducing a wider range of impacts. Three Rivers has modified its maintenance and natural resource management strategies at Baker Park Reserve to respond to these changing trends, such as protecting highly erodible areas and planting species that are more resilient.



STATE TRENDS

The 2020-2024 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), published by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR), gives outdoor recreation decision-makers and managers a focused set of priorities and suggested actions to guide them as they make decisions about outdoor recreation. The SCORP outlines outdoor recreation trends, challenges and issues including protecting existing natural resources, sustaining existing facilities, promoting healthy lifestyles, connecting people with nature and an increasing demand for a diverse range of recreation opportunities based upon population changes.

The SCORP identified some of the most imperative future trends and issues that will impact how we plan for, manage and enjoy outdoor recreation in Minnesota. These include recognition of 1) the public health benefits of outdoor recreation; 2) the need to serve all Minnesotan's equitably in outdoor recreation spaces; 3) Minnesota's changing population demographics; 4) climate change impacts on our natural world and recreational facilities; and 5) continued accessibility challenges at our outdoor recreation facilities.

REGIONAL TRENDS

Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan indicates an increasing interest in providing equitable access to parks, trails, and recreation facilities. With significant population growth in the urban core and first ring suburbs, there is also the need to provide recreation facilities close to home. Transportation to regional parks is a significant participation barrier for low income populations. Physical and mental health are also recognized as important provisions of parks, trails, and recreation programming. With an increase in obesity and mental health issues, parks have been tasked with providing facilities and programs that help people lead healthier lives.

Metropolitan Growth Projections

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for tracking and forecasting population growth within the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. According to the 2020 US Census, there are 3.16 million people living within the seven-county area.

The regional population is expected to increase to 3.48 million by 2030, 3.75 million by 2040 and 4.0 million by 2050.

The Metropolitan Council reports that "by 2040, the region's population will be: more racially and ethnically diverse; older; and more often living in smaller households." In addition, there will be more older community members than children since demographic data started being collected. Baker Park Reserve must be prepared for these changes in visitor demographics by planning for improvements that enhance the user experiences of these community groups.

Aging "Baby Boomer" Generation

The baby-boom generation is one of Three Rivers' primary user groups. The United States Census Bureau considers a baby boomer to be someone born during the demographic birth boom between 1946 and 1964 following World War II. For this group, their recreational preferences and habits are very well established and the demand for these activities will continue to be strong. However, as this group ages, physical limitations will require some park and trail visitors to change their recreational activities from higher intensity activities such as running, in-line skating and biking to lower-impact recreational

activities such as walking, nature observation and educational opportunities. Promoting nature-based programming and providing more rest stops along trails at Baker Park will help satisfy this demand.

While many park and trail facilities are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, there is still work to do to make facilities more accessible at Baker Park Reserve. Programs such as the Three Rivers' "Trails at Your Pace" and investment in accessible routes, bathrooms, and recreation facilities will be more important than ever before.

Racial Diversity & Immigrant Groups

Metropolitan Council demographers have found that the BIPOC population of the Twin Cities region is anticipated to double between 2020 and 2050. The Twin Cities region will become more racially and ethnically diverse and the region's population of color will comprise a greater share of the region's population, going from 28% in 2020 to 44% in 2050. In contrast, the region's White population will level off, then decline after 2030.

The following are the most prevalent immigrant groups within the region: Hmong/Southeast Asians, Hispanic/Latino and Somali/West Africans.

Metropolitan Council research has indicated that these visitor groups, BIPOC and immigrant, share a common approach to park and trail visitation.

Specifically, immigrants often visit parks and trails in very large groups (20 or more visitors) of extended families and friends that cross all age classes.

They prefer clustered picnic tables with adjacent play fields for pick-up games, shaded areas with seating for older members of their group and access to water for shore fishing.

To serve these community members, it is important to provide adequate wayfinding, accessible and convenient park access, and welcoming facilities for people from all backgrounds. Preserving open space and improving picnic facilities will be important at Baker Park Reserve.

BAKER PARK RESERVE TRENDS & DEMOGRAPHICS

Three Rivers maintains an active Research and Evaluations Program that periodically surveys the general public, as well as park and trail visitors to understand who is and is not visiting Three Rivers parks and trails, to identify issues and gather suggestions for improvements. Information is gathered through phone surveys, on-site interviews and mail-back surveys.

Suburban Hennepin County

Three Rivers main focus includes all of Hennepin County except for the City of Minneapolis. When comparing the Baker Park Reserve service area with suburban Hennepin County, the following trends are seen:

- Higher percentage of residents over 60 years old
- Lower percentage of low income households
- Lower percentage of BIPOC residents

It is expected that visitors to Baker Park Reserve will mirror these findings.

Park Service Area Demographics Comparison

The park service area (defined in Chapter 1 | Figure 6) is a tool that helps understand the geographic area as well as the demographic composition a park already serves or intends to serve.

Table 2 illustrates which community groups are underrepresented or overrepresented in Baker Park Reserve when comparing the demographics of actual visitors surveyed in the park in 2018, compared to the demographic census data of the ideal primary service areas. Based on this comparison, the following demographic groups are considered to be underrepresented at Baker Park Reserve.

- People age 24-34 and 75 years or older
- Females
- Black adults
- Asian adults
- Multiple and other race adults
- Households with an average annual income less than $50,000

Underrepresented community groups represent people or groups that are not participating in a park activity to the extent in which it is expected given their percentage of the overall population. Since these are community members Three Rivers would like to better serve, particularly at Baker Park Reserve, efforts were made to reach out to these community members during the engagement phases to ensure their voices were heard and could be addressed in the long-range plan recommendations. In addition, future engagement efforts will take into account any changes in the demographic composition of park service area (a more detailed breakdown of the demographics of community groups for each of the service areas is located in **Appendix E**).

TABLE 2 | COMMUNITY GROUP REPRESENTATION FOR BAKER PARK RESERVE SERVICE AREAS

SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

AGE	Under Represented	On-Target	Over Represented
<5 years		✓	
5–9 years			✓
10–17 years			✓
18–24 years		✓	
25–34 years	✓		
35–44 years		✓	
45–59 years		✓	
60–74 years		✓	
75+years	✓		

GENDER	Under Represented	On-Target	Over Represented
Female	✓ 1		
Male			✓

RACE	Under Represented	On-Target	Over Represented
White			✓
Black	✓		
American Indian		✓	
Asian	✓ 2		
Multiple/Other	✓ 2		

ETHNICITY	Under Represented	On-Target	Over Represented
Not Hispanic		✓	
Hispanic		✓	

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Under Represented	On-Target	Over Represented
<$50,000	✓		
$50,000 - $75,000		✓	
>$75,000			✓

1. Women, Black, Asian, Multiple and Other races are considered under-represented only if golf visitors are factored into the analysis. Excluding golf visitors from the analysis, these population groups are not considered under-represented in Baker Park Reserve due to the golf being a White male-dominated activity.
2. As a result of more recent population growth, Asian and multiple/other race community members were not considered under-represented in the service area when the engagement plan was developed, thus were not specifically targeted in the plan.

Visitation

Baker Park Reserve received about 480,000 visits during 2022 (not including golf visits) according to Metropolitan Council estimates. This is an increase of 40 percent over the last fifteen years when Baker's annual visitation was estimated at 338,000. According to Metropolitan Council, the season with the highest visitation at Baker has consistently been summer.

The number of Baker Park Reserve summer visitors that participate in various activities and their ages are provided in **Tables 3 & 4** and are based on observation counts, visitor surveys and revenue reports compiled by Three Rivers staff.

Length of Stay

Currently, 56 percent of day visitors stay for less than three hours while 33 percent stay for less than two hours and six percent of all day visitors stay for less than one hour. The average length of stay is two hours 40 minutes (second longest for Three Rivers).

Perceived Safety and Satisfaction

In 2018, 99 percent of surveyed Baker visitors felt safe with 90 percent of visitors feeling very safe. Additionally, 99 percent of surveyed Baker visitors were satisfied with their experience at the park.

Desired Improvements

According to the 2018 Park District visitor survey, the most frequently suggested improvements for Baker Park Reserve are as follows:

1. Provide more garbage cans (12%)
2. Improve lake water quality (10%)
3. Upgrade play area (6%) *
4. Staff gate more frequently (6%)
5. Clean bathrooms more/better (6%)
6. Staff should be friendlier & more helpful (5%)
7. Upgrade bathrooms in recreation area (5%) *

***The play area was reconstructed in 2021 and the restroom in 2020.**

TABLE 3 | MAIN ACTIVITY PARTICIPATED IN DURING 2018 SUMMER PARK VISIT TO BAKER PARK RESERVE

SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Main Activity	Percent of Summer Visitors	Number of Summer Visitors	Average Visitors Per Summer Day
Camping	22.6%	53,900	586
Golfing	22.2%	50,500	549
Hiking	8.4%	20,100	218
Picnicking	8.4%	20,100	218
Biking	7.8%	18,600	202
Play Area	6.3%	15,000	163
Swimming / Beach	6.2%	14,700	160
Boating (includes boat fishing)	4.7%	11,300	123
Group Camping	4.2%	10,000	109
In-line Skating / Roller Skiing	1.1%	2,500	27
Public Programs	1.1%	2,500	27
Running	1.0%	2,400	26
Fishing from Shore	0.9%	2,200	24
Scheduled Group with Staff Instructor	0.7%	1,700	18
Horseback Riding	0.4%	1,000	11
Other[1]	4.9%	11,700	127
Total Summer Visits - 2018	**100%**	**238,200**	**2,589**

[1] Other activities include attending a baptism, capture the flag, checking out park, hanging out, meditating, reading, relaxing, volleyball, and watching the sunset.

TABLE 4 | AGE OF PARK VISITORS

SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Main Activity		Estimated Percent of Visitors											
		n	Under 3 Years	3-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-12 Years	13-17 years	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-59 years	60-74 years	75 or older
Biking		20	1	1	4	8	7	3	14	22	21	17	1
Boating (includes boat fishing)		18	1	2	8	2	12	16	18	11	21	8	<1
Camping		93	4	6	13	10	7	5	9	22	14	10	1
Fishing from Shore		7	<1	<1	5	16	48	5	<1	16	5	5	<1
Golfing		455	<1	<1	1	2	2	3	10	15	33	31	3
Hiking/Running		18	3	2	2	5	12	10	17	8	40	2	<1
Horseback Riding		3	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	20	60	<1	20	<1
In-line Skating / Roller Skiing		5	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	43	<1	29	14	14	<1
Picnicking		33	2	5	13	15	8	8	14	16	5	13	1
Play Area		24	2	18	36	19	1	14	2	6	1	2	<1
Public Programs		25	<1	2	36	27	9	2	<1	7	7	8	2
Swimming/Beach		39	3	6	22	8	21	12	5	11	6	5	1
Other		12	5	2	14	14	5	9	18	18	14	2	<1
Total Summer Visitors – 2018[1]	**As Asked**	**752**	**2**	**4**	**11**	**8**	**8**	**7**	**11**	**16**	**19**	**13**	**1**
	Grouped	**752**	**6**		**11**	**16**		**7**	**11**	**16**	**19**	**13**	**1**
Suburban Hennepin County[2]			**6.7**		**6.2**	**10.1**		**6.3**	**14.6**	**13.3**	**20.7**	**15.5**	**6.7**

[1]Total estimate does not include those participating in group camping, scheduled groups or golf lessons. **Shaded cells denote median age range**.

[2] Data from the 2017 American Community Survey by U.S. Census Bureau.

Projected Park Use

Projected recreational use at Baker Park Reserve indicates continued participation in camping, fishing, boating, swimming, golfing and trail use during the non-winter months. Three Rivers' seasonal-use data indicates that significant use of the park occurs in the spring, summer and fall seasons. Winter use of the Baker Park Reserve includes cross country skiing and winter walking which is also projected to continue.

Annual visitation is expected to grow from 480,000 in 2022 to 613,000 without golf visits or from 542,700 to 683,000 with golf visits by 2031, if visitation trends remain similar to the past 15 years. After the long-range improvements are completed, Baker Park Reserve is projected to generate a moderate increase in visitation as most of the recommendations are minor improvements to existing facilities.

Projected Population Growth

Much of the Baker Park Reserve service area is expected to grow in the next 20 years, with most significant growth happening in Rogers, Rockford, southwestern Maple Grove, eastern Corcoran and northern Plymouth **(Figure 7).** Overall, the entire service area is expected to grow by 16% in the next 20 years. .

Population density in most of the Baker Park Reserve service area is very low, except in the cities of Maple Grove, Plymouth, Rockford, Delano and Mound **(Figure 8)**. Areas surrounding some of these communities that are expected to see the most growth in the next twenty years as well.

FIGURE 7 | 2020 - 2040 POPULATION GROWTH IN BAKER PARK RESERVE SERVICE AREA
SOURCE: METROPOLITAN COUNCIL (TAZ ZONES)

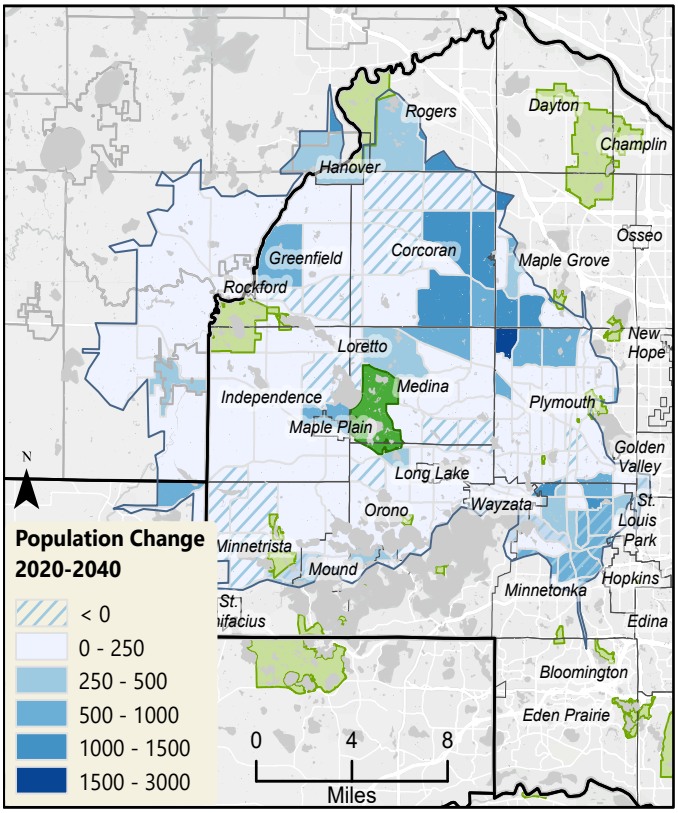
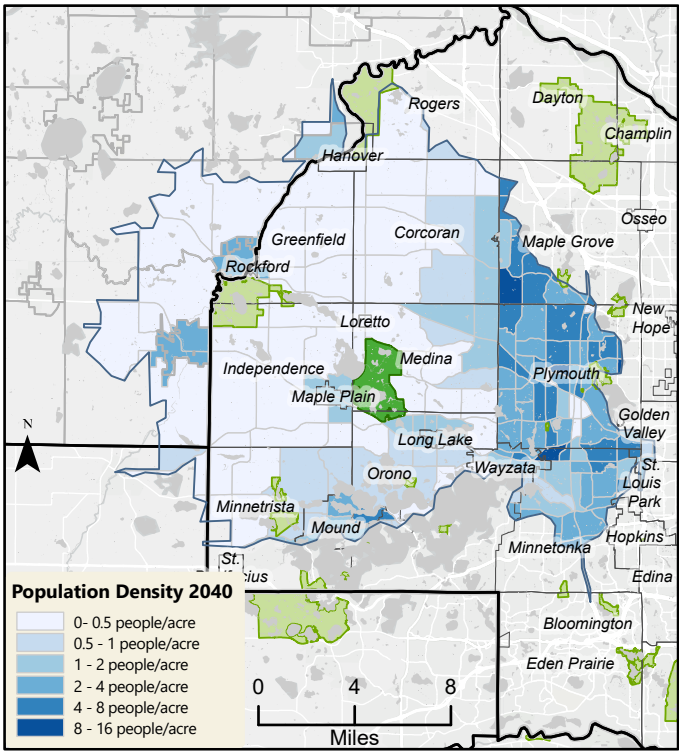


FIGURE 8 | 2040 (ESTIMATED) POPULATION DENSITY IN BAKER PARK RESERVE SERVICE AREA
SOURCE: METROPOLITAN COUNCIL (TAZ ZONES)



3
INPUT
ENGAGEMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS

Community and partner engagement are instrumental in determining the relevance and success of parks for all potential users, both now and in the future. The goal of Baker Park Reserve's Long-range plan was to develop a community driven and supported plan to better serve both existing and new park users. To do so, Three Rivers staff purposefully engaged and built relationships with individuals, community groups and agency partners throughout the engagement process.

Input from these groups was used to guide the development ideas, resource management and operation recommendations for the park.

The majority of engagement occurred in 2018 at the start of the long-range planning process, which guided the Development Concept, but was paused from 2020-2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After the pause, additional public engagement was conducted in 2022 and focused on confirming and updating the ideas from the Development Concept as well as re-engaging with underrepresented populations.

ENGAGEMENT SCOPE

As a semi-developed park reserve, Baker Park Reserve's purpose is to protect natural resources while supporting nature-based recreation and education **offerings**.
The long-range plan includes recommendations to build off and improve the existing infrastructure and offerings to ensure the park remains relevant and welcoming to all potential park visitors and community members.

What do we mean when we say:

Offerings: the combination of all nature-based education programs, recreation opportunities, events and facilities provided by Three Rivers.

FIGURE 9 | ENGAGEMENT SCOPE
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

GOALS

To ensure the park serves and remains relevant and welcoming to all potential visitors and the changing greater community.

- Make engagement easy, convenient, interactive, thoughtful and valuable to both/all parties.
- Provide opportunities for all interested parties to participate and be heard – regardless, and in consideration, of, income, religion, gender, race, age (including youth and seniors), etc.
- Reach and engage diverse populations of the area especially those typically underrepresented in the regional park/trail system and planning/engagement processes.
- Set the stage for developing long-term relationships with underrepresented populations.

WHO

- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

WHAT

- Overall park input/feedback (areas of success and improvement)
- Programming suggestions
- Focused input (underrepresented voices)
- 30-day public comment period

WHERE

- In-person meetings
- Pop-ups
- Tabling at events
- Online surveys
- Interactive mapping input
- Facilitated conversations
- Display boards for comment

WHEN

- Phase 1 (Summer 2018): Information Gathering
- Phase 2 (Fall 2018-Fall 2022): Preliminary Public Review
- Phase 3 (Fall 2022-Spring 2023): Partner Review
- Phase 4 (Spring 2023): 30-day Comment Period

Therefore, the long-range plan does not completely start from scratch as if the park was a blank slate. This approach is appropriate as the 2018 Park District visitor satisfaction data suggests visitors are highly satisfied and feel safe and welcomed at the park.

The engagement scope and approaches were wide-reaching and included a variety of techniques including many new engagement strategies due to the COVID-19 pandemic **(Figure 9)**. A main goal was to make engagement easily accessible, authentic and valuable.

Three Rivers' engagement approach was further informed by the Public Participation Spectrum, an engagement tool developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). The spectrum describes five general modes of public participation that fall on a progressive continuum of increasing influence over decision-making in a given civic-engagement process. Importantly, the model not only describes the goals of a given mode of public participation, but also the "promise" that each mode communicates - either implicitly or explicitly - to the public **(Figure 10)**.

The engagement plan followed a four-phase process which directly correlated to the public participation spectrum, offering opportunities to inform, consult, involve and collaborate throughout the planning process:

- **Phase 1** | Information Gathering
- **Phase 2** | Proposed Concepts/Ideas Review
- **Phase 3** | Preliminary Partner Review
- **Phase 4** | 30-Day Public Comment Period

FIGURE 10 | PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM
SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Inform Phase 1, 2, 3, 4	Consult Phases 1, 2, 3 & 4	Involve Phases 1 & 2	Collaborate	Empower
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

WHO WAS ENGAGED

Public engagement focused on gathering input from those who live within the service area and are most likely to benefit or use Baker Park Reserve. In accordance with Three Rivers' Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, the ideal primary service area is within a 30-minute drive time. Therefore, engagement efforts generally focused on reaching and engaging residents and agencies located within or close to this area.

