



## 2008 Rosemount Parks, Trails and Open Space System Plan

*City of Rosemount, Minnesota*



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# 1. Purpose and Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

Parks, trails, and open space systems can have a strong impact on neighborhoods and are essential components of a healthy community. Rosemount recognizes that the provision of adequate park, recreation, open space and trail connections are tools to help create a high quality of life for the people living and working in the City.

The City's parks define neighborhoods, offer recreation opportunities, and serve as open space and wildlife habitat. Rosemount's parks act as neighborhood gathering points and strengthen the sense of community. Rosemount is committed to meeting its residents' needs and planning wisely for the future. As such, this plan is designed to help continue the tradition of quality parks, trails and open spaces.

## 2002 UPDATE/ 2008 FORECAST

In 2002, the City of Rosemount prepared a Comprehensive Park Plan and Development Guide. Since that time, the city has experienced significant growth, and new parks and trails have been constructed. In 2008, the city is completing the 2030 Rosemount Comprehensive Guide Plan. The Comprehensive Plan defines the expected residential, commercial and industrial development and contains forecasts for population, household and employment growth through the year 2030. This Parks, Trails and Open Space plan is an update to the City's 2002 Parks Master Plan and reflects the changes in Rosemount since 2002 and plans for the growth forecasted through 2030.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement, used in past parks master plans, remains an appropriate guide for the 2008 plan:

***"The purpose of the Rosemount Park System is to provide in as cost effective a manner as possible, a comprehensive, balanced, well-maintained system of parks, natural/open spaces, trails and leisure-oriented activities/programs for the City residents to use and enjoy."***

The 2008 Parks System Plan is intended to act as a user-friendly guide to decision making regarding the future needs, development, renovation and preservation of Rosemount's parks, trails and open spaces. The city recognizes that demographic, recreation and environmental trends will change over the next several years and those changes will affect park, trail and open space needs. Thus the plan will help set the framework for these future improvements and will increase efficiency by establishing a long-term vision and priorities.



## GOALS

The following goals have been set by the City Council and Parks and Recreation Commission to assist with development of the plan:

- Continue to develop a comprehensive parks, trails and open space system that meets the needs of the expanding community.
- Meet our community’s parks, trails and open space needs through proactive planning, partnerships and responsible spending.
- Continue to create a community that is well connected by trails, sidewalks and other pedestrian friendly amenities.
- Create and follow standards for recreational facilities that include having a park area within walking distance of all homes in the urban developed area of the City.
- Preserve, protect and enhance our natural resources.
- Continue to invest in the future of our parks, trails and open space through high levels of maintenance and an active Capital Improvement Plan.
- Plan for and develop revenue sources for facility renovations and replacement.
- Enhance sustainability through energy conservation, best management practices and use of environmentally friendly products, practices and equipment.
- Maximize efficient use of park and recreation facilities through scheduling and the addition of irrigation and lighting.
- Adopt policies to assure a balance of facility development and an equitable allocation of fields and facilities.

## SECTIONS OF THE PLAN



- Section 1** Provides an introduction, a review of previous plans, and a summary of the goals, sections of the plan and sources of information.
- Section 2** Contains information about community characteristics such as the regional and local settings, existing parks, description of major stakeholders and partners, and growth forecast.
- Section 3** Shows the Parks and Trails System Framework. This includes park and trail classifications, park acreage standards, park service area criteria, and previous planning efforts. These standards are used in assessing community needs and planning the future park system.
- Section 4** Contains the Needs Assessments and Recommendations. Included are a summary of the community input, a review of local trends, a table of core park area needs, and recommendations based on the application of the park and trail system framework.
- Section 5** Discusses the System Plan. The plan includes recommendations for new park land acquisition and development, renovations or improvements to existing parks, new trail construction, park financing, and implementation actions.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The City of Rosemount wanted to be sure that this park plan represented the community's needs and desires. That goal resulted in a commitment to gather community input about desires for the existing and future park system. The following sources were used to provide insight on issues associated with growth and parks, open space, trails and recreation in Rosemount:

- Public Opinion Surveys*** In March 2007, Decision Resources Inc. conducted a public opinion phone survey of Rosemount residents. Approximately 400 households were surveyed. The survey included questions about recreation facility use, satisfaction, and priorities for the future.
- Community Meetings*** Two public meetings were held to gather input regarding parks, trails and open space. A Comprehensive Plan kickoff meeting was held on April 10, 2007 and a parks, trails and open space meeting was held on May 9, 2007. These meetings gave residents the opportunity to provide their input on the City's parks, trails and open spaces.
- Parks and Recreation Commission Input*** Throughout the planning process, the Rosemount Parks and Recreation Commission oversaw the preparation of the plan. The Commission worked with consulting planners, city staff and the community and provided detailed guidance and input.
- Staff Input*** City staff used their knowledge of the City's parks system and understanding of the City's potential for growth to provide the basis for developing the plan.

## 2. Community Characteristics

Community characteristics are shaped by people and their surroundings. Rosemount is home to active people, good parks, strong schools and solid infrastructure. The regional and local settings, existing parks, description of major stakeholders and partners, and growth forecast are described below.

### REGIONAL SETTING

Rosemount is bordered by Apple Valley to the west and by Eagan and Inver Grove Heights to the north. These cities have highly developed park and trail systems. The Mississippi River and Nininger Township form the eastern border of Rosemount. Empire and Vermillion Townships are located to the south of Rosemount.

Dakota County Parks is the implementing agency for regional parks and trails in and around Rosemount. The locations of the current and proposed county parks, North/South Urban Regional Trail and the Dakota County Mississippi River Trail are shown in Appendix B.

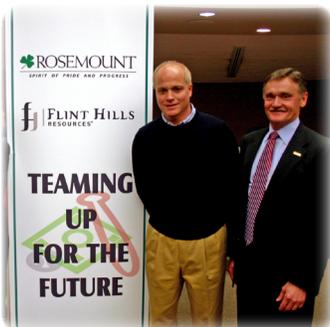
Many of the Dakota County Parks are located near Rosemount. Lebanon Hills Regional Park is located on the north border of the city and Spring Lake Park Reserve is located in the northeast corner of Rosemount. A new regional park is being planned along a portion of the Vermillion River in Empire Township, just south of Rosemount. Regional Parks such as Lebanon Hills Park and Spring Lake Park Reserve are designed to provide natural resource based recreation and education opportunities.

