

Council Meetings

Van Meter United Methodist Church
100 Hazel St, Van Meter, IA 50261

Joe Herman, Mayor

Council Members

Travis Brott, Mayor Pro Tem

Joel Akers

Blake Grolmus

Quin Pelz

Penny Westfall

City Staff

Liz Faust, City Administrator

Jess Drake, City Clerk

Drew McCombs, Public Works Director

Sam Chia, Parks & Rec Director

Jonatha Basye, Library Director

Michael Brown, Police Chief

Mark Schmitt, Fire Chief

John Fatino, Whitfield & Eddy, PLC

Randy Johnson, Veenstra & Kimm, Inc.

Workshop Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Introduction & Discussion: Julia Helm, Dallas County Board of Supervisors
4. Discussion and Consideration: Future Land Use Map Updates
5. Discussion and Consideration: Master Parks Plan
6. Discussion and Consideration: Comprehensive Plan Updates
7. Adjournment

Posted: Thursday, February 20, 2025

Agenda Item #1

Call to Order

Mayor: *The time is 6:15pm on Monday, February 24, 2025.*

I hereby call this meeting of the Van Meter City Council to order.

Agenda Item #2

Approval of the Agenda

Submitted for: **ACTION**

Recommendation: **APPROVAL**

Sample Language:

Mayor: Do I hear a motion to approve the agenda?

City Councilmember: _____ **So moved.**

City Councilmember: _____ **Second.**

Mayor: Roll Call Please.

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

Mayor: The agenda is adopted.

Agenda Item #3

Discussion and Possible Action:

Resolution #2025-19 Approving FY25 Transfers

Submitted for: **Discussion and Possible Action**

City Clerk Drake will provide additional information but these transfers are needed to balance out certain funds, close out funds that are no longer active and move funds that are being incorrectly recorded into the general fund.

Recommendation: **APPROVAL**

Sample Language: **Motion to adopt Resolution #2025-19 Approving FY25 Transfers**

City Councilmember: _____ ***So moved.***

City Councilmember: _____ ***Second.***

Mayor: ***Roll Call Please.***

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

Agenda Item #3

Introduction and Discussion:

Julia Helm, Dallas County Board of Supervisors

Submitted for: **Discussion**

Supervisor Helm will be in attendance. As a newly elected official in Dallas County, we are taking this opportunity to introduce to her the City of Van Meter & elected officials.

Agenda Item #4

Discussion and Consideration: Future Land Use Map

Council & Staff will engage in conversation regarding current state of the future land use map (included) and possible updates.

Recommendation:

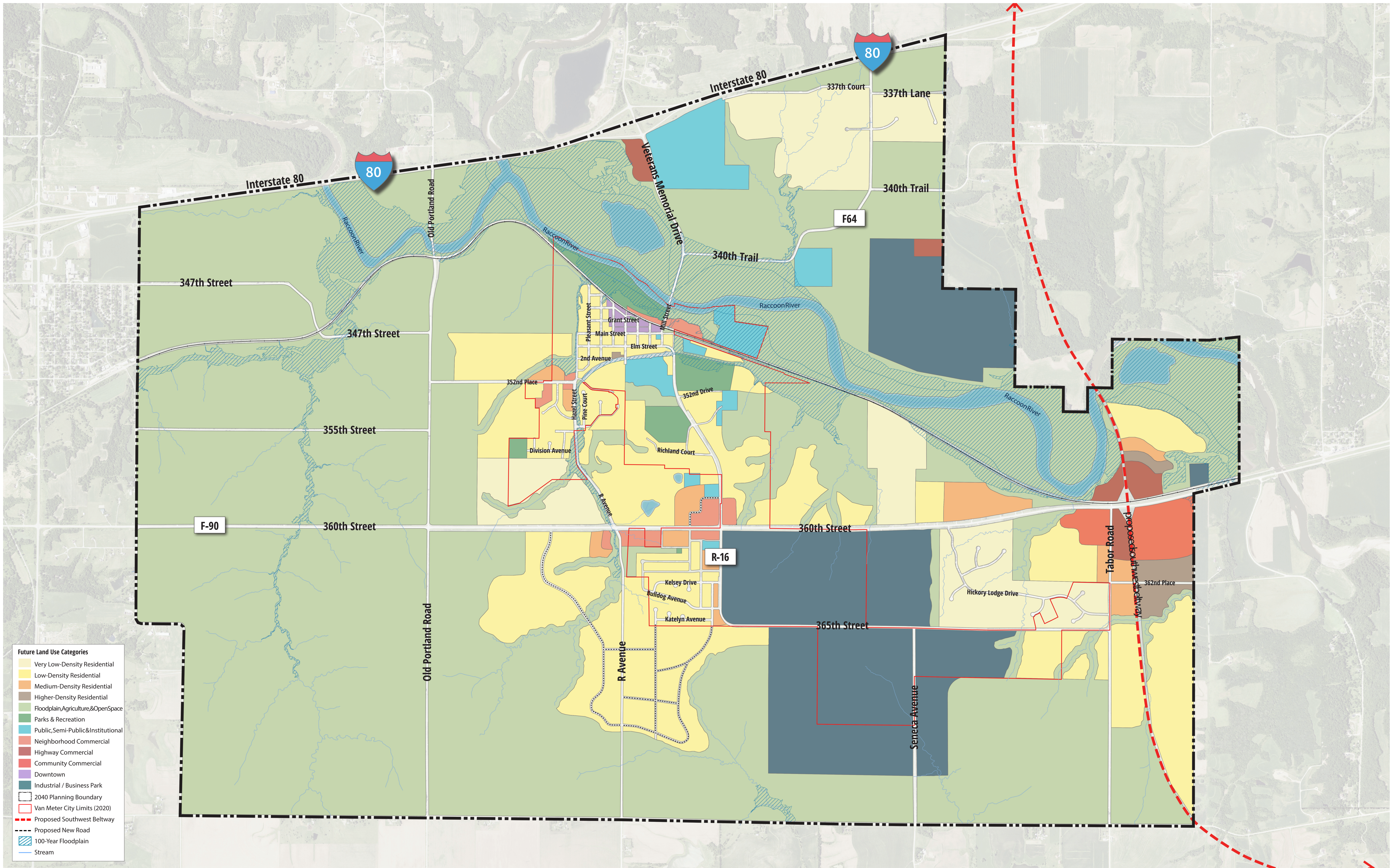
Sample Language:

City Councilmember: _____ ***So moved.***

City Councilmember: _____ ***Second.***

Mayor: ***Roll Call Please.***

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

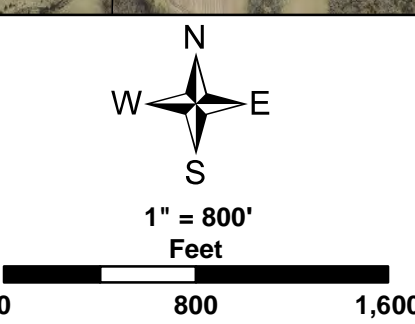


VISION VAN METER 2040 / COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Future Land Use Plan

Adopted November 9, 2020 / Updated November 16, 2023

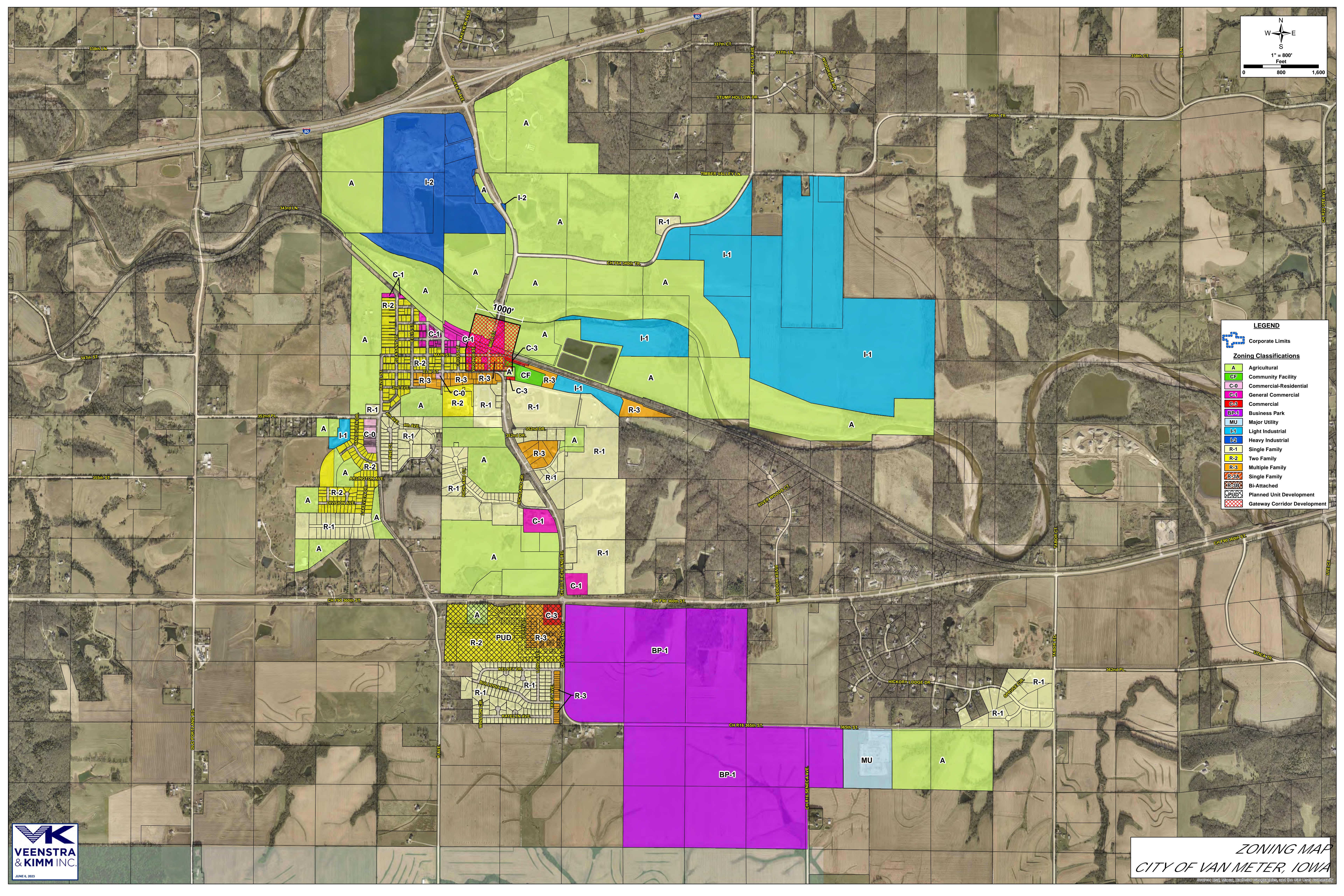




LEGEND	
	Corporate Limits
Zoning Classifications	
	Agricultural
	Community Facility
	Commercial-Residential
	General Commercial
	Commercial
	Business Park
	Major Utility
	Light Industrial
	Heavy Industrial
	Single Family
	Two Family
	Multiple Family
	Single Family
	Bi-Attached
	Planned Unit Development
	Gateway Corridor Development



ZONING MAP
CITY OF VAN METER, IOWA



Agenda Item #5

Discussion and Consideration: Master Parks Plan

City Clerk Drake & Parks and Rec Director Chia will discuss a potential Master Parks Plan.