Engagement efforts were divided into categories including; general public, underrepresented community groups, existing park users and cities, agencies & staff.

General Public

The general public represents the full range of potential park users – and includes people of all ages, abilities, races, ethnicities and income levels who generally live or spend time within the defined service area (30-minute drive time). This category also includes everyone who is intended to benefit from the park, including both existing and non-park users. This helps ensure that the feedback is not biased toward one group and park improvements encourage users and non-users to continue or start visiting the park.

It also has the potential to capture feedback from underrepresented community members; however, these groups typically have greater barriers to participation and may be less represented within the feedback obtained through engagement efforts focused solely on the general public.

Engagement efforts with the general public focused on increasing awareness, understanding barriers and obtaining more broad, general feedback on preferences and recommendations.

Park Users

Baker Park Reserve is a popular local and regional destination within the Three Rivers Regional Parks and Trail system, receiving 555,000 visits (including golf)/ year with nearly 19% of visitors originating from greater Minnesota or outside of Minnesota. During the summer months, the park averages 2,500 visits/day. Of these total visits, 88 percent are repeat visits.

Existing park users are a valuable resource to engage with since they have a greater awareness of the park's amenities and offerings. Thus, engagement efforts with existing park users often focus on identifying specific locations for improvements (i.e., specific park facilities, amenities, operations and rules), building awareness of other happenings in the park (i.e., for those who haven't participated or are unaware), and additional offerings they would like to see in the park (e.g., programs, amenities, etc.).

Based on the 2018 Baker Park visitor survey and recent US Census data, the demographic composition of Baker Park Reserve visitors generally reflects that of the core service area (50% of visitors drive 19.8 minutes or less), but is less diverse in terms of certain age groups and races when compared to the primary service area (75% of visitors drive 29.2 minutes or less). See Appendix E for demographic details of park visitors and service areas.

Underrepresented Community Groups

Based on research findings, there are some community groups that are currently underrepresented within Three Rivers, meaning they are not visiting to the extent which is expected given their percent of the overall population. Traditionally, these groups have not been accurately represented and/or actively engaged in planning processes. System-wide, these groups include:

- **First-tier community** members
- **Black, Indigenous, People of color (BIPOC)**
- New immigrants and refugees
- Households with an average annual income of less than $50,000
- People 75 years or older
- People with a range of abilities

As highlighted in Table 2 of Chapter 2, underrepresented groups in the Baker Park Reserve primary service area include:

- People age 24-34 and 75 years or older
- Females (not considered underrepresented if golf visits are excluded)
- Black adults
- Asian adults
- Multiple and other race adults
- Households with an average annual income less than $50,000

What do we mean when we say:

First-Tier Communities are generally fully-developed, include the most populated areas, have the greatest concentrations of currently underrepresented community groups and the least direct access to current Three Rivers parks. First-tier communities include: Bloomington – east of 35W, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park – south of Hwy 610, Crystal, Edina, Golden Valley, Hopkins, New Hope, Richfield, Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park.

BIPOC includes, for the purposes of this Plan; African Americans/ Black, Indigenous Peoples, Asian Americans, Pacific Islander Americans, multiracial Americans, and some Latinx/o/a Americans, though members of these communities may prefer to view themselves through their cultural identities rather than color-related terminology. This terminology is based on current inclusive writing guidance and is subject to change.

Increasing our connections to these community groups is a core focus in order to better serve and help connect everyone to nature every day.

Additional context as to how these demographic groups are changing, why they are still underrepresented in our parks, and how the region's history has contributed to inequitable outcomes throughout regional park and trail corridors is detailed in **Table 5, pages 21-22**.

The engagement efforts for this group focused primarily on building awareness, understanding barriers, and identifying offerings that would encourage them to visit and feel welcome at Baker Park Reserve.

Cities, Agencies & Staff

Three Rivers engaged cities around Baker Park Reserve, which includes Medina, Orono, Independence and Maple Plain. Three Rivers also engaged Hennepin County, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management.

This group was engaged to provide perspective on the park based on their expertise and agency's needs, goals and priorities, including planning and projects that may impact the park reserve.

Additionally, they helped provide context as to gaps in services and make connections/share event information with residents.

Engagement materials were brought to targeted community events.

TABLE 5 | UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS CONTEXT | EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

First-Tier Community Members	BIPOC & Hispanics			
	Black	**Indigenous**	**Asian**	**Hispanic**
Barriers				
• **Lack of physical Park District facilities (parks and trails) located directly within first-tier communities.** These communities were developing or fully developed when Three Rivers was established. Affordable, large blocks of land for preservation of parkland were not available in this area and instead located in second and third-tier communities. This inadvertently resulted in a geographically imbalanced park and trail system and the first-tier communities were not served as well.	• **Lack of awareness,** such as understanding what is a regional park, where are they, how do you get there, what are the rules, what do you do there, what events are occurring there. • **Safety concerns,** including fears of violent crime and accidents. • **Map challenges**, including understanding maps and lacking directions which can led to getting lost getting to park, or while recreating. • **Lack of cultural accommodations,** which often leads to cultural insensitivity/ discrimination. • **Cost/Access**, for purchasing or renting recreation gear/ equipment. Especially for an activity that is new.	• Barriers experienced by this group are not well documented or explored. Three Rivers is committed to better understanding the experiences of indigenous groups in suburban Hennepin County and beyond.	• **Lack of awareness,** including what a regional park is, where they are located, and how do they get there and navigate once there. • **Language barriers,** particularly for immigrants learning English but also those who speak English as a second language. • **Weather,** specifically winter is too cold to be outside, additionally rain and heat are barriers. • **Safety concerns**, including fears of wildlife, getting lost, and behavior of others.	• **Lack of awareness,** including wayfinding and providing materials in Spanish. • **Lack of time,** too busy or consumed with trying to meet basic needs. • **Safety concerns,** such as darkness/ lighting and getting lost. • **Cost/Access**, for purchasing or renting recreation gear/equipment. Especially for an activity that is new. • **Proximity of regional parks** from home, place of work or other destination (barrier contributor, but to a lesser degree).
Recommendations				
• Over the last 20 years, this has been and will continue to be a significant focus for Three Rivers. Subsequent planning as part of the Parks to People Long-range Plan will continue to explore opportunities for bridging and/or partnership parks and trails within the first-tier communities depending on applicable needs assessment. These areas have the greatest numbers and concentration of BIPOC community members and lower-income households.	• Systemic racism, meaning the compounded and cumulative economic, social & health inequities that many Black Americans endure, requires a collective response. Black Americans have historically been discriminated against in housing, employment, community development (e.g. parks and trails) and more. Due to the long history of systemic racism in institutions that intersect with park systems themselves, this community group deserves thoughtful time & attention to better understand the barriers they face as well as their preferences, which require building trust between the Black community and public agencies such as Three Rivers.	• Indigenous groups across the United States have also been impacted by systemic racism. Land used for parks and other developments was largely inhabited by indigenous groups at one time. It is crucial to better understand how to partner with and better share this group's history whom have endured land theft, genocide, and discrimination since the inception of the United States. New initiatives and partnerships within Three Rivers and Regional Park System have prioritized this work in the coming years.	• This community group is the third largest ethnic group after white and Black or African-American in Hennepin County. Barriers within the Asian community can differ depending on whether individuals identify as Asian Immigrants or Asian Americans. Regardless, it is important to consider and employ both groups recommendations. Some recommendations include the following: increase awareness through ambassadors or translated materials, increase safety through security guards or ambassadors, provide and advertise spaces to walk, fish, rest/relax.	• Because this community group is growing, younger, and is more frequently from lower-income households, efforts to increase their participation and enjoyment of the regional parks and trails will also support several other underrepresented community groups. This should include support for outdoor activities including celebrations and parties, picnicking and/or barbecuing and spending time with family.

	New Immigrants & Refuges	Households with Annual Income less than $50,000	People 75 years & Older	People with a Range of Abilities
Barriers	• **Lack of awareness,** particularly understanding what is a regional park, where are they, how do you get there, what are the rules, what do you do there, what events are occurring there. • **Language Barriers**, particularly for immigrants learning English but also those who speak English as a second language.	• **Lack of awareness.** • **Lack of accessibility,** including transit dependent households who may not be able to access regional parks and trails due limited route connections, time it takes to access parks via transit and need for safe pedestrian/ bicyclist connectivity of a regional park and trail from their home, place of work or other desired destination. • **Lack of time,** too busy or consumed with trying to meet basic needs. • **Cost/Access**, for purchasing or renting recreation gear/ equipment. Especially for an activity that is new.	• **Lack of support amenities,** including benches and seating along paths and active use areas. • **Lack of accessibility**, particularly easily accessible spaces or lack of information about accessibility. • **Limited winter maintenance** on paved trails. • **Lack of programs** geared toward seniors. • **Preference for other activities** not offered by parks & trails. • **Reduced physical ability**.	• **Lack of ADA consistency,** provide unwelcoming and uncomfortable experiences for those that may require additional support. • **Lack of facilities that embrace the wide range of disabilities and abilities,** including cognitive, independent living, hearing, vision and self care that prohibit or reduce one's ability to fully participate in a recreation offering independently or with support. Focus often is primarily focusing on providing ADA improvements that affect mobility (13.7% of adults).
Recommendations	• Because this community group is constantly evolving given current immigrant and refugee patterns as well as acclimation from one generation to the next, the work to better understand the needs and barriers for immigrants and refugees is ongoing and will remain a Park District focus.	• Removing or minimizing the impact of the barriers is a priority of Three Rivers. Many ideas or recommendations will be piloted at French Regional Park and the Parks to People Plan and then implemented across Three Rivers system.	• As this age cohort continues to grow and the trend for seniors to age in place and remain active longer than previous generations strengthens, additional effort to provide convenient high-quality and safe recreation opportunities in parks is needed.	• Ensure ADA compliance for park and trail facilities that do not meet standards. • When considering new and renovated park and trail facilities, consider the wide range of disabilities and abilities that may not fall outside the purview of ADA guidelines. • Examples include: Unstable surfaces, tripping hazards, signage/maps that are difficult or impossible for people with visual impairments to read, sensory overload, and lack of support facilities/ amenities (e.g., benches, ADA restrooms/parking, and equipment like all terrain wheelchairs).

WHAT WAS LEARNED

Engagement focused on gathering ideas around park improvement and building awareness of the park. Recommendations derived from public engagement feedback were reviewed with the public to determine whether the recommendations aligned with members needs and interests and were then modified accordingly.

Phase 1 | Information Gathering

Inform **Consult** **Involve**

This preliminary phase of the long-range plan was focused gathering general information about what makes Baker Park Reserve special, what barriers exist to its use and what improvements would make the park more enjoyable to all visitors or encourage visiting more frequently. The feedback obtained was used to develop ideas and recommendations that went into the Development Concept.

Several different strategies were developed for presenting and collecting input from the public and stakeholder groups, including an online survey, an online mapping tool and in-person events **(Table 6, pages 24-26)**. The bulk of in-person engagement activities occurred during this phase.

The project team attended eight park and community events as part of the first phase of community engagement and reached over 150 people through these events.

Common themes from this phase of engagement included the following:

- Local residents appreciate open space, trails, natural areas, good management of and improvements made to the nature resources of the park.
- Park users are satisfied with maintenance and quality of facilities.
- Adjacent communities acknowledge the value of the Baker Park Reserve trail system and additional community connections.
- The public would like to see enhanced partnerships and communications with local agencies.
- Popular amenities include: campground and recreation area (beach, play area, picnic area).
- Important summer activities: Swimming, quiet/ solitude in the park, observing nature, bicycling, picnicking, playing on the playground, hiking and camping.
- Important winter activities: cross country skiing, sledding, observing nature and winter walking.
- Most desired improvements include: add visitor center/nature center (year round building with information and natural interpretation); more camping amenities (electric campsites, camper cabins, winter camping & recreation opportunities, Wi-Fi in campground); more nature-based programming; lighted cross-county ski trails; more paved trails; add off-leash dog area.
- Most desired natural resource improvements include: improved water quality for wildlife and recreation.
- Other commonly requested ideas include: mountain bike trails; playground in campground; picnic shelters; zipline in the play area; fishing pier; trail improvements, such as adding scenic overlooks, additional shorter trail loops and connections to other parks, trails and neighborhoods.

Feedback was received at various community events.

TABLE 6 | PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT RESULTS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

	Online Survey [Survey Monkey]	Online Interactive Map [Social Pinpoint]	Night to Unite [Maple Plain]	Night to Unite [Independence Beach Neighborhood Party]
	Engagement Category	Engagement Category	Engagement Category	Engagement Category
Overview	**Number of Engagements:** 67 An online questionnaire posted on the project webpage was available for the public to take and provide feedback through. The questionnaire asked about frequency of visits to the park reserve, reasons for visiting or not visiting, the importance of various summer and winter activities, the desire for new facilities and natural resource improvements, and some basic demographic information. This survey was advertised at in-person engagements and through online posts.	**Number of Engagements:** 135 visits, 68 comments An online mapping tool was used to gain public input on how people use the park reserve now and specific locations for improvements. Participants could also comment on other people's comments. The Social Pinpoint mapping tool was advertised at in-person engagements and through online posts.	**Number of Engagements:** 30 A community event at Northside Park in Maple Plain for National Night to Unite. The goal of this event was to reach general public members as well as reach underrepresented groups concentrated in this area, including BIPOC community members, seniors, young adults with children and people from low-income households. Participants were notified of these community events through city communication channels (e.g., City newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages).	**Number of Engagements:** 15 A community event at the Independence Beach neighborhood in Medina (adjacent to Baker Park) for National Night to Unite. The goal of this event was to reach general public members near Baker Park which included many seniors and young adults with children. Participants were notified of these community events through city communication channels (e.g., City newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages).
Feedback Summary	• Most respondents use the park reserve a few times per year or more often • Of those who don't visit often, reasons include: too far away, too busy and campground is full • Most important summer activities include: swimming, play area, picnicking, quiet/solitude in the park, being in nature and bicycling • Most important winter activities include: observing nature, cross country skiing, winter walking and sledding • Most desired improvements include: visitor center+, lighted ski trails+, more paved and soft surface trails, **campground upgrades***, dog off-leash area+ and **Wi-Fi in the campground*** • Other commonly requested improvements included mountain bike trails+, **a playground in the campground*** and **trail connections to other regional trails/parks and surrounding neighborhoods*** • Most desired natural resource improvement: **water quality improvements*** • Most respondents were between 35 and 44 years old and most were white (10% non-white)	• Appreciation for loop trails, natural terrain, natural golf course, picnic facilities, and boat launch • Interest in **interpretive signage *** and **programs related to natural resources and wildlife*** • Desire for water quality of Spurzem Lake to be addressed • Interest in **expanded camping options*** (group camp flexibility, teepees/yurts, bike-in sites) • Interest in disc golf course and lighted ski trails+ • Desire for **more trail connections to/from the park*** • Add a nature center+ • **Interest in more land acquisition to expand park reserve****	• Many very positive comments about Baker Park • Favorite things about Baker Park include the trails, beaches, play area and campground • Desire for **trail improvements (e.g., winter options along 6-mile trail loop - fat tire and plowed)***, **scenic overlooks***, shorter trail loop off the main paved multi-use trail+, more non-paved trails+, mountain bike trails+, **wayfinding signage**, **trail connections to Maple Plain***, lighting for cross-country trails+) • **Play area improvements*** • Widen boat ramp lanes+ • Add a disc golf course+ • Least favorite things about Baker include the requirement for reservations for the campground, crowded campground and lack of awareness of the Spurzem Lake access	• Overall, people shared their enthusiasm for Baker Park Reserve and its offerings • Favorite things at the park included trails (bike, walk, run, ski), boat launch, open area/visual open space as a buffer to other development, nature viewing/bird watching, lake protection • Desire to **continue natural resource improvements*** and **maintain open space as a buffer to development*** • Ideas for improvement include: **improve water quality*** and **maintain trail access and trail conditions***

AUDIENCE
- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 73) for more information.
**This feedback was addressed in the Acquisition Plan. See Chapter 4 (p. 39) for more information.
+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

TABLE 6 | PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT RESULTS (CONTINUED)
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

	Ringer Roller Ski Race [Baker Park Reserve]	Corn Days [St George's Church]	Medina Celebration Day [Hamel Community Center]	Display Boards [Baker Park]
Overview	**Engagement Category**	**Engagement Category**	**Engagement Category**	**Engagement Category**
	Number of Engagements: 15 A roller ski race organized by the Loppet Foundation. This engagement focused on youth and young adults, mostly avid cross country skiers and bike racers.	**Number of Engagements:** 30 A community event near Baker Park at St George's Church in Long Lake, MN. The goal of this event was to reach local general public members within the primary service area as well as reach underrepresented groups concentrated in this area, including BIPOC community members, seniors, young adults with children and people from low-income households. Participants were notified of these community events through city communication channels (e.g., City newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages).	**Number of Engagements:** 20 The goal of this event was to reach local general public members within the primary service area. Participants were notified of these community events through city communication channels (e.g., City newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages).	**Number of Engagements:** 20+ Display boards were posted indoor at frequently visited park reserve locations, including the campground office and golf course clubhouse, to inform and engage park users.

Feedback Summary	• Favorite things about Baker Park Reserve include: paved trails, cross country ski trails and the campground.
	• Ideas for improvements for the cross country ski trails include getting a Piston Bully groomer+, lighted trails and snow-making+.
	• Offer groomed **fat tire bike trails*** south of CR 24 or in the recreation area.
	• Add mountain bike trails in the NW corner of the park (2)+
	• **Finish the bike trail connection for the Lake Independence Regional Trail at Welcome Drive*** (2)
	• Consider trail connections from Baker Park to the Dakota Rail RT and to other planned trails along Medina Road
	• **Add interpretive signs highlighting the park's history**
	• Add electric vehicle charging stations to the recreation area and golf course
		• Favorite things about Baker Park Reserve included: playground, beach, trails, group campgrounds, boat ramp
		• Several people had questions around park location and offerings.
		• Ideas for improvement included:
		  • **Improve the playground*** (add more playground equipment for older kids, add a climbing wall)
		  • Add a splash pad feature+
		  • Add more horse trails+
		  • Add a concession area at the park+
		  • Add more places for people to go with their dogs in the park
			• Favorite things about Baker included: overall park, campground, golf course, nature-based programming, beach, and wildlife
			• Suggested improvements included:
			  • **Improve playground*** (move it uphill and keep the zip line)
			  • Trail connection along Co Rd 11 to Lake Rebecca Park Reserve
			  • **Horse trails: Do not eliminate them***, expand horse trailer parking lot+, **increase education around horse trail etiquette*,** incorporate a pump and hose for water on horse trails
			  • Add disc golf course+
			  • Add dog off leash area+
			  • **Add more benches along trails***
			  • Consider the Hidden Lakes area, NW of Baker, for acquisition**
			  • Add more non-paved trails
				• Appreciation for Park District staff and well-maintained facilities
				• Appreciation for scenic golf course
				• Interest in mountain bike trails, **improved restrooms*** and lit signs
				• Desire for better food options at golf course, **buckthorn removal*** and distance markers on Evergreen course

AUDIENCE
- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 69) for more information.
**This feedback was addressed in the Acquisition Plan. See Chapter 4 (p. 39) for more information.
+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

Park Pop-ups [Baker Park]

Overview

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 60+

A mobile display and survey materials were developed to collect input in the park. The materials included surveys allowing participants to share which types of park activities and park improvements were preferred. The same general materials were used at each pop-up in order to collect consistent feedback.

Pop-ups took place at the south beach/recreation area, Baker Park play area, north beach and campground.

Phone calls and emails to stakeholders

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 0

Lake Independence Citizens Association (neighboring community), Tuesday Night Time Trails (bikers) and Gear West (bikers, runners & skiers) were contacted by email or phone to provide more specific input related to user groups.

Mobile Hope, a non-profit organization that provides on-site support services and resources for the residents of the mobile home park in Corcoran was contacted by email to provide specific input for the long-range plan. Residents of the mobile home park have a higher percentage of under-served populations such as BIPOC, Hispanic, and low income.