### CITY OF ROSEMOUNT

In 2008, Rosemount is a developing community of approximately 22,400 people. The city is located in the east-central portion of Dakota County and on the developing edge of the southeast portion of the Twin City metropolitan area. The western part of the city is largely developed and the eastern portion is devoted primarily to agriculture, open space and industrial uses. The historic downtown area is located around the intersection of TH 3 and 145<sup>th</sup> Street and contains a mix of business, residential, public and institutional uses.

Two major land owners, Flint Hills Resources and the University of Minnesota (U of MN) own approximately 7,500 acres of land in the city (30% of the area of the city). These areas are primarily undeveloped and contribute to the open and agricultural character of the city. Flint Hills Resources recently donated 57 acres of agricultural land to the City of Rosemount to be used as the site for an athletic facility.

The primary focus of land use for UMORE Park, the University of Minnesota property in Rosemount, has been agricultural research. The UMORE property also is home to the Lone Rock Trail, and the UMORE Property just south of Rosemount is now preserved open space managed by the DNR as part of the Gopher Football stadium agreement with the State of Minnesota. Representatives from UMORE have indicated they are planning big changes for the property. Discussions with



representatives from UMORE suggest increased interest in developing a sustainable “research village” on part of their site and a commitment to work with the City of Rosemount, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Dakota County Parks to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. The UMORE property is not being included as an area of development in this master plan but will be dealt with in future master plans.

## SCHOOLS

Rosemount High School, Rosemount Middle School, Rosemount Elementary School and Shannon Park Elementary School are part of Independent School District 196 and are all located in Rosemount. The school sites have a number of athletic/recreation facilities that supplement city facilities and are generally available for public use during periods of non-school use. Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) is located on County Road 42 near Akron Avenue and is interested in expanding the recreation and sports opportunities for its students. The college is interested in potential partnerships for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. The City is currently in the process of developing plans for a joint use soccer complex on property owned by DCTC.

In the fall of 2007, Intermediate School District 917, educating students in grades K-12, started construction of a new school in Rosemount and staff has discussed partnering on the development and use of their outdoor recreation facilities. St. Joseph’s School is a private K-8 school also in Rosemount that is planning to build a new school in the near future. Staff is meeting with St. Joseph’s to try and partner on new facilities. Opportunities to partner with local educational entities on the development, costs and use of recreational facilities should continue to be aggressively pursued. Rosemount First Baptist Church and School also have outdoor recreation facilities that are currently only used by the church and school.

## EXISTING PARK SYSTEM

Rosemount currently has 27 parks totaling 515 acres. The parks are located primarily in the western and central portions of the city. The parks and trails provide a wide range of recreation opportunities to Rosemount residents, area employees and visitors. **Appendix A** contains a map of the existing parks. A detailed listing of park amenities and an updated parks map are published on a quarterly basis in the City’s Parks and Recreation brochure and are also available at the Parks and Recreation Department.

## EXISTING TRAIL SYSTEM

Rosemount’s trail system is a well defined combination of internal park trails, trails connecting neighborhoods, and county trails. In 2006, the Rosemount City Council adopted a Trail and Sidewalk Plan (Pedestrian Facilities Improvement Plan) that identifies all existing trails and sidewalks in the city, as well as those places in the developed parts of the town where sidewalks and trails are needed. The trails include paved off-street trails, striped on-street bike lanes, and unpaved trails in natural areas.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The city is home to many natural resources including Schwarz Pond Park, Carrolls' Woods, the Wiklund Preserve, and the Mississippi River. You can find oak savanna, oak woodlands, wetlands, and small lakes throughout the City. The University of Minnesota and Flint Hills Resources properties have natural resource sites that warrant evaluation and appropriate protection or management in conjunction with any land use changes or significant development. Rosemount has planned for developing greenways and also has identified a connection between Rosemount's downtown and the Mississippi River called the Interpretive Trail Corridor. In essence, the trail is a springboard for celebrating several community values. The unique approach to trail design integrates functional use, scenic value, historical and environmental interpretation, and ecological restoration.

The area between Highway 55 and the Mississippi River contains some significant natural resources. Remnant prairie areas, high quality oak forests and flood plain forests are located along the river valley and bluffs. These areas are home to a variety of wildlife including unique species, such as bald eagles and loggerhead shrikes. This area is part of the Mississippi River Critical Area and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA) and has specific land use policies and management strategies to preserve the unique character of the river corridor.

In 2006, the City developed a Natural Areas Map that identified the natural resources in Rosemount and was developed to use as a reference tool for preserving or enhancing the resources prior to development. Additional information regarding the environment and natural resources is included in the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

## HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



Rosemount has a rich history with a strong link to agriculture and railroading. Rosemount's variety of transportation connections (river, rail, and highway) spurred industrial development. The Gopher Ordinance Plant was built in the south central part of the city during World War II. The plant was closed and the land was conveyed to the University of Minnesota for an agricultural research center. The property still has physical evidence of its former use in the form of large chimneys, building ruins and other artifacts that are suitable for historic interpretation, education and recreational use. The Gopher Village housing development is located near Biscayne Way Road. Some of the remaining farmsteads reflect Rosemount's agricultural heritage. Other historic resources include the former St. Joseph's Church, which in January of 2008 was recommended to be the home of a future arts and cultural center.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Rosemount’s population, based on the most recent census conducted in 2000, is younger and has a higher percentage of households with children than the average Twin City metropolitan area community. This has equated to requests for Rosemount to have active park space and activities for youth and adults. Given the high proportion of existing and forecasted single-family homes, the high percentage of families and children is likely to continue as the community grows. The Minnesota League of Cities states that it has been estimated that by the year 2030, there will be more retirees than school-aged children.

