

PARKS MASTER PLAN

BLOOMFIELD LEISURE
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MAY, 2014



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town Council

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INTRODUCTION

The 2014 Bloomfield Parks Master Plan provides a framework for decision making for future service delivery and resource allocation for the Department of Leisure Services. The Plan process began in September 2013 and concluded in May 2014. The Plan covers a 5 year period, 2014 through 2018. The process included a series of meetings with Town staff, review of Town documents such as budget information and organization charts, site visits, meetings with Town officials including Town Council members and Leisure Services Department Park Board.

The Town of Bloomfield is centrally located in Connecticut just north of the state capitol, Hartford. With a population of 20,843 residents, the town encompasses 26.4 square miles of rural beauty and abundant land. Bloomfield's Department of Leisure Services and the team of Heller and Heller Consulting, Inc. (HHC), Sasaki and Fitzgerald and Halliday, Inc. have worked together to complete a system review of current and projected park and recreation services which will contribute to an overall Master Plan. This review included public input, a thorough review of park inventory and standards and a review of the overall organization and leadership.

Park and Recreation Services are delivered by two Departments. Recreations services are managed by the Department of Leisure Services. Park and facility maintenance are managed by the Town's Public Works Department. The Departments work closely together to ensure good services for the community, including athletic programming and maintenance and pool start-up and operations. Bloomfield has 1,825 acres of open space, school, and park land, which is used for both active and passive recreation. Significant facilities and parks include the Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center, the Bloomfield Municipal Pool, Farmington River Park, Filley Park, Wintonbury Park, and Town Green.

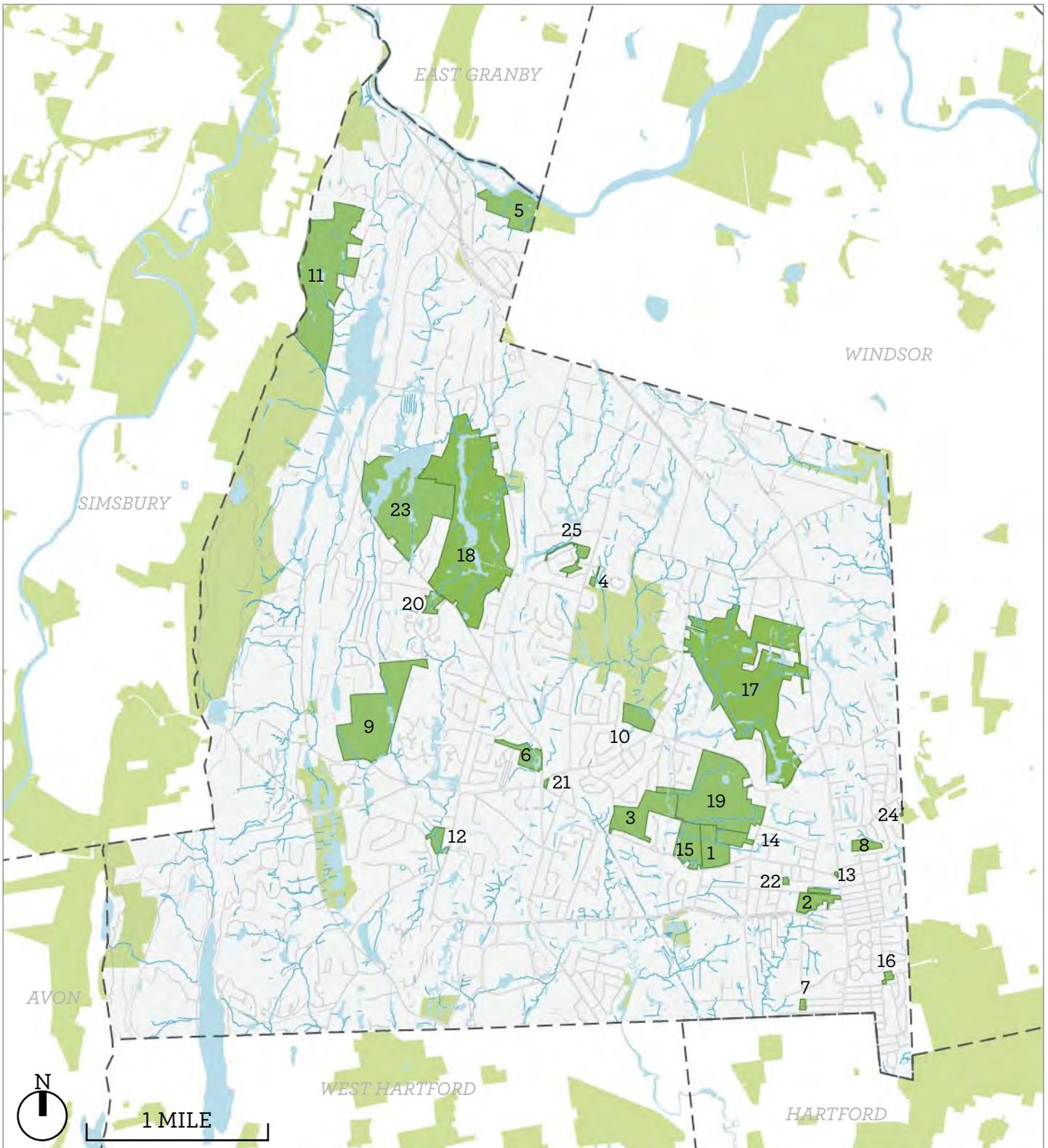
The goal of the Plan, as outlined in the RFP was to: "Develop a community-supported plan that provides guidance for future development and redevelopment of the Town's parks, recreation programming and services, open space, trails and facilities."

In addition to this, other additional goals included:

- Creating a more sustainable operation through the identification of appropriate park acreage and amenities
- Developing recreation opportunities for parks such as Farmington and Wilcox
- Aligning services and programs with changing demographics
- Creating a narrative for the Department in order to better tell its story
- Building brand and image of the Department
- Reviewing labor resources of both the Leisure Services and Public Works Departments

The most significant element of the Master Plan is a call to action and future positioning of the Department. The Master Plan includes several technical reports and analysis as well as community input summary. These elements are important in setting the stage for the most important part of the Plan: the Strategic Initiatives. Planning is important, but it is the implementation of the Plan that is most critical to ensure the Department's success. The Master Plan will assist the Department in ensuring resource allocation is determined according to the greatest community needs. It also positions the Department to pro-actively make decisions and receive the greatest return on investment of taxpayer dollars. Finally, the Plan will become a major initiative for Department employees and will provide direction for their daily work.

ALL PARK TYPES



- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Alvin & Beatrice Wood Human Services Center / Park School Complex | 5. Farmington River Park | 12. Maplewood Open Space | 19. Samuel Wheeler Reed Park |
| 2. Bill Lee Fields/Robert L Watkins Community Center | 6. Filley Park | 13. Mary Hill Green | 20. Sinnott Farm Open Space |
| 3. Bloomfield High School | 7. Hubbard Park | 14. Metacomet School | 21. Town Green |
| 4. Castlewood | 8. Joyce Neighborhood Street Park | 15. Municipal Pool | 22. West Eggleston Park |
| | 9. LaSalette Open Space | 16. Pershing Park Playground | 23. Wintonbury Hills Golf Course |
| | 10. Laurel School | 17. Reservoir No. 2 | 24. Wintonbury Playground |
| | 11. M.K. Wilcox Park | 18. Reservoir No. 3 | 25. Woodland Manor Open Space |

The background of the page is a blue-tinted photograph of a natural landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, thin grasses or reeds. In the middle ground, a dense line of trees and bushes stretches across the horizon. The sky is a clear, light blue. The overall mood is serene and natural.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & SYSTEM THEMES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Department is:

The Bloomfield Leisure Services Department is committed to providing quality recreational opportunities, preserving natural resources, and managing a comprehensive system of parks and facilities dedicated to enriching the lives of a diverse and changing community.

Key words of the mission include: quality recreational opportunities, preserving resources, comprehensive system, enriching lives, and a changing community. The Master Plan process is aligned with the statement. These key words will be repeated frequently throughout the Plan as evidence of reinforcing the most significant tenets of the Mission.

SYSTEM THEMES

The Master Plan process resulted in the development of overall system themes, or key areas of focus and recommendations for the next five years. Recommendations and plan deployment will concentrate in these areas. The Themes were developed in a brainstorming session with staff after reviewing all of the technical reports included in the Plan. The five system themes for Bloomfield include:

- Visibility and Branding
- Connectivity
- Reinvesting in the System
- Program Opportunities
- Park Land Sustainability

Visibility and Branding

Bloomfield parks and recreation services play an integral role in providing the community with a variety of recreation opportunities. The Department of Leisure Services is vital to economic development, creating a more livable community, healthier residents, and offering quality programs and services that are affordable. With these key factors in mind, the Department's influence in the Town will continue to grow.

The Department will continue to work on “telling its story” to residents. Branding is the Department's promise to its customers. It tells them what they can expect from products and services, and it differentiates offerings from other providers of similar services. The Leisure Services brand is derived from what people perceive as what the Department currently is, what the Department wants to be, and what the Department will become. The brand evokes an emotional response and feeling. Strengthening the brand will result in greater participation in programs and services.

Connectivity

As a suburban town with rural origins, many destinations within Bloomfield are accessible primarily by automobile. While there is demand for walking and bicycling in Town, the limited sidewalk and bike route network presents an obstacle to this mode of transport. By enhancing connections to parks, Bloomfield's residents will have greater access to, and a stronger relationship with, the Town's parks.

The improvement of access to and between Bloomfield's open spaces should take a multi-faceted approach. The Town's parks need clearly identifiable entrances. Access points to parks and open space should be increased. An on-street bicycle network should be established that provides connectivity and for multiple levels of riding expertise. Finally, an off-street network of bicycle pathways that improves access to natural and scenic resources and provides a safe operating space for young and/or inexperienced riders should be established as an alternative to on-street routes.

Reinvesting in the System

One of the hallmarks of a great park and recreation system is its ability to adequately maintain the infrastructure. This is difficult to achieve during economically challenging times. Many of the facilities are in need of improvement and renovation. One of the outcomes of the Master Plan is to create a

stronger vision of capital improvements, with priorities for completion. The first step in the process is having the knowledge of what priorities exist in renovating current facilities and parks. Based on the Level of Service Standards, community input, and overall park development needs, the Department desires to have a planned approach to the future allocation of resources.

Program Opportunities

The critical core competency of the Department is the provision of recreation programs and services. Within the last few years, program offerings have grown. There is appreciation and understanding of the diverse audience of the community, and the resulting challenges of connecting with diverse age segments and ethnicities. The Department is perceived as a provider for youth programs. The agency's strength is its programs for youth. In the future, the Department aspires to have greater connections with the adult population. One of the significant challenges is the lack of high quality indoor recreation space.

Park Land Sustainability

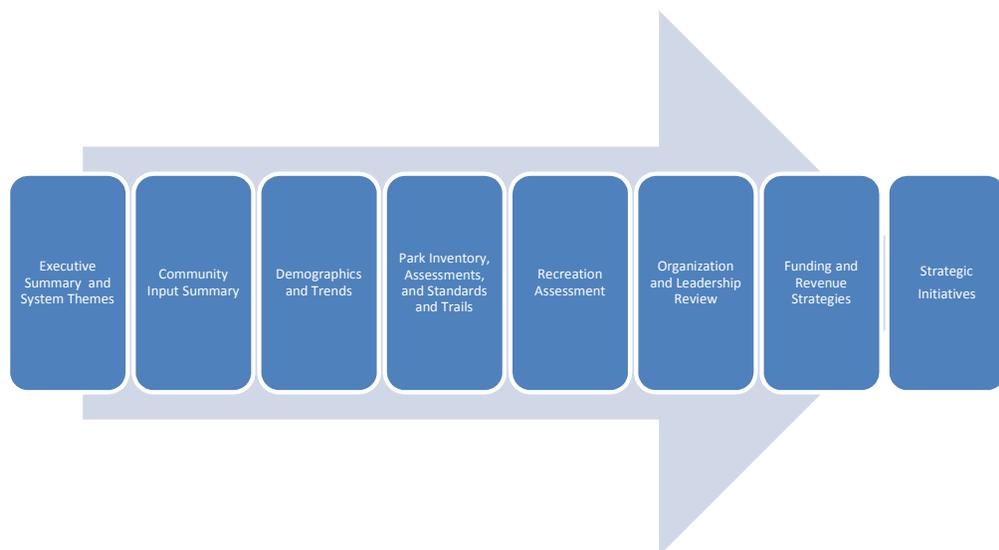
Conversely to the need for more indoor space, the amount of park land greatly exceeds the standard for park acreage. At one time, the National Recreation and Park Association

(NRPA) had a standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 population. Now, the standard is closer to 12 acres per thousand population, based on reporting agencies within the NRPA current database of agencies around the country. Bloomfield has 81.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 population, which greatly exceeds the standard. While abundant parkland is extremely important for the quality of life within a community, it comes with the requirement of significant resources for maintaining the infrastructure and maintaining the land and facilities.

REVIEW OF PROCESS

The overall Master Plan sequence of tasks is represented in the following visual. As evidenced in the process, the Plan begins with a macro level description of the Executive Summary and System Themes, supplemented by the specific areas of community input and demographics and trend information, park inventory and assessments, level of service standards, mapping of amenities, recreation programs, organizational and leadership review, revenue funding and strategies, and strategic initiatives.

The following section outlines the elements of the Plan and includes a brief description of each section of the report.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL REPORTS

Community Input and Review Summary

An important component of the Master Plan development was the community input process, which included a series of public input methods. Focus groups, key leader meetings, and public meetings were facilitated by the Consulting Team. Additionally, the Consulting Team met with Town of Bloomfield staff members, including the Town Manager, Planning Director, Town Engineer, and Public Works Director. The Leisure Services Board and Town Council members also participated in meetings. The input and review summary will be useful in determining future programming and facility opportunities, potential partnerships, opportunities for improvement, and challenges the Department will face in the next five years.

From these meetings a list of key issues for the Department were discussed and included:

- A majority of the respondents indicated that there needs to be an improvement with marketing and awareness of the services provided by the Department
- All of the respondents recognized the increase in the aging population and lack of programming for this age group
- Trails and parks stood out as a high level of importance for the community
- Desired Amenities included:
 - Trees and streetscape design in the downtown area
 - Benches, Scenic outlooks, Information kiosks
 - Signage on trails and in parks
 - Natural playgrounds
 - Dedicated paved family paths
 - Comprehensive and current town directory of open space amenities
 - Pool renovation

Demographics and Trend Report

The Town of Bloomfield is becoming increas-

ingly older and more diverse. By 2017, the baby boomer population (55+) will increase by 5%. The Black and Hispanic population will increase, while the White population will decrease. From a program and services perspective, this suggests a significant need to expand services for the active adult population (50's and 60's) and older seniors (70's and older). The senior population will be serviced by the Senior Center; therefore, the Leisure Services Department should focus efforts on active adults. Leisure Services may be able to supplement Senior Center services by offering more fitness and athletics activities.

As for industry trends, many activities are experiencing a slow increase and/or decline due to the recent poor economic conditions, including those that have a cyclical pattern. However, a few activities have made a foothold and are increasing in participation. These include:

- Fitness programs remain the most popular physical activity
- Increased participation among a number of key sports and activities such as lacrosse and hockey
- An expressed desire to increase the amount of travel done for participation in favorite sports and recreational activities

According to research in the Sports and Leisure Market Potential, the most popular activities in the Bloomfield region include golf, aerobics, yoga, walking, fishing, and basketball.

Park Inventory and Level of Service Standards

The purpose of this assessment is to provide a detailed synopsis of all parks, open space, trails and facilities located within Bloomfield. The assessment provides a thorough inventory, analysis of forecasted needs, existing gaps in the system, and strategic recommendations. Additionally, the inventory includes an overview of needed renovations, improvements, and system opportunities. This section

also includes Level of Service Standards, or information about parkland, facility, and amenity comparisons to other similarly sized cities throughout the United States.

In addition to the community meetings and focus groups, the Consulting Team completed a detailed review of park inventory and standards for the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services. The inventory of parks includes a total of 25 parks and open spaces within the Town of Bloomfield for a total of 1,670.14 acres. Parks were evaluated based upon their acreage, amenities and location.

When compared to other similar-sized agencies, the Town of Bloomfield is well above the national standard for park acreage per thousand. The recommended total is 12 acres per thousand and Bloomfield has 81.47 acres per thousand. The park inventory analysis also reviewed the standards for level of service for types of facilities such as recreation centers, fitness centers, playgrounds, tennis courts, dog parks, etc.

For Bloomfield, outdoor tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, soccer and baseball fields, gymnasiums and community garden were above the recommended number of amenities based upon population. Facilities that fell below standard recommendations based upon population included recreation center, fitness center, playgrounds, indoor swimming, indoor/outdoor skating rink, youth and adult softball fields and dog park.

Mapping

This process includes park mapping by classification and major amenities by facility standards. The Consulting Team utilized GIS to create a service area analysis for specific parks, waterfront, open space, trails and facilities. The mapping process will be used in conjunction with the standards analysis and will form the basis for identifying gaps in service and potential opportunities for future facility development and capital planning.

Recreation Assessment

The Assessment includes a review of programs and service offerings of the Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services, including core program identification, a current program assessment, marketing approaches and program guide review, recreation programming standards, customer requirements and measures. The assessment also includes a review of age segment distribution of offerings, program lifecycle analysis and recommendations for future program direction.

Approximately 66% of programs are geared towards the ages of 13+. Conversely, youth programs and adult programs/fitness have a similar amount of programs offered. The number of program offerings continues to grow. Additionally, community events play an important role for the community. To remain competitive with youth programs, new programs should be introduced seasonally.

Core programs for the Department include:

- Adult Programs/Fitness
- Aquatics
- Camps
- Special Events
- Youth Programs

These are the programs offered most frequently and have the greatest amount of participants.

As the Town of Bloomfield becomes older and more diverse, determining the community's need for adult programming is important, moving forward. With a Senior Center offering programs for older adults, the Department of Leisure Services should focus its attention on younger active adults in their 50's and 60's. However, existing facility space does not lend itself toward attracting active adults. There is interest from the community for fitness and wellness programs. The Department is challenged in its ability to attract active adults as a result of the limitations of indoor recreation space.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organization and Leadership Review

The Consulting Team worked with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Department of Leisure Services Staff to complete an assessment of the operations of the organization. The review of the DPW included a look at the overall staffing levels, operating budget, and a comparative analysis of other agencies. The comparative analysis includes data from a national database, PRORAGIS (Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and Geographical Information System), for this comparison and includes agencies that have parks and recreation functions as one department.

Currently the DPW operates cross-functionally which maximizes staff resources. Bloomfield reported 2,084 population per FTE while the median is 1,397. Therefore, staff working for Leisure Services and Public Works dedicated toward park maintenance is very low for Bloomfield. Additionally, Bloomfield's operating expenditure per capita is \$78.13 which is lower than the median of \$104.33. The DPW operating budget dedicated toward park maintenance is currently, \$1,128,444 which is also well below the median of similar-sized agencies which is \$2,257,530.

In addition to the review of the DPW, the Consulting Team completed a review of the Department of Leisure Services which included a Recreation Assessment. The Recreation Assessment identified five core program areas for the Department including adult programs/fitness, aquatics, camps, special events and youth programs. One significant challenge that was identified was the lack of quality indoor space, particularly for the adult population. Currently, there is no standard for indoor recreation space however, Heller and Heller Consulting, Inc. uses a standard of 2.0 square feet per capita for agencies located in cold weather climates. Therefore, for Bloomfield the standard would be 41,600 square feet of indoor space for a population of 20,843. Currently, the only indoor space managed by the Department is included in the Human Service Center and totals 23,526 square feet.

The Consulting Team also developed a list of recommendations for the Department of Leisure Services which included:

- Develop a launch group as a way of developing active adult services
- Host Meet up groups
- Identify new space for active adult services for group exercise and fitness
- Complete a needs assessment survey to determine the greatest program needs, unmet program needs and what are the biggest priority for customers
- Increase the percentage of introductory and growth program areas
- Develop several key performance measures to monitor Department programming performance
- Develop a virtual online program guide that allows customers to register by smart phones

Visioning Section

Visioning included a discussion of the overall findings from all of the technical reports and community input. Discussion occurred during a staff workshop to review the findings and recommendations as well as a brainstorm exercise to prioritize System Themes. This information then resulted in final Parks Master Plan recommendations.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES/ACTION PLAN

Strategic Initiatives include a listing of recommendations targeted during the next five years. The Initiatives are categorized according to short term, midterm and long term time frames. The Strategic Initiatives are listed below.

Short Term 2014-2015

- Develop a system wide signage and wayfinding plan and improve park "gateways" to make them more prominent and make the parks feel like special places. Signage and gateways should have a common theme or branding to make the parks easily identifiable as a Bloomfield Park.
- Develop the Department's brand and image, including logo and development of consistent messaging.

- Improve Filley Park and the connections to Filley.
- There is a potential for a trail connection between Filley Park and LaSalette (the Scott Trail) by passing through the cemetery.
- Develop Auer Farm for potential Farm has potential for east/west bike connections also.
- Coordinate signage for the East Coast Greenway route and prioritize bicycle facility improvements along that route.
- As part of trails and connectivity Initiatives, develop a citizen Trails Committee.
- Ensure safety and security at parks including such items as lighting at the Community Center.
- Create Park Board by-laws with identification of procedures, composition of Board seats, appointment process, and term lengths.
- Create additional Public Works positions to perform park maintenance to improve the acreage per full time staff person ration. In the short term, five additional positions would be beneficial.
- Develop maintenance standards to outline the level of maintenance desired at various parks and facilities.
- Maintain the tennis courts at Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center, but remove all others as there is a surplus of 12 tennis courts in the system.
- Create a capital replacement program based on Master Plan recommendations. Include maintenance impacts for new facilities or amenities and an ongoing replacement schedule for park amenities such as playgrounds.
- Continue to work on identifying ways of engaging active adults within programs and services. This includes an active adult launch group and meet up groups. The launch group can be involved in the development of additional indoor space.
- Complete a statistically valid needs assessment survey to determine program and facility needs, unmet needs, and priorities.
- Develop improvements at Wilcox Park, including the addition of a large picnic pavilion (to accommodate groups larger than 50) for group rentals, a new rental building, and the possibility of an outdoor adventure/recreation area for youth and a team building course for corporate use can be contracted.
- Develop smaller picnic pavilions at two additional locations (for groups of up to 50)
- Renovate the existing building at Farmington River Park; options include converting it into a nature center and/or a rental facility for river access with kayak and canoe rentals and nature camps.
- Analyze the possibility of merging park maintenance responsibilities as part of Public Works into the Leisure Services Department. Nationwide, a significant majority of parks and recreation operations are within the same department. This structure works well from an external customer perspective as issues concerning all park and recreation services are within the same department. One area to consider in this analysis is the disadvantage created by this in relation to the cross training and shared responsibilities currently employed by the Public Works Department.
- Create cost of service information to develop data relating to identification of expenses of park maintenance by specific park
- Create a system of key performance indicators to determine the Department's outcomes and progress
- Renovate Bloomfield Municipal Pool
- Add additional soccer fields to Reservoir 3. This will alleviate the deficit of multi-purpose field amenity as part of the Level of Service Standard.

Mid Term 2016-2017

- Develop a Disc Golf Course at LaSalette Park.
- As part of PRORAGIS, perform a calculation of economic benefits of Department services and events.

Long Term 2018-2019

- Plan for a referendum to fund improvements to the system. The referendum, in part, should include alleviating the indoor space deficit of approximately 20,000 square feet and include fitness center and group exercise space.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Expand, and continue to plan for expansion of greenway from Tariffville to Cottage Grove Road via routing along Griffin Line rail corridor.
- Research the possibility of renovating a golf course clubhouse to include a banquet facility, large enough to hold 100 people.
- Consider installing an artificial turf field at the Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center or the high school.

Capital Improvements

Various Strategic Initiatives require capital funding. These elements are listed, detail provided, and cost estimates included. This will be helpful for the Town to plan for resource allocation in the future. Features included within the Capital Improvement section include:

- Pool Renovation
- Small Picnic Shelter (24x24) 4 picnic tables, 32 people capacity
- Medium to Large Shelter (32x32) 9 picnic tables, 72 people capacity
- Soccer Field
- Indoor recreation space
- Disc Golf Course
- Golf Course Banquet Facility
- Artificial Turf Field
- Signage program
- Bike and Trail Improvements

Implementation Guidelines

This section lists a series of guidelines for successful implementation including methods of monitoring progress, reporting results, and communication with Town leaders, staff members, partners, and the public. The Guidelines are developed to ensure successful implementation of the Plan.





COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Master Plan process included a series of public input methods at the beginning of the process. This included attendance at a Halloween special event, a series of community focus groups and meetings with Town Council and Leisure Services Board. The community input process is a critical element to the development of a Master Plan. The following lists the overall highlights and area of common themes from the meetings.

There was consensus about several key issues for the Department. The key areas include:

- The Department is seen as an agency that is geared toward providing youth services
- There appears to be a general lack of awareness of Department services
- The Department's leadership is perceived positively
- There has been insufficient investment in the infrastructure. There were many comments about the condition of the pool
- Of facilities that do not exist, the one facility most frequently mentioned as a need is an indoor pool facility
- The aging population is significantly growing
- The brand and image of the Town and the Department needs improvement
- Trails and connectivity

Other topic areas of discussion and consensus responses include:

What the Department does well?

- Support of youth organizations
- Low cost recreation activities primarily for kids
- Planning of the Department and all the organization required
- Bloomfield has a lot of open space
- The staff do a good job with what they have to work with

What does the Department need to improve?

- Trails, connectivity and bike trails
- Facilities need improvement
- Better and more programs
- Lack of awareness by residents
- The pool needs improvement
- Parks maintenance was better when there was a Parks Department
- People go to other towns for recreation, such as renting facilities for a sweet sixteen party

Communication with Residents

- Leisure Services is invisible; hard to know what's going on. More digital presence is needed. The Department needs to do a better job communicating
- The program guide is useful
- The political leadership in the Town seems to have an attitude of we are doing ok and they feel that is good enough
- We do not seem to make bold moves; we need leaders in Town
- Leisure Services has done a good job, but there is only so much they can do
- Flyers to schools have been successful
- The Department needs to advertise better
- Most residents work outside Bloomfield, which makes it more difficult to communicate
- Have kids for their civics requirement at high school be involved with the Department
- There is a lack of pride in the community; families are trying to get out of the school system
- Maybe we should do something with the Town's brand
- Promote more at the library, cable television, super markets
- The Town's computer system is not as sophisticated as it should be
- Email sign-ups for email blasts
- Insert a newsletter into the tax bill
- When the public has the opportunity to provide feedback, they do not get involved

- We need something to energize or create excitement
- The pool

Demographics

- Population is getting older and will affect service delivery
- School enrollment is dropping
- Segregated schools
- More condos and apartments

Funding

- \$96 million has been spent on schools, there isn't a window of opportunity for another bond program

Programs

- There are not enough programs for older people
- Need more adult education classes like art classes
- Relationship with the Senior Center is good; transportation is an issue for seniors
- Try to get kids outside and enjoying nature
- We need to have more special events in parks
- There needs to be some individual initiative for program development such as badminton, disc golf, ultimate Frisbee, etc.

Park Land/Trails

- Filley Park inaction has created a lack of confidence in the planning process; Filley Park needs work
- Connections between parks and facilities are important
- Sam Wheeler Park is my favorite park; would like interpretive signage for the park
- We are lucky to have so much park land and open space
- Penwood Park is popular for hiking; we are trying to make a trail go from Filley to Penwood, but the cemetery doesn't want people walking through the cemetery
- Farmington River Park is wonderful
- Connecting to the East Coast Greenway is important

- We can use more trails and trail maintenance
- We have bits and pieces of trails but nothing is connected
- Signage and wayfinding is missing
- We need a northwest park in Bloomfield
- Parks are under-utilized; is it a lack of amenities, the condition of the infrastructure?
- Do we need a dog park?
- There are opportunities to develop historical properties

Facilities

- Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center could be re-purposed
- Several residents mentioned the need for an indoor pool
- Several people commented on improving the outdoor pool
- Keep adapting to changing needs of the community
- There are probably too many tennis courts

Partnerships

- The Department has partnerships with the school district, athletic associations, public works, youth and senior services, and library
- The Department does not do much with the corporate sector of civic groups



The background image is a landscape photograph with a blue color overlay. It shows a dense forest of trees on a hillside, with a body of water in the middle ground. In the foreground, there are tall, green reeds or grasses. The text 'DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT' is centered in white, bold, uppercase letters.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to identify demographic changes in the community in the next several years and to identify the impact of any changes on the Department's service delivery system. Additionally, the report details recreation participation trends. Recreational trends are explored at both the local and national levels. This information will assist the Department in its ability to position programs and services for the future.

The following report is a culmination of information derived from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) and Physical Activity Council (PAC). This information compiles results for age, gender, race, ethnicity and household income of the Town of Bloomfield residents and compares the data to state and national statistics. Demographic projections from ESRI give an outlook through 2017.

METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data were acquired in October 2013, and reflect actual numbers as reported in the 2010 US Bureau of the Census and demographic projections for 2012 and 2017 as estimated by ESRI. The Town of Bloomfield was utilized as the demographic analysis boundary.