Agency and City Meetings

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 18

Attendees, including city planners. watershed districts, county transportation and city park commissions, provided their feedback on community engagement strategies and ideas for park improvements.

Staff Working Group Meetings

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 5

Working group meetings were held with Park District staff to discuss the park's strengths, weaknesses, needs, ideas for improvements and current/planned management plans. Follow up meetings were held to review and incorporate public engagement feedback.

AUDIENCE

- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

Feedback Summary

- Many repeat visitors expressed appreciation and enjoyment of Baker
- Impressed with quality of park and campground
- Desire for a **new play area***
- Interest in a **small play area in the campground for younger children***
- Interest in several beach area updates including:
  - **Additional picnic pavilions and/or shade structures***
  - **Fishing pier and shoreline fishing along the north end of beach***
  - Food options/concessions+
  - Boat docks at south beach+
- Interest in **expanding the campground including more cabins*,** additional space between sites and add walk-in sites
- Improving trails: shorter loop trails, lit ski trails and snow making+, mountain bike trails+

- Feedback from these solicited stakeholder groups was not collected independently but was included in the online survey (Survey Monkey) and interactive webmap application (Social Pinpoint).
- Though Mobile Hope did not respond to requests for input, feedback from other similar under-served populations include:
  - Lack of transportation to the park reserve by lower income groups is a barrier
  - Cost of programs and recreation activities are high and can be prohibitive for potential users
  - **Free, introductory and family-oriented types of activities are preferred***

- Interest in **improving local connections to the park reserve for safety and access***
- Interest in **improving safe crossings of county roads adjacent to the park reserve***
- Ongoing projects related to **water quality in and around the park reserve should be continued***
- Interest in **preserving natural areas*** and **acquisition of more open space adjacent to Baker****
- Desire for better coordination and communication between Park District and cities

Campground

- **Redesign entrance/exit roads to alleviate congestion***
- Larger campground check-in building with more office and public space
- **Additional camper cabins***
- **Add winter camping***
- **Add/impove electricity***
- **Add nature play area***

General Park Reserve-Wide

- Consider relocation of Public Safety headquarters
- **Enhance wayfinding for roads and trails***
- **Explore reconfiguration of the West Trailhead parking lot and CR 19 crossing***
- **Consider CR 19 crossing improvements (underpass or surface road crossing)***
- **Continue natural resource management project, especially related to water quality***

Baker Park Recreation Area

- **Add picnic shelters***
- **Add fat tire biking***
- **Add shoreline fishing and fishing pier***
- **Explore options to alleviate boat trailer queuing congestion***
- Naturalize Lake Independence shoreline+

Baker National Golf Course

- Add snow-making for ski trails+
- Improve irrigation system

Baker Outdoor Learning Center

- Need **more indoor classroom space,** restrooms and showers for larger groups. **Trail maintenance issues due to topography***

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 69) for more information.
**This feedback was addressed in the Acquisition Plan. See Chapter 4 (p. 39) for more information.
+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

Phase 2 | Preliminary Public Review

Inform **Consult** **Involve**

Phase 2 engagement presented draft concept plans and ideas to the public and stakeholder groups to ensure it accurately represented the feedback from Phase 1 with a particular focus on underrepresented groups. Obtained feedback was used to make adjustments to the concept plan and to develop the draft long-range plan document.

A variety of tools were used, including press releases, online website updates, a public open house, pop-ups in the park, conversations with underrepresented groups and community events.

Community member feedback helped influence and determine the direction of the recommendations. The following themes emerged across Phase 2 engagement (detailed summary of the Phase 2 engagement is outlined in **Table 7, pages 28-29**):

- **Improve natural resources,** such as water quality, invasive species control, restoration and education opportunities.
- **Add a visitor/nature center and increased nature programming**, specifically improving Baker Outdoor Learning Center
- **Expand or improve trails, including new alignment for the Lake Independence Regional Trail** at Welcome Drive, shorter paved trail loops, trail spurs to overlooks, water stop, trail connections to surrounding neighborhoods and Lake Rebecca Park Reserve, improve safety at tunnel underpass
- **Improve campground**, including more electrical sites, adding winter recreation & camping, entrance/exit road improvements, spacing out campsites, adding a play area and Wi-Fi
- **Improve winter amenities**, including lighting and snow making on cross country ski trails
- **Add or improve fishing amenities**, specifically add a fishing pier and shoreline fishing.

Open house participants review draft concept plans and provide feedback for consideration.

TABLE 7 | PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT RESULTS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Open House
[Baker Park Reserve]

Overview

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 25

The public was invited to attend a meeting at Baker National Golf Course Clubhouse to view draft park development concepts and ideas. Project boards showing the preliminary concepts and ideas were on display in an open house format. Participants were invited to leave comments on a comment board or in a comment box and to have conversations with Park District staff and consultants.

Feedback Summary

- Desire for ski trail lighting+ and wider classic ski trails
- Desire for nature center+
- Desire for **more naturalist-led programming**
- **Improve safety of CR 19 underpass***
- Increase winter maintenance of paved trails
- **Make smaller trail loops**
- Connect Baker Park to Lake Rebecca Park Reserve as well as better connections to adjacent neighborhoods
- Strong support for **natural resource improvements especially water quality***
- Support for the **winter camping/ recreation recommendations, including camper cabins***
- Support for **trail spurs for overlooks, interpretive signage and trail construction at Welcome Drive***
- Support for **Baker Outdoor Learning Center (BOLC) improvement recommendations*** (new shower building/infirmary, enhanced programming capacity and archery)

Project Website and Survey
[Let's Talk Three Rivers]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 204 survey respondents, 9 comments

This online survey included all the recommended improvements which were generated from the 2018 engagement work and asked respondents to comment on each improvement and rate the relative importance of each.

Flyers and mailings were sent to everyone who made reservations to camp or picnic at Baker in 2022 and to under-served populations associated with mobile home community in Corcoran and clients of Inter-faith Outreach & Community Partners, inviting them to fill out the survey and provide feedback.

- The highest-rated improvements from the list included:
  - **Adding electrical hook-ups to the campground***
  - **Adding a natural play area at the campground***
  - **Adding Wi-Fi at the campground***
  - **Adding natural and cultural history interpretive signs***
  - **Reconfiguration of the campground entrance/exist roads***
  - **Fishing improvements***
  - **Adding scenic overlooks and a drinking water stop along the paved trails***
  - **Additional nature-based programming***
  - **Winter camping and recreation opportunities***
  - **Improvements at the Baker Outdoor Learning Center***
- Additional comments from the general mailbox included:
  - Complaints about muddy conditions in the campground**, people cutting through campsites and congestion at the entrance/exit***
  - **Desire for more electric sites***
  - **Continue to enhance the natural resources of the park***

Horse User Group Mtgs
[Virtual & In-Person]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 5

A virtual meeting with the director of We Can Ride program at Baker Park Reserve and President of the Minnesota Trail Riders Association to discuss the long-range plan recommendations and additional input regarding the horse trails at Baker.

An in-person meeting was held in February 2020 with three (3) horseback riding representatives. They are active riders of Baker Park Reserve and they stable nearby.

- Trails are in good condition, enjoyable to ride and no major problems or conflicts
- Do not reduce trail mileage - especially the Katrina loop
- Suggested improvements included:
  - Provide **informational signage addressing good trail etiquette between multi-use trail users and horseback riding trails*** similar to Crow-Hassan Park Reserve's share the trail signage updates
  - **Expand the parking lot at the Public Safety building*** to support We Can Ride events
  - **Add a rest stop with a picnic table along the trails**
  - When possible, physically separate trail modes, similar to Crow-Hassan's long-range plan guidelines+
  - Relocate trail network away from adjacent to We Can Ride riding area+
  - **More office space*** for We Can Ride
  - Additional We Can Ride pasture space and sensory trail+

Night to Unite
[Corcoran]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 50

A community event at the Corcoran Public Works building for National Night to Unite.

The goal of this event was to reach general public members as well as reach underrepresented groups living in this area including seniors, young adults with children and people from low-income households.

Participants were notified of these community events through city communication channels (e.g., City newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages).

- Additional suggested improvements included:
  - Campsites that are spaced further apart
  - **More screening between sites***
  - Add walk-in campsites+
  - **Add winter camping and winter recreation***
- Other comments included that participants like the new bathrooms and dish washing station

AUDIENCE
- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 69 for more information.
+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

TABLE 7 | PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT RESULTS (CONTINUED)
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Park Pop-ups [Baker Park Reserve]

Overview

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 35

A mobile display and survey materials were developed to collect input in the park, allowing participants to share which types of park activities and park improvements were preferred. The same general materials were used at each pop-up in order to collect consistent feedback.

Pop-ups took place at the north beach/recreation area, play area and boat launch.

Feedback Summary

- Almost everyone engaged was very complimentary of the quality of the amenities and maintenance of the park. Many repeat visitors expressed how much they enjoyed the park and are now bringing their kids and grandkids back to the park.
- Visitors love the new play area and new restrooms in the recreation area.
- Suggested trail improvements included: **trail spurs along the 6-mile loop trail***, including benches, **desire for smaller trail loop,** water stop along the 6-mile loop trail - south end.
- Suggested beach area improvements included: desire for parking close to the north beach area+, desire to add another dock for boat parking along the north beach area+, **moving the boat decontamination station further away from the boat launch to relieve congestion***, food options+.
- Add disc golf course+.

Camping 101 Conversation [Baker Park Reserve]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 10

Planning staff met with Camping 101 group since these programs focus on serving first-time campers, BIPOC and low-income communities.

- Participants liked all the ideas previously proposed, especially **additional camper cabins*, nature play in the campground*** and **overlook trail spurs along the 6-mile loop trail***.
- Suggested improvements included:
  - **Better wayfinding in campground*** and natural surface trail between the campground and south beach area
  - **Improve traffic flow in front of the campground office***
  - **Increase vegetative screening between the E-loop sites and the road (CR 19)***
  - **Add shower with flush toilets for at least one group camp site***

ACER Family Day Event [Mississippi Gateway]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 100

This family day event was held in partnership with ACER and Three Rivers Park District at Mississippi Gateway Regional Park. The event invited the families served by ACER, an organization that focuses on serving immigrant and refugee, BIPOC and low-income communities in the metro area. Many attendees were part of the African American or African immigrant community from the Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center area

- No one was familiar with Baker Park Reserve and therefore could not address the proposed improvements directly.
- Participants inquired about activities people liked to do in parks, discussed activities they wanted to try, and the barriers they had to participating.
- Activities most participants liked to do or wanted to try included: camping but needed equipment rentals, biking and hiking, fishing, swimming, volleyball and basketball, and boating.
- A common concern was safety in parks, particularly being targeted or victims of crime or harassment. Being out in parks can feel vulnerable.

Parks to People Focus Groups [French Park and United Faith Pentecostal]

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 29

Planning staff held two Parks to People focus groups during Summer 2022 with the Black/African American community. Some were familiar with Baker or had visited in the past due to outreach initiatives like Camping 101 and Baker Outdoor Learning Center Retreats with TRPD cultural liaisons.

- A lot of enthusiasm for Baker, especially the camping and fishing offerings.
- Suggested improvements included: **add camper cabins***, provide various types of boats to rent (row boats, pontoon boats)+, offer more water-based programs, **continue camping initiatives and programs***, and **provide a bathroom at Spurzem Lake*.**

AUDIENCE
- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 69 for more information..
\+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

Phase 3 | Partner Review

Inform **Consult**

Phase 3 reengaged cities, governmental/regulatory agencies and staff by obtaining additional feedback and keeping them informed of decisions around how their feedback was considered during the process. Partners were invited to offer final suggestions, although they did not have a promised role in evaluating and determining final recommendations.

Phase 3 including sharing relevant draft graphics with affected cities and agencies and encouraging their thoughtful review and comment. This was primarily done through meetings and email. Each partner was given several weeks to review the applicable material and reminded of review deadlines. Partners that requested additional review time were granted additional time as their feedback was critical to ensuring the information in this long-range plan is as accurate as possible when the long-range plan was prepared. A summary of Phase 3 engagement is incorporated into **Table 8**.

Not every partner elected to participate; however, they were also welcome to review and provide feedback during Phase 4 during the 30-day comment period.

TABLE 8 | PHASE 3 ENGAGEMENT RESULTS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Partner Review
[Cities, Agencies & Staff]

Overview

Engagement Category

Number of Engagements: 19

Planning staff re-engaged decision-making partners in the following ways:

- Planning staff met with the cities of Orono, Maple Plain, Independence and reached out to Medina to share updated information about the project and review the Development Concept concepts
- The staff working group held several meetings to review the previous versions of the Development Concept to ensure that all park areas' needs were being met and that the plan incorporated feasible management plans and ongoing needs after the public input was incorporated.

Feedback Summary

Cities

- Approval of the Development Concept proposed improvements as they pertain to their city
- Most important improvements included:
  - **Trail construction for the Lake Independence RT at Welcome Dr/ Starkey Rd***
  - **Add a restroom at the West Trailhead area***
  - **Adding drinking water stop to the 6-mile loop trail***
  - **CR 19 crossing improvements at Main Street (Baker-Carver Regional Trail connection)***

Staff

Staff approved the Development Concept list of improvements with the following changes:

- **Reduce the number and minimize the impacts of the trail spurs overlooks along the 6-mile loop trail to minimize ongoing maintenance of vistas***
- **Move location of the fishing pier to north of the boat launch to where it is more feasible and better fishing***
- Explore the boat trailer queuing+
- **Remove the shoreline stabilization as it was determined to not be feasible or practical at beach area***
- Remove the CR 19 underpass expansion in favor of study to explore options
- **Expand Public Safety parking lot and storage needs if We Can Ride organization stays long term***

AUDIENCE
- General Public
- Park Users
- Underrepresented Community Groups
- Cities, Agencies & Staff

* This feedback was incorporated into the final design guidance recommendations. See Chapter 6 (page 69 for more information.
\+ This feedback was considered, but not included due to limited support, development location, cost or proximity to other offerings in the service area.

Phase 4 | 30-Day Public Comment Period

Inform **Consult**

The focus of Phase 4 was to obtain feedback from community members and partners and keep them informed of decisions and how their feedback was considered during the process. While community members and partners were welcomed to offer suggestions, they did not have a promised role in evaluating and determining final recommendations.

The general public, park users, underrepresented community members and cities and agencies were welcomed to review and provide comments on the draft long-range plan over a 30-day comment period from June 30 to July 30, 2024. Three Rivers shared this opportunity through several methods including a press release, social media posts which partners shared/reposted, and news item on Three Rivers website. The plan was available online, at local public venues (city halls and nearby Park District facilities) and shared via email to identified partners and others upon request. A summary of the main themes heard during this phase and how they were generally addressed is outlined in **Table 9.**

In addition, a more detailed overview of all raw comments and Park District responses, including how a comment was or was not addressed in the long-range plan, are included in **Appendix B**. Partner cities were asked to provide a letter or resolution of support, which are included in **Appendix C**.

TABLE 9 | GENERAL THEMES OF 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD & LONG-RANGE PLAN INFLUENCE
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Feedback Theme	Long-range Plan Influence
New trail development and connections to local trail systems	Because Baker Park Reserve currently exceeds the amount of developed land designated for recreation according the Park District's 80/20 Policy (no more than 20% of the upland areas can be developed), no new trails can be created from previously undeveloped lands. However, if new parkland is acquired or if current uses become no longer viable, the Park District will consider the addition of new trails. The long range plan was updated to allow new local trail connections in locations where it is safe to do so and where they would connect to local pedestrian and bicycle systems located outside of the park. The plan does not include exact locations as they will need to be first thoroughly reviewed to ensure user safety especially when crossing adjacent roads.
Current trail use	Additional plowing of trails for winter walking will be considered as part of annual operation and budget plans, as well as part of future winter use expansion. The plan does not call for any change to the current winter walking trails at the Baker campground (approx. 1 mile) or at the winter multi-use trail at the East Trailhead parking lot.
Park expansion and natural resource protection	Baker Park is current exceeding our own policy for developed lands, largely due to past land use decisions made prior to implementing the policy. At this time, our policy prohibits us from expanding our developed footprint into natural upland areas. Baker's natural resources are a valuable asset. Part of Three Rivers' mission is to protect them. The plan was updated to recognize the public's support and interest to expand the park boundaries and include known, potential acquisition opportunities. This flexibility to acquire more land and expand the park's boundaries is critical to protecting Baker's natural resources and ecological systems as well as alleviating recreation development demand.

ACCOUNTABILITY MOVING FORWARD

Three Rivers is committed to advancing the long-range plan recommendations based on feedback from the general public, underrepresented communities, existing users, and partners and will continue to work with these groups to implement the recommendations included in this long-range plan as resources become available to ensure that they best address the identified challenges or opportunities at the time of implementation **(Table 10)**.

Since this long-range plan is a starting point for improvements, Three Rivers will continue to reevaluate and prioritize these recommendations to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness to changing community needs and priorities. More information about each area of commitment is detailed in Chapter 6: Design Guidance.

TABLE 10 | ACCOUNTABILITY & COMMITMENT MOVING FORWARD
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Long-range Plan Recommendations	General Public	Park Users	Underrepresented Community Groups	Cities, Agencies & Staff
General Park-Reserve Wide				
• Add vista overlooks along paved loop trail	●	●	●	
• Add interpretive signage	●	●	●	●
• Improve wayfinding throughout the park	●	●	●	●
• Add fishing pier and parking improvements at Spurzem Lake	●	●	●	
• Improve Marshview group camp	●	●	●	
• Public Safety/WCR parking lot and storage improvements		●	●	●
• Improve West Trailhead area	●	●	●	●
• Construct new Lake Independence Trail alignments	●	●	●	●
• Improve equestrian trails		●		
• Add drinking water along paved loop trail	●	●	●	
• Consider local trail connection at East Trailhead	●	●		●
Baker Park Recreation Area				
• Improve Lake Independence water quality	●	●	●	●
• Add small picnic shelter	●	●	●	
• Add ADA fishing pier	●	●	●	
• Add shoreline fishing	●	●	●	
• Explore boat launch queuing	●	●		
• Add large picnic shelter	●	●	●	
• Improve County Road 19 crossing	●	●	●	●
Campground				
• Improve campground entrance circulation		●	●	●
• Add camper cabins		●	●	●
• Upgrade campsite electrical		●		●
• Enhance nature-based programming		●	●	●
• Add Nature exploration play area		●	●	
• Expand campground parking		●	●	
• Expand winter recreation & camping	●	●	●	●
• Add Wi-Fi and charging stations		●	●	
• Make landscape improvement at C and E-loops		●	●	●
Baker Outdoor Learning Center				
• Enhance nature-based programming space		●	●	●
• Improve trails for accessibility		●		●
• Improve archery range		●	●	●
• Enhance administrative functions				●
• Enhance maintenance functions		●	●	●

4

CONTEXT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Baker Park Reserve is located in west-central Hennepin County, bordered by Lake Independence and within or adjacent to the cities of Medina, Independence, Orono and Maple Plain, in addition to nearby Long Lake and Loretto **(Figure 11)**. At its widest points, Baker Park Reserve measures approximately 3.5 miles north/south and 2.25 miles east/west. U.S. Highway 12 and County Road (CR) 6 form the south boundary, CR 115 forms the north boundary, CR 201 forms the east boundary and CR 19 generally forms the west boundary. CR 24 and CR 19 divide the park reserve in north/south and east/west directions, respectively. These roads effectively split Baker Park Reserve into three parts, which has subsequently affected the development and management of the park reserve.

