

City of Oak Creek Park & Open Space Plan 2013



City of Oak Creek Park and Open Space Plan

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Steve Bautch, Secretary

Alderman Daniel Bukiewicz

Michael Read, School District Rep.

Michael Theys, Citizen Rep.

Dan Jahn, Citizen Rep.

Marianne Dickmann, Citizen Rep.

Community Development Department

Doug Seymour, AICP, Director

Kari Papelbon, CFM, AICP, Planner

Peter Wagner, Zoning Administrator/Planner

Prepared by the
City of Oak Creek Community Development Department
8640 S. Howell Avenue
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154
www.oakcreekwi.org

Adopted December 17, 2013

Amended April 15, 2014

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1 Introduction

Plan Background and Purpose

The primary purpose of the Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Oak Creek is to guide the preservation, acquisition, and development of land for park, outdoor recreation, and related open space purposes to serve the recreational needs of the population. The further purpose is to protect and enhance the underlying and sustaining natural resource base. The plan is also intended to make the City eligible to apply for and receive federal and state aids that support the acquisition and development of needed park and open space sites and facilities. Oak Creek last updated its Park and Open Space Plan in 2008.

The importance of this Park and Open Space Plan to the overall quality of life within the City of Oak Creek cannot be overemphasized. The recommendations presented in this plan will guide the acquisition, preservation, and development of land for parks, outdoor recreation activities close to home, and other open spaces in the City to meet the needs of a growing and changing population. However, this plan also recognizes that its implementation is dependent upon the availability of increasingly limited financial resources, and therefore, certain recommendations may not be able to be achieved within the time-frame of this plan.

The City of Oak Creek encompasses 28.4 square miles in the southeast part of Milwaukee County. In general, the City's boundaries are County Highway ZZ (College Avenue) to the north, Racine County to the south, 27th Street to the west, and Lake Michigan to the east, though the City of South Milwaukee is located north of Forest Hill Avenue and east of Pennsylvania Avenue. Oak Creek shares its borders with the communities of Franklin, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Greenfield, and the Town of Caledonia.



The City of Oak Creek is a rapidly growing, diverse suburban community. Just under one-half of the City's substantial land base is undeveloped or in permanent open space. Oak Creek's population has grown from 28,456 persons in 2000 (U.S. Census), to 34,451 in 2010 (U.S. Census)—a 21% increase. Population in 2030 is projected to be 40,596 persons¹.

Commercial development has been stagnating in recent years due to recent economic conditions. Since 2008, there has been a small amount of new commercial development in the City. Future commercial development is expected to occur mainly around S. Howell Avenue and Drexel Avenue due to the redevelopment of the old Delphi factory which is currently known as Drexel Town Square.

Light industrial and manufacturing development in Oak Creek mainly consists of two large industrial parks, Northbranch and Southbranch. As large areas of land have become scarce, newer industrial parks have been much smaller.

¹ State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center – “Final Population Projections for Wisconsin Municipalities: 2000-2025”

Recent single-family residential development has been predominately in the southern area of the City, with some neighborhoods more than doubling their population between 2000 and 2010. With the majority of open land being located south of Puetz Road, it is anticipated that the southern portion of the City will see more single-family residential growth over the next 10 to 20 years. Recent multi-family development has occurred near the City center area as well as along major arterial streets such as S. Chicago Road, S. 13th Street, and S. 27th Street. It is anticipated that there will be increases in both multi-family and single family development along the S. 27th Street Corridor as the S. 27th Street Corridor Plan and Sub Area Plan have designated large areas of land for mixed-use residential development.



Park & Open Space Planning Process

There are numerous purposes for comprehensive Park and Open Space Planning including:

1. Assessing the need for parkland, facilities, and programs to meet the demand of City of Oak Creek residents.
2. Identifying a workable system of regional, community, neighborhood, and sub-neighborhood park facilities.
3. Propose acquisition of lands that are particularly suited for park and open space purposes.
4. Suggest standards for park facility development.
5. Identify changes in demographics, parks and recreational trends and plan accordingly.
6. Prioritize proposals for acquisition and development based on objective analyses of needs and resources.

Together these factors, if adopted and followed, will allow the City to have a park system that will satisfy most of the needs of current and future residents. Further incremental development and acquisition of parkland will assure that future residents will have convenient access to facilities of similar quality without an undue burden on the taxpayer. The intent of this plan is to inform and guide city leaders of the goals and objectives of park and open space acquisition and development in the City of Oak Creek over the next five years. Funding and implementation of this plan to any specific property will be determined by the Common Council.

The Need to Evaluate the Park & Open Space Plan

This plan is actually an update of previous park plans completed and adopted in 1975, 1980, 1986, 1991, 1998, and 2008. While those plans served well during their time, significant changes in the City's population growth, land use, changing standards, new development, trends in parks and recreation, and partial implementation of the past plans all cause the need for periodically rethinking the City's park acquisition and development program.

The adoption of this plan and subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will also enable the City of Oak Creek to participate in outdoor

recreation grant programs. The DNR has adopted requirements for local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans that must be met in order to qualify for participation in state and federal grant programs. One of the criteria is that any municipality requesting grant funding must have an adopted comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, updated every 5 years, and approved by the DNR.

Recommendations put forth in this plan should be examined annually and completely reviewed at the end of the planning period in order to determine how well the City has achieved its goals. Future planning efforts should build upon the recommendations made in this plan.

Park planning cannot be done in a vacuum. In the preparation of this plan the City looked at other local, county, regional, and State of Wisconsin plans that directly or indirectly impact park and open space planning. The City of Oak Creek has several adopted plans that address park, recreation, natural resource and open space planning, including:

1. **“2020 Vision – A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Oak Creek”**

The City’s adopted Comprehensive Plan has dedicated an entire section to agricultural, natural, and cultural resources to be in compliance with the State of Wisconsin’s Smart Growth legislation. Contained in that section are several recommendations regarding parks and recreation, many of which are taken directly from the 1998 Parks & Open Space Plan. The stated goal in that plan is:

“Oak Creek should preserve approximately 25 percent of the total City land area in permanent open space, not including private yards. Oak Creek should have well-designed and appropriately located park facilities, preserve areas of open space that are prominent features of the community’s landscape, and protect natural resources. Development of park facilities should serve recreational needs of local residents and enhance the appearance of the community. Preservation of open space can take the form of preventing development in critical environmental areas, preserving farmland, promoting strategies for conserving and enhancing streetscapes, and requiring adjacent development to respect and incorporate open space and natural features.”

2. **2008 Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Oak Creek**

This plan set forth the basic socioeconomic, land use, and natural resource base-related data pertinent to the park and open space planning; established standards for the provision of park and open space facilities; identified land and facility needs based on those standards; established goals and objectives and defined policies to best meet those goals and objectives. In addition, this plan addressed implementation strategies through a five-year capital improvements program to address facility needs.

3. **Abendschein Community Park Master Plan**
This plan for Oak Creek's first and only community park was adopted by the City in 2000. This plan provides a blueprint for the phased development of Abendschein Park. In 2008, the City updated the master plan and has partially implemented some components of the plan.
4. **Bender Park Master Plan**
This plan is for the development of Milwaukee County's Bender Park, which is located in the southeastern area of Oak Creek.
5. **"A Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2010" (SEWRPC)**
This plan is the first regional bicycle & pedestrian facilities system plan prepared for Southeastern Wisconsin. The plan has a proposed regional bikeway system designed to provide connections between the Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee urbanized areas. The City and County have used this document to guide the development of a City-wide system of bicycle and recreational trails.
6. **"A Park & Open Space Plan for Milwaukee County" (DRAFT – 2007)**
Milwaukee County is currently updating their park and open space plan. While the plan has not been adopted to date, it does provide goals for County-owned parkland in Oak Creek.
7. **Lakefront Redevelopment Plan**
The plan establishes a framework and roadmap for redevelopment of the lakefront area into a mixed use neighborhood with the focus on a lakefront park and public open spaces. It also allows for private development in appropriate areas.
8. **Wetland Enhancement Area Plan Drexel Town Square**
This plan establishes the framework to enhance the wetland area within the Drexel Town Square and provide passive recreational opportunities.



Importance and Benefits of Parkland and Open Space Sites

Park and open space sites provide the opportunity for participation in and enjoyment of a wide range of outdoor recreational experiences. Park and open space sites afford the opportunity for participation in resource-oriented activities such as golfing and picnicking, and non-resource-oriented activities such as baseball, basketball, softball, soccer, and tennis. Such sites also afford the opportunity for more passive pursuits, such as nature study or walking. In addition, park and open space sites have a number of important social, environmental, and economic benefits. Among these benefits are the following:



- Social Benefits – Individuals personally benefit from outdoor recreational experiences through:
 - The improvement of physical health
 - Learning and teaching
 - Rest, relaxation, and revitalization which contribute to mental well-being
 - The opportunity to interact with other individuals in the community
 - An increase in the awareness of the natural environment
- Environmental Benefits – Acquiring land for parks and open space helps assure the long-term preservation of environmentally significant land which in turn:
 - Protects wildlife and plant communities
 - Reduces congestion
 - Enhances air quality
 - Reduces the sediment load, toxins, and excess nutrients that enters the waterway
 - Reduces the rate and amount of stormwater runoff that causes flooding and erosion
- Economic Benefits – The development of park and open space sites benefit the economy by:
 - Contributing to a healthy and productive working environment
 - Making a community more desirable for businesses and residential development
 - Increasing values of nearby properties



2 Inventory of Planning Area

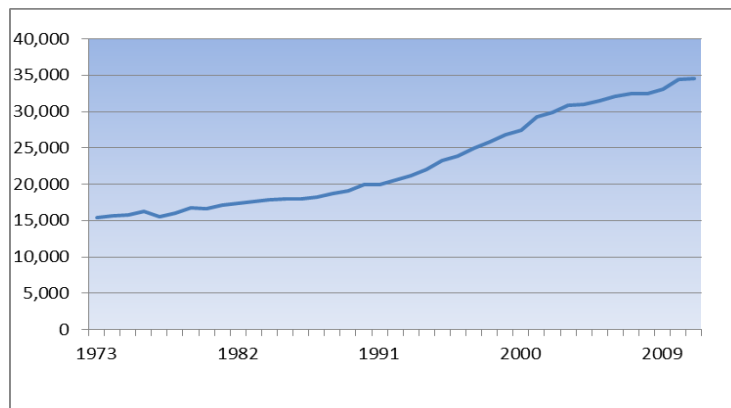
The proper formulation of a park and open space plan necessitates the collection and collation of data related to existing demographic characteristics, existing land uses, and natural resources. Such data provide an important basis for determining the need for additional park and open space sites and facilities and for designing a plan to meet those needs. The inventory findings are presented in this chapter.

Demographic Characteristics

Population

Historic population levels in the City of Oak Creek have risen steadily since 1980, as can be seen in Figure 1. The population trend for the City of Oak Creek has steadily increased as shown in Table 1. The 2013 population estimate for the City of Oak Creek is 34,695.

Figure 1: Historic Population Levels in Oak Creek: 1973-2013



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

Households

In addition to total population, the number of households, or occupied housing units, is of importance in land use and public facility planning because it greatly influences the demand for transportation and other facilities and services, including parks and recreational facilities.

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of households increased over the past twenty-five years for both the City and County. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households increased by 25.1 percent. Over the same time period, Milwaukee County only increased by 1.6 percent. With the number of households increasing at a faster rate than the population, the number of persons per household has decreased. The average sized household in the City of Oak Creek is 2.45 people.



Table 1: Households for City of Oak Creek and Milwaukee County: 1980 and 2010

Year	City of Oak Creek			Milwaukee County		
	No. of Households	Change from Previous Census		No. of Households	Change from Previous Census	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1980	5,565	--	--	363,653	--	--
1990	7,007	1,442	25.9	373,048	9,395	2.6
2000	11,239	4,232	60.4	377,729	4,681	1.3
2010	14,064	2,825	25.1	383,591	5,862	1.6

^a Estimated number of households
Source: US Census 2010

Age Distribution

The age distribution of the population may be expected to influence the location and type of recreational areas and facilities provided within the City. The age distribution of the population of the City and County between 1990 and 2000 is set forth in Table 2. The total population of the City increased significantly between 1990 and 2000, with increases in all age groups. The age groups 5-17, 25-44 and 45-64 show the greatest increase in the number of people over the ten year period.

Table 2: Age Distribution of the Population of the City of Oak Creek:
Census Years 2000 & 2010

Age Group	2000		2010		Change 2000-2010	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent
Under 5	1,912	6.7	2,249	6.5	337	41.2
5-17	5,195	18.3	5,883	17.1	688	35.5
18-24	2,651	9.3	2,817	8.2	166	40.6
25-44	10,072	35.4	10,293	29.9	221	44.3
45-64	6,107	21.5	9,415	27.3	3308	57.9
65 and older	2,519	8.9	3,794	11.0	1275	58.2
All ages	28,456	100.0	34,451	100.0	8,943	45.8

Source: US Census 2010

Natural Resource Inventory

Within its nearly 2,200 acres of parks, parkways, and trails, the City of Oak Creek and Milwaukee County maintain a large amount of the significant natural resource base in the city. This section presents such information as it relates to the City of Oak Creek.

Surface Water Resources

Surface water resources, consisting of streams and lakes, form a particularly important element of the natural resource base. Surface water resources provide recreational opportunities, influence the physical development of the City, and enhance its aesthetic quality. Major surface water features within the City are shown on Map 1.



The City includes two watersheds: the Oak Creek Watershed and the Root River Watershed. The main streams include the Oak Creek and the Root River consisting of 28.9 miles. There are no major lakes 50 acres or more. However, the major portion of the eastern boundary of the City consists of the Lake Michigan shoreline. In addition, there are a number of “minor” ponds such as Henry Miller Pond and other man-made water bodies in subdivisions located throughout the city.

Floodlands

Floodlands are the wide, gently sloping areas contiguous to, and usually lying on both sides of, a stream channel. For planning and regulatory purposes, floodlands are normally defined as the areas, excluding the stream channel, subject to inundation by the 100-year recurrence interval flood event. This is the flood that may be expected to be reached or exceeded in severity once in every 100 years, or stated another way, there is a 1 percent chance of this event being reached or exceeded in any given year. Floodland areas are generally not well suited to urban development, not only because of the flood hazard, but also because of the presence of high water tables and, generally, of soils poorly suited to urban uses. Floodland areas often contain important natural resources, such as high-value woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, which can be prime locations for parks and open space areas.

Floodlands, identified by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), are shown on Map 1. Approximately, 1,292 acres or about 7.0 percent of the total area of the City are located in the 100-year recurrence interval flood hazard area. Approximately 82 acres, or 6.3 percent of the floodlands, are located within the parkland within the City².

Wetlands

Wetlands provide essential breeding, nesting, resting, and feeding grounds and provide escape cover for many forms of fish and wildlife. Wetlands also contribute to flood control, because such areas naturally serve to store excess water runoff temporarily which tends to reduce peak water flows. Wetlands also serve as groundwater recharge and discharge areas. In addition,



² City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

wetlands help protect downstream water resources from siltation and pollution by trapping sediments, nutrients, and other water pollutants.

The location and extent of wetlands in the City as delineated by SEWRPC are shown on Map 2. Wetlands covered about 2,207 acres, or about 12.1 percent of the City. About 663 acres, or 30 percent of the wetlands, are located in parklands within the City³.

Woodlands

Woodlands, as defined by SEWRPC, are those upland areas one acre or more in size having 17 or more deciduous trees per acre, each measuring at least four inches in diameter at breast height, and having 50 percent or more tree canopy coverage. Woodlands provide an attractive natural resource with a variety of beneficial functions, such as contributing to clean air and water, regulating surface water runoff, and providing a safe habitat for wildlife.

Woodlands occur in scattered locations throughout the City. Woodland areas cover about 823 acres, or about 4.5 percent of the City. Approximately 279 acres, or 34 percent, of the woodlands are located in parklands within the City⁴. Map 3 shows the major woodlands found in the City of Oak Creek, and Tables 3 & 4 describe these woodlands.

Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat

A comprehensive inventory of natural and geological resources in the County was conducted by the Southeast Regional Planning Commission in 1994 as part of the natural areas and critical species habitat protection and management plan⁵. The inventory systematically identified all remaining high-quality natural areas, critical species habitat, and sites having geological significance within the Region. Recommendations developed through that program for the protection and management of identified natural areas, critical species habitat, and geological sites have been incorporated into this park and open space plan.