Recommendation:

Sample Language:

City Councilmember: _____ ***So moved.***

City Councilmember: _____ ***Second.***

Mayor: ***Roll Call Please.***

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

Van Meter PARK SYSTEM PLAN

PROCESS AND PROJECT SCOPING

February 13, 2025

Casey Byers, PLA

Principal Landscape Architect

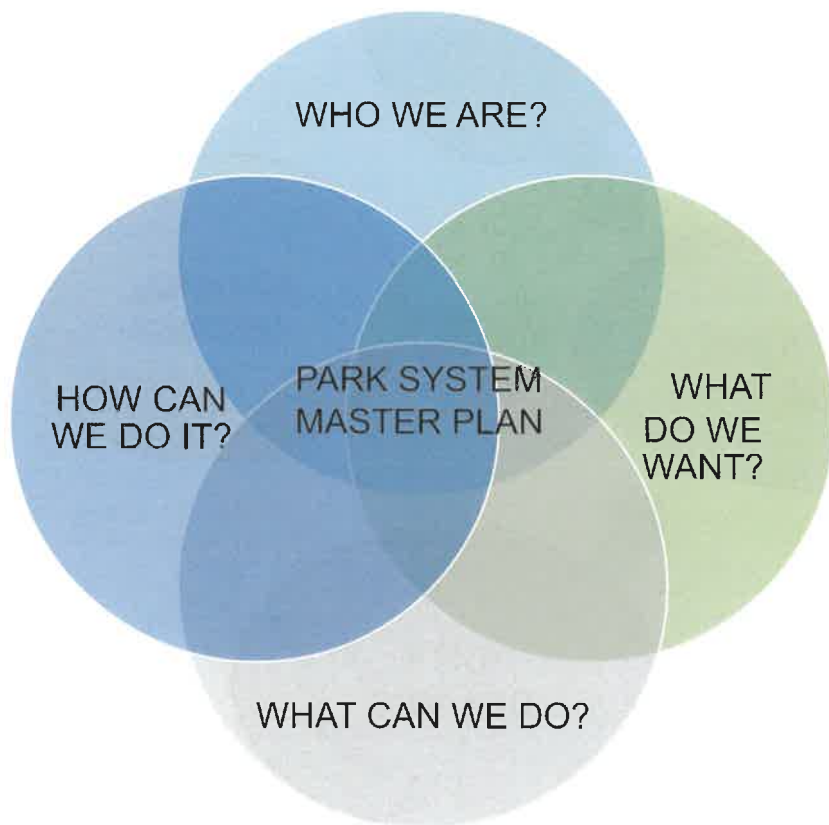


Real People. Real Solutions.