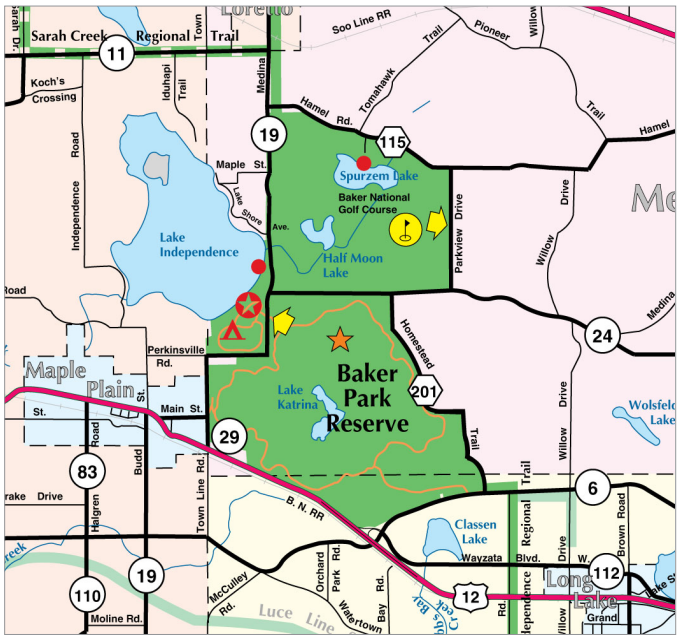


FIGURE 11 | BAKER PARK RESERVE PARK LOCATION
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

CULTURAL CONTEXT

For countless generations, this area of Minnesota was a former combination of Big Woods, wet prairie and conifer bogs and home to indigenous Dakota people prior to European settlement.

The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, a complex and disastrous time in Minnesota history, profoundly shaped the state as we know it today. The Dakota people were forcibly displaced after decades of pressure to cede large tracts of land to the United States.

Since that time, the land surrounding Lake Independence - named by Fourth of July Euro-American excursionist, Kelsey Hinman, in honor of the national holiday[1] - has been an amalgamation of farmland, small towns like Loretto and Maple Plain and lakeside resorts serving tourists and vacationers from Minneapolis and St. Paul.

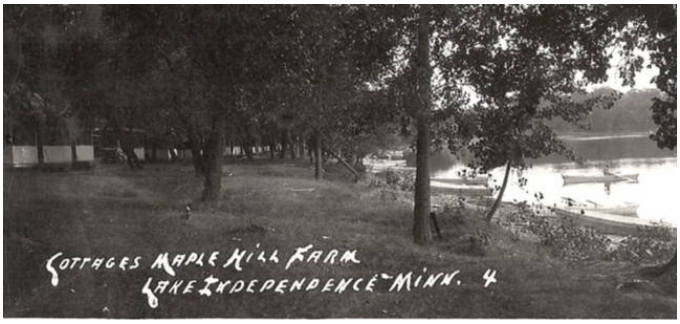
HISTORIC PARK DEVELOPMENT

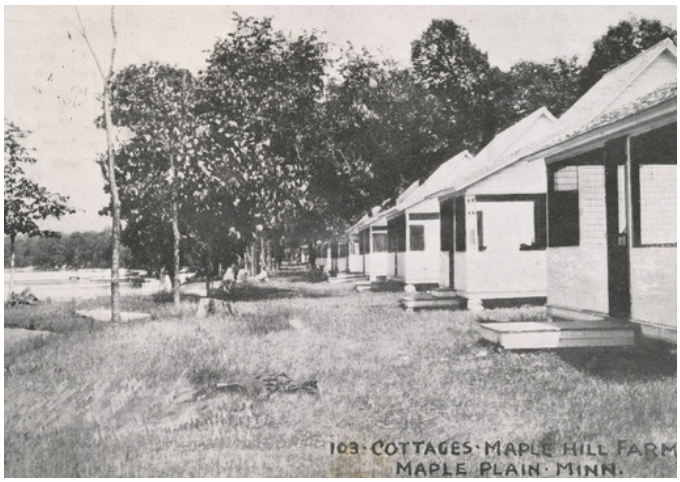
Baker Park Reserve is the Park District's first acquisition; a result of farsighted civic leaders, legislative policy and a generous land donation that would eventually lead to the creation of Three Rivers and its growth to nearly 26,500 acres.

The site of the original Baker Park Reserve land donation was home to the Maple Hill Farm, a 210-acre resort on the shore of Lake Independence which consisted of roughly 25 small cabins and an adjacent farming operation. In the early 1900s, Lake Independence had become a popular vacation destination with several resorts along the shoreline. Maple Hill Farm, amongst several other Lake Independence resorts, enticed guests with farm-to-table dining, picnicking, camping, sport hunting, fishing, boating and swimming opportunities.

In 1955, Morris T. Baker a well established real estate developer, acquired the property with the initial intent of developing a lakeside residential subdivision. A noted philanthropist and early advocate for a regional park system in the Twin Cities area, Morris T. Baker began considering the Maple Hill Farm resort property for inclusion into the regional park system. As a result of enthusiastic response to the recreation potential, the Maple Hill Farm resort land gift was granted with

[1] Minnesota Geographic Names, by Warren Upham, Saint Paul, 1920





The 210-acre Maple Hill Farm resort on Lake Independence (located in what is now the park's main recreation area) was the original land donation that led to the creation of Three Rivers.

Photo Credits: Minnesota Historical Society

Early Park Advertising

An early Maple Hill County Park marketing brochure details:

"Everyone in Hennepin County now has access to the first county park... Here is a spot for a view of beautiful Lake Independence with a park shoreline of about three fourths of a mile on lake frontage, providing a superb lake shore for bathing, access to the lake for boating, boat ramp, new facilities for picnicking such as tables, grates, and a place for the children to play, with swings, slide, jungle gyms, and a ball field...An area for overnight camping by individual families or organized groups is available. This is a new feature in our Hennepin County metropolitan area but will afford, with easy access, a place to practice the art of overnight camping to secure a taste of this wonderful activity."

the stipulation that a county park system be formed.

The property was opened to the public in 1956 and was called Maple Hill County Park. It was initially managed by the Minneapolis Park Board and was immediately embraced by the public. Attendance was recorded as approximately 15,000 visits. In 1955, legislation was enacted allowing for the activation of park districts whose primary duties are "acquisition, development and maintenance of large parks, wildlife sanctuaries, forest and other reservations, and means for public access to historic sites and to lakes, rivers and streams and to other natural phenomena" (Minnesota State Statutes, Chapter 398.07). After a year of negotiations the Hennepin County Board passed a resolution creating the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, which would later become Three Rivers Park District. By 1958, the Maple Hill County Park was transferred from the Minneapolis Park Board to Three Rivers.

When Three Rivers received the initial Maple Hill Farm resort property, it also inherited an operating swimming beach, picnic area, campground with pit latrines, and grass and gravel parking.

Pursuant of Three Rivers' first long-range plan, A System of Parks (1958) which defined prospective search areas for future park acquisition, including 25 acres on Half Moon Lake (1958) and 41 acres adjacent to Lake Independence (1959) were purchased at Baker Park Reserve. These purchases, in addition to auxiliary property acquisitions throughout Three Rivers, were the start of Three Rivers' presence within suburban Hennepin County. Subsequently, in 1959 Three Rivers renamed the Maple Hill County Park after the original donor, Morris T. Baker County Park. This name would stand until the park was rededicated in 1980 as Baker Park Reserve.

Since its inception, Baker Park Reserve has grown to over 3,000 acres and is home to many Park District "firsts," such as the first trumpeter swan refugee, golf course, picnic area, creative play area and swimming beach development **(Figure 12)**.

EXISTING ADJACENT LAND USES & CONTEXT

Located within the City of Medina, Baker Park Reserve is surrounded primarily by large lot residential and agricultural land uses. The developed land cover portion

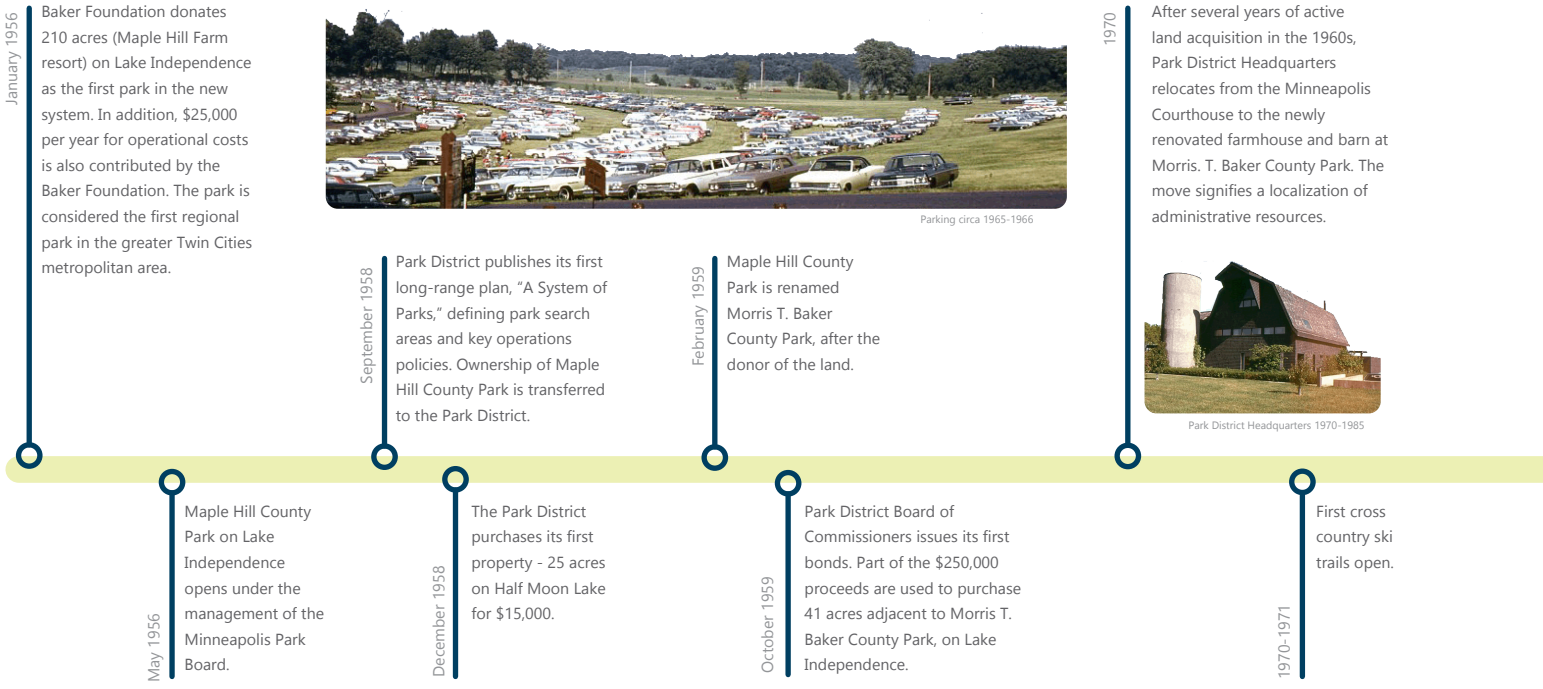


FIGURE 12 | BAKER PARK RESERVE PARK DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES (ANNOTATED)
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

of Baker Park Reserve includes the active recreation area west of CR 19 and several satellite locations dotted throughout the park, which include the Baker National Golf Course, Baker Outdoor Learning Center (BOLC), various group camping sites, maintenance facilities, a public safety center, trailhead parking lots and an extensive system of trails.

Access to Baker Park Reserve is obtained at several locations, depending on desired visitor destination points. The active recreation area adjacent to Lake Independence is a highly visited area of Baker Park Reserve, and is accessed via CR 19, south of CR 24. Baker National Golf Course, another popular Baker Park Reserve destination, is accessed via CR 201/ Parkview Drive, north of CR 24. Baker Outdoor Learning Center, formerly Baker Near-Wilderness Settlement, is also accessed via CR 24. Entry points to various other destination points exist throughout the park and are discussed in greater detail in subsequent text.

No significant transportation infrastructure changes are anticipated to impact the park. Bus transit currently does not service the park; however, it is connected to the larger regional trail network with the Lake Independence Regional Trail and planned connections to the Baker-Carver and Diamond Lake Regional Trails.

Currently, there are no significant conflicts to report.

CURRENT ACQUISITION PLAN

Three Rivers currently owns 3,147 acres within the Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan boundary. Subsequently, property acquisition is nearly complete. When the previously identified 35 acres within 13 parcels are acquired, the total park reserve area will be 3,183 acres.

Inholding Evaluation Method & Recommendation

This long-range plan update recognizes that the value of each inholding varies and that a variety of strategies should be employed to meet long-range plan goals while minimizing acquisition costs. Criteria **(Table 11, page 37)** that assesses the impact of natural resource goals, recreational development goals, and the park reserve's interior integrity were applied to each of the 13 parcels **(Figure 13 & Table 12, page 38)**, and each parcel was subsequently assigned a rating of critical, significant benefit, or low value.

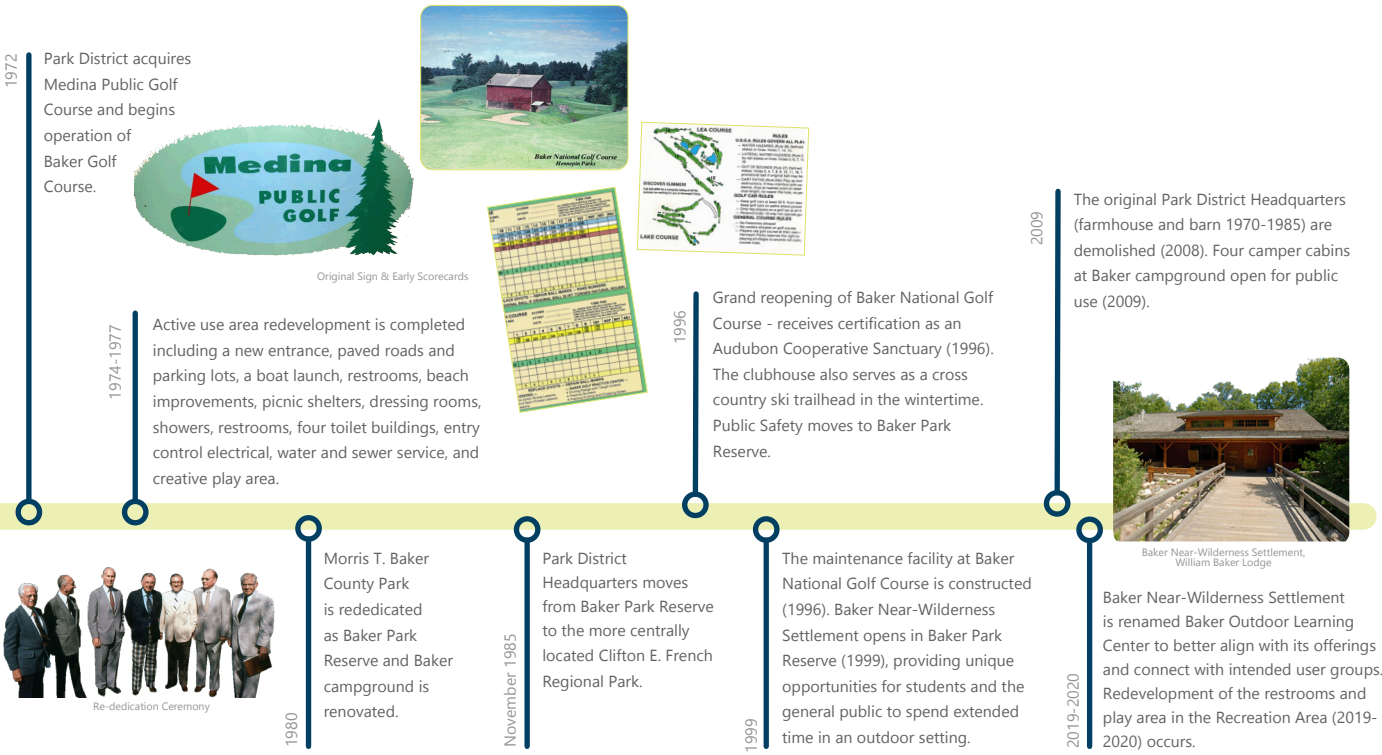


TABLE 11 | INHOLDING RATINGS & STRATEGIES

SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Rating	Description	Recommendation
Critical	Inholdings whose exclusion from the park would be in significant conflict with the Long-range Plan goals for natural resources and/or recreation development. For these properties, direct purchase is very important and preferred; however, other land protection strategies such as easements may accomplish the Long-range Plan goals and should be pursued if acquisition is not feasible.	Act now to prioritize acquisition or pursue other protection strategies from all willing property owners.
Significant	Inholdings that hold significant benefits to the park's natural resource base, the park's recreation development plan; the integrity of the park as a whole; and/or ensure park boundaries coincide with natural or existing features (roads, water bodies and/or delimiting topography or vegetation). While acquisition of these properties is ideal, it is not required unless other protection strategies (i.e. easements, land use designations, conservation development, etc.) are not feasible or appropriate for the specific scenario. For example, instead of direct purchase, a trail easement may suffice to meet the requirements of the development plan, or a conservation easement may act as a buffer to adjacent NRM lands.	Evaluate and identify a preferred land protection strategy (acquisition, easement, land use designations, conservation development, etc.) for each inholding and proceed with implementation as resources allow from all willing property owners.
Minor	Inholdings where there appears to be little value to Three Rivers parks and resources. Purchase or protective covenants are not needed to meet long-range plan goals; or to maintain the integrity of the park; or ensure park boundaries coincide with natural or existing features.	Reevaluate the inholding at the next long-range plan update and redraw the long-range plan boundary of the park to exclude inholdings if the property is still ranked minor or reclassify the property accordingly. In addition, before a property is removed from the long-range plan boundary, staff should evaluate unintended consequences (i.e. local cities obligation to provide utility services/public road access to property) and, if appropriate, adjust the ranking accordingly.

FIGURE 13 | BAKER PARK RESERVE INHOLDING ANALYSIS (SOUTHEAST CORNER)
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

TABLE 12 | CURRENT BAKER PARK RESERVE INHOLDINGS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Parcel	Rating	Acres*	2024 Assessed Value	Comments/Rationale
1	Significant	1.9	$ 254,000	Park interior, close to critical natural resource and recreational amenities.
2	Significant	3.0	$ 292,000	Park interior, close to critical natural resource and recreational amenities.
3	Significant	1.9	$ 782,000	Park interior, close to critical natural resource and recreational amenities.
4	Significant	6.7	$ 216,000	Wetlands are environmentally sensitive. Opportunity to clean up lead from shooting range site. Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
5	Significant	3.5	$ 100	Wetlands are environmentally sensitive. Opportunity to clean up lead from shooting range site.
6	Significant	5.5	$ 210,000	Wetlands are environmentally sensitive. Opportunity to clean up lead from shooting range site. Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
7	Significant	1.6	$ 477,000	Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
8	Significant	1.0	$ 594,000	Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
9	Significant	2.0	$ 1,046,400	This parcel could be used to realign the regional trail through the park. Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
10	Significant	3.5	$1 ,615,200	Includes some wetlands, very close to Wildlife Preservation Area and Sanctuary.
11	Significant	2.2	$ 967,000	Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
12	Significant	2.4	$ 1,347,500	This parcel could be used to realign the regional trail through the park. Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
13	Significant	0.3	$ 0	Highway makes a logical boundary to the park.
		35.5	**$ 7,801,200**	

Summary		
Critical	- -	- -
Significant	35.5	$ 7,801,200
Minor	- -	- -
TOTAL	**35.5**	**$ 7,801,200**

*Rounded to the nearest tenth.

NEW ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES

Although an inholding plan is detailed above, Three Rivers remains open to additional acquisition opportunities if they help meet the goals of the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan and/or 2040 System Plan, namely providing new community desired passive recreation and/or protecting and connecting existing high-quality natural resources.

- **Community Engagement Support**
  During the engagement efforts, community members and representatives spoke about the importance of protecting adjacent natural resources, support for acquiring additional land for park and conservation purposes, and a desire for additional development improvements than what is currently provided at Baker and that cannot be accommodated due to the 80/20 status.

- **Existing Plan Consistency**
  Three Rivers' 2040 System Plan calls for the protection of natural resources around and between its park reserves.

  Additionally, protection of natural resources is consistent with the City of Medina's 2040 Comprehensive Plan which calls for protecting its significant natural resources and open space throughout the City as well as several community goals including:
  - Preserving rural vistas, open spaces, and wetlands in all parts of the community to promote the rural character of Medina.
  - Protecting and enhancing the environment and natural resources throughout the community.
  - Preserving and expanding trails and parks to provide community recreational facilities, connect neighborhoods, and encourage healthy lifestyles of its residents.

