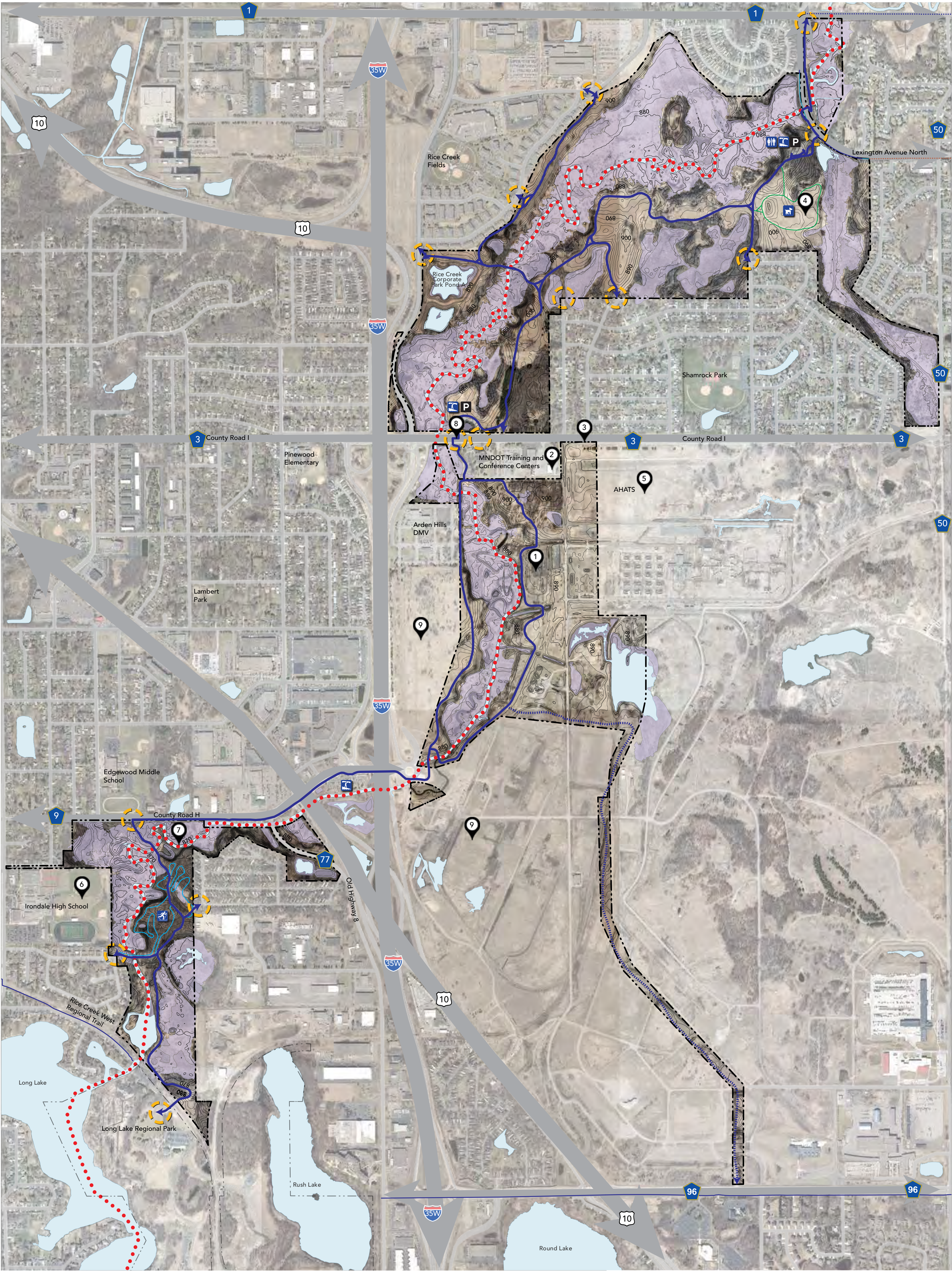


Rice Creek North Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment 2018



BACKGROUND

Rice Creek North Regional Trail is located in the northwest corner of Ramsey County in the cities of Shoreview, Arden Hills, Mounds View and New Brighton. The trail is 4 miles in length and is part of a 14-mile regional trail corridor that extends from the Chain of Lakes Regional Park Reserve to the Mississippi River by way of Long Lake Regional Park