**TABLE 2.A – 2000 DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON**

2000 Census Category	City of Rosemount	Twin City Metropolitan Area Average
Median age	31.3 years	34.3 years
Average persons per household	3.08	2.53
% of households with children	54%	35%
% of households w/residents over age 65	12%	17.3%
% of owner-occupied housing	88.3%	71.4%

*Source: US Census 2000*

## FORECASTED GROWTH

By 2030, the population of Rosemount is predicted to reach approximately 45,500. These new residents will create a demand for municipal services including parks, trails, schools and open space. As the city continues to develop, additional needs will be created by commercial, industrial, business park and other types of development. As the land available for development diminishes, the recreational and open space opportunities available on the Flint Hills Resources and University of Minnesota properties will become increasingly valuable.

**TABLE 2.B – GROWTH FORECAST**

Year	Population
2010	25,908
2020	38,398
2030	45,498



### 3. Park, Trails and Open Space System Framework

Decisions about parks, trails and open space affect the entire community and, if made wisely, can help increase quality of life and enhance the sense of community. Therefore, it is important to have a set of guidelines to use in decision-making. The following framework was prepared to act as a guide for the preparation of the park plan and for on-going decision making.

The framework criteria are based on national standards set by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) with a strong influence of local needs and conditions. As such, this framework should be used as a guide and should be adjusted based on community needs, trends, etc. It is assumed that residents, land developers, city staff, commissions and officials will use this framework and knowledge of local conditions as they face decisions about parks, trails or open space.

The NRPA typically calls for an accepted range of overall park acreage per population ranging from a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 population to 20 or more acres per 1,000 population. These park acreage figures are for the core park system of mini-parks, neighborhood parks/playfields and athletic complexes/community parks. They do not include trail corridors, greenways, special use parks, school lands, regional parks or conservation areas. This overall figure should be viewed as a benchmark and should be adjusted based on local needs and trends.

The NRPA also sets facility/amenity standards that should be used, again as a guide to meet minimum facility needs. The standards are detailed in the NRPA's Park, Recreation, and Greenway Guidelines publication. The standards are flexible to account for local demands and specific conditions. The minimum number of facilities per capita will vary depending upon the specific community needs and the use of the field or court. For example, a baseball or softball outfield area may also be used for soccer, football and lacrosse. It is not available for use by more than one sport at a time.

The following criteria are applicable to all park and trail areas.

- The location of parks and trails will be determined by the city using this plan as a guide. Park land shall be suitable for its intended use. Suitability depends on adequate size, parcel shape, soils, slope, access and relationship between facilities in the park and to adjacent land uses.
- Park land shall be continuous and undivided by roadways, railroad tracks, pipelines, or other impassible or unusable barriers.
- Park land shall be free from any contaminants or debris.
- When park land is dedicated by a developer, that developer is required to grade the park land and pave access and perimeter trails (not internal park trails) and neighborhood sidewalks, and adjoining rights of way. All construction must meet city specifications.

#### OVERALL PARK ACREAGE STANDARDS

#### RECREATION FACILITY/ AMENITY STANDARDS

#### GENERAL PARK AND TRAIL CRITERIA



## PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

### MINI-PARKS

Rosemount's parks are classified according to their use and function and are described below. See Table 3.A for a summary of the classifications, park sizes, typical service areas, etc.

Mini-parks are small parks (0.5 to 3 acres) which are designed to supplement neighborhood parks in specific settings where a neighborhood park is not available or a new neighborhood park cannot be provided. Mini-parks typically contain children's play equipment and may also include a small open play area and/or a picnic table or seating area. Mini-parks typically do not include athletic fields. In general, mini-parks are needed in situations where barriers such as major streets, railroads, etc., prevent convenient access to a neighborhood or community park, or the presence of high-density residential development warrants additional park land beyond the typical neighborhood park facilities.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS/ PLAYFIELDS

Neighborhood parks are the core building block of the Rosemount park system. Neighborhood parks are designed to provide the day-to-day recreation facilities for a 125 to 500-acre neighborhood (1/4 to 1/2 mile radius or an average of 1/3 mile radius). These parks are designed to serve approximately 300 to 650 households. Neighborhood parks are typically between four and ten acres. The parks typically contain a children's play area, a picnic area, a basketball court, internal park trails, a small parking area and ball fields (softball, soccer, etc.). Ball fields are typically for both formal and informal use. Some neighborhood parks may contain a hockey rink, skating area, tennis courts, or other similar recreation facilities.

Neighborhood parks may also include natural resources such as wetlands, wooded areas, etc. Neighborhood playfields serve the dual function of providing recreation for neighborhoods and providing facilities for organized youth athletics. Neighborhood playfields have similar facilities as neighborhood parks, but they typically have multiple fields for youth athletic leagues. The playfields are typically larger than neighborhood parks and serve an area of between 500 and 2,000 acres (1/2 to 1 mile radius).

### ATHLETIC COMPLEXES AND COMMUNITY PARKS

Athletic complexes and community parks provide recreation facilities for community scale recreation. They can vary from multi-field athletic complexes to a large park that can host special events, has special use amenities or a combination of both. Athletic complexes and community parks serve a two-plus square mile area. Users typically travel greater distances to these parks, although these parks may also function as a neighborhood park for the adjacent area. Passive community parks are typically located around a natural resource such as a lake, wetland, significant woodland or other resource. Athletic complexes are based on recreation needs and their locations should have good access and be compatible for active lighted ball fields.

### GREENWAYS

Greenways are privately or publicly owned corridors of open space that often follow natural land or water features. They are primarily managed to protect and enhance natural resources. Greenways are typically planned to establish a system of inter-linked natural resource features and corridors. Greenway widths will vary depending upon the character of the land and the intent of the resource protection strategy. It is important to assure a wide enough corridor for the greenway to meet its intended function – for example, a wildlife migration corridor may need to be wider than a stream corridor.