Natural Areas

Natural areas are tracts of land or water so little modified by human activity, or sufficiently recovered from the effects of such activity, that they contain intact native plant and animal communities believed to be representative of the landscape before European settlement. Natural area sites are classified into one of three categories: natural areas of statewide or greater significance (NA-1), natural areas of countywide or regional significance (NA-2), and natural areas of local significance (NA-3). Classification of an area into one of these three categories is based upon consideration of the diversity of plant and animal species and community types present; the structure and integrity of the native plant or animal community; the extent of disturbance from human activity, such as logging, agricultural use, and pollution; the commonness of the plant and animal community; unique natural features; the size of the site; and the educational value.

A total of 7 natural areas, encompassing about 523 acres, or about 2.9 percent of the City, were identified in the City of Oak Creek in 2000 and described in Table 3. Of the

³ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

⁴ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

⁵ SEWRPC Planning Report No. 42, A Regional Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat Protection and Management Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, September 1997.

523 acres, about 340 acres, or 65 percent were within City or County parklands. Of the 7 natural areas, there are no classified NA-1 sites, two are classified as NA-2 sites, and five are classified as NA-3 sites. Map 3 depicts the locations of natural areas⁶.

Table 3: Natural Areas in the City of Oak Creek

Number on Map 3	Area Name	Classification ^a	Location	Ownership	Size (acres)	Description and Comments
1	Cudahy Woods	NA-2 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 4	Milwaukee County	47	An upland hardwood forest containing two major forest types separated by a small stream. To the north is a dry-mesic forest of oak, cherry, and hickory; southward is an old-growth mesic forest of sugar maple, beech, and red oak. One of the best forests of its kind in the vicinity.
2	Falk Park Woods	NA-2 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 7	Milwaukee County	77	This is a diverse, relatively large north-south stand of woods. Consists mostly of good-quality dry-mesic uplands, with mesic stands of beech and sugar maple at the north end, and low areas of ephemeral ponds, wet-mesic hardwoods, and stream interspersed throughout.
3	Root River Wet-Mesic Woods – East	NA-2 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 32	Milwaukee County	50	Wet-mesic and mesic woods bordering a gravel-bottom stream that is a tributary of the Root River. Contains a rich, diverse flora, including several rare species.
4	Esch-Honadl Woods	NA-3 (RSH)	T5N, R2E Section 18	Milwaukee County	72	A mix of low woods, second-growth upland forest, and relatively undisturbed beech woods. Integrity of the woods is threatened by encroaching residential development.
5	Wood Creek Woods	NA-3 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 20	Private	35	This is a patchy mixture of mature mesic and dry-mesic upland woods, regenerating forest, wet-mesic forest, stream, and ephemeral ponds. Quality varies throughout. The site is threatened by future residential development.
6	Wedge Woods	NA-3 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 23	Private	19	A small, disturbed woods consisting of lowland hardwoods at the low, wet west end, and dry-mesic woods at the drier east end. Contains one of the largest populations of the State-designated endangered blue-stemmed goldenrod in the State. Threatened by residential development.
7	Oak Creek Low Woods	NA-3 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Section 26, 27	Milwaukee County & Private	68	Moderate-quality wet-mesic woods, with small areas of mesic woods.
8	Root River Riverine Forest	NA-3 (RSH)	T5N, R22E Sections 31, 32, 33, 34	Milwaukee County, Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation	140	A significant portion of the Root River corridor. Extends south into Racine County.

^a RSH identifies a rare species habitat site.

Source: SEWRPC

Critical Species Habitat

Critical species habitat sites are those areas, outside of natural areas, where the chief value lies in their ability to support rare, threatened, or endangered species. Such areas

⁶ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

constitute “critical” habitat that is important to ensure survival of a particular species or group of species of special concern.

A total of 6 sites supporting endangered, threatened or rare plant species have been identified in the City of Oak Creek. These sites together encompass an area of about 75.7 acres – of which approximately 10.6 acres or 14 percent, are located within City or County parklands – and shown on Map 3 and described in Table 4. A total of 3 aquatic sites supporting threatened or rare fish, herptile, or mussel species have also been identified in the City (see Map 3 and Table 4). There are 7.1 stream miles of critical aquatic habitat in the City of Oak Creek.

Table 4: Critical Species Habitat Sites Located in the City of Oak Creek

Number on Map 3	Site Name	Location	Ownership	Size (acres)	Species of Concern
9	Meyers Woods	T5N, R22E, Section 19	Private	18	Black Haw
10	PPG Woods	T5N, R22E, Section 32	Private	19	Red trillium
11	Fittshur Wetland	T5N, R22E, Section 23	Private	6	Blue-stemmed goldenrod
12	Bender Park Woods and Clay Banks	T5N, R22E, Section 25	Milwaukee County	13	Blue-stemmed goldenrod, Variegated scouring-rush
13	Bender Park Woods – South	T5N, R22E, Section 25	Milwaukee County	4	Blue-stemmed goldenrod
14	Oak Creek Power Plant Woods	T5N, R22E, Section 36	WE Energies	16	Blue-stemmed goldenrod

Source: SEWPRC

State Designated Natural Area

Certain natural areas in the City of Oak Creek, identified earlier in this chapter, have been designated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Endangered Resources as state natural areas under the State Natural Areas Program. The program is an effort to protect outstanding examples of native natural communities in the state. Milwaukee County contains four state natural areas. Of these four, the City of Oak Creek contains one, Cudahy Woods.

Geological Sites

No geological sites of importance have been identified in the City of Oak Creek.

Environmental Corridors and Isolated Natural Resource Areas



One of the most important tasks completed under the regional planning program for southeastern Wisconsin has been the identification and delineation of those areas in the region in which concentrations of the best remaining elements of the natural resource base occur. The preservation of such areas in essentially natural, open uses is vital to maintaining a high level of environmental quality in the region, protecting its natural heritage and beauty, and providing recreational opportunities in scenic outdoor settings.

Identification of environmental corridors is based upon the presence of one or more of the following important elements of the natural resource base:

- rivers, streams, lakes, and associated shorelands and floodlands
- wetlands
- woodlands
- prairies
- wildlife habitat areas
- wet, poorly drained, and organic soils
- rugged terrain and high relief topography

The presence of elements that are closely related to the natural resource base, including park and open space sites, natural areas, historic sites, and scenic viewpoints, are also considered in the delineation of environmental corridors. Many of the natural resource elements which form the basis for corridor delineation have been described in the preceding sections of this chapter.

The delineation on a map of the natural resource and resource-related elements specified above results in an essentially linear pattern of relatively narrow elongated areas which have been termed “environmental corridors” by the Southeast Regional Planning Commission⁷. Primary environmental corridors are a minimum of 400 acres in size, two miles in length, and 200 feet in width. Secondary environmental corridors connect with the primary environmental corridors and are at least 100 acres in size and one mile in length. Areas at least five acres in size which contain important natural resource base elements but are separated physically from primary and secondary environmental corridors by intensive urban or agricultural land uses have also been identified and have been termed “isolated natural resource areas.” Environmental corridors and isolated natural areas within the City of Oak Creek are shown on Map 4. Such areas encompassed about 3,472 acres or about 19.1 percent of the City. Approximately 1,103 acres, or 40.7 percent, of environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas are located within parklands in the City⁸.



⁷ A detailed description of the process of refining the delineation of environmental corridors in Southeastern Wisconsin is presented in SEWRPC Technical Report, Vol. 4, No. 2 (March 1981, pp. 1-21.)

⁸ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

Primary Environmental Corridors

The primary environmental corridors contain almost all of the best remaining woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat areas in the City and are, in effect, a composite of the best remaining elements of the natural resource base.



As shown on Map 4, the primary environmental corridors in the City of Oak Creek are located along the Root River, the Oak Creek, Lake Michigan, and in large wetland areas. About 2,429 acres, comprising about 13.4 percent of the total area in the City, are encompassed with the primary environmental corridors. Approximately 1,066 acres, or 43.9 percent, are located within parklands

in the City⁹.

Secondary Environmental Corridors and Isolated Natural Areas

Secondary environmental corridors contain a variety of resource elements and are often remnant resources from primary environmental corridors that have been developed with intensive agricultural or urban uses. Secondary environmental corridors facilitate surface water drainage and provide corridors for the movement of wildlife and for the dispersal of seeds for a variety of plant species.

Secondary environmental corridors in the City of Oak Creek, as shown on Map 4, are located chiefly along the small perennial and intermittent streams within the City. About 762 acres, comprising about 4.2 percent of the City, are encompassed within secondary environmental corridors. Approximately 134.7 acres, or 17.4 percent, are located within parklands in the City¹⁰.

As also shown on Map 4, isolated natural resource areas within the City of Oak Creek include a geographically well distributed variety of isolated wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. These areas encompass about 280.9 acres, or about 1.5 percent of the City. Approximately 37.5 acres, or 13.3 percent, located within the City and County parklands¹¹. Isolated natural resource areas may provide the only available wildlife habitat in an area, provide good locations for local parks and nature areas, and lend aesthetic character and natural diversity to an area.

Existing Parklands

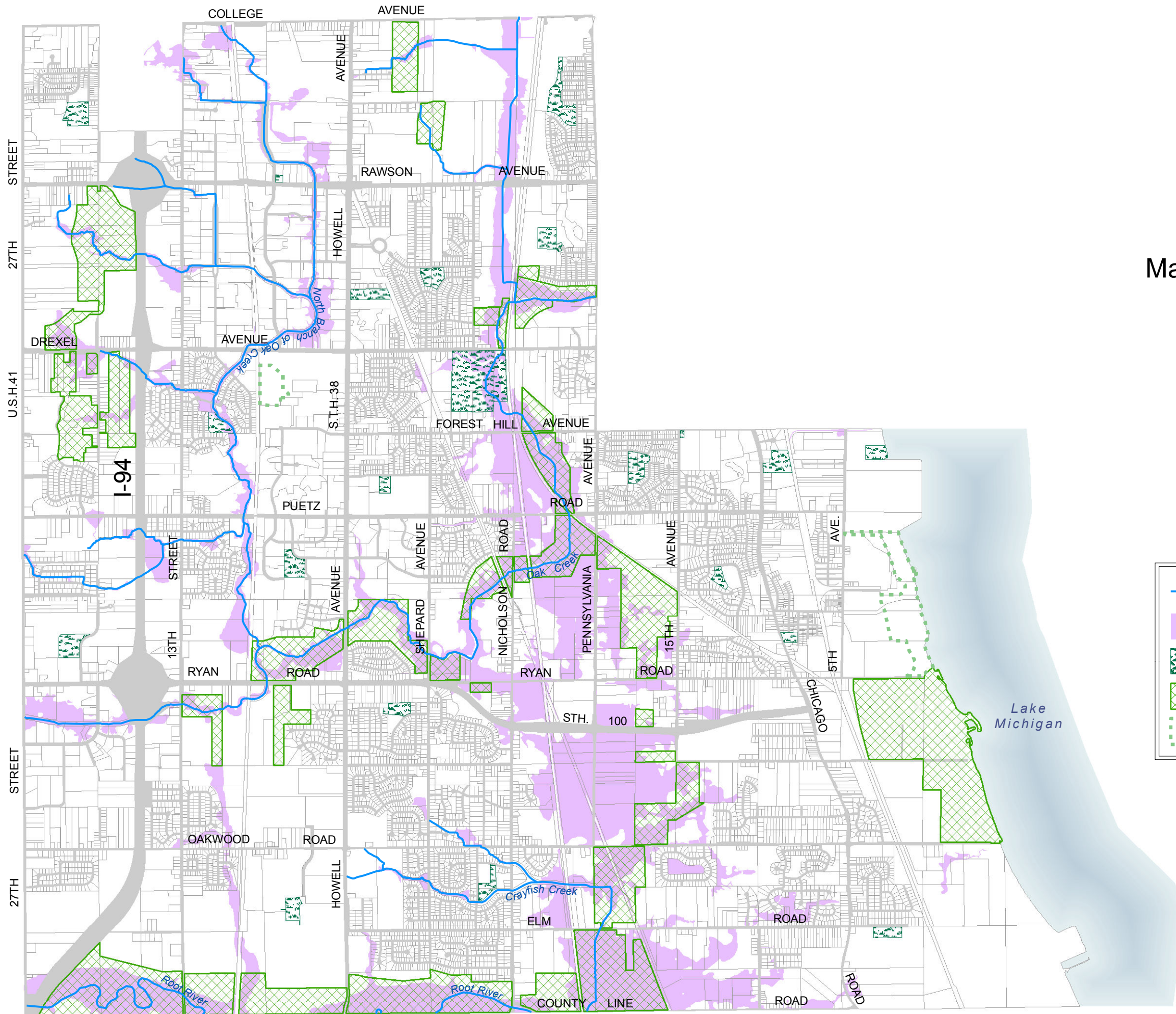
To plan efficiently and effectively for the park system of the future, the City of Oak Creek must consider all existing park and open space sites within the planning area. The following section describes park types and their function in the park system. Map 5 illustrates existing parkland types throughout the City of Oak Creek. While this plan attempts to properly categorize the various types of parks according to their role and function within the system, it should be noted that larger facilities (such as regional and metropolitan parks) can satisfy neighborhood park needs for nearby residents so long as they are placed in an appropriate area of the City. Table 5 details the type of facilities that exist in each park type.