EXISTING AMENITIES

- Nearly 8 miles of trail from County Road J to the Rice Creek West Regional Trail
- Rice Creek Water Trail/Boat Launch
- 13-acre off leash dog area
- 30 car parking lot at County Road I
- Restrooms and drinking fountain

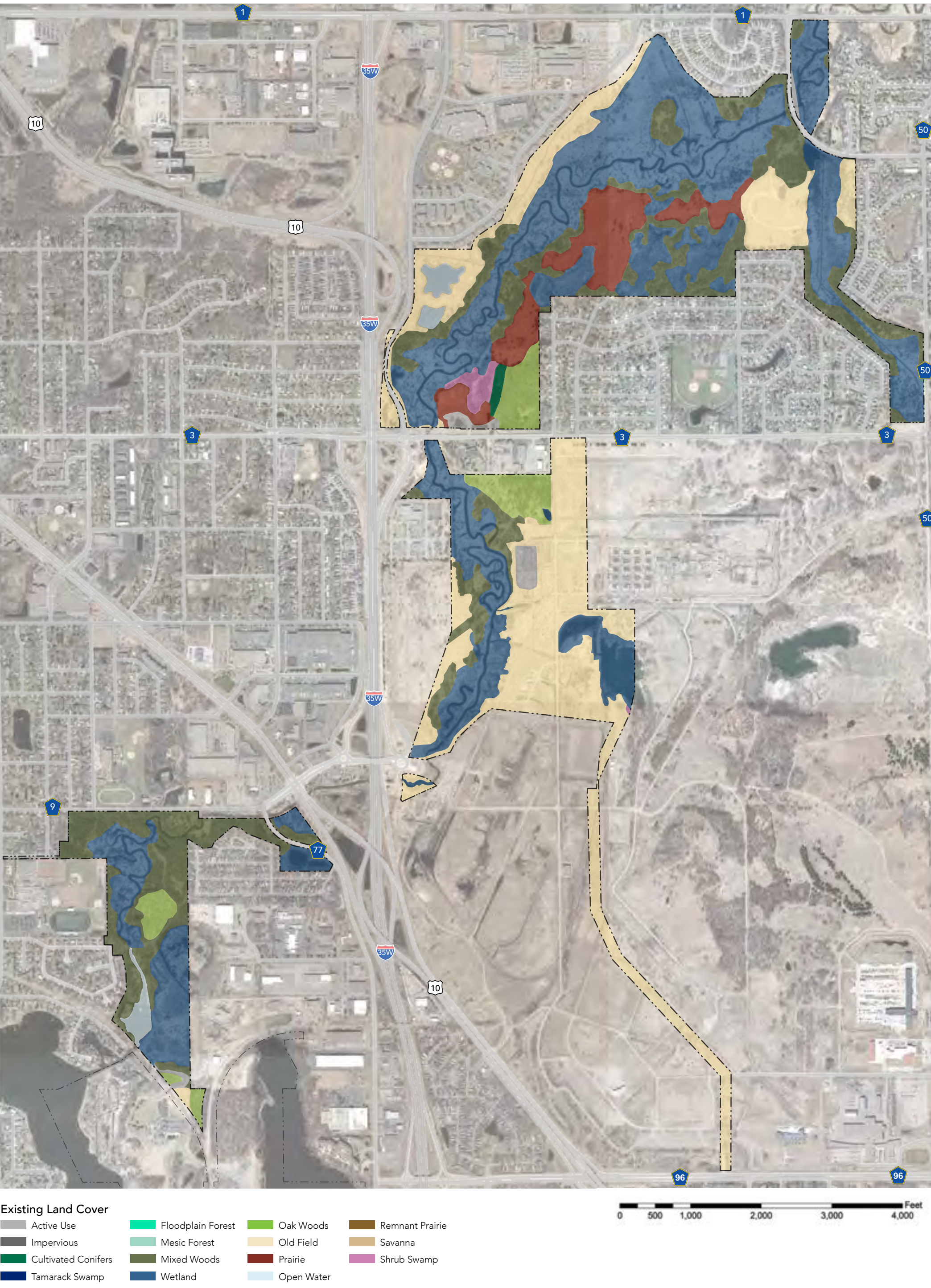
NATURAL RESOURCES

Rice Creek North Regional Trail land cover consists of extensive floodplain wetland with scattered oak woods and savannas, mixed woods and converted prairies that have been established for over a decade. These prairie areas, mainly located from Lexington Avenue to Highway I, are maintained with prescribed burns. Invasive species have become widespread throughout the corridor and include reed canary grass in the wetlands and common and glossy buckthorn in most of the wooded areas. A forest habitat restoration project in the section south of County Road H to Long Lake Regional Park began in 2015 and is ongoing. This restoration includes removal of woody invasive species, mainly buckthorn, and seeding of native herbaceous grasses and forbs. Ongoing maintenance will include foliar spraying of buckthorn and periodic prescribed burns through the wooded areas.

In addition to the habitat restoration projects, the Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) has completed meandering restoration of the Rice Creek channel north of County Road I in early 2000's and since 2015 RCWD has been meandering the channel south of County Road I to Interstate 35W. The creek through these areas was straightened in the early 1900's to expand agricultural land and the meandering restoration projects will put the Creek back into its previous natural channel to regain the twists and turns to slow water, which will reduce stream bank erosion, sediment loading and increase aquatic life. Rice Creek is a popular canoe and kayak navigable waterway and is a designated water trail that spans through Anoka and Ramsey Counties. In addition to the Rice Creek Watershed District's meandering project, they also complete water testing on the Creek and carp monitoring. In 2017, the RCWD installed a temporary carp barrier across Rice Creek, north of where the creek enters Long Lake. Future projects may include a permanent barrier at this location.

The park hosts a diverse variety of wildlife. The park has a variety of nesting songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Larger mammals include otter, coyotes, red fox, raccoons and white-tailed deer. Deer populations in the area are surveyed annually to determine the need and location for special archery hunts. Since 2015, the section of Rice Creek North Regional trail north of County road I has been the location for several special archery deer hunts, under the provisions of the Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Plan in partnership with the cities of Shoreview. The creek corridor is also home to numerous reptiles and amphibians, including the state threatened Blanding's turtle.