Just under half of the park (41 percent) and the following lakes and creek fall within the South Fork Crow River Watershed and its Pioneer-Sarah Creek sub watershed: Independence, Half Moon and Spurzem Lakes and Spurzem Creek. The South Fork Crow River watershed is managed by the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission (PSCWMC).

Just over half of the park (59 percent) and Lake Katrina fall within the Mississippi River Watershed and its Painter Creek, Stubb's Bay Creek and Long Creek sub watersheds. This watershed is managed by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's (MCWD).

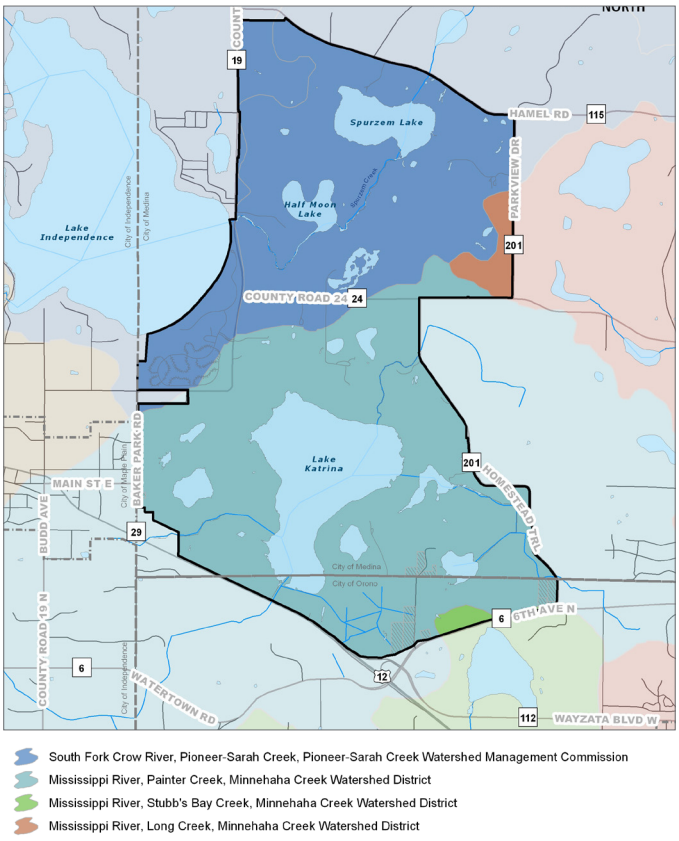
Groundwater

Baker Park Reserve is within the Metro Province 1 groundwater designation which is characterized by buried sand aquifers and relatively extensive surficial sand plains with a thick layer of unconsolidated sediments deposited by glaciers overlying the bedrock. Metro Province 1 has good aquifer properties.

Stormwater

Stormwater that does not soak into the ground becomes surface runoff, which either flows directly into surface waterways or is channeled into storm sewers, which eventually discharge to surface waters. Stormwater is of concern for two main reasons, volume and timing of runoff water (flood control and water supplies) and potential contaminants that the water is carrying (water pollution). This is especially concerning for Lake Independence and Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed which are subject to Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) plans with assigned stormwater allocations to the cities of Medina, Independence, Maple Plain, and Orono in an effort to reduce watershed nutrient loading and improve overall water quality.

FIGURE 17 | WATERSHED DIVISIONS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



Surface Water | Lakes, Wetlands & Streams

Baker Park Reserve's system of lakes, wetlands and streams accounts for 36.2 percent of the total acreage of the park reserve **(Figure 18, page 50)**.

Four major lakes lie within, or are adjacent to, the park reserve boundaries; Lake Independence, Lake Katrina, Spurzem Lake and Half Moon Lake. It should be noted

TABLE 17 | BAKER PARK RESERVE WATERSHED DIVISIONS
SOURCE: MnDNR

Watershed	Sub Watershed	Jurisdiction	Sub Watershed Acres Total	Sub Watershed Acres within Park Reserve
South Fork Crow River	Pioneer-Sarah Creek	Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission	12,349	1,316
Mississippi River	Painter Creek	Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	8,718	1,784
Mississippi River	Stubb's Bay Creek	Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	43,480	21
Mississippi River	Long Creek	Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	7,449	61

that Lake Katrina is technically not a lake as it does not meet the DNR's current definition due to its shallow depth. However, historically and within this long-range plan, it is still referred to as a lake given its amount of open water **(Table 18)**. Cumulatively, these lakes total over 1,100 acres in surface area and provide a wide range of habitat types and recreational opportunities.

TABLE 18 | LAKE CHARACTERISTICS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT & MnDNR

	Lake ID.	Area	Max Depth (Feet)	% of Lake Area < 15 Feet Deep	Classification
Independence	27-0176	832 ac	58 ft	50%	Deep
Katrina*	27-0154	201 ac	3/6 ft (est)	100%	Shallow
Spurzem	27-0149	82 ac	38 ft	51%	Deep
Half Moon	27-0152	33 ac	25 ft	62%	Deep

*Lake Katrina, while commonly referred to as a lake is classified as a wetland by the MnDNR

Lake Independence forms just under one mile of the park reserve's western boundary for a distance of approximately 4,300 feet of shoreline. It is the fourth largest lake in Hennepin County, and covers 832 acres with a maximum depth of 58 feet. It is used extensively for boating, fishing, swimming and aesthetic viewing by local residents as well as residents from the entire Twin Cities region. Baker Park Reserve's Lake Independence shoreline includes two public swimming beaches, a campground, an ADA accessible fishing pier, numerous picnic areas and a boat access.

It has one of the metro area's best all-around fisheries in both summer and winter seasons, offering a diverse fish community of black crappie, bluegill, largemouth bass, muskellunge, northern pike, walleye and yellow perch.

Three Rivers has been monitoring and assisting with efforts to improve the lake's water quality and nutrient loading. A 2009 aquatic plant survey showed seven species dominate the aquatic plant community, with five of those being natives and two - Eurasian milfoil and curly leaf pondweed – being exotic invasives. A more recent vegetation survey in 2014 found zebra mussels in the lake. The spread of the invasive zebra mussels throughout the lake was initially slow as it established, but recent surveys indicate populations have increased dramatically to densities where mussels are now growing on any hard substrate they can find including rocks, sticks, native clams, vegetation and even on top of themselves forming clusters of mussels.

Additionally, the recreational suitability of the lake has been compromised for many years due to high levels of phosphorus **(Table 19)**. This imbalance causes nuisance algal blooms, which adversely impacts water clarity, the lake's ecology and the aesthetic water quality. Since 2002, Lake Independence has been listed as impaired due to high nutrients (phosphorus).

With technical assistance from Three Rivers water resources staff, the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission prepared a TMDL study in 2007.

Implementation of the TMDL is intended to help reach water quality standards set in the TMDL and fully supports fishing and other recreation. The Lake Independence watershed includes Spurzem and Half Moon Lakes, and decreasing nutrient flows out of these lakes into Lake Independence is an important component of the TMDL.

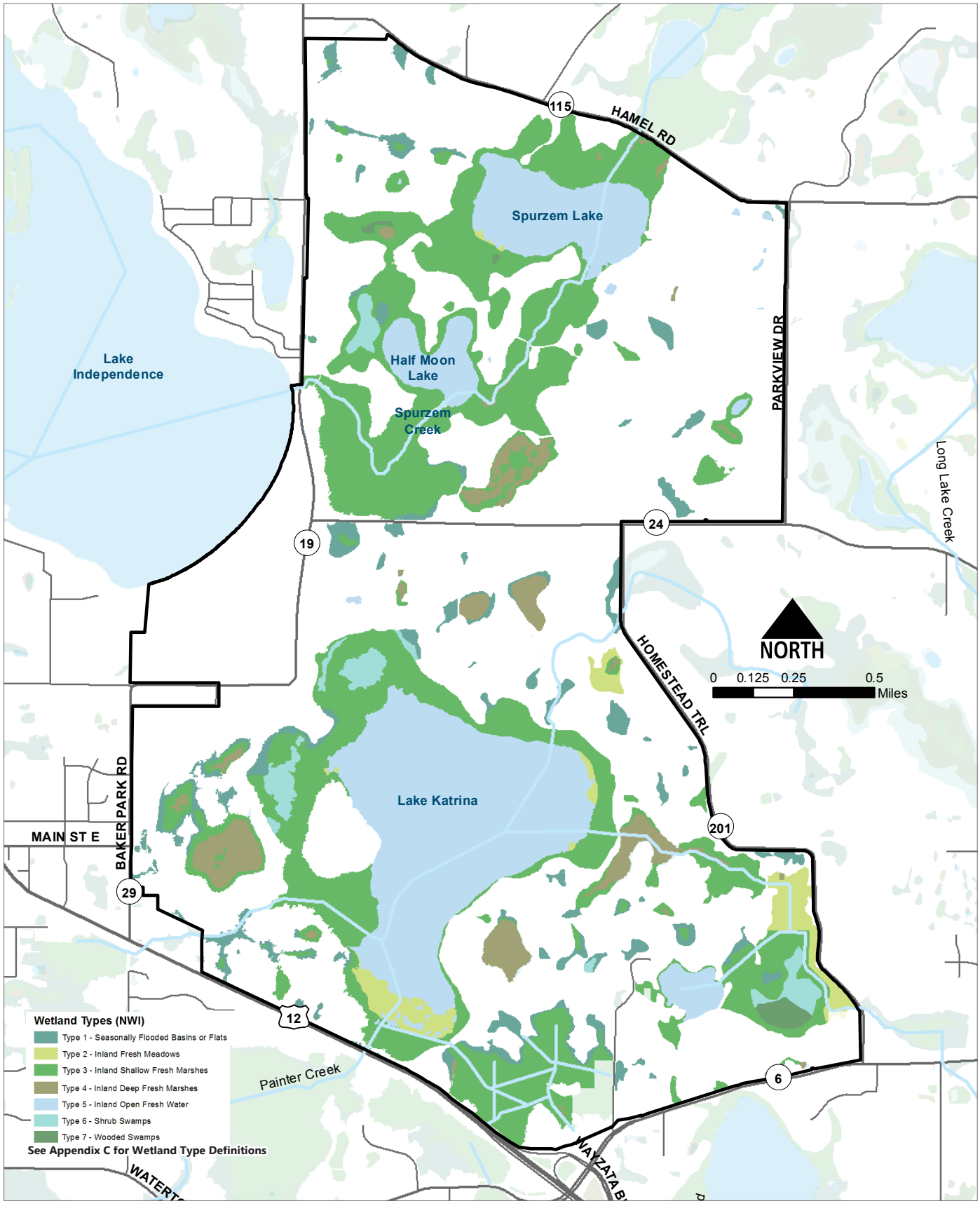
TABLE 19 | LAKE INDEPENDENCE WATER QUALITY
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT AVERAGES (JUNE - SEPT 2012-2021)

	State Water Quality Standards*	Lake Independence Values
Total Phosphorous (ug/l)	< 40 ug/l	48.0 ug/l
Chlorophyll "a"	< 14 ug/l	26.2 ug/l
Water Clarity (meters)	>1.4 m	1.92 m

Lake Katrina is a large wetland with approximately 253 acres of open water and floating bog, surrounded by 225 acres of predominantly open marshland located in the southern portion of Baker Park Reserve. It drains to the south through Painter Creek, which flows into Lake Minnetonka, Minnehaha Creek, and finally into the Mississippi River. This drainage is a significant portion of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed.

Lake Katrina was officially reclassified as a wetland due to its shallow depth. As previously mentioned, it is still viewed by the public as a lake due to its large amount of open water. It is primarily used by wildlife

FIGURE 18 | LAKES, WETLANDS & STREAMS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



and for aesthetic enjoyment as access is restricted to occasional canoeing by Baker OLC groups.

There is little or no information available for the lake in terms of depth, fishery or aquatic plant community. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the lake is very shallow (maximum depth of less than 6 feet) and that fish migrate to the lake on an annual basis, but almost all die each year from winter kill.

Lake Katrina contains a high level of nutrient concentrations, which discharges poor quality water into the Painter Creek system. Minnehaha Creek Watershed District identified Painter Creek as a major source of phosphorus loading to Lake Minnetonka's Jennings Bay, which is degraded and does not meet current state water quality standards. Lake Katrina has a water regulating structure on the Painter Creek outflow to restrict discharge which was installed at the request of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. This structure tends to attenuate fluctuations of water levels in Lake Katrina.

Water quality in Lake Katrina is likely affected in part by historical wastewater treatment facility discharges from the City of Maple Plain. These discharges were stopped in the mid-1980s but likely have created enriched sediment conditions in the lake causing degraded water quality **(Table 20)**.

The majority of the Lake Katrina's watershed lies within undeveloped portions of Baker Park Reserve, thus watershed-derived pollutant loadings are low.

TABLE 20 | LAKE KATRINA WATER QUALITY
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT AVERAGES (MAY - SEPT, 1999-2008)

	Katrina Values
Total Phosphorus (ug/l)	159 ug/l
Chlorophyll "a"	63.5 ug/l
Water clarity (meters)	0.7 m

Spurzem Lake is a 82-acre lake located along the northwest edge of Baker National Golf Course. Three Rivers owns and maintains a public boat access located off Hamel Road on the northwest lake shore. Spurzem Lake is used primarily for sport fishing, boating/canoeing and aesthetic enjoyment. The lake fishery consists primarily of bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, largemouth bass and northern pike. Occasionally, the lake has had fishing setbacks due to winter-kill from oxygen depletion.

Spurzem Lake is also used as a water source for Baker National Golf Course irrigation under a MnDNR water appropriation permit. A deep well adjacent to the lake was constructed in 2010 and is used to pump groundwater into Spurzem Lake to increase the supply of available water for golf course irrigation.

In 2008, Spurzem Lake was listed as impaired by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) because of high nutrient concentrations **(Table 21).** Spurzem Lake's poor water quality is characterized by high phosphorus concentrations, frequent severe algal blooms and poor water clarity. Water quality is also likely affected by runoff from the lake's mostly agricultural watershed and a large internal load from the lake's sediments. Years of high nutrient loading have created a large pool of phosphorus in the sediment and substantial amounts of organic matter that quickly consumes oxygen as it decomposes.

This high productivity contributes to the excessive oxygen demand that causes winterkill of fishes. The lake is not currently aerated, but consideration may be given to aeration in the future.

Spurzem Lake has been sampled for vegetation annually for the past several years. Vegetation is most abundant during spring surveys when Curlyleaf Pondweed is abundant. Late season vegetation declines due to low water clarity caused by excessive algae that only worsens after curly-leaf pondweed dies off in the early summer. Low water clarity limits light penetration and inhibits the growth of plants.

Discharge from Spurzem Lake reaches Half Moon Lake and eventually Lake Independence. Improving water quality in Spurzem Lake will improve both the value of this resource for park visitors as well as help meet the load reduction requirements for the Lake Independence TMDL.

TABLE 21 | SPURZEM LAKE WATER QUALITY
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT AVERAGES (MAY - SEPT, 2007-2017)

	State Water Quality Standards*	Spurzem Values
Total Phosphorus (ug/l)	< 40 ug/l	150 ug/l
Chlorophyll "a"	< 14 ug/l	52.4 ug/l
Water clarity (meters)	> 1.4 m	1.42 m

*Because >20% of Spurzem Lake is 15 feet deep or more, state water quality standards for deep lakes in the North Central Hardwood Forest ecoregion apply.

MN8004XX

Half Moon Lake is a 33-acre lake used primarily for sport fishing, canoeing, and aesthetic enjoyment. Three Rivers owns and maintains a public carry-in canoe access on the west lake shore.

A 2009 fish population survey by MnDNR showed that the sport fishery consists of bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, largemouth bass, and northern pike. Based upon that survey, the fish population has average to good growth rates. The lake is not aerated and has also experienced occasional fish winter-kill from oxygen depletion.

Half Moon Lake has been sampled for vegetation two times per year for the past several years. Typical early season vegetation surveys show that about half to three-quarters of the survey points have submerged vegetation and around two-thirds have curly-leaf pondweed. By late season, vegetation abundance declines. This reduction in vegetation is due to the die off of curly-leaf pondweed in early summer that leads to the lake becoming algae dominant, which in turn causes poor water clarity and poor growing conditions for other native plant species.

Water quality in the lake is poor (although better than Spurzem Lake) and is characterized by high phosphorus concentrations, frequent severe algal blooms including periodic blue-green algae blooms and poor water clarity. As such, Half Moon Lake was listed as impaired for excessive nutrients in 2016 and was included in the 2017 Pioneer and Sarah Creek Watershed TMDL **(Table 22)**. Lake water quality is likely affected by discharge from Spurzem Lake upstream. Most of Half Moon Lake's watershed lies within Baker Park Reserve so pollutant loadings should be minimal. Improving Half Moon Lake water quality will improve both the value of the resource for park visitors and help meet load reduction requirements for the Lake Independence TMDL.

TABLE 22 | HALF MOON LAKE WATER QUALITY
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT AVERAGES (MAY - SEPT, 2007-2017)

	State Water Quality Standards*	Half Moon Values
Total Phosphorus (ug/l)	< 40 ug/l	128 ug/l
Chlorophyll "a"	< 14 ug/l	45.7 ug/l
Water clarity (meters)	> 1.4 m	1.33 m

*Because >20% of Half Moon Lake is 15 feet deep or more, state water quality standards for deep lakes in the North Central Hardwood Forest ecoregion apply.

Wetlands

Wetlands provide important conveyance and water storage functions during flood and drought conditions, remove pollutants from incoming water, promote groundwater recharge and provide important habitat for fish, invertebrates and waterfowl. In general, a large diversity of high quality wetlands protects stream and lake quality and provides essential habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial organisms.

Baker Park Reserve wetlands are categorized based on size and management options **(Table 23)**. The largest natural wetlands (more than 30 acres) are associated with Lake Katrina, Spurzem Lake and Half Moon Lake. Their water levels are not controlled or manipulated (except for the regulated outflow from Lake Katrina) and much of the park's water originates from outside the park reserve, so nutrient loads remain high.

Most wetlands throughout the park reserve are largely hybrid cattail marshes with reed grass and reed canary grass abundant around the edges. There are also some willow and sedge meadows. The most common wetland types are shallow, seasonally flooded basins surrounding the park reserve's lakes.

The majority of wetlands are hyper-eutrophic and degraded with invasive species, although a small wetland southwest of the waterfowl refuge retains a greater diversity of emergent species.

In Baker Park Reserve's northwest and southeast wetland complexes there are several unique areas where tamarack trees and bog associated plants can be found. The northwest area has the more diverse herbaceous layer, which has survived on a floating bog mat despite water levels that have fluctuated several feet due to beaver activity. The southeast area is less diverse but has more large tamaracks.

The greatest wetland diversity is found between Spurzem and Half Moon Lakes. Lake Katrina has a large number of floating emergent vegetation mats that repeatedly scrape off submergent vegetation and change the wetland's appearance almost daily, depending on the direction of the wind. Recent vegetation management has not been undertaken in most of the larger wetlands, except for the release of beetles for Purple Loosestrife biological control in the 1990s.

Large wetland complex in Baker Park Reserve. Photo credit: Three Rivers Park District

TABLE 23 | BAKER PARK RESERVE | WETLAND TYPES
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

	Wetland Type	Acres
1	Seasonally Flooded Basins or Flats	107.1 acres
2	Inland Fresh Meadows	46.3 acres
3	Inland Shallow Fresh Marshes	613.7 acres
4	Inland Deep Fresh Marshes	75.5 acres
5	Inland Open Fresh Water	405.2 acres
6	Shrub Swamps	36.8 acres
7	Wooded Swamps	8.7 acres

Most of the mid-sized wetlands (10-30 acres) in Baker Park Reserve were restored or enhanced by Three Rivers in the 1970s. Eight of these wetlands have some sort of water control structure on the outflows, which can be utilized to manipulate water levels to control emergent vegetation (primarily hybrid cattail and reed canary grass) and maintain beneficial wildlife conditions. Future water and wetland management plans, and implementation of those plans, will help combat these invasive monoculture conditions.