⁹ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

¹⁰ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

¹¹ City of Oak Creek GIS Department and SEWRPC

Map 1
City of Oak Creek
Major Surface Water Features
and Floodland Areas

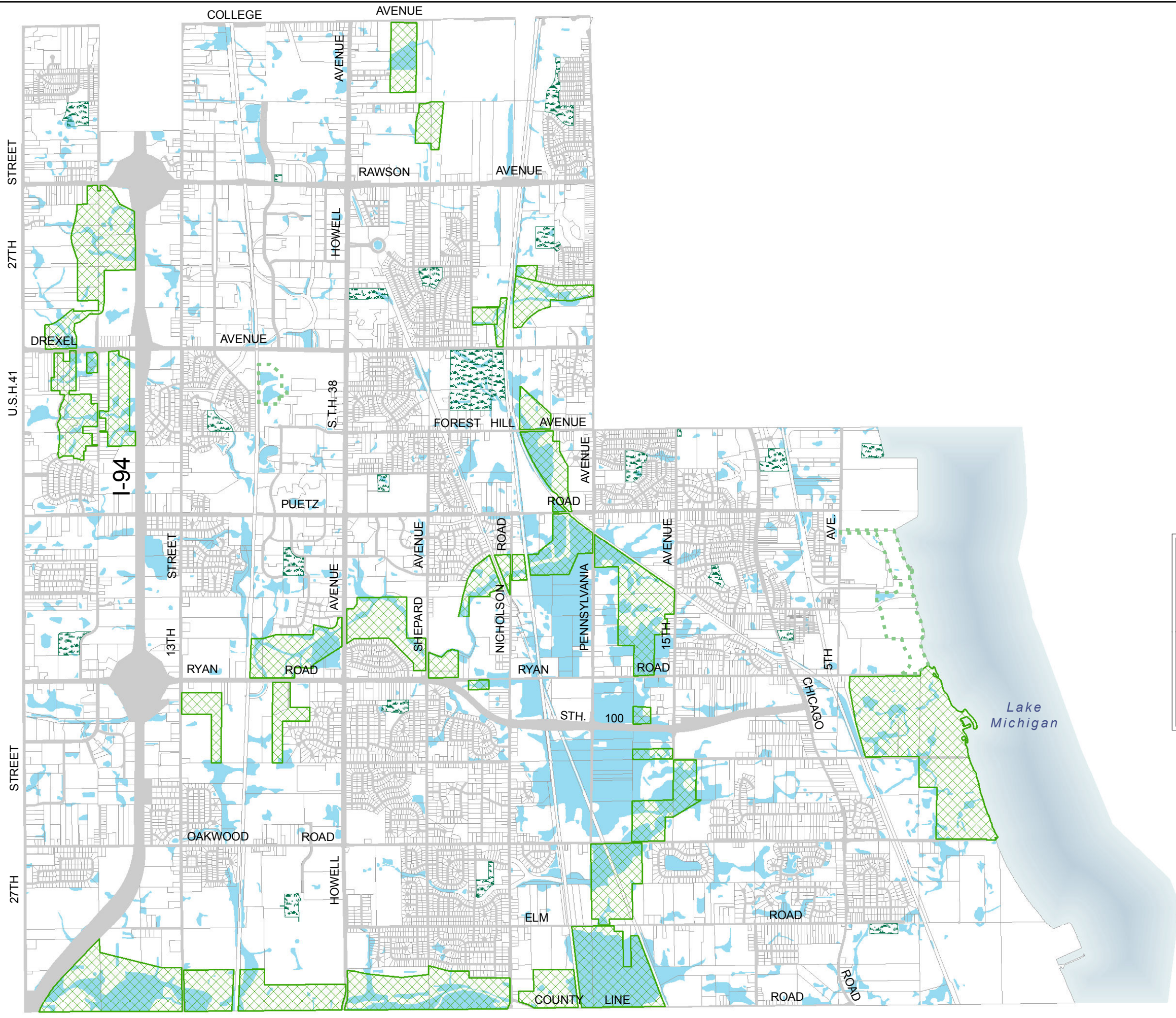


Source: (1) SEWRPC
(2) City of Oak Creek Department
of Community Development

Map 2
City of Oak Creek
Wetland Areas



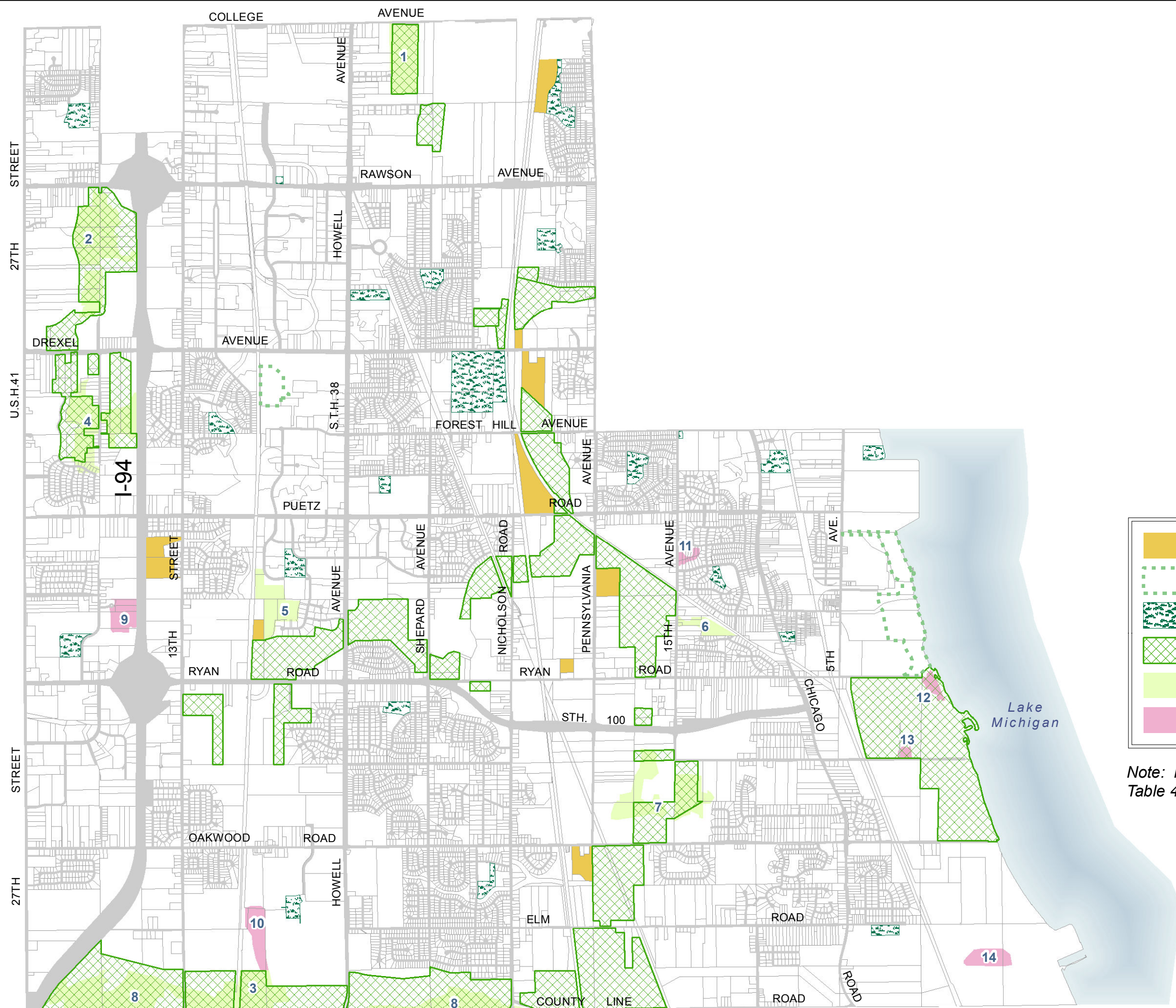
	Future City Park
	DTS Wetland Enhancement Area
	City Parks (2)
	County Parks & Parkways (2)
	Wetland Areas (1)



Source: (1) SEWRPC
(2) City of Oak Creek Department of
Community Development



Map 3 City of Oak Creek Natural Areas & Critical Species Habitat



- Publicly Owned Open Space Areas (1)
- Future City Park
- City Parks (2)
- County Parks & Parkways (2)
- Natural Areas (2)
- Critical Species Habitat (2)

Note: Please refer to Table 3 on page 9 and Table 4 on page 10 for area names and descriptions.

Source: (1) City of Oak Creek Community Development Department
(2) SEWRPC

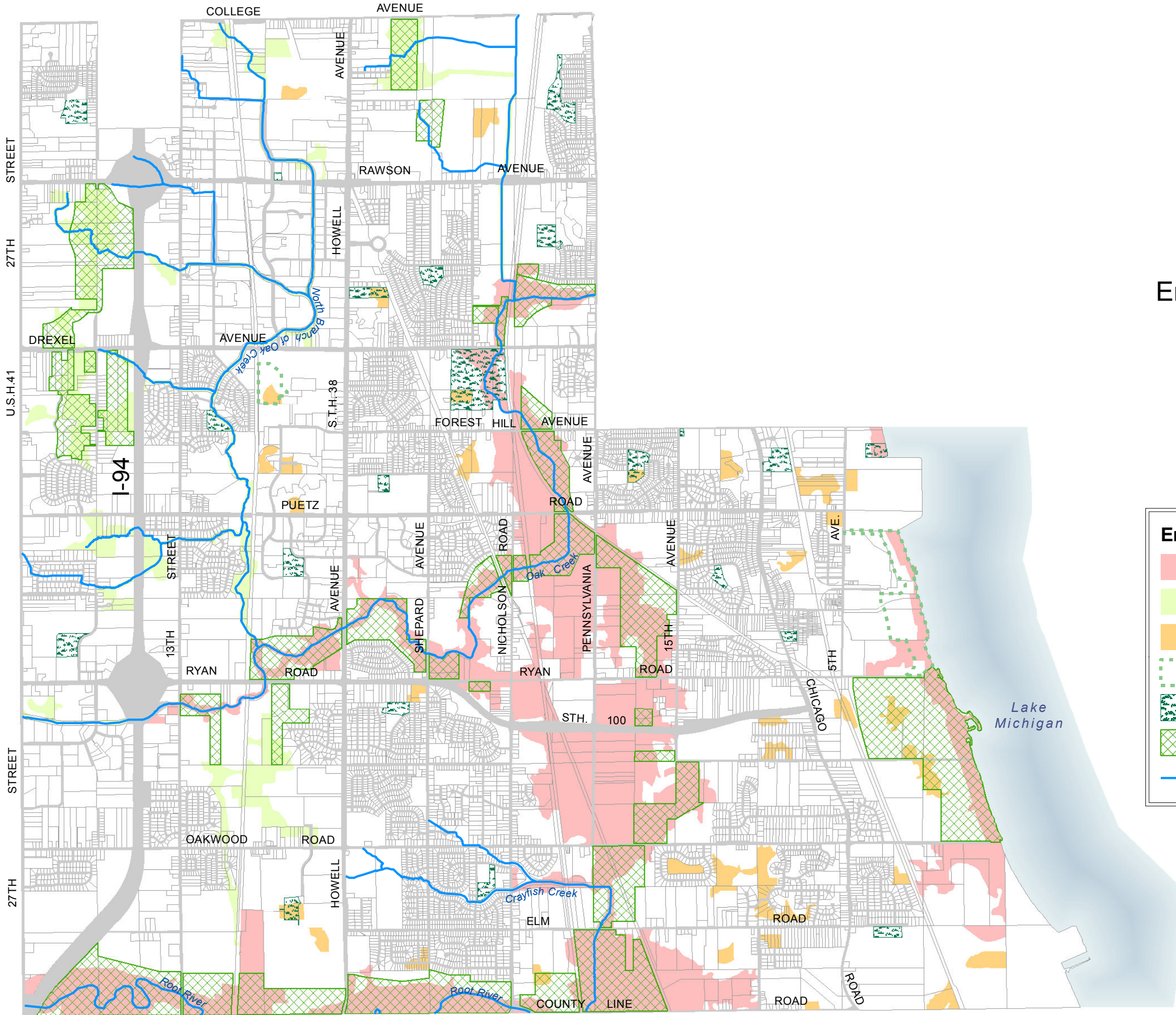


Map 4
 City of Oak Creek
 Environmentally Sensitive Lands
 (Primary & Secondary Environmental Corridors
 & Isolated Natural Areas)



Environmentally Sensitive Lands

- Primary Environmental Corridor (1)
- Secondary Environmental Corridor (1)
- Isolated Natural Areas (1)
- Future City Park
- City Parks (2)
- County Parks & Parkways (2)
- Surface Water Features (1)



Source: (1) SEWRPC
 (2) City of Oak Creek Department of
 Community Development

Park Types and Function

When planning a system of parks and open spaces it is essential to have an assortment of park types. Each park has a certain function within the park system. Different entities may also be responsible for different parks. The following sections describe each park type.

Regional or Metropolitan Parks

These parks typically have special natural resource features, unique landscapes and open spaces that make them a regional draw which are not typically provided by neighborhood or community parks. These types of parks are between 100 acres and 250 acres in size and serve a 3-10 mile radius. Regional parks in the City of Oak Creek include Bender Park and Falk Park, which are owned and maintained by Milwaukee County.

Regional Parks typically contain special natural features and contain recreational facilities that attract residents from a metropolitan area.

- Bender Park is a 286.3-acre site featuring a boat launch and scenic vistas overlooking Lake Michigan.
- Falk Park is a 259.0-acre site that features a significant woodland area.
- Lake Vista Park will be approximately 100 acres. At this time, amenities are undefined, but will include access to and scenic vistas of Lake Michigan.

Greenways

This type of parkland consists of corridors of land that serve as linkages among high priority natural resources or manmade features. They can be either land-or-water based and serve a variety of functions and benefits, including community revitalization and economic development, natural resource conservation, environmental protection, wildlife habitat, and migration¹². The City has two greenways:

Greenways preserve high priority natural resources and connect park system components to form a cohesive park system.

- Root River Parkway encompassing 620 acres.
- Oak Creek Parkway encompassing 705 acres.

Community Parks

The intent of these types of parks is to serve the overall needs of Oak Creek residents by providing recreation opportunities beyond those supplied by neighborhood parks and accommodate large group activities and organized sports play. These types of parks are between 30 and 100 acres in size and serve an area in a 2 mile radius. Oak Creek has one community park:

Community Parks focus on meeting the recreational needs of a community as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.

- Abendschein Park encompasses approximately 74.5 acres and is located at 1321 East Drexel Avenue. The City acquired 40 acres for this site in 1956 from Arthur and Meta Ebert, 14.5 acres from Antonia Gaida in 1958, 10 acres from Milwaukee County in 1985, and 10 acres from Gerald Stahl in 2010. The park was named after Arthur Abendschein, the first Mayor of Oak Creek.

¹² Chaddsford Township, www.chaddsfordpa.net

Neighborhood Parks and School-Park Sites

Neighborhood parks are the basic unit of the park system. This park type includes smaller parks that are designed to be 10-15 acres in size and intended to serve the day-to-day recreational needs of families within a neighborhood area, which typically includes anywhere from 2,000 to 6,000 persons. These parks are developed for active and passive recreation activities and accommodate a wide variety of ages and user groups, such as children, adults, and the elderly.

Neighborhood Parks are the basic unit of the park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of a neighborhood.

School-Park Sites allow for the expansion of recreational opportunities for the community in an efficient and cost effective manner.

School-Park sites combine the resources of the School District and the City to expand the recreational, social, and educational opportunities to the community. A school-park site is typically adjacent city parkland to school district land or a site that has city park facilities located on school district land. Depending on the size and facilities of a school-park site, this type of park may serve in a number of capacities, such as a neighborhood park, athletic fields, or a community park. The important outcome of this type of park is the cooperative relationship between the school district and the City to provide recreational and educational opportunities without duplication of services.

Overall, the City of Oak Creek has 19 neighborhood parks and school-parks encompassing approximately 278 acres.

- **Camelot Park** is a 10.43-acre site located at 7385 S Chapel Drive. The City has been leasing the site from Milwaukee County since 2002 and developed the park in 2005.
- **Carollton School-Park** is a 12.267-acre site located at 8965 S. Carollton Drive. The site is comprised of 4.4 acres of City park area adjacent to a 7.86-acre elementary school site.
- **Chapel Hills Park** is a 17.1 acre site located at 6735 S. Highfield Drive. The park site was developed between 1981-82 and renovated in 2006.
- **Cedar Hills School/Johnstone Park** is a 17.67-acre site located at 2225 W. Sycamore Avenue. The neighborhood site is comprised of 12.67 acres of Milwaukee County land, which the City has been leasing since 1983, and an adjacent 5-acre elementary school site. The park site was developed in 1996.
- **Deerfield Elementary School** is a 9.2-acre site located at 3871 Bluestem Drive.
- **Edgewood Elementary School** is 5.6-acre site located at 8545 S. Shepard Avenue.
- **Greenlawn Park** is a 9.8-acre site located at 7628 S. Howell Avenue and was originally the site of the Greenlawn School. The site was donated to the predecessor school district of our current school in 1927 by the Greenlawn Social Center, Inc. and then deeded to the City in 1994.
- **Haas Park** is a 7.5-acre site located at 4215 E.t Elm Road and donated to the City by the Wisconsin Electric Power Company (WEPCO) in 1975. It is named after the Haas family who owned and homesteaded this land prior to WEPCO's purchase.

- **Manor Marquette Park** is a 9.2-acre site located at 801 E. Marquette Avenue. The park site was developed in 1983.
- **Meadowview School-Park** is a 16.8-acre site located at 10420 S. McGraw Drive. The neighborhood site is comprised of 6.8 acres of City-owned land adjacent to a 10-acre elementary school site. Development of the park site was completed in 1994.
- **Oak Leaf Park** is a 10.8-acre site located at 401 W. Centennial Drive. The neighborhood park was acquired between 1994/1995 and developed in 1999.
- **East Middle School** is a 50-acre site located at 9330 S. Shepard Avenue.
- **Otjen Park** is a 3.3-acre site located at 9300 S. Chicago Road. The park site was developed in the mid 1970s and renovated in 2002.
- **Riverton Meadows Park** is a 12-acre site located at 2801 E. Honeysuckle Drive. The 7.7 acre park site were purchased by Milwaukee County in 1980 from the Riverton Meadows subdivision development. Another 4.3 acres of the site was purchased by the City and traded to Milwaukee County in 1985. The City leases the park site, developed in 1995, from Milwaukee County.
- **Senior High School** is a 28.2-acre school site located at 340 E. Puetz Road.
- **South Hills Park** is an 11.9-acre site located at 9299 S. 22nd Street. The park site was developed in 2005.
- **Shepard Hills School-Park** is an 11.6-acre site located at 530 E. Shepard Hills Drive. The neighborhood site is comprised of 6.8 acres of City park area adjacent to a 4.8 acre elementary school site.
- **West Middle School** is a 21.4-acre school site located at 8401 S. 13th Street.
- **Willow Heights Park** is a 7.62-acre site located at 1111 W. Weatherly Drive. The park site was acquired in 1982 and developed in 1985.

Special Use Parks

A special use park covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use. Special uses typically fall into three categories:

Special Use Parks provide a single-purpose use such as soccer fields, historic society, or community center.

1. Historic/Cultural/Social Sites include unique local resources offering historical, educational, and cultural opportunities.
2. Recreational Facilities include specialized facilities such as community centers, arenas, golf courses, and senior centers.
3. Outdoor Recreational Facilities include specialized outdoor facilities such as tennis centers, softball complexes, and athletic fields.