## PRESERVES/ CONSERVANCY LANDS

Property that is managed as a preserve is designed to be maintained or enhanced as an area including high quality natural resources. Typically preserves are guided by a conservation easement or other government directed restrictions. Preserves often flourish when access is limited or controlled.

## LINEAR PARKS

Linear parks typically function as trail corridors. Land for linear parks should be provided within new subdivisions when the park plan shows a potential off-road trail corridor. Linear parks may also function as open space, wildlife corridors or a combination of uses depending upon their location and character. Linear parks used for trails should be a minimum of 30-feet wide to support a trail corridor, and wider areas should provide sufficient upland to locate a trail and support facilities such as picnic areas, seating areas, open lawn areas, etc., at suitable locations. The character, alignment and width of the linear park will be dependent upon the function, resource area, terrain, and proposed subdivision.

## SPECIAL USE PARKS

Special use parks and recreation areas such as community golf courses, splash pad, arenas, swimming pool, gardens, plazas, historic sites, skate parks, BMX bike areas, disc golf, off-leash dog areas, etc., are based on the unique natural, cultural, historic or community feature or recreation activity. The size, configuration and location of these parks will be determined by the city on an individual basis.



### TABLE 3.A - PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The following is a summary of Rosemount's park classification system. These park classifications are used in the Park and Trail Plan and map and are to be used as a guide in park dedication and development.

	USE	SERVICE AREA	SIZE	ACRES/ 1,000	SITE
<b>MINI-PARK</b>	Specialized park that serves a concentrated population (i.e. tots or seniors) or geographic area. Used in areas where geographic barriers prevent access to a neighborhood park.	1/8 mile radius	0.5 to 3 acres	0.25 to 0.5	Typically near higher density housing that does not have access to a neighborhood park or as a supplement to a neighborhood park.
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD PARK/ PLAYFIELD</b>	Basic unit of the park system, developed for both active & passive activities. Design criteria should anticipate the changing demographic profiles of the neighborhood served to provide appropriate facilities. The focus is on formal and informal activities.	1/3 mile average radius	4 to 17 acres	2.5 to 3.5	Easily accessible to the neighborhood population with safe walking and biking access utilizing trail networks. Parking facilities provide access and minimize on-street parking.
<b>ATHLETIC COMPLEX</b>	Area for intensely programmed recreation facilities and uses such as athletic fields, swimming pools, etc. Separate athletic fields complexes are typically provided for youth and for adults. Fields are typically lighted for evening use.	Community wide	25 to 80 acres	3.0 to 4.0	Site should be suited for intense development that is easily accessible to the population it is intended to serve. Located near high traffic areas such as schools and major thoroughfares.

*Table 3.A - Park Classification System  
continues on next page*

	<b>USE</b>	<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>SIZE</b>	<b>ACRES/ 1,000</b>	<b>SITE</b>
<b>COMMUNITY PARK</b>	Area possessing natural qualities conducive to passive recreational activities.	Community wide	20 to 80 acres	2.5 to 5	Site typically affords a variety of natural features, well-drained soils, positive drainage, and varied topography; is accessible to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
<b>CONSERVANCY OR PRESERVE LANDS</b>	Area possessing natural qualities preserved for environmental, open space or aesthetic purposes. Facilities should be compatible with the preservation of the resource.	Site Specific	Depends on resource	Varies	Significant natural areas that merit preservation and would be adversely affected by development. Often flourish when access is limited or controlled. May be guided by a conservation easement or other government-directed restrictions.
<b>GREENWAYS</b>	Privately or publicly owned corridors of open space that often follow natural land or water features and which are primarily managed to protect and enhance natural resources.	Site specific & community wide	Sufficient width for intended use.	Varies	Corridors, used to protect, enhance and link natural resources and features.

*Table 3.A - Park Classification System continues on next page*

**TABLE 3.A (CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGES)**

	<b>USE</b>	<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>SIZE</b>	<b>ACRES/ 1,000</b>	<b>SITE</b>
<b>LINEAR PARKS</b>	Linear parks and open spaces developed for varying modes of recreational travel such as walking, biking, skiing, in-line skating, etc., or for preservation of wildlife corridors, streams, etc.	Site specific & community wide	Sufficient width for intended use. Minimum 15-30 feet wide.	Varies	Built or natural trail corridors, used to link parks, natural resource sites, and/or community facilities such as schools, libraries, and commercial areas. Certain uses such as wildlife corridors require sufficient width to ensure proper function.
<b>SPECIAL USE</b>	Highly specialized use area such as community golf courses, swimming pools, splash pads arenas, gardens, plazas, and other specialized recreation uses.	Community wide	Variable	Varies	Site Specific
<b>HISTORIC SITES</b>	Area set aside for preserving and interpreting historical features such as landscapes and architecture.	Community wide	Variable	Varies	Size should be adequate to provide support facilities such as picnic areas, parking, etc.

## TRAILS CLASSIFICATIONS

Trails are classified based on their function, design and location. The most popular trails are for pedestrians and bicycles. There are separated trails (parallel sidewalks and bikeways) within the same corridor, combined trails (pedestrians and bikes on the same trail), bike lanes (paved shoulder next to the street), unpaved nature trails and special use trails (cross country ski, horse and snowmobile). Trail classifications and criteria are summarized in Table 3.B. Existing and proposed trail alignments will most likely follow the design of our road and street system which is identified in **Appendix C**. The trail plan is designed to connect neighborhoods, parks, schools and commercial areas. The major trails can be used for recreation and transportation purposes. Trails within parks will be determined as part of the specific park design. Trail land shall be of sufficient width and slope to accommodate 10' wide trails and appropriate buffer areas. General guidelines include a minimum trail corridor or buffer area of 15-30 feet, and a maximum slope of less than 5 percent.