The smallest wetlands (less than 10 acres) are pre-existing or were restored by breaking agricultural drain tiles or excavating small areas. These areas undergo natural fluctuations in water levels. The shallower wetlands are dominated primarily by reed canary grass and deeper wetlands by hybrid cattail. Most have very little emergent plant diversity.

Areas adjacent to wetlands are often designated open areas to increase the open aspect of the upland sites and to provide herbaceous habitat for wildlife. Wetland wildlife species that require open areas for some aspect of their lives include leopard frogs, chorus frogs, American toads, mallards, blue-winged teal and sand hill cranes.

Spurzem Creek

Spurzem Creek enters the park reserve at the northern end, flowing through Spurzem and Half Moon Lakes before discharging into Lake Independence. The creek meanders through 1.7 miles of the park reserve and contains approximately 282 acres of marsh within the Spurzem and Half Moon complexes.

MLCCS

The Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) is a state mapping system that categorizes areas in terms of land cover rather than land use. Baker Park Reserve's land cover is comprised of a combination of deciduous and coniferous forests, deciduous woodlands and shrublands, emergent vegetation (wetlands), grasslands and short grass areas with mixed vegetation **(Table 24 & Figure 19, pages 55-56)**. The predominant land cover is deciduous forest, followed closely by emergent vegetation and grasslands.

TABLE 24 | BAKER PARK RESERVE LAND COVER
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT & MnDNR

Vegetation Type	Current Acres	Proposed Acres
Oak woods	30	30
Maple-basswood	335	1220
Tamarack	13	13
Shrublands	40	40
Flood plain forest	5	10
Early successional forest	1069	125
Prairie	0	80
Oldfield	40	15
Planted/cultivated	45	45
Open water	490	490
Wetland cattail	735	735
Wetland sedge	1	0
Disturbed	380	380
Totals	3,183	3,183

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Natural communities are groups of native plants that interact with each other and their environment in ways not greatly altered by modern human activity or introduced organisms. Natural communities are generally classified and described by considering vegetation, hydrology, landforms, soils and natural disturbance regimes. The following natural communities can be found at Baker Park Reserve:

Big Woods

The most significant natural community in Baker Park Reserve is representative of the once abundant Big Woods (elm - sugar maple – basswood - red oak) forest, although nearly all elms have been eliminated due to Dutch Elm Disease. Within Hennepin County, there currently remains less than 1 percent of the original historic Big Woods forest making this intact community that much more important to this park and the greater region.

The woodlots west of Baker National Golf Course are some the best examples of a mature Big Woods forest within Baker Park Reserve as they contain sizable specimen trees and an open, though somewhat depauperate, understory.

Willow Swamp

The second most dominant natural community is the willow swamp, characterized by a dense shrub layer comprised of willows and dogwoods on saturated peat in small glacial ice-block basins that receive minimal run-off from surrounding uplands. Unfortunately, most of the designated willow swamps have regressed to hybrid cattail areas. The largest remaining willow swamp is located on the northwest side of Lake Katrina.

Tamarack Swamp

The tamarack swamp northwest of Half Moon Lake and the tamarack forest in the southeast corner of the park reserve are likely the most extraordinary plant communities within the park reserve. These areas contain plant species that are only found in a few other places within Three Rivers. The southeast tamarack swamp has become dominated by reed canary grass and is in decline. Restoring hydrology and managing invasive species will be critical to protect this resource.

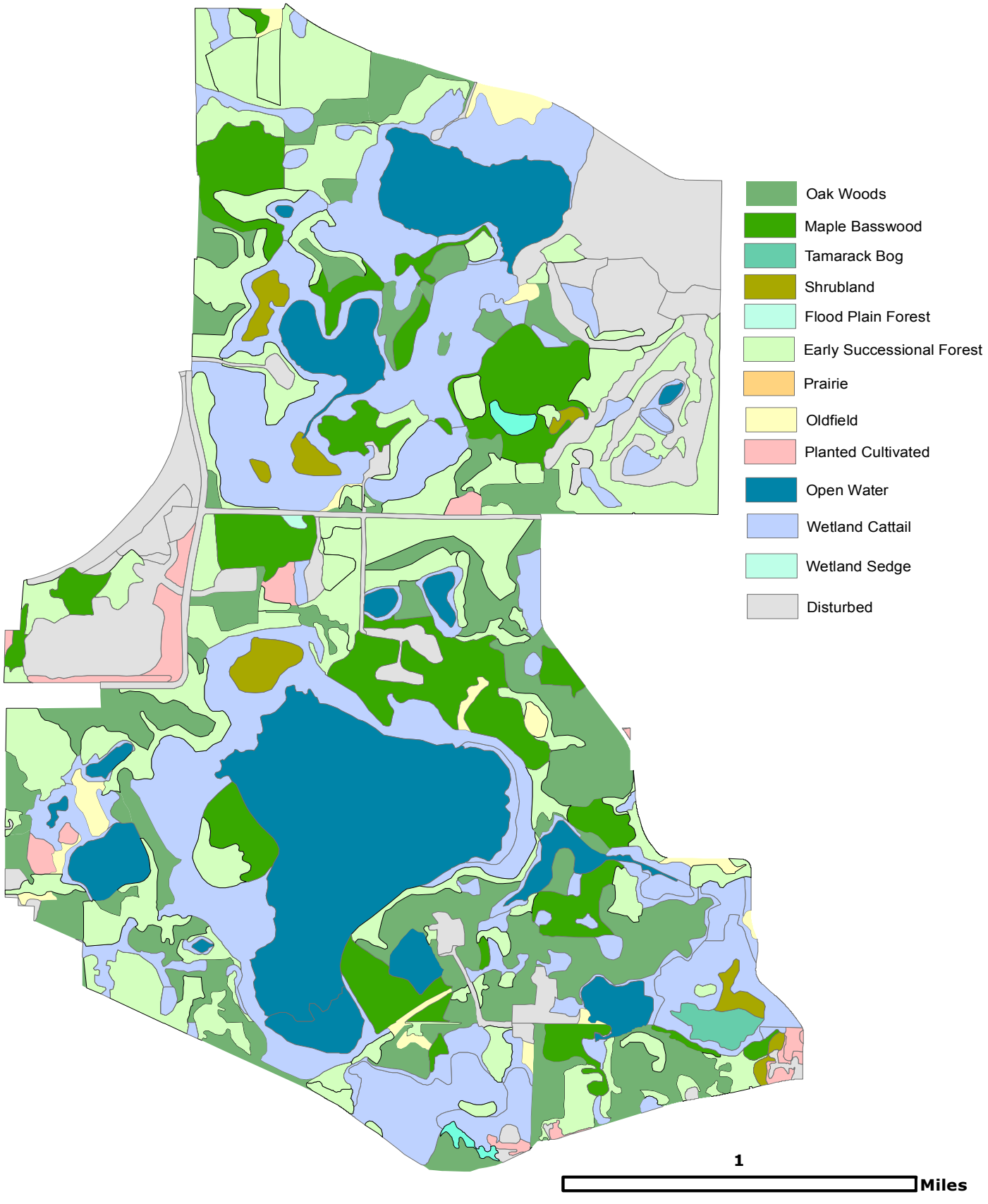
Oak Forest

A patch of oak forest exists northeast of Lake Katrina, on the southeast edge of Baker Outdoor Learning Center. This area is defined as a dry-mesic to mesic forest on moist, well drained soils. This area is succeeding rapidly to a sugar maple composition.

Prairies

There are no prairie remnants in the park, but there are several areas on the south end of the park currently undergoing prairie restoration.

FIGURE 19 | BAKER PARK RESERVE LAND COVER (BASED ON MLCCS)
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT & MnDNR



WILDLIFE

Since the 1970s, the composition of bird species in Baker Park Reserve has changed in the following ways as natural areas have transformed from grasslands to shrub lands and then to forests:

- Open area species like bobolinks and eastern meadowlarks have been replaced by edge species like gray catbirds, cardinals and common yellowthroats.
- Woodland raptors, including cooper's hawks, red-shouldered hawks and barred owls are now more common, which reflects a change in habitat.
- A pair of bald eagles started nesting in the park around 1995 as a result of their natural range expansion back into the Twin Cities metro area, which previously would have been unlikely.
- Turkeys are now common in the park after being reintroduced into this part of Minnesota around 1990.
- Wetland bird species have changed and decreased as the wetlands transition from mixed stands of diverse vegetation to stands dominated primarily by hybrid cattail.
- A pair of ospreys has routinely nested on an artificial pole on the north side of Spurzem Lake.
- Sandhill cranes have nested in the park for the past decade.
- Rafts of diving ducks are popular during migration.
- White pelicans congregate during the summer.

Other species have also undergone dramatic changes. Tiger salamanders and northern leopard frogs have become less common likely due to increased traffic adjacent to the park. However, beavers are more common in the park and otters have returned after a state re-introduction effort in the 1980s.

NHIS

The National Heritage Information System (NHIS) provides information on Minnesota's rare plants, animals, native plant communities and other rare features. This database recognizes the following species as having a presence within 1 mile of Baker Park Reserve:

- Trumpeter swan (Cygnus buccinator) is included on Minnesota's Endangered and Threatened Species List, with the status of special concern.
- Bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) is a formerly endangered, now designated as a species of special concern, first observed in 2001 and active today.
- Red-shouldered hawk (Buteo lineatus) is designated as a species of special concern.
- Colonial waterbirds which can include most grebe species, pelicans, cormorants, herons, egrets, gulls and terns.

Wildlife Management Success Stories

Three Rivers has a rich and successful history of reintroducing rare, threatened, or near-extinct wildlife species and managing natural communities in a manner which promotes the long-term health, reproduction and survival of many native wildlife species. Two success stories of this work at Baker are highlighted below.

- The Canada goose was a rare species in Minnesota in the early 1900s. At that time, the goose population was predominately migrating birds which were only in Minnesota during spring and fall migration. In the late 1950's and early 1960's resident geese from Rochester were relocated to a wildlife refuge at Baker in an effort to increase the resident geese population in Minnesota.

  The refuge and associated management actions helped create a thriving population of resident geese in Minnesota which are still abundant today.
- The trumpeter swan was nearly hunted to extinction in Minnesota during the 1800s. The wildlife refuge was repurposed in the 1960's to help increase and stabilize the swan population – ultimately protecting it from extinction. Swans are now a common sight at Baker and the entire state as a result of Three Rivers' wildlife management efforts.

NATURE AREAS AND PLANT COMMUNITIES PLANS

Due to the historic and changing ecological diversity in Baker Park Reserve, Three Rivers created plans to guide and manage both natural areas and plant communities.

Natural Areas Classification & Priorities Plan

The significant natural areas within the 80 percent zoned as natural area are identified using Natural Resource Priority Areas **(Table 25)** that guides use and management. **Figure 20** identifies the natural resources priority areas found in Baker Park Reserve.

Plant Communities Concept Plan

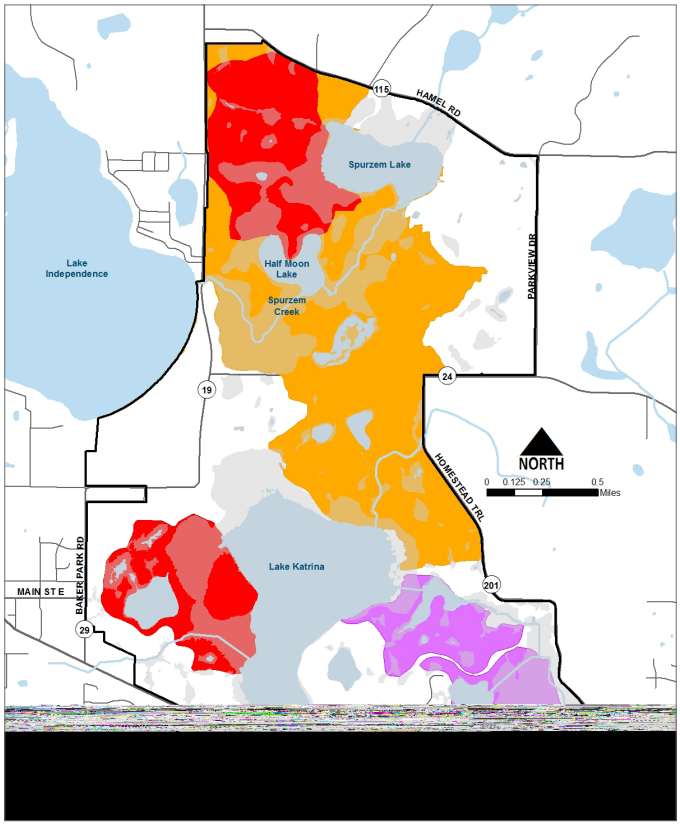
Three Rivers has considered various objectives for plant community restoration and management since its formation. These objectives have changed over time as staff follow adaptive management practices and base future decisions on current projections. The Natural Resources Operations Plan identifies specific goals for park reserves throughout Three Rivers system to help ensure natural resources management consistency across the park system. Managed areas will include prairies, wetlands and forests, with forest communities being a primary focus of Baker Park Reserve. Prairies may include a variety of prairie communities depending on soil and hydrology of a specific area. Forested areas may also include a multitude of forest communities including maple-basswood and oak-aspen, as well as different forest age structures. Contemporary forest objectives emphasize promoting native forest communities that can replace themselves with minimal outside direction or inputs. The locations and types of forests and open areas were subsequently determined by Three Rivers' Natural Resources Department and are reevaluated on a prioritized short, mid and long term schedule **(Figure 21)**.

In addition to reforestation plantings, Forestry staff are continuing efforts to restore the understories of existing higher quality maple-basswood woodlots within the park, known as the Woodland Enhancement Project (WEP). The understory plant composition of many of the woodlots within Baker Park are lacking their historically characteristic herbaceous and woody plant communities. This is due to a variety of relatively recent disturbances with earthworms being the most impactful. WEP work involves the use of seed and plant material harvested and grown from dedicated sources at the District Nursery to attempt to re-establish native herbaceous plants in the forest understory. Currently, there are 4 woodlots identified for this type of enhancement activity.

TABLE 25 | NATURAL RESOURCE PRIORITY AREAS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT

Priority Area	Acres	Description
Sanctuary Areas	521 acres	Sanctuaries are areas designed to protect significant plant communities and associated wildlife from the impacts of human activity. Development is not permitted, and natural resources management is specialized to address specific plant community and/or wildlife needs. Visitation by people is permitted only on a very limited basis for scientific investigation, educational instruction, or management requirements. Two sanctuaries have been designated within Baker Park Reserve and both contain tamarack stands.
Wildlife Preservation Areas	231 acres	Wildlife preservation areas are a combination of upland and wetland and have been set aside to provide wildlife seclusion during the nesting season. Three wildlife preservation areas are designated in Baker Park Reserve.
Key Environmental Components	1,173 acres	Key environmental components are unique natural features and primary factors in designation of a regional park reserve. Though recreational development is allowed in these areas, it is not allowed to compromise the integrity of the resource. The key environmental components found in Baker Park Reserve feature open water and forested areas.

FIGURE 20 | NATURAL AREA CLASSIFICATIONS
SOURCE: PARK DISTRICT



Wayfinding Plan

The family of current Park District signs are shown in the images on this page and located in **Figure 24**. Baker Park Reserve contains many sign kiosks and maps along its trails; however, additional wayfinding signs are desired at trail intersections and at park reserve entrances to better direct park users to the desired facility. In addition, there is a need to clarify wayfinding at regional trail intersections for trail users passing through Baker Park Reserve.

Trailheads are identified within the park for regional trails and park trails. These provide a framework and hierarchy for signage placement. This long-range plan recommends naming the west park trail parking lot along CR 19 the "West Trailhead" and the current Horse Trailhead called the "East Trailhead."

A District-wide in-park wayfinding signage study is being conducted to identify the most efficient way to communicate and ensure consistency from one park to another. This study anticipates recommending in-park welcome and information signage at various levels such as You Are Here signs, trail markers, and directional and assurance signs. While the exact location and types of signs has not yet been identified for Baker Park Reserve, a general cost for the implementation of this program at Baker Park Reserve is included the long-range cost estimate **(Appendix C)**.

Existing Wayfinding Signs

Park Monument Entrance Sign

Vehicle Entrance Sign

Park Map

Informational Sign

Regional Trail Kiosk

Regional Trail Directional Sign

Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan

June 30 - July 30, 2024

ThreeRivers PARK DISTRICT

Feedback Comment	Response
I do support adding trail spurs to more scenic overlooks. That would be helpful for birding the Park especially along the Lake Katrina loop trail. As far as increasing interpretive signage, I would error on the side of less is more. I think signs may have the best of intentions but they are man-made structures that compete with the simple beauty of nature and natural vistas. They also mentally clutter one's impressions at these sites. Sometimes we don't need to know, we just need the experience. If we have to know, we can go to our mobile phones - have the info on the Baker Park website - not in the viewshed.	Thank you for your comments. They will be taken into account when the trail spurs and interpretive signs are considered and designed.
Please add Swings. Great Park my favorite part is the zip line. I love you baker park	There is a group swing installed at the play area. To-fro type swings require much more space than group swings, therefore were not included in the new play area.
One thing that I noticed so far, You have Clarissa Hadler listed in the Front as the City Admin for Maple plain	The long-range plan was edited to include this change.
We live in Greenfield and use Baker Park all seasons. As a family, we are particularly excited about the increased fishing options proposed in the plan. Would love to see a fishing dock on the end of the beach where the boat launch is.	A fishing pier just north of the boat launch was included in the plan. There is also a fishing pier planned at Lake Spurzem.
Greetings, I appreciate the continued efforts of the TRP to continue to improve Baker Park for the enjoyment of recreation in all seasons for all people. I am interested in the equestrian trails. Is there a way to add more trails? Make another loop trail? I am not sure of the land boundaries that the park owns. Thank you for your consideration.	Because Baker Park Reserve currently exceeds the amount of developed land designated for recreation according the Park District's 80/20 Policy (no more than 20% of the upland areas can be developed), no new trails can be created from previously undeveloped lands. However, if new parkland is acquired or if current uses become no longer viable, the Park District will consider the addition of new trails.
I would love to see a mountain bike space. It does not need to include all the challenges of Murphy-Hanrehan, ort Elm Creek. More like Lake Rebecca. Just a a few short diversions from the existing paved 6 mile loop would be nice.	Because Baker Park Reserve currently exceeds the amount of developed land designated for recreation according the Park District's 80/20 Policy (no more than 20% of the upland areas can be developed), no new trails can be created from previously undeveloped lands. However, as new parkland is acquired or if current uses become no longer viable, new trails could be added.
Winter trail walking is important to many people. Expand the west parking lot to add capacity and plow. Also plow two miles of the trail adjacent to the parking lot.	The plan does include the expansion the West Trailhead parking lot along with other improvements there. Additional plowing will be considered as part of annual operation and budget plans, as well as part of future winter use expansion. Additionally, there are winter walking opportunities at the Baker campground where the perimeter trail (approx. 1 mile) is currently plowed in the wintertime.
I love the Baker Park multi-use winter trail. It is one of the few places skijoring, bikejoring, and dogsledding are allowed. Please keep the multi-use winter trail as a part of the future updates.	There are no plans to eliminate the multi-use trail.