AGE SEGMENT AND GENDER

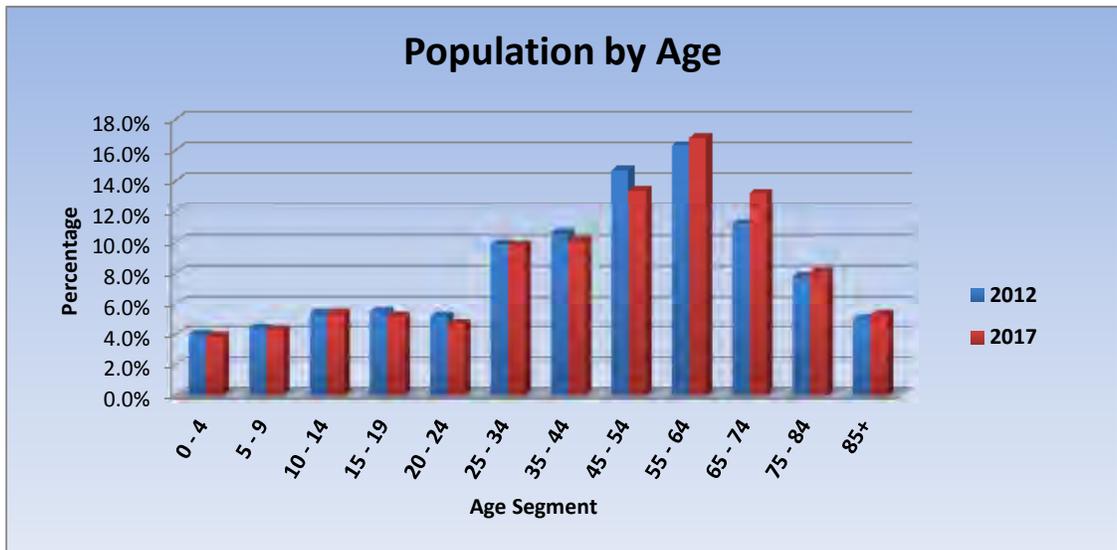
Age segments appear to remain somewhat constant from Census 2010 through 2017 with a slight decrease in ages 15-24 and the greatest decrease occurring for ages 35-54 by 2017. Additionally the 14 and under population will slightly decrease from 14.1% to 13.6%.

The greatest increases by 2017 will be ages 55+, a testament to the aging baby boomer population. According to US Census information, the percentage of Bloomfield's population 55 and over is currently 38.6%. This will grow to 43.5 % of the population in 2017. Nationally, the average percentage of adults 55 and over in communities is 24.7%. The change in the older population will have a significant impact on programs offered by Leisure Services as so many programs are geared toward youth.

From a program and services perspective, this suggests a significant need to expand services for the active adult population (50s and 60s) and older seniors (70s and older). The senior population will be serviced by the Senior Center; therefore, the Leisure Services Department should focus efforts on active adults. Leisure Services may be able to supplement Senior Center services by offering more fitness and athletics activities.

Additionally, males represent 44.9% of the population and females represent 55.1% of the population. Again, this has relevancy to the programs offered by the Department. The percentage distribution of age segments is shown in the following chart.

Population by Age	Census 2010		2012		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0 - 4	837	4.0%	829	4.0%	825	3.9%
5 - 9	928	4.5%	914	4.4%	907	4.3%
10 - 14	1,166	5.6%	1,134	5.4%	1,136	5.4%
15 - 19	1,218	5.9%	1,154	5.5%	1,090	5.2%
20 - 24	1,073	5.2%	1,089	5.2%	996	4.7%
25 - 34	2,022	9.8%	2,054	9.9%	2,068	9.8%
35 - 44	2,275	11.0%	2,208	10.6%	2,142	10.1%
45 - 54	3,169	15.3%	3,071	14.7%	2,831	13.4%
55 - 64	3,238	15.6%	3,394	16.3%	3,544	16.8%
65 - 74	2,182	10.5%	2,330	11.2%	2,785	13.2%
75 - 84	1,622	7.8%	1,625	7.8%	1,707	8.2%
85+	974	4.7%	1,041	5.0%	1,121	5.3%



DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

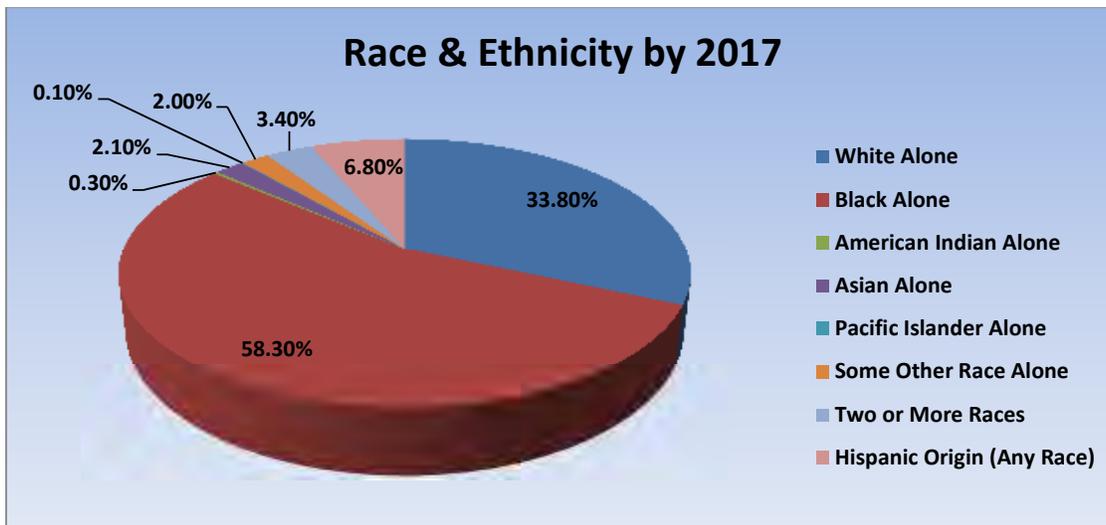
RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity for the Town of Bloomfield according to the Census 2010 is 57.9% of the population being Black, 35.3% White, 5.6% Hispanic, and 3.0% Two or more races. It is projected that Bloomfield will continue to become more diverse, with 1.5% reductions for the white population by 2017. Additionally, the Hispanic population is expected to increase from 5.6% to 6.8% and the Black population is expected to increase from 57.9% to 58.3% by 2017. The chart below represents race and ethnic percentages by 2017. It's important for the Department to continue its outreach to various ethnic constituencies.

HOUSEHOLDS AND INCOME

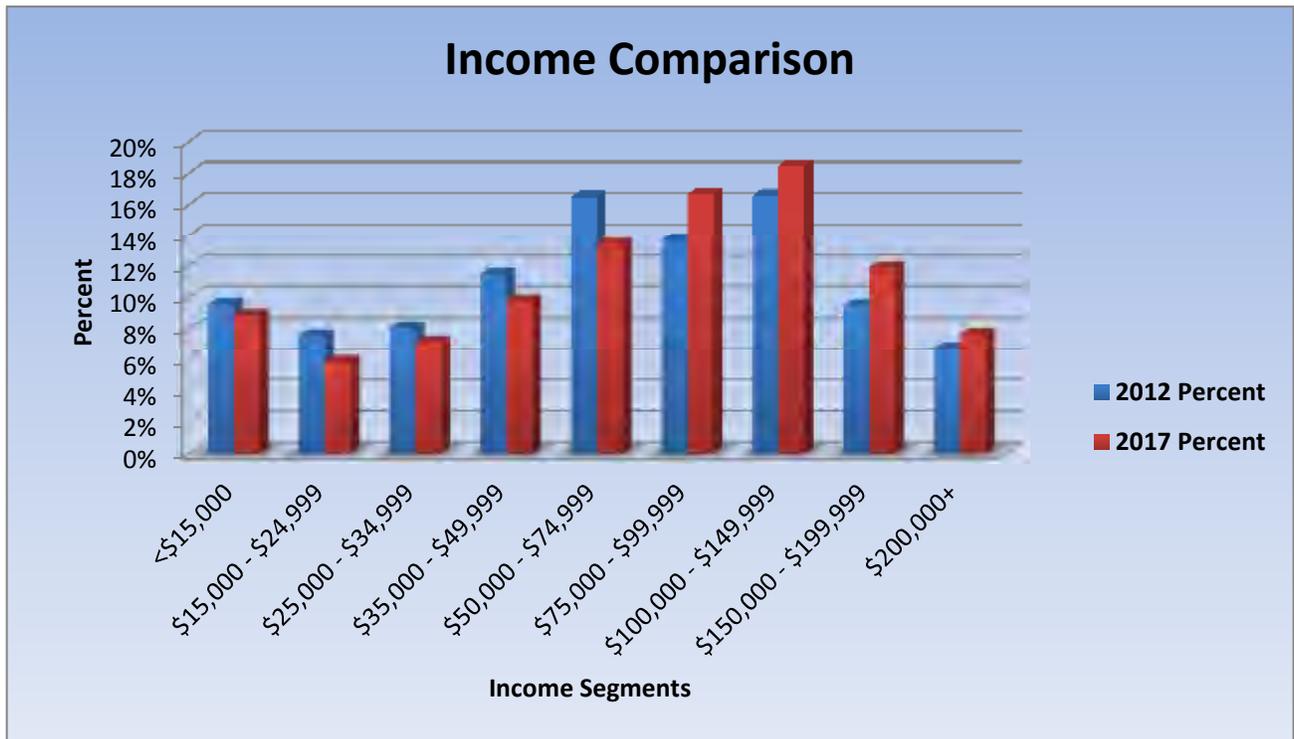
Based on the Census 2010, 8,642 households are within the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services boundaries with an average household size of 2.32 persons. According to Census information, the median age is 47.7 in 2010, increasing to 50.3 in 2017. Of these households, 5,403 were identified as families, representing 62.5% of the total households. According to the demographic and income profile, households identified as families will increase slightly (2.2%) by 2017. This statistic bodes well for the Department of Leisure Services as many family oriented events are offered. The median household income is currently estimated as \$68,181 and is projected to increase to \$80,687 by 2017.

Race and Ethnicity	Census 2010		2012		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	7,308	35.3%	7,306	35.1%	7,145	33.8%
Black Alone	11,983	57.9%	12,050	57.8%	12,340	58.3%
American Indian Alone	53	0.3%	57	0.3%	68	0.3%
Asian Alone	386	1.9%	399	1.9%	445	2.1%
Pacific Islander Alone	8	0.0%	10	0.0%	12	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	347	1.7%	368	1.8%	421	2.0%
Two or More Races	620	3.0%	653	3.1%	721	3.4%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	1,160	5.6%	1,234	5.9%	1,445	6.8%



Summary	Census 2010	2012	2017
Population	20,705	20,843	21,152
Households	8,642	8,746	8,960
Families	5,403	5,441	5,521
Average Household Size	2.32	2.31	2.29
Owner Occupied Housing Units	6,382	6,363	6,476
Renter Occupied Housing Units	2,260	2,383	2,484
Median Age	47.7	48.6	50.3

Households by Income	2012 Number	2012 Percent	2017 Number	2017 Percent
<\$15,000	843	9.6%	797	8.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	669	7.6%	528	5.9%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	712	8.1%	642	7.2%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	1,007	11.5%	875	9.8%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	1,443	16.5%	1,205	13.4%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	1,195	13.7%	1,496	16.7%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	1,452	16.6%	1,660	18.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	830	9.5%	1,063	11.9%
\$200,000+	595	6.8%	694	7.7%



DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

AREA, STATE AND NATIONAL COMPARISON

The Town of Bloomfield area rate of population growth from 2012 to 2017 is projected to be higher than the state average, but remains significantly lower than national average. The number of households, families and homeowners will also increase; however, is still lower than national averages. The median household income is projected to increase greatly in the \$75,000 to \$199,999 segments. Most other income segments will see a decline by 2017. The Town of Bloomfield’s median household income remains higher than the national median, but lower than the state’s median by 2017. The projected median household income will be \$80,687. These statistics can be viewed in the graph below.

2012 Median Household Statistics:

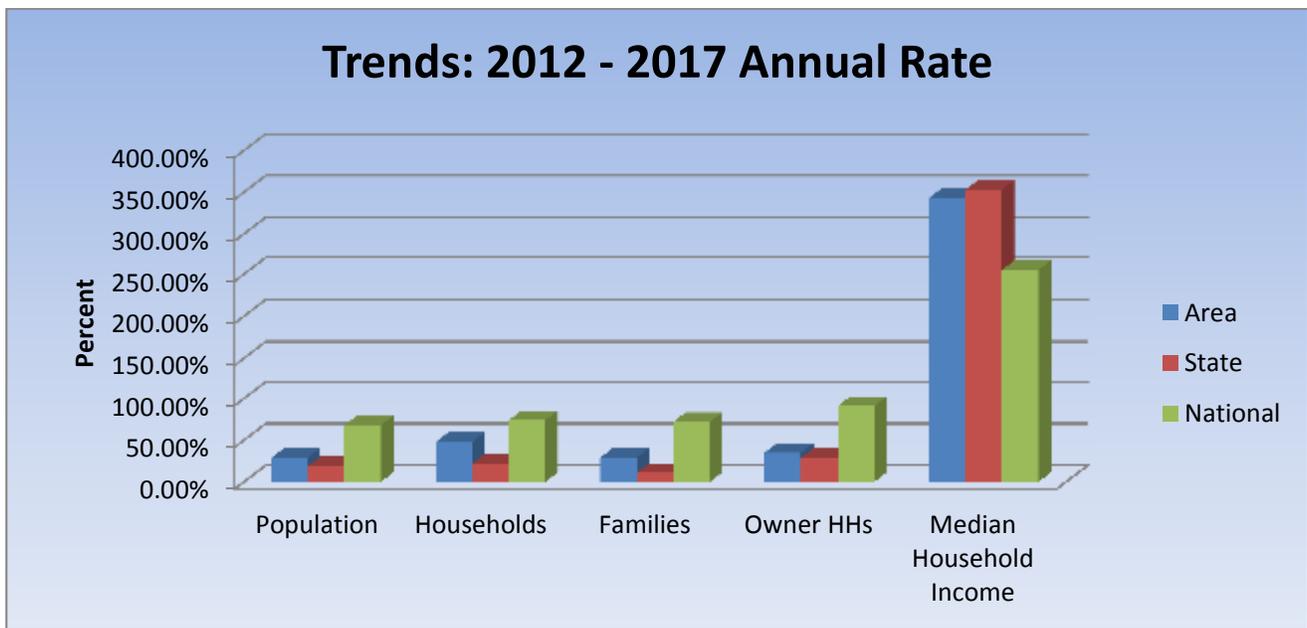
- Town of Bloomfield median household income: \$68,181
- National median household income: \$51,371
- Connecticut’s median household income: \$69,519

RECREATION TRENDS

Local Trends

Recreation trends information was also derived from ESRI and is a report entitled Sports and Leisure Market Potential. These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to the local demographic composition of the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services area. Usage data were collected by Growth for Knowledge Mediamark Research and Intelligence, LLC. (GfK MRI) in a nationally representative survey of U.S. households. MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults in the specified area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.

Based on projected population, the top recreational activities the Town of Bloomfield residents will participate in (based on percentage of population as well as above the national average with an MPI over 100) are listed in the table to the right.



Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Participated in aerobics	1,993	11.6%	116
Participated in archery	465	2.7%	104
Participated in backpacking/hiking	1,579	9.2%	97
Participated in baseball	738	4.3%	82
Participated in basketball	1,744	10.1%	108
Participated in bicycling (mountain)	671	3.9%	105
Participated in bicycling (road)	1,417	8.2%	85
Participated in boating (power)	1,111	6.4%	105
Participated in bowling	1,695	9.8%	84
Participated in canoeing/kayaking	839	4.9%	102
Participated in downhill skiing	460	2.7%	91
Participated in fishing (fresh water)	1,607	9.3%	72
Participated in fishing (salt water)	864	5.0%	110
Participated in football	960	5.6%	89
Participated in Frisbee	764	4.4%	81
Participated in golf	2,105	12.2%	119
Play golf < once a month	639	3.7%	93
Play golf 1+ times a month	1,235	7.2%	134
Participated in horseback riding	463	2.7%	88
Participated in hunting with rifle	637	3.7%	77
Participated in hunting with shotgun	613	3.6%	85
Participated in ice skating	476	2.8%	95
Participated in jogging/running	1,588	9.2%	86
Participated in martial arts	208	1.2%	86
Participated in motorcycling	634	3.7%	101
Participated in Pilates	605	3.5%	106
Participated in roller skating	376	2.2%	105
Participated in snowboarding	281	1.6%	84
Participated in soccer	528	3.1%	71
Participated in softball	583	3.4%	86
Participated in swimming	2,883	16.7%	86
Participated in target shooting	657	3.8%	99
Participated in tennis	752	4.4%	102
Participated in volleyball	532	3.1%	88
Participated in walking for exercise	5,641	32.7%	110
Participated in weight lifting	2,085	12.1%	102
Participated in yoga	1,118	6.5%	111
Spent on high end sports/recreation equipment/12 mo: <\$250	724	4.2%	95
Spent on high end sports/recreation equipment/12 mo: \$250+	697	4.0%	104

DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

NATIONAL TRENDS

Additional recreational trends were derived from the Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report (2012) developed by The Sports & Fitness Industry Association, a top national researcher in the sports and fitness industry. The data reflecting the national trends stem from a statistically valid survey which over 38,000 online responses were compiled and analyzed. These surveys were then weighted against a total population of 283,753,000 ages 6 and up. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, household size, region, and population density.

Overall, many activities are experiencing a slow increase and/or decline due to the recent poor economic conditions, including those that have a cyclical pattern. However, a few activities have made a foothold and are increasing in participation. In general, the survey reveals the following:

- Fitness sports remain the most popular physical activity and include activities such as yoga, boot camp-style training, and other classes. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, the top predicted 2014 trends include:
 - High intensity interval training (HIIT)
 - Body weight training
 - Educated and experienced fitness professionals
 - Strength training
 - Exercise and weight loss
 - Personal training
 - Fitness programs for older adults
 - Functional fitness
 - Group personal training
 - Yoga
- Increased interest in indoor rowing
- Increased participation among a number of key sports and activities such as lacrosse and hockey

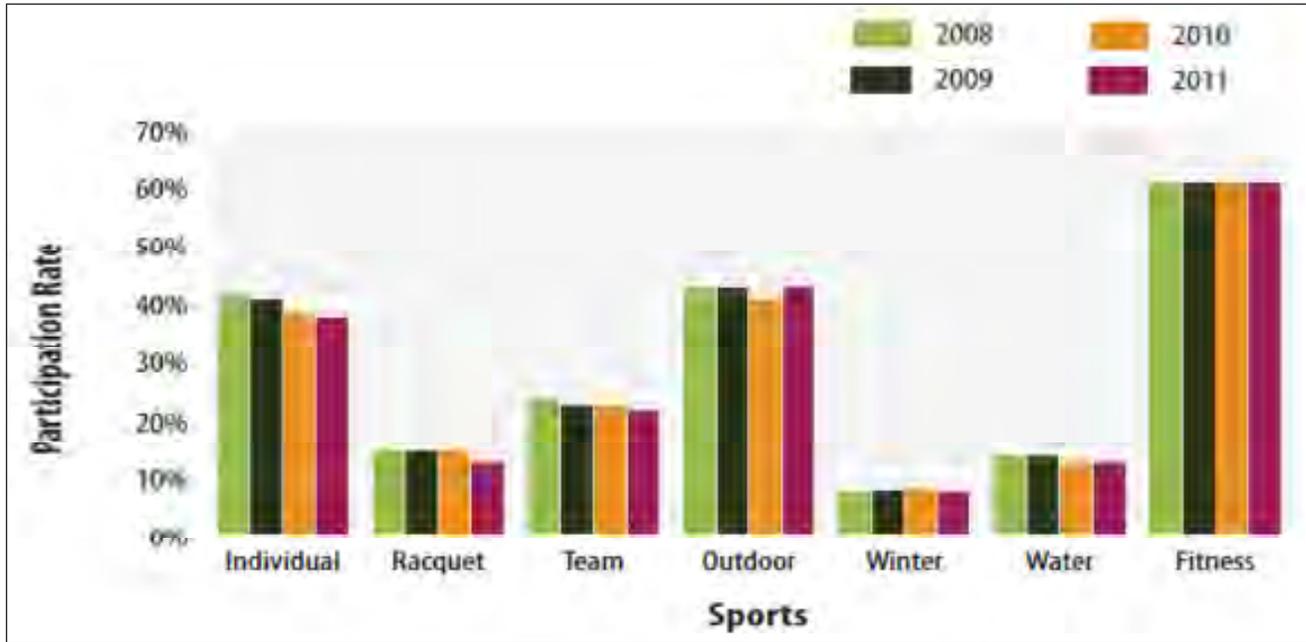
- An expressed desire to increase the amount of travel done for participation in favorite sports and recreational activities
- Aspirational activities show a desire and demand to participate in the coming year
- An expressed desire to participate in favorite sports and recreational activities with some areas showing an increase in spending which is encouraging
- Niche sports such as racquet sports shows a slight increase
- Significant opportunities to engage inactive populations in swimming and working out
- Smart phone apps for fitness and nutrition recording

In particular, the categories of participation include individual sports, racquet sports, team sports, outdoor sports, winter sports, water sports and fitness sports. As the chart to the right reveals, individual, team, and winter sports have slightly decreased while water and fitness sports have held steady.

Other categories despite their slight decrease have remained steady and are expected to gain participation with the rebounding economy.

The survey reveals that 76% of Americans have participated in some activity in the last four years; however, the general trend is that Americans have become more inactive with the rate of inactivity increasing from 21.5 percent in 2007 to 23.9 percent in 2011. Inactivity increased among young adults aged 18 to 24 and 35 to 54. Conversely, inactivity rates fell slightly among children ages 6 to 12 from 16.6 percent in 2010 to 16 percent in 2011. This decrease may be a result of efforts towards the fight against childhood obesity. Additionally, for adolescents ages 13 to 17, inactivity fell from 16.7 percent to 16.4 percent which, although modest, is a positive step in the right direction.

Increased spending areas will likely be seen in lessons, instruction, and camps (24.5 percent); individual sports events (23.1 percent); and team sports at school (22.8 percent).



	<u>Spend More</u>	<u>Spend Same</u>	<u>Spend Less</u>
Team Sports at School	22.8%	64.6%	12.6%
Team Sports Outside of School	21.6%	66.3%	12.4%
Travel for Sports and Rec.	22.5%	64.2%	13.3%
Lessons, Instruction and Camps	24.5%	62.9%	12.2%
Gym Membership/Fees	20.7%	67.6%	11.7%
Individual Sports Events	23.1%	65.1%	11.3%
Golf Membership/Fees	15.5%	71.4%	13.7%
Tennis Membership/Fees	9.9%	76.2%	12.9%
Winter Sports	17.6%	66.8%	15.5%
Outdoor Recreation	20.7%	70.1%	9.2%
Sports/Rec. Clothing	16.5%	69.2%	14.1%
Sports/Rec. Footwear	16.4%	70.4%	13.2%
Sports/Rec. Equipment	16.0%	66.7%	17.3%

DEMOGRAPHIC AND TREND REPORT

HOW TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION

The Survey revealed that one of the best ways to increase activity and participation later in life is to encourage casual play at the younger ages and in school through Physical Education. The survey points out that an adult who participated in physical education while in school is four times more likely to participate in a racquet sport and about three times more likely to participate in team, outdoor, winter and golf. There is a strong correlation between casual play as a youth turning into a core activity later in life.

In particular, the survey examined the difference between Generation X and Generation Y population. "Generation Y (born 1980-1999) are twice as likely to take part in team sports than Generation X (born 1965-1979). Although much is explained by the age difference, the psychological tendency of Generation Y is more positively disposed to team sports than their Generation X predecessors who are more individual in nature. Generation Y are also more social in their interactions in terms of:

- The way they play (gravitating towards team sports)
- The way they exercise (including a tendency to participate in group exercise)
- The way they communicate (Social Networking, Facebook, Twitter)

Fitness sports remained the most popular physical activity. The participation rate has held steady at 60% over the last 4 years. There are also opportunities to engage the inactive populations. Swimming ranks as a popular "aspirational sport" for inactive participants ages 6 to 12 and 45 and older. Working out with weights and fitness machines are the top "aspirational sports" for inactive participants ages 13 to 44.

The economy has also had a slight impact on sports and recreation spending. While many active people are still not spending money on sports and recreation, more people spent the

same amount or increased spending, rather than spending less.

In order to increase participation, knowing the trends and what various users groups are interested in participating is crucial. Significant changes in specific activities (both increases and decreases) over the past 2 years are summarized and listed below. This data is extracted directly from the PAC study, 2012, SGMA Participation Topline Report © 2012 SGMA Research.

Team Sports

Over the last 2 years, there has been a slight decrease in the traditional team sports area such as baseball, football, basketball, and soccer. Trending growth in the newer more evolving transplant sports like Lacrosse continue to grow at significant rates.

Baseball	-6.0%
Basketball	-1.4%
Football	-4.0%
Gymnastics	22.1%
Ice Hockey	5.6%
Lacrosse	29.1%
Roller Hockey	-13.3%
Soccer (outdoor)	-2.1%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	-3.1%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	-14.9%
Wrestling	-37.8%

FITNESS

Class based fitness and exercise programs like Zumba continue to drive positive participation performance for these types of fitness activities. Many agencies around the country have moved these classes outside and are using parks as programming space. Several systems have also advertised the availability of park space for contractual instructors to use for various class activities.

Another recent trend includes “functional fitness” as reported in the April 22, 2013 New York Times article Gyms Move from Machines to Fitness Playgrounds. Sandbags, ropes and climbing areas are taking over the floor space as part of a functional fitness movement. Companies such as Lifetime Fitness are removing weight machines and are replacing them with open areas of space for people to use as more natural strength training, rather than being locked in a machine.

“Fun” fitness is a current trend. Exercises like “P90x,” “Insanity,” or “Crossfit” has proven that you don’t need a lot of equipment to look and feel good. Since these programs have become popular, newer versions have become available, some cutting the time in half to look and feel fit. These types of classes have been and will continue to grow in popularity at park districts, parks and recreation departments and fitness centers.

Group cycling continues in popularity as the younger fitness enthusiasts embrace this high performance group exercise activity as well as program variations to attract the beginner participant are developed. Though, group cycling is not projected to grow much beyond current participation numbers.

For most age groups, swimming for fitness or weight training are the two most frequently mentioned activities that people indicate they would like to participate in.

Aerobics (High Impact)	23.4%
Aerobics (Low Impact)	4.1%
Elliptical	14.8%
Running/Jogging	17.8%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	29.2%
Treadmill	5.7%
Walking for Fitness	1.7%
Abdominal Machine	-4.9%
Pilates	-3.0%
Stretching	-4.4%
Free Weights	11.3%
Home Gym	1.8%
Weight/Resistance Machines	1.2%

While Pilates has shown an incredible 10 year growth trend, the past 2 years have seen a decline in participation. Perhaps participation migrated to Yoga, as participation is up across all levels for the year. Yoga is more class based while Pilates is more of an individual activity. The Gen Y fitness participants are showing a higher propensity to go with group oriented programs.

Running and Walking for Fitness continue to show strong and consistent growth. Running is up 17% year/year growth (see graph at lower left).

Individual Sports

Much like the trends for individual fitness participation, sports are showing significant declines across most levels of participation.

Billiards/Pool	20.0%
Golf	-5.2%
Martial Arts	-24.2%
Roller Skating	-18.6%
Scooter Riding	-15.7%
Skateboarding	-16.7%
Badminton	-4.5%
Table Tennis	1.7%
Tennis	-4.2%

Outdoor Sports

Compared to previous years, outdoors sports have experienced significant increase in participation. BMX has seen the greatest growth with an increase of over 30% in the last two years.

Bicycling	5.4%
Camping	-10.1%
Fishing (fresh)	-4.4%
Target Shooting	6.5%



PARKS ASSESSMENT



PARKS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

Bloomfield is home to approximately 970 acres of Town owned and operated parks. This translates to 47.3 acres per thousand residents, which is considerably higher than the national standard for towns with a similar population (12 acres per thousand residents). Additionally, the town leases and operates two reservoirs (#2 and #3) which total 700 acres combined. Seen collectively, the parks and reservoirs provide 1,670 acres of the publicly-accessible open space, which yields 81.5 acres per thousand residents. Most of the City's parkland (78%) is within large regional parks like M.K. Wilcox Park and LaSalette Open Space. The remaining acreage is in community parks (7%), neighborhood parks (4%), mini parks (<1%) and special use parks (11%). All of the park types, except mini parks, exceed the recommended national benchmarks for total acreage. Mini park acreage would ideally be closer to 3 acres (Bloomfield has 1.35 acres). However, this deficit is more than adequately offset by the abundance of other park types.

Overall, Bloomfield has a wealth of parks and open spaces. As a result, the acquisition of additional parkland should not be a priority for the department. Instead, Department efforts should focus on the quantity, quality and distribution of park amenities. In addition to amenities, the Department should focus on creating connections to, within and between parks.

