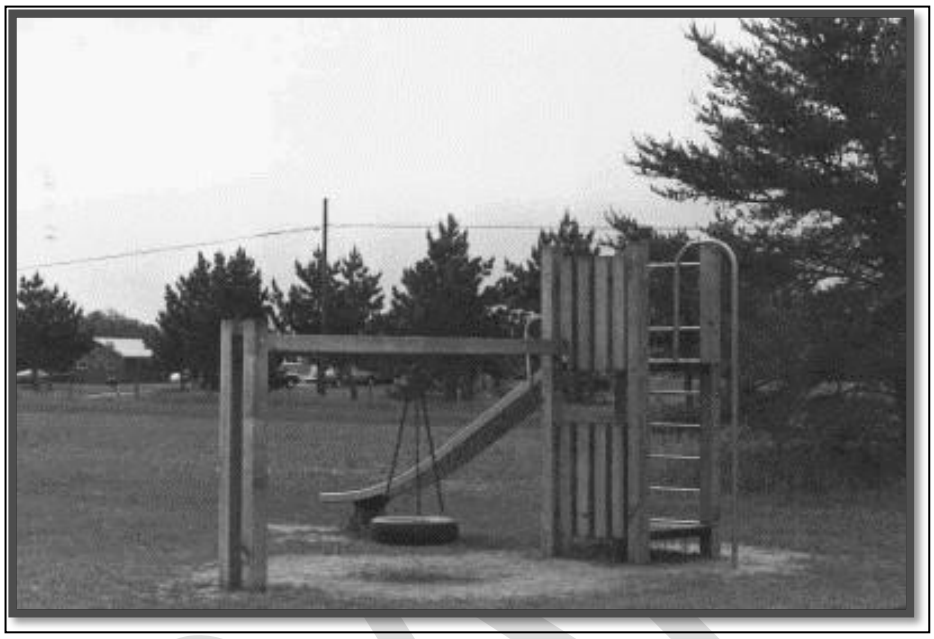

Central Park, Circa 1984

Central Park, Circa 2012

Interim Playground Replacement Policy

City of Ramsey, Minnesota

Adopted: x/x/2021

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION.

Playgrounds provide children with a safe and exciting connection to the outdoors during a time when electronic devices increasingly occupy their attention. They are associated with immense physical benefits—upper- and lower-body strength, muscular and cardiovascular endurance, balance, agility, and hand-eye coordination; in the long-run, reduced risk for cardiovascular ailments (e.g. heart disease and stroke), obesity, type-2 diabetes, and certain cancers—as well as boosts to self-confidence and improvements in social skills. Many of children's fondest memories are formed at parks. Playgrounds help build relationships between parents, grandparents, neighbors, and between children and their peers. Additionally, they provide a community gathering place for young parents and their children who may otherwise experience isolation. It may not be an exaggeration to state that playgrounds metaphorically serve as the backbone of neighborhoods within the community, and as such are a valuable resource that must be properly maintained. Playground equipment and associated improvements unfortunately do not last forever, and so this policy serves as a guide to replacing the city of Ramsey's playgrounds so that they remain a safe and enjoyable place for the community to gather around.

SECTION 2. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT.

The city of Ramsey has seventeen playgrounds that will need to be replaced in the future. Due to fiscal and administrative constraints, as well as the varying ages and conditions of the city's playgrounds, the replacements are to be carried out over the span of more than a decade. As of the writing of this policy, six of the city's playgrounds have reached the end of their twenty-year useful lifespan and over the next decade, nine more will have reached that point. Consequently, the next capital improvement program (CIP), covering years 2022 through 2031, as well as subsequent CIPs will need to account for the city's playground replacement needs. This policy will guide the city in determining which playgrounds to replace and program into a given year of the CIP.

SECTION 3. PLAYGROUND EVALUATION MATRIX.