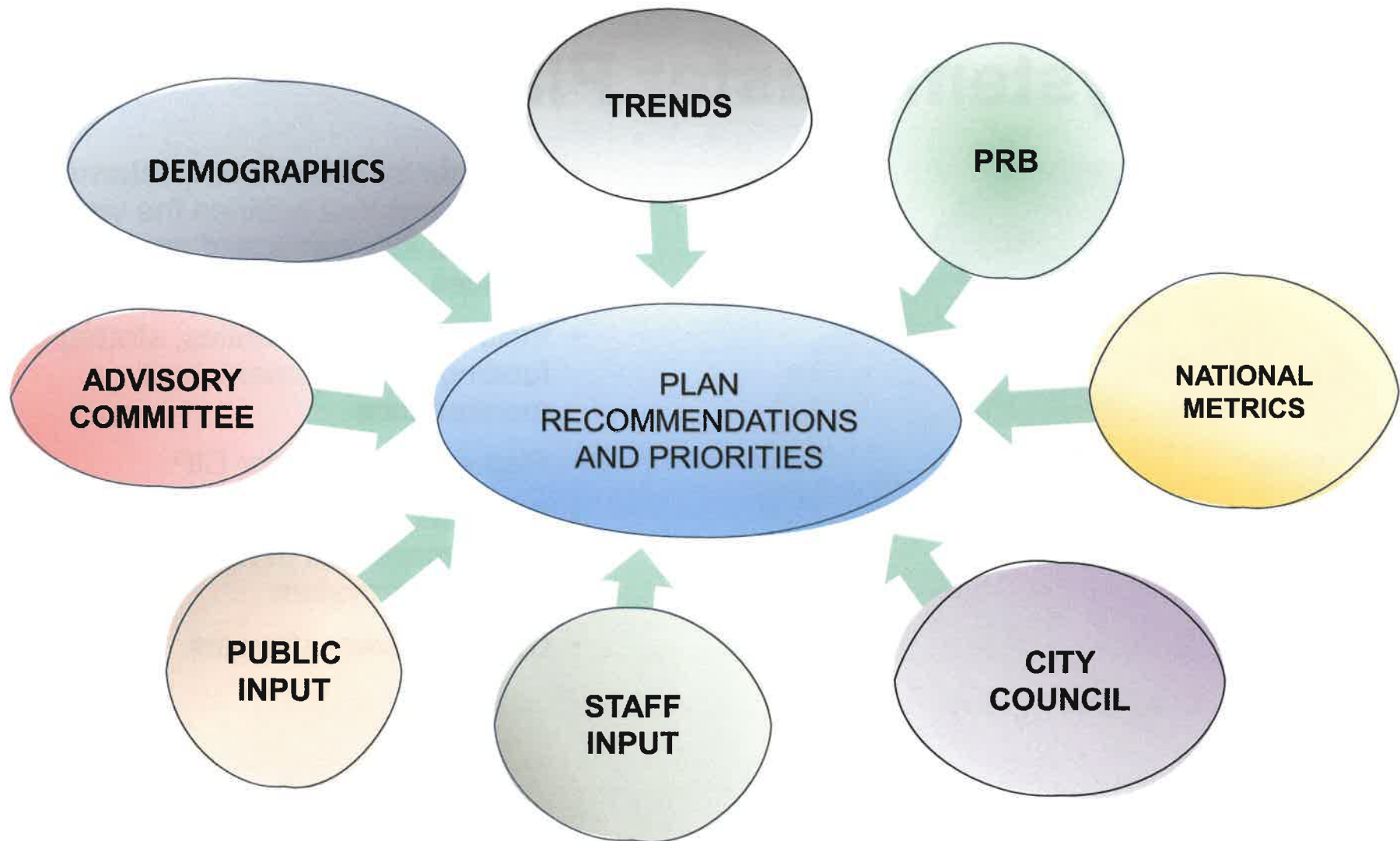
PARK SYSTEM PLANNING



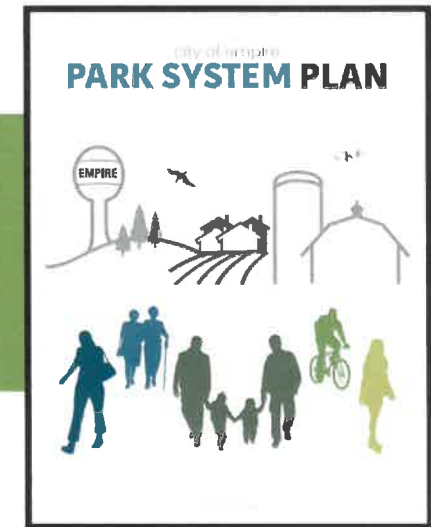
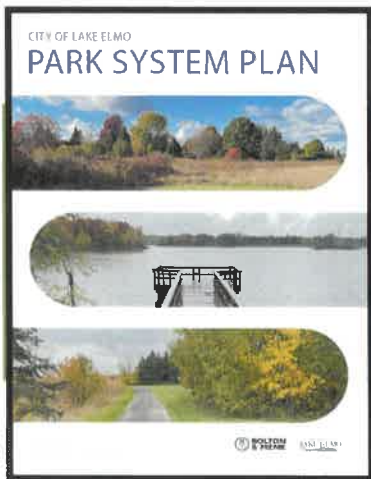
Park System Master Plan



- Community-driven **comprehensive document** that outlines the vision for a community's parks and recreation facilities
- Includes goals, priorities, strategies, funding, management, and maintenance
- Plan and prepare for CIP
- Serve as guiding document for department staff to manage the growth of the park system
- Updated every 10 years



COMPLETED PLANS



- **Marshalltown, IA**
- **Forest Lake, MN**
- **Lake Elmo, MN**
- **Robbinsdale, MN**
- **Empire, MN**
- **Windsor Heights, IA**
- **Blue Earth, MN**
- **Jasper County, SC**
- **Cabarrus County, NC**

PROJECT UNDERSTANDING + APPROACH

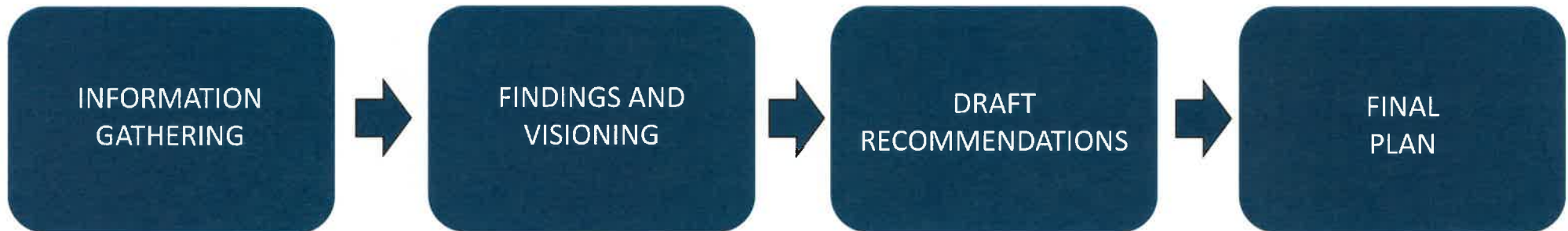


PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

- What are your goals/success factors for this process?
- Are there anticipated outcomes you are hoping to see or avoid?
- Are there procedural things you have in mind?
- Other?



PROCESS



INFORMATION GATHERING



FINDINGS AND VISIONING



DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS



FINAL PLAN

Needs Assessment

- All Assets
- All Program Locations
- Other Providers

Inventory

- All Park Assets
- All Program Locations
- Other Providers
- Level of Service Comparison and Mapping