In 2014, emerald ash borer was discovered within a small isolated grove of ash trees in the northern section of the park and is currently being monitored by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is currently using the Emerald Ash Borer site discovered within the park as a biological control survey location and will continue to monitor the site.



POINTS OF INTEREST

- Building 189:** Building 189 has been identified as a potential site for repurposing the building for multiple uses including a trailhead facility, picnic and restroom location, parking, interpretive and educational uses, a large event space and satellite maintenance facility. The area surrounding Building 189 may host some of these uses as well as serve as an area of development for playgrounds, passive recreation, habitat restoration, stormwater mitigation and an improved trail access point.
- MNDOT Arden Hills Training Center & Truck Station:** MNDOT is in the midst of master planning for long term improvements to the current Arden Hills Training Center & Truck Station, expressing a need for additional training facility improvements.
- County Road I:** There is an opportunity for an improved vehicular access point from County Road I into a future development space surrounding Building 189. A new access point is proposed at the intersection of County Road I and Fairview Avenue North, this would likely occur during construction of an access road from County Road I to Building 189
- Rice Creek Off Leash Dog Area:** Master planning for Ramsey County Off Leash Dog Areas began in 2017 and was completed in 2018. The master plan addressed improvements to the Rice Creek Off Leash Dog Area and should be referred to for any future development of the area.
- Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS):** Ramsey County has a long term goal of opening AHATS for recreational use, the county will continue to coordinate with the Minnesota National Guard for access and potential use of the area. Potential uses could include passive recreation, multi-purpose trails, cross country ski and mountain biking trails, interpretive or educational programming etc. Additional development would be dependent on negotiations with the Minnesota National Guard for the proposed AHATS site.
- Irondale High School:** Irondale High School uses the southern section of the Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor for cross country skiing and running training. An agreement has been established with Irondale for the maintenance of existing natural surface trails for school use. Improvements may be required in the future to continue providing a high quality experience for all.
- Rice Creek Water Trail:** The Rice Creek Water Trail offers a wide variety of paddling experiences for canoers and kayakers alike. The trail begins in Lino Lakes at the Peltier Lake boat launch and travels over 15 miles to Long Lake in New Brighton. Rice Creek flows through a variety of habitats and settings on its way to Long Lake, and paddling difficulty varies depending upon which section of the creek you are exploring. The upper part of the water trail makes its way through five lakes