The City of Oak Creek has five special use parks consisting of approximately 46 acres; Runway Dog Park, South Metro Pier, Veterans Memorial Park, Kickers Creek Park, Historical Society, and Henry Miller Park.

Natural Resource Parks

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, landscapes, and open spaces. In addition, these areas may consist of unsuitable lands for development. Examples include steep slopes, natural vegetation, drainage-ways and ravines. This type of park provides a natural environment without any active recreation and little to no passive recreation.

The City of Oak Creek has three Natural Resource Parks:

- Cudahy Nature Preserve is approximately 42 acres.
- Mardeand Park, encompassing approximately 8 acres, is an undeveloped site located at 403R W. Oakwood Road, donated to the City in 1982 by Dr. Frederick J. Hofmeister.
- Wetland Enhancement Area located in the Drexel Town Square is approximately 17 acres consisting mostly of wetlands and will have recreational pathways.

Natural Resource Parks set aside lands for preservation of significant natural resources and open spaces.

Existing Bikeways

As part of the 1998 Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Oak Creek, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed to create a bikeway map to guide future development of bikeways throughout the City. Three classifications of bikeways were utilized in the development of the map and are illustrated in Appendix A. They are:

- Class I: This type is a separate 8-10-foot-wide paved areas away from an existing street where there is minimal contact among pedestrians bikers, and motor vehicles., for example, the path along South Shepard Avenue or East Drexel Avenue. There exists 13.95 miles of Class I bikeways.
- Class II: This type is a delineated 4-6-foot-wide bikeway lane along and next to the travel lane of an existing street, such as along East Puetz Road. There exists 3.54 miles of Class II bikeways.
- Class III: This type is a non-delineated bikeway on an existing street that is merely identified with a sign, such as West Drexel Avenue and South Pennsylvania Avenue, which are currently part of the County's Oak Leaf Bike Trail. There exists 35.71 miles of Class III bikeways.

Map 6 illustrates the existing bikeways throughout the City. The main goals in the development of this map are:

1. Designate bikeways along the less-traveled streets of the City.
2. Connect all the City and County Park sites to the bikeway system.
3. Connect the City's industrial parks to the bikeway system.
4. Connect all the City's schools to the bikeway system.
5. Connect the central business district/civic center area to the bikeway system.













OAKCREEK
— WISCONSIN —

Map 5 Existing Park Types in the City of Oak Creek



-  Surface Water Features (2)
-  Regional/Metropolitan Parks (1)
-  Greenways (1)
-  Community Parks (1)
-  Neighborhood Parks/School-Parks (1)
-  Special Use Parks (1)
-  Natural Resource Parks (1)
-  Future City Park

Note: Please refer to Table 5 on page 21 for park names and provided facilities.

Source: (1) City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development
(2) SEWRPC

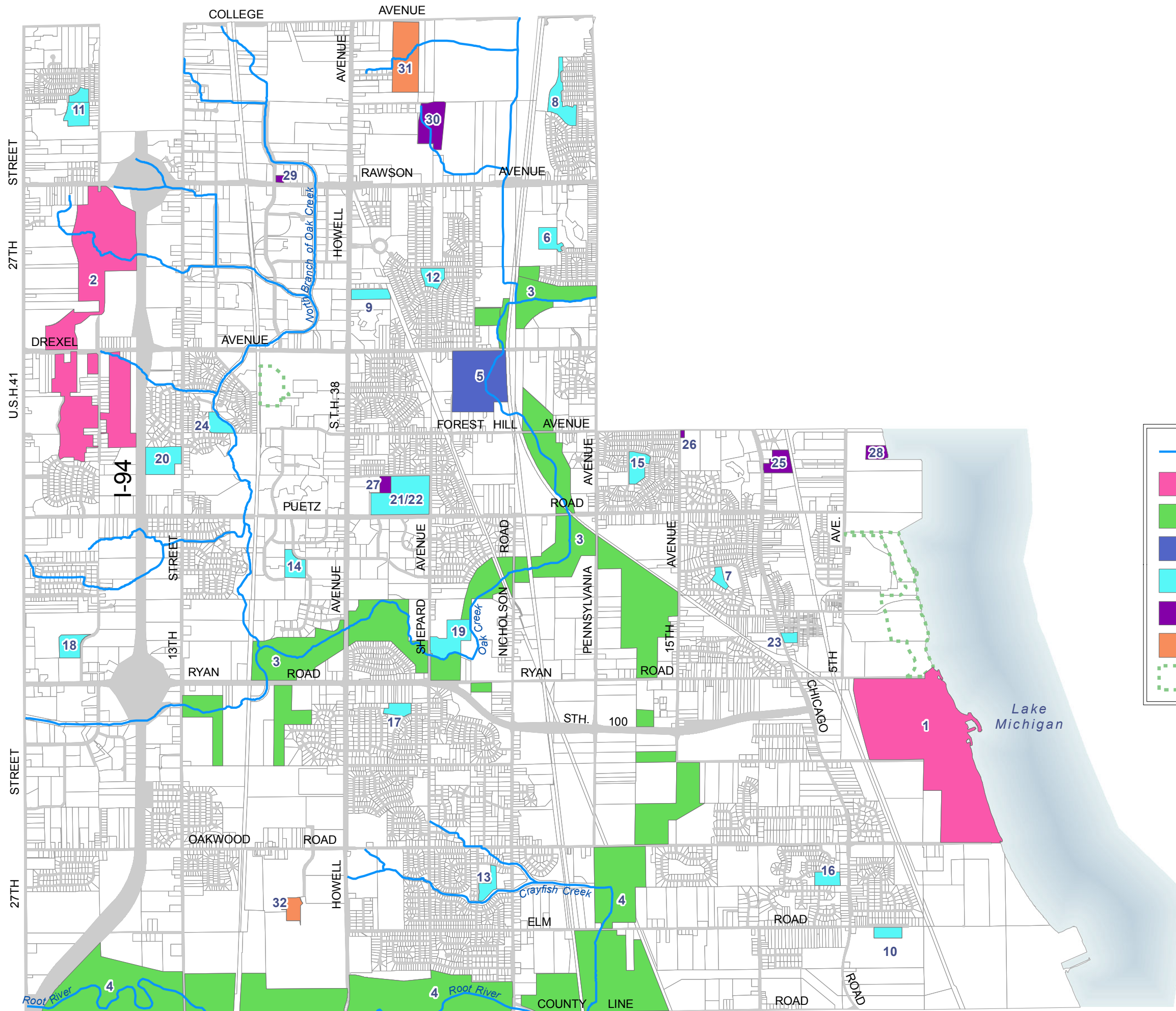


Table 5: City of Oak Creek Existing Inventory of Public Recreational Facilities: 2013

Map 5 Reference No.	Recreational Facility	Acreage				Outdoor Facilities																	Indoor										
		City	School Dist.	Milw. Co.	MMSD	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Basketball Standards	Volleyball Courts (hard)	Volleyball Crt (Sand)	Softball Fields	Picnic Area*	Open Shelter	Fishing	Playground	Parking Lot	Sledding Hill	Ice Rink	Open Play Areas	Nature Area	Football/Soccer**	Asphalt Path	Baseball Field	Disc Golf	Skate Park	Boat Launch	Watercraft Beach	Gymnasium	Classrooms	Swimming Pool	Building		
Regional/Metropolitan Park																																	
1	Bender Park			286.3									1		2					1							1			1			
2	Falk Park			205.8							1				1					1										1			
Greenway																																	
3	Oak Creek Parkway			704.6										1						1													
4	Root River Parkway			619.5																													
Community Park																																	
Lake Vista Park		30																															
5	Abendschein Park	74										1		1	2				2	1	1		1	1	1								
Neighborhood Parks & School-Park Sites																																	
6	Camelot Park			10.43			1			1	1	1		1	1				1			1											
7	Carollton School	4.4	7.86			2	2			1				1	1				2			1						1	1	1			
8	Chapel Hills Park	17.1				2	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1			1			1											
9	Greenlawn Park	9.8									1				1				1	1													
10	Haas Park	7.5						2		1	1	1			1	1																	
11	Cedar Hills School/Johnstone		5	12.7			2			1	2	1	1		2	1				1		1						1	1	1			
12	Manor Marquette Park	9.2				2	1		1		1	1	1		1		1		1	1		1						1	1	1			
13	Meadowview School/Park	2.8	10			2	1	2		1	1	1			1	1			1			1						1	1	1			
14	Oak Leaf Park	10.8				2	1			1	1	1	1		1				1			1											
15	Riverton Meadows Park			12		1	1			1	1	1	1		1			1	1		1												
16	Deerfield		9.2					4							1	1			1			1						1	1	1			
17	Shepard Hills School/Park	7.3	4.8					4			2				1	2												1	1	1			
18	South Hills Park	11.9				2	1			1	1	1	1		1	1	1					1											
19	East Middle School		50													1						1						1	1	1			
20	West Middle School		21.4													3					3							1	1	1			
21	Senior High School		28.2			9					3					2					2							2	1	1			
22	Edgewood School		5.6				1	2							1	1				1								1	1	1			
23	Otjen Park	3.3					1	1			1	1			1	1				1													
24	Willow Heights Park	7.6				2	1		1		1	1	1		1	1	1					1											
Special Use Park																																	
25	Kickers Creek Park	10.7													1						2												
26	Oak Creek Historical Society	0.65																															
27	Henry Miller Park	4.8									1		1				1			1		1								4			
28	South Metro Pier				3								1		1					1										1			
29	Veterans Memorial Park	1.3																															
30	Runway Dog Park			26.2																													
Natural Resource Park																																	
31	Cudahy Nature Preserve			41.8																	1								1	1			
32	Mardeand Park	7.8																		1													
33	Wetland Enhancement Park	16.5																			1												
Total (all facilities)		237	142	1919	3	24	14	15	2	7	17	14	10	3	18	27	5	1	15	14	8	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	11	1	17







*NOTE: Open Shelters are located in picnic areas.

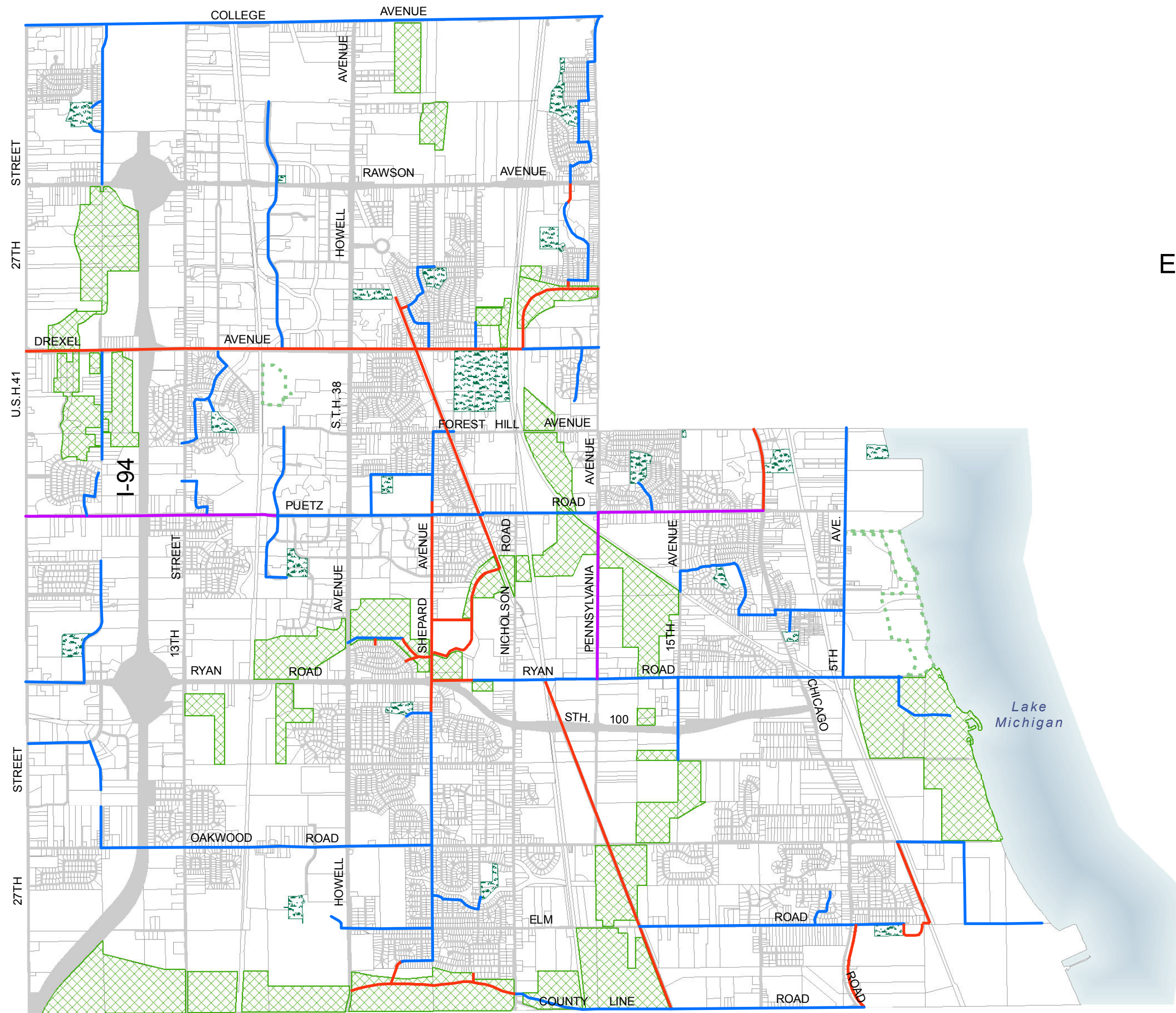
**NOTE: The outfields of 18 softball diamonds can also serve as multi-purpose open play areas.

Map 6
City of Oak Creek
Existing Bikeway System - 2013



Bikeways

-  Class 1 - Existing
-  Class 2 - Existing
-  Class 3 - Existing
-  Future City Park
-  City Parks (2)
-  County Parks & Parkways (2)



Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

3 Location & Needs Analysis

When determining park and open space needs it is important to recognize that parks and recreation mean different things to different people. To some, a park is a quiet place where they can picnic, read a book, or enjoy the natural surroundings of nature and wildlife. These types of activities are known as passive recreation as they require limited physical activity on behalf of the participant. Active recreation typically requires some physical activity by the participant such as baseball, bicycling, jogging, golf, and soccer. In general, more parkland is dedicated to active recreational uses than to passive or resource protection uses.

The need for outdoor recreation sites and facilities within the City is determined by applying a variation of the National Recreation Standards as it applies to the City of Oak Creek for the size, number, and spatial distribution of city parks and outdoor recreation facilities. These standards compare the probable demand for park sites and facilities and the existing supply of recreation sites and facilities to the anticipated future resident population levels and distribution of parks within the city.

National Recreation Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the American Academy for Parks and Recreation Administration developed the National Recreation Standards laid out in *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* by James D. Mertes and James R. Hall. These are very general guidelines. They help estimate recreational needs across the whole country and give numbers to adjust for local circumstances. The benchmarks come in the format of a prescribed number of square acres or number of facilities per number of residents. Since population numbers are known and often forecasted into the future, and acreage easily tabulated, this system provides an easy starting point for evaluating general needs. Table 6 provides a breakdown of existing parkland and estimated needs utilizing the NRPA standards based on Oak Creek's estimated 2013 population of 34,695.

Table 6: Existing City Parklands and Needs Based on National Park Standards¹³

Park Type	Number	Standard	Existing Acreage	Recommended Acreage	Excess or Deficiency
Regional	2	12 acres per 1000	492	414	+108 acres
Community	1*	2.25 acres per 1000	74	78	-4 acres
Neighborhood Park & School-Park Site	19	2.25 acres per 1000	269**	78	+191 acres**
Total	22	--	835	570	+295 acres

Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development and Park, Recreation, and Open Space and Greenway Guidelines

* Lake Vista Park is not included

** Acreage includes 142 acres of School District Property

These results should not be interpreted as an indication that Oak Creek has an overabundance of park space because it does not take into account factors such as the

¹³ National Park Standards do not include greenways, special-use parks, and natural resource parks.

location of park facilities in relation to the population distribution and the inclusion of School District property. Map 8 illustrates this point.

Based on current and future City population, the need for parkland and park facilities will continue to grow when comparing existing parkland and park facilities with national park standards. Although population growth is a major determining factor in placement of parks and park facilities, additional factors such as location and existing facilities also need to be considered when assessing parkland location and park facility needs.