**TABLE 3.B - TRAIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

	Location and Use	Surface	Width	Slope	Notes
<i>Class I - Separate pedestrian and bicycle trails</i>	Off-street	Bituminous or bituminous and concrete	5-6 feet for pedestrians 8-10 feet for bicycles	0-5% pedestrian 0-3% bike	
<i>Class II - Combined pedestrian and bicycle trail</i>	Off-street	Bituminous	8-10 feet	0-3% average 8% maximum	
<i>Class III - Bikeway lane</i>	On-street one way per side	Striped lane next to vehicle lane	6-10 feet	Slope to match road	One-way lanes
<i>Nature trail</i>	Within parks and conservation areas	Aggregate, woodchip or turf	4-12 feet	0-5% desirable 10% maximum	
<i>Cross country ski trail</i>	Within parks and conservation areas	Snow	10-14 feet – varies for one or two way	0-15%+ depending upon difficulty	Diagonal and skate tracks
<i>Snowmobile trail</i>	Off-street	Snow	10-14 feet	0-10%+	
<i>Horse trail</i>	Off-street	Turf or wood chips	10 feet	0-10%+	12 foot overhead clearance

## 4. Needs Assessment and Recommendations

This section analyzes Rosemount's existing parks, trails and open space needs based upon the Parks Trails and Open Space System Framework contained in Section 3. Community input, growth forecasts and recreation trends are used in conjunction with the framework standards to define existing and future park needs. Recommended trail locations are determined by analysis of destination locations (parks, schools, neighborhoods, shopping, etc.), the planned roadway network, the physical terrain and barriers, and opportunities.

### RECREATION TRENDS

Recreation interests and participation are influenced by many factors. Age, access to facilities, amount of leisure time, interests in the environment, new recreation technology, income and social trends all influence recreation participation. Many park users are looking for quality recreation close to home but are willing to travel to obtain better quality or more specialized activities. Recent concern regarding the environmental impact of vehicle travel and the benefits of exercise are encouraging many more people to walk and bicycle for transportation as well as for leisure.

### RECREATION TRENDS IN ROSEMOUNT

Recreation participation in Rosemount will continue to grow as the community grows. The following trends have been noted by city staff, planning consultant and also recent public input.

- Trail use continues to increase (walking, running and biking).
- There is a growing interest in having public art be used as a park amenity.
- Preserving and protecting open space and natural resources is important.
- Lacrosse has been introduced at the high school and youth level.
- Youth sports are continuing to grow in popularity.
- Off-leash dog parks are popular and considered destination locations.
- Skateboarding, disc golf and other types of nontraditional recreation continue to increase in popularity.
- Society is becoming less active and classified as being in a "Obesity Crisis."
- USTA (United States Tennis Association) reports a resurgence in people playing tennis.
- Increased requests for youth athletic fields and extended seasons of play are increasing.
- Adult softball fields at Erickson Park are too small for today's style and caliber of play.
- Requests for additional outdoor ice skating opportunities have increased.
- Requests for large park shelter rentals have increased and are not being met.
- Youth sports tournaments have become a key function of each sport
- ISD 196 outdoor athletic facilities in Rosemount are some of the oldest in the district but future expansion is very limited.
- Our youth are becoming disconnected from the outdoors as defined in the book *Last Child in the Woods – Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv.



## PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

In March 2007, Decision Resources Inc. conducted a public opinion phone survey of Rosemount residents. Approximately 400 households were surveyed. The survey included questions about recreation facility use, satisfaction, and priorities for the future. Here is what the survey found:

**Rosemount's parks, trails and recreation facilities are well used:** Neighborhood Parks are frequently or occasionally used by 75% of those surveyed, 65% said they used community parks, and 65% indicated that they used the trails.

**Building a new outdoor recreation complex:** 75% of people either supported or strongly supported building a new outdoor recreation complex on the land that was donated to the City by Flint Hills Resources.

**People in Rosemount place a high value on open space:** 88% of the residents surveyed either supported or strongly supported preservation of open space or green space.

**What people like about living in Rosemount:** 22% of the respondents indicated that the rural aspect, open space, quiet, small-town feeling of Rosemount is what attracted them to the community in the first place. When asked what they like most about living in Rosemount, they cited the qualities listed here. With the addition of Parks and Recreation programs, these qualities accounted for 54% of the respondents' comments to this questions.

**Participation in Parks and Recreation Programs:** 35% of the respondents said they or someone in their household participated in a Rosemount Parks and Recreation program, and 99% of the participants indicated that they were satisfied with the experience.

**Participation in Rosemount Area Athletic Association (RAAA) Programs:** One third of the respondents indicated that a member of their household has participated in a RAAA program.

**The City is environmentally sensitive about our natural resources and interested in trails.** The recent survey showed that 23% of the respondents listed developing policies that protect and preserve environmental quality as a first priority, and 15% listed additional bike paths and sidewalks as a first priority.

## COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the input received at the public meetings, from the public opinion survey, and from the Park and Recreation Commission.

- The existing park system is very good. Keep up the park, trail and facility standards for the new growth areas.
- Additional athletic facilities are needed. Consider developing the property donated by Flint Hills and start planning for the next athletic complex.
- Consider expanding areas for alternative forms of recreation like skateboarding, disc golf, BMX biking, etc.
- Connect the community parks (Erickson, Central, Schwarz and Carroll's Woods), school facilities, and downtown together with trails to make one integrated system.
- Preserve open space and natural areas now before the areas are developed.
- Continue to work with partners (ISD 196, ISD 917, RAAA, Dakota REV, Dakota County, DCTC, U of M, Flint Hills Resources, etc.) on recreation facility planning and development.

## SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS AND FUTURE TRENDS

- Continue to provide high quality care and maintenance of the City's parks and open space investments.
- Ruins and artifacts of the Gopher Ordinance plant that are present on the UMORE property, and other historic resources, should be considered for opportunities for some preservation and be integrated into the community's park, trails and open space system.
- Create more user-friendly biking destinations by providing better trail signage and public bike racks.
- Investigate the possibility of incorporating more earth friendly or green park development standards.
- Allow for space for art to be displayed in public parks.
- Increase tree canopy density in all parks areas

The following are significant findings and likely future trends based on Rosemount demographics, user input, and the public opinion survey:

- Residents are frequent users of Rosemount parks and are satisfied with the condition of the park system.
- Rosemount's population will likely double between 2008 and 2030.
- The construction of an athletic complex on the property donated by Flints Hills Resources must move forward to meet the existing and future outdoor facility needs for youth athletics.
- Trail use will continue to increase and demand for trails expansion and connections between parks and other city locations will grow.
- The City will focus on developing sustainable parks and operation methods.
- Recreation facility development and operations partnerships between government agencies, schools, organizations and private corporations will continue to be important to a comprehensive and efficient park system in Rosemount.
- Demand for youth athletic activities and facilities will continue to increase.
- Rosemount expects to continue having a high proportion of families with children along with a growing number of retirees by the year 2030.
- There will be a need for new neighborhood parks, mini parks, athletic complex/ community parks and natural areas to serve the forecasted growth in Rosemount.
- Open space preservation and protection are a community priority. Key open spaces and natural resources should be preserved in advance or in concert with development.
- The demand and the need for alternative recreation (i.e. skateboarding, disc golf and BMX biking etc.) and special use areas (swimming pool, splash pads, public art, etc.) should be evaluated on a continual basis.

## PROJECTED GROWTH AND SERVICE AREA NEEDS

The Rosemount Comprehensive Plan identifies an abundance of new development taking place in Rosemount in future years. The majority of the development will take place east of Highway 3 and north of County Road 42, east of Akron Avenue and north of County Road 42, and east of Hwy 52 and south of County Road 42. Growth areas are identified in the Parks, Trails and Open Space Search Area Map included as Appendix D.

## FUTURE PARK, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS

### NEEDS BASED ON RECREATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS



### NEEDS COMPARISON TO FRAMEWORK STANDARDS

Park needs are based on recreation interests, population and household demand or geographic distribution and physical features. For example, a new neighborhood park is designed to serve a population of 1,000 to 2,000 people or approximately 300 to 650 households. The framework standards also call for neighborhood parks to be located within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of most residents. That translates into a typical neighborhood park service area radius of approximately 1/3 mile. Park service areas are general guides to the geographic area that the park should serve.

Continued residential growth with a high proportion of single-family housing means a continued increase in the number of households with an active lifestyle is expected. The movement of the “baby boomers” into retirement also means more active life styles for retired adults. This requires a broad spectrum of recreational facilities and activities suitable for individuals as well as groups of youth, teens, adults, and retirees.

Participation in youth athletics has grown steadily and is likely to continue to grow as the community grows. Community growth and increased youth participation results in a need for baseball, softball, soccer, football fields and tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts. Facilities are needed for league play as well as hosting tournament play. The number of adults participating in sports leagues is also likely to increase as population increases, and the need for appropriately sized facilities should be considered. The city lacks sufficient community park space for tournaments and for the expected growth in organized athletics. A new community athletic playfield is needed to meet future demands.

Sports such as lacrosse, field hockey and ultimate frisbee are becoming more popular, and these activities increase pressure on existing soccer and football fields.

Sport seasons are becoming longer. Demand for soccer fields during the baseball and softball seasons limits the effectiveness of multi-use (overlapping) fields.

Many people are interested in passive and natural resource based recreation such as hiking, nature study, bird watching, fishing, etc. Conservation and natural resource sites are needed to accommodate these activities. The baby boomer generation’s recreation interests are often focused around healthy lifestyles and staying active. Their recreational interests include walking/running, bicycling, golfing, bird watching, nature study, community volunteering, arts and cultural activities, etc.

Table 4.A (on the next page) evaluates the existing park supply and forecasted needs based on the park classification framework.

On paper, Rosemount currently appears to meet the local demand for parks on the low end of the standards. What needs to be reviewed carefully is whether the amenities being offered are meeting the needs of the community. In the 1970’s and 1980’s a number of parks were developed that by today’s standards would be considered mini parks and most likely not used for organized events. Furthermore, a large amount of the land in the parks system is managed as preserves or conservancy lands. A number of regional parks or protected open spaces are also located near Rosemount. The development of the 57 acres of land donated by Flint Hills Resources for an outdoor Recreation complex is needed to help meet the existing and future needs of the community.

## NEEDS COMPARISON TO FRAMEWORK STANDARDS, CONTINUED

Between 2008 and 2030, additional neighborhood parks/playfields, athletic complex land, and community park lands are needed to meet forecasted growth and resident needs. A total of approximately 416 to 697 additional core park acres will be needed by 2030. A careful review of additional needs should be conducted based on the current number of multiple-use fields, overlapping fields, frequent school use of school facilities (limiting general public availability) and the need for field maintenance and refurbishing (field quality declines rapidly with overuse). Local needs are often a more appropriate benchmark than general framework standards. The input from park users and existing facility use may indicate a greater or lesser need for certain types of facilities.

Due to the size of the land holdings and use of Flint Hills Resources and the University of Minnesota property, portions of these large land areas may be suitable sites for a community athletic complex/community parks or other park or open-space use. Parks, trails and open-space protection should be incorporated into any land use or development changes on these properties.

### TABLE 4.A - EXISTING CORE PARK AREA AND 2030 AREA NEEDS BY PARK CLASSIFICATION

	EXISTING	EXISTING NEEDS	2030	AREA NEEDS (RECOMMENDED # OF SITES)
Population	22,400	22,400	45,500	
Park classification and land/ per 1,000 capita ratio				
Mini-park 0.25-0.5 ac./1,000 pop.	14 acres	5.5-11 acres plus 3 acres	11.25-22.5 acres	1-4 acres (2 parks)
Neighborhood Park/Playfields 3-5 ac./1,000 pop.	76 acres	66-110 acres within range	135-225 acres	59-149 acres (14 parks)
Community Park 3-5 ac./1,000 pop.	73 acres	66-110 acres within range	135-225 acres	62-152 acres (2 parks)
Athletic Complex 3-5 ac./1,000 pop.	108 acres*	66-110 acres within range*	135-225 acres	60-115 acres (2 parks)
Special Use Parks**	13 acres	Varies	Varies	Varies
Conservancy/Preserve Lands Amount per population varies**	146 acres	Varies	Varies	Varies
Overall Park Area 10-20 ac./1,000 pop.	430 acres	203.5-340 acres	450-900 acres	181-420 acres

\* Assumes the 57 acres donated by Flint Hills Resources will be developed in 2008/2009.