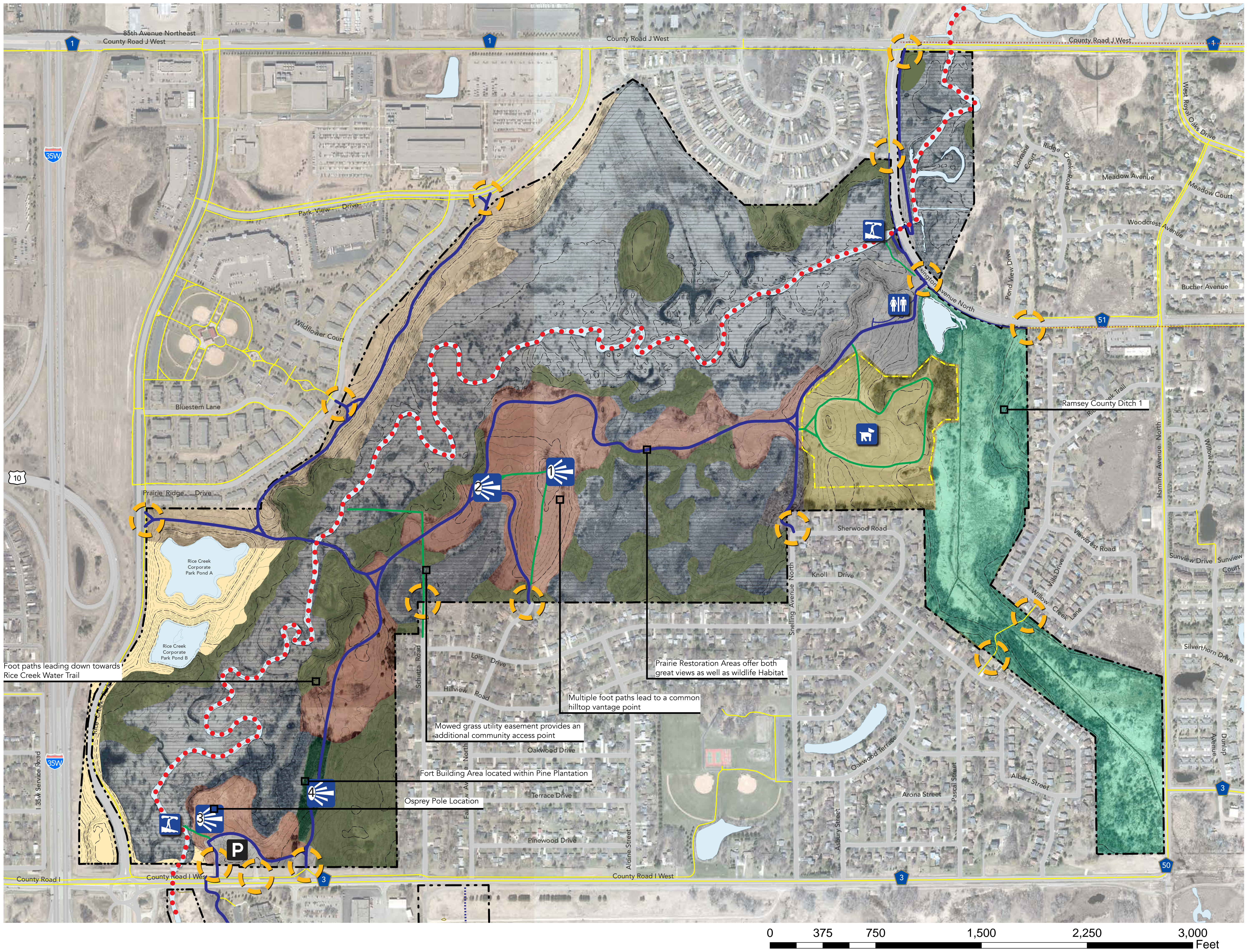
LEGEND

Rice Creek Regional Trail	Rice Creek Water Trail	
Major Road Connection	Park Entrance	
Natural Surface Trail	Wetland Delineation	
Parking Lot	Cross Country Ski Area	
Small Watercraft Launch	Point of Interest	
Restroom Building	Cross Country Ski Trails	
Off Leash Dog Area		

8) **County Road I At-Grade Crossing:** A planning study will be required to identify necessary improvement for the at-grade crossing over County Road I to provide safe passage.

9) **Rice Creek Commons:** Ramsey County development area of mixed-use development, 426 acres.

Rice Creek North Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment 2018



Zones & Use Areas

Rice Creek Trail & Wetlands

Rice Creek Trail & Wetlands
Low lying areas of the park, primarily where the main channel of Rice Creek flows. The Rice Creek Watershed District continues to perform maintenance and channel meandering/restoration projects in this area.

County Ditch 1

Ramsey County Ditch 1 aides in stormwater mitigation, taking runoff from surface streets and the surrounding neighborhood in the sub watershed before water reaches Rice Creek. This area has one community path crossing, however it is a low lying and perennially wet area not very suitable for development purposes.

OLDA

Master planning for Ramsey County Off Leash Dog Areas began in 2017 and was completed in 2018. The master plan addressed improvements to the Rice Creek Off Leash Dog Area and should be referred to for any future development of the area.

Restored Prairies

Restored Prairies
As a natural resource based park system Ramsey County has had many prairie restoration projects within the Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor. These areas serve as both wildlife habitat and provide users with wonderful views of this unique ecosystem. Osprey and Kestrel poles have been installed in a few areas of the park adding to the excitement of bird watchers. These areas are periodically burned and otherwise maintained so development activities should be concentrated elsewhere.