Community Profile

- Historical and Planning Context
- Demographics

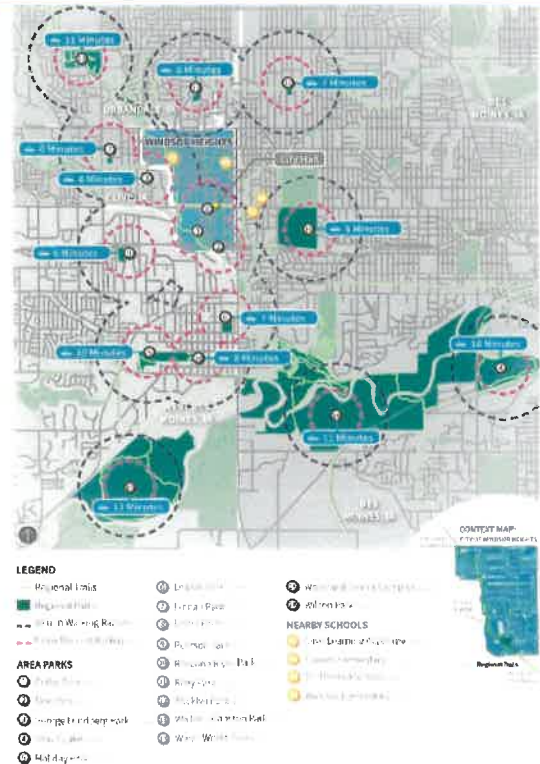
Trends

- Local and National
- NRPA Metric and Trends Analysis

Community and Public Engagement

- City-wide Survey
- Pop-Up Meetings
- Open House

FIGURE 3: LOCAL PARK PROXIMITY



NRPA BENCHMARK	ALL PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES (MEDIAN)	PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES LESS THAN 20,000 (MEDIAN)	LAKE ELMO
PARK FACILITIES			
Residents per park	2,386 residents	1,172 residents	573 residents
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents	10.6 acres	12.6 acres	37.1 acres
Miles of trails	16 miles	4.5 miles	82 miles
STAFFING			
Park and recreation full-time employees per 10,000 residents	8.9 employees	13.7 employees	2 employees
BUDGET			
Annual operating expenditures	\$6,453,357	\$1,451,763	\$431,038
Annual operating expenditures per resident	\$99.47	\$135.53	\$31.93
Operating expenditures per acre of park and recreation space	\$8,260	\$9,777	\$833.27
Annual operating expenditures per full-time employee	\$110,912	\$101,304	\$215,519
Typical percentage of operating expenditures for staffing	54%	N/A	30%



Presentations/Feedback Sessions

- Staff
- Stakeholders
- Steering Committee
- PRB
- City Council

What We Have Discovered

Vision

Opportunities

Limitations

Themes

Analysis

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

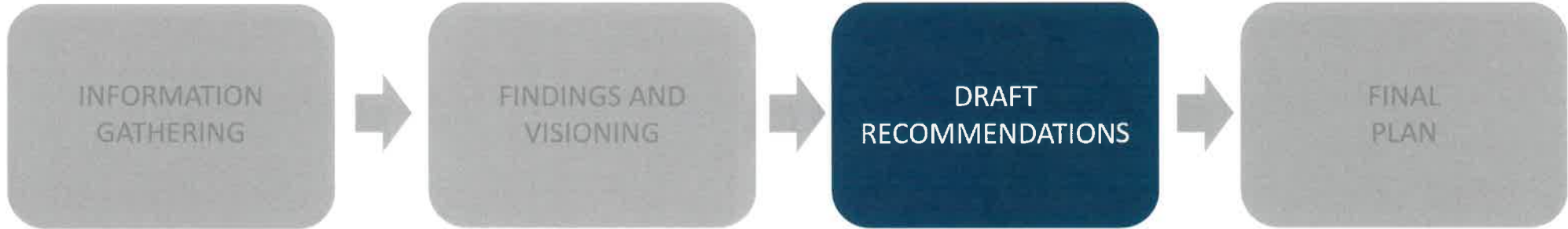
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Similarly, collaboration with city staff, the Advisory Committee, and the community led to the creation of four guiding principles specific to Lake Elmo's parks, trails, and open spaces. These guiding principles provide an overarching framework to help inform the development of the goals, policies, and initiatives found in the recommendations section of this report. During the planning process, they helped define the actions that should be taken to achieve the vision for Lake Elmo's park and trail system. Guiding principles for this plan include:



Figure 4.2. Aerial view of native plants in Lake Elmo

1	CONNECT	This plan should connect the community to parks, trails, open spaces, nature, reliable information, and each other, as well as strengthen relationships to the outdoors and healthy lifestyles
2	GROW	This plan should enhance and improve Lake Elmo's existing assets, as well as provide room for future growth of the park and trail system
3	MAINTAIN	This plan should provide guidance and recommendations that are implementable, maintainable, and sustainable.
4	ADAPT	This plan should assist the city in adapting to ever-changing trends in park and recreation, as well as Lake Elmo's rapidly growing population