The evaluation matrix considers six factors (and an additional screening factor) when prioritizing playgrounds for replacement and the playgrounds are scored based on their adherence to those categories. A playground can receive a maximum score of 90 points, and the higher a score a playground receives, the greater the need for replacement. Four of the seven factors, accounting for 60% of the points, assess the playground itself, while the remaining two factors, accounting for 40% of the points, consider the context of the playground. The remaining factor, while not accounting for any points, is considered before any of the other six factors, because it serves to screen out playgrounds that are not recommended for replacement. The following is a description of that screening factor:

Home Density Surrounding Playground—Yes/No to pass go:

Housing density may be considered a proxy for the regular frequency of usage of a particular playground. Because community parks are likely to be used significantly by outside visitors in addition to the surrounding neighborhood, home density does not factor into the scoring for community parks. Accordingly, playgrounds in community parks are automatically recommended for replacement scoring. Playgrounds in neighborhood parks however, must meet a threshold of 35 homes within 1,500' feet of walking distance to the park to be recommended for replacement consideration. In cases where a playground might be removed, alternative actions (described below) are to be considered. In the table below, playgrounds meeting this threshold are scored "Y" for those that have appropriate densities, and those not meeting the threshold are scored "N." Home density is determined based on how many homes (or townhome/apartment units) are within the 1,500 feet walking distance of a park's boundary along streets, sidewalks and trails.

The following are the four scoring factors that consider the playground itself. Combined they account for 60% of the points:

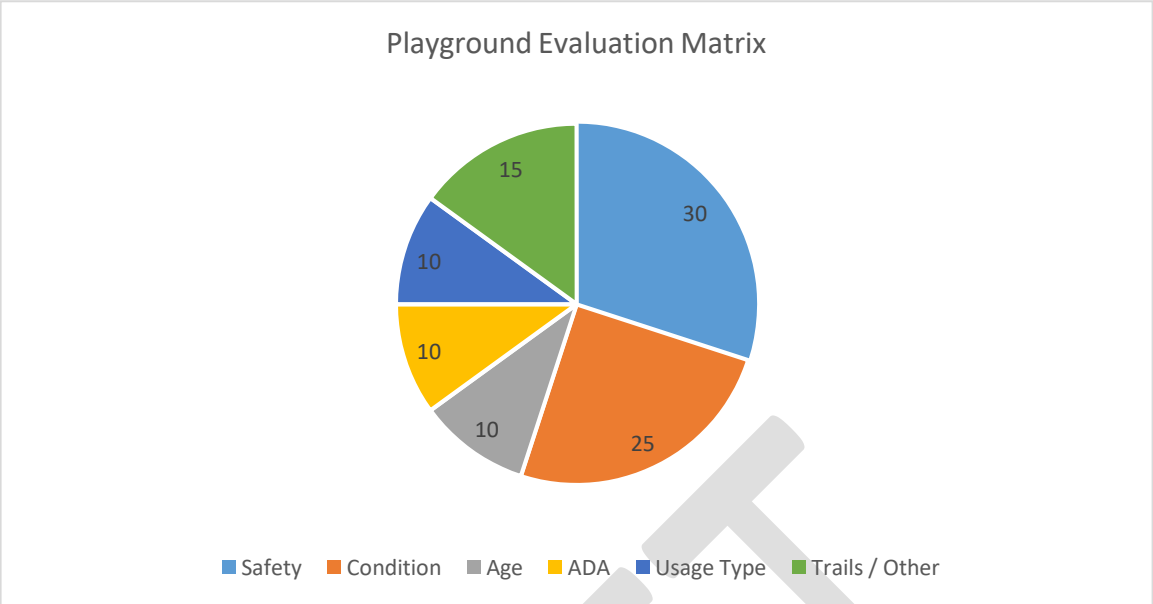
A. **Features Posing Safety Concerns.** A thorough inspection is to be performed on all elements of the playground structures, including but not limited to swings, slides, transfer decks, railings, and surfaces. If one feature is determined to pose a potential safety concern, the playground automatically receives fifteen points in this category, or one half of the total. If more than one feature is found to pose a concern, the playground receives the full thirty points.
B. **Visual Condition of the Playground Set.** The inspection will also determine the visual quality of the playground. The presence of faded or chipped paint, or rusted metal, are indicators of poor condition. Playgrounds in great condition receive zero points; playgrounds in fair condition receive five points; playgrounds in poor condition receive the full ten points.
C. **Age of the Playground Set.** If the playground is less than ten years old, it receives zero points. If it is between ten and twenty years old, it receives two points. If it is between twenty and thirty years old, it receives eight points. If it is greater than thirty years old, it receives the full ten points. The disparity between scores of playgrounds older than twenty years and those younger than twenty years is due to the assumed useful lifespan of a playground being twenty years.
D. **Compliance with ADA Standards.** ADA standards are defined below. Compliance is worth zero points whereas noncompliance is worth ten points.