Upland Wooded Areas

The upland areas of the park are dominated by mixed woods and oak forests. The mixed woods are predominantly aspen trees which helps to drown out sounds of cars in areas beyond the park making for an enjoyable experience. There are many footpaths interspersed between the main trail and lowlands showing that passive recreation activities such as cross country skiing, trail running and mountain biking may be considered for some areas of the park.

Trailhead & Development Areas



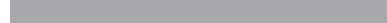












The northern section of the Rice Creek North Regional Trail corridor has two parking lots one located off of Lexington Avenue North, and the other off of County Road I. Both parking lots have carry in access to the Rice Creek Water Trail. The parking lot off of Lexington Ave. N also hosts a restroom building and has space for approximately 35 vehicles. The parking lot off of County Road I has space for approximately 32 vehicles and also hosts a connection to a trail managed and maintained by the City of Arden Hills

Community Connection Corridor

Community Connection Corridor

These areas lie on the edge of the parks border and have spurs off of the main Rice Creek trail to serve as community connection points for those not driving to the corridor. Often found on thin strips of usable land or bordering significant topography there is not much room for further development of these spaces.

LEGEND

Rice Creek Regional Trail		Rice Creek Water Trail	
Major Road Connection		Park Entrance	
Natural Surface Trail		Wetland Delineation	
Parking Lot		Cross Country Ski Area	
Small Watercraft Launch		Point of Interest	
Restroom Building		Cross Country Ski Trails	
Off Leash Dog Area		City Paths, Sidewalks & Bike Routes	
Viewshed Opportunity			