Summary of Findings

Strategies

- Long-Term Vision
- Short-Term Vision

Implications

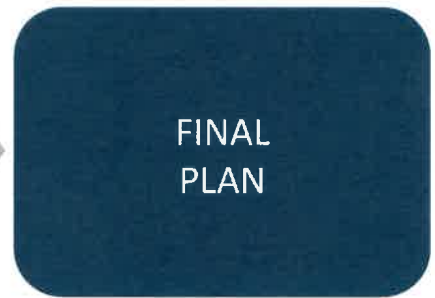
- Financial
- Operational
- Maintenance

Recommendations

Action Plans

Reviews and Revisions

PRIORITY/PHASE	PARK/LOCATION	IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATION + BRIEF DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ESTIMATE	
			Low (\$)	High (\$)
1 (0-2 Year/Immediate)	Blue Earth Ballfields	Accessible sidewalk connections to playgrounds and park features	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
	Dog Park	Expand size of existing dog park, designate fenced-in areas for dogs	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
	Fairbault County Fairgrounds	Establish wayfinding throughout the Fairgrounds	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 44,000.00
	Giant Park	Add a kiosk w/ map to community amenities	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
	Piano Park	Add seating options/furnishings	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
	Putnam Park	Add a community event space/bandshell/ampth/heater	\$ 550,000.00	\$ 650,000.00
	Stemberg Nature Park	Add a nature playscape	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
	Non-Site Specific	Create additional programming and park amenities for senior citizens	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
		TOTAL PHASE 1 COST	\$ 990,000.00	\$ 1,365,000.00
2 (2-5 Year/Mid-term)	Beyer Field and Leland Parkway	Strengthen connections to the Blue Earth River	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
	Blue Earth Ballfields	Update/improve existing playground areas	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 350,000.00
	Dog Park	Add accessible sidewalk connections to park amenities Incorporate an open-air shelter/shade structure for users	\$ 40,000.00 \$ 80,000.00	\$ 60,000.00 \$ 150,000.00
	Fairbault County Fairgrounds	Create better, accessible connections to Giant Park and surrounding circulation Expand the existing playground area/offering	\$ 200,000.00 \$ 300,000.00	\$ 275,000.00 \$ 400,000.00
	Giant Park	Establish accessible sidewalk connection to the existing trail	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
	Piano Park	Add accessible sidewalks to important park features	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 150,000.00
	TOTAL PHASE 2 COST	\$ 1,030,000.00	\$ 1,470,000.00	
3 (5+ Year/Long-term)	Beyer Field and Leland Parkway	Establish and promote biking/running trails in Leland Park	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
	Blue Earth Ballfields	Add crosswalk across 5 Rice Street to parking area	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
	Dog Park	Establish water access in the park	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
	Fairbault County Fairgrounds	Promote the community gardens	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
	Giant Park	Add additional landscaping and visual enhancements	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
	Piano Park	Create a more welcoming central plaza space Update/improve existing playground features	\$ 50,000.00 \$ 250,000.00	\$ 80,000.00 \$ 350,000.00
	Putnam Park	Update disc golf equipment and signage Update/improve existing playground features	\$ 15,000.00 \$ 350,000.00	\$ 25,000.00 \$ 450,000.00
	Stemberg Nature Park	Connect park amenities with accessible walking loop Provide additional park seating opportunities and related site furnishings	\$ 200,000.00 \$ 5,000.00	\$ 300,000.00 \$ 10,000.00
	Non-Site Specific	Establish a bike share station at a neighborhood park Add a basketball court to a neighborhood park Add a skate park to a neighborhood park	\$ 10,000.00 \$ 150,000.00 \$ 300,000.00	\$ 20,000.00 \$ 200,000.00 \$ 400,000.00
		TOTAL PHASE 3 COST	\$ 1,427,000.00	\$ 2,030,000.00
		TOTAL INVESTMENT INTO PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM	\$ 3,387,000.00	\$ 4,665,000.00



USING THE PLAN

This park system plan document is organized into seven sections, which include:

- 01: Introduction
- 02: Existing Conditions + Needs
- 03: Vision + Guiding Principles
- 04: Trends Analysis
- 05: Recommendations
- 06: Implementation
- 07: Appendix

The contents of this park system plan report include park inventory data, community input results, analysis of all collected data, recommendations and implementation strategies for Lake Elmo's parks, trails, and open spaces.

The report's appendix includes park inventory maps and the complete community survey results.

01: INTRODUCTION

The introduction provides an overview of the planning process and purpose, as well as a brief look at demographics and community context.

02: EXISTING CONDITIONS + NEEDS

This section evaluates the Lake Elmo system through various lenses and outlines future needs.

03: VISION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This section helps set the stage for what is desired by the community for the future system and what overarching ideas should help steer its future.

04: TRENDS ANALYSIS

Understanding social, demographic, and recreational trends is an important part of maintaining a responsive park system. This section highlights key trends that are impacting today's parks and recreation systems and help inform the plan.

05: RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are actions to help attain the vision for the system (solve the backbone of the plan, building off the analysis and vision).

06: IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines steps to carry out the proposed recommendations, and includes priorities, capital improvements, and funding ideas.

07: APPENDIX

Supporting documents including park inventory maps and community survey results.

SETTING PRIORITIES

Over the years, Lake Elmo has worked to align funding and mechanisms for land acquisition, facility additions and improvements, trail development, and operations and maintenance. Without a formal parks and recreation department in place, however, the city has been unable to develop an efficient process for prioritizing improvements and identifying potential funding resources. The city is in need of an adaptable and flexible framework to help guide the development, improvement, and projected maintenance of future park, trail, and open space assets.

The priorities in this plan are drawn from the improvement recommendations identified in the Chapter 5. They are organized into five key topic areas, including:

- Parks
- Facilities
- Connectivity
- Open Space and Preserves
- Operations and Maintenance

Many factors informed the prioritization of recommendations in this report, including community and stakeholder input, the availability of city resources (e.g., time, staff, funding, etc.), and alignment with past planning documents among other factors. Depending on staff resources, funding, and need, some initiatives will be easier and faster to achieve, while others may warrant a long-term commitment to implement. This plan anticipates the cumulative improvements for the park and trail system will be completed in phases as funding is available and opportunities for public and private partners arise.

In the future, as city staff prepares to implement park and trail-related improvements, they should continue to keep residents involved/updated through social media outlets, and the city website's "Park Notices" tab (Home > Departments > Parks > Park Notices).

The following pages include an implementation matrix which provides information about the improvement recommendations' priority levels and planning level budget estimates. The general timelines for implementation for each priority level are as follows:

- High Priority Level = 1 - 3 years
- Medium Priority Level = 4 - 7 years
- Low Priority Level = 8+ years

Following the matrix is a compilation of funding resources for Lake Elmo to explore.

FIRST PRIORITY: PARKS DIRECTOR

As mentioned, Lake Elmo does not currently have a parks director to assist in the improvement and development of the city's park and trail system. **Adding this position is the most critical action the city can take toward improving their park and trail system as the future unfolds.** Without a dedicated parks director, the recommendations and implementation strategies discussed in this plan will be difficult to fulfill.