The matrix additionally considers two factors that encompass the context of the playground. Combined they account for 40% of the points:

E. **Community Park vs. Neighborhood Park.** This distinction refers to the usage of the park containing the playground in question. Neighborhood parks are smaller parks with fewer amenities that primarily serve the immediate neighborhood. They are mostly used by people who live within walking distance of the park. Community parks are larger parks that serve considerably larger constituencies and that feature a greater variety of amenities, particularly athletic fields. They are the sites of athletic tournaments and major gatherings. Playgrounds in community parks are likely to receive much greater usage and wear more quickly, needing replacement sooner than their neighborhood counterparts. Consequently, this category gives priority to playgrounds in community parks over those in neighborhood parks, with the former receiving twenty-five points compared to fifteen points.

F. **Accessibility via Trails and Other Considerations.** Many of Ramsey's older playgrounds are inaccessible via an ADA compliant path which makes them more difficult to access for persons with mobility limitations. Any potential playground replacement would include a paved surface to allow for easier access, thus playgrounds without such a surface are prioritized in this category and may receive the 15 points.

   This category also maintains room for other considerations as well, an example would be structures that need frequent repair components. Due to the overall lack of gradience in the scoring metrics, several playgrounds may receive the same score. This category may also be used to break ties.



SECTION 4. PUBLIC INPUT AND DEMONSTRATED NEED.

The evaluation matrix may not be the sole determinant of the order in which playgrounds are replaced. Input by the community with respect to neighborhood parks is crucial to ensure that residents are well served by their city. A playground scoring higher than another does not necessarily mean that it will be replaced first, particularly if public input demonstrates significant justification for another park's playground to be replaced sooner.

Another tool for assessing the need for playground replacement is actual neighborhood demographics. In some cases, school district data may be obtained that provide the numbers and ages of children within a logical distance of the park under consideration (likely the same 1,500' foot radius). This may reveal very young children that will be coming into that 6+ age where playgrounds are important features of their lives. In other instances it may be found that the population are older residents, and less likely to have children in the household regularly. In 2012, the City installed a game trail camera to monitor the numbers, frequency and real-time use of a playground. This was found to be an effective way to support retaining this particular play area.

SECTION 5. ALTERNATIVES TO PLAY STRUCTURE COMPONANTS.

In instances where the public may not support the elimination of a playground per se, but full or partial replacement is not feasible, other actions can be taken to preserve space for children to engage in outdoor recreation without entirely new play structure components. Alternative play spaces however are best considered with appropriate public input. Residents may embrace for example, 'nature based' play areas made with trees, branches, boulders etc. which *may* be less expensive to install and maintain than traditional playground equipment. Pearson Park has elements like these, which are proven to be popular.


Figures 1-2: Nature-based play features at Pearson Park: *(left to right)* figure-eight stair stepping logs; sand and artificial turf surfacing, scattered 'tree cookies'

Another option to traditional playgrounds is converting parkland, including the former playground area, into naturalized landscapes, providing a different type of valued outdoor amenity.

Tree forts are almost a rite of passage for children, like this one in the wooded area of Ford Brook Park, or one below at Pearson Park manufactured from imported branches.