\*\* Special Use parks and conservancy lands and preserves are not intended typically for active programming and thus are not considered part of the core parks land calculations.

## SUPPLEMENTAL OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### OTHER FACILITIES

School District 196 also has recreation facilities that can supplement city recreation facilities. School facilities in the past have been primarily designed for school use, but are also available to the public depending upon school needs and facility availability.

**Special Use Parks:** The need for special use parks or facilities is an on-going process based on staff, Commission, stakeholder and public input and changing recreation needs. These types of needs might include skate parks, outdoor pools, splash pads, BMX biking, disc golf, etc. These activities are often more appropriate in community parks.

**Facilities for Those with Special Needs :** Facilities built specifically to meet the special needs of park users are something that should be reviewed and discussed on an ongoing basis. These types of facilities might include areas such full-access ball fields, zero-slope looped trails, etc. The opportunity to partner with local school districts, non-profit service providers, and others in the community to develop these types of facilities is something the City should pursue.

**Swimming Pool/Splash Pad:** The cities of Eagan, Apple Valley, Farmington and Hastings have outdoor swimming pools and/or aquatic parks. Dakota County, the City of Lakeville and the City of Burnsville operate beaches at local lakes. Given the close proximity to these major outdoor pools and public beaches, at this time it is questionable if a public outdoor pool in Rosemount would get sufficient use to justify the large initial expense and the on-going operating costs. Given the presence of the nearby outdoor pools, a feasibility study should be conducted to determine what type of aquatic facility (indoor or outdoor) if any, should be pursued.

**Community Tennis Courts:** How best to address the need and possible location of future tennis courts is being discussed by the Parks and Recreation Commission, United States Tennis Association, local stakeholder groups and staff. The feedback from these discussions will be valuable with development of future tennis courts.

**Former St. Joseph's Church and School:** In 2004, the City of Rosemount acquired the St. Joseph complex, a combination of a church and school with ancillary uses such as parking and a playground. The church relocated to its new building on Biscayne Avenue in 2002 but continues to operate the school at the South Robert Trail site. A lease agreement between the parish and the City allows the school to continue occupying the school premises until 2011. The southern portion of the property is being used for a new branch of the Dakota County Library System. The City Council also feels the campus has strong potential for reuse by the local community and can enhance opportunities to visit Rosemount's downtown. In January of 2008, the St. Joseph's Facility Task Force recommended to the City Council that the long-term use of the property and buildings be focused on an Arts and Cultural Center.

**Community Center:** Rosemount is fortunate to have the Rosemount Community Center for recreation and community meeting use. The need for additional indoor facilities should be determined through a supply and demand analysis based on forecasted growth, recreation trends, facility use data, and a competitive market analysis of other public and private facilities in the area. Parks and Recreation Commission, stakeholder and public input, along with a feasibility study will help determine what the appropriate course of action is.



## THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM PLAN

### SYSTEM PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Mini-Parks*

#### *Neighborhood Parks/ Playfields*

#### *Community Athletic/ Community Parks*

#### *Conservation Areas*

#### *Greenways*

## 5. The System Plan

The Rosemount Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan will guide the parks, trails and open space acquisition and development through the year 2030. The Plan is based on forecasted growth and a flexible park system framework to create a pleasing and accessible system of parks, trails and open space for new and existing residents, employees and visitors. The Plan contains recommendations for the following:

- Additions and renovations to existing parks and open space
- New park, trails and open space development and land acquisition
- System funding and park dedication

The plan map shows existing and proposed park areas, trails and other site specific opportunities. The proposed park locations are shown on **Appendix D** and also identified in a table as **Appendix E**.

The following recommendations for new parks are based on the park system framework and standards and the needs analysis.

- Two new mini-parks are needed to meet the recreation needs of the forecast growth to 2030. The distribution of these parks is shown on the Rosemount Park, Trail and Open Space Map as **Appendix D**.
- Fourteen new neighborhood parks are needed to meet the recreation needs of the forecasted growth to 2030. Staff will need to work with developers and landowners to acquire land for neighborhood parks in accordance with the search area locations shown on **Appendix D**.
- There is a need for 122 to 267 acres of athletic facility/community park land to meet future community needs. It is important to acquire land for these parks in advance of development because of the large amount of land they will require. Potential sites should have good vehicular access, be relatively level, and have appropriate adjacent land uses. The sites should meet the criteria established in the Park, Trails and Open Space System Framework.
- Two new conservation opportunity areas are identified. These areas contain key natural resources that should be preserved and opened to the public. Depending upon the location and natural features, some of these conservation areas may also function as passive-use community parks. The locations of these proposed conservation areas are shown in **Appendix D**. Consider acquisition and/or preservation of sites with conservation easements. When feasible, the city should evaluate these sites, seek funding for acquisition, and acquire the priority sites through partnerships with non-profit, governmental or private agencies.
- The Mississippi River Greenway Strategic Plan defines greenways as “privately or publicly owned corridors of open space which often follow natural land or water features and which are primarily managed to protect and enhance natural resources.” The City of Rosemount participated in the Greenway Strategic Plan, and the City Council recognizes the report, but has not formally adopted the recommendations. The Greenway

## Greenways (continued)

Strategic Plan seeks to establish a system of inter-linked natural resource features and corridors from Ravenna Township to Rosemount. The Greenway Strategic Plan recommends a minimum 150-foot width for greenways in Rosemount. Implementation of the greenway plan is recommended through a partnership that includes the commitment of the City to work cooperatively with local residents and greenway area land owners.