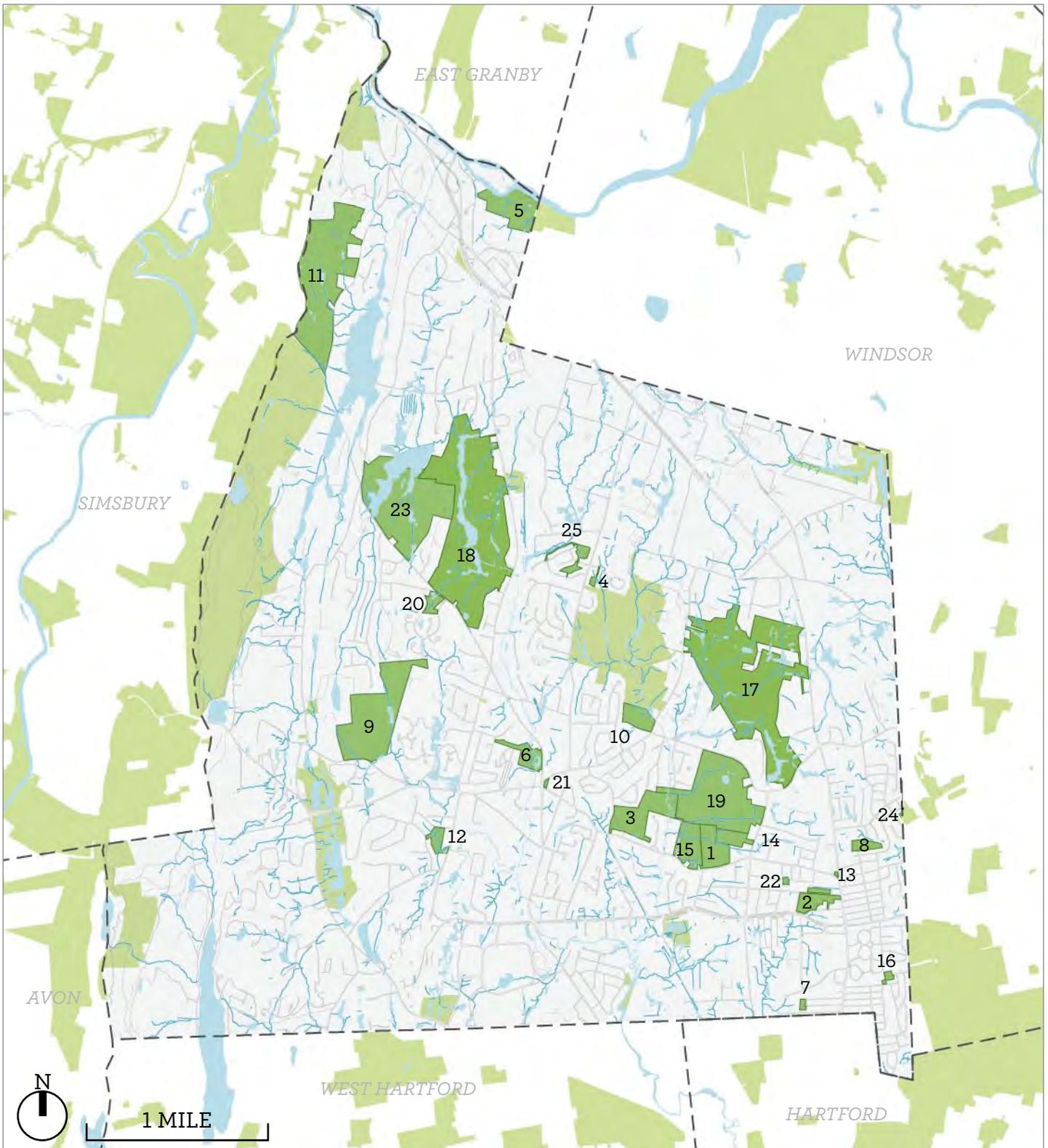
PARK INVENTORY

The following inventory describes each of Bloomfield's parks. The descriptions are grouped by NRPA's standard park type classifications. The classifications are as follows:

- Mini Parks (<1 Acre)
- Neighborhood Parks (1-10 Acres)
- Community Parks (10-50 Acres)
- Regional Parks (>50 Acres)
- Special Use Parks (Varies)



ALL PARK TYPES



- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Alvin & Beatrice Wood Human Services Center / Park School Complex | 5. Farmington River Park | 12. Maplewood Open Space | 19. Samuel Wheeler Reed Park |
| 2. Bill Lee Fields/Robert L Watkins Community Center | 6. Filley Park | 13. Mary Hill Green | 20. Sinnott Farm Open Space |
| 3. Bloomfield High School | 7. Hubbard Park | 14. Metacomet School | 21. Town Green |
| 4. Castlewood | 8. Joyce Neighborhood Street Park | 15. Municipal Pool | 22. West Eggleston Park |
| | 9. LaSalette Open Space | 16. Pershing Park Playground | 23. Wintonbury Hills Golf Course |
| | 10. Laurel School | 17. Reservoir No. 2 | 24. Wintonbury Playground |
| | 11. M.K. Wilcox Park | 18. Reservoir No. 3 | 25. Woodland Manor Open Space |

PARKS ASSESSMENT

MINI PARKS

These parks serve their immediate neighbors. Each park usually offers a few small amenities such as seating, play equipment and ornamental planting.

Mary Hill Green

Originally called the Blue Hills Green, this mini park was rededicated in 1994 to honor Mary Zolan Hill, a dedicated community advocate and leader. The space consists of seating, ornamental planting, a brick path and a large oak.



Mary Hill Green

Town Green

Located in Bloomfield's historic town center, this small park consists of seating, pathways, lawn areas and gardens. The park is home to numerous war memorials, historical markers and other plaques. The site vegetation consists of ornamental plantings, including the Milly Zito Memorial Garden, and dense deciduous and evergreen canopy trees. The latter will require pruning to maintain access and safe sight lines through the space.

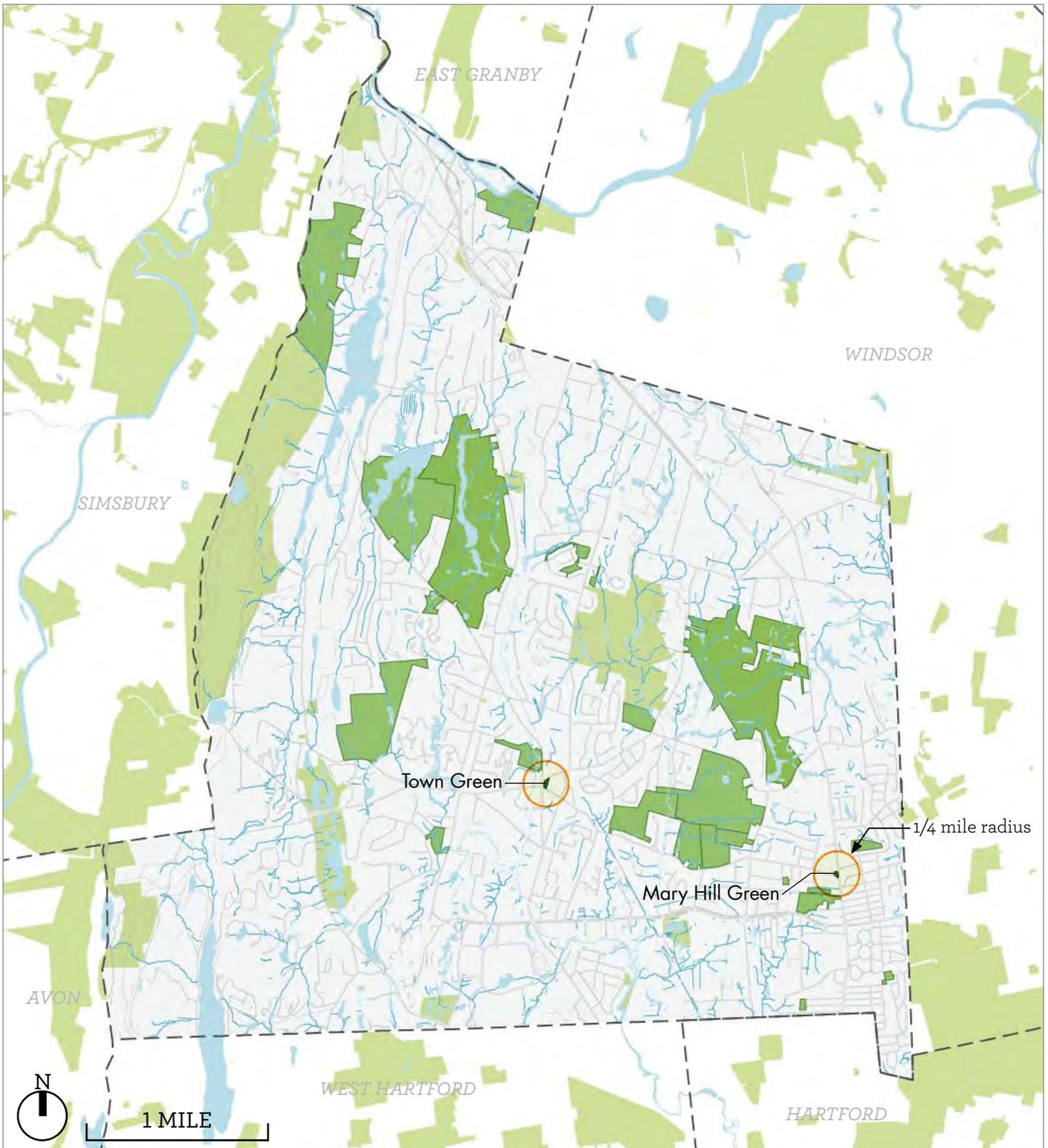


Memorials and ornamental planting at The Town Green



Pathways and planting at The Town Green

MINI PARKS



PARKS ASSESSMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks provide walkable park amenities for their surrounding neighborhood. These parks typically include lawns, paths, playgrounds, ornamental planting, shade trees, some court sports and occasionally small structures.

Metacomet School

The Metacomet School grounds offer sports fields (2 youth softball and three youth soccer) and a new playground. The site is easily accessible from 330 Park Ave, the Municipal Pool, and Samuel Wheeler Reed Park. Public Access to the site is limited to off-hours.



Bill Lee Fields/Robert L Watkins Comm. Ctr

The Bill Lee Field site straddles Rockwell Ave. The park offers several field and court sports opportunities, as well as parking and portable toilets. The tennis and basketball courts are equipped with lighting to allow for extended hours of play. The site lacks landscaping and shade trees. Additional planting should be considered, especially at the site entrance.



Hubbard Park

Hubbard Park is an open grassy lot with a single swing-set and scattered benches. The site is isolated at the end of a residential street.



Joyce Neighborhood Street Park

This park is no longer in use. The site has grown in with vegetation.

(Left)
Baseball field
at Metacomet
School

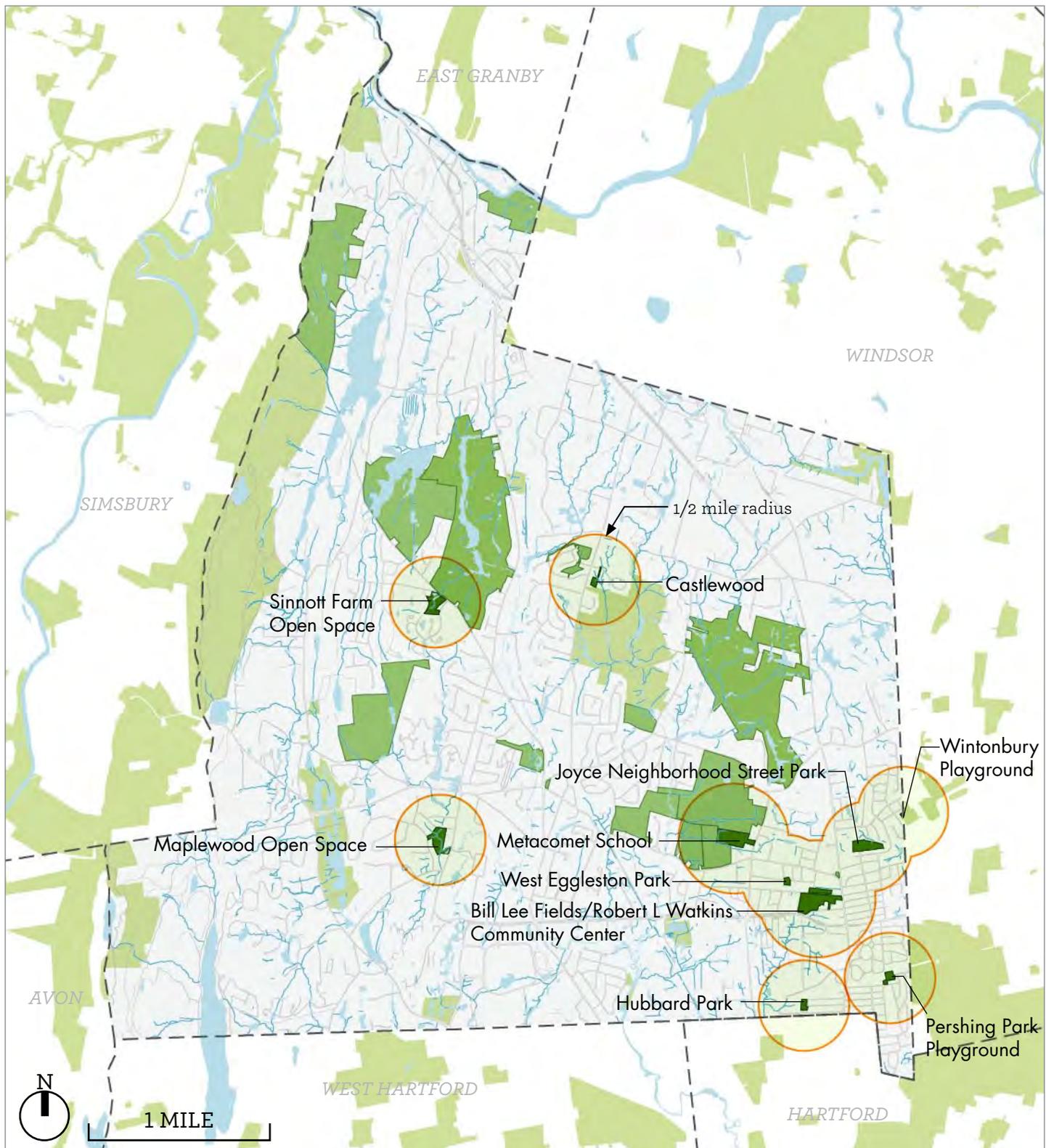
Pershing Park Playground

Pershing Park offers a range of amenities including several play structures, a basketball court, a small shelter, seating and shade trees. The condition of the amenities is declining due to use and mild vandalism. In particular, the drinking fountain needs new hardware (and perhaps plumbing) and the basketball court is severely warped and cracking.

(Bottom Left)
Entrance to
Bill Lee Fields



NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



PARKS ASSESSMENT

Sinnott Farm Open Space

This park is rather secluded, situated within a residential development away from busy streets. This sense of isolation is compounded by the lack of signage leading to the park. The park includes a play structure with sand surfacing, a baseball backstop and a tennis court. The tennis court is in disrepair and is not currently open for public use. In the future, this court should be removed and replaced with vehicle access from Ryefield Hollow Drive.



West Eggleston Park

This park was recently acquired by the town. The park consists of a small grassy lot with seating and large shade trees. Parking is limited to street parking.



Wintonbury Playground

The park is located within a residential area at the end of a small residential street. This park was recently renovated and includes a new play structure, a swing-set, a half basketball court and an open grassy area.

Castlewood

This park consists of two tennis courts buried within the Colonial Lane Open Space. The site is accessed from a small parking area on Castlewood Drive by way of a small trail. The courts are in moderate condition.



Maplewood Open Space

This park follows a small creek that emerges from a drainage structure below Mallard Drive. The park includes a basketball court, a tennis court, a play structure, swing-sets, seating and an open grassy play area. The site has no dedicated parking other than street parking along Mallard and Burnwood Drives. The tennis court is closed due to severe cracking.

(Left) Sinnott Farm Open Space. View from tennis court.

Wintonbury
Playground
entrance



Maplewood
Open Space



PARKS ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY PARKS

These parks provide amenities for multiple neighborhoods. Visitors walk and drive to these parks. Community parks offer parking, lawns, paths, field sports, court sports, special sports facilities, community gardens, performance spaces, a range of natural and ornamental vegetation, pavilions, vending, restrooms and other structures.

Filley Park

Similar to the nearby Town Green, Filley Park is seen as the Town's central park space. The site abuts Tunxis Ave to the east and Mountain View Cemetery to the west. The site includes a pond with an accessible island, seating, trails, grills for cooking, a fireplace, bridges crossing the water and shade trees – some of which are considerably old. Parking is located at the north end of the site.



Woodland Manor Open Space

This park straddles Essex Lane. Both halves of the park are sparsely developed. The southern half includes a cluster of play equipment surrounded by an open grass area. The northern half of the park includes a basketball court. Both spaces lack paths or clear entrances from Essex Lane. The site requires additional signage and parking to increase its visibility and usefulness.



Woodland Manor
Open Space

Alvin & Beatrice Wood Human Services Center / Park School Complex

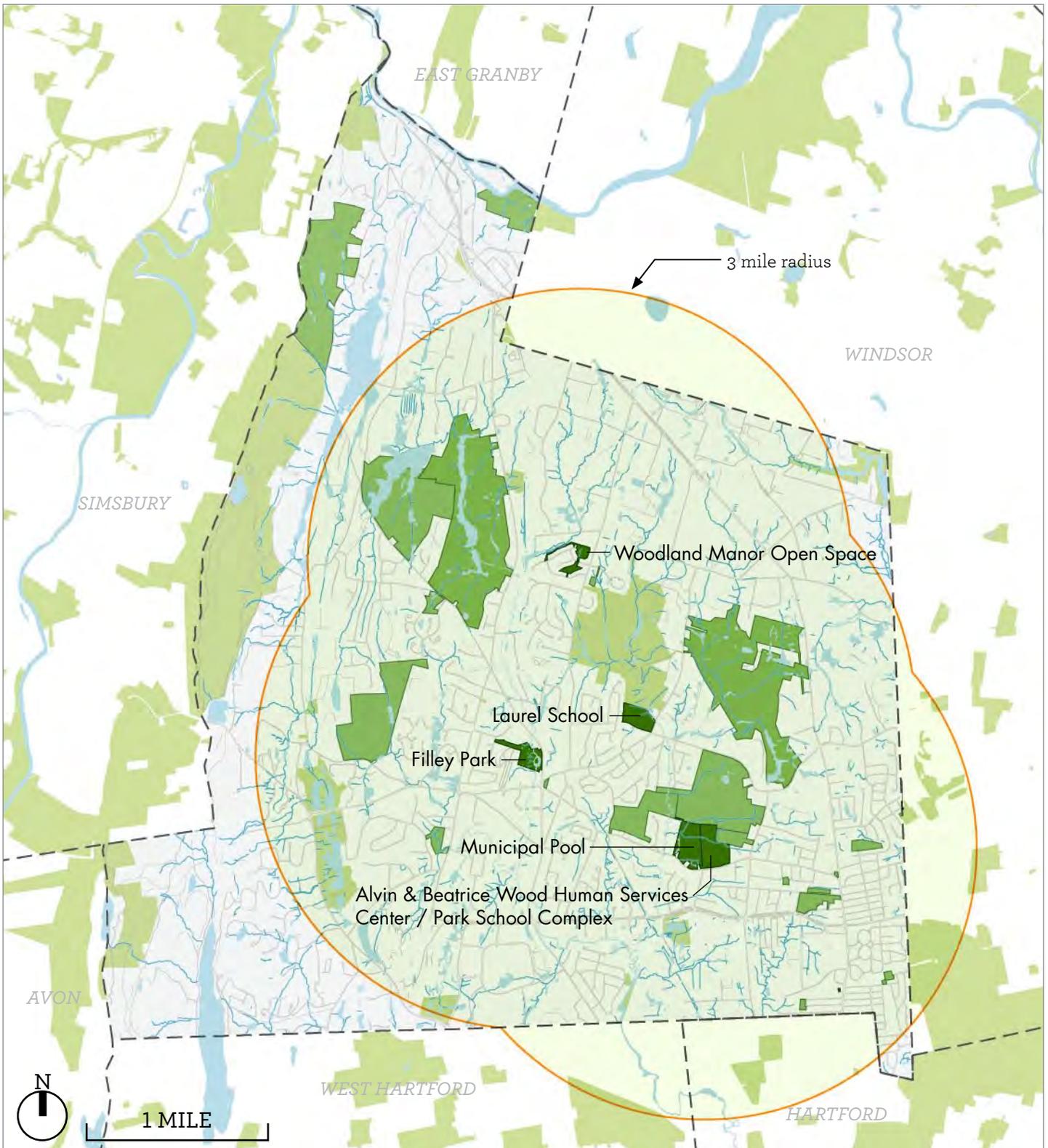
The facilities at 330 Park Avenue are the core of the Bloomfield park system. The site offers several play fields including a 60' baseball field (and batting cages), an adult soccer/football/lacrosse field and four youth soccer fields. The site also includes nearly a third (6) of Bloomfield's tennis courts. A small stream separates the site from the adjacent Municipal Pool and Metacomet School grounds. Parking is shared with the adjacent recreation center and school.

(Left) Filley
Park pond and
bridge



Alvin & Beatrice Wood
Human Services Center
/ Park School Complex

COMMUNITY PARKS



PARKS ASSESSMENT

REGIONAL PARKS

These parks provide amenities for the entire city, surrounding communities and visiting tourists. Parking is available for the many visitors that drive to these parks, but there are often walkable amenities for immediate neighbors. By virtue of their size regional parks provide unique opportunities such as woodlands, trails, natural resource areas, water bodies, major sports complexes, historic sites, beaches and camping.

Bloomfield High School

Bloomfield's High School grounds include multiple field sports options including 90' and 60' baseball diamonds, an adult softball diamond, two dedicated football/soccer fields and a multi-use field. The site also offers a running track and other track and field facilities such as a discus pitch, long jump and pole vault. The site is surrounded by residential development. Public access is limited to off-hours.



Samuel Wheeler Reed Park

This site consists of a large, undeveloped meadow. It can be accessed from the Metacommet School parking lot. Site access from School Street is undefined. In the future a small parking lot should be added along School Street to better serve visitors. The southern half of the site includes a seasonal drainage course for the surrounding landscape. As a result, much of the site is saturated in the spring and during rain storms. Any future development of the site should take this local hydrology into account.

LaSalette Open Space

This park is home to the Captain Oliver Filley House, a historic stone house listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The house compound includes several out-buildings in severe disrepair. These structures should be assessed for their historical significance. The surrounding landscape includes a gravel road and open fields, some of which are cultivated by a local farmer. The site has considerable topography, offering scenic views of the surrounding landscape and downtown Hartford.

(Left) Running track at Bloomfield High School

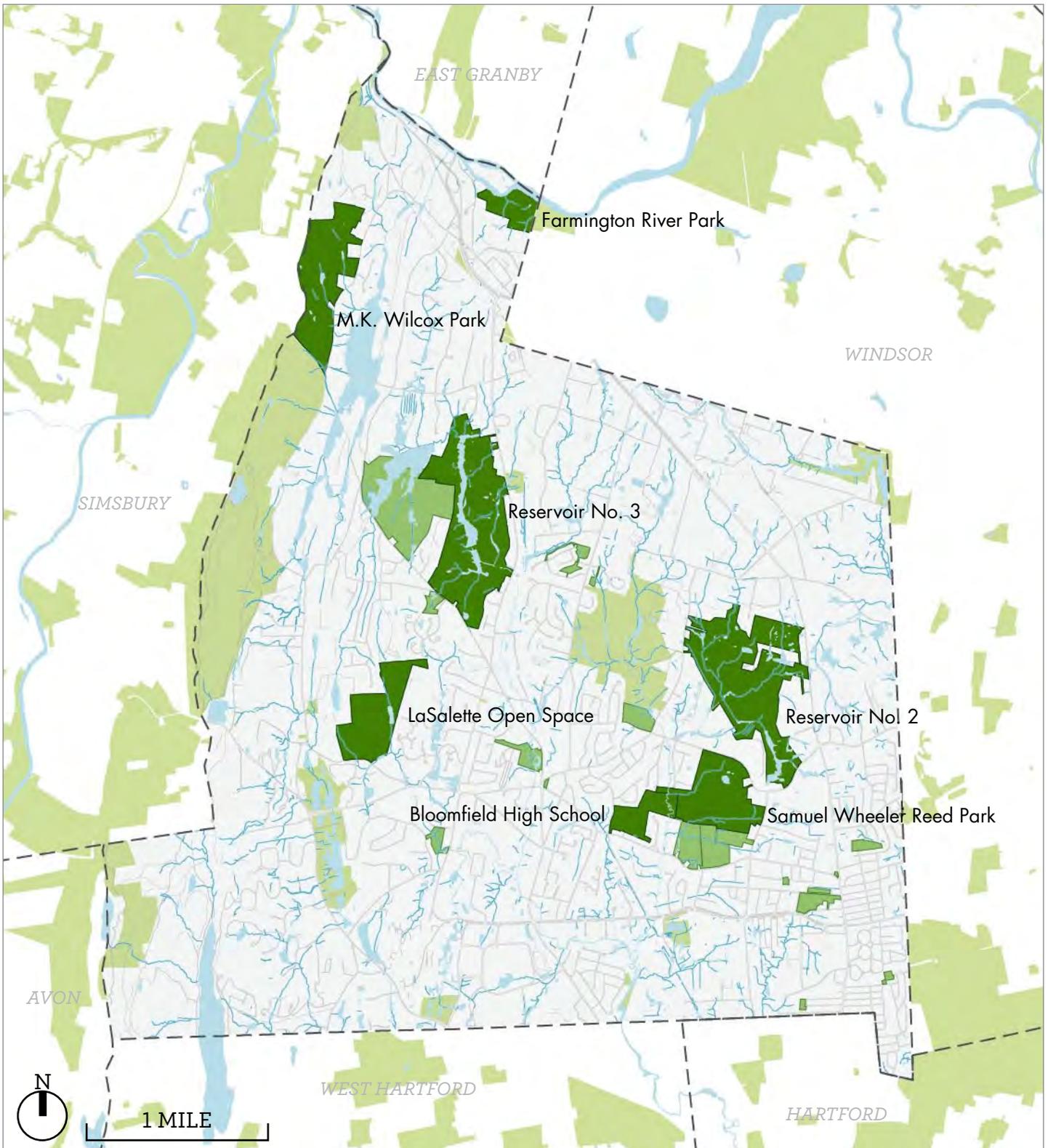


The Captain Oliver Filley House at LaSalette



Meadow at Samuel Wheeler Reed Park

REGIONAL PARKS



PARKS ASSESSMENT

Reservoir No. 2

This open space is situated behind the Seabury housing facility, and accessible from the Seabury service entrance. A complex network of walking trails extends through the park, linking to adjacent properties. The site is also home to the Wintonbury Flying Club's runway and event space. There are portable toilets on site.



Reservoir No. 3

Reservoir No. 3 includes three tennis courts, a small shade structure with picnic tables, a community garden and small path leading to the water's edge. The tennis courts are warped and cracking. The courts should be removed and replaced with a grass soccer/football field. The existing parking will need to be expanded to accommodate field users.



Reservoir 3

M.K. Wilcox Park

This park was formerly operated as a summer day camp. Today, the site includes an open area, picnic tables, trash receptacles, trails, and woodlands. The site also includes a disused brick structure and two associated parking areas. The park has scenic views to the east and dramatic topography to the west. In the future, a large pavilion for special events should be added. If deemed unusable and/or too costly to rehabilitate, the existing structure should be removed.



(Left) Open area at M.K. Wilcox Park

(Far left) Wintonbury Flying Club's runway at Reservoir 2

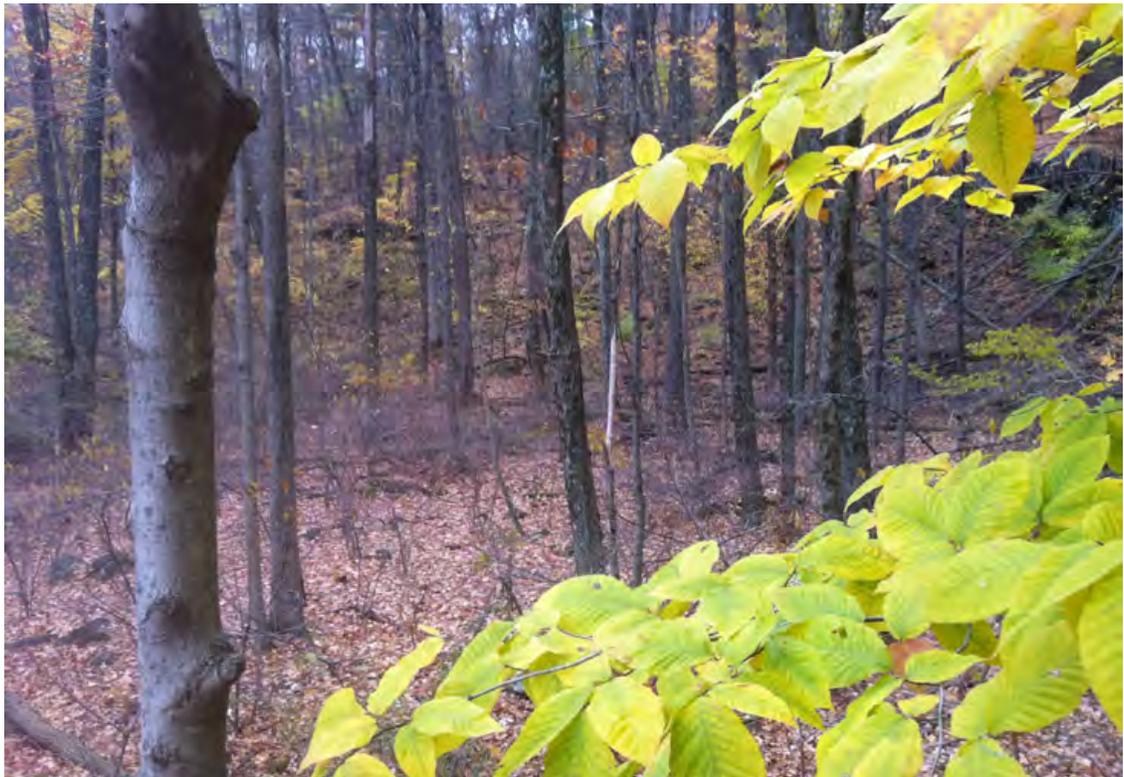
Farmington River Park

This park is located on the upland embankment of the Farmington River. The site includes a winding access road, woodlands and attractive views of the river. The site also includes a house with a small pond and access to the river.