Ford Brook Park Pearson Park

Natural woods allow for the creation of lean-to's and stick forts as well as hide-n-seek games or self-guided exploration of these shady enclaves. In other neighborhood parks, it may even be appropriate to simply leave areas open, and available to make bicycle tracks in the soil with shovels and hand tools—another rite of passage for many children.

At parks where the landscape is be to converted from playgrounds (or turf), there should be a plan for both the conversion, but also the appropriate care and management which can be simple and less costly than some maintenance intensive formal playgrounds. Regardless of the type of alternative landscape, these areas are not to be left for weeds and invasive plants to become established—which can result in a degradation of the park or adjoining private lands.

SECTION 6. PLAYGROUND SURFACING.

The city of Ramsey primarily uses two different types of surfaces for its playgrounds— engineered wood fiber (known colloquially as wood chips) and pea gravel (reused seal coating rock). Both surfaces are considered safe as long as kept at a depth of at least twelveinches, though pea gravel may have concerns due to its shape, making it desirable for young children to put in their mouth. Additionally, the surfaces —as well as rubber mulch—are desirable due to generally low upfront installation costs (with pea gravel being the cheapest), but require regular maintenance (raking and levelling to maintain a proper depth for cushioning falls but still remaining accessible) and need to be replaced roughly every five years. Funding for the reoccurring surface replacement could be from the Lawful Gambling Fund, instead of the General Fund as has been the case.

***Figures 3-4*: (*left to right*) engineered wood fiber (EWF); pea gravel**

SECTION 7. FUNDING SOURCES.

The *potential* funding sources for playgrounds and their replacement are many, including the Park Trust Fund, General Fund, the Capital Maintenance Fund, or even bonding—however, the most logical funding source may be the LawfulGambling Fund, which is proceeds the city receives from a tax on charitable gambling (pull tabs) in Ramsey. Pursuant to MN State Statute Chapter 349, the Lawful Gambling Fund monies may only be used for expenditures that primarily benefit youth in the community. The 2021 present fund balance is approximately $325,000.

SECTION 8. DEFINITIONS

- **Americans With Disabilities Act** or "ADA" refers to the civil rights legislation passed in 1990 that prohibits discrimination against individuals based on disability. Its provisions were updated in 2008 to include a larger number of people under the umbrella of 'disabled.' Pursuant to that law, the Department of Justice developed *Standards for Accessible Design* in 2010. Any playgrounds constructed or modified after March 15, 2012 are subject to the new standards. Examples of these standards include:
  a) Running slopes may have grades no steeper than 5% with cross slopes no steeper than 2%; slopes with grades larger than 5% must have handrails and landings
  b) An accessible route 60 inches wide with 80 inches of overhead clearance must be available
  c) Transfer platforms must be between 11 and 18 inches high with width and depth at least 24 inches and 14 inches, respectively; transfer steps may be no higher than 8 inches and should include handholds; a 30-inch by 48-inch space must be available adjacent to the transfer platform
  d) Elevated ramps connecting play structures must be no steeper than 8.25%, no longer than 12 feet, and at least 36 inches wide; they must contain handrails with spots for gripping between 20 and 28 inches off the ground; a 60-inch by 60-inch

landing area must be provided if the elevated ramp changes directions

e) Manipulative and interactive sensory and communicative components must have reach ranges of 18 to 44 inches for 5- to 12-year old children, and 20 to 36 inches for 2- to 5-year old children
f) At least 50 percent of elevated play components should be accessible; for play structures with more than 20 elevated play components, at least 25 percent should be accessible

- **Community Park** refers to a park with numerous amenities, such as athletic fields, meant to serve those from around the city as well as from neighboring communities. They are also considerably larger than neighborhood parks, (often 40 acres or more).
- **Neighborhood Park** refers to a park with fewer amenities, typically anchored by a small playground. They draw people mainly from the immediate neighborhood and accordingly, have smaller parking capacities. They are considerably smaller than community parks (generally 1 to 15 acres of developed area).