See Pg. 5 for Details

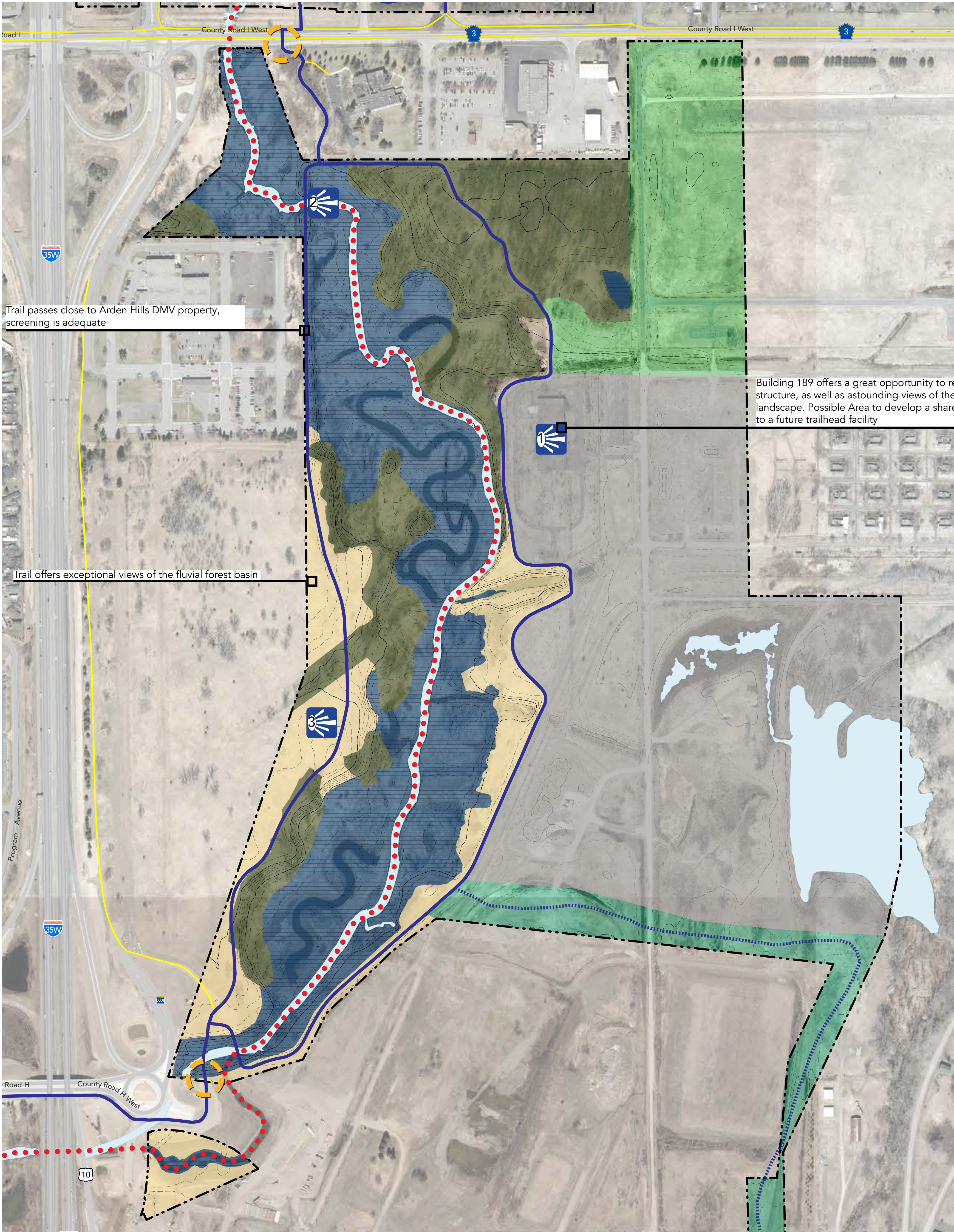
Pine Plantation

An iconic entrance for many to the park located to the North of the parking lot off of County Road I. This stand of pines was most likely planted for harvest at a future date that never came. There is a small, improvised fort building area located within the stand just off of the main trail.

Old Field Areas

Undeveloped and mostly non-maintained areas of the park that have not been restored as any part of natural resource management. Dependant upon topography, location, access etc. These sites may be good candidates for passive recreation development or restoration as a part of the county natural resource management program.

