



PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is Hereby Given Regarding a Special City Council Workshop to be held on September 23, 2025 at 5:00 PM.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss:

City of Mound Strategy for Parks and Open Spaces

The location for the meeting is the Council Chambers in the Mound Centennial Building, 5431 Maywood Road, Mound, MN.

All meetings are open to the public and all interested persons are invited to attend.

By: Jesse Dickson, City Manager
Posted: September 18, 2025



WORKSHOP AGENDA

STRATEGY FOR PARKS & OPEN SPACES

City of Mound City Council Chambers

I. INTRODUCTION - STRATEGY FOR PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Michelle Herrick – The purpose of the document is to encourage a discussion around the long- and short-term strategy for the parks and open spaces. Creating a vision will help provide a strategy that is supported by our budget and gain city staff support. This document was reviewed by Public Works and Jesse Dickson. This document is a draft.

II. COUNCIL OPEN DISCUSSION – 55 MINUTES

Comments on approach

Does the Council support the vision?

Can we gain support of the budget committee for upgrades, add to staff.....

Review of current smaller parks

Parks commission roles and responsibilities

III. NEXT STEPS



Date: 9.23.2025



Time: 5:00 PM



Strategy for Parks & Open Spaces – City of Mound MN

VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To position Mound as a “**Lake Lifestyle Community**” where residents and visitors enjoy high-quality parks, active waterfronts, and accessible natural spaces that balance recreation, community gathering, and environmental stewardship. Unlike many towns of comparable size, Mound’s Park system should **blend land-based recreation with a “water-first” identity**. The lakefront is both its **front yard and backyard**.

- **Accessibility:** Most residents should be within a 10–15-minute walk (~½ mile) of a neighborhood park.
- **Variety:** Provide a mix of passive (relaxation, natural areas) and active (sports, playgrounds, fitness) spaces.
- **Waterfront First:** Leverage the lakeshore for recreation, habitat, and community identity.
- **Sustainability:** Prioritize low-maintenance, climate-resilient design, manage stormwater, and protect wildlife habitats.
- **Community-Centric:** Parks should support recreation and double as gathering spaces for events, markets, and community activities.
- **Identity:** Parks should reflect the city’s character, history, and natural assets.

TYPES OF PARKS

Definitions for the classification of parks and facilities are generally based upon the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines but have been refined to address the specific needs of the City of Mound residents. The criteria used to define each of the open space and park categories are described below.

1. **Neighborhood Parks – Recommendation is 6-8 specialized parks that serve a concentrated or limited population area, or that serve residents within ½ mile.**
 - 0.25–1 acre each, within neighborhoods.
 - Playground/tot lot equipment
 - Benches, picnic tables, ornamental landscape features including open turf & shade trees.
 - Recommended Goal: one park per 500–1,000 residents.
 - Goal to have even coverage across neighborhoods.
2. **Community Parks – Recommendation is 2-3 Serves the whole town.**
 - 4-5 acres centrally located.
 - Multi-use athletic fields (Soccer, baseball, softball, pickleball & tennis courts)
 - Event lawn/amphitheater for concerts city celebrations, picnic shelters, specialty markets.
 - Trails and fitness loops, or fitness courses
 - Large playground
 - Serves multiple neighborhoods (15–20 min walk/short drive).
3. **Waterfront Parks & Lake Access – Recommendation 3-5 total**
 - Public swimming beaches (expand Surfside beach front access) The beach was made smaller to open up room for parking boats on the beach park. Room could be made by creating temporary parking spaces over by the depot side.
 - Fishing piers and kayak launches. (Cooks Bay/Seton Lake shoreline)
 - Lake promenade and boardwalk with picnic areas.
 - Environmental buffers with restored native shoreline. (Open spaces that support Docks & Commons Program)
 - Expand public docks for transient boats to support commerce.
4. **Greenways & Trails – Multi-use trails**
 - Expand connections to Dakota regional rail trail.
 - Linear corridors (along the lake, rail trails, or utility easements).
 - Connect neighborhoods, schools, and downtown. i.e., Andrews Sister Trail
 - Connect neighborhoods to waterfront connections where possible.
 - Encourage walking, cycling, and non-motorized commutes.
5. **Specialty Parks & Natural Areas – Recommendation 2-3 Concepts would need budget approval.**
 - Dog Park – Fenced area for large and small dogs, attracts people to area (\$ Budget Needed).
 - Nature Preserve – Bird watching/wetland boardwalk near lost lake,
 - Historic – Celebrate Tonka heritage (Railroad, steamboat rides, Dakota cultural history)

- Preserved woodlands, wetlands, or prairies.
- Managed for biodiversity, stormwater management, and education.
- Golf space – putting greens, possibly a small Putt- putt golf area.

