

SECTION 6: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Regional Parks and Trails

A requirement of the Comprehensive Plan is to describe how regional trail and park facilities will develop in conformance with the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. Currently, no regional park or trail systems exist in Lauderdale.

Demographics and Demand for Local Park Facilities

Demographic information helps determine the potential demand for park facilities. The following table reflects the age distribution of Lauderdale residents.

Table 6-1: Lauderdale Age Groups and Sex: 2000¹⁷

Age	Number			Percent			Males per 100 females
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	
Under 18 years	399	190	209	16.9	16.6	17.1	90.9
18 to 64 years	1,760	867	893	74.5	75.9	73.1	97.1
18 to 24 years	385	175	210	16.3	15.3	17.2	83.3
25 to 44 years	914	489	425	38.7	42.8	34.8	115.1
25 to 34 years	548	294	254	23.2	25.7	20.8	115.7
35 to 44 years	366	195	171	15.5	17.1	14.0	114.0
45 to 64 years	461	203	258	19.5	17.8	21.1	78.7
45 to 54 years	290	126	164	12.3	11.0	13.4	76.8
55 to 64 years	171	77	94	7.2	6.7	7.7	81.9
65 years and over	205	86	119	8.7	7.5	9.7	72.3
65 to 74 years	114	51	63	4.8	4.5	5.2	81.0
75 to 84 years	71	29	42	3.0	2.5	3.4	69.0
85 years and over	20	6	14	0.8	0.5	1.1	42.9

Since parks are especially important for children, the City requested enrollment information from Roseville Area Schools. During the 2005-06 school year, 144 Lauderdale children were enrolled in the school district. The following chart breaks down the enrollment figure by grade. The aging of the City is reflected in the decline in school age children. During the 1995-96 school year, a total of 296 Lauderdale children were enrolled in Roseville Area Schools.

Table 6-2														
Lauderdale Children Enrolled in Roseville Area Schools: 2005-2006														
		Elementary						Junior High			Senior High			Total
Grade	Kinder- garten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
#	8	6	16	14	11	10	11	14	15	12	6	13	8	144
#	8	68						41			27			144
%	5.5%	47.2%						28.5%			18.8%			100%
Source: Roseville School District														

¹⁷ More information is available at http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US2735738&-qr_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U_QTP1&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U.

Lauderdale Parks and Open Spaces

Community Park

Preserving open space for recreation has long been a priority for the City. Lauderdale Community Park is the largest City-owned open space. The park was purchased for \$95,000 in March 1985 from the Roseville School District. This was accomplished using a variety of funding sources (\$23,750 in City funds, \$23,750 State LMCR Grant, and \$47,500 Federal LAWCON Grant). As a condition of the LAWCON Grant, Lauderdale agreed to keep the park as an area for public recreation only. The City would need permission from the federal government to change the park's use.

Since its purchase, the City has made several park improvements.

- In 1993, the warming house roof was replaced and the interior was refurbished.
- In 1994, a picnic shelter was constructed with financial support from the Lauderdale/Falcon Heights Lions Club.
- Also in 1994, a Community Development Block Grant funded the creation of a path along the north end of the park to link the parking lot to the playground and purchased new playground equipment. These improvements made the playground equipment safer and more accessible for physically challenged individuals.
- In 1996, the City added additional paths and improved the park's ball field.

Since the 1998 Comprehensive Plan in 1998, the following improvements were made to Lauderdale Community Park.

- In 1999, permanent grills and an ADA accessible drinking fountain were added with grant money.
- In 2000, a sand volleyball court was added with grant money.
- In 2003, the hockey rink was moved to its current location.
- In 2003, toddler playground equipment was added.
- In 2006, new goals and nets were purchased for the hockey rink.
- In 2007, the tennis and basketball courts were reconstructed. (The tennis court was last resurfaced in 1976).
- Storm water improvements enabled the City to remove the sewer lift station near the park.
- The overhead power lines from the warming house to the hockey rink were buried underground.

Lauderdale Nature Area

The City owns open space south of Rosehill Townhomes called the Lauderdale Nature Area. The nature area is zoned as C-1 Conservation. This area was purchased in 1991 for \$200,000. It is intended to provide residents, especially those that live in the high density apartment area, a place for recreation in addition to being a water retention pond. The wooded area extends beyond the City owned portion onto property owned by single-family home owners and Luther Seminary. The portion owned by Luther Seminary is known by many as "Breck Woods." The City has an easement on this property for a retention pond, but does not own the property. This pond was created in 1994 as a part of a Tax Increment Finance housing development.

Walsh Lake Area - Open Space

The City also owns four lots on the northwest side of Walsh Lake. One of these lots was purchased in August 2004. The majority of the lots are under water. Access to the lots is via a path on the east side of Ryan Avenue and a narrow piece of land on the north end of Pleasant Street. Walsh Lake is also a storm water retention area.

Walnut/Ione Street Area - Open Space

In September of 2002, the City purchased two adjacent lots from Ramsey County at the south end of Walnut Street. The area has a view of downtown Minneapolis. A picnic table and garbage can were made available to residents. The area does not have street side access but is accessed via an alley off of Ione Street.

Parks and Open Space Goals, Policies, and Recommended Actions

Goals

- Create a long-term vision and plan for the parks and open space.
- Connect and create paths, trails, and walkways within Lauderdale to make the parks and open space accessible to all residents.
- Build community spirit through volunteerism.

Policies

- Parks and open space investments will focus on features that are safe, long lasting, and visually attractive.
- Maintenance plans will be required for all capital improvement projects.
- The City will encourage residents to volunteer for the dual purpose of accomplishing city goals and building community spirit.
- The City will create a master plan for all of Lauderdale's parks and open spaces and make decisions based upon the master plan.
- The City will explore ways to make the parks and open spaces accessible to all residents, including creating paths, trails, walkways, and signage.

Recommended Actions

- Park improvement funds should be earmarked and saved outside of the general fund. Budget documents should reflect what the funds are being saved for in a way that is easy for residents to understand.
- City staff should proactively coordinate city-wide volunteer activities with the goal of building momentum for regular and consistent volunteer events.
- City staff should coordinate and oversee bi-annual City clean up/fix up events with resident volunteers.
- City staff should maintain and identify an on-going list of possible volunteer projects.
- The City Council should reorganize city committees to allow for more ad hoc or subcommittees to coordinate city social events, volunteer opportunities, and address community issues.
- City staff should resolve any potential liability issues with using volunteers with LMCIT.
- City staff should coordinate and oversee community volunteer activities and discourage ad hoc volunteerism for safety reasons.

- Staff should create a Lauderdale Nature Area Maintenance Policy and Plan with local stakeholders that conforms to its C-1 Conservation zoning.
- The City should develop strategic relationships with our neighbors (Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, University of Minnesota, and the Cities of Falcon Heights, Minneapolis, and St. Paul) to improve the Lauderdale Nature Area and trolley path.
- The City should ensure that the open spaces at Walsh Lake and Walnut/Ione are maintained and included in the development of the City's Capital Improvements Plan and the master park plan.
- The City will consider creating an Environmental Committee to work on ideas and projects that will make the City more livable and environmentally responsible.