Location Standards

The location of needed outdoor recreation sites and facilities within the City is determined by a set of standards regarding service areas, population distribution, hazards, environmental features, and locations in proximity to elementary schools.

Service Area

The service area of a park is determined by park type (regional, community, and neighborhood) which is defined to serve a number of residents in a community and identifies the area around a park type that draws those residents. Table 7 defines the service area by park type and park facilities. It is emphasized that these are recommended guidelines, and service areas of more or less than the standard can be considered satisfactory when special factors impact a particular neighborhood.

Table 7: Oak Creek Park Standards, Spatial Characteristics, and Typical Facilities

Type of Facility	Acres Required per 1000 of Population	Population Served (Thousands)	Service Area Radius (miles)	Minimum Site Size (acres)	Typical Facilities*
Regional/Metropolitan					
Regional Park	12.0	40-100	8-10	250+	1-18
Metropolitan Park		20-40	3-4	100-249	2-6,8-18
Parkways		Varies	Varies	200 feet +	6,13,16-18
Special Parks		Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Community					
Park (General)	2.25	10-20	2	30-100	2-6,8-17
Sports Complex		10-20	2	10-40	2-5,14-16
Special Purpose		Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Neighborhood Parks & School-Parks					
Park	2.25	2-6	0.5-1	10-15	2-6, 8,10, 11,14,17
Playground		1-3	0.5	1-5	6,8
Tot Lots		1-3	.025-0.5	0.5-1	6,8

Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

*Typical Facilities

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 = Swim facilities | 6 = Picnic/Sitting area | 11 = Ice rink | 16 = Comfort station |
| 2 = Tennis Courts | 7 = Water facility | 12 = Health stations | 17 = Jog/Bike path |
| 3 = Basketball courts | 8 = Play equipment | 13 = Nature area | 18 = Pleasure drive |
| 4 = Volleyball courts | 9 = Vehicle parking | 14 = Football/Soccer | |
| 5 = Ballfields | 10 = Sledding hill | 15 = Baseball field | |

Since the City has little to no control of Metropolitan Parks, this plan does not cover the facilities provided by these park types.

The City has one community park, Abendschein Park. According to the service area standard for community parks, Abendschein Park has a service area radius of two miles and is designed to serve 10,000 – 20,000 residents. As can be seen in Map 7, the southern part of the City does not meet the accessibility standard (within two miles) of a community park. Furthermore, the City’s current population of 34,530 residents exceeds the number of residents one community park can sufficiently support. The City has acquired future parkland north of Bender Park consisting of approximately 30 acres. At this time, the parkland area is in the process of environmental remediation and is not ready for public use. When this park is completed, it will provide residents with a second community park.

As stated earlier in this plan, the City contains 19 neighborhood parks and school-parks. Map 8 illustrates the areas serviced by these parks. As illustrated in Map 8, the southwest part of the City does not have a neighborhood or school-park, and does not meet the service area standards.

Population Distribution

The City’s current population standard for the location of neighborhood parks is 500 residents. When a neighborhood reaches 1,000 residents, the sited neighborhood park is provided with park facilities as identified by the City’s facility standards for a neighborhood park.



Table 5 displays estimated 2010 resident population by neighborhood. All but two neighborhoods, Northbranch and Woodknoll, meet the 500-resident population standard.

The majority of the Northbranch neighborhood is zoned manufacturing and would not likely see a population over 500 residents in the next five years. The Woodknoll neighborhood currently has 480 residents and will most likely exceed this standard within the five-year planning period.

Currently, five neighborhoods do not have a neighborhood park yet exceed the 500 resident-standard. They are: Woodridge, Greenwood, Oak Creek Manor, Prairie View, and Oakwood Manor neighborhoods. Although these neighborhoods meet the city standard for population, they may fall within the service area of neighborhood parks in adjacent





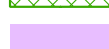
Table 8: Neighborhood Population Estimates: 2010

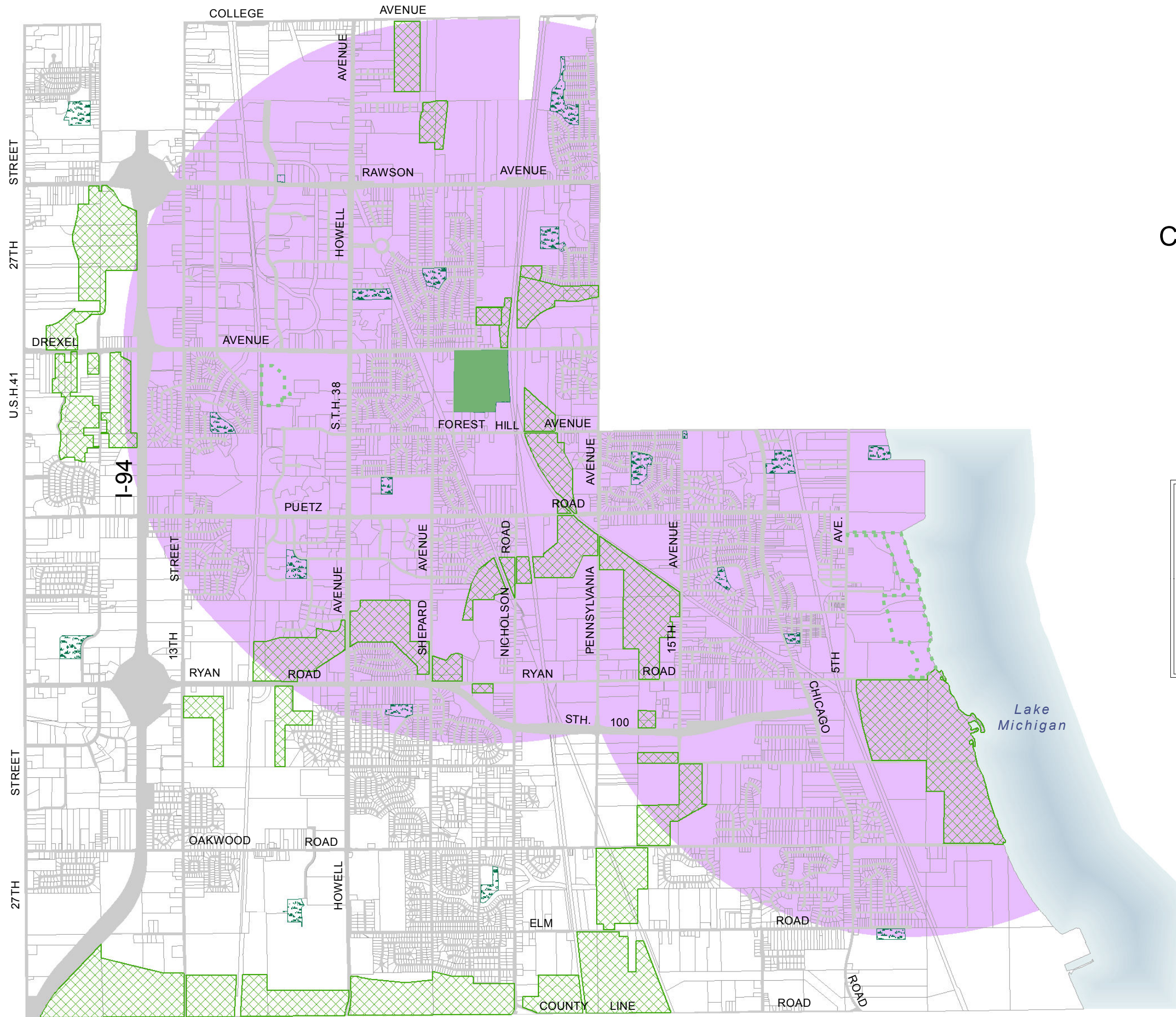
Neighborhood	Population
Carollton Estates	1,509
Carollville	1,287
Cedar Hills	2,232
Chapel Hills	1,829
Edgewood	1,729
Forest Hills	2,359
Greenwood	782
Lakeview	529
Manor Marquette	2,103
Meadowview	2,837
Northbranch	170
Oak Creek Manor	982
Oak Leaf	4,065
Oak Park	2,456
Oakview	1,174
Oakwood Manor	778
Prairie View	926
Shepard Hills	1,876
South Hills	1,778
Willow Heights	1,561
Woodknoll	480
Woodridge	1,009

Source: 2010 US Census

Map 7
Community Park Service Area:
Two Mile Radius

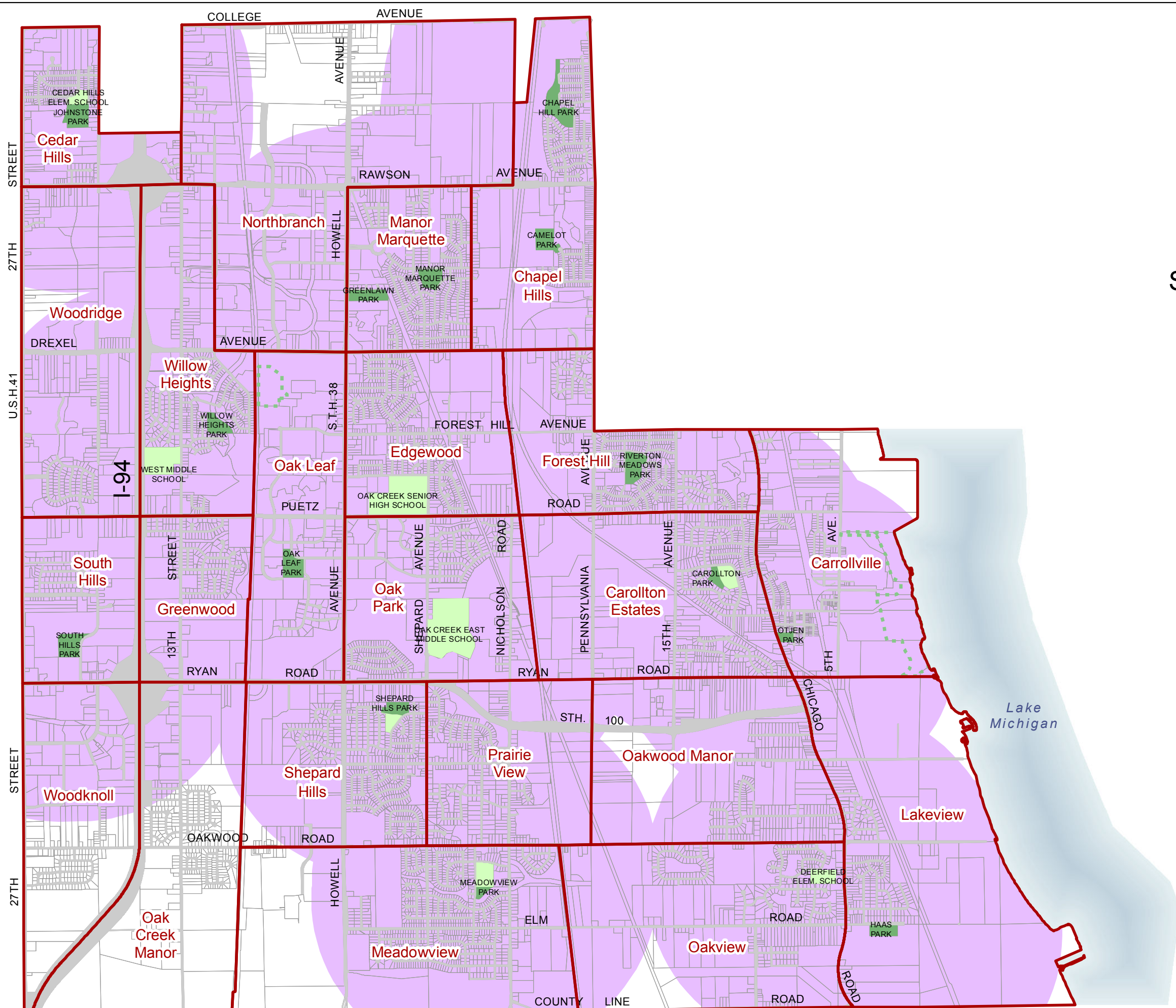
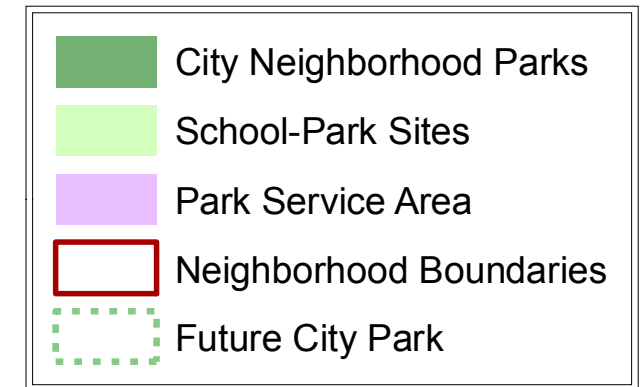


-  Abendschein Park
-  Future City Park
-  City Parks (2)
-  County Parks & Parkways (2)
-  Community Park Service Area



Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

Map 8 Neighborhood Park & School-Park Service Areas: One Mile Radius



Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

neighborhoods or may meet other location factors as identified in following sections of this chapter.

Hazards

Where possible, parks should not be located near known hazards in order to avoid danger to children, elderly and handicapped groups, and the overall population. Heavily traveled streets, conflicting land uses, such as heavy industry or busy commercial districts, and railroad crossings represent some of the hazards to be avoided, particularly within neighborhood park service areas. If the hazard is deemed severe enough, supplemental park facilities may be needed in a neighborhood already served by a park in order to avoid contact with the hazard.

Environmental Features

Besides population, service areas and hazards, there are environmental features to consider in siting park, recreation and special purpose facilities. Preferred sites typically include large wooded tracts. However, other features such as wetlands, poor soil areas, unusual topography, waterways, or floodplains adjacent to waterways can be considered as potential sites for future parks and recreation facilities.

Map 4, "Environmentally Sensitive Areas," represents Oak Creek's most significant environmentally sensitive lands. These environmental corridors link areas having a concentration of natural resource features and often have some type of water body as the linking factor. The difference between the designation of primary and secondary environmental corridors are in width, length, and linear concentration of natural resource features. Isolated natural areas (minimum of five acres) contain various natural resource base elements, but are physically separated from either of the corridors. Both secondary corridors and isolated natural areas are considered to be less significant than primary corridors, but could serve as future park sites in developing neighborhoods. Within the City, the Root River, Lake Michigan and the Oak Creek represent the resource base that is in greatest need of protection.

Locations Adjacent to Elementary Schools

Another factor to consider when siting a neighborhood park is the ability to place a neighborhood park adjacent to a local elementary school. It is beneficial to both the School District and the City to have neighborhood parks adjacent to local elementary schools. This way, facilities are more highly utilized, there is less duplication of playground equipment and space, and maintenance of a single school-park site is easier and less costly than two separate facilities. Currently, the City has parkland or park facilities located adjacent to or on all elementary school properties.

Facilities Standards

When planning which facilities to include in the different types of parks, the City must use qualitative and quantitative measures. There are widely accepted national standards that can be used as a starting point; however local recreational needs and emerging trends also need to be considered.

Park facility standards refer to the developed improvements, such as ball field and playground that are placed in recreation areas. The standards in this report (see Table 9, Facility Standards) refer to community and neighborhood facilities developed by the City of Oak Creek, not the larger metropolitan or regional parks; which are the responsibility of the

County. These standards are based on a refinement of figures developed by Milwaukee County and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The modifications reflect the City's current development practice; which has emphasized neighborhood park development to a greater extent than community facilities.

Table 9: City of Oak Creek Facility Standards

Type of Facility	Standard per 1,000 Population	Per Facility Minimum
Softball Diamonds	0.60	One per neighborhood park, school-park, community park and/or sports complex.
Baseball Diamonds	0.13	One per community park and/or sports complex.
Playground Equipment	0.40	One per community, neighborhood, or school-park.
Tennis Courts	0.60	One or two per neighborhood park, school-park, community park and/or sports complex.
Basketball Courts	0.40	One per neighborhood park, school-park, and community park.
Open Play Areas (Football/Soccer)	0.40	One per neighborhood park, school-park, and community park.
Jog/Bike Path	0.60	One per neighborhood park, school-park, and community park.
Picnic Area/Shelter	0.40	One per neighborhood park, school-park, and community park.
Volleyball Courts	0.40	One per neighborhood park, school-park, and community park.

Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

Additional activities, such as passive recreation, could also be included in the table above. However, in the interest of primarily addressing major capital improvement items, the scope of the standards used has been limited. In addition, natural resource oriented items such as hiking and nature study depend on the availability of certain "natural" areas that are not evenly distributed throughout the community. These types of recreation must be developed where natural features exist and to the extent the resource permits. As such, they do not readily lend themselves to standardization.

As in the service area standards, these figures are intended to act as guidelines. If greater demand exists, additional facilities can be provided. These standards should be adequate unless a specialized population group, such as the elderly, become predominate in a particular neighborhood. Adjustments can then be made to accommodate that group.

To better understand how the City compares to these standards, Table 9 summarizes the existing park facilities and future park facilities based on a select number of facility standards.

Table 10: Park Facility Standards, Existing Facilities, and Proposed Park Facilities

Type	Standard per 1000 Population	Standard ¹ Number of Facilities	Existing Number of Facilities (2013)	Standard ² Number of Facilities (2020)
Softball Diamonds ³	0.6	21	18	23
Baseball Diamonds	0.13	4	1	5
Jog/Bike Path	0.4	14	14	15
Playgrounds	0.4	14	17	15
Tennis Courts	0.6	21	24	23
Basketball Courts	0.4	14	15	15
Open Play Areas ⁴ (Football/Soccer)	0.4	14	22	15
Picnic Areas/Shelters	0.6	21	14	23
Volleyball Courts	0.4	14	9	15

¹ Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration 2013 population estimate of 34,695. ² Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration's 2020 population projection of 37,600. ³ Softball fields can also serve as playfields; however, they may not meet standard size requirements for a particular sport. ⁴ Many open play areas can accommodate football or soccer fields, but are not designated for that purpose. Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development.

Comparing these standards with existing facilities, the City lacks adequate park facilities. Presently, the City has deficiencies in softball diamonds (4), baseball diamonds (3), volleyball courts (5), and picnic areas/shelters (7). The remaining facilities exceed the minimum standards. However, when standardizing basketball courts and playfields, additional facilities need to be considered. The City does provide individual basketball standards, a basketball pole and basket, in various locations throughout the City that do not have basketball courts. Many open fields located in parks throughout the City can accommodate football or soccer fields but are not designated for those uses. Facility deficiencies can be specifically located on a neighborhood basis by calculating minimum standards by neighborhood population. Table 11 summarizes facility needs by neighborhood utilizing population data from the 2010 US Census for each neighborhood.

Table 11: Analysis of Existing Facility Needs by Neighborhood

	Existing Number of Facilities (2013)							Standard Number of Facilities 2013 ¹						
	Softball Diamonds	Open Shelters	Playground Equipment	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Volleyball Courts	Open Play Areas	Softball Diamonds	Open Shelters	Playground Equipment	Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Volleyball Courts	Open Play Areas
Neighborhood														
Carollton Estates	1	0	1	2	2	0	2	1.0	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.6
Carrollville	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.5
Cedar Hills	2	1	2	0	2	1	2	1.3	0.9	0.9	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.9
Chapel Hills ²	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	1.1	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.7
Edgewood	3	1	1	9	1	0	1	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.7
Forest Hill	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.4	0.9	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.9
Greenwood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Lakeview	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manor Marquette	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	1.3	0.8	0.8	1.3	0.8	0.8	0.8
Meadowview	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.1
Northbranch	Industrial Neighborhood							Industrial Neighborhood						
Oak Creek Manor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.4
Oak Leaf	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2.4	1.6	1.6	2.4	1.6	1.6	1.6
Oak Park	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
Oakview	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5
Oakwood Manor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Prairie View	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.4
Shepard Hills	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.8
South Hills	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1.1	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.7
Willow Heights	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.6
Woodknoll	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Woodridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4

¹ Calculated using Oak Creek facility standards and 2010 US Census population. ² Includes Clement Park, a County Park.

NOTE: Highlighted table cells indicate a facility shortage.

Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development.

4 The Recommended Plan

The recommended plan for future parkland acquisition and development identifies needed facilities based on the City's adopted land use plan, the existing zoning, and the standards contained in the Location & Needs Analysis Chapter. The plan attempts to look into the future and plan for park facilities to accommodate the City's future ultimate population.

The Plan has been broken down into a series of goals and objectives. Goals are broad based statements identifying what the City hopes to accomplish over the long term. Objectives are more targeted, specific statements which are intended to achieve the stated goals. These objectives set quantitative targets which the City can then use to measure the rate at which the plan is being implemented.

Regional/Metropolitan Parks Goal/Objectives

The City has no control of how these parks will be developed or maintained as they are owned by Milwaukee County. The prospects of large-scale regional park development by Milwaukee County continue to be limited because of budgetary constraints. Within the County budget, new park acquisition and development has become a low priority, particularly when funding has become inadequate to maintain existing facilities. Despite these constraints, the City should continue its efforts to partner with the County to provide and maintain parkland.

GOAL: Provide the residents of Oak Creek with access to a system of regional/metropolitan parks and parkway networks that a full range of passive and active recreational opportunities and which takes advantage of the City's unique setting along Lake Michigan, the Oak Creek and the Root River.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with Milwaukee County regarding future development of Bender Park and promote additional open space and park acquisition and development along the lakefront.
Status Update: Acquired 30 acres of lakefront property north of Bender Park with the plans of purchasing approximately 70 acres more in the next five year planning period.
2. Explore the feasibility of cleaning up environmentally contaminated land along the lakefront and converting portions into parkland for public has access to the Lake Michigan shoreline.
Status Update: The City has received grants to remediate the acquired parkland along the lakefront.
3. Work with Milwaukee County to ensure that Falk Park is preserved, developed, and maintained as a significant element of the City's planned Urban Village area as recommended in the South 27th Street Sub Area Plan.
Status Update: Cooperation between the City of Oak Creek, Northwestern Mutual, Milwaukee County, and private property owners has increased the size of Falk Park by 50 acres, which included a primary environmental feature, Honadel Woods.

4. Work with Milwaukee County to achieve full implementation of their Park and Open Space Plan for Milwaukee County pertaining to the City of Oak Creek. This cooperation may include joint development of existing parks and shared funding for parkway acquisition. **Note: Milwaukee County is in the process of updating their Park and Open Space Plan.*

Community Parks Goal/Objectives

Oak Creek's 2013 population is enough to warrant a fully developed community park as well as an additional community park. Currently, the City has only one designated community park, Abendschein Park. As redevelopment continues along the lakefront, an approximately 100 acre site could be developed into our second community park.

GOAL: Plan for the present and future recreational needs of the citizens of Oak Creek by way of a developed community park system that is accessible to the entire City, and offers a balance of active and passive recreational opportunities for the residents of Oak Creek.

Objectives:

1. Allocate funding for the phased development of Abendschein Park in accordance with the revised master plan.
Status Update: Funds were allocated for Phases 1 & 2 which were completed. Planning of Phase 3 will be completed in 2013, and construction will begin in 2014.
2. Explore opportunities to acquire additional acreage adjacent to Abendschein Park.
Status Update: In 2010, 10 acres of high quality woodland abutting the southern portion of the park was acquired from the Stahls.
3. Identify and officially map a second community park in the southern portion of the City.
Status Update: When complete, the parkland along the lakefront will be the City's second community park.
4. Research and apply for grants to augment funding for park acquisition & development for community parks.
5. Coordinate and schedule community park acquisition and development within the parameters of Wisconsin's new Impact Fee Legislation.
6. Study the community demand and need for an indoor recreation center which may include an aquatic facility, a senior center, and a performing arts center.
7. Determine need and location for two lighted softball facilities and one hardball diamond.

Neighborhood Parks & School-Park Sites Goal/Objectives

As stated earlier in this plan, neighborhood parks, which are designed and intended to serve the day-to-day recreational needs of families within a neighborhood area, are a key component of the park system

GOAL: Plan and provide for a system of neighborhood and sub-neighborhood parks that meets the needs of developed and developing sections of the City.

Objectives:

1. Officially map, acquire and develop a neighborhood park between 2015 and 2016 that will serve both the Woodknoll and Oak Creek Manor neighborhoods.
2. Officially map, acquire and develop a neighborhood park between 2017 and 2018 that will serve both the Prairie View and Oakwood Manor neighborhoods.
3. Explore the demand for a neighborhood park in the Carrollville neighborhood.
4. Explore and consider a location for a neighborhood park in the Oak Park neighborhood to replace the park facilities lost as a result of the new East Middle School construction.
5. Secure funding for the construction of the shelters and install shelters at neighborhood parks as needed.
6. Ensure that all neighborhood parks are bicycle and pedestrian friendly by designing neighborhood parks with simple, wide access points from surrounding neighborhoods.
7. Identify need for a neighborhood park in the southern portion of the Meadowview neighborhood.
8. Identify need for a neighborhood park in the Greenwood neighborhood.
9. Coordinate and schedule community park acquisition and development within the parameters of Wisconsin's new Impact Fee Legislation.

Bikeways & Recreational Trails Goal/Objectives

Effective and attractive bicycle and pedestrian facilities have the potential to reduce automotive vehicle use, traffic congestion, and associated personal delay, energy consumption, air pollution, and to encourage a healthy lifestyle through daily.

GOAL: Provide for a system of bikeways and recreational trails connecting parks, schools, neighborhoods, employment centers and other significant destinations of the City. Adopt policies that encourage alternative, non-motorized modes of transportation.

Objectives:

1. Beginning in the year 2014 and in subsequent years, allocate funds for the construction of one half mile of Class 1 bikeway facilities as illustrated in Map 9.

Table 12: Estimated Cost of Class I Bikeways

Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Extended Cost	Comments
Unclassified Excavation	C.Y.	1,913	\$18	\$34,434	9"W x 11'D
Crushed Aggregate Base Course	Ton	2,097	\$13	\$27,261	6" thickness
Asphalt	Ton	1,012	\$65	\$65,780	3" thickness
Topsoil/Seed Restoration	S.Y.	3,520	\$5	\$17,600	3' width along both sides
Construction Contingencies	%	10	\$145,075	\$14,510	10%
Engineering & Administration	%	15	\$145,075	\$21,760	15%
Total	--	--	--	\$181,345	Cost per mile

Estimate based on one mile length of 10 foot wide asphalt pathway, constructed to existing grade, excavated material trucked off-site, no consideration for wetlands. Estimated cost per lineal foot is \$31.60. Costs are in estimated in 2012 dollars.

Source: City of Oak Creek Engineering Department

2. Allocate Capital Improvement funds for the construction of Class 2 bikeway facilities for any street scheduled to be constructed or reconstructed and is designated as a bikeway route as illustrated in Map 9.
3. Designate on-road Class 3 bikeways along lesser traveled roads through the City.
4. By 2018, install appropriate signage along all Class 3 bikeways as designated in the adopted bikeway plan.
5. Maximize connections between the City's and County parks, employment centers and other destinations in the City (schools, library/civic center, etc.).
6. Require developers to include bikeways in new developments. Those developments not affected by a bikeway route should contribute a fee per new residential unit to an interest bearing account used solely for the installation of designated bikeways.
7. Encourage existing and new businesses to provide for bicycle racks, especially those located along the trail system and bikeways.
8. Explore the demand for cross country ski trails and consider amending the bikeway plans to accommodate these types of recreational uses.
9. Collaborate with Milwaukee County in developing a bike trail segment from Puetz Road to Bender Park.

Open Space Preservation Goal/Objectives

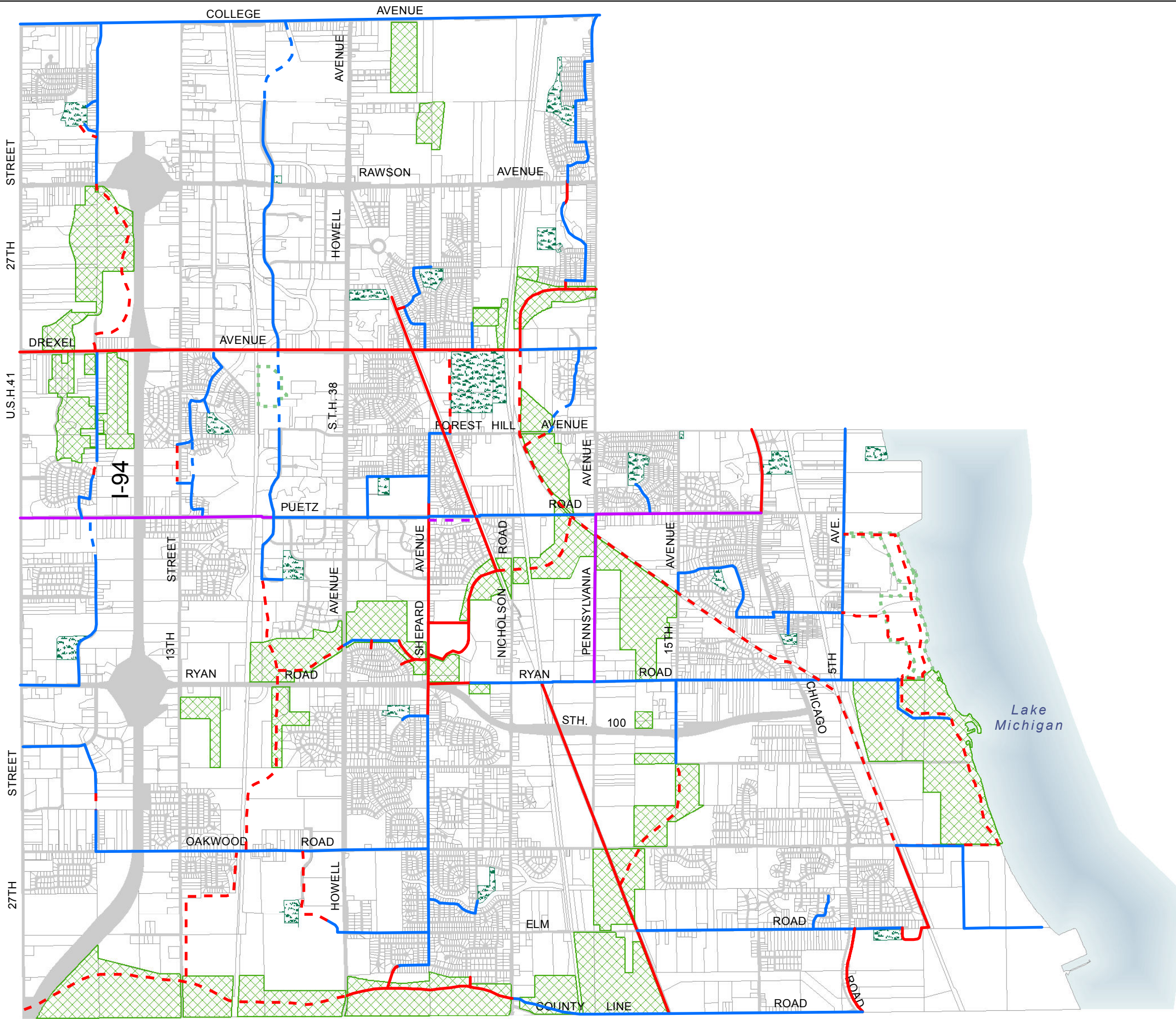
Oak Creek should protect natural resources and preserve areas of open space that are prominent features of the community's landscape. Preservation of open space can take the form of preventing development in critical environmental areas, preserving farmland, promoting strategies for conserving and enhancing streetscapes, or requiring adjacent development to retain and incorporate open space and natural features.

Map 9
City of Oak Creek
Bikeway System - 2013



Bikeways

- Class 1 - Existing
- - - Class 1 - Proposed
- Class 2 - Existing
- - - Class 2 - Proposed
- Class 3 - Existing
- - - Class 3 - Proposed
- Future City Park
- City Parks (2)
- County Parks & Parkways (2)



Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

GOAL: Preserve approximately 25 percent of the total City land area in permanent open space, not including private yards.