***Figures 5-19*: Playground Equipment: (*left to right, top to bottom*) transfer surface; spring rider; chain ladder; talk tube; spinner; track-ride; sandbox excavator toy; metal ladders; stepping pods; corkscrew climber; clatter bridge; belt bridge; globe spinner; climbing wall with rope; enclosed rope climber.**

SECTION 9. SCORING OF PARKS WITH PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Playground	*Aging Score*	*Condition*	*Meets Density*	*Park Type*	*ADA*	*Trails /other Considerations*	*Safety Concerns*	*Total*
Rabbit	10	10	Y	15	10	5	30	*80*
Alpine	8	10	Y	25	10	0	0	*53*
Solstice	8	5	Y	15	0	0	15	*43*
Riverdale	8	5	Y	15	10	2	0	*40*
Central	8	5	Y	25	0	0	0	*38*
Peltzer	8	5	Y	15	0	5	0	*33*
Rivers' Bend	2	5	Y	25	0	0	0	*32*
Fox	8	5	Y	15	0	2	0	*30*
Emerald Pond	8	5	Y	15	0	1	0	*29*
Woodland Green	8	5	Y	15	0	0	0	*28*
Titterud	2	5	Y	15	0	5	0	*27*
Flintwood Terrace	2	5	Y	15	0	0	0	*22*
Ford Brook	0	5	Y	15	0	0	0	*20*
North Commons	0	0	Y	15	0	0	0	*15*
Pearson	0	0	Y	15	0	0	0	*15*
Autumn Heights	-	-	N	-	-	-	-	-
Shawn Acres	-	-	N	-	-	-	-	-

SECTION 10. PROPOSED TIMELINE OF PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT

Playground	*Year*
Rabbit Park	*2022*
Alpine Park	*2023*
Solstice Park	*2024*
Riverdale Park	*2025*
Central Park	*2026*
Peltzer Park	*2027*
Rivers Bend Park	*2028*
Fox Park	*2029*
Emerald Pond Park	*2030*
Woodland Green Park	*2031*
Titterud Park	*2032*
Flintwood Terrace Park	*2033*
Elmcrest Park	*2034*
Ford Brook Park	*2035*
North Commons Park	*2036*
Pearson Park	*2037*

SECTION 11. PLAYGROUND DESCRIPTIONS

Alpine Park

Alpine is a larger community park located in central Ramsey along the south side of Alpine Drive, approximately 1 mile east of Ramsey Boulevard and 1/3 mile west of Sunfish Lake Boulevard. Park amenities include four baseball diamonds and batting cages, off-leash area, as well as a skate park. Its playground was completed in 2000. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing.

The playground consists of two components, a wooden swing set and a wooden composite play structure. The swing set has two sections, one section with a single plastic chair swing and the other section with two normal belt swings. The playground structure consists of one plastic slide with parallel ramps. A metal, vertically curved set of six parallel monkey bars is connected to the rest of the set via a low transfer surface. Opposite the monkey bars is a wooden ladder with two steps that connect to the rest of the structure.

There are five means of entry—the aforementioned transfer surface and ladder, a wooden staircase, a chain link ladder (with four parallel chains) with metal footings, a chain link ladder on the interior of the structure which three rubber tires serving as steps, and a wooden climbing wall (sloped roughly 60 degrees with the ground) with six wooden steps and a rope for balance. The bottom of the climbing wall is worn, likely due to use as an additional step. The protective covering on the rope is worn and the metal inside of the rope is exposed in places. The rope has also been stretched considerably.

The entire surface of the structure is wooden with the exception of a bridge, which has a rubber mat for a surface. The bridge is sloped slightly (less than 15 degrees) from one end to the other, however there are four peaks on the rubber surface with thin wooden planks on top. The rubber surface is somewhat worn and there are cross slopes in some places that are unrelated to the design. The chains for both ladders are in fairly good condition. The wood throughout the structure ranges from okay to poor condition visually. The wood on the supports for the tallest portion of the structure (i.e. the area withthe wooden climbing wall) is in the poorest condition with several of the planks making up horizontal and diagonal supports being splintered. The playground also has talk tubes (metal megaphone toys through which children may communicate with one another through opposite ends), which are both in good working condition.