Feedback Comment	Response
Please don't expand structures or development. We have enough of that in our world. What we don't have, what is rare and getting rarer by the moment, is our natural resources. Please protect them and in this time of climate crisis, ensure we don't lose one more inch. In fact, add more land to the park. Protect more. Keep man made in its current footpath and only replace or make more environmentally friendly. Thanks.	Baker Park is current exceeding our own policy for developed lands, largely due to past land use decisions made prior to implementing the policy. At this time, our policy prohibits us from expanding our developed footprint into natural upland areas. Baker's natural resources are a valuable asset. Part of Three Rivers' mission is to protect them.
We have a 64 acre farm on the SE quadrant of County Road 19 & County Road 11 partially along the southern border of Loretto. It's also adjacent to the County Rd 19 walking trail that connects to the Three Rivers, Baker Park trails. This property has been in our family (Becker's/Elsen's) since 1868, just 10 years after MN became a state. It's currently in our family trust and we've been in process of positioning it for sale. Our family would be interested in our farm becoming part of the Three Rivers Parks system if the timing would be right for the Park. Please keep us in mind should this become a property of interest for the Park.	The plan was updated to recognize the public's support and interest to expand the park boundaries and include known, potential acquisition opportunities. This flexibility to acquire more land and expand the park's boundaries is critical to protecting Baker's natural resources and ecological systems as well as alleviating recreation development demand.
The (Medina) Park Commission expressed support for the Baker Park Reserve Long Range Plan with the following comments. The Commission urged Three Rivers Park District (the "District") to consider potential trail connections between the local trail system within the City of Medina to connect with the trails within Baker Park. Potential locations are clouded in the following exhibit. While acknowledging that the developed portion of Baker Park exceeds the 20% of buildable land that District has set as a policy for the maximum developed area, the Commission urged the District to be open for opportunities to "swap" out existing developed areas for new developed areas. The Commission urges that this would be appropriate because: 1) Baker Park exceeds the Met Council requirement for the 80/20 natural area for total area. 2) Baker Park includes a high percentage of wetland and water compared to other Park Reserves. 3) Significant portions of the development area of Baker Park (Golf Course and Recreational Area) were developed prior to acquisition by the Park District and the application of the 80/20 rule.	The long range plan was updated to allow new local trail connections in locations where it is safe to do so and where they would connect to local pedestrian and bicycle systems located outside of the park. The plan does not include exact locations as they will need to be first thoroughly reviewed to ensure user safety especially when crossing adjacent roads. Additionally, Three Rivers recognizes that additional local connection requests may come up in the future and does not want to be limited to only those connections specially called out in the plan.

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APPENDIX B

JURISDICTIONAL SUPPORT

B

CITY OF MAPLE PLAIN
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

RESOLUTION NO. 24-0826-1

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BAKER PARK RESERVE LONG-RANGE PLAN

WHEREAS, The City of Maple Plain recognizes Baker Park Reserve as an important component of the regional parks system providing natural resource protection and nature-based recreation to the residents of the City and the region; and

WHEREAS, City staff have been working in partnership with Three Rivers Park District in development of the Long-range Plan to ensure long-range planning preserves Baker Park Reserve's treasured areas while enhancing the recreational and educational offerings; and

WHEREAS, The City of Maple Plain recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has gathered significant public input in the development of the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan; and

WHEREAS, The City of Maple Plain recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has drafted the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately; and

WHEREAS, The Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan is consistent with other approved local and regional plans; and

WHEREAS, the City of Maple Plain supports the design, implementation and operation of the Baker Park Reserve pursuant to the Long-range Plan; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Maple Plain supports the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan.

Adopted this 26th day of August 2024.

CITY OF MAPLE PLAIN

BY: _____
MAYOR Julie Maas-Kusske

BY: _____
CITY ADMINISTRATOR Jacob Kolander

CITY OF ORONO

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

NO. 7506

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BAKER PARK RESERVE LONG-RANGE PLAN

WHEREAS, The City of Orono recognizes Baker Park Reserve as an important component of the regional parks system providing natural resource protection and nature-based recreation to the residents of the city and the region; and

WHEREAS, City staff have been working in partnership with Three Rivers Park District in development of the Long-range Plan to ensure long-range planning preserves Baker Park Reserve's treasured areas while enhancing the recreational and educational offerings; and

WHEREAS, The City of Orono recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has gathered significant public input in the development of the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan; and

WHEREAS, The City of Orono recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has drafted the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately; and

WHEREAS, The Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan is consistent with other approved local and regional plans; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orono supports the design, implementation and operation of the Baker Park Reserve pursuant to the Long-range Plan; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Orono supports the Baker Park Reserve Long-range Plan.

Adopted by the City Council of Orono, Minnesota at a regular meeting held on August 26, 2024.

ATTEST:

Christine Lusian, City Clerk

CITY OF ORONO

Dennis Walsh, Mayor

Member Albers introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

CITY OF MEDINA

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-69

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BAKER PARK RESERVE LONG-RANGE PLAN

WHEREAS, the city of Medina (the "City") is a municipal corporation, organized and existing under the laws of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Three Rivers Park District (the "District") owns and operates Baker Park Reserve within the City; and

WHEREAS, Baker Park Reserve is an important component of the regional parks system providing natural resource protection and nature-based recreation to the residents of the City and the region; and

WHEREAS, the District has engaged with City staff and officials in development of the Long-Range Plan to ensure long-range planning preserves Baker Park Reserve's treasured areas while enhancing the recreational and educational offerings; and

WHEREAS, the District has gathered significant public input, drafted the Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan, and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately; and

WHEREAS, the City finds the Long-Range Plan to be consistent with other approved local and regional plans; and

WHEREAS, the City would consider support for the District acquiring additional property to add to Baker Park Reserve, provided the District consults with City and the City finds such acquisition to be consistent with City plans and objectives; and

WHEREAS, the City supports the District's design, implementation, and operation of Baker Park Reserve pursuant to the Long-Range Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Medina, Minnesota supports the Baker Park Reserve Long-Range Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that nothing herein shall be construed or interpreted to authorize the District's purchase or condemnation of real property rights pursuant to Minn. Stat. 398.09(b)(1). Future land acquisition in the City by the District shall require separate consideration and action by the City pursuant to said statute.

Date: October 1, 2024.

Kathleen Martin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Caitlyn Walker, City Clerk

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by member Cavanaugh and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Albers, Cavanaugh, DesLauriers, Martin

And the following voted against same: **(Absent: Reid)**

None

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Resolution No. 2024-69
October 1, 2024

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APPENDIX C

DETAILED DEVELOPMENT COST ESTIMATE

C

ID	ITEM	TOTAL*	NOTES/ASSUMPTIONS
General Park Reserve-wide Improvements Cost estimate totals include all appropriate design, engineering and contingency costs			
A	Enhance existing vista locations off paved Lake Katina loop trail with trail spurs to scenic overlooks	$155,000	Assumes short paved or aggregate trail spurs with bench
B	Add natural and cultural history interpretive signage	$65,000	Assumes a small panel sign on metal frame at each location
C	Implement improved wayfinding	$170,000	Implementation of the District-wide welcome and information signage program
D	Add fishing pier, additional parking and pre-fab vault latrine at Spurzem Lake	$350,000	
E	Add flush toilets and shower building, accessibility and parking improvements at Marshview Group Camp. Expand the small parking lot at CR 24 at the group camp entrance.	$465,000	Assumes a pre-fab toilet/shower combination building, new well, water conditioning system, septic field and electrical upgrades. Expand gravel parking lot at CR 24
F	Expand the existing Public Safety parking lot and lighting to accommodate existing use	$605,000**	Only required if We Can Ride remains at current site
H	Reconfigure trailhead parking lot and trails in coordination with the Baker-Carver Regional Trail implementation	$590,000***	Includes trail realignment, expanded parking lot and pre-fab vault latrine. CR 19 road crossing improvements will be addressed when the regional trail is constructed
I	Construct Lake Independence Regional Trail between County Rd 6 and Welcome Dr	$335,000***	Includes new trail between Welcome Drive and Starkey Road and trail realignment at CR 6
J	Add equestrian trail etiquette signage [paved Lake Katrina loop trail]		Not a Development/CIP cost item
K	Add drinking water along south side of paved Lake Katrina loop trail	$55,000	Includes new solar-powered well
	General Park Reserve-wide subtotal	**$2,810,000**	

Baker Park Recreation Area Improvements Cost estimate totals include all appropriate design, engineering and contingency costs			
L	Continue natural resource efforts to improve Lake Independence water quality	$0	Ongoing projects using existing funds/grants
M	Add small non-reservable picnic shelter near play area	$125,000	Assumes a pre-fab shelter structure
N	Add accessible fishing pier near boar launch	$140,000	
O	Add shoreline fishing near north beach	$50,000	Assumes accessible aggregate paths and large, flat boulders place along shoreline
P	Explore options to alleviate boat queuing issues	$20,000****	Cost to study boat queing issues
Q	Add large picnic shelter at the north picnic area	$480,000	Assumes contractor construction, electricity, mostly open architecture with some accent stone work and trusses
R	Add safety improvements to CR 19 crossing for maintenance vehicles	$20,000****	Consultant study to determine the best options for safety improvements for the CR 19 crossing at the existing underpass and/or at-grade road crossing
	Baker Park Recreation Area subtotal	**$835,000**	

* 2024 dollars
** Costs would likely be shared with We Can Ride
*** Costs support both Baker Park Reserve and regional trail system
**** Cost estimate does not include implementation of recommendation
***** Possible future development cost

Campground Cost estimate totals include all appropriate design, engineering and contingency costs			
S	Redesign circulation of campground entry/exit, including relocating dump stations	$410,000	Assumes new entrance/exit road construction and relocation of dump station
T	Add 5 additional camper cabins	$1,700,000	Assumes contractor construction including site prep and electrical connections
U	Add electricity to F Loop and increase existing electric loops from 30 to 50 amp service	$980,000	Assumes new electric service for F loop, upgrade to 50 amp for B, D and G loops
V	Add wifi and charging stations in the campground	$410,000	Includes installation of wifi throughout the campground and lockable charging stations near the non-electric sites
X	Add small nature play area at campground	$55,000	Assumes the purchase a commercially available nature structure, but alternatively, could use readily available natural materials such as logs, sticks, sand and rocks
Y	Add parking spaces along the campground perimeter drive	$70,000	
Z	Purchase equipment and improvements to support winter recreation and winter camping	$100,000	Restroom improvements to support winter activities
AA	Add new internal paths between sites to improve access to the nearest restroom	$50,000	May be in-house construction
BB	Improve grading for C-loop sites	$10,000	May be in-house construction
CC	Increase vegetative buffer between E-loop and Baker Park Road	$15,000	May be in-house construction
	Campground subtotal	**$3,800,000**	

Baker Outdoor Learning Center Cost estimate totals include all appropriate design, engineering and contingency costs			
DD	Explore enhanced programming offerings and facilities	*****	Staff to explore options for future consideration
EE	Improve trails to cabins for accessibility and other trails to be more sustainable	$205,000	Assumes re-routing or regrading of existing trails, new trail to lodge and low voltage lighting. May be in-house construction
FF	Archery range improvements to provide greater seasonality/use	$560,000	Assumes log cabin-style classroom building with covered porch, 30' x 24'
GG	Explore options to improve storage space in OLC office building	*****	Staff to explore options for future consideration
HH	Demolition of the pole barn (Turkey Barn)	$215,000	Remove large pole barn when equivalent maintenance storage space is developed elsewhere in Three Rivers.
	Baker Outdoor Learning Center subtotal	**$980,000**	
	TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS	**$8,425,000**	Total does not include the cost of implementing some undetermined recommendations to be studied

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APPENDIX D

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

PARK BOUNDARIES*

Baker Park Reserve falls roughly between Hamel Road and U.S. Highway 12/ CR 6 (north and south) and CR 19 and Parkview Drive/ Homestead Trail (west and east). The specific description is as follows:

In the City of Medina (Township 118, Range 23)

In Section 7: That part of the Southeast ¼ lying southerly of road and that part of the Northeast ¼ lying easterly of a line bearing north 19 degrees, 30 minutes east from a point on the South line thereof a distance 20.68 feet east from the Southwest corner thereof and lying southerly of the road except road.

In Section 8: That part of the South ½ lying southerly of Hamel Road and Lots 1 and 2, Block 1, Feser's Addition.

In Section 17: All of Section 17.

In Section 18: The Northwest ¼ of the Northeast ¼ and Government Lots 3,4,5,6 and 7 excluding the Dockside Addition.

In Section 19: That part of Government Lot 1 described as follows: beginning at the Southwest corner of said Government Lot thence north along the West line thereof a distance of 858 feet thence east parallel with the South line of said Government Lot a distance of 223.08 feet thence north 03 degrees, 30 minutes east 780.78 feet to the shore of Lake Independence then northeasterly along the shore to the East line of said Government Lot then south along said east line to the Southeast corner of said Government lot west to the beginning, also Government Lot 2 and the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ and the North ½ of the Northeast ¼ , also that part of the West ½ of the Southwest ¼ lying south of a line running parallel with and 30 feet south from the South line of the North 20 rods thereof and Government Lots 3, 4 and 6, also that part of Government Lot 5 lying east of the west 30 feet of said Lot lying south of the north 360 feet thereof.

In Section 20: The North ½ of the Northwest ¼ and the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼, also that part of the Southwest ¼ of the Northeast ¼ lying southwesterly of the road and Government lots 1,2 and 3, also that part of the Northwest ¼ of the Southeast ¼ lying westerly of the road and that part of the South ½ of the Northwest ¼ of the Southeast ¼ lying easterly of the road, also that part of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ lying west of County Road 210.

In Section 28: The North ½ lying westerly of Homestead Trail.

In Section 29: That part of the Northeast ¼ lying north and east of Welcome Acres 1st Addition, also Government Lots 2 and 3, also that part of the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ described as follows: beginning at a point on the east line thereof 256 feet north of the

Southeast corner thereof, thence west 313 feet thence south 256 feet west to the Southwest corner thereof thence north to the Northwest corner thereof thence east to the Northeast corner thereof thence south to the point of beginning, also:

Lot 1, Block 1 and Lots 1-5, Block 2, Welcome Acres Addition.

In Section 30: Government Lots 1, 3 and 4, also that part of the Northwest ¼ described as follows: Beginning at the Northeast corner thereof thence west to the Northwest corner thereof thence south along the West line 253.5 feet thence east 257 feet thence south 169.5 feet thence west 257 feet thence south along the West line of said Northwest ¼ 260 feet thence east 233 feet thence south 130 feet thence east 239 feet thence south 231 feet thence deflecting left 64 degrees, 46 minutes a distance of 807.71 feet to the East line of the west 1207 feet of the Northwest ¼ thence south along said line to the North line of the Railroad thence southeasterly along said north line to the South line of the Northwest ¼ thence east to the Southeast corner thereof thence north to the beginning, except roads.

In the City of Orono (Township 118, Range 23)

In Section 29: That part of the Southeast ¼ of Section 29 lying north of County Road 6 except the following 3 tracts of land. Exception number 1: Commencing at the Northwest corner of said Southeast ¼ thence on an assumed bearing of south along the West line of said Southeast ¼ a distance of 1560.32 feet thence east 149.06 feet to the point of beginning of the land being described thence north 74 degrees, 47 minutes, 5 seconds east 272 feet thence south 12 degrees, 39 minutes, 41 seconds to the Northwesterly Right-of Way line of County Road 6 thence southwesterly along said Right-of-Way line to a line bearing south 23 degrees, 27 minutes, 59 seconds east from the point of beginning thence northwesterly to the point of beginning; Exception Number 2: Beginning at the intersection of the Northwesterly line of County Road 6 with the West line of the east 415 feet of the Southeast ¼ of Section 29 thence on an assumed bearing of north along said West line a distance of 199.31 feet thence north 83 degrees, 16 minutes, 26 seconds east 131.26 feet thence south 6 degrees, 43 minutes, 34 seconds east to the Northerly Right-of-Way line of County Road 6 thence westerly along said Right-of-Way line to the point of beginning; Exception Number 3: Beginning at the intersection of the Northerly Right-of-Way line of County Road 6 with the West line of the east 415 feet of the Southeast ¼ thence on an assumed bearing of north along said West line 199.31 feet thence south 83 degrees, 16 minutes, 26 seconds thence west 74.76 feet thence south 2 degrees, 43 minutes, 19 seconds west to the Northerly Right-of-Way line of County Road 6 thence easterly along said Right-of-Way line to the point of beginning, also:

That part of Lot 1 lying north of the south 455 feet thereof and Lots 2 through 7 and Lots 9 and 10, also that part of Lots 11, 12 and 13 lying northerly of County Road 6, all in Minnetonka Gardens Addition, also Tracts B and C of registered Land Survey Number 724.

In Section 30: That part of the South ½ of Section 30 lying north of U.S. Highway Number 12 and west of Registered Land survey Number 724, also Tracts A, D, E, F, G and H in registered Land survey Number 724, also:

That part of Government Lot 2 described as beginning at the point of intersection of the Northerly Right-of-Way line of U.S. Highway Number 12 with the Westerly boundary line of Registered Land Survey Number 724, thence north 21 degrees, 31 minutes east along said Westerly boundary line a distance of 157 and 86/100 feet to the most Southerly corner of Tract A Registered Land Survey Number 724 thence north 73 degrees, 29 minutes west a distance of 66 feet to the Southwest corner of said Tract A thence north 0 degrees, 29 minutes east along the West line of said Tract A distance 246 and 25/100 feet thence south 49 degrees, 17 minutes, 39 seconds west a distance 213 and 74/100 feet thence south 74 degrees, 57 minutes, 07 seconds west a distance of 232 and 95/100 feet to said northerly Right-of-Way of U.S. Highway 12 thence southeasterly along said Right-of-Way line a distance 444 and 39/100 feet to the beginning.

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APPENDIX E

DETAILED DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

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DEMOGRAPHICS FOR BAKER PARK RESERVE SERVICE AREAS

POPULATION CATEGORY	Visitor Survey Data including Golf Visitors (2018)		Actual 'Core Service Area' 19.8 minute* drive-shed		Actual 'Primary Service Area' 29.2 minute* drive-shed		'Ideal Primary Service Area' 30 minute drive- shed	
AGE +								
<5 years	14,805	6.2%	16,554	6.4%	66,472	6.3%	73,861	6.3%
5–9 years	24,950	10.5%	17,575	6.8%	68,488	6.5%	76,177	6.5%
10–17 years	37,613	15.8%	27,590	10.7%	106,806	10.2%	118,559	10.1%
18–24 years	17,174	7.2%	14,076	5.5%	81,277	7.8%	97,388	8.3%
25-34 years	**25,815**	**10.8%**	31,746	12.3%	**165,919**	**15.8%**	**187,295**	**16.0%**
35–44 years	38,438	16.1%	36,582	14.2%	146,371	14.0%	163,327	13.9%
45–59 years	45,466	19.1%	55,287	21.4%	199,657	19.1%	221,277	18.9%
60–74 years	31,251	13.1%	**41,743**	**16.2%**	153,448	14.7%	169,031	14.4%
75+years	**2,620**	**1.1%**	**16,826**	**6.5%**	**58,591**	**5.6%**	**64,588**	**5.5%**
GENDER +								
Female [1]	**106,597**	**44.8%**	**128,857**	**49.9%**	**524,865**	**50.1%**	**587,974**	**50.2%**
Male	131,450	55.2%	129,124	50.1%	522,164	49.9%	583,530	49.8%
RACE of Adults ++								
White	143,610	89.3%	155,480	82.7%	515,983	71.4%	575,776	71.4%
Black	**4,357**	**2.7%**	**8,461**	**4.5%**	**87,857**	**12.2%**	**95,864**	**11.9%**
American Indian	732	0.5%	545	0.3%	5,437	0.8%	6,282	0.8%
Asian	**6,784**	**4.2%**	**13,018**	**6.9%**	**54,824**	**7.6%**	**60,469**	**7.5%**
Hawaiian	-	0.0%	53	0.0%	233	0.0%	262	0.0%
Other [1]	**2,027**	**1.3%**	2,720	1.4%	**21,555**	**3.0%**	**25,780**	**3.2%**
Multiple [1]	**3,254**	**2.0%**	**7,798**	**4.1%**	**37,079**	**5.1%**	**42,114**	**5.2%**
ETHNICITY of Adults ++								
Not Hispanic	152,244	94.7%	**182,195**	**96.9%**	683,215	94.5%	759,749	94.2%
Hispanic	8,520	5.3%	5,906	3.1%	39,743	5.5%	46,797	5.8%
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME +								
# of Households: < $50,000		**11.0%**	**20,875**	**20.2%**	**117,804**	**27.5%**	**131,885**	**27.6%**
# of Households: $50,000 - $75,000		14.3%	13,729	13.3%	65,849	15.4%	73,414	15.4%
# of Households: > $75,000		74.7%	68,819	66.5%	245,112	57.2%	272,168	57.0%

Bold: Population Categories are considered under-represented when comparing the 2018 TRPD visitor survey data to the Ideal Primary Service Area (30.0 minute drive-shed).

* Based on 2018 TRPD visitor survey data, 29.2 minutes is the 75% percentile of drivetimes of surveyed visitors to the park, including golf visitors.