Objectives:

1. Preserve resource protection areas and associated waterways, floodplains, wetlands, ground water recharge areas, steep slopes, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, and woodlands.
2. Preserve significant woodlands, wetlands, or other environmentally sensitive areas whenever possible by proper design of street locations and building areas.
3. Encourage the use of conservation or cluster subdivision design to preserve open space.
4. Increase the City budget allocation for open space purchases. Leverage City dollars with County, State, and Federal dollars, including the State Stewardship Program. In cases where fee-simple purchase is not required, consider purchasing development rights (PDR). Create an ad-hoc committee or study group to explore the feasibility and support for a PDR, transfer of development rights (TDR) program, or other alternative programs, including compensating the owners of Resource Protection Area properties for the storage of storm water.
5. Protect environmental corridors as delineated by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), with modifications based on public input.
6. Protect open space from encroachment by incompatible uses. Cooperate with other government and non-profit groups to preserve shorelines and shoreland areas along creeks, rivers, and Lake Michigan.
7. Use zoning, subdivision, and official mapping ordinances to protect waterways, shorelines, wetlands, water supply, and floodplain areas.
8. Develop a program for the evaluation of land offered to the City for open space purposes.
9. Encourage the remediation of contaminated sites as related to potential parkland (i.e. "brownfields").
10. Implement action plans to provide more open space to replace agricultural lands being depleted by development.
11. Develop a naturalization management plan.
12. Protect and enhance open space and wetland areas in the Drexel Town Square development.



Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal/Objectives

Park planning issues cross many jurisdictional boundaries. Addressing those issues requires that units of government work together to develop strategies and implement solutions. In order to successfully implement this Park and Open Space Plan, the City of Oak Creek must maintain and strengthen its relations with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions.

GOAL: Work with all levels of government (federal, state, and local) as well as the School District to identify, acquire, develop, and enhance parks, recreation facilities, and open space in the City of Oak Creek.

Objectives:

1. Cooperate with the Oak Creek-Franklin School District to utilize school land for public park purposes and identify potential opportunities for additional agreements.
2. Work with the school district whenever a new school or school expansion is planned that may impact City park facilities.
3. Work with Milwaukee County on the full development of Bender Park.
4. Explore the possibility of additional agreements with Milwaukee County where the City develops and maintains neighborhood parks and other park facilities on County-owned land.
5. Partner with Milwaukee County to achieve full implementation of their Park and Open Space Plan for Milwaukee County pertaining to the City of Oak Creek once adopted.

City Forestry Goal/Objectives

The City's urban forest touches the lives of its citizens every day. It consists of all trees in the city on both public as well as private property, including street trees, park trees, forested parklands, trees on institutional campuses and trees in many private ownership settings ranging from parking lots to back yards.

GOAL: Increase community value through building community appreciation and awareness of the urban forest.

Objectives:

1. Shift to a Canopy analysis style of management.
2. Demonstrate sustainable, long-term urban forestry practices.
3. Establish and preserve a quality urban forest.
4. The City Forester will review all landscape plans for new development in the City.
5. Revise the Urban Forestry Management Plan every five years.
6. Preserve and enhance green space within boulevards, cul-de-sac islands, medians, and terrace areas (area between the sidewalk and street).
7. Keep abreast of potential forestry threats such as invasive plant species and destructive insect species to the City's overall landscape and plan accordingly.
8. Strive for an urban forest where no tree genus will constitute more than 15 percent of the total street tree population and no individual tree species will constitute more than 10 percent of the street tree population.
9. Encourage the use of native landscape species in all developments.
10. Revise the street tree ordinance by 2014.
11. Continue to require the planting of street trees along new public streets to expand the City's urban forest.
12. Promote tree planting on private and public lands.
13. Develop a Forestry website.

Capital Improvements Program

The Park and Open Space Plan calls for the City to maintain a five year Capital Improvements Program (C.I.P.) for Parks and Open Space acquisitions and

development. This planning and budgeting tool allows policy makers to predict and prepare for major expenditures over the next five years. This Capital Improvements Program, like the Parks and Open Space Plan itself, is a document which needs to be updated to reflect changing community standards and needs. The C.I.P. needs to be updated annually to maintain a five-year schedule of improvements.

The items for this Capital Improvements Program are those which were designated as needs by the recommendations set forth in the Park and Open Space Plan. Each of the objectives calling for acquisition or development of park facilities was included as its own item in the C.I.P.

An approximate cost was then applied to each of these items. It is important to note that these costs need not be born entirely by the City of Oak Creek. One of the principal reasons behind adopting a Park and Open Space Plan is to make the City eligible for financial assistance under the State’s Stewardship program. Also, funds are available through the existing park escrow and impact fee programs.

Based upon the objectives previously identified, the following projects should be implemented as part of the five-year capital improvements program beginning in 2014:

Table 13: Capital Improvements Program: 2014-2018

Year	Acquisition	Cost	Development	Cost
2014	Abendschein Park Addition	\$600,000	Abendschein Park: Phase 3	\$400,000
			Wetland Enhancement Park	\$250,000
2015	Prairieview/Oakwood Manor Park	\$320,000	None	\$0
2016	Woodridge Park	\$320,000	Prairieview/Oakwood Manor Park	\$400,000
2017	None	\$0	Woodridge Park	\$400,000
2018	None	\$0	Abendschein Park: Phase 4	\$750,000

Estimated in 2012 dollars. Source: City of Oak Creek Department of Community Development

5 Implementation Plan

The recommended improvements to the City of Oak Creek's Park and Open Space system will need to be phased in over a long period of time. Several projects envisioned in previous Park and Open Space Plans have yet to be implemented due to various reasons. The prioritization and phasing of the recommended improvements are not only dependent on the City's priorities but also may be dependent on development patterns, property owner decisions, and budgetary concerns.

The goal of this Five Year Parks and Open Space Plan is to establish goals and objective and the means to implement them. Though there are several recommended goals and objectives, there are some projects that are high priority items including the phased development of Abendschein Park and the development of the lakefront. The following is a list of prioritized park projects that should be completed over the next five (5) years:

- Identify, officially map, acquire land and develop future neighborhood parks to serve the Prairie View, Oakwood Manor, and Woodridge, neighborhoods.
- Acquire a parcel of land adjacent to Abendschein Park in the year 2014.
- Develop and Implement Abendschein Park Phase 3 as outlined in the Abendschein Park Master Plan.
- Develop the lakefront area north of Bender Park as a second community park site.
- Coordinate and schedule park acquisition and development within the parameters of Wisconsin's new Impact Fee Legislation.

The City should continue to work with other governmental jurisdictions when implementing this Park and Open Space Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, Milwaukee County, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and any adjoining communities.

During every budget cycle, the City of Oak Creek should review scheduled capital improvements for parks and recreational facilities, determine what projects are eligible for Wisconsin DNR Stewardship grant funding and apply for grants when appropriate. In addition to the grants for local governments, the City should strengthen its relationship with park advocate groups and work with them to secure grants that would benefit Milwaukee County Park facilities that Oak Creek residents use and enjoy.

The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District also has programs that acquire open space. The City of Oak Creek has benefited from the acquisition of several parcels of land by MMSD. These properties are purchased with the goal of protecting key lands with water absorbing soils. These lands are purchased in communities that are expected to experience major growth over the next 20 years such as Oak Creek and Franklin. It also aims to preserve land along stream corridors that connect the region's supply of public properties.

Implementation Tools

The City has at its disposal numerous implementation tools and financing mechanisms to implement the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. Besides financing through the annual budget cycle and capital improvements budget there are other funding methods including impact fees, grants, land donations, and conservation easements. What follows is a brief description of these implementation tools.

Impact Fees

Since 1996, the City of Oak Creek has used impact fees to fund a portion of the acquisition and development of community and neighborhood parks in lieu of requiring developers to donate land for park facilities. Park escrow fees are also collected for the development of bicycle facilities. Impact fees allow the City to charge a fee at the time of construction of any new residential housing unit in the City. That fee is intended to recover the proportionate share of the capital costs for parks that will serve new development. This allows the City to reduce the financial burden on existing residents to fund facilities that serve new development. It also allows for a dedicated source of funds for park facilities. The monies collected for park impact fees cannot be allocated to other items in the budget. The City currently collects \$2,105 from each new single family home to fund community park facilities and \$50 for bikeway facilities. In 2008, legislation changed allowing park impact fees to be collected on a City-wide basis instead of by neighborhood. In the past five years, park impact fees were used to implement Phase 1 and 2 of Abendschein Park.

Grants and Other Outside Funding Sources

There are numerous grants and other funding sources that the City of Oak Creek can utilize to help offset the acquisition and development of park and recreational facilities. Grants are also available for the development of recreational trails and the purchase of environmentally significant lands.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program was created by the Wisconsin Legislature in 1989 to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries, and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation. Named for two of Wisconsin's most revered conservation leaders, Warren Knowles (Governor 1965-1971) and Gaylord Nelson (Governor 1959-1963, U.S. Senator 1964-1981), the program has been an outstanding success since its inception.

The conservation and recreation goals of the Stewardship Program are achieved through the acquisition of land and easements, development of recreational facilities, and restoration of wildlife habitat.

Each year, funds are available through general obligation bonding for these purposes. The State of Wisconsin sells bonds to investors now to raise the funds, then pays back the debt over the next 20 years. This spreads the cost over time so it is shared with future users of public lands. Foundations, businesses, private citizens, and landowners contribute dollars as well as land and easements. This leveraging of private resources with public funds is an important ingredient in the Stewardship success story.

There are different types of Stewardship grants that are available to different levels of government and park advocate groups whose mission is citizen stewardship of Milwaukee County Parks.

The City of Oak Creek is eligible for several grants for local governments. They are as follows:

- **Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)** is intended to help local units of government buy land easements and develop or renovate local park and recreational area facilities for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes (e.g., trails, fishing access, and park support facilities). Applicants compete for funds on a regional basis.
- **Urban Green Space Grants (UGS)** helps buy land or easements in urban or urbanizing areas to preserve the scenic and ecological values of natural open spaces for nature-based outdoor recreation, including non-commercial gardening. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.
- **Urban Rivers Grants (UR)** helps buy land on or adjacent to rivers flowing through urban or urbanizing areas to preserve or restore the scenic and environmental values of riverways for nature-based outdoor recreation. The Urban Rivers Program has a cap per applicant based on 20% of the total funds allocated to the program each fiscal year. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.
- **Urban Forestry Grants** provide assistance for projects that support urban forestry management.
- **Hazard Elimination Program** is designed to survey hazardous locations or projects affecting any public bicycle or pedestrian pathways. This could include railroad crossings and crossing busy arterial roadways.
- **Acquisition Of Development Rights Grants (ADR)** help buy development rights (easements) for the protection of natural, agricultural, or forestry values, that would enhance nature-based outdoor recreation. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.
- **Transportation Enhancements Programs (TE)** are part of the Statewide Multi-Modal Improvement Program (SMIP) and are intended to provide facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program (BFPF)** funds projects that construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This program replaced the Surface Discretionary Grant Program (STP-D). All of the STP-D funding was transferred to the BFPF program.
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality** is a federally funded program which encourages transportation alternatives that improve air quality including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These funds are only available in the Southeastern Wisconsin ozone non-attainment and maintenance counties, which include Milwaukee County.
- **Safe Routes to School** is a Federal program administered by the State of Wisconsin. It is intended to make streets and intersections safer for children who walk or bike to school. Funds from this program can be used to connect neighborhoods to schools with bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Land Donations

Occasionally the City of Oak Creek receives offers from property owners or trusts to donate land to the City. With each offer, the City should look at the development in the area, the Needs Analysis in this report, and the type of land that is proposed for dedication to determine if the land could be used as a park site. Oftentimes people will dedicate land that is undevelopable due to wetlands and floodplain. The City should continue to accept these donations of environmentally significant land. The City's Comprehensive Plan recommends that the City preserves lands designated as resource protection or limited development areas through either regulation or acquisition. The Comprehensive Plan also recommends acquiring areas with floodway to preserve their function in stormwater conveyance.

Alternatives to Land Acquisition

With tighter budgets it is becoming increasingly more difficult for municipalities to acquire and preserve open space and acquire additional parkland. There are other implementation tools that the City can employ to preserve open space and potentially allow for recreational uses. These tools are cluster/conservation development schemes, conservation easements, deed restrictions, density bonus incentives, land trusts, purchase of development rights, and transfer of development rights.

Cluster/Conservation Development

In addition to acquisition of open spaces through donation or purchase, the City of Oak Creek can implement a cluster/conservation development ordinance to preserve privately owned open spaces and environmentally sensitive lands.

Cluster or conservation development is a means of preserving open space while permitting residential, commercial, office, or industrial development. This is done by grouping (clustering) the developed portion of the property into a smaller area on the overall property and preserving the remainder of the property in permanent open space.

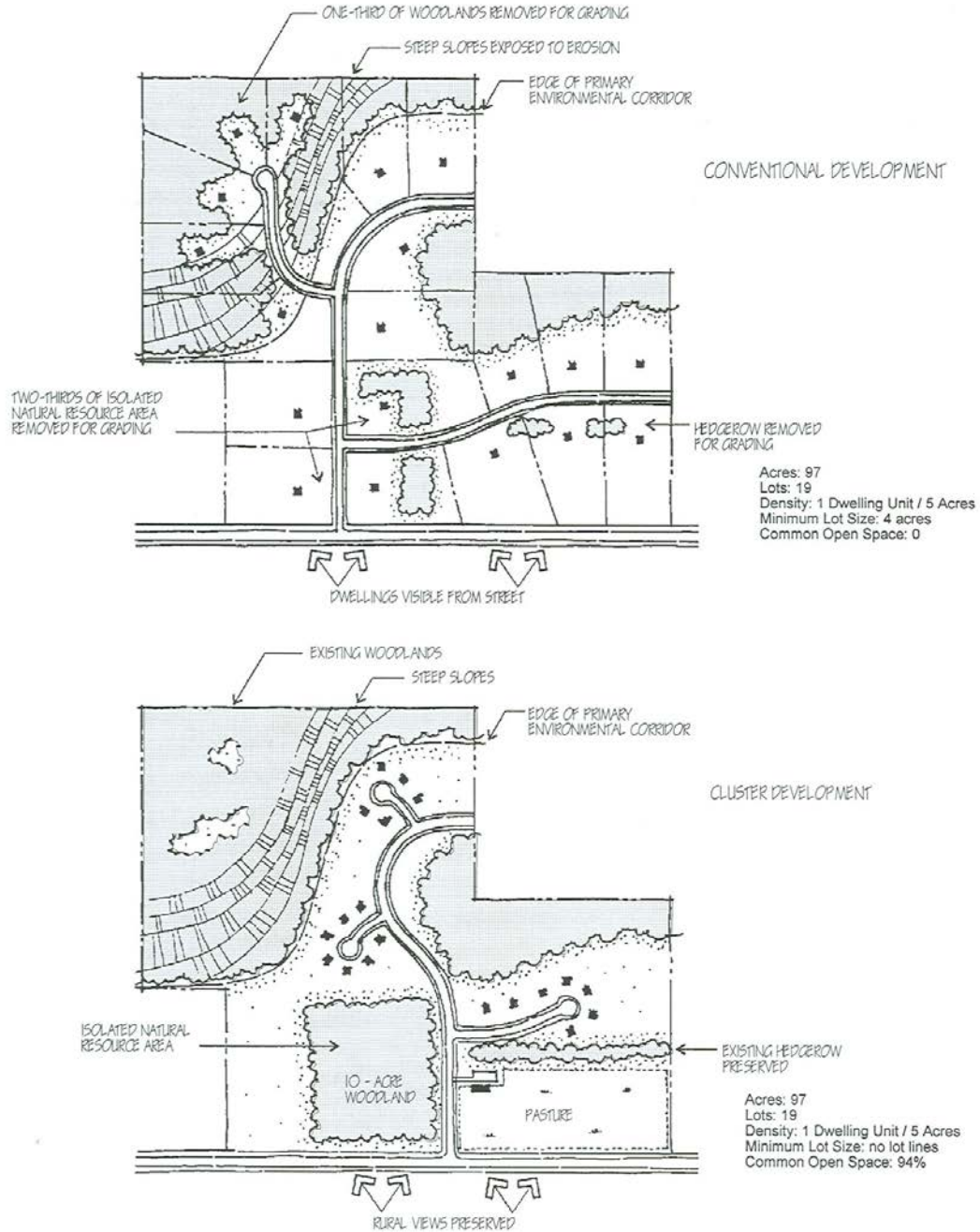
The best way to describe the distinction between a conventional and a cluster subdivision is to imagine that a 100-acre piece of land might be subdivided into 50 two-acre parcels, each with a residential dwelling. Under a cluster design, a developer would plan differently. The plan would still call for 50 dwellings, but this time each would be located on, half-acre parcels, "clustered" together in groups. This would only use 25 acres of land for residences and would leave 75 acres of "open space." Typically, the open space areas are in the midst of the development and are designed around the natural or man-made features of the landscape. In our hypothetical 100-acre parcel, we might have three separate areas of open space averaging 25 acres each. One might be centered around a section of woods, one around a pond or a creek, and one around a meadow. In a typical cluster subdivision, each homeowner has access to all of the open space areas, which may be permanently preserved by a conservation easement.