***Figure 20*: Alpine Park Playground**



***Figures 21-23*: *(from left to right)* Splintered wood on horizontal and diagonal supports; Splintered wood on support for swing set; Worn rope covering on climbing wall**

Autumn Heights Park

Autumn Heights is a neighborhood park located in northwestern Ramsey at the intersection ofRabbit Street and Nutria Street, just east of Armstrong Boulevard and south of 173rd Avenue. Its playground was assembled by staff in 1985. Wooden timbers (6" x 6") bound the play area, with the play area not accessible via an ADA access path. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

The playground consists of a single wooden play structure with a tire swing and a metal pull-up bar. The tire itself is in good condition, but the chain it is attached to is rusted and shows wear. The top surface of the play structure consists of five parallel wooden planks, all of which are loose (with the exception of the second-to-rightmost plank). There are two means of entry, neither of which are ADA-compliant. One is a ladder with two metal bars serving as steps. The other is a curved surface with narrow gaps for footholds, comprised of eight wooden planks, all of which are fully attached. The flat surface between this surface and the top surface (which is three inches above this surface) is comprised of six wooden planks (none of which are fully secured) perpendicular to those on the top surface and parallel to those on the curved surface. There is a single straight stainless steel slide, which is in fair condition, (however it is South facing, which is not desirable). *The terms of this Interim Playground Replacement Policy point to the playground components' removal, without replacement.*

***Figure 24*: Autumn Heights Park Playground**

Loral I Armstrong Delaney Central Park

Central Park is a 45-acre community park located at the intersection of Armstrong Boulevard and 161st Avenue. Park amenities include football fields, seven softball/baseball diamonds, two lacrosse/football/soccer fields, four tennis courts, and four horseshoe pits. Its current playground was constructed in 1998 as a community-built project. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

The structure is largely wooden, but there are multiple plastic and metal components as well, such as two plastic slides—one enclosed and one open with three parallel tracks—and a plastic tunnel. The wood is in fair condition, but is exhibiting some wear and tear. There are two track-rides, one straight with a single track and one curved with five parallel tracks. The grip for the first track-ride is metal, with chipped paint, and the grips for the latter are plastic and are in good condition, albeit with slightly faded paint.

Linking the two track-rides is a series of four wooden transfer platforms. The topmost platform is accessible via a metal chain-link ladder as well as two parallel metal bars for climbing. Linking the track-rides and transfer platform between them with the rest of the playground structure is a series of seventeen arched plastic platforms. Additional means of entry include a rope climbing wall, metal ladder, a wooden climbing wall with a rope, a step with handrails for accessing a transfer platform, a corkscrew climber, and a wooden ramp.

Additional playground features include two playground excavator toys, two spinners, and a balance beam. Overall, the playground is in fair condition, but the wooden components are worth monitoring.

***Figure 25*: Central Park Playground wide shot; *Figures 26-27*: (*left to right*) seventeen curved platforms; several means of entry, including a metal ladder, a wooden climbing wall with a rope, a corkscrew climber, and a step with handrails**

Elmcrest Park

Elmcrest is a large community park located in east-central Ramsey, west of State Highway 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard and south of 167th Avenue along Quicksilver Street. Park amenities include twelve soccer fields. Its playground was erected in 2015, the year after the adjacent park building was completed. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing.

The farm-themed playground features a main playground structure, a swing set with two bucket swings, a play barn, two spinners (one globe spinner), two chicken sculptures and one bee sculpture for climbing. The main play structure contains an obstacle course with a rope ladder, four angled platforms securedinto the ground by a chain, a curved metal bar with four ropes crossing one another for balancing, aset of inclined monkey bars comprised of three rings forming six handholds, and five stepping pods. Additionally, the playground has three zigzagging slides and five means of entry– one transfer surface, two platforms forming a quasi-staircase, a ladder consisting of three platforms, an enclosedchain-link ladder with five metal semicircular footholds, and a climbing wall with slots cut out for footholds. All components of the playground are in excellent condition.