## Trails

- The proposed trail system is designed to connect neighborhoods to parks, shopping, schools, adjacent communities' trails, and regional trails. The trail recommendations focus on creating a network of trails, which will be created as development occurs and roads are extended as identified in **Appendix C**. Most new trails are expected to be Class II shared pedestrian/bike paved trails. There will also be a need for internal trails within parks and unpaved nature trails in larger parks and conservation areas. Here are the key components to developing a comprehensive trail:
  - Acquire and develop trail corridors and linear parks in accordance with the future roadways identified in the Comp Plan and Functional Road Classification Map (**Appendix C**) and the Rosemount Park, Trail and Open Space Plan (**Appendix D**).
  - Implement the Interpretive Trail Corridor Plan into future development plans.
  - Build loop trails within parks that connect park features and facilities.
  - Ensure that trail connections are provided from developments to proposed parks.
  - Develop a north-south linear park between Biscayne and Akron Avenues from 135<sup>th</sup> Street north to the Inver Grove Heights border, connecting the ponds.
  - Interconnect existing and future parks and trails to potential greenways, wetlands and other passive recreational opportunities.
  - Work with Dakota County to continue to construct a trail parallel to County Road 42. Near TH 52, the proposed County Road 42 trail will travel north of the CR42/TH52 interchange to avoid the proposed future cloverleaf intersection design.
  - Identify and explore opportunities for a trail underpass under Highway 3, County Road 42, and other areas that might warrant such a grade separated crossing.
  - Continue implementation of the City's Pedestrian Improvement Plan (Trails and Sidewalk Plan) Improvement Program.



## REGIONAL GREENWAY NETWORK

Dakota County has proposed a network of greenways in Rosemount. Some of these greenways have already been incorporated into the regional system. Other greenways and segments thereof are currently being considered for regional status. Still others have been proposed as City Greenways, and it has not yet been determined if regional status will be sought for these greenways. This network of greenways is shown on the Dakota County Parks, Trails, Lakes and Greenways map (Appendix B) and on the Rosemount Parks, Trails and Open Space map (Appendix D).

## IMPROVEMENTS AND RENOVATIONS TO EXISTING PARKS

It is important to plan and budget for future renovation along with new park development. Park facilities such as play equipment, shelter buildings, fencing, paving, etc., have a finite life span. A stand-alone comprehensive capital replacement schedule for parks and trails (i.e. play equipment lasts about 20 years) should be implemented and updated on a regular basis. Park revitalization needs should be continually evaluated by on-site observations and input from residents, Parks and Recreation Commissioners and staff. Recommendations for park improvements and renovations to existing parks is included in **Appendix E**.

## EXPLORE ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Continue and expand partnerships with School Districts 196 and 917, Dakota County, Dakota County Technical College, Flint Hills Resources and the University of Minnesota for future park, trail and open-space acquisition and development.

## EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISTORIC SITES

Evaluate the potential for preservation of significant historical or cultural sites. Continue to work with the Rosemount Historical Society to preserve Rosemount's history. Consider Rosemount's agricultural, railroad and community history when naming, acquiring or developing future parks. For instance, some parks could be named for prominent settlers of the land, or an agricultural design theme could be incorporated into a new playground.

## PARK IMPROVEMENT/ RENOVATION FUNDING AND PARK DEDICATION

Funding of park land acquisition and development is done through a variety of sources. Park dedication from new development (either land or cash) is the primary funding source for new parks and trails. City general funds are typically used for renovation of existing parks and trails. Grant funds should be sought to help supplement city funds for certain projects.

## PARKS DEDICATION ORDINANCE



When new residential, commercial, industrial, business park or other subdivisions are proposed, the City requires dedication of park land or trails where shown on the Rosemount Park and Trail Plan maps or as recommended by the Rosemount Parks & Recreation Commission and approved by the Rosemount City Council. Where general park service area locations are shown on the Parks, Trails and Open Space map identified in **Appendix D**, the exact extent and location of the parkland will be determined and recommended through detailed analysis and review by City staff. Where it is decided that park, trail or open space land is not to be dedicated, the City will require cash in lieu of land payment as determined by the City's ordinance relating to park dedication and a fee which is set annually in the City's Fees and Fee Policy. Where a mix of cash and land dedication is required, the city will calculate the pro-rated cash dedication share based on the land dedication amount.

City Ordinance requires dedication of 1/25 of an acre of land for each residential dwelling unit or a per unit fee established by the City Council. New commercial, industrial, business park development and other subdivisions are required to dedicate 10% of the subdivision land area or an equivalent value in a cash payment. The per unit and per acre dedication fees should be evaluated annually and adjusted to keep

pace with rising land and construction costs. Park dedication funds should be used for construction of new park and trail facilities. The funds should not be used for facility replacement or for renovation of existing parks unless additional capacity is the result of the improvement.

## GENERAL FUNDING

It is important to allocate sufficient capital from the General Fund to cover capital facility repair and replacement. The importance of General Funds for renovation will increase as Rosemount's parks and trails age. Rosemount should be proactive and plan and budget for park renovation and replacement of facilities such as parking lots, trail repaving, play equipment, and park shelters, etc. The city should establish a facility maintenance schedule and budget for on-going reinvestment in the park system; for example, playground equipment typically lasts 15-20 years.

## GRANTS

Some city park construction projects and land acquisitions are eligible for supplemental grant funds. County, state, federal and non-profit grant programs are the major sources of grants for park development, conservation and special recreation land acquisition, and trail and pedestrian/bike bridge construction. These grant programs may require a local match and have limited funds, and there is intense competition for these limited resources. The City should continue to evaluate the suitability of proposed acquisition or development for these grant opportunities.

## REFERENDUM

A bond referendum is a special election that allows voters to determine if they want to increase their property taxes to help pay for bonds which fund selected public improvements such as park and trail development or acquisition of conservation areas and open space. In general, park bond referendums are used to fund larger community wide projects such as a community center, aquatics center, sport complex, conservation areas trails and greenways, or a range of park improvement projects such as renovation of multiple parks. This is an option for Rosemount depending upon the specific project needs and fiscal situation.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Where appropriate and feasible, partnerships for acquisition and development of community facilities can reduce the up-front cost to the City and lessen the on-going operating costs of recreation facilities. The details of use, cost sharing, maintenance and other issues determine the suitability and feasibility of potential partnerships.