The Farmington River as seen from trails within the park



Woodlands at M.K. Wilcox Park



PARKS ASSESSMENT

SPECIAL USE PARKS

These spaces provide a single amenity that requires specific infrastructure and design. Uses may include: harbors and marinas, golf courses, performance venues, ropes courses, pool facilities, skate parks, historic sites and sports complexes.

Wintonbury Hills Golf Course

Bloomfield's only special use park is the Wintonbury Hills Golf Course. The course was designed by Pete Dye in 2005, and is his first championship design in New England. The course is a 6,711-yard, par-70 layout. It features a combination of open links-style and traditional tree-lined holes. The site also includes a full driving range, a putting and chipping green, and the Tap Inn restaurant.

The Wintonbury Hills Golf Course is certified as Cooperative Sanctuary by Audubon International.

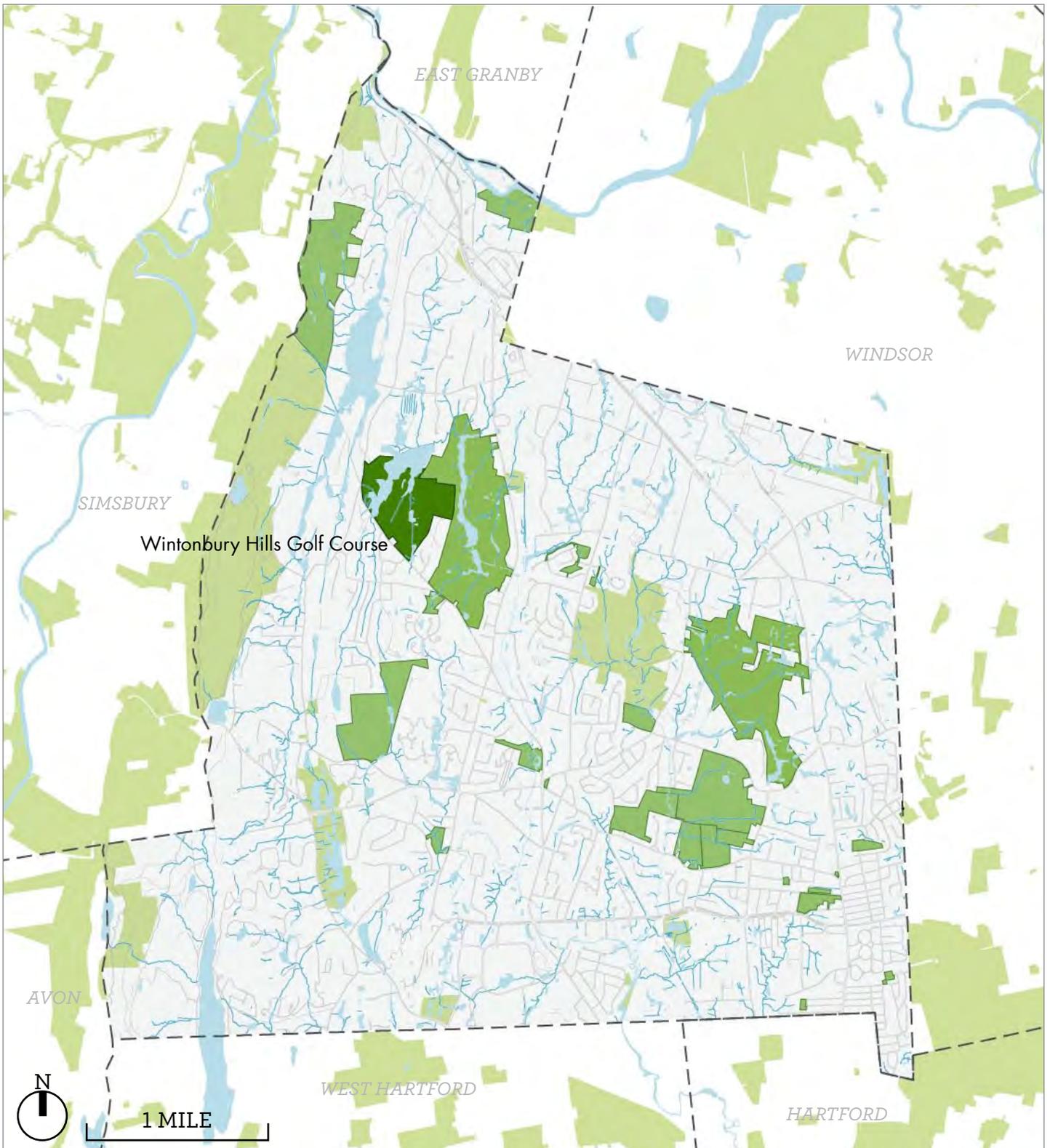


Wintonbury
Hills Golf
Course



Wintonbury
Hills Golf
Course

SPECIAL USE PARKS



PARKS ASSESSMENT

LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Park amenities are the built elements within a park that support various forms of recreation (both active and passive). For many users these are the primary reason they visit parks. It is critical that Bloomfield's parks supply the right number and types of amenities to meet the needs of residents. The following level of service assessment compares Bloomfield's amenities to national standards. This data was derived from the National Recreation and Parks Association, PRORAGIS (Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS) database. Forty agencies were selected as benchmark comparatives. All of the comparative agencies have a population of between 15,000 and 30,000.

The maps on the following pages illustrate the distribution of park amenities throughout the Town.

Surpluses and Deficits

The primary gaps in service are in playgrounds (-1.5), ice skating (-1.3), youth softball (-3.5), and adult softball (-2.5) and pavilions (-4.1). Additional playground should be considered for the following parks

- M.K Wilcox Park: Currently the Town's parks are focused in the south and east sides of the town. A playground at M.K Wilcox Park will serve residents in the northeast of the town - and will support future pavilion program at the park.
- Filley Park: A natural playground is proposed for Filley Park.

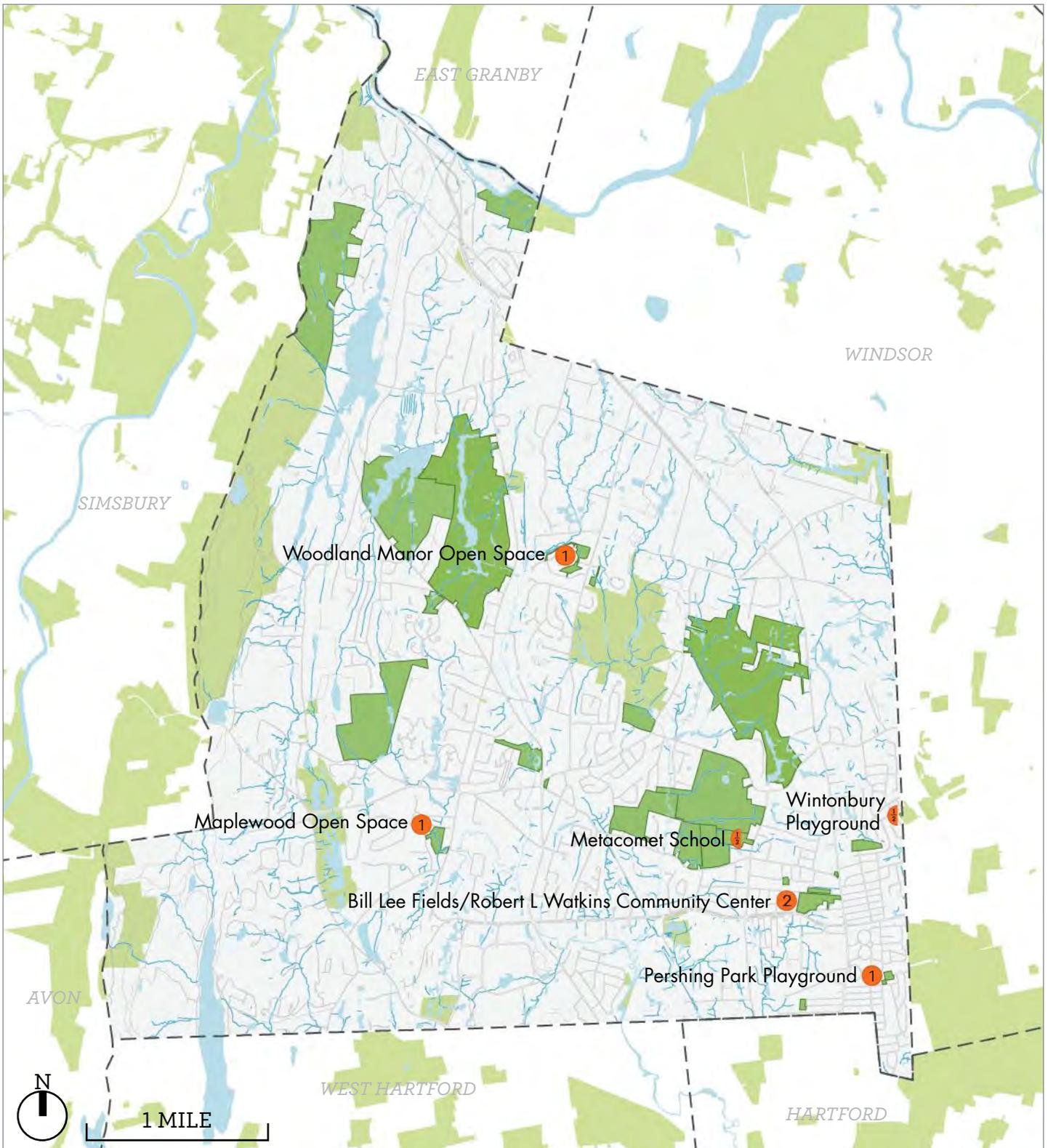
Ice skating will soon be re-opened at Filley Park, which will offset the outdoor skating deficit. The large deficit in softball does not reflect a true need among residents, as the existing facilities are currently under-used. A large pavilion (for groups of 72 people) should be created at M.K. Wilcox park. Three additional pavilions for groups of approximately 30 people should be distributed throughout the Town - perhaps at LaSalette Open Space, Filley Park and the Bill Lee Fields.

Several amenity types are in surplus including outdoor tennis, outdoor basketball and youth soccer fields. The significance of such a surplus varies by amenity. In the cases of basketball and soccer, these amenities are well used and meeting a need among residents. The current number of basketball courts should be maintained. The number of soccer fields should be increased by adding a regulation size soccer/football/lacrosse field at Reservoir 3. On the other hand, the surplus of outdoor tennis courts indicates an inefficient use of resources. Many of the courts are closed due to disrepair and should be removed. The town's tennis facilities should be focused at 330 Park Ave.

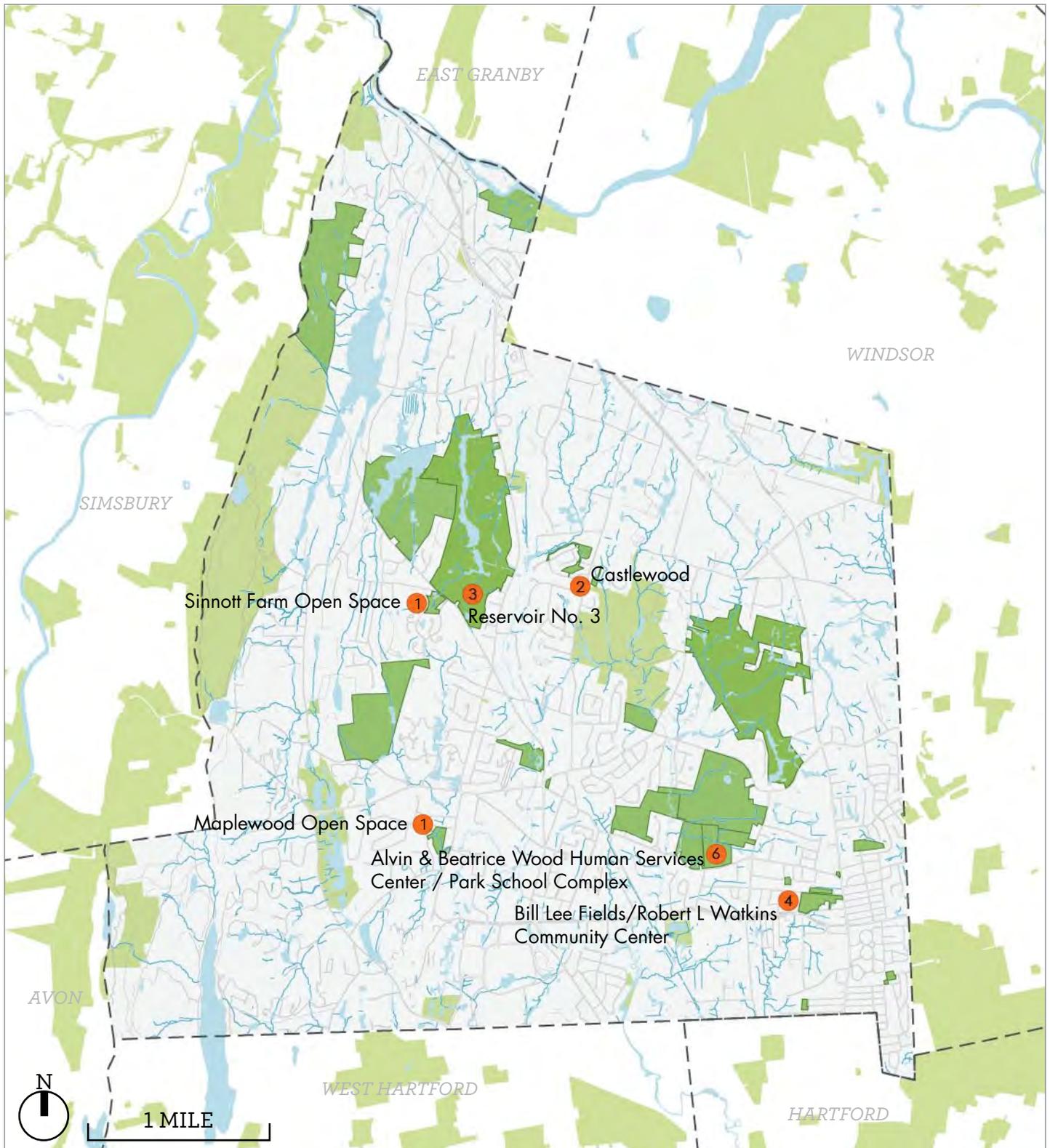
LEVEL OF SERVICE TABLE

Amenity	# in Bloomfield	# Recommended	
Recreation Center	1.29	1.0	-0.3
Fitness Center	0.83	0.0	-0.8
Playground	10.48	9.0	-1.5
Outdoor Tennis Court	4.64	17.0	12.4
Outdoor Basketball	3.00	6.0	3.0
Indoor Swimming	0.51	0.0	-0.5
Outdoor Swimming	1.03	1.0	0.0
Spray Ground	0.82	0.0	-0.8
Indoor Skating Rink	1.29	0.0	-1.3
Outdoor Skating Rink	1.29	0.0	-1.3
Regulation Soccer/Football/Lacrosse	2.55	3.0	0.4
Youth size Soccer	5.13	9.0	3.9
90 ft. Baseball Field	1.21	2.0	0.8
60 ft. Baseball Field	4.26	5.0	0.7
Adult Softball	2.53	0.0	-2.5
Youth Softball	4.54	1.0	-3.5
Dog Park	0.51	0.0	-0.5
Gymnasium	0.73	1.0	0.3
Community Garden	0.51	1.0	0.5
Picnic Shelter	4.10	0.0	-4.1