***Figures 28-31*: (*clockwise from the top left*) main play structure; chicken sculpture, bee and flower sculpture, swing set with bucket swings, and play barn**

Emerald Pond Park

Emerald Pond is an approximate 14-acre neighborhood park in southeastern Ramsey, located east of CSAH 57 / Sunfish Lake Boulevard, north of CSAH 116 / Bunker Lake Boulevard, and south of Alpine Drive. Park amenities include a single baseball diamond and a soccer field, a pergola with fountain, as well as a basketball hoop in the parking lot. Its playground was built in 1997. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

Emerald's playground consists of three components—a seesaw spring rider, a swing set, and a large composite play structure. The seesaw's surface is well-worn from use, with paint chipped and metal beginning to rustin some places, but it is still functional. The swing set is mostly in good condition, albeit with someof the chains exhibiting rust. The swing set consists of three bays, two with two belt swings each, and the third with two bucket swings.

The play structure consists of eight means of entry—a curved metal ladder with eight semi-rectangular rungs; a pair of transfer platforms next to a clatter bridge; another transfer platform on the opposite side of the clatter bridge; a chain-link ladder with three rungs for footholds and two curved metal bars for handholds; a corkscrew climber; two sets of wide metal ladders with two footholds each and two semicircular bars (opposite one another) each; and a narrow staircase with three steps and two curved metal bars for handholds.

Additionally, it features five slides—one short straight slide with two parallel tracks, one straight slide with a single hump in the middle, one short curved slide rotating 90 degrees, one curved slide rotating 360 degrees, and one enclosed zig-zagging slide. The enclosed slide has drainage issues, with water occasionally pooling at the bottom, but this does not pose a safety issue. All of the slides are in good condition otherwise. The other plastic components—two tunnels, two interactive sensory components with 3 x 3 rotatable blocks with letters on them, most of the guardrails, and a roof—are in good condition.

Adjacent to the clatter bridge is a set of flat monkey bars with a curved path. Two of the metal shafts in adjacent sections of the monkey bar structure are not completely flush, which is not a safety issue in and of itself, but should be repaired outside of a full playground replacement. On the opposite side of the playground structure, there are two sets of monkey bars as well as a track-ride, linked together by a triangular transfer platform. One of the sets has flat bars while the other has six rings suspended by short chains, the latter linking the former as well as the track-ride with the rest of the play structure.

***Figure 32*: Emerald Pond Park Playground (looking northeast)**

***Figure 33*: Emerald Pond Park Playground (looking west)**

***Figure 34*: Section of monkey bars with minor misalignment**

***Figure 35*: Seesaw spring-rider**

Flintwood Terrace Park
Flintwood Terrace is a neighborhood park in southeastern Ramsey, located west of MN 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard, north of CSAH 116 / Bunker Lake Boulevard, and south of CSAH 5 / Nowthen Boulevard. Its playground was completed in 2004. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

The playground consists of three components—a swing set, a small play set, and a large play set. The swing set has three bays—two with two belt swings each, and one with two bucket swings. The small play set has two slides—one straight with two parallel tracks and one curved 90 degrees—as well as a staircase and two opposing handrails for entering the structure.

There are five different ways one can enter the main structure—a staircase, a metal ladder with five alternating semicircular rungs forming ten footholds, a curved metal ladder with four semi-rectangular rungs, a chain-link ladder with six rungs, and a corkscrew climber. The main play set has five slides—a straight slide, a straight slide with a hump, a straight slide with two parallel tracks, a curved slide rotating 90 degrees and a curved slide rotating 360 degrees. Linking the different elements of the structure are two bridges—a clatter bridge and a belt bridge—and a plastic tunnel. Additionally, there is a track-ride and two sets of monkey bars. One set of monkey bars has seven upwardly curving bars, while the other has seven rings suspended by chains. Overall, the playground is in great condition.

***Figures 36-37*: Flintwood Terrace Park Playground (