\+ Source: US Census: 2021 American Communities Survey

++ Source: 2020 US Census

1. Women, Black, Asian, Multiple and Other races are considered under-represented only if golf visitors are factored into the analysis. Excluding golf visitors from the analysis, these population groups are not considered under-represented in Baker Park Reserve due to the golf being a White male-dominated activity.

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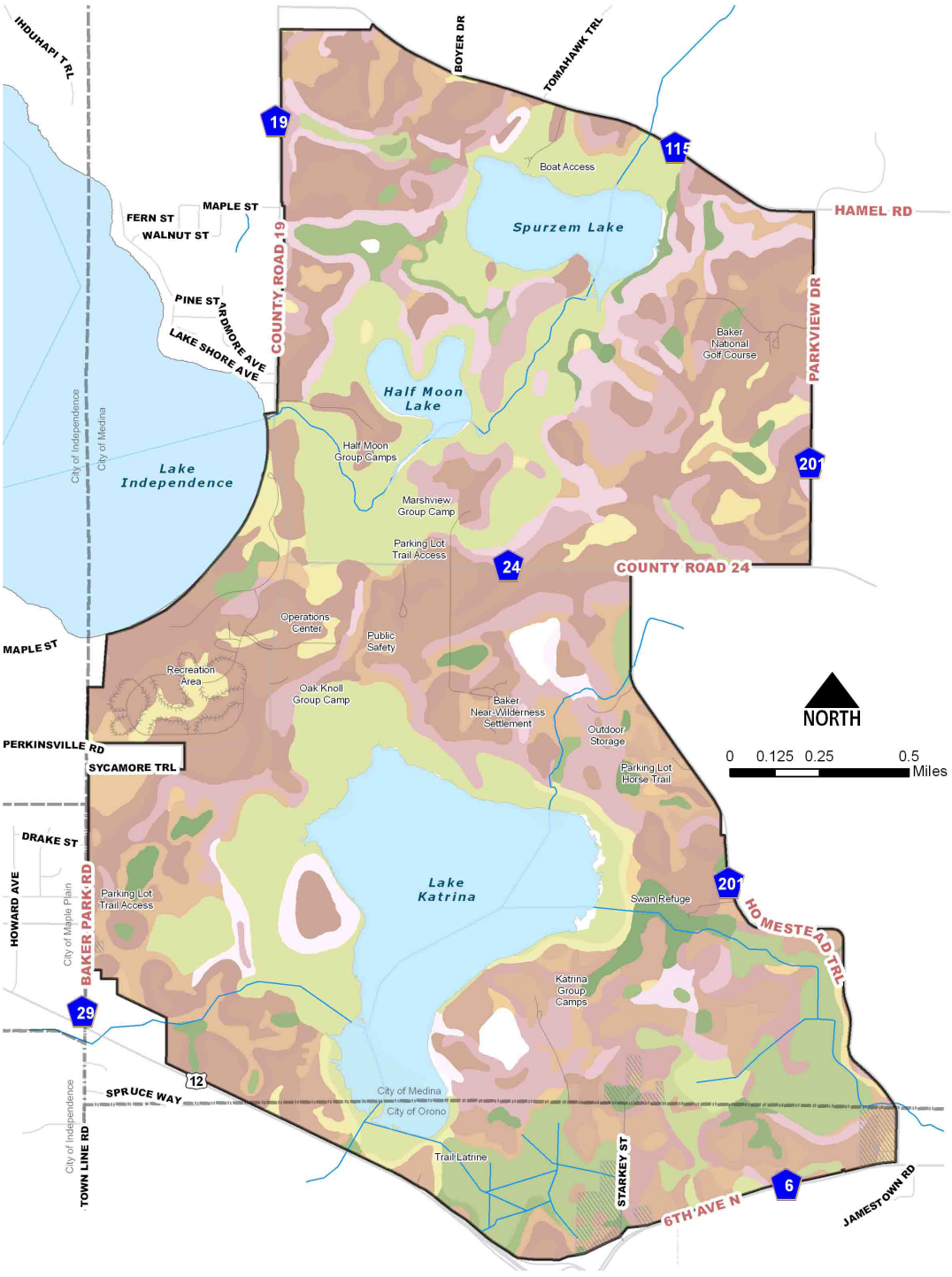
APPENDIX F

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

WETLAND DESCRIPTIONS

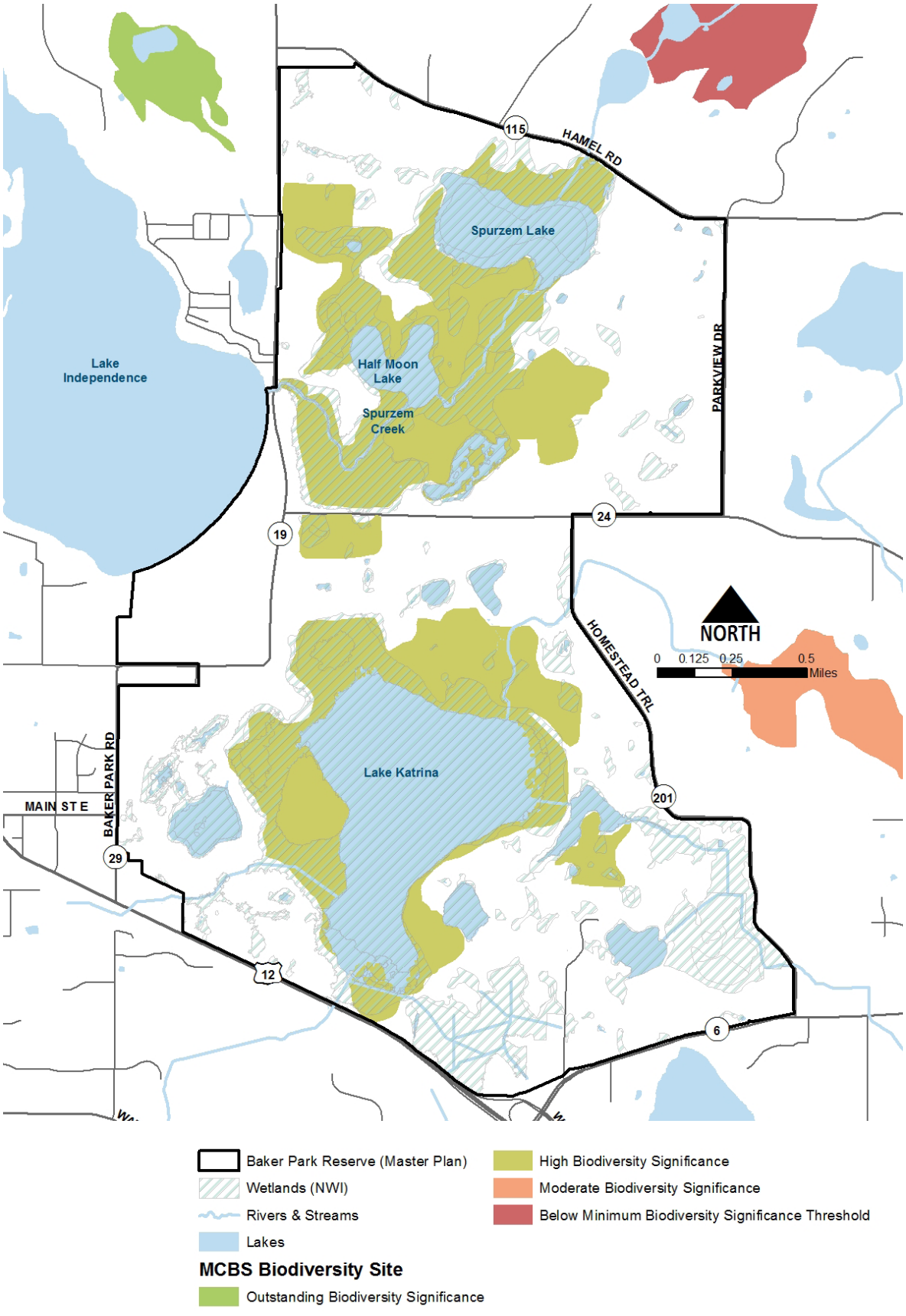
Wetland Type	Soil	Hydrology	Vegetation	Common Sites
1	Usually well-drained during much of the growing season	Covered with water or waterlogged during the variable seasonal periods	Varies greatly according to season and duration of flooding from bottomland hardwoods to herbaceous plants	Upland depressions, bottomland hardwoods (floodplain forests)
2	Saturated or nearly saturated during most of the growing season	Usually without standing water during most of the growing season but waterlogged within at least a few inches of the surface	Grasses, sedges, rushes, various broadleaved plants	May fill shallow basins, sloughs, or farmland sags; may border shallow marshes on the landward side and include low prairies, sedge meadows, and calcareous fens
3	Usually water logged during the growing season	Often covered with 6" or more of water	Grasses; bulrushes; spikerush; and various other marsh plants, such as cattail, arrowhead, pickereralweed, and smartweed	May nearly fill shallow lake basins or sloughs; may border deep marshes on landward side, commonly as seep areas near irrigated lands
4	Usually covered with 6" to 3' or more of water during the growing season	Usually covered with 6" to 3' or more of water during the growing season	Cattail; reed; bulrush; spikerush; and wild rice; open area may have pond weed, duckweed, waterlily, and spatterdock	May completely fill shallow lake basins, potholes, limestone sinks, and sloughs; may border open water in such depressions
5	Inundated	Usually covered with less than 10-foot-deep water; includes shallow ponds and reservoirs	Fringe of emergent vegetation: pond weed, duckweed, waterlily, and spatterdock	Shallow lake basins and may border large open water basins
6	Usually waterlogged during the growing season	Often covered with as much as 6" of water; water table is at or near the surface	Includes alder, willow, buttonbrush, dogwood, and swamp privet	Along sluggish streams, drainage depressions, and occasionally on floodplains
7	Waterlogged within a few inches of the surface during the growing season	Often covered with as much as 1' of water; water table is near the surface	Hardwood and coniferous swamps with tamarack, northern white cedar, black spruce, balsam fir, balsam poplar, red maple, and black ash, deciduous sites frequently support beds of duckweed and smartweed	Mostly in shallow ancient lake basins, old riverine oxbows, flat terrains, and along sluggish streams
8	Usually waterlogged during the growing season	Water table at or near the surface	Woody, herbaceous, or supporting a spongy covering of mosses; typical plants are heath shrubs, sphagnum mosses, sedges, leatherleaf, Labrador tea, cranberry, and cottongrass; may include stunted black spruce and tamarack	Mostly on shallow glacial lake basins and depressions, flat terrain, along sluggish streams

SOIL TYPES



- Park Reserve Boundary
- Inholdings
- Park Roads
- Lakes
- Streams
- Klossner muck, depressional, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- Glencoe loam, depressional, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- Klossner soils, depressional, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- Houghton and Muskego soils, depressional, 0 to 1 percent slope
- Hamel-Glencoe, depressional, complex, 0 to 3 percent slope
- Muskego, Blue Earth and Houghton soils, ponded, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- Tadkee-Tadkee, depressional, complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Cordova loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Minnetonka silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Canisteo loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Dundas-Cordova complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes
- Udorthents (cut and fill land), 0 to 6 percent slopes
- Nessel loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
- Le Sueur loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
- Lerdal loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
- Hamel, overwash-Hamel complex, 1 to 4 percent slopes
- Angus loam, morainic, 2 to 5 percent slopes
- Lester loam, morainic, 6 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
- Angus-Kilkenny complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
- Lester-Kilkenny complex, 6 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
- Lester loam, morainic, 12 to 18 percent slopes, eroded
- Lester-Kilkenny complex, 12 to 18 percent slopes, eroded
- Lester loam, morainic, 18 to 25 percent slopes
- Lester-Kilkenny complex, 18 to 25 percent slopes
- Lester-Metea complex, 18 to 25 percent slopes
- Lester-Kilkenny complex, 25 to 35 percent slopes

MINNESOTA COUNTY BIOLOGICAL SURVEY (MCBS)



TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES OF THREAT TO BAKER PARK RESERVE

Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat	Problem	MDA Noxious Weed Status
Terrestrial (Woody) Invasive Plants				
Common buckthorn, Glossy buckthorn	Rhamnus cathartica, Frangula alnus	Diverse habitats including the understory of more open forests, riparian woods, historic hedgerows and pastures. It is less vigorous in dense shade, and often grows on woodland edges.	Aggressive competitors for nutrients, light, and moisture. Threatens the regeneration of native forests. Contributes to erosion by shading out other plants that grow on the forest floor. Spread by birds.	
Non-native (exotic) honeysuckles	Lonicera tartarica, Lonicera morrowii, Lonicera x bella	Similar to buckthorn, it can grow in diverse habitats (mixed forests with oaks, elms and other hardwoods and floodplain forests). In general, favors disturbed sites and forest edges or openings.	Can severely impede forest regeneration following disturbance. Tree seedling density, species richness, and herb cover are all inversely related to honeysuckle cover, and tree regeneration inhibited. Annual herbs entirely suppressed.	
Oriental bittersweet (potential)	Celastrus orbiculatus	Forests, woodlands, forest edges, riparian areas and open fields.	Climbs and twines around trees and shrubs, effectively girdling or smothering the plant. Has the potential to overtake entire plant community. Outcompetes and displaces indigenous American bittersweet (Celastrus scandens).	
Amur maple	Acer ginnala	Early successional forest, edge, open fields/ disturbed areas, and roadsides. Has a wide tolerance for different soil qualities and pH values. It grows best in moist, well-drained soils.	Invades open fields and forest edges. Shade tolerance allows it to spread into intact forest. Prolific seeder.	Specially Regulated
Norway maple	Acer platanoides	Early successional forest, forest wetland, late successional forest, open disturbed areas, roadsides, vacant lot, yards or gardens. Extensively planted as a street and ornamental tree.	Naturalizes to nearby woods from urban planting areas and from there moves to less disturbed habitats. Can spread rapidly due to early leaf out and shade tolerance.	Not regulated
Terrestrial (Herbaceous) Invasive Plants				
Garlic mustard	Alliaria petiolata	Grows in partially shaded woodlands, both upland and floodplain forests. It is not limited to disturbed areas.	One of the few alien herbaceous species that invades and dominates the understory of forested areas. It is typical of cold season European plants, so it grows during early spring and late fall when native species are dormant.	Restricted
Hoary alyssum	Berteroa incana	It can be found along roads, railroads, trails, gravelly stream and lake banks, lawns, farmyards, vacant lots, overgrazed pastures and rangeland, and in hay meadows.	Spreads rapidly due to the high number of seeds per plant. The plant emerges early in spring and continues to flower and produce seed until frost. It can cause toxicity to horses.	Not regulated
Creeping bellflower	Campanula rapunculoides	Old fields, stream banks, woodlands and woodland edges, prairies, roadsides, urban areas, and oak savannas.	Prolific seeder, but also spreads via rhizomes. Forms dense monocultures.	Not regulated
Oriental bittersweet	Celastrus orbiculatus	Forests, woodlands, forest edges, riparian areas and open fields.	Climbs and twines around trees and shrubs, effectively girdling or smothering the plant. Has the potential to overtake entire plant community. Out competes and displaces indigenous American bittersweet (Celastrus scandens).	Eradicate
Autumn olive	Elaeagnus umbellata	Grows well on a variety of soils, including sandy, loamy, and somewhat clayey textures. Does not do well on very wet sites. Does do well on droughty sites and infertile soils.	Invades old fields, woodland edges, and other disturbed areas. It can form a dense shrub layer which displaces native species and closes open areas. Was widely planted for wildlife habitat, and shelterbelts. It is a non-leguminous nitrogen fixer.	Not regulated
Helleborine orchid	Epipactis helleborine	Prefers disturbed areas such as along foot trails and roadsides within woodlands.	This is an exotic plant that is becoming increasingly invasive throughout the region, especially in dryish, gravelly soils of forest and woodland edges.	Not regulated
Winged burning bush	Euonymus alatus	Can be found in a variety of habitats, including abandoned fields, early successional forest, railroad/ utility rights-of-way, roadsides, or landscaping. It can also tolerate a variety of soil types and pH levels, though it does not tolerate water-logged soils well.	The seeds are bird dispersed and spread extensively from plantings. Plants form dense thickets, threatening native plants by crowding and shading. This plant continues to be used as an ornamental, thus continuing its spread in the region. Can tolerate full sun to full shade.	Not regulated
Orange hawkweed	Hieracium aurantiacum	It is usually found in sunny areas and occurs in disturbed areas such as roadsides, gravel pits, meadows, and pastures.	Spreads via stolons (roots) and can tolerate low nutrient and disturbed soils.	Not regulated
Wild parsnip	Pastinaca sativa	Found in open places along roadsides, paths, and in old fields. Can tolerate a wide range of soil moisture, usually dry to mesic soils, but can be found in wetter areas (such as roadside ditches).	It produces a compound that causes severe blistering and discoloration on contact with the skin on sunny days, a condition known as photodermatitis. Since it regularly occurs along paths and roadsides, eradication is desirable from a human safety standpoint. It can become abundant on prairie edges and in disturbed open areas. Seed is often spread by mowing when plant has gone to seed.	Control

Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat	Problem	MDA Noxious Weed Status
Japanese knotweed	Polygonum cuspidatum	This plant thrives in riparian areas and wetlands, but can be found along roadsides and other disturbed areas. It prefers full sunlight, but can tolerate moderate shade. It is tolerant of high temperatures, dry soil, and salt.	It forms dense, persistent thickets that exclude other vegetation. Its vegetative reproduction has proved quite successful and established populations are very difficult to eradicate.	Specially Regulated
White poplar	Populus alba	Prefers areas of disturbance where it can get ample sun. Typically these are early forest succession areas. It can tolerate a variety of soils and different levels of pH, as well as a fair amount of salt.	It can form large clonal communities that are capable of excluding native species. When attempts are made to cut it back, it vigorously resprouts and spreads even more. It can interfere with forest succession in disturbed habitats. Also, it is a very brittle tree that is easily broken and can cause damage to nearby structures or other trees.	Not regulated
Common buckthorn	Rhamnus cathartica	Diverse habitats including the understory of more open forests, riparian woods, historic hedgerows and pastures. It is less vigorous in dense shade, and often grows on woodland edges.	Aggressive competitor for nutrients, light, and moisture. Threatens the regeneration of native forests. Contributes to erosion by shading out other plants that grow on the forest floor. Spread by birds.	Restricted
Black locust	Robinia pseudoacacia	Black locust does not tolerate low light situations and is usually found in disturbed areas where it can get full sun. It prefers sandy, well-drained soils, and does not grow well in poorly-drained situations.	Spreads rapidly via root suckers and crowds out native vegetation. Cutting this plant causes more root suckers and stump spouts to form. It can form tall, dense, monotypic stands. It is a nitrogen fixer and can tolerate low nutrient soil conditions.	Restricted
Common tansy	Tanacetum vulgare	It often occupies recently disturbed sites, and is most common along roadsides, river banks, and other disturbed open areas. Is not shade tolerant.	Along rivers or lake shores, dense monotypic populations are common. In open fields, low- to moderate-density populations can be widespread. Seeds are often spread by mowers or other human disturbances.	Control
Terrestrial Invasive Animals, Diseases and Pathogens				
Earthworms	All of the terrestrial earthworms in Minnesota are non-native species	All soils.	Worms are responsible for the loss of duff layer in the forest floor by eating and/ or mixing the leaf litter with the mineral soil. This often favors exotic species (like buckthorn, bush honeysuckle and garlic mustard).	
Emerald Ash Borer	Agrilus planipennis (Fairmaire)	All native ash species, i.e. Fraxinus spp.	Tiny beetles attack and kill native ash trees.	
Oak wilt	Caused by non-native fungus, Ceratocystis fagacearum	Mature forests.	Caused by a non-native fungus that invade and eventually kill most infected trees. All native oaks are susceptible, but red oaks most susceptible.	
Dutch Elm Disease	Caused by fungus, Ophiostoma novo-ulmi	Mature and regenerating forests.	Similar to oak wilt, but attacks and kills elm (Ulmus spp.) trees. Can still be a significant limiting factor to successful forest regeneration.	

Source: Three Rivers Park District

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