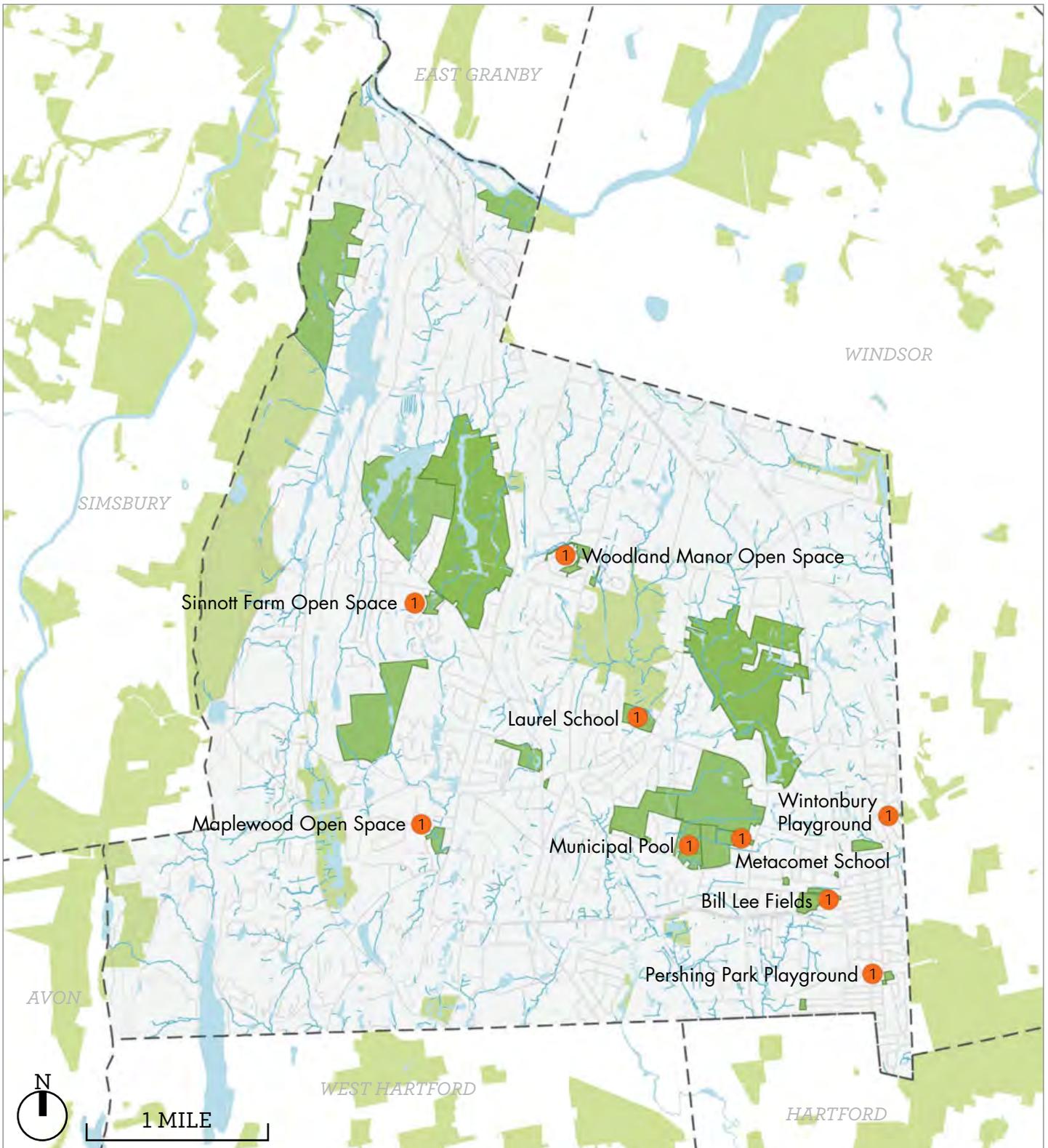
BASKETBALL COURTS



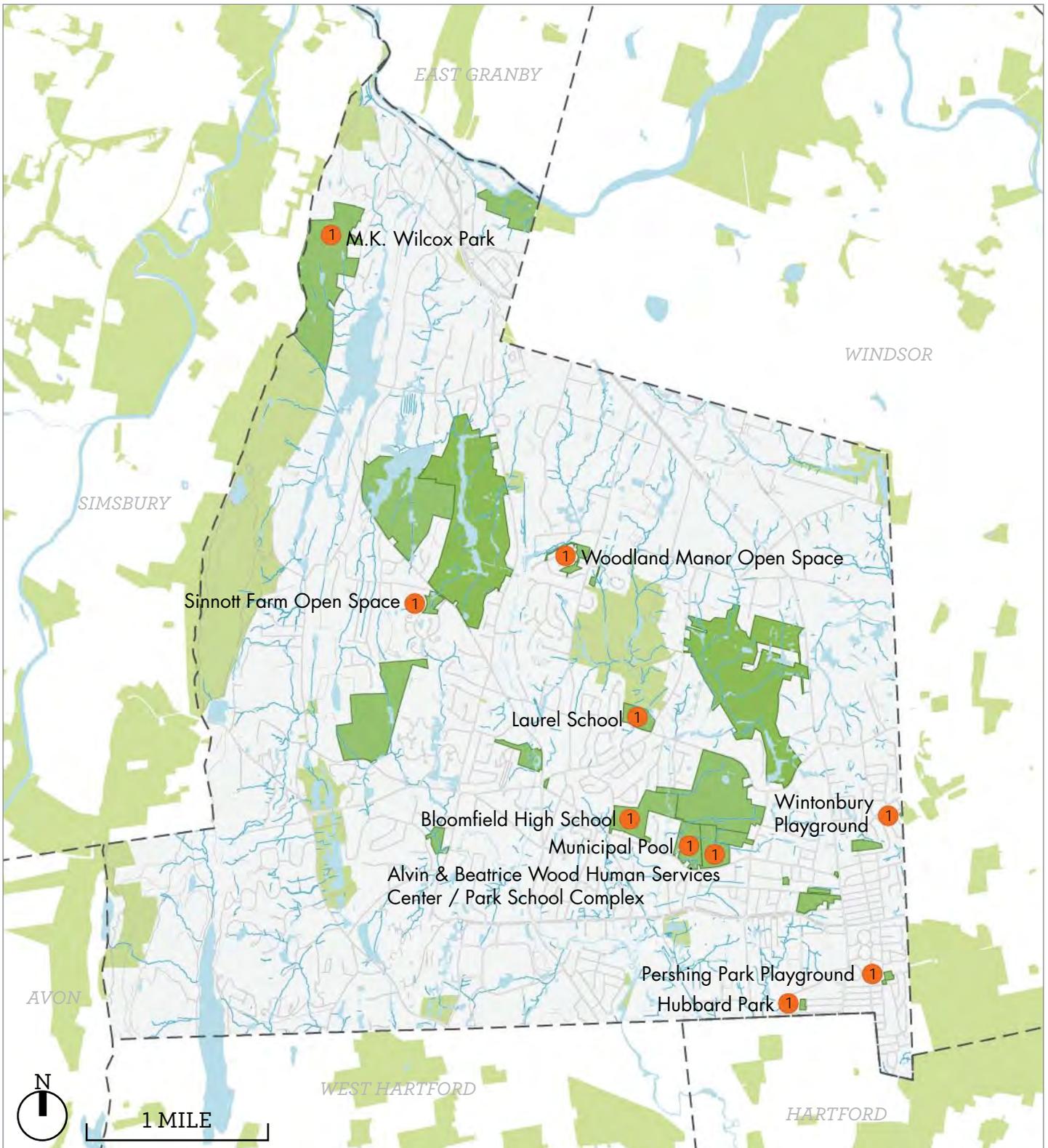
TENNIS COURTS



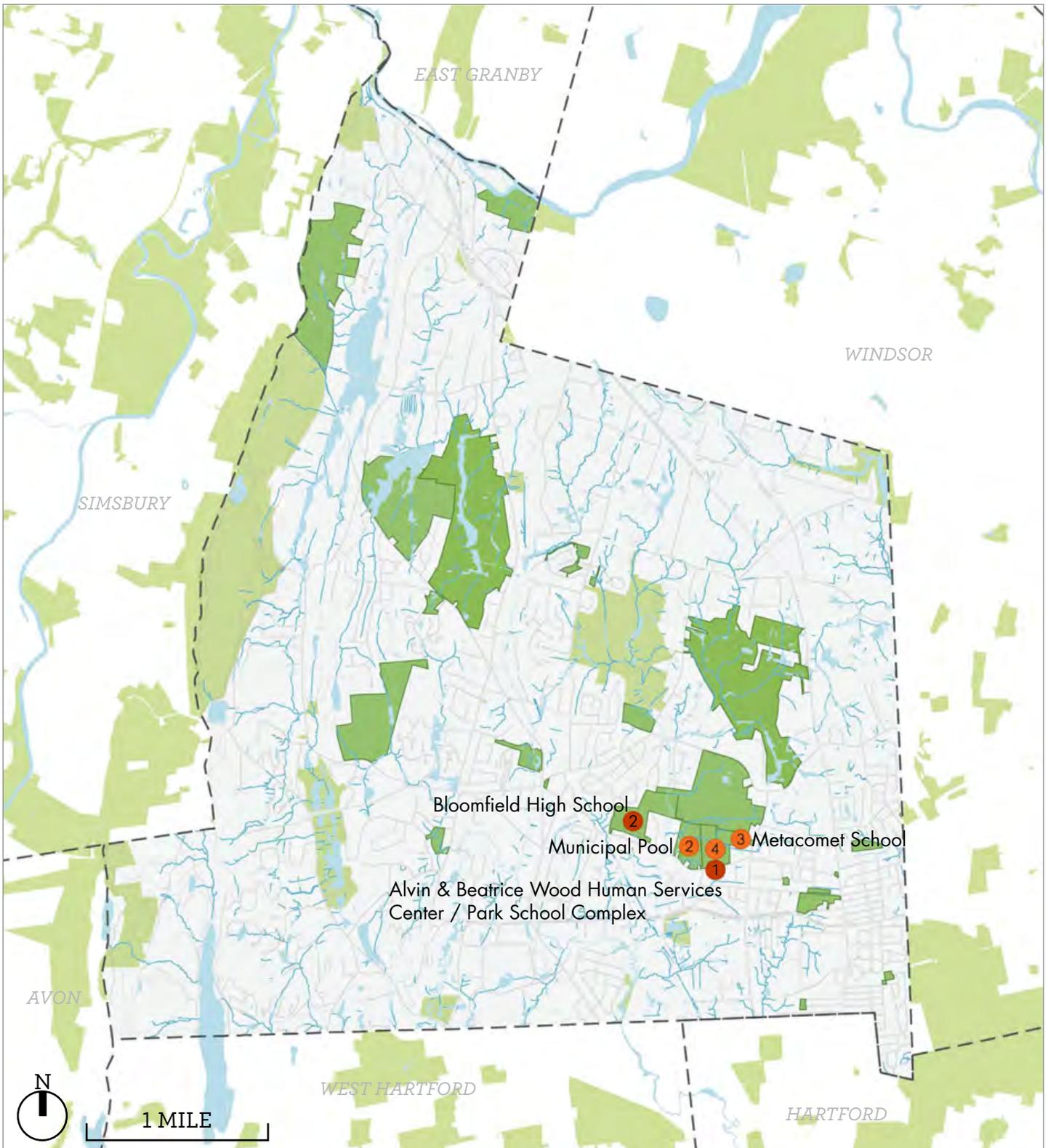
PLAYGROUNDS



OPEN PLAY FIELD

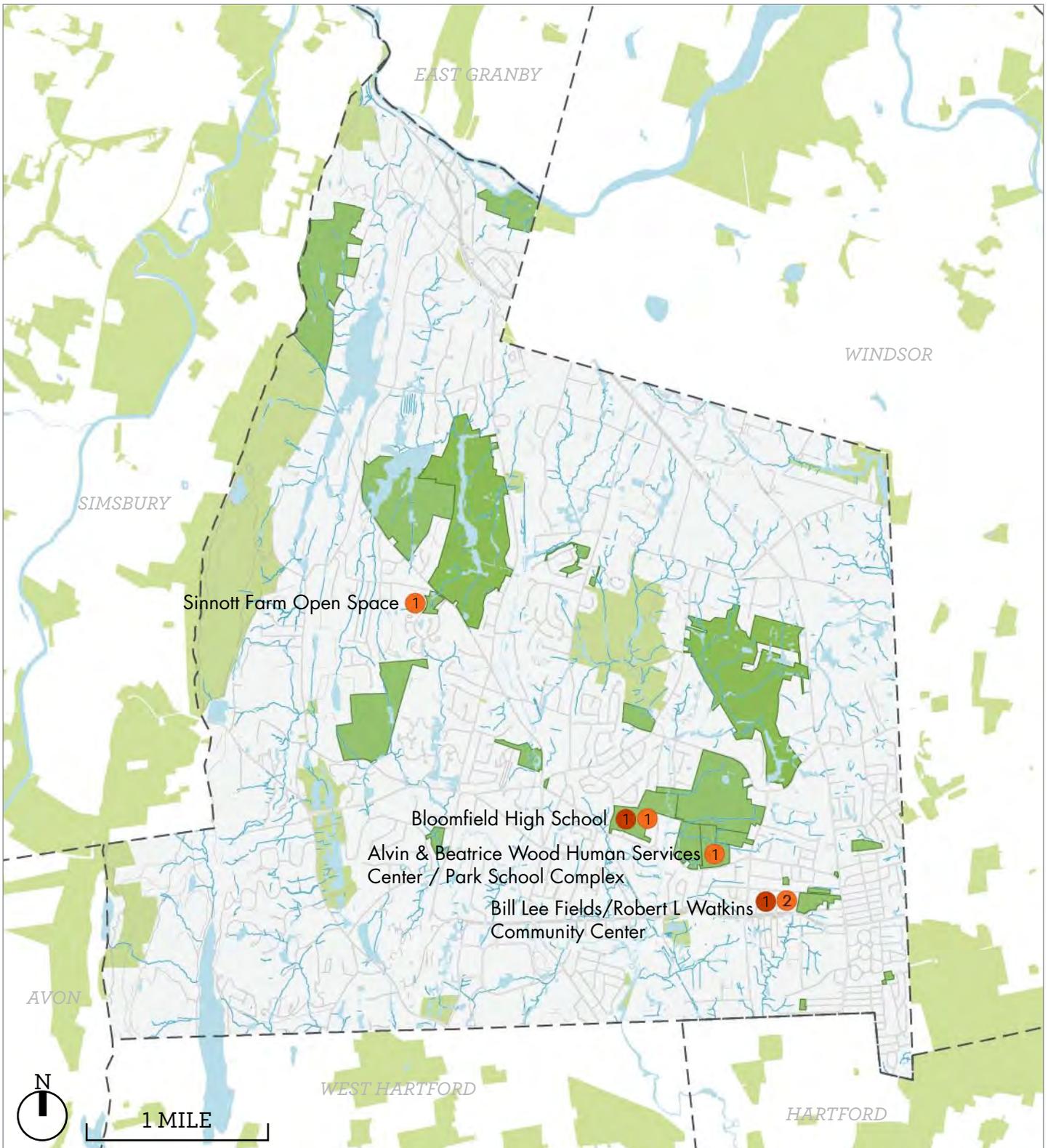


SOCCKER FIELDS



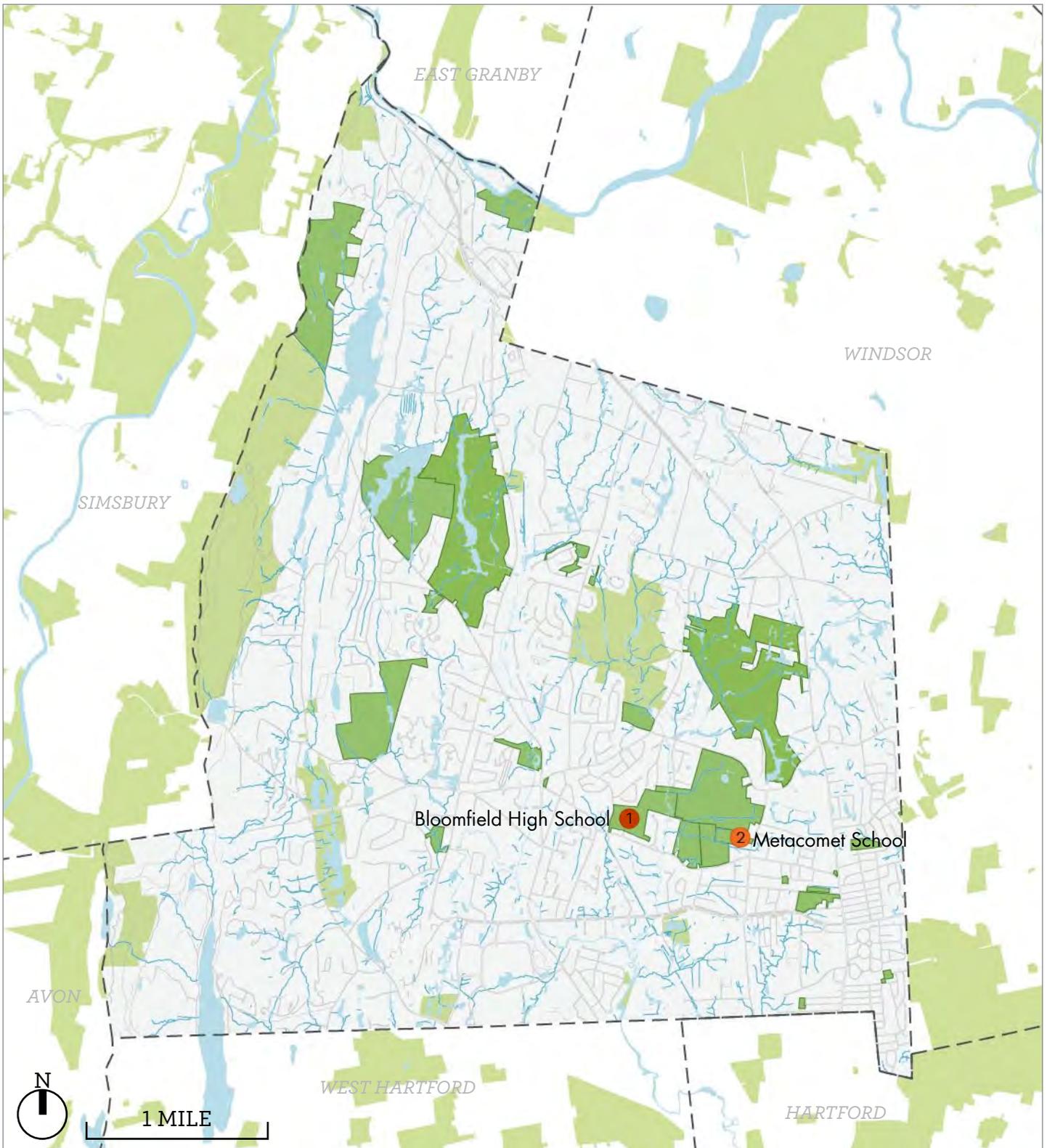
- Regulation Soccer Field
- Youth Soccer Field

BASEBALL FIELDS



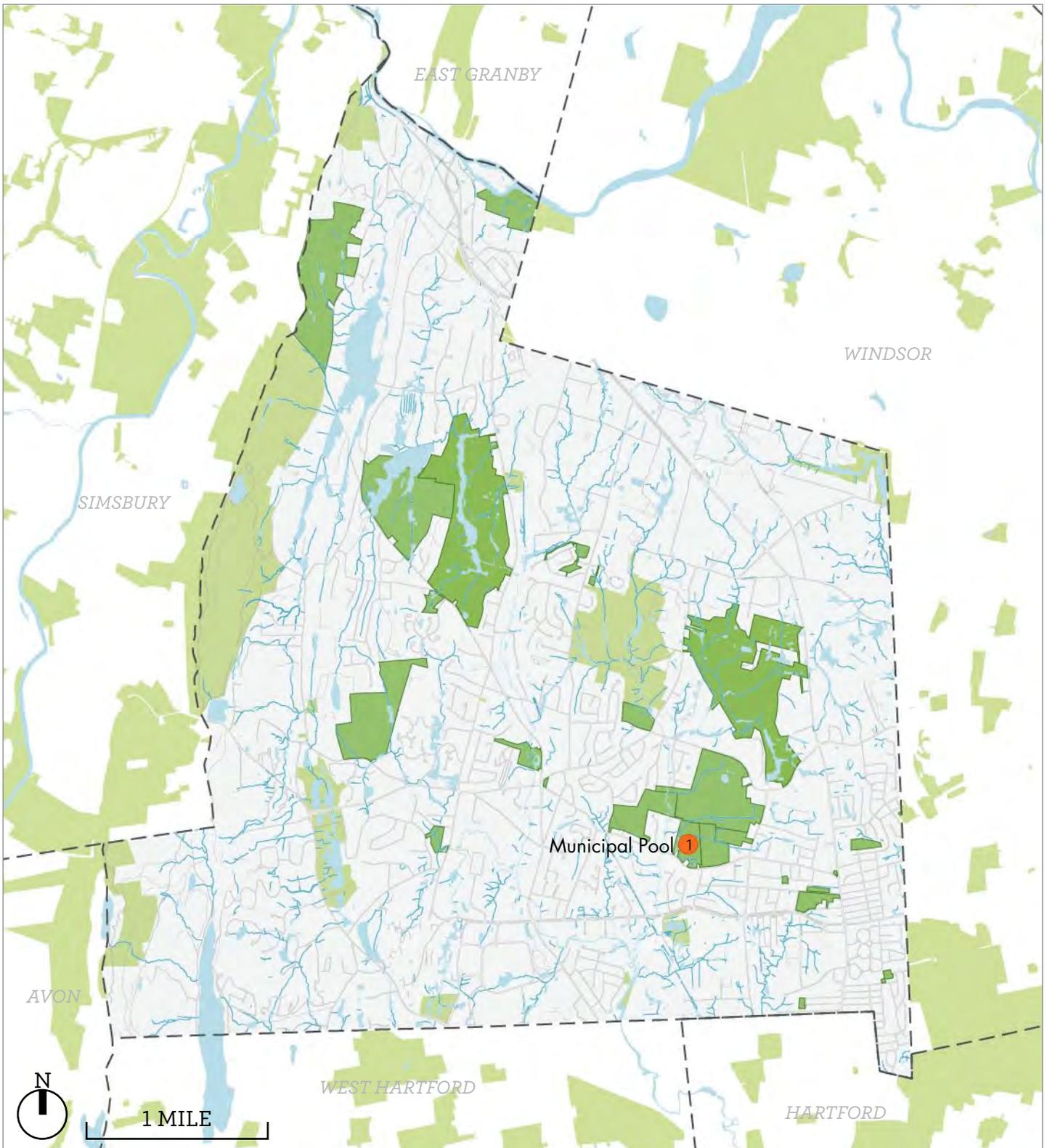
- 90ft Baseball Field
- 60ft Baseball Field

SOFTBALL FIELDS

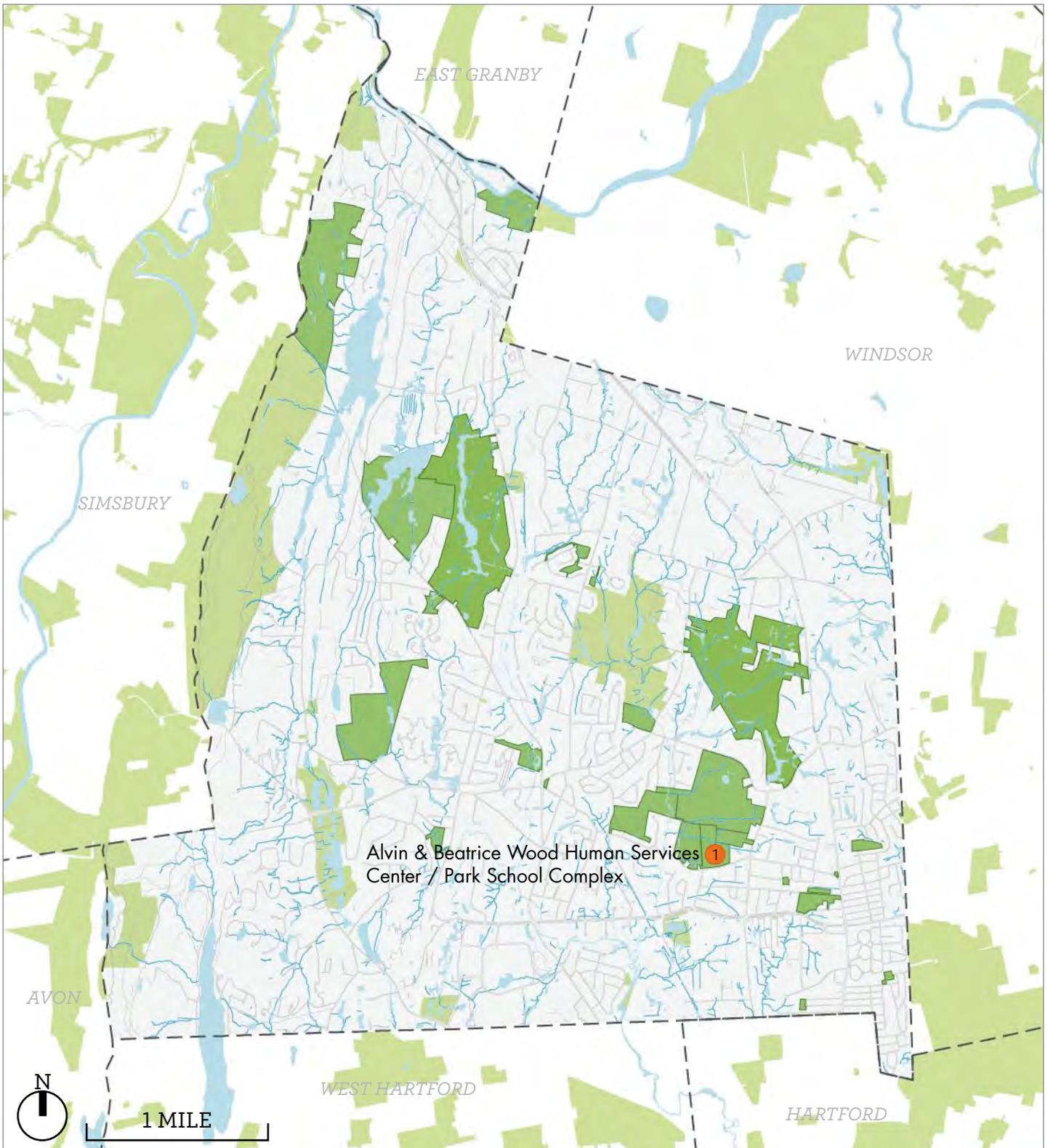


- Adult Softball
- Youth Softball

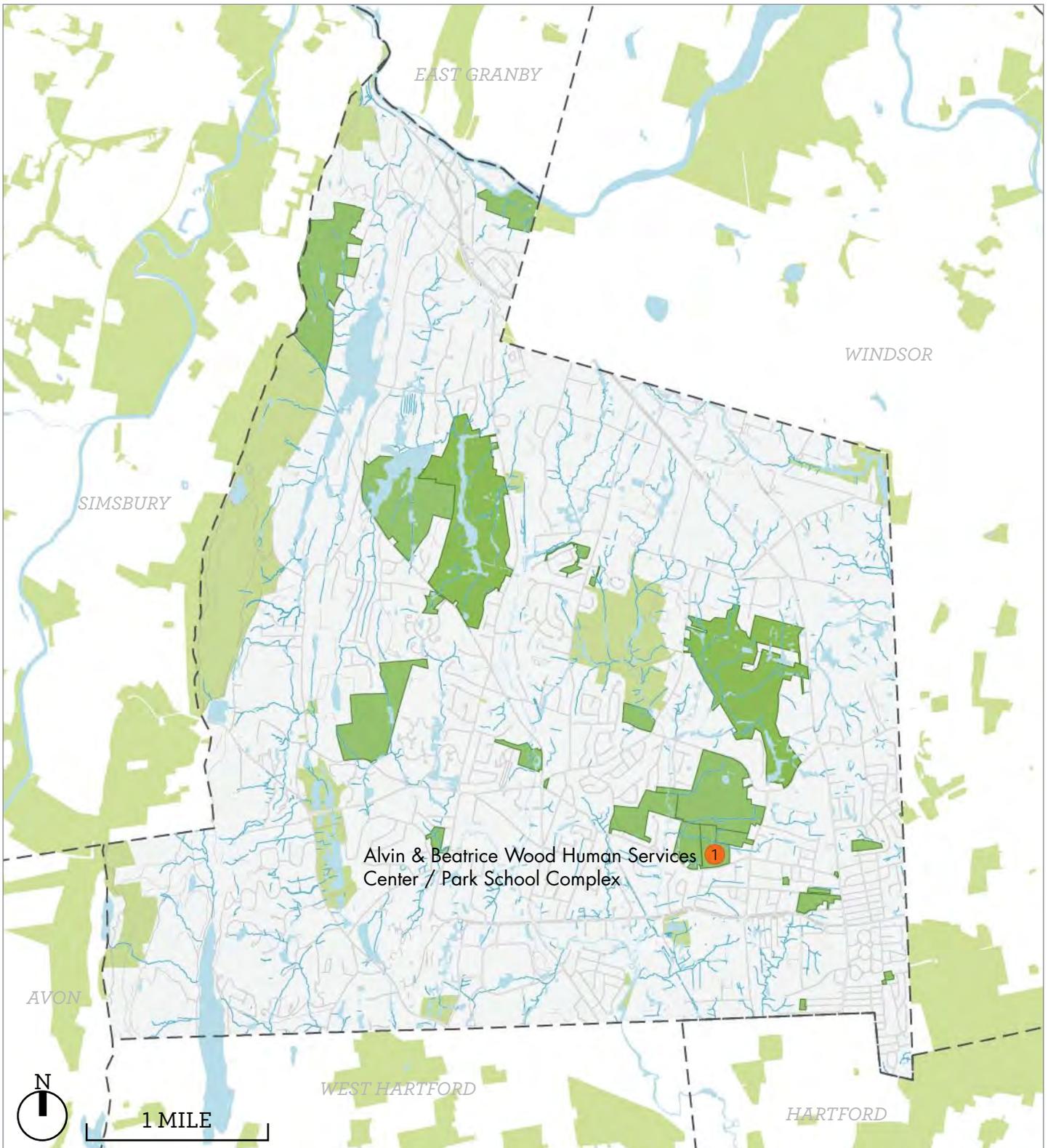
OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOLS



RECREATION CENTERS



GYMNASIUMS



PARK ASSESSMENT

In addition to the quantitative level of service analysis, a qualitative assessment of each park was conducted as part of the plan. The assessment scored parks' design and usability based on 17 metrics, which were grouped in the following categories:

- Access, Linkages and Information
- Comfort and Image
- Sociability
- Uses and Activities

For each metric, parks could receive a score of 0 (N/A), 1 (poor), 2 (needs improvement) or 3 (good). The highest possible score a park could receive was 51 points. The parks scored as follows:

•Municipal Pool	43
•Metacomet School	42
•Bloomfield High School	39
•Mary Hill Green	39
•Filley Park	39
•Town Green	39
•330 Park Ave.	38
•Bill Lee Fields	38
•Pershing Park Playground	38
•Reservoir No. 3	38
•Wintonbury Playground	38
•Reservoir No. 2	37
•Sinnott Farm Open Space	34
•M.K. Wilcox Park	34
•Wintonbury Hills Golf Course	33
•Farmington River Park	30
•Woodland Manor Open Space	29
•Maplewood Open Space	26
•Hubbard Park	25
•LaSalette Open Space	24
•Castlewood	21
•West Eggleston Park	20
•Samuel Wheeler Reed Park	19
•Joyce Street Park	14

DESIGN STANDARDS

The following guidelines should guide the selection of park furnishings with Bloomfield's Parks.

Aesthetics

Furnishings should be attractive and appropriate to the context. Furnishings within a park and/or district should share a similar aesthetic.

Durability

Product materials and finishes should withstand intense use and infrequent maintenance.

Maintenance

Furnishing should be simple, efficient, and safe to operate and maintain.

Cost

Product selection must balance quality and cost.

Sustainability

Whenever possible, the City should use furnishings that use sustainable materials, have energy efficient fixtures, and reduce maintenance.

User Friendly

Furnishings should be comfortable, easy to use, and safe. In particular, lighting should be selected for good visibility and color rendering.

The following section provides standards for athletic equipment, playgrounds and typical park furnishings (benches, tables, lighting, etc.). Turf maintenance discussed on page 89.

PARKS ASSESSMENT

Athletic Equipment

Athletic equipment selection should balance cost and durability. Most athletic equipment come in a range of models, some that are more expensive and more durable, and other that are less expensive but more vulnerable to vandalism and wear-and-tear. For most parks, the less expensive models will be the best choice, but if vandalism is an issue in particular parks, more sturdy models should be selected. The basketball hoops below are an example of the range of durability offered by manufacturers.



Basic Basketball Hoop
Front Mount Economy Goal (Game Time)



Extra-Durable Basketball Hoop
Ultimate Playground Goal (Game Time)

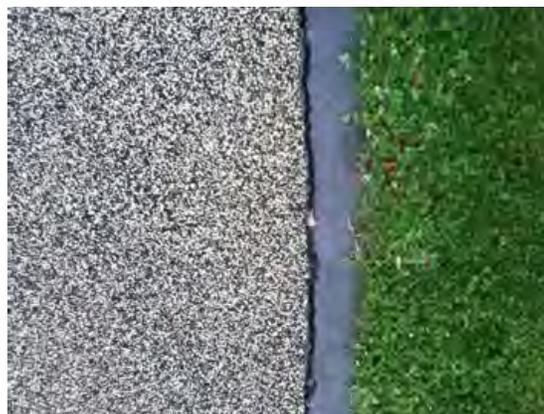
Play Equipment

Play equipment should be durable, modular and whenever possible, universally-accessible. Accessibility is more than providing ramps; it is also about including interesting ground-level features suitable for a range of different play and learning styles. Kompan and Landscape Structures, Inc. both offer play equipment that meets these criteria.

Surfaces surrounding play equipment should be designed to protect against injury from falling and should be accessible wherever possible. The rubber surfacing at the Municipal Pool playground is an example of a successful application of rubber play surfacing and inclusive play equipment.



The new play equipment at Wintonbury Park is an example of high-quality and engaging play



While the rubber surface at the Municipal Pool is successful, the edges are beginning to deteriorate

Other Park Furnishings.

Part of Bloomfield’s appeal for residents is its rural scenery and agrarian landscape. In addition to embodying the design guidelines set forth in this chapter, park furnishings should

be in keeping with the Town’s simple rural palette.

The following furnishings are examples of fixtures that possess an aesthetic character of Bloomfield.



Park Benches



Picnic Tables



Solar Trash and Recycling Receptacle



Trash and Recycling Receptacle



LED Park Lights



Drinking Fountain



A blue-tinted photograph of a forest path. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads through a dense forest of trees. The text "TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY" is overlaid in white, bold, uppercase letters on the left side of the image.

TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

Bloomfield's park system, while expansive, lacks a cohesive identity. Park-to-park connectivity is limited to the Town's road network. There are no local bicycle routes, pathways, or continuous sidewalks linking parks, conservation areas, and playgrounds. Bloomfield has several roads that are popular with local and regional bicyclists, yet there are no bicycle facilities in place for those riders. Given the limited sidewalk network in Town, and the distribution of open space assets throughout the Town, bicycling presents itself as a viable alternative to accessing parks and open space via walking or driving.

Improving connectivity within the Town and the open space network has been identified as a priority within Bloomfield's Plan of Conservation and Development. More specifically, the construction of a trail that would serve the East Coast Greenway has been identified as a priority. The East Coast Greenway is a route that links communities on the East Coast from Florida to Maine; it currently traverses an on-street route through Bloomfield connecting Simsbury and Hartford.

The improvement of access to and between Bloomfield's open spaces should take a multi-faceted approach. The Town's parks need clearly identifiable entrances (gateways). Access points to parks and open space should be increased. An on-street bicycle network should be established that provides connectivity and for multiple levels of riding expertise. Finally, an off-street network of bicycle pathways that improves access to natural and scenic resources and provides a safe operating space for young and/or inexperienced riders should be established as an alternative to on-street routes.

GATEWAYS

Gateways provide a sense of arrival at a place. Gateways can be composed of a variety of elements and welcome visitors who arrive to a park by car, bicycle or on foot. Signs are a common feature of a gateway; they announce



The East Coast Greenway on Simsbury Road in Bloomfield

the name of the place and may provide directional signage. Columns, walls and ornamental fences are often used as structural elements to define the gateway and guide traffic. Landscaping is often used to convey the nature of the open space whether it is naturalistic or highly manicured. Consistent themes and design vernacular are used across gateways to identify them as belonging to the same park or open space network.

Bloomfield should consider constructing gateways that announce and celebrate the Town's open space facilities and network. These gateways could be constructed at various scales which would reflect the importance and nature of the entrance or connection to the open space resource. These gateways could be organized as follows:

- Primary Gateway: Automobile and pedestrian entrance to a large park or open space that has a high volume of use.
- Secondary Gateway: Entrance to a park that is not the primary entrance or entrance to a smaller park or lesser used facility.
- Pedestrian Gateway: Entrance to a park or open space network that is only accessible to pedestrians and/or bicyclists.

The map on page 57 identifies recommended gateway locations for open space facilities in Bloomfield. Additional locations for gateway treatments may become feasible as the park system evolves.



Primary Gateway: Wabash City Park, Wabash, Indiana



Secondary Gateway: Frear Park, Troy, New York



Pedestrian Gateway: Levin Plaza, San Francisco, California

TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

RECOMMENDED BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bicycle Route

A bicycle route, much like a designated state highway route, is a recommended course of travel that utilizes various roads and types of roadways. The bicycle route is not a physical bicycle facility but may incorporate bicycle facilities. The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is an example of a bicycle route. The ECG travels from Maine to Florida and is routed onto pathways, rail trails, bicycle lanes, and rural and urban streets. The ECG travels through Bloomfield and is designated by multiple route markers that are posted along its route through the town. Bicycle routes such as the ECG are typically designated on roadways that are considered safe for experienced bicyclists.



Sharrow

A Sharrow is a shared roadway that is marked and signed for bikes. A sharrow symbol and accompanying signs inform drivers to expect the presence of bicyclists and of the anticipated location of the bicyclist on the roadway. A sharrow is most often used on streets where bicycle traffic is desirable but street width is insufficient for a dedicated bicycle lane. The use of sharrows is unnecessary on low-volume local residential streets where there is little conflict between bicyclists and motor vehicles. Likewise, sharrows are not an appro-

priate solution for high-volume, high-speed roadways where there is insufficient roadway width for side-by-side automobile and bicycle traffic.



Bicycle Lane

A bicycle lane designates a portion of the street for exclusive bicycle use through a dedicated lane, markings and signage. Bicycle lanes are typically located between the curb and travel lane or between a parking lane and travel lane. Bicycle lanes are generally a preferred facility, but roadway width is often insufficient to accommodate a dedicated bike lane.



Shared-Use Path

A shared-use path is physically separated from vehicular traffic by a curb, median or traverses a route that is independent of a street network (often through open space or along a river corridor). These facilities allow for shared use by bicyclists, pedestrians and skateboarders or roller-bladers. Pathways tend to be recreational in nature, although they are sometimes used for commuting and daily, routine trips. Shared-use pathways are the preferred facilities for inexperienced and/or young riders. Pathways sometimes travel through parks, conservation areas, utility corridors and abandoned rail corridors.



Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking is needed at all destinations frequented by bicyclists. Bicycle parking is most effective when placed in well-lit, secure areas and is most convenient when located close to building entrances. When located in parks, bicycle racks should be located near prominent features such as playgrounds, swimming pools, picnic areas and ball fields.



TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

PROPOSED OPEN SPACE CONNECTIVITY

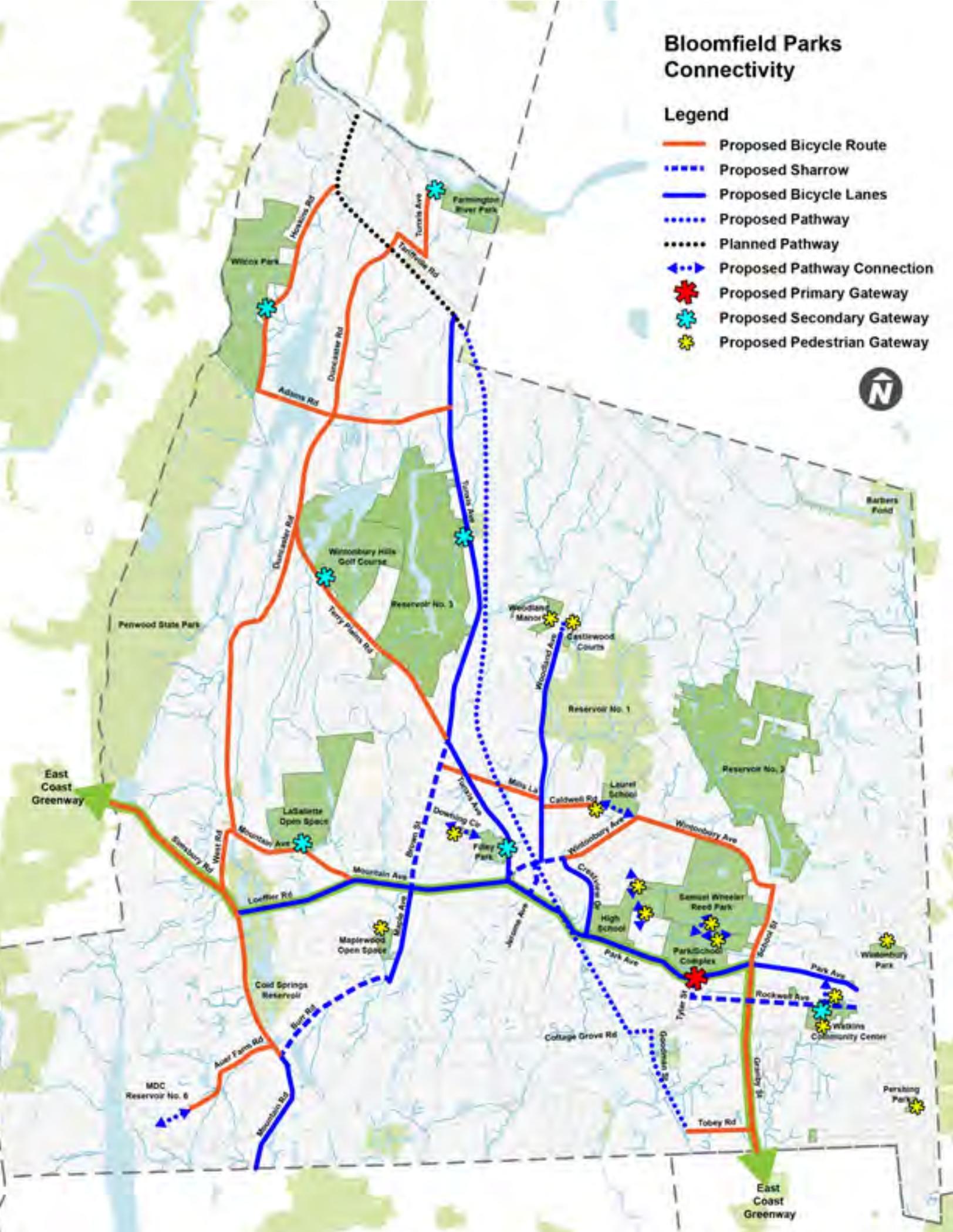
The proposed connectivity plan seeks to connect Bloomfield's open spaces and community facilities, including the Town Center via a network of on-street bicycle facilities and off-street pathways. The network would connect the east and west sides of Bloomfield and would extend north/south from Simsbury to Hartford. A map of the network is provided on the following page.