Cluster/conservation development has several benefits for not only the residents or businesses in the development but for the community as a whole. These preserved open spaces are visually attractive, preserve the rural character of communities, and in many cases provide for additional recreational opportunities. Some developments will have hiking, bicycle, and even equestrian trails. Other developments have athletic fields and playgrounds which the residents can utilize. These types of development schemes also benefit the community because the infrastructure maintenance costs are reduced.

Since the development is clustered in a smaller area there is less roadway and infrastructure to maintain.

While not preserving the entire site, cluster development can preserve large tracts of land without cost to the municipality. Under these development schemes the City does not need to purchase the land in order to preserve it. With proper site planning and design guidelines for the open space and the developed areas, the City and the developer can work together to achieve open space goals.

Figure 2: Illustration of Cluster Development



Source: SEWRPC

Conservation Easements and Deed Restrictions

An easement is a way to convey some of the land rights associated with ownership to another party. Utility, highway, and driveway easements are examples of how affected parties use the land in a specific way. Similarly, a conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a government agency, a non-profit conservation organization or a land trust that permanently limits specified current and future uses. As with other easements, landowners still retain ownership and many uses of their property such as agriculture, hunting and fishing. But a conservation easement will also help protect water quality, habitat and natural resources.

Although each conservation easement is unique, some examples of land rights purchased by state or local agencies include the right to improve streams, permit public access, manage trees, plants and shrubs by cutting and/or planting, and prohibit development. The agreement will also indicate the geographical boundaries of the easement. This legal document is recorded at the Register of Deeds Office. Land ownership stays with the landowner while easement rights “run with the land” which means the agency retains the easement rights if the landowner sells the land. The new landowner must abide by the easement.

Conservation easements have been successfully used across the country to permanently protect open space within developments, secure land for future parks, establish community trail corridors, preserve unique habitat for plants and animals, and safeguard vital groundwater aquifers and recharge areas. Easements may be affirmative or negative. Affirmative easements grant limited rights to use land for public purposes, such as hiking, fishing, or horseback riding. Negative easements restrict the owner in the use of his own land; for example, a scenic easement would require the owner to preserve the openness or natural beauty of an area adjacent to a rural highway.

A conservation easement is a type of negative easement which restricts the use of land owned by another person to specified conservancy or open space uses. The easement area and its restrictions are described in an easement agreement between the landowner and the holder of the easement. The landowner retains title to the property and continues to use it, subject only to the specific restrictions set forth in the easement agreement. The landowner and subsequent owners may retain, sell, lease, or bequeath land covered by a conservation easement at any time, subject to the provisions of the easement. The easement is granted in perpetuity and is binding on all future owners of the land. While the objective is to preserve open space in perpetuity, it is sometimes agreed that conditions may change sufficiently over time to prompt a need or desire to change the conditions of the easements or deed restrictions and that provisions should be made for such change. Any such provisions, however, should make it difficult to subvert or negate the original objective. If changes warrant consideration, the municipality, the members of the association, and any third party holders of easements or restrictions should all agree that it is in the best interests of everyone to revise or modify the easements or restrictions. Accordingly, a provision may be included in the documents concerned providing a procedure for making amendments or revisions.

For example, conservation easements might state that they are valid for 50 years, at the end of which time they shall automatically renew for another 50 years unless all parties concerned agree to amend or revise them.

The land under the protection of a conservation easement remains taxable, although its value as a parcel separate from the value of the homes is diminished. The municipality should not suffer a loss of tax revenue, however, because the value of the homes is enhanced by their location adjacent to permanent open space and thus reflects the value of the open space.

Whether a community association, the local unit of government, or the original landowner owns the common open space in a cluster development, it is recommended that a conservation easement be held by at least one of these parties. A concern related to the use of cluster development is that, at some time in the future, the zoning of a parcel developed as a cluster subdivision or the open space areas of such subdivision may be changed, and the open space may once again be susceptible to development. Although experience indicates that this is not likely to occur, an added protection against development under such a rezoning is for another interested party to hold a conservation easement on the land. The local unit of government can support the use of voluntary conservation easements by adopting a local conservation policy, that identifies the types of features it deems important to protect, such as wetlands, woodlands, agricultural lands, environmental corridors, and steep slopes, and by enacting a resolution that specifically states its support for conservation easements as a means of implementing its planning goals. A municipality may also require that, in the case of open space owned by a community association or retained by the original landowner, a conservation easement be granted to either a conservation organization or, if one cannot be found to accept the easement, to the municipality itself.

Probably the most effective way to assure preservation of the common open space in a cluster subdivision in perpetuity is to have each lot owner in the subdivision also own an undivided interest in the common open space. This would require that all lot owners concerned would have to agree for the open space to be sold and developed. When a community association owns the open space, however, the laws may permit such a decision to be made by a simple majority of the lot owners. For this reason, it is recommended that common open space be owned by the lot owners in the form of an undivided interest, as tenants in common, and not by the community association.

Density Bonus Incentives

Subdivision ordinances with density bonuses allow developers to build more homes, with smaller lot sizes, on a given parcel than would have been allowed under traditional zoning as an incentive to develop conservation subdivisions. This allows for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas while still permitting development to occur on the parcel. Currently, the Village of Caledonia in Racine County implements this tool.

Land Trusts

Land trusts are private, community-based, non-profit organizations established to protect land and water resources for public benefit. Land trusts protect land from uses that harm wildlife habitats, scenic landscapes or open spaces — land with natural, recreational, scenic, historic or productive value to their communities.

Wisconsin is home to more than 50 active land trusts that collectively protect and manage over 200,000 acres with significant ecological, scenic, recreational, agricultural, and historic value. These land conservation organizations range from small groups operated solely by volunteers to large land trusts with multiple professional staff.

Land trusts in Wisconsin vary in the geographic scope of the conservation work they do. Some have identified a specific watershed within which they operate to protect the health and natural functioning of the rivers or lakes that watershed encompasses. Others use a political delineation for their service area like a City, County, or Township. Still others operate within multiple counties or in areas which overlap political boundaries.

Land trusts are run by people who understand what natural resources are important to their community. Land trust board members, staff and volunteers bring a variety of skills to the table. They are involved in real estate, ecology, education, communications, fundraising and management of nonprofit organizations. What these conservationists have in common is an abiding interest in protecting natural resources and preserving our natural heritage. Land trusts are the fastest growing conservation movement in the United States.

When no existing local land trust can be found with an interest in holding conservation easements on common open space, a new land trust may be formed whose mission includes furthering its purposes through the acquisition of common open space in cluster developments, whether as an easement or in the form of ownership. Municipalities can be instrumental in forming such a land trust by working with conservation minded groups to do so.

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

In order to protect open space and farmland from development some Wisconsin municipalities have enacted Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Programs. These programs are helpful tools for protecting land from development. Under these types of programs a landowner voluntarily sells the development rights of a parcel of land to the City, a land trust or even the State of Wisconsin. By relinquishing the right to develop the landowner is financially compensated. The landowner still owns the land and has all other rights and responsibilities associated with that land. For instance, if a farmer sells his/her development rights he/she still can continue to farm the property, but cannot sell it to a developer or develop it themselves. Typically a conservation easement is placed on the property. That easement document would spell out what the owner (and any future owner) can and cannot do with the land.

The City of Muskego, Wisconsin recently enacted a PDR program that is financed through a conservation fee assessed for any new development. The fee is a “dedication fee” instead of an impact fee, this allows the City to charge the fee for all new development, not just residential development as is the case with impact fees. The fee is \$580 per acre consumed by the development. The money goes into an account which can be used for the purchase of development rights or the outright purchase of land for preservation.

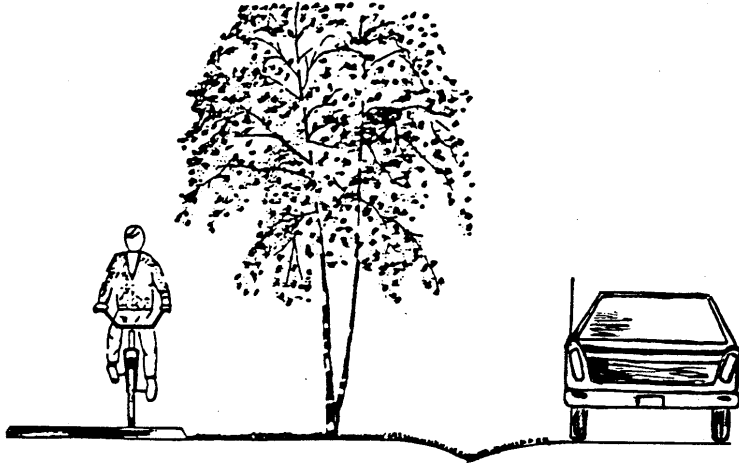
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs are similar to PDR programs with the owner of a property receiving financial compensation to not develop their property or a portion of their property. However the City, land trust, or other governmental entity does not purchase the rights, a developer does. Under this type of a program a developer purchases one parcel's development rights and then transfers those rights to another parcel. This allows more development on the second parcel while reducing or preventing development on the originating parcel.

APPENDICES

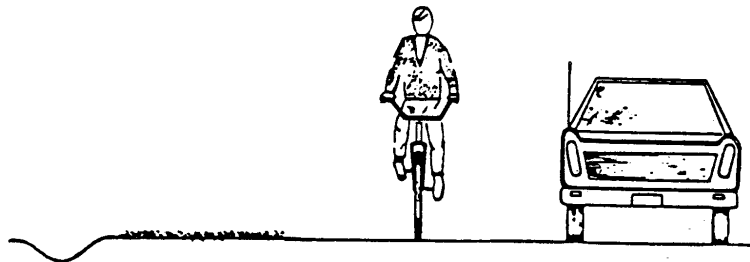
APPENDIX A

Illustration of Bike Classifications

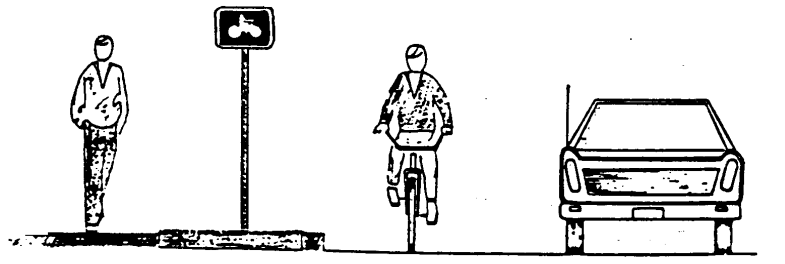
Class I: A separate travel way with minimum contact with vehicular or pedestrian movement.



Class II: A delineated bikeway next to the car lane.



Class III: An undelineated travel way that shares the normal street pavement with other vehicles.





OAKCREEK
— WISCONSIN —

MEMO

To: Mayor Steve Scaffidi and Members of the Plan Commission
From: Peter Wagner, Zoning Administrator/Planner
Subject: 2013 Parks & Open Space Plan
Date: April 17, 2014

At the Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Commission meeting on Thursday, October 10, 2013, the Commission approved the proposed 2013 Park and Open Space Plan. The Commission unanimously voted to recommend approval of the plan to the Plan Commission and Common Council recognizing that any funding decisions would be determined by the Common Council. The Park and Open Space Plan will be presented sometime in late November and early December before the Plan Commission and Common Council.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

APPENDIX C

MINUTES OF THE OAK CREEK PLAN COMMISSION MEETING TUESDAY, November 26, 2013

Mayor Scaffidi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The following Commissioners were present at roll call: Commissioner Dickmann, Commissioner Johnston, Commissioner Carrillo, Alderman Bukiewicz, Mayor Scaffidi, Alderman Michalski, Commissioner Siepert, Commissioner Correll and Commissioner Chandler. Also present were Kari Papelbon, Planner, Pete Wagner, Zoning Administrator/Planner and Assistant Fire Chief Mike Kressuk.

Commissioner Dickmann moved to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2013 regular Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Johnston seconds. There was a correction made to the minutes to include Commissioner Chandler who was present at the November 12, 2013 meeting. Roll call, all voted aye. Commissioner Correll abstains. Motion carries.

Ms. Papelbon read the summary of significant Common Council actions from December 3, 2013.

Plan Review 2013 City of Oak Creek 5 Year Park and Open Space Plan

Mr. Wagner stated that this is the seventh update to the Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Oak Creek. This Plan serves a good purpose in providing direction for policy makers as it pertains to parks and open space. Every five years there are changes and it is important to update the plan on a regular basis. The State requires the City to adopt a park and open space plan every five years, so that we qualify for State grants. One example would be the DNR Stewardship Grant which was used for phase two of Abendschein Park. Staff has worked with Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission and on October 10, 2013 the Commission voted unanimously in favor to recommend the update of the Park and Open Space Plan to the Plan Commission and Common Council recognizing that any funding decisions would be left up to the Common Council.

Janet Fluegel, Chairperson, stated that Mr. Wagner did a wonderful job and the Parks and Recreation Commission did go page by page of the Park and Open Space Plan.

Alderman Michalski asked if the City was still looking for a park in the 5th or 6th District south of Ryan Road and between 27th Street and the railroad tracks. Mr. Wagner stated on page 29, map 8 showing neighborhood parks and one of the gaps in our service area for neighborhood parks is in the southwest part of the City. We are looking at trying to find an affordable area in that portion of the City. Assuming funding is available, the City is looking at acquiring space for a park in 2015.

Commissioner Chandler asked if the grant has been approved and does it cover all the items on page 41. Mr. Wagner explained that a grant was applied for back to back years in 2010 and 2011, unfortunately the City did not receive the grant which was to be applied to half the cost of a property located on Judith Place.

Commissioner Dickmann referred to page 7 regarding the increase in people age 45 to 64 and the whether the plan addresses more of their needs. Mr. Wagner stated that this plan focuses

APPENDIX C

on parkland acquisitions and open space and we use the national standards that are outlined in Chapter 3 that talks about what the trends are and what the basic development facilities you provide in a neighborhood park. He stated that the recreation department takes into account what the trends are for recreational facilities and needs. Commissioner Dickmann also referred to page 40, objective 1, Shift to a Canopy analysis style of management and asked for a definition. Mr. Wagner stated that it was a way to measure the diameter of trees. He stated that City Forester Rebecca Lane provided this information.

Commissioner Johnston asked if Mardeand Park would fill in the hole in the southwest corner. Mr. Wagner explained how Mardeand Park was a unique park in the City; there are restrictions to the park, basically it is a nature center or preserve. With the construction with the OakView Business, there will some limited access, it will not be an active recreational area, it will be more of a passive park, with walking trails. It will not fit the neighborhood park definition, where kids play baseball; there will not be those types of facilities at Mardeand Park. Mayor Scaffidi stated that it will be a park and it was donated by a couple families in the area. He mentioned Lake Vista Park which will be constructed in the next few years on the lake front which will have public lake access for the first time in 85 years.

Commissioner Dickmann moved that the Plan Commission recommend to the Common Council that the 2013 Park and Open Space Plan be adopted as proposed. Commissioner Correll second. All voted aye, Motion carries.

Commissioner Carrillo moved for adjournment, Commissioner Correll second. All voted aye. Motion carries, meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

APPENDIX D

RESOLUTION NO. 11437-121713

BY: Ald. Ruetz

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN UPDATED
PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN
FOR THE CITY OF OAK CREEK

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), through the Stewardship Fund, provides matching funding to municipalities for park and open space acquisition and/or development; and

WHEREAS, to receive this funding, a municipality must have an adopted park and open space plan on which to base their requested funding;

WHEREAS, these plans need to be updated every five (5) years to maintain eligibility; and

WHEREAS, the City's current plan was approved by the Plan Commission and Council in early 2008 and certified by the DNR in late 2008; and

WHEREAS, at their meeting of October 10, 2013, the City's Park, Recreation, and Forestry Commission approved this plan update; and

WHEREAS, at their meeting of November 26, 2013, the City's Plan Commission approved this plan update; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission has recommended that the updated Park and Open Space Plan be approved by the Common Council with the adoption of this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the updated 2013 Park and Open Space Plan for the City of Oak Creek, Wisconsin dated December 17, 2013 is hereby approved.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oak Creek held this 17th Day of December 2013

Passed and adopted this 17th day of December 2013.



President, Common Council

Approved this 17th day of December, 2013.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk

VOTE: Ayes 6 Noes 0