6. Civic/Plaza Spaces – Recommendation 1

- Hardscaped areas downtown for markets, festivals, and public life.

SERVICE STANDARDS (TARGET BENCHMARKS)

- National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) The national benchmark by population is about 10.6 acres per 1000 residents.
- **10–15 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents** → For 8,600 people, plan for **90-105 acres total**.
- Ensure **90%+ of residents** live within a 10-minute walk of some type of open space.
- Multi-use design (soccer fields doubling as festival grounds, rain gardens that are also play areas).
- **Given Mound's limited land and extensive shoreline**, water-based recreation will supplement land-based parks. 2025 Parks are approximately thirty-six acres. We understand the value of our lakeshore to commerce.

SAMPLE PARK MIX PLAN FOR 8,600 RESIDENTS

FACTORS THAT CHANGE THE RECOMMENDED NUMBER/SIZE

- **Service goals (walkable access within ½ mile vs. destination parks).**
- **Topography and natural open space (greenways may substitute for acreage).**
- **Demographics (more children → more playground/fields; more seniors → more passive spaces).**
- **Budget/maintenance capacity – To many small parks increase maintenance costs. Community parks take priority.**
- **Local policy — some towns set their own LOS (level of service) targets** LOS must be considered. There is not enough staff, time, or budget. We must prioritize specific parks.

PROGRAMMING & USES

- **All Ages:** Tot lots, teen skate/BMX areas, adult fitness stations, senior walking loops.
- **Community Building:** Farmers markets, outdoor concerts, food truck nights, cultural events.
- **Nature & Wellness:** Pollinator gardens, birdwatching areas, walking trails, meditation zones. Senior living (Fall prevention equipment)
- **Education:** Outdoor classrooms for schools, signage on ecology and history.

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

- Controlled **native, drought-resistant plantings** (low water & maintenance).
- **Green infrastructure** (rain gardens, permeable pavements, bioswales).
- Preserve **existing mature trees** and natural habitats. Unless trees have emerald ash borer (EAB). This is currently an issue in town.
- Explore **solar lighting** and low-energy design. This serves better as accent lighting not primary.

GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS

- **Mound City Council and City Staff**
 - Full time staff position – administrative role that works in conjunction with public works.
 - Web site administration
 - Budgeting
 - Community programming – Depot, permitted activities at the park, tournaments etc.
 - Annual inspections and long projections
- **Parks Commission**-Full-time staff position and committee volunteers, set a code of conduct.
- Partnerships with:
 - Schools (shared facilities)
 - Local nonprofits, boy and girl scouts, sports leagues
 - Regional land trusts / conservation groups
- **Adopt-a-Park programs** for volunteers and businesses.

- **Public Works** – maintenance and inspection, currently 368 hours per week to maintain parks & open spaces. An additional full-time parks space would be needed in order to meet level of service expected.

FUNDING

- **Capital Funding:** State/federal grants, bonds, impact fees from developers.
- **Operations:** Partnerships, sponsorships, modest user fees for some facilities. (Wolner Field, parking fees, social events)

IMPLEMENTATION

- **Phasing:** Start with high-impact projects (Lost Lake, trail connectors, visible small parks).
- **Waterfront Activation Plan** – Expand Surfside Park as a lakefront festival ground and add small-scale lake access throughout system.
- **Map** – create a definitive map with parks we want to bring visitors to parks. Winter implementation.
- **Identification** - validate names of parks, ownership with Hennepin Co. Winter implementation.
- **Park Access Audit** – Ensure every resident is within 10–15 minutes walking distance of a park or lake access. Winter implementation.
- **Community Programming** – Lakeside concerts, paddle sport rentals, farmers markets, ice skating on lakes in winter. Publish on City Website
- **Programming** – Create standards and policies around allowable events that do not do damage to buildings or require clean-up (number of participants, length of time, cost for cleanup). Publish events on website. For example, Surfside & Depot, and Lost Lake usage.
- **Public/Private Partnerships** – Work with LMCD (Lake Minnetonka Conservation District), Three Rivers Park District, and local civic groups for funding, programming, and conservation.
- **Annual Inspection Process** – Public works department checklist, safety and maintenance log Completed spring of 2025. Jordon completed the inspection. Jordan has had his inspector certificate in the past and is working toward certification through the city of Mound. The LMC inspection forms were used to complete the inspection.
- **Security** – camaras, lighting, police patrol and scheduling. Also, it benefits Public Works for snow event management and planning. Live stream and storage to the cloud would be required. Example would be Arlo Security cameras. Must meet Government data practices act.
- **Crowdsourced Mobil GPS Data**