Rice Creek North Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment 2018



Zones & Use Areas

Rice Creek Trail & Wetlands

Low lying areas of the park, primarily where the main channel of Rice Creek flows. The Rice Creek Watershed District continues to perform maintenance and channel meandering/restoration projects in this area.

Future Trail Spur

This area has been identified as a location for a future spur of the Rice Creek North Regional Trail which would connect with the Highway 96 Regional Trail to the South. This segment of the trail would most likely be developed in conjunction with the Rice Creek Commons Project.

County Road I Access

This segment of the trail corridor has been identified as a possible location where an additional vehicular and multi purpose trail access point could occur.

Upland Wooded Areas

The upland areas of the park are dominated by mixed woods and oak forests. The mixed woods are predominantly aspen trees which helps to drown out sounds of cars in areas beyond the park making for an enjoyable experience. There are many footpaths interspersed between the main trail and lowlands showing that passive recreation activities such as cross country skiing, trail running and mountain biking may be considered for some areas of the park.

Building 189 and Open Old Field

This area of the park is an excellent opportunity for the public to help drive what happens in the future within the Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor. Building 189 has been identified for possible repurposing. The building could be turned into a satellite maintenance facility, large event space, picnic/patio space etc. The land surrounding Building 189 are essentially all old field with some wetland areas, making this an ideal site to be developed for recreational purposes.