The proposed facilities reflect the roadway types and conditions in Bloomfield. For instance, where adequate roadway space exists, features such as bicycle lanes have been proposed for roadways that are popular with bicyclists or provide a strategic connection between open space or community facilities. Sharrows or bicycle route signage has been proposed for similar roadways that lack sufficient roadway space for bicycle lanes. Additionally, pathway connections are proposed for a number of open space and recreation facilities. These short segments of pathway would connect open space facilities to nearby neighborhoods via Town-owned property.

Bloomfield Parks Connectivity

Legend

-  Proposed Bicycle Route
-  Proposed Sharrow
-  Proposed Bicycle Lanes
-  Proposed Pathway
-  Planned Pathway
-  Proposed Pathway Connection
-  Proposed Primary Gateway
-  Proposed Secondary Gateway
-  Proposed Pedestrian Gateway



TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTED COSTS

The following recommended implementation plan advances the least costly aspects of the connectivity plan that provide the greatest level of connectivity. More complex, resource intensive and physically challenging components of this plan are recommended for later phase (Phase 2 and 3) implementation. The Town should, and will likely need to, seek federal and state funding for implementation of Phase 2 and 3 improvements.

PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS

Phase 1 improvements include all on-street bicycle facilities. Most of these facilities, unless noted, require only pavement markings and signage. The Simsbury Road/Loeffler Road/Park Avenue/School Street/Granby Street corridor is a key component as this is the East Coast Greenway route through Bloomfield. Establishing facilities that accommodate this existing route will ensure that the route is maintained through Bloomfield and will increase the safety of riders already traversing this route.

The total estimated cost of Phase 1 improvements is \$600,000. This cost estimate includes the removal of existing shoulder striping and replacement with bike lane striping where applicable, pavement striping, pavement markings, and bike route, wayfinding & regulatory signage. This cost estimate does not include roadway sliver widening where necessary. In total, bicycle facilities have been proposed for 28 miles of roadway.

Bicycle Routes

- Adams Road
- Caldwell Road
- Duncaster Road
- Granby Street
- Hoskins Road
- Mills Lane
- Mountain Avenue (Duncaster Rd to Loeffler Rd)
- School Street
- Simsbury Rd (Mountain Rd to Simsbury line)
- Tarrifville Road (Duncaster Rd to Tunxis Ave)
- Terry Plains Road
- Tunxis Avenue (north of Tarrifville Rd)
- West Road
- Wintonbury Avenue (Crestview Dr to School St)

Sharrows

- Brown Street
- Burr Road
- Jerome Avenue (Park Ave to Wintonbury Ave)
- Rockwell Avenue
- Tyler Street (Rockwell Ave to Park Ave)
- Wintonbury Avenue (West of Crestview Dr)

Bicycle Lanes

- Crestview Drive
- Loeffler Road
- Maple Avenue (Burr Rd to Mountain Ave)
- Mountain Avenue (Loeffler Rd to Tunxis Ave)
- Mountain Road
- Park Avenue
- Tunxis Avenue
- Woodland Avenue (Wintonbury Ave to Hampton Ln, Sharrow from Hampton to Essex Ln)

Proposed
bicycle lanes
on Park
Avenue



Proposed
bicycle
sharrow on
Wintonbury
Avenue



TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS

Phase 2 improvements include the construction of pathway connections between neighborhoods and schools and/or open space facilities. Also recommended within Phase 2 is the construction/installation of gateways at parks and open space facilities. The construction of these pathways and gateways would greatly enhance access to, and awareness of, the Town's open space and recreational facilities.

The total anticipated cost of Phase 2 improvements is \$1 million. Of this, proposed pathway connections and gateway treatments at those connections are expected to account for \$700,000 of the total cost, with the remaining \$300,000 projected for construction of primary, secondary, and pedestrian gateway treatments.

Pathway connections and gateways

- Metacomet School/Carmen Arace connection and pedestrian gateway 750
- Samuel Wheeler/Carmen Arace connection and pedestrian gateway 120
- Caldwell Rd/Laurel Elementary School connection and pedestrian gateway 850
- Ivory Road/Bloomfield High School connection and pedestrian gateway 150
- Revere Drive/Bloomfield High School connection and pedestrian gateway 400
- Greenbriar Drive/Watkins Community Center connection and pedestrian gateway 400

Additional Pedestrian Gateways

- Castlewood Tennis Courts
- Maplewood Open Space
- Pershing Park
- Wintonbury Park
- Woodland Manor

Secondary Gateways

- Farmington River Park
- Filley Park
- LaSalette Open Space

- Reservoir Number 3
- Watkins Community Center
- Wilcox Park
- Wintonbury Hills Golf Course

Primary Gateway

- Park Entrance at Park Avenue/Tyler Street

PHASE 3 IMPROVEMENTS

Phase 3 recommendations are long-term improvements that would enhance off-street connections to and between open space in the Town. Given the complex and extensive nature of these recommended improvements, an accurate cost estimate is not feasible at this level of planning. Improvements in total are expected to be in the tens of millions of dollars. Given the substantial costs of these proposed improvements, the Town should seek state and federal grant funding to assist in the planning, design, and construction of proposed facilities.

The Auer Farm Road/MDC Reservoir 6 connection would require the construction of a pathway between the publicly accessible access road at Reservoir 6 and Auer Farm. Auer Farm is a private farm, which is open to the public; it is envisioned that an easement or agreement could be put in place allowing pedestrian and bicycle access through the property. This proposed connection would provide the most direct bicycle and pedestrian access between the center of Bloomfield and MDC Reservoir Number 6.

Additionally, the proposed Downing Circle/Filley Park connection would take advantage of a newly constructed cell tower access road on town property on the west side of Filley Park at Downing Street. While there is a steep slope in this location, the construction of a walking pathway is likely feasible. This pathway would provide a direct connection between the neighborhood in the Downing Circle area to Filley Park and Bloomfield's Town Center.

Existing
Caldwell
Road pathway
to Laurel
School and
Playground



Proposed
Caldwell
Road gateway
to Laurel
School and
Playground



TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

The most significant proposed facility, and the most ambitious component of this connectivity plan, is the proposed development of a shared-use pathway along the Griffin Line rail corridor. This facility has already been envisioned by the Town. The Town is currently designing the northernmost segment of this corridor which will soon be constructed and will extend from the Simsbury Town Line to Day Hill Road. The Town should continue to plan, and seek funding for, the extension of this pathway from Day Hill Road to Granby Street. The pathway would likely travel along the west side of the rail corridor from Day Hill Road to Cottage Grove Road. At Cottage Grove Road the pathway would travel east on the north side of the roadway and cross at a signalized intersection at Goodman Street (an unused gravel roadway). The pathway would travel through town-owned property on Goodman Street and connect to Tobey Road whereby an on-street connection could be made to Granby Street. This pathway, if constructed, would provide an off-street route for the East Coast Greenway between Park Avenue and Granby Street.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following guidelines provide design guidance and best practices for developing bicycle facilities. These guidelines are based upon American Highway of State and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Connecticut Highway Design Manual. While the standards presented within these guidelines are considered best practices, each bicycle project is unique and has specific design requirements.

Bicycle Routes

- Bicycle routes should only be established on roadways that allow for the safe operation of bicycles by experienced riders. On-street bicycle routes that do not provide an exclusive bicycle lane should not be considered suitable for inexperienced riders and young children. Literature such as route maps should note this distinction.

- Warning and regulatory signage such as “Share the Road” signs should be used to improve driver awareness. Signage should be placed at regular intervals and in proximity to crossing roadways that feed a significant volume of traffic onto the route.
- Bike Route signage should be used to assist in wayfinding and promote awareness of recommended bicycle routes. Signage should be placed at the beginning of a route, at regular intervals along the route and at changes in the route’s course.



“Share the Road” signs should be used to improve driver awareness.

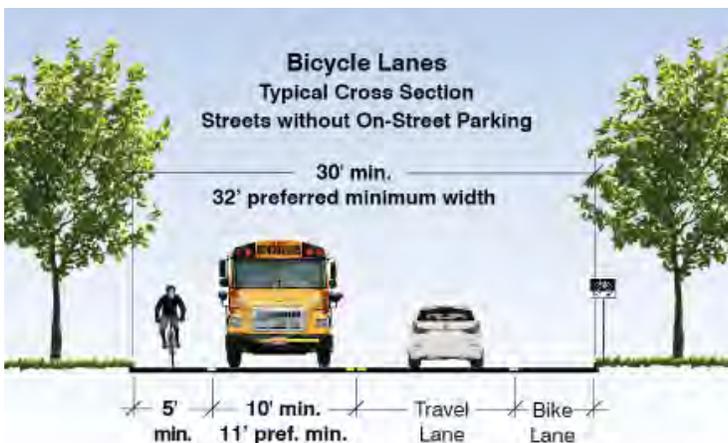


Bike Route signage should be used to assist in wayfinding and promote awareness of bicycle routes



Sharrow

- Roadway speed limit of 35 mph maximum
- 12' minimum travel lane width (14' preferred) -AASHTO
- Space sharrow pavement markings 250' apart or less
- The center of sharrow marking should be located a minimum of 4' from edge of roadway if no parking is present and a minimum of 11' from the edge of roadway where on-street parking is present
- Use "Share the Road" signage where there is sufficient space for side-by-side operation or traffic volume is sufficiently low so as to permit encroachment of opposite side travel lane by vehicular traffic when passing bicyclists. Use "Bike May Use Full Lane" signs where there is not sufficient space for side-by-side operation and where traffic volumes are too high to allow encroachment of opposite side travel lane by vehicular traffic.



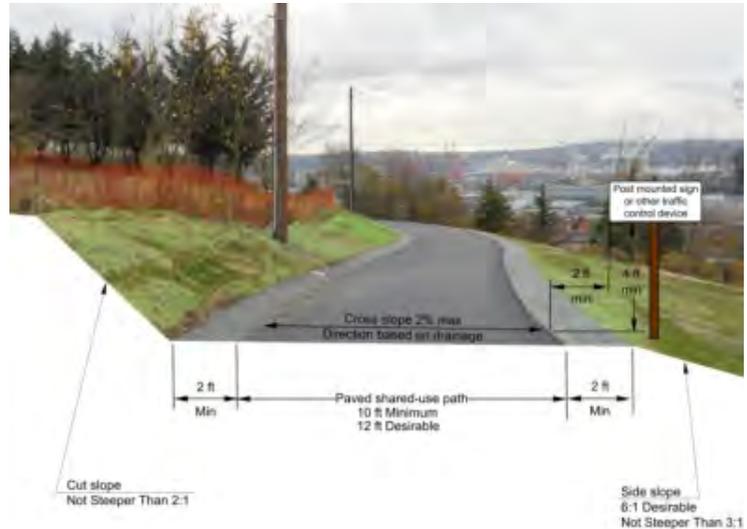
Bicycle Lane

- Use on collector and arterial roadways, or on high volume local streets.
- 4' minimum width w/o curb, 5' minimum width with curb (15'-16' travel lanes), and 5' wide minimum width adjacent to on-street parking -AASHTO
- Pavement markings: 500' maximum spacing can be used more frequently in dense urban settings.
- Use "Bike Lane" signage at the beginning of the lane and spaced every mile or at significant intersections.
- When placed adjacent to on-street parking, the left hand lane stripe (the stripe that separates the bicycle lane from the travel lane) should be a minimum of 12 feet from the curb, with 13 feet being a preferred dimension. If parking volumes are substantial or turnover is high, such as downtown locations or streets with metered parking, and if roadway width permits, the distance between curb and left hand bicycle lane stripe should be increased to 14 feet so as to avoid collisions in the door zone of parked cars.
- Bike lanes should be installed on both sides of roadway so as to discourage riding in the wrong direction.

TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

Shared Use Path

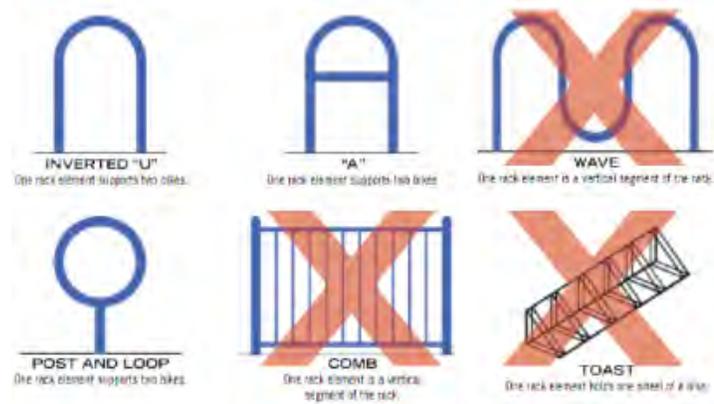
- 8' wide minimum at constricted areas, 10' wide minimum sustained width, 12' preferred width where high usage is anticipated.
- A 2' wide area shoulder should be kept clear of vegetation on both sides of the trail through the application of gravel or mulch
- Bi-directional travel is preferred
- Minimize roadway and driveway crossings
- Sign for permitted uses



Source: Washington State DOT

Bicycle Parking

- Protected bicycle parking such as bike shelters or bike lockers should be installed in areas where bicycles are parked for the duration of the day.
- Bicycle parking should be located near building entrances but should not obstruct pedestrian movement
- Bicycle parking should be installed in a secure, visible, lighted area
- “Post and Loop”, “U”, and “A” style racks should be installed in series, parallel and spaced 30 inches apart
- Comb, toast, schoolyard, and other wheel bending racks that provide no support for the bicycle frame are not recommended. Wave style racks are not recommended.
- The bike rack should:
 - Support the bicycle upright by its frame in two places
 - Prevent the wheel of the bicycle from tipping over
 - Enable the frame and one or both wheels to be secured
 - Support bicycles that lack a horizontal top tube







RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

This assessment includes an analysis of the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services' program and service offerings. The report offers a detailed perspective of recreation programs and events and helps to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for future program direction. It also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, and future program offerings for residents based on community input and trends.

A review of program information, program assessment worksheets completed by staff, and interviews and meetings with the staff were conducted. In addition, marketing materials such as the Program Brochure and the Website were reviewed.

The content of this section is organized as follows:

- Core Program Identification
- Program Mix
- Lifecycle Analysis
- Age Segment Analysis
- Current Program Assessment
- Program Brochure and Website Review

CORE PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

The ability to align program offerings according to community need is of vital importance to successfully delivering recreation services. At the same time, it is also important to deliver recreation programs with a consistent level of quality, which results in consistent customer experiences. Core programs are generally offered each year and form the foundation of recreation programs. In assessing the categorization of core programs, many criteria are considered. A list of the criteria includes:

- The program has been provided for a long period of time
- Offered three to four sessions per year or two to three sessions for seasonal programs

- Wide demographic appeal
- Includes 5% or more of recreation budget
- Includes tiered level of skill development
- Requires full-time staff to manage the program area
- Has the ability to help solve a community issue
- High level of customer interface exists
- High partnering capability
- Facilities are designed to support the program
- Evolved as a trend and has resulted in a "must have" program area
- Dominant position in the market place
- Great brand and image of the program, based on the District's experience of offering the program over a period of time

Core programs, by definition meet at least the majority of these criteria. The establishment of core programs helps to provide a focus for program offerings. This focus, in turn, creates a sense of discipline for quality control of these program areas and helps to reduce variation of service for the program participants. It must be noted that the designation of non-core programs does not suggest they are unimportant. It just means there may be less focus and fewer programs compared to core programs. A HHC Core Program Assessment is attached as a tool to use in determining future core program areas.

During discussions with staff and reviewing the core programming criteria, the following programs were identified as core program areas:

- Adult Programs/Fitness
- Aquatics
- Camps
- Special Events
- Youth Programs

PROGRAM MIX

The program mix or the distribution of types of programs offered should represent the programming needs of the residents. Therefore, this should be evaluated annually through an assessment process. In addition, the program offerings should include emphasis on the delivery of core programs. In reviewing program offerings listed in the summer 2013, fall 2013 and 2014 winter/spring Program Guides, the list of core programs and number of activities offered included:

- Adult Programs/Fitness: 31 (32.6%)*
- Aquatics: 5 (5.3%)
- Camps: 7 (7.4%)
- Special Events: 21 (22.1%)
- Youth Programs: 31 (32.6%)

*Core Programs by percentage offered is in parenthesis

Aquatics and Camps have a lower percentage as they are offered seasonally. The other programs are offered year round.

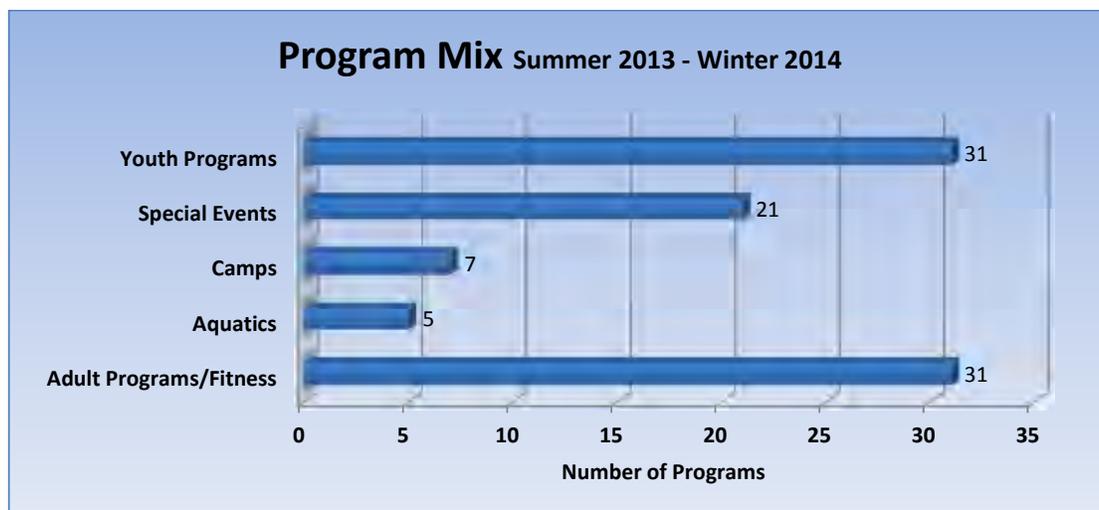
LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

The program assessment included a lifecycle analysis of the core programs selected for review. This assessment helps to determine if the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services needs to develop newer and more innovative programs, reposition programs that have been declining, or continue the current mix of lifecycle stages. This assessment was based on staff members' opinions of how their core programs were categorized according to the following areas.

- Introduction Stage (Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing)
- Growth Stage (Moderate and interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing)
- Mature Stage (Steady and reliable performer, but increased competition)
- Decline Stage (Decreased registration)

The percentage distribution of programs according to lifecycle categories includes:

- Introductory programs: 5.8% (3)
- Growth programs: 26.9 % (14)
- Mature programs: 34.6 % (18)
- Decline programs: 32.7% (17)
- Total programs: 52



RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Program Life Cycle Stages – Adult Programs/Fitness			
Introduction	Growth	Mature	Decline
Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing	Interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing	Steady performer, reliable success	Signs of tailing off, increased competition
Insanity & Simply Awesome Abs Basic Quilting	Full Body Tone Rejuvenating Stretch The Circuit Drop-in Volleyball	Adult Basketball Dog Obedience	Zumba Fly Family Fitness CPR/First Aid

Program Life Cycle Stages – Aquatics			
Introduction	Growth	Mature	Decline
Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing	Interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing	Steady performer, reliable success	Signs of tailing off, increased competition
Private Swim Lessons		Learn to Swim Program Lifeguard Training Membership (adult) Membership (child) Membership (family)	Aqua Fitness

Program Life Cycle Stages – Camps			
Introduction	Growth	Mature	Decline
Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing	Interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing	Steady performer, reliable success	Signs of tailing off, increased competition
	Summer Enrichment Program		Awesome Adventurer Lil-Rec-ers The-REC-ing Crew Shining Stars Camp Sunrise Camp Sunset Camp Sunrise/Sunset

Program Life Cycle Stages – Special Events			
Introduction	Growth	Mature	Decline
Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing	Interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing	Steady performer, reliable success	Signs of tailing off, increased competition
	Hershey Track & Field Lyman Orchards Corn Maze Summer Concerts on the Green West Indian Celebration	Family Bingo Family Flashlight Hike Eggstravaganza Pumpkin Carving Fall Family Festival Halloween Party Memorial Day Parade & Road Race	Colors of the Season

Program Life Cycle Stages – Youth Programs			
Introduction	Growth	Mature	Decline
Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing	Interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing	Steady performer, reliable success	Signs of tailing off, increased competition
	Track Club Little Chefs Hoop It Up Start Smart Basketball Conditioning	After-School Drop-In Mommy and Me CPR/First Aid Drop-in Volleyball Youth Center Drop-in	Potter's Wheel Clay Creations Flag Football Aikido & Jijitsu

The recommended standard for percentage distribution (according to other agency benchmarks in the Heller & Heller database) is 60% of programs should be in introduction and growth stages, and 40% in the maturation and decline stages. For the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services, the introductory/growth percentage is slightly lower at 32.7% introduction/growth and 67.3% are in the maturation/decline stage. Mature and declining programs should be monitored closely to ensure sufficient registrations. Additionally, it's important to continuously monitor customer expectations and requirements as a way of determining how to reposition programs.

AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS

Park and recreation systems should strive for an equitable balance of offerings for various age segments, including:

- Youth age 5 and under
- Youth ages 6-12
- Youth ages 13-17
- Adults 18-49
- Adults/Seniors 50 and over

The percentage of program offerings in each age category should closely match community demographics.

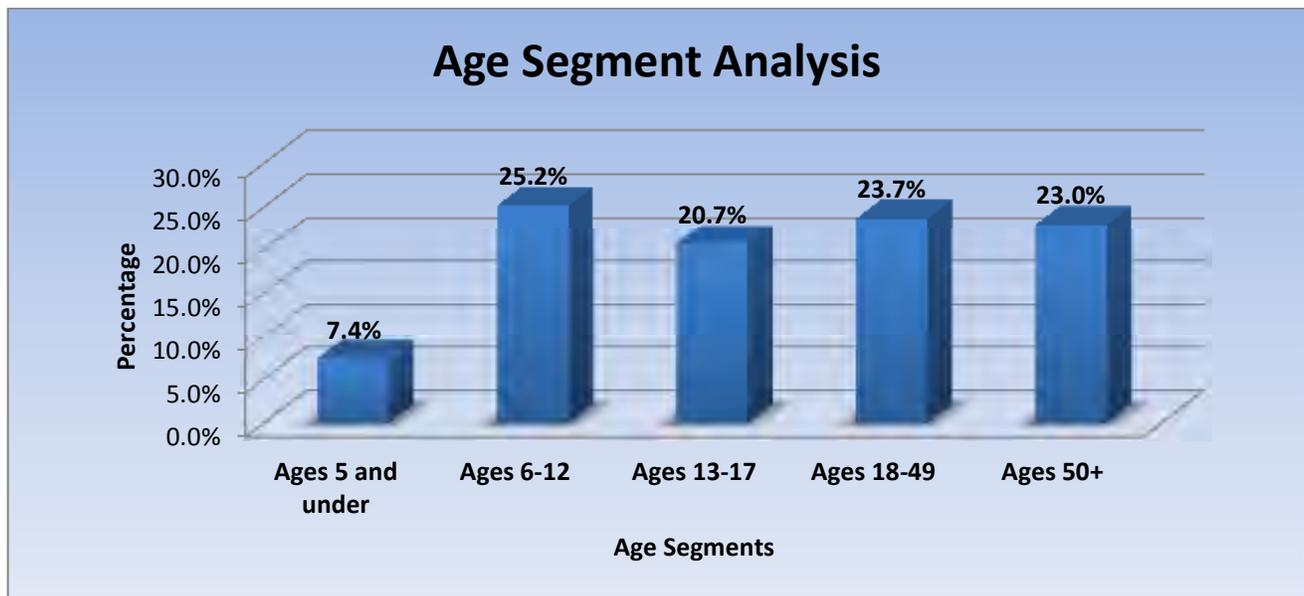
RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The following chart shows the age segment percentages of program offerings. This information was calculated by reviewing the 2014 winter/spring Program Brochure and counting the number of programs offered for each segment, some overlapping age categories. Programs and events offered for all ages, such as family special events, were not included in the list. The age distribution of programs is as follows:

Youth age 5 and under:	10	7.4%
Youth ages 6-12:	34	25.5%
Youth ages 13-17:	28	20.7%
Adults 18-49:	32	23.7%
Adults/Seniors 50 and over:	31	23.0%

The area that is under-represented is the Adults/Senior group. According to 2012 population numbers, close to 40% of Bloomfield residents are 55 and over. As mentioned in the Demographics and Trend Report, this is an area to focus on in the future. According to staff, this is a significant challenge as adult programs have been offered in the past, but have not had sufficient registration.

This distribution reflects that programs are most geared toward individuals ages 6-12 with 25.2% of programming in this area. Adding the youth category ages 5 and under increases the total program percentage to 32%. Recreation assessments in the Heller and Heller database typically have an average of 70-80% of program offerings geared toward youth 12 and under; therefore, Bloomfield Leisure Services does a much better job distributing programs among all age segments.



CURRENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Adults/Fitness

Current national trends show decreasing participation among senior and adult programs. In the last five years, adults are now working longer, spending is more conservative and there are more competitors offering less expensive opportunities for recreation. Staff mentioned during the recreation programs and services interview session that quilting class is very popular. In 2012, participation increased 54% from 2011. During this same time, revenue decreased by 11.5% and this program area netted a loss of \$385; whereas in 2011, this program area had a net gain of \$758. Staff commented fees for adult programs are contractor instructor driven and contractual percentages are between 80/20% or 90/10%. This is a low percentage for the Leisure Services Department and should consider increasing the percentage to more of a 70/30 or 60/40 split. This is based on a typical industry standard for contractual instructors.

Determining the community's need for adult and senior programming is important moving forward. With a Senior Center offering programs for the older population of adults, the Department of Leisure Services should focus its attention on younger active adults in the 50s and 60s. However, existing facility space does not lend itself toward attracting active adults.

A possible solution to increase participation of active adults is to create a task force, or launch group, with residents to help determine program ideas while creating a community connection. Trends and applications in lifestyle programming for active adults include several areas of interest. Findings are categorized in six dimensions of human wellness that influence optimal health, well-being and quality of life. These program areas include: 1) Physical, 2) Social, 3) Intellectual/Creative, 4) Emotional, 5) Vocational and 6) Environmental.

Active adults are vitally interested in the social

program area, which can include walking and biking clubs. The adult/senior program area already has mostly fitness related programs being offered. Fitness programs continue to be a nationwide trend. Increasing offerings for fitness programs is recommended due to recent personal training successes and the ability to reach all age groups. Another growing area for active adults is sports leagues for 45+, 55+ and older. This can be offered on a regional basis with other towns in the region to draw a competitive number of teams.

A more recent trend is a website named "meetup.com." The concept for meetup.com is for individuals to search already formed special-interest groups that "meet up" in the area that is searched. There are currently many groups (26) within a five-mile radius of the Bloomfield area. Utilizing this Website may be a tool to build adult programming or increase other opportunities for Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services.

Fitness and wellness programs and classes tend to be the most popular type of program across the United States and continue to be a nationwide trend for adults. The age range in fitness programming is 18+. Currently, there are seven fitness programs, not including adult basketball, offered and five of them are in the introduction, growth and mature stages. This shows that there is interest in the community. Staff commented that there are five competing agencies within a driving distance of 20 minutes to Bloomfield's facility and similar providers have better facilities. This results in Bloomfield being in a competitive disadvantage from a facility standpoint.

Another nationwide trend is fitness programs for children. A wellness program for children is an area for potential growth. There are an increasing number of grant opportunities to assist in programming to help youth become more physically fit. This may also be a partnership opportunity with the school district.

RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Aquatics

Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services offers pool memberships, a learn to swim program, private swim lessons, lap swim and lifeguard training. There are three competing agencies within a 20-minute driving distance. These three agencies have significantly higher program fees.