ANALYSIS OF UNDERUSED PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Because waterfront access is the city's signature amenity, even underutilized parks should first be analyzed for **lake access, trail connection, or ecological restoration potential** before any divestment. Small, hidden, or redundant inland parks might be good candidates for **conversion into specialty uses** (dog park, community garden, native habitat).

1. Data Collection & Usage Assessment

- **Observation Studies:** Track how often the park is used, what activities occur, and at what times.
- **Community Surveys:** Ask residents why they do (or do not) use the park. Is it location, safety, lack of amenities, or poor visibility?
- **Crowdsourced Mobil GPS Data**
- **Maintenance Logs:** Compare upkeep costs with actual use (cost-per-visitor).
- **GIS Mapping:** Overlay Park service areas to see if another park already serves the same neighborhood.

2. Contextual Evaluation

- **Accessibility:**
 - Is the park walkable, bike-friendly, and ADA accessible?
 - Is it hidden or hard to find?
- **Amenity Fit:**
 - Does the park offer amenities people want (e.g., playgrounds, trails, courts, shade)?
 - Or is it just turf/open land with no clear purpose?
- **Demographics:**

- Match amenities with local demographics (young families, seniors, etc.).
- **Environmental Factors:**
 - Is it low-lying, prone to flooding, or ecologically sensitive?
- 3. **Community Engagement**
 - **Workshops & Pop-Up Events:** Test new programming in underused parks (e.g., food trucks, outdoor yoga, music nights) to see if interest can be sparked.
 - **“Adopt-a-Park” Programs:** Partner with local civic groups, HOAs, or schools to activate spaces.
 - **Pilot Features:** Add temporary amenities (portable basketball hoops, pop-up dog runs) and monitor response.
- 4. **Financial & Opportunity Cost Analysis**
 - Cost vs. Benefit: Compare annual operating/maintenance costs to park visitation and community impact.
 - Land Value: In a lakefront community, some parcels may have remarkably high redevelopment or conservation value.
 - Alternative Uses: Could the land be better used as:
 - Naturalized open space (pollinator meadow, stormwater basin)?
 - A community garden or dog park?
 - A land swap for more strategically located recreation space.
- 5. **Decision Pathways** - After analysis, the city could classify each underutilized park into one of four categories.
 - Reinvest: Add new features or programming to revive use.
 - Example: turning a little-used turf space into a pickleball mini-hub. The pickleball court on the island is extremely popular and is bringing people that do not live in Mound to the area. 3pts will be done in 2029 and will be painted for one pickleball court alone with paint for tennis. Two pickleball courts would be a terrific addition to Philbrook.
 - Repurpose: Change its function to meet unmet needs.
 - Example: convert to a shoreline restoration site, kayak launch, or dog park.
 - Partnership: Share use with schools, civic groups, or nonprofits for specialized recreation.
 - Divest / Land Reallocation (rare, but possible): If a park is truly redundant, consider repurposing or even selling (with community input and legal safeguards).
- 6. **Key Metrics to Track**
 - Cost per acre vs. usage.
 - % of residents within ½ mile of another park (service coverage).
 - Resident satisfaction (survey results).
 - Change in activity levels after adding programming or amenities.

DECISION MATRIX

A **Decision Matrix** is used to score each underused park across these categories (accessibility, amenities, cost, land value, redevelopment potential.) Each property would be scored. Sample list of questions/criteria:

- Accessibility (walk/bike/ADA)
- Visibility / Safety
- Amenity Fit (meets resident needs)
- Current Usage Levels
- Maintenance Cost vs. Use
- Proximity to Other Parks
- Waterfront / Ecological Value
- Redevelopment or Alternative Use Potential
- Community Input / Support

Score	Meaning
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1	Very Poor/Not suitable
2	Poor
3	Adequate
4	Good
5	Excellent/High Priority