Review

- Staff
- Public
- Steering Committee
- PTRC
- Council

Approval

- PTRC
- Council

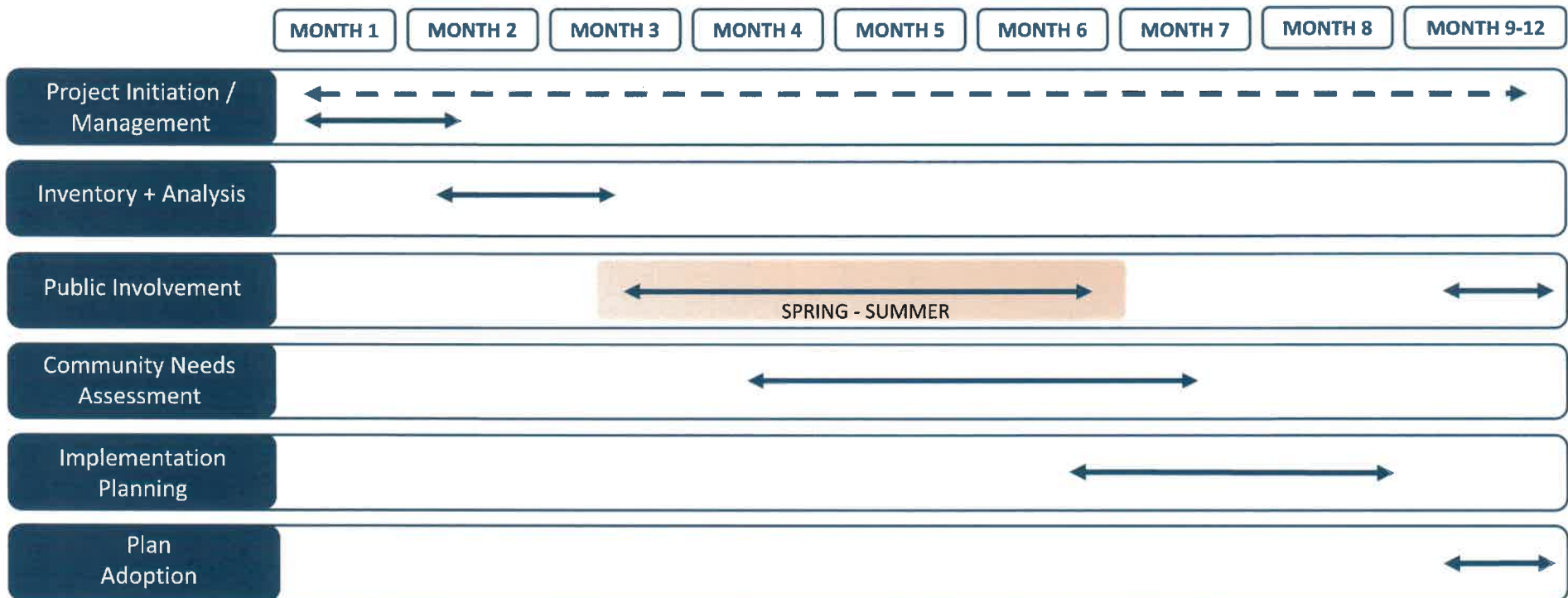
Implementation

- Guiding Document
- Action Plan
- Annual Review

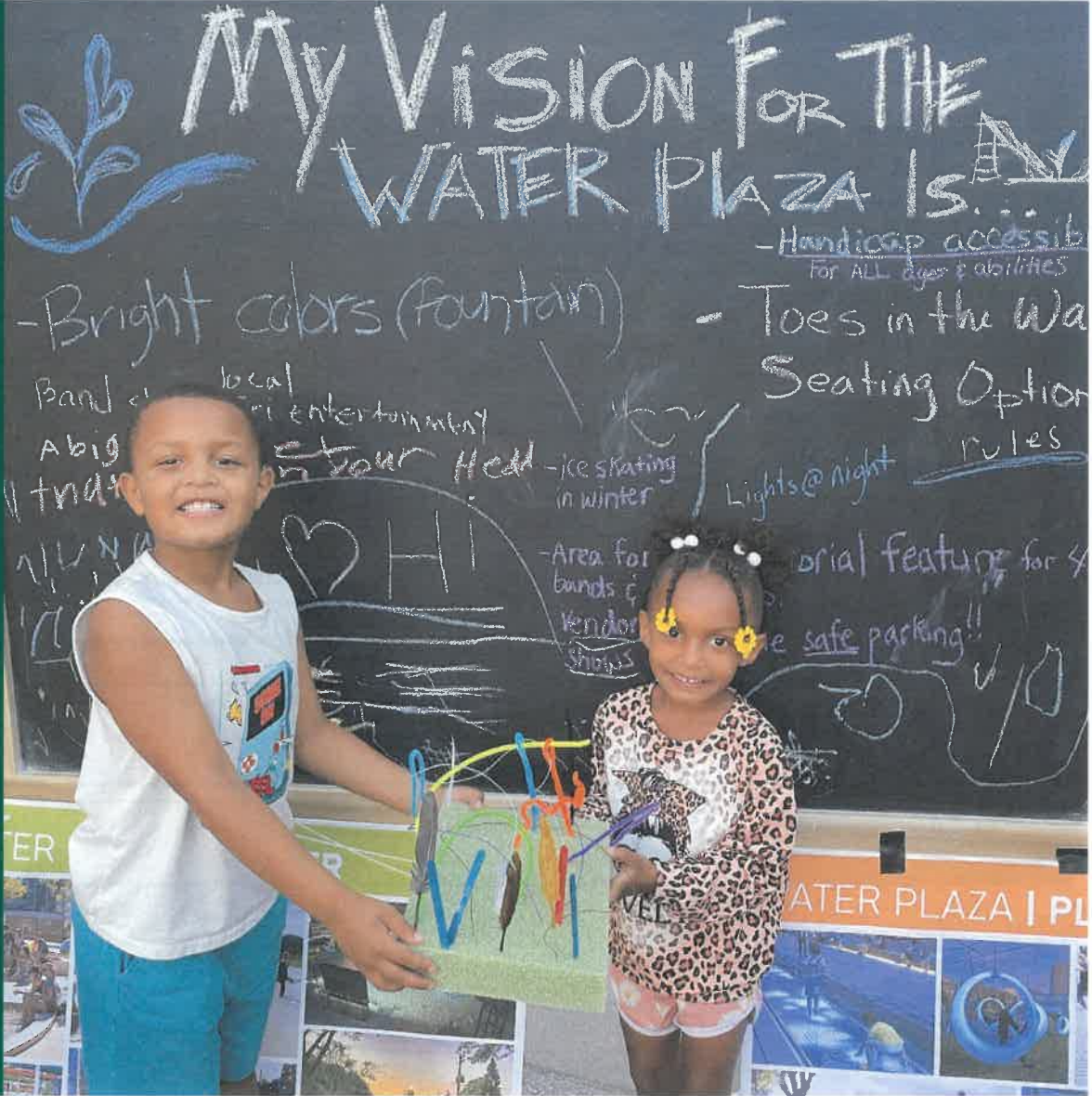


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PROPOSED TIMELINE



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



- One or Two Council Members
- One or Two PRB Members
- City Staff
- Community Liaison
- Dedicated meetings with the committee throughout the project
- Hands-on **collaborative** work

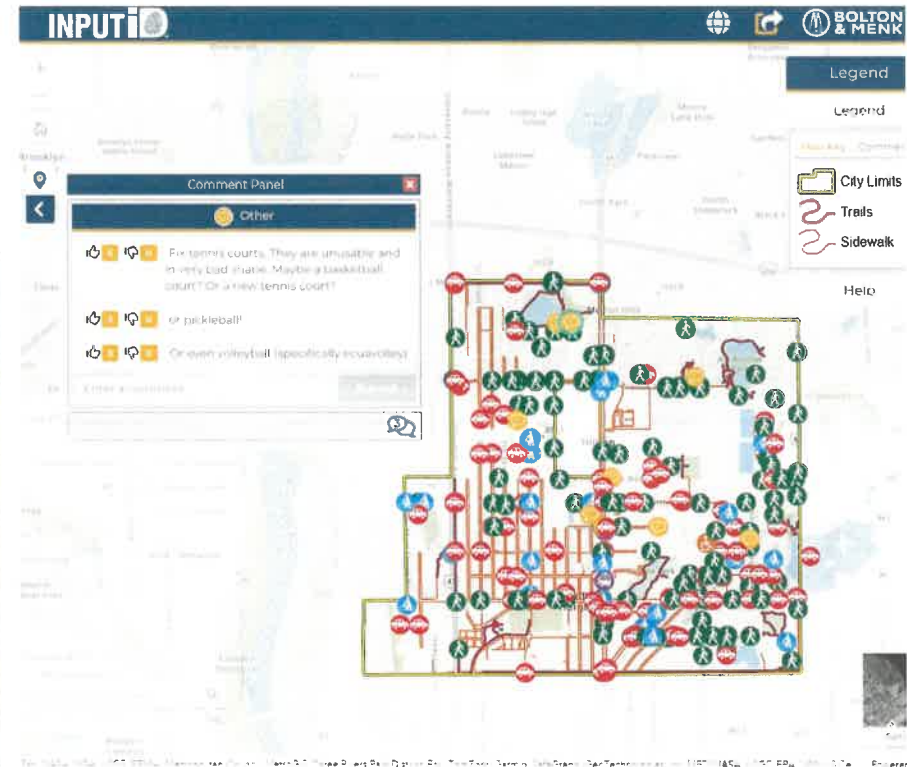
POP-UP MEETINGS



- **Effective** way to reach the community
 - Creative Ideas
 - Produces meaningful discussions
 - Additional opportunity to engage PRB and City Council
 - Encourages community buy-in
-
- Raccoon River Days
 - Easter Egg Hunt
 - Fan Fest

COMMUNITY INPUT

- Community-wide survey
- Park uses and activities
- Preferred amenities
- Utilize visual preferencing
- Customized to city
- Interactive Community Map INPUTiD™
- Yard Signs
- Trail Graphics



BUDGET

PROJECT
MANAGEMENT
+ INITIATION

INVENTORY +
ANALYSIS

PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY
NEEDS
ASSESSMENT

IMPLEMENTATION
PLANNING

FINAL
PLAN

10%

15%

15%

20%

20%

15%

Next Steps

- Scope and Fee
- Council Consideration – Meeting Date?
- Project Schedule
- Public Engagement Plan



QUESTIONS?

Contact:

Casey Byers, PLA

Casey.Byers@bolton-menk.com



Agenda Item #6

Discussion and Consideration: Comprehensive Plan Updates

City Clerk Drake & City Administrator will discuss proposed immediate comp plan updates and then a path forward on a larger review in CY26. Draft updates will be provided at the meeting.

Recommendation:

Sample Language:

City Councilmember: _____ ***So moved.***

City Councilmember: _____ ***Second.***

Mayor: ***Roll Call Please.***

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

Agenda Item #7

Adjournment

Submitted for: **ACTION**

Recommendation: **APPROVAL**

Sample Language:

Mayor: *With no further business, do I hear a motion to adjourn?*

City Councilmember: _____ *So moved.*

City Councilmember: _____ *Second.*

Mayor: *Roll Call Please.*

City Clerk: Akers _____ Brott _____ Grolmus _____ Pelz _____ Westfall _____

Mayor: *This meeting is adjourned at _____pm. Thank you.*