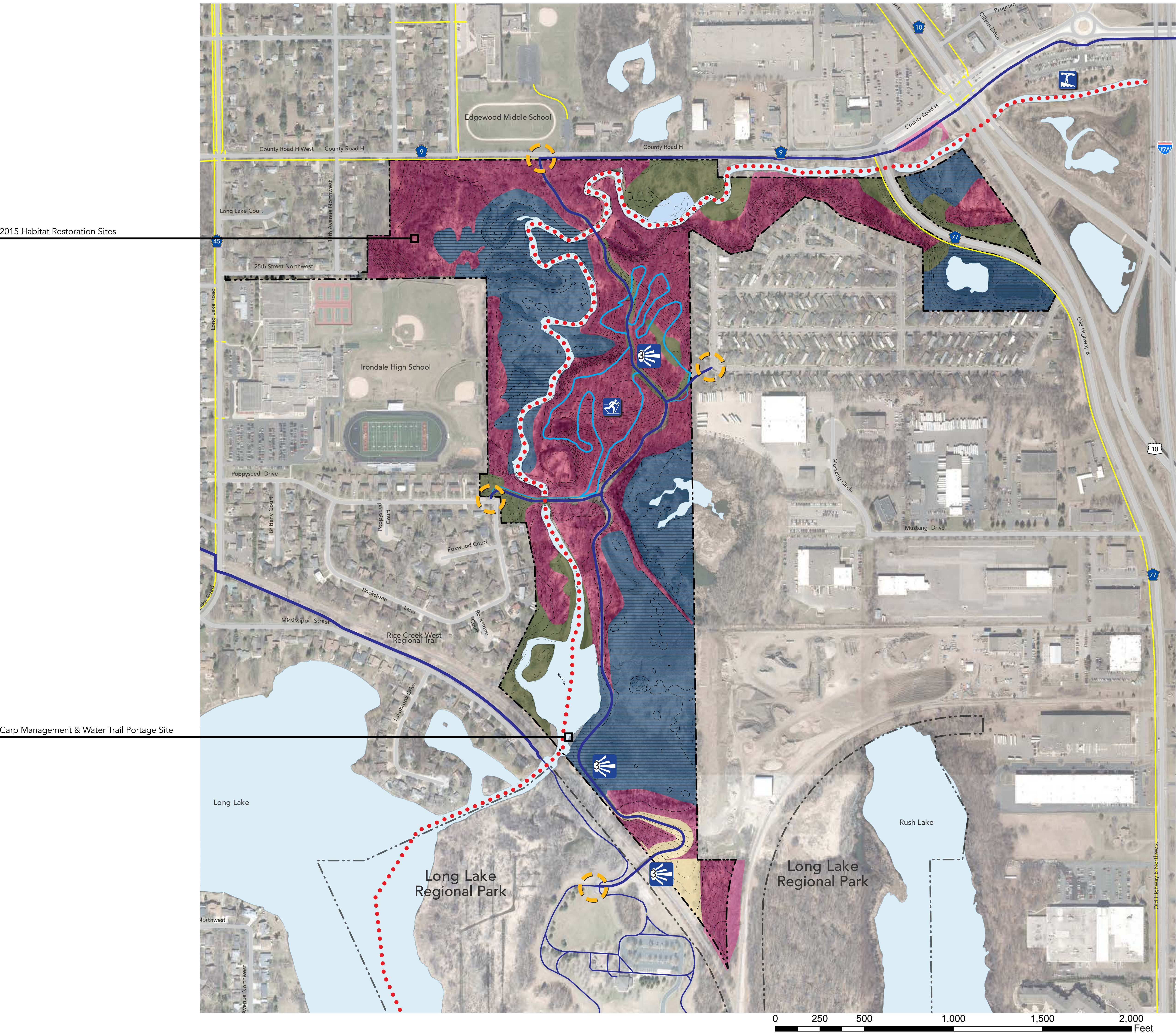
Old Field Areas

Undeveloped and mostly non-maintained areas of the park that have not been restored as any part of natural resource management. Dependant upon topography, location, access etc. these sites may be good candidates for passive recreation development or restoration as a part of the county natural resource management program. These areas within the central section of the corridor offer exceptional views of the meandering creek and fluvial forest basin.

LEGEND

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Restroom Building		Cross Country Ski Trails	
Off Leash Dog Area		City Paths, Sidewalks & Bike Routes	
Viewshed Opportunity See Pg. 5 for Details			

Rice Creek North Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment 2018



Zones & Use Areas

Rice Creek Trail & Wetlands

Low lying areas of the park, primarily where the main channel of Rice Creek flows. The Rice Creek Watershed District continues to perform maintenance and channel meandering/restoration projects in this area.

Forest Restoration Areas (Includes Upland Wooded Areas)

Restoration is currently ongoing in these areas of the Southern section of the Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor. Upland mesic and oak woods are undergoing invasive plant removal most notably buckthorn. Cross country ski trails are managed and maintained by Irondale High School under an existing agreement. Expansion of this system could be considered in the future.

Upland Wooded Areas

The upland areas of the park are dominated by mixed woods and oak forests. The mixed woods are predominantly aspen trees which helps to drown out sounds of cars in areas beyond the park making for an enjoyable experience. There are many footpaths interspersed between the main trail and lowlands showing that passive recreation activities such as cross country skiing, trail running and mountain biking may be considered for some areas of the park.

Carp Management & Water Trail Portage

RCWD is partnering with the University of Minnesota and a private company, Carp Solutions, LLC, to study the behavior and movements of carp throughout the watershed. During feeding, carp stir up sediment on the bottom of lakes, decreasing water clarity and freeing up excess nutrients that feed algae growth. A carp management electronic barrier has been installed across the channel requiring watercraft to portage around this segment of the water trail.

Old Field Areas

Undeveloped and mostly non-maintained areas of the park that have not been restored as any part of natural resource management. Dependant upon topography, location, access etc. these sites may be good candidates for passive recreation development or restoration as a part of the county natural resource management program.

LEGEND

Rice Creek Regional Trail	Rice Creek Water Trail	
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Viewshed Opportunity See Pg. 5 for Details		

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Viewshed from Point 2, Page 2



Fort Building Area within Pine Plantation



Pine Plantation Entrance, Point 4, Page 2



Bridge Joining Long Lake Park To Trail System



View Atop Building 189 Point 1, Page 3



Carp Entering Management Trap



Portage Trail Around Carp Managment Nets



Portage Trail Around Carp Management Nets



Exterior View of Building 189



Typical Wayfinding Trail Post



Trail Runners



Carp Management Electronic Nets



Typical Small Watercraft Launch



Interior View of Building 189 Point 1, Page 3