Parks/Open Spaces to Review	General Notes
Bluffs Park	Grass lot between two homes, decide if this is a park or open space. Very under used. Area residents are using this as a dumping ground for lake/yard waste.
Beachside Shore	Electrical boxes, pumping station, grass field
Doone	Large open space, with two picnic tables. Wooded area on NW, stormwater mgmt. on NE side. On Tuxedo Blvd. Possible dog park location
Dundee	Close proximity to Swenson and Chester, according to neighbors not being used. Equipment scheduled for replacement in 2027(\$80K) Current equipment is past end of life.
Edgewater	At a later date
Highland End Park	Repurpose to provide access to the lake for the community and access to the docks and commons program. Provides winter access to the lake.
Lakeside Shore	Grass between homes, city dock access. City utility. On Lakeside drive. Not on Hennepin Co map. Wouldn't call this a park
Sherven – Extra Lot	Lot across from Sherven Park, Fence and open space. .27 acres

Community Parks

Park Name	Size	Characteristics	Neighborhood
Highland Park	2.37		Highland
Lost Lakes Commons			Downtown
Philbrook	3.36		
Surfside Park & Beach	3.31	Large Playground, picnic, and beach access Access to Lake Minnetonka	Surfside, Cook's Bay
Swenson	2.57		Island Park
Three Points Park	2.35	Needs a full court replacement. Budgeted for 2029 \$150K. Should discuss multi use court ideas.	Three Points
Tyrone Park	2.56		Island Park

Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Size	Characteristics	Neighborhood
Alwin	.84	Small playground	
Avon	.55	Small playground	
Belmont	.45	Playground, two native plant areas	
Doone	1.64	Empty lot, could be used as a dog park, repurposed, or sold	Tuxedo Blvd
Dundee	.43	Small playground, between two homes	Dundee Lane
Edgewater	.29	Empty lot	Rosedale Rd
Seton	.48	Small playground, near Dakota Trail	Sandy Ln & Edgewater
Sorbo	.91	New playset, small ball field	Evergreen Rd
Veteran's	.21	On Langdon Lake, small memorial. Needs new benches, nicer flagpole with lights, flower garden, landscaping for better presentation. Could work with the Legion.	Commerce Blvd

Veteran's Memorial	.28	Next to Parking ramp, memorial & flag poles, some work was completed in spring of 2025. Landscaping is 20+ years old, could use a refresh.	Shoreline Dr
Weiland	1.29	Large area with playground	Village by the Bay

Waterfront Parks

Park Name	Size	Characteristics	Neighborhood
Avalon	.57	Pumping station, docks and commons, winter lake access	
Beachside		Pumping station, grass, beach access?	
Bluffs Beach	.11	Small strip of land, Halstead Bay	Bay Ridge Rd
Carlson	.54	Docks, access to fishing	Bartlett Blvd
Centerview		Small beach, fishing dock, big winter lake access	Harrison's Bay
Chester	.13	Small playground, small beach area	Al & Almas
Crescent		Not on Hennepin Property map, pumping station, Natural area. Plans to improve the trail and add a table at the end of trail by water. New Park signs to come.	Sparow & Sumach
Dutch Lake (2 access pts)		Grandview & Dutch Lane, NOT on Hennepin Map 2025 Fishing dock, trail, ADA parking was complete. Trees were removed in preparation for storm sewer repairs and new asphalt ramp fall of 2025 or spring of 2026.	
Lagoon Shore		Could be Ridgewood Not on Henn Map, also has an island	Priest's Bay
Lakeside Shore		Not on Henn Co map	
Lost Lake	12.55	Lost lake access, not developed	Lost Lake
Highland End Shore (Twin Park)	.82	Provides access for docks program. Lake Minnetonka Winter Lake access.	Highland
Highland End	.80	Long hillside also provides access for docks program. Lake Minnetonka No parking Winter access	Highland
Ridgewood Shore	.24	Lot with City dock access	Priests Bay
Sherven	.55	Winter lake access. Spring Park Bay, Large lot across street .27 acres. Winter traffic access highly used Ice fishing.	Island
Surfside Park & Beach	3.31	Large Playground, picnic, and beach access Access to Lake Minnetonka	Surfside, Cook's Bay
Wychwood		Beach, not on Hennepin Co Map Winter access to lake. Small not much room.	Cook's Bay

Specialty Parks

Park Name	Size	Characteristics	Neighborhood
Zero Gravity		Skate Park. Improvements and updates needed to extend life of park.	Behind Centennial Building
Wolner Field	3.46	Little league fields (2) Leased and maintained by Westonka. Public Works oversees parking lot.	Cypress Ln