Revenue has decreased the past three years. More recently, 2013 saw a revenue decrease of 8.6%. During this same period, registrations decreased 11% and memberships 11.9%. Expenses have remained the same over the past three years. The decreases may be due to more children attending summer school. Staff commented competing with a free program is difficult. In addition, the condition of the pool was mentioned during the public input process as a factor in deciding to go to the pool.

Camps

Camp programs are offered during the summer season only. Registrations have fluctuated greatly over the past three years, perhaps due to summer school. In addition to competing against summer school, there are an additional eight agencies within a 25-minute drive of Bloomfield. Fees at these agencies are either similar or higher.

Most camp programs were slotted in the decline stage of the lifecycle analysis. Implementing changes and enhancements to these programs are needed to increase participation.

Registrations decreased 36% in 2013 from 2012. Revenue also decreased during the same period 41.3%. In 2011, revenue for 435 registrations equaled \$82,645. In 2013, revenue from 517 registrations totaled \$63,495. The decreases may be due to more children attending summer school. Staff commented competing with a free program is difficult.

Special Events

Special events are an important offering for the community. Each season in Bloomfield offers special events. Of the twelve offered

annually, 92% of them are in the growth/mature stages. Special events are subsidized programs. The net loss for 2011-2013 was \$20,000 each year. In 2012, there was a registration increase of 4.6%, however, still an 8% decrease from 2010's registration totals. Free activities saw a 19% increase in participation in 2012 from 2011.

Implementing changes and enhancements to events are a way show commitment to a popular service and to build trust from the community. If events are becoming routine and static, forming a task force of residents/staff for community events is a great way to create new ideas. Additionally, special events offer an opportunity for sponsorships from the corporate community as they are time intensive and require tax support.

Youth Programs

Youth programs have the highest number of annual program offerings. However, these programs also have the most competition within a distance of a 25-minute drive. Fees at these agencies are either similar or higher. There were no programs listed in the introduction stage. To remain competitive, new programs should be introduced. Staff commented that kids cooking classes are filled and staff have to turn patrons away. This is a great problem to have. Additional classes or instructors to accommodate interested patrons should be considered. In addition to cooking, youth sports have increased interest.

Registration history shows a 37.3% decline from 2011 to 2012. However, there was a 27.8% increase in 2013, from 2012. Revenue has increased each year since 2011. However, the net loss has also increased.

MARKETING APPROACHES AND PROGRAM GUIDE

Program Guide

The 2014 winter/spring Program Guide was reviewed. Below are highlights and suggestions to enhance the guide. Program guides are typically the most important marketing

technique used by park and recreation agencies. According to national information in the Leisure Vision database (a firm specializing in the development of park and recreation needs assessment surveys), 53% of residents in communities across the country find out about programs from their guides.

The Program Guide is distributed to households three times per year with the winter/spring, summer and fall editions. The guide is printed in four color, which is the best visual option for the reader. A pdf version is also available on the website.

The current winter/spring Program Guide features three circular photos with engaged participants at programs. The layout of the cover gives the reader a chance to see multiple experiences from users at programs or events. The cover also includes the Department's logo, website address and slogan "Come Out and Play."

Typically the front and back covers are printed in a higher quality paper. These four pages, front, front inside cover, back inside cover and back, should be utilized to advertise special or community events or important upcoming programs. Currently general information, the registration form and registration information is featured on the inside covers and back cover. Another option is to add a Director's message to highlight upcoming events/programs and/or summarize the successes of the Department of Leisure Services and emphasize the benefits of community parks and recreation.

Overall the Program Guide is simple and concise. Changing the font for both the descriptions and headers can be an easy way to add a catchy new look. A fresh look is an enhancement for marketing programs and events. Although the current font is appealing, it can come across as too much. Fonts are also an attention-grabber for readers. Changing the font for both the descriptions and headers can be an easy way to add a catchy new look to draw interest.

Creating a virtual or flipbook style guide online, other than the pdf version, would be more visually appealing and easier to read. These types are also more easily available to read on smart phones and tablets. Creating links directly on the virtual style guide where a customer can click and it takes them directly to the online site would help increase online registration.

The strategic placement of information and photos throughout the guide is essential to the overall design. Pictures help sell an experience. Labeling photos as to where it is from can assist in the promotion.

Below are some additional suggestions to help communicate a consistent message to readers.

- Listing staff members' phone numbers and email addresses provides a sense of open communication and also communicates the appropriate staff members to reach for questions.
- A current trend is to call any adult program a "wellness" program.
- In addition to your Photo Release, a suggestion is to also list social media.
- Add a Facebook page to provide communication regarding the Leisure Services Department.
- Add phone numbers to facilities and schools on page 3 of the winter/spring Program Brochure.
- Include addresses of the parks listed on page 4 of the winter/spring Program Brochure.
- Can the map on page 5 of the winter/spring Program Brochure be consolidated to also show addresses and a map legend to list the amenities at the various park and facility locations?
- Use the terms "early bird" and/or "regular" rather than using "late fee" when the price increases.
- Consistencies with how "AM/PM" or "am/pm" is listed.
- Consistent alignments of titles and descriptions on pages.

RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

- Grammar and language consistencies are also important, including: the same amount of spaces after times/dates, using the “age” or “ages” term, phone number consistencies and using consistent order for program descriptions, i.e.:

- Fee
- Dates
- Time(s)
- Location, etc.

Website Review

Parks and Recreation Websites are becoming increasingly important as a marketing tool, an identification of brand and image, and an avenue to provide government transparency.

The Department of Leisure Services homepage has a consistent look to the rest of the Town’s website. It is very generic and simple, but has a compelling call to action. There are several opportunities for improvement for this important marketing and informational tool.

The header of the page reads “Bloomfield Leisure Services Department” with the address, phone number and office hours just below. Then just beneath is a brief description what the Leisure Services Department provides. Two highlighted buttons announce to the reader where to click for the registration form or online registration. The registration form box opens to a pdf and the online registration button takes the reader to a new website “MyRec.com” to register online. This page has pictures and information on how to register and also tabs along the top with a few other options. There is a drop-down menu that provides the reader a quick look at activities.

Back to the main webpage, the winter/spring Program Brochure is featured in the middle of the page and when clicked, opens a pdf version. The brochure front cover is the only colorful visual on the webpage.

Below the brochure are quick links to a number of options for the reader, followed by the Leisure Services Staff and email addresses.

The majority of patrons using the Web do not want to read a large amount of text. However, the insertion of pictures or even videos of users can help “sell” programs and add flair to a generic site.

A Website assessment should be completed minimally on an annual basis. The assessment should include external customer feedback through focus groups. In addition, it is helpful to have recreation program staff and contractual instructors review the site and provide suggestions in areas of improvement, based on their use of the site and suggestions they hear from customers.

It is projected that within the next three years, there will be an equal number of users who may access Websites through smart phones (I-phones, Androids, Blackberries, etc.) and Tablets (I-Pad, Samsung Galaxy, HP Slate, etc.). In order to maximize outreach to its target market, the Town of Bloomfield should develop applications and a WAP (wireless application protocol) enabled Website that can be easily viewed by potential users on smart phones or tablets and also that allows them to make online reservations.

Technology has given us endless opportunities to promote agencies. Therefore it’s important for the District to continuously evaluate user satisfaction with the Website. An evaluation process should occur on an annual basis with a review of the Website:

- Content (promotional as well as informational; not too much text)
- Maintainability (up to date information)
- Accessibility
- Customer Usage (tracking usage)
- Internal Support (process for content updates, technology glitches, etc.)

RECREATION PROGRAM BEST PRACTICES

A key to developing consistent services is the use of service and program standards. One of Bloomfield's limitations in developing best practices is the small number of staff dedicated to recreation programming as compared to other agencies.

Bloomfield has several program standards in place, but in the future can be more robust. Having standards provides a more consistent service environment. As program growth continues, and as staff time permits, additional standards can be put into place throughout the entire recreation program system, such as customer requirements, instructor standards, and program consistency.

In addition to standards, efforts should be made to develop a listing of key customer requirements for core program/membership areas. Key customer requirements are defined as those areas of the program purchasing process that are most important to registrants. For example, an adult softball player's key requirements may include: cost of the league, quality of athletic field maintenance, cleanliness of restrooms, quality of the umpires, game times and location of the facility. Identifying key requirements is vitally important for staff to deliver well in the items most important to the customer.

Key requirements should be identified by customers and can be included as part of an importance/performance matrix. This determines how important a requirement is to the customer and how the Leisure Services Department is performing.

Program registration reports should be reviewed by core program or facility area and set up as cost centers in order to determine overall expense and revenue for the key areas. These reports should be done on a quarterly basis and condensed to a higher level of detail.

Some areas closely track financial performance, while others do not. A robust mea-

surement system generally includes a more comprehensive set of measures, including:

- Program capacity rate (ratio of total maximum enrollments for number of spots filled)
- Number of programs per age segment
- Customer satisfaction toward the registration system
- Facility utilization rate
- Program success rate (or cancellation rate)
- Cost recovery rates by core program area
- Number of new programs offered annually
- Household percentage of program participation
- Percent of programs in introduction and growth stage
- Market penetration by age group
- Customer retention, repurchase intent, and referral

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a launch group as a way of developing active adult services
- Host Meet up groups
- Identify new space for active adult services for group exercise and fitness
- Complete a needs assessment survey to determine the greatest program needs, unmet program needs and what are the biggest priority for customers
- Increase the percentage of introductory and growth program areas
- Develop several key performance measures to monitor Department programming performance
- Develop a virtual online program guide that allows customers to register by smart phones

A blue-tinted landscape photograph of a field with trees in the background. The text is overlaid in the center.

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department budget is about \$4.7 million and is organized into four functions: Administration, Operations, Facilities, and Fleet Services. The Operations area is responsible for park and recreation maintenance. The Department is headed by a Public Works Director, supported by a Foreman, Operations Manager, Crew Leaders, Equipment Operators, and Maintainers.

The functions of maintenance include:

- Operates and maintains town parks and public spaces
- Manages and maintains the urban forestry plan
- Manages and maintains landscaping, including trees, on public rights of way
- Removes graffiti from park facilities and public rights of way
- Maintains and repairs city-owned utility poles
- Hangs and removes town decorations
- Supports special events that require Public Works involvement

The Operations budget in support of park maintenance support is not detailed separately from the rest of the Department. For the purposes of the Master Plan process, the Public Works Director detailed percentage allocation of staff time toward park maintenance tasks and allocated other expenses in support of parks and facilities.

The allocations include:

- One foreman who spends 60% of time annually dedicated toward park maintenance, and within that 60%, half of the time is dedicated toward park maintenance
- One operations manager who spends 60% of time annually dedicated toward park maintenance, and within that 60%, spends a third of time dedicated toward park maintenance

- One Crew Leader
- One to two Equipment Operators
- Four Maintainers

Staffing levels have reduced slightly during the last 15 years. According to staff, the number of full-time staff has decreased from 20 to 18 during the last 15 years. Staff members feel as though they do a very good job with what they have to work with. The staffing levels are much lower than the national benchmark. This analysis is detailed in the Comparative Analysis section of the report.

The DPW Maintainers also are responsible for pool start up and end of year closing as well as custodial support at all facilities. At this time, there is no cost accounting information available to identify the costs to maintain individual parks.

Using actual budget numbers from 2013, Public Works spent approximately \$278,000 in staff salaries and approximately \$125,000 in benefits. In addition to labor expenses, the Department spends approximately \$60,250 in other support, from landscape and athletic field expenses to recreation program support and equipment rental. Therefore, the total approximate level of financial support from Public Works was \$463,250, and 87% of that expense is related to personnel costs.

The Public Works Department works cross functionally. At one time park maintenance was a part of Leisure Services, but several years ago, they were split. DPW maximizes staff resources by using a cross functional approach to work tasks. Employees have skills beyond their functional area. This is helpful when one area of operation needs support at specific times of the year. As an example, during the winter season, Maintainers involved in park maintenance can assist with other areas of the Department. During the busy mowing season, other staff can assist when needed.

There are no seasonal or part-time employees as part of the park maintenance operation.

Most park and recreation systems rely heavily on part-time and seasonal employees because of cost efficiencies and the seasonal variation of the work. However, for Bloomfield, the fact the Maintainers are crossed trained allows them to do other work beyond parks during the winter months.

According to staff, the relationship between Leisure Services and DPW is good and roles are clearly defined. The Leisure Services Director and Public Works staff meet weekly to go over items of importance. The Leisure Services Director will soon begin an ongoing park visitation process as a way of ensuring another set of eyes reviewing park maintenance quality. The Department of Leisure Services is the liaison to the athletic groups. The groups do not pay for any maintenance.

DPW spends significant time mowing the reservoirs. There is just a community garden and tennis courts at one and a flying park at another. The staff questioned the need for mowing. Or alternatively, mowing could be contracted.

The staff is interested in standards for amenities to ensure there are realistic maintenance requirements given the number of limited staff. Currently no written maintenance standards exist. Best practice standards include the following basic maintenance tasks:

Parks

- Aeration: Spring and Fall each year (work toward the ideal of three times a year)
- Pesticide application: once every two to three years (work toward annual application)
- Fertilization: once per year (work toward three times a year application)

Athletic Fields

- Aeration: Spring, Summer and Fall
- Pesticide application: twice a year
- Fertilization: four to five times a year
- Overseed: twice a year

Currently, DPW Core aerates every couple of years and has an ongoing fertilization program.

Additionally, DPW does not have an automated work order system; the Leisure Services Department calls when staff members need something. Having an automated system may be considered in the future.

Some issues of concern for staff include:

- Inadequate staffing levels for the amount of work required
- The pool is in bad shape. We have used about the last band aid as possible to have the pool limp along. The pool budget is in the Leisure Services Department
- There is a lack of investment in maintaining the overall parks and recreation infrastructure
- The Master Plan needs to be realistic, in terms of what DPW can support. Resources are already stretched thin; therefore, any additional assets will require additional operations and maintenance support
- The School District installs their own playgrounds. DPW is concerned about their ability to maintain and inspect the playgrounds
- Scheduling done by the School District needs improvement
- Significant amount of mowing performed at the reservoirs could possibly be contracted, minimized or eliminated
- There is a lack of irrigation at athletic fields, which makes maintenance more difficult

DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES

The Department of Leisure Services includes a Director, Assistant Director, Administrative Analyst, and a Clerk Typist II. Leisure Services includes the following divisions: Administration, Environmental Programs, School Year Programs, Summer Programs, and Swimming Pool. The Department is supplemented with hundreds of seasonal and part-time staff.

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

The Department's mission:

"The Bloomfield Leisure Services Department is committed to providing quality recreational opportunities, preserving natural resources, and managing a comprehensive system of parks and facilities dedicated to enriching the lives of a diverse and changing community."

The Department's programming and service facilities include the Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center, the Municipal Pool, and the use of a variety of schools and parks. Primary program areas include:

- Adult Programs/Fitness
- Aquatics
- Camps
- Special Events
- Youth Programs

A full assessment of programs and services is included in the Master Plan as part of the Recreation Assessment.

The Director's responsibilities include capital projects, budget, special events, youth sports and gym usage, special events, Website, and other responsibilities. The Assistant Director is responsible for marketing, adult programs, aquatics, systems management of the program registration software system, the program brochure, Website and other responsibilities. The Administrative Analyst is responsible for programming and manages youth programs, summer camp, summer concerts, tennis, golf, after school programs, and other responsibilities.

A significant challenge for the Department is the lack of quality indoor space, particularly for the adult population (this excludes senior programming, as this is handled separately in the Senior Center). While a national standard does not exist for indoor recreation space, Heller and Heller Consulting, Inc. uses a standard of 2.0 square feet per capita for agencies located in cold weather climates. This is based on the database of other systems.

Therefore, for Bloomfield, with a population of 20,843, the amount of indoor space should be approximately 41,600 square feet. The only indoor space managed by the Department is included in the Human Service Center. This square footage is 23,526. As a result, the Department could use approximately 18,000 of additional space. This does not take into account school facility use. The standard of 2.0 sq. ft. per capita also does not take into account school use. Almost all park and recreation systems use schools to supplement their programming space.

The Department's budget includes the following:

Actual 2010 Expense	\$637,660
Actual 2011 Expense	\$663,276
Actual 2012 Expense	\$664,894
2013 Budgeted Expense	\$686,880

Actual budget expenses from 2010 to 2012 increased by only 4%.

Staffing for Leisure Services is recommended to increase by one full-time staff member, specializing in a program area as well as doing marketing and public communication efforts. Currently, the director spends time directly overseeing programming and managing special events. An additional position could result in the director being able to have time to devote toward more strategic issues. Furthermore, an additional position could pay for some of its costs as a result of developing additional programs.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

For the purposes of comparison, budget information includes both Leisure Services and Public Works Department expenses. The expenses from Public Works include just those costs that relate to providing support for park and building maintenance. This Comparative Analysis is based on departments in the database having parks and recreation functions as one department.

POPULATION SUMMARY

Jurisdiction Population Older than 65

For the reporting agencies the median percentage of jurisdiction population that is older than 65 years of age is 12.7 percent. Bloomfield almost doubles the median with a jurisdiction population older than 65 at 24 percent and is well above the upper quartile which is 15.68 percent.

Operating Expenditures per Capita

Bloomfield's operating expenditure per capita is \$78.13 which is above the lower quartile of respondents which is \$55.07. However, Bloomfield expenditure per capita is significantly lower than the reported median which is \$104.33 and the upper quartile which is \$154.42.

Jurisdiction Population per FTE

Bloomfield reported 2,084 for population per FTE (full-time equivalent). This is more than double the lower quartile of 803 and significantly higher than the median which was reported at 1,397. Therefore, the number of staff working for Leisure Services and Public Works dedicated toward parks and recreation services is very low.

Revenue per Capita

For reporting agencies in the database, the revenue per capita for the lower quartile is \$12 while the upper quartile is four times that amount at \$49. Bloomfield reported \$1.16 for revenue per capita which is significantly lower than the lower quartile reported.

Total Capital Costs per Capita

Bloomfield reported \$3.60 for total capital costs per capita which is well below the median of \$14.25. For reporting agencies, the Lower quartile is \$5.24 while the upper quartile is \$36.16.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Total Operating Expenditures

The lower quartile is \$1,006,332. Bloomfield's operating expenditures are just above this amount of \$1,128,144. This amount is significantly below the median number of \$2,257,530, or about half that amount.

Total Non-Tax Revenue

For reporting agencies in the database, the lower quartile on Non-Tax Revenue is \$233,960. For Bloomfield, FY12/13 total revenues were \$173,896. This includes \$149,694 of Enterprise Fund revenue and \$24,202 in General Fund revenue. Bloomfield ranks below the lower quartile.

Revenue percent of Total Operating Expense

Bloomfield reported 2% for revenue as a percent of total operating expenses. The reporting agencies in the database reported 37% as the median and 61.63% for the upper quartile. Bloomfield is well below the lower quartile which was reported at 19.53 percent. This is attributed partly to the lack of indoor space.

Department Capital Budget

Bloomfield's department capital budget varies from year to year, but in recent years, the capital budget has been approximately \$75,000. The median capital budget for reporting agencies is \$300,000 while there was no upper quartile reported. Bloomfield is above the lower quartile which is \$62,293.

PERSONNEL SUMMARY

Full-Time Positions

Both Public Works allocation of staff dedicated toward maintenance activities and Leisure Services Department staff are included in this comparison. The total number of staff is 11, which matches the median of 11 per agency.

Total Full-Time Personnel Expense

The median amount for FT personnel is \$1,242,119 and the lower quartile is \$686,410. For Bloomfield, the amount is \$858,113.

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

Operating Expenses per FTE

For reporting agencies, the upper quartile for operating expenses per FTE is \$168,745. Bloomfield reported \$112,414 which is higher than the median of \$108,246, and well above the lower quartile, which is \$76,003.

PARK SUMMARY

Park Acreage

The median park acreage for agencies is 262. Bloomfield's acreage is 1,670 or 537% higher than the median. This equates to 69.48 acres per 1,000 population. Historically, the National Recreation and Park Association standard for park acreage was 10 acres per 1,000 population. According to the PRORAGIS database of comparable agencies, the median amount of acreage is 13.3 per 1,000 population.

Because of the vast amount of acreage owned by the Town, the staffing complement dedicated toward park maintenance is extremely low compared to other agencies. The highest quartile of acres maintained by FTE staff is 38.3 acres per staff person. In Bloomfield the number of acres maintained by staff is 238. It is worth noting the park acreage category does not differentiate between mowable and non-mowable acreage or land that is undeveloped. It is strictly total acreage.

Bloomfield also reported \$675 per acre of land managed or maintained which is well below the lower quartile reported which is \$3,286 per acre. The median reported by agencies is \$6,194 while the upper quartile is \$11,339 per acre of land managed or maintained.



A blue-tinted photograph of a university campus. On the left, a bronze statue of a man in a suit and tie stands in a grassy area. The background is filled with large, leafy trees, some showing autumn colors. The overall scene is serene and academic.

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Master Plan provides examples of funding and revenue strategies used throughout the United States. Park and recreation agencies draw on many sources of revenue to help them acquire park land, develop parks and facilities, maintain parks, and offer recreation programs and community facilities from a variety of revenue options. The following are examples of revenue options the Town of Bloomfield may consider to support capital improvement, land acquisition, and operational needs in the future. Following the list of funding and revenue ideas is a listing of trends in revenue growth in parks. Included in the appendix of the Master Plan is a listing of grant opportunities at the federal and state level.

GENERAL FUNDING SOURCES

General Fund

General funds derived from property taxes and other municipal income sources have historically been the typical method to support park and recreation system operations. However, as a result of diminishing resources, they are limited in their ability to fund operations, significant land acquisition or capital development.

General Obligation Bond

A general obligation bond is a municipal bond secured by the taxing and borrowing power of the municipality issuing it. These bonds usually require community voter support and are used to support capital improvements and acquisition of land.

Bond Referendum

This funding approach involves voter approval of a bond measure to be used to finance land acquisition, facility and park development, and/or maintenance.

Governmental Funding Programs

A variety of funding sources are available from federal and state government for transportation, water, green space, and sustainability projects. For example, the Land and

Water Conservation Fund provides funds to state and local governments to acquire, develop, and improve outdoor recreation areas. Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds can be used in part to support green space-related improvements. Transportation enhancement funds available through SAFETELU, the current federal transportation bill, can be used for trail and related green space development. AmeriCorps grants can be used to fund support for park maintenance. Federal Housing Grants can be used to develop recreation related facilities to support social needs of housing residents. Also, the federal government oversees the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants which assist with reducing energy usage. A listing of federal and state resources is included at the end of this document.

DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCES

Park Impact Fees

These fees are attached to the cost of new residential development based on the square footage or number of bedrooms per unit to generate funds for park acquisition and development. Impact fees typically range from a low of \$500 dollars per unit to a high of \$9,000 dollars per unit and should be periodically updated to address market rates and land values.

Cash-in-Lieu of Open Space Requirement

Ordinances requiring the dedication of open space within developments to meet the park and recreation needs of the new residents often have provisions allowing cash contribution to substitute for the land requirement. The proceeds can be applied to a park site, usually within close proximity of the development.

Tax Allocation District

Commonly used to finance redevelopment projects in Atlanta, a Tax Allocation District (TAD) involves the issuance of tax-exempt bonds to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible development costs in partnership with private developers. As redevelopment occurs in the district, the "tax increment" resulting

from redevelopment projects is used to retire the debt issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs. The public portion of the redevelopment project funds itself using the additional taxes generated by the project. TADs can be used to fund green space acquisition and development as an essential infrastructure cost.

Boulevard Tax

This funding source has been used by Kansas City, Mo., to develop and maintain its nationally renowned parkways and boulevard system. Residents who live along these corridors pay a charge based on a lineal foot that is added to their property tax bill. This approach has proven to be very beneficial to owners when selling their homes because of the added value to their properties.

Dedicated Sales Tax

A dedicated sales tax has been used by many cities as a funding tool for capital improvements. The City of Lawrence, Kan., passed a one-cent sales tax for parks that has generated over \$50 million in park improvements over the last seven years. The City of Phoenix receives sales tax revenue from car rentals to support capital needs of parks and recreation services. Agencies throughout Texas and Colorado have done the same.

Facility Authority

A Facility Authority is used by park and recreation agencies to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venue for competitive events. Repayment of bonds to fund the project usually comes from sales taxes. The City of Indianapolis has created several recreational facilities to meet local needs and national competition venues as an economic development tool. The Facility Authority is responsible for managing the sites and operating them in a self-supporting manner.

Improvement District

An improvement district allows for special assessments on property owners to support

acquisition, development, and/or maintenance costs. There are various types of improvement districts that apply to parks and green spaces. Landscape and Lighting Districts are used by California communities to fund park development and ongoing maintenance. Park Benefit Districts establish assessments on properties based on the benefits and costs of acquisition and development associated with a park land improvement. Benefit Districts are typically applied to regional parks, large community parks, event plazas, signature parks, and attractions located in downtown areas or areas slated for redevelopment. In Park Maintenance Districts, the assessments are earmarked to fund park maintenance within a designated area (similar to Landscape and Lighting Districts).

Real Estate Transfer Fee

This relatively new form of funding is being used by a number of agencies and states to acquire and develop park land. The transfer of real estate from one owner to another generates the money, with the municipality retaining a percentage of the value of the property (typically one-half percent) at the time of sale. The proceeds can be dedicated to acquiring land or for other green space purposes.

Revolving Fund

This is a dedicated fund to be used for various purposes that is replenished on an ongoing basis from various funding sources.

Storm water Utility Fee

Also referred to as a Surface Water Management Fee, this funding source is derived from fees on property owners based on measures such as the amount of impervious surfacing. It is used by many cities to acquire and develop greenways and other green space resources that provide for storm water management. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, and retention ponds that serve multiple purposes such as recreation, environmental protection, and storm water management. The City of Houston is using this source to preserve and maintain bayous and to improve their access and use for flood

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

control and recreation purposes.

Transient (Hotel) Occupancy Tax

This funding source is used by many cities to fund improvements of parks to improve the image of an urban area, to enhance parks surrounded by hotels and businesses, to support the development of a park-related improvement, or to build an attraction. Transient occupancy taxes are typically set at 5% to 10% on the value of a hotel room and can be dedicated for park land improvement purposes.

Wheel Tax

A Wheel Tax is a method of taxation commonly used by cities or counties to generate revenue. The tax is charged to motorists based upon the number of wheels their vehicles have, often collected at the time of vehicle registration or tag renewals. Wheel taxes can be used to fund management and maintenance of park roads and parking lots.

System Development Charges

(SDCs) are one-time fees assessed on new development to cover a portion of the cost of providing specific types of public infrastructure required as a result of this development. The City of Portland, Ore., has recently implemented these charges to help fund its future growth and development.

REVENUE CAPTURE

Land Leases/Concessions

Land leases and concessions are public/private partnerships in which the municipality provides land or space for private commercial operations that enhance the park and recreational experience in exchange for payments to help reduce operating costs. They can range from vending machines to food service and golf course operations.

User Fees

User fees are fees paid by participants of programs or recreational facilities to offset the costs of services provided by the municipality. The fees are set by the municipality based on cost recovery goals and the level of exclusiv-

ity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. This does not necessarily imply the need for increasing fees, but rather having a sophisticated approach to the charging of fees.

Capital Improvement Fee

A capital improvement fee can be added to the admission fee of a recreation facility to help pay back the cost of developing the facility. This fee is usually applied to golf courses, aquatic facilities, recreation centers, ice rinks, amphitheaters, and special use facilities such as sports complexes. The funds generated can be used to either pay back the cost of the capital improvement or the revenue bond that was used to develop the facility. Columbia, MO, has successfully used this fee for years. Virtually all of their program and rental fees have a capital improvement fee attached to the cost of the service.

Corporate Naming Rights

In this arrangement, corporations invest in the right to name an event, facility, or product within a parks system in exchange for an annual fee, typically over a ten-year period. The cost of the naming right is based on the impression points the facility or event will receive from newspapers, TV, Websites, and visitors or users. Naming rights for park facilities are typically attached to sports complexes, amphitheaters, recreation centers, aquatic facilities, stadiums, and events. These can be looked into particularly for some of the special use facilities or signature arts facilities

Corporate Sponsorships

Corporations can also underwrite a portion or all of the costs of an event, program, or activity based on their name being associated with the service. Sponsorships typically are title sponsors, presenting sponsors, associate sponsors, product sponsors, or in-kind sponsors. Many cities seek corporate support for these types of activities. Park districts that have leveraged good success from the corporate sector include Naperville, Schaumburg, and Rockford Park Districts.

Maintenance Endowment Fund

This is a fund dedicated exclusively for parks maintenance, funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals.

Gift Catalog

This can be a Web based shopping list for individuals to “buy” a gift for the City of WOW Parks and Recreation Department. This consists of having a list of amenities the public can buy to help fund park development.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

Business/Citizen Donations

Individual donations from corporations and citizens can be sought to support parks and green spaces. As an example, the Naperville Park District has an ongoing program soliciting tax deductible contributions from individuals, community organizations, and businesses to enhance park and recreational services.

Private Foundation Funds

Nonprofit community foundations can be strong sources of support for parks and green space. The City of Indianapolis has received over \$100 million in grants from the Lilly Endowment for park-related improvements.

Scholarship Programs

Most agencies have some level of scholarships available to financially disadvantaged households. Funding typically comes from general fund support, corporate support, and other programs' fees and charges. Another mechanism is to develop a relationship with a retailer, such as a grocery store and at check-out, give customers the option of having a small contribution toward the scholarship fund added to the bill.

Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations can provide support for parks and recreation in various ways. Examples include:

- **Conservancy or Friends Organization:** This type of nonprofit is devoted to supporting a specific park. New York City and Philadelphia have had

great success with conservancies. Typically, the conservancy manages a large park and is autonomous from City government, and instead is managed by the board.

- **Land Trust:** Land trusts are nonprofits focused on preservation. A landowner can donate, sell, or exchange part of their land rights to a trust, in cooperation with the City. There is a tax incentive to donate the land as a charitable gift, although it is the responsibility of the landowner to pursue the tax deduction. Collaborating with land trusts and landowners takes considerable time and effort. In Atlanta, the Trust for Public Land and Conservation Fund helps to facilitate land acquisition by the City, but it does not own land and easements outright. Project Green space proposes establishment of a new land trust dedicated to acquiring and managing green space in Atlanta.
- **Conservation District:** Conservation Districts operate like a land trust, but are set up to protect specific property areas with high green space value, such as watersheds or sensitive natural areas. The conservation district's role is to provide landowners with tax benefits to allow their properties to be preserved as part of the district.
- **Parks Foundation:** Established to support system-wide parks and recreation needs, park foundations have helped many cities across the nation to acquire land and develop parks. For example, the Parks Foundation of Houston raises \$5 million annually, on average, for land acquisition and park improvements. Foundation members are typically community leaders who are committed to the parks and recreation agency. The foundation requires staff time as a liaison to the group.
- **Greenway Foundations:** Greenway foundations focus on developing and maintaining trails and green corridors on a citywide basis. The City of Indianapolis Greenway Foundation develops and maintains greenways throughout the city and seeks land leases along the trails as one funding source, in addition to selling miles of trails to community corporations and nonprofits. The development rights along the trails can also be sold to local utilities for water, sewer, fiber optic, and cable lines on a per mile basis to support development and management of these corridors. King County in the Seattle area has done a very good job in accessing this funding source for greenway development.

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

Homeowner Association Fees

Homeowner association fees are typically used to maintain dedicated open space areas within private residential developments. They could be applied to maintaining privately owned green space that is publicly accessible through an agreement between the developer and the association.

Lease Back

Lease backs are a source of capital funding in which a private sector entity such as a development company buys the land and develops a facility such as a park, recreation attraction, recreation center, pool, or sports complex. After the purchase, the development company leases the facility back to the municipality to pay off the capital costs over a 30- to 40-year period. This approach takes advantage of the efficiencies of private sector development, while relieving the burden on the municipality to raise up-front capital funds. Capital Source is a private banking company that provides municipalities this option without going to the voter for approval and/or using municipal bonds to support parks and recreation needs.

VOLUNTEER SOURCES

Adopt-a-Park

In this approach, local neighborhood groups or businesses make a volunteer commitment to maintaining a specific park. Adopt-a-Park arrangements are particularly well-suited for smaller parks that are less efficient for a parks department to maintain.

Neighborhood Park Initiatives

These are formal or informal initiatives by local groups to address the needs of an individual park. Examples include park watch programs and “clean up/fix up” days.

Adopt-a-Trail

This is similar to Adopt-a-Park but involves sponsorship of a segment of a trail (e.g., one mile) for maintenance purposes. The agency uses community volunteers to monitor trails for safety and as a first-response to report problems on the trails. This could be done for

parts of the North Oconee Greenway or other trails in the system.

Community Service Workers

Community service workers are assigned by the court to pay off some of their sentence through maintenance activities in parks, such as picking up litter, removing graffiti, and assisting in painting or fix-up activities. Most workers are assigned 30 to 60 hours of work.

FEDERAL AND STATE OF CONNECTICUT RESOURCES

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). RTP is administered through the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Recreational Trails Program funds may be used for:

- Construction of new trails
- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails
- Access to trails by persons with disabilities
- Purchase of land and trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Acquisition of land or easements for a trail, or for trail corridors.
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as related to recreational trails.

DEP may award grants to private nonprofit organizations, municipalities and state departments. Sponsors may submit proposals for any of the permitted uses as listed. Grant amounts vary.

America the Beautiful Grants

Each year, the Urban Forestry Program makes available federal grant money to towns, cities and non-profits in Connecticut to further the advance of urban forestry. The funds have gone to such diverse projects as tree planting, street tree inventories, tree maintenance programs and the design of tree guidebooks.

National Parks Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

NPS staff provide technical assistance during one-year commitments, for up to three years. Projects typically involve trail corridors, gateways connecting trails to Main Streets, riverfront greenways, and land conservation. Request for assistance letters must address four issues: resource significance, tangible results, public support, and clear roles for NPS and its partner. Partners include informal groups, private non-profit organizations, and local governments. Several Connecticut greenway projects have received valuable technical assistance through this program.

American Greenway/Kodak Grants, The Conservation Fund

This is a small grant program aimed at non-profit organizations, public agencies, and community groups to promote action oriented greenway projects. The grants are made possible through the American Greenways Kodak Awards Program sponsored by the Conservation Fund, the Eastman Kodak Company, and the National Geographic Society. The \$500 to \$2500 grants are awarded for a wide variety of planning, design, implementation, and educational projects.

Bikes Belong Coalition

The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. The goal is putting more people on bikes more often. They seek to assist local organizations, agencies, and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects that will be funded by Federal Highway Administration Enhancement Grants.

Bikes Belong Coalition will accept applications for grants of up to \$10,000 each, and will consider successor grants for continuing projects. Funding decisions will be made on a rolling basis. Applications and proposals will be reviewed under the auspices of the Bikes Belong Coalition's Executive Director and presented to the Board of Directors for approval, rejection, or resubmission.

CT EPA Assessment Program

Municipalities and related organizations refer sites for program consideration that may be complicated by hazardous substance contamination or petroleum contamination. An environmental consultant is hired to investigate the environmental condition of an eligible site and to prepare the remedial action work plan.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Connecticut Brownfields Redevelopment Authority's (CBRA) program which provides funds to developers/owners for brownfield projects in CT. TIF funding is repaid to CBRA by municipalities based on the increased property valuation.

Abandoned Brownfield Cleanup Program

The ABC program offers an opportunity for developers, who are not responsible for contamination, to be afforded liability protection from the responsibility to investigate and remediate off-site contamination provided that the projects meet certain economic development thresholds and remediation is completed under a formal DEP program.

Connecticut's Clean Water Fund

The Clean Water Fund (CWF) provides a combination of grants and loans to municipalities which undertake water pollution control projects at the direction of the DEP. Projects funded:

- Water Pollution Control;
- Sewage Treatment Plant construction & upgrades
- Nutrient Removal Projects protecting Long Island Sound
- Non-point Source Pollution Control Projects affecting Long Island Sound;
- River Restoration; and Drinking Water Treatment Plant upgrades; Waterline installation

Urban and Industrial Sites Reinvestment Tax Credit

This program is an economic development tool designed to drive investment to the state's urban centers and other economi-

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

cally distressed communities without depleting valuable state bond dollars. Under the program, the state may provide up to \$100 million in tax credits over a ten-year period to support projects that create significant jobs and capital investment in these underserved areas.

New Markets Tax Credit Program

U.S. Treasury Dept. program provides tax credits to investors through community development entity projects, used to attract capital and leverage investment.

EPA Programs for Municipalities and Eligible Non-profits

EPA provides funding for brownfields assessment, revolving loan fund and cleanup grants. These grants are part of the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act to help states and communities around the country clean up and revitalize brownfield sites.

REVENUE TRENDS IN PARKS

- A national trend is to offer programming in parks such as yoga and exercise classes. Some systems charge instructors a percentage of gross revenues for programs
- Outdoor Fitness Programming including activities such as P90x, Insanity, Rushfit
- Unique Sports Leagues with changing the norms (Parks & Recreation Magazine – August '13), i.e. lower basketball hoops, shorten base paths, change rules, play 3-on-3, reduce field lengths, limit softball game times, categorize by weight and age, etc.
- Golf Course Ideas:
 - Charge by the hour, not by the round
 - Have one fee, regardless of the number of holes played
 - Partner with a local fitness club
 - Increase the diameter of the hole to 15 inches
 - Partner with nearby hotels for discounts for hotel guests
- Offer Foot Golf, which is playing golf with a soccer ball, American FootGolf League oversees the sport
- Nature-based and backcountry recreation activities; kayaking and canoeing trips
- Bicycle programs, including bike sharing and bike rental programs
- Aquatic climbing walls
- Climbing walls in general
- Host meeting space for groups from meetup.com
- Offer culture-specific programming
- Develop cooperative agreements with surrounding park and recreation agencies, school districts or other businesses
- Corporate sponsorships and unique sponsorships with local businesses i.e. allowing a table for \$100 at an event, etc.
- Music lessons in unused rooms
- Community garage sale at a facility and charge per space
- Children's garage sale – only children items
- Build picnic pavilion structures or set up tents for rental income for non-profits, businesses, individuals
- Intergenerational programming
- Packaged wedding venue at a park location
- Food trucks and lease agreements for food vendor/café
- Offer Parkour, which is a daring pastime born in the streets, have long seen public spaces as their playground. Parkour as the ultimate rebel's game, one with no rules, league, equipment or winners. It started in France (the name is derived from the French word for "course") and has spread around the world: Gaza, Tokyo, Rome and Miami are Parkour Towns. Parkour is a sport that originated in urban outdoor spaces.

BICYCLE FUNDING SOURCES

The Town of Bloomfield should consider pursuing federal resources to assist in the development of its bicycle network. Funding is provided by the federal government via the US Department of Transportation (US DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The primary source of this funding is via the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). MAP-21 replaces the previous SAFETEA-LU legislation and provides funding for the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years. While communities are able to directly apply to many of the grant programs identified here, the most likely avenue for pursuing grant funding is by coordinating with the local regional planning organization (Capital Region Council of Governments).

The MAP-21 programs most relevant to the recommendations of this plan fall under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The TAP program provides funding for various bicycle related improvements. Within the TAP program are the Recreational Trails Program and the Safe Routes to School Program. The Recreational Trails Program could provide assistance in developing off-road facilities, while the Safe Routes to School program could be administered through the school system to improve access to schools and the playgrounds and athletic fields located at those schools. Additional information about these programs is provided on the following pages.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Administered by: FHWA
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/tap.cfm>

MAP-21 established the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to provide for a variety of alternative transportation projects, including many that were previously eligible activities under separately funded programs. The TAP replaces the funding from pre-MAP-21 programs including Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, Safe Routes to School, and several other discretionary programs, wrapping them into a single funding source.

An amount equal to 2% of the total amount authorized from the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund for Federal-aid highways each fiscal year (FY) is to be reserved for the TAP. Within each State, the amount for the TAP is set aside proportionately from the State's National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Surface Transportation Program (STP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and Metropolitan Planning apportionments. An amount equal to the State's FY 2009 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) apportionment is set aside from the State's TAP funds for the RTP.

Funds may be used for projects or activities that are related to surface transportation, these may include but are not limited to:

- Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation.
- Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
- Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users.
- Recreational Trails projects
- Safe Routes to School projects

In general, TAP funds are administered by the State DOT. Funds suballocated to urbanized areas over 200,000 must be on the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO, through a competitive process, selects the projects in consultation with the State from proposed projects submitted by eligible entities. Funds suballocated to small urban areas and rural areas will be administered by the State. The State, through a competitive process, selects the projects from proposed projects submitted by eligible entities.

FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

The eligible entities to receive TAP funds are: local governments; regional transportation authorities; transit agencies; natural resource or public land agencies; school districts, local education agencies, or schools; tribal governments; and any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a State agency) that the State determines to be eligible. Under TAP, nonprofits are not eligible as direct grant recipients of the funds. Nonprofits are eligible to partner with any eligible entity on an eligible TAP project, if State or local requirements permit.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Administered by: FHWA, CT DEEP
www.ct.gov/deep/site/default.asp

MAP-21 requires each State to set aside a portion of its Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds for projects relating to recreational trails. The amount to be set aside is equal to each State's FY 2009 RTP apportionment. States administer the RTP through a designated State agency or agencies, which may or may not be the State DOT. Connecticut's RTP program is administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Recreational Trails Program funds may be used for:

- Construction of new trails (motorized and non-motorized).
- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails (motorized and non-motorized).
- Access to trails by persons with disabilities.
- Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment.
- Acquisition of land or easements for a trail, or for trail corridors.
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as related to recreational trails.

The CT Recreational Trails Committee typically reviews proposals in May and makes recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration for use of any potential funding.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Administered by: FHWA, CTDOT
<http://www.ctsaferoutes.org/>

Initiated in 2006, the Connecticut Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program is designed to empower schools and communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. Connecticut receives a set allocation of SRTS funding from the federal government each year. Most of this funding (about 70 percent) is spent on infrastructure, or engineering, improvements near schools. The remaining funds are allocated to non-infrastructure activities, or those that fall under the Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation activities.

The goal of the program is to substantially improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. Specifically, the purposes of the program are:

- To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity (approximately 2 miles) of primary and middle schools (Grades K-8).

Infrastructure-related activities are those projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including sidewalk improvements, traffic calming and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities, secure bike parking, and traffic diversion improvements

in the vicinity of schools. Any project or program proposed for funding under the SRTS program must either increase the safety of students walking and biking to school and/or increase the number of students walking and biking to school.

Street	Functional Class	Average Daily Traffic	Roadway Width	Recommended Facility	Notes	Segment Length
Adams Road	Local	400 – 1,600	21'	Route	Hoskins to Tunxis	6,500'
Auer Farm Road	Private	N/A		Route		3,500'
Brown Street	Local	N/A	26'	Sharrow		5,000'
Burr Road	Local	N/A	26-30'	Sharrow		4,500'
Caldwell Road	Local	N/A	30'	Route	Connects to pathway	1,700'
Crestview Drive	Local	N/A	30'	Bike Lane		3,000'
Duncaster Road	Collector	700 – 1,400	22'	Route		21,000'
Granby Street	Minor Arterial	9,200	28'-48'	Route		3,900'
Hoskins Road	Local	N/A	24'	Route		7,700'
Jerome Ave	Collector	N/A	30-32'	Sharrow		1,000'
Loeffler Road (Rt. 178)	Minor Arterial	10,000	40'	Bike Lane		3,900'
Maple Avenue	Collector	100	30'	Bike Lane		3,100'
Mills Lane	Local	N/A	22'	Route		3,500'
Mountain Avenue	Local	1,000	24'	Route	West of Loeffler	4,300'
Mountain Avenue (Rt. 178)	Minor Arterial	8,000-10,500	24-26'	Bike Lane	East of Loeffler	5,100'
Mountain Road	Collector	5,100	28-30'	Bike Lane	Sliver widening may be needed	3,700'
Park Avenue (Rt. 178)	Minor Arterial	10,900-11,900	32'	Bike Lane		8,900'
Park Avenue	Collector	7,300	32'-36'	Bike Lane	East of School Street	3,500'
School Street	Minor Arterial	5,400	28-30'	Route		2,200'
School Street (Rt. 178)	Minor Arterial	8,200	28-30'	Route		2,700'
Simsbury Road (Rt. 185)	Minor Arterial	12,800 – 18,900	26-36'	Route	Bike Lane if sliver widening done	11,000'
Tariffville Road	Collector	1,100	30'	Route		1,100'
Terry Plains Road	Local	N/A	22-26'	Route		8,700'
Tunxis Avenue	Local	N/A	30'	Route	North of Tariffville Road	2,000'
Tunxis Avenue (Rt. 189)	Minor Arterial	6,500 – 10,200	30-36'	Bike Lane	Sliver widening needed	5,000'
West Street	Collector	1,400	26-28'	Route		2,100'
Wintonbury Avenue	Collector	6,800	28-30'	Sharrow	West of Crestview Rd	1,800'
Wintonbury Avenue	Collector	6,800	24-30'	Route	Crestview Rd to School St	8,000'
Woodland Avenue	Collector	5,550	24-30'	Bike Lane	Sharrow between Hampton and Essex	7,900'



SYSTEM THEMES

A photograph of a playground with various equipment including a red spring rider, a red and blue play structure with a slide, and a blue metal frame, all set on a gravel surface with trees in the background. The image has a blue tint and the text 'SYSTEM THEMES' is overlaid in white.

VISIONING THEMES

INTRODUCTION

In April, 2013, the Consulting Team and Town of Bloomfield staff met for an afternoon of visioning to discuss overall Master Plan findings and preliminary discussion of strategic recommendations. The meeting included a discussion of major system Themes. The Themes serve as the overarching framework for the future vision of the system. These will serve as the major focus areas and positioning of the Department. After discussion and priority ranking, the system themes included:

VISIBILITY AND BRANDING

Bloomfield parks and recreation services play an integral role in providing the community with a variety of recreation opportunities. The Department of Leisure Services is vital to economic development, creating a more livable community, healthier residents, and offering quality programs and services that are affordable. With these key factors in mind, the Department's influence in the Town will continue to grow.

The Department will continue to work on "telling its story" to residents. Branding is the Department's promise to its customers. It tells them what they can expect from products and services, and it differentiates offerings from other providers of similar services. The Leisure Services brand is derived from what people perceive as what the Department currently is, what the Department wants to be, and what the Department will become. The brand evokes an emotional response and feeling. Strengthening the brand will result in greater participation in programs and services.

CONNECTIVITY

As a suburban town with rural origins, many destinations within Bloomfield are accessible primarily by automobile. While there is demand for walking and bicycling in Town, the limited sidewalk and bike route network presents an obstacle to this mode

of transport. By enhancing connections to parks, Bloomfield's residents will have greater access to, and a stronger relationship with, the Town's parks.

The improvement of access to and between Bloomfield's open spaces should take a multi-faceted approach. The Town's parks need clearly identifiable entrances. Access points to parks and open space should be increased. An on-street bicycle network should be established that provides connectivity and for multiple levels of riding expertise. Finally, an off-street network of bicycle pathways that improves access to natural and scenic resources and provides a safe operating space for young and/or inexperienced riders should be established as an alternative to on-street routes.

REINVESTING IN THE SYSTEM

One of the hallmarks of a great park and recreation system is its ability to adequately maintain the infrastructure. This is difficult to achieve during economically challenging times. Many of the facilities are in need of improvement and renovation. One of the outcomes of the Master Plan is to create a stronger vision of capital improvements, with priorities for completion. The first step in the process is having the knowledge of what priorities exist in renovating current facilities and parks. Based on the level of service standards, community input, and overall park development needs, the Department desires to have a planned approach to the future allocation of resources.

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

The critical core competency of the Department is the provision of recreation programs and services. Within the last few years, program offerings have grown. There is appreciation and understanding of the diverse audience of the community, and the resulting challenges of connecting with diverse age segments and ethnicities. The Department is perceived as a provider for youth programs.

The agency's strength is its programs for youth. In the future, the Department aspires to have greater connections with the adult population. One of the significant challenges is the lack of high quality indoor recreation space.

PARK LAND SUSTAINABILITY

Conversely to the need for more indoor space, the amount of park land greatly exceeds the Standard for park acreage. At one time, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) had a standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 population. Now, the standard is closer to 12-13 acres per thousand population, based on reporting agencies within the NRPA current database of agencies around the country. Bloomfield has 69.47 acres of parkland per 1,000 population, which greatly exceeds the standard.

Each of the five Themes is referenced repeatedly throughout the following Strategic Initiative Recommendations. They are the foundation for future positioning of the Department.



A large, leafy tree stands in the foreground, its trunk thick and dark. In the background, a calm pond reflects the surrounding greenery. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue gradient. The text "STRATEGIC INITIATIVES" is centered in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

INTRODUCTION

The following are Strategic Initiatives for the Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services. The Recommendations include a five year period from 2014 to 2019. The Recommendations are listed as short term, midterm, or long term priorities. The Plan should be reviewed each year in order to accommodate any changes in priorities that occur throughout each year.

The Initiatives are categorized according to three time frames:

- Short Term 2014-2015
- Mid Term 2016-2017
- Long Term 2018-2019

Short Term 2014-2015

- Develop a system wide signage and wayfinding plan and improve park "gateways" to make them more prominent and make the parks feel like special places. Signage and gateways should have a common theme or branding to make the parks easily identifiable as a Bloomfield Park.
- Develop the Department's brand and image, including logo and development of consistent messaging.
- Improve Filley Park and the connections to Filley.
- There is a potential for a trail connection between Filley Park and LaSalette (the Scott Trail) by passing through the cemetery.
- Auer Farm has potential for east/west bike connections also.
- Coordinate signage for the East Coast Greenway route and prioritize bicycle facility improvements along that route.
- As part of trails and connectivity Initiatives, develop a citizen Trails Committee.
- Ensure safety and security at parks including such items as lighting at the Community Center.
- Create Park Board by-laws with identification of procedures, composition of Board seats, appointment process, and term lengths.

- Create additional Public Works positions to perform park maintenance to improve the acreage per full time staff person ration. In the short term, five additional positions would be beneficial.
- Develop maintenance standards to outline the level of maintenance desired at various parks and facilities.
- Maintain the tennis courts at Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center, but remove all others as there is a surplus of 12 tennis courts in the system.
- Create a capital replacement program based on Master Plan recommendations. Include maintenance impacts for new facilities or amenities and an ongoing replacement schedule for park amenities such as playgrounds.
- Continue to work on identifying ways of engaging active adults within programs and services. This includes an active adult launch group and meet up groups. The launch group can be involved in the development of additional indoor space.

Mid Term 2016-2017

- Develop a Disc Golf Course at LaSalette Park.
- As part of PRORAGIS, perform a calculation of economic benefits of Department services and events.
- Complete a statistically valid needs assessment survey to determine program and facility needs, unmet needs, and priorities.
- Develop improvements at Wilcox Park, including the addition of a large picnic pavilion (to accommodate groups larger than 50) for group rentals, a new rental building, and the possibility of an outdoor adventure/recreation area for youth and a team building course for corporate use can be contracted.
- Develop smaller picnic pavilions at two additional locations (for groups of up to 50)
- Renovate the existing building at Farmington River Park; options include converting it into a nature center and/or a rental facility for river access with kayak and canoe rentals and nature camps.
- Analyze the possibility of merging park

maintenance responsibilities as part of Public Works into the Leisure Services Department. Nationwide, a significant majority of parks and recreation operations are within the same department. This structure works well from an external customer perspective as issues concerning all park and recreation services are within the same department. One area to consider in this analysis is the disadvantage created by this in relation to the cross training and shared responsibilities currently employed by the Public Works Department.

- Create cost of service information to develop data relating to identification of expenses of park maintenance by specific park
- Create a system of key performance indicators to determine the Department's outcomes and progress
- Renovate Bloomfield Municipal Pool
- Add additional soccer fields to Reservoir 3. This will alleviate the deficit of multi-purpose field amenity as part of the Level of Service Standard.

Long Term 2018-2019

- Plan for a referendum to fund improvements to the system. The referendum, in part, should include alleviating the indoor space deficit of approximately 20,000 square feet and include fitness center and group exercise space.
- Expand, and continue to plan for expansion of greenway from Tariffville to Cottage Grove Road via routing along Griffin Line rail corridor.
- Research the possibility of renovating a golf course clubhouse to include a banquet facility, large enough to hold 100 people.
- Consider installing an artificial turf field at the Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Service Center or the high school.



A blue-tinted photograph of a park. In the foreground, a concrete sidewalk runs across the bottom. To the left, a playground structure with a green roof is partially visible. In the middle ground, several picnic tables are scattered across a grassy area. The background is filled with a dense line of trees, some with bare branches and others with green foliage. The overall scene is peaceful and well-maintained.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The following information outlines estimated costs for improvements outlined in the Strategic Recommendations. Some of the costs associated with Strategic Initiatives listed above are not detailed within this section. The improvements of Farmington River Park, for example, are not included. This is a result of further analysis required to determine the best use of the park.

The costs listed below represent present day estimates. These numbers will change, depending upon when the projects are completed. Assume an inflationary factor of about 4% annually.

Pool Renovation

- A 700 bather load aquatics facility renovation, keeping the existing 50 meter pool is estimated at approximately \$6-\$7 million dollars.

Small Picnic Shelter (24x24) 4 picnic tables, 32 people capacity

- Shelter purchase \$16,000
- Shelter install \$12,000 (+/-75%)
- Footings \$3,000
- Concrete paving \$7,000 (1,000 SF for shelter pad)
- Excavation/haul off \$2,000
- TOTAL \$40,000

Medium to Large Shelter (32x32) 9 picnic tables, 72 people capacity

- Shelter purchase \$25,000
- Shelter install \$18,000 (+/-75%)
- Footings \$3,000
- Concrete paving \$11,000 (1500 SF for shelter pad)
- Excavation/haul off \$3,000
- TOTAL \$60,000

Athletic fields: soccer

- A regulation size field (120 yards x 80 yards) \$173,000 (\$2/sf)

Indoor recreation space

- 50,000 square feet facility estimated at \$14 million and includes all hard and soft cost. This excludes an indoor pool and any land acquisition. If a decision is made to build an indoor facility, a feasibility study would need to be included and research performed outlining program spaces.

Disc Golf Course

- Disc golf baskets, tee pads and signage \$10,000
- Course clearing and preparation \$5,000
- Equipment installation \$5,000
- TOTAL \$20,000

Golf Course Banquet Facility

- Adding 1,400 square feet for seating of an additional 70 people would be \$600,000 not including any expansion of the kitchen area.

Artificial turf

- A regulation size field (120 yards x 80 yards) \$650,000 (\$7.5/sf)

Signage program

- Park signage and wayfinding study \$8,000
- Sign design and documentation design \$28,000
- Construction Administration \$4,000
- TOTAL \$40,000
- Sign fabrication and installation costs will vary depending on extent of signage.

Bike and Trail Improvements

- Phase 1 Improvements \$600,000
- Phase 2 Improvements \$1,000,000



A blue-tinted photograph of a grassy field with a line of trees in the background. The text "IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES" is overlaid in white, bold, uppercase letters.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Implementation Guidelines

The following is a listing of suggestions for successful implementation of the Strategic Recommendations. It represents the commitment and discipline required to integrate the Master Plan implementation process into daily operations.

- The Strategic Recommendations will become the guidepost for the Department. When decisions or responses to the community are needed, the Plan becomes the reference point for decision making and whether or not new issues or responses to the community are of higher importance than what's been established as existing direction.
- This information should be included as part of new Board Member and employee orientation programs.
- Post the Executive Summary on the Website and track results on the site as well. It may also be helpful to print a short summary of the progress to distribute to interested partners and community members.
- The Leisure Services Director should have responsibility of being the project manager or "champion" of the Plan's implementation to ensure success. This includes monitoring the Plan's progress and working with staff to effectively integrate the Plan with operations.
- Regular reporting of the Plan's progress should occur. Break the Plan into separate fiscal years and report one year at a time, as an ongoing annual work plan. Each Recommendation for the year should include a list of tactics that support its completion. The tactics are developed prior to each year for the upcoming list of Recommendations. A suggestion is to input each year's data on a spreadsheet that lists the Recommendation start and completion dates, and which staff person is responsible for the Recommendation's completion.
- At the end of the year, perform an annual written review and documentation of the Recommendation.
- In addition to an annual review, a more comprehensive three year review will occur at the end of FY16-17 and FY19-20. This will include updating demographic information, updating park and amenity inventory, revising recreation program recommendations, and completing an additional Community Survey at the end of FY19-20.
- Update major stakeholders on the Plan's implementation and results on an annual basis.
- Conduct staff meetings on a regular basis, such as semi-annually to review the Plan's progress and results and report the Plan's progress to the Recreation Commission as well.
- Complete an annual just-in-time review of the next year's Recommendations to determine if priorities have changed. This can be included at an annual retreat in which successive years' Recommendations are discussed as part of the annual budget process. The Recommendations should tie into the budget process. The Plan's action plan includes three time frames: 2014-2015, 2016-2017, and 2018-2019. This schedule provides the opportunity for thorough updates during those time frames.
- Post a chart of each year's Recommendations on office walls in administrative areas with a check-off column designating completion as part of a visual management program. Staff meetings should regularly include discussion of strategy. This will help to emphasize the Plan's importance and the Department's commitment to execution.
- If there are ideas for new strategies that arise throughout the year, include them on a written "parking lot" and review them as part of the annual just-in-time review to determine if they supplant any existing initiatives.

CLOSING

The Town of Bloomfield Department of Leisure Services aspires to continue and build upon providing excellent services to the community. The Department is poised to develop its brand and image, update its use of marketing, connect more with residents, and further develop the park and recreation system according to the Initiatives of the Master Plan. This will result in fulfillment of the Department's mission:

"The Bloomfield Leisure Services Department is committed to providing quality recreational opportunities, preserving natural resources, and managing a comprehensive system of parks and facilities dedicated to enriching the lives of a diverse and changing community. The Bloomfield Leisure Services Department is committed to providing quality recreational opportunities, preserving natural resources, and managing a comprehensive system of parks and facilities dedicated to enriching the lives of a diverse and changing community."

The focus of the Department will center on the Major Themes:

- Visibility and Branding
- Connectivity
- Reinvesting in the System
- Program Opportunities: One of the hallmarks of a great park and recreation system is its ability to reinvest in the infrastructure.
- Park Land Sustainability

This will ensure the Department's continued role of importance to the community, as well as optimizing resources. The Strategic Initiatives create a sense of direction and focus for the next five years. All of these efforts will result in leadership excellence in the provision of services and impactful results that will greatly benefit all of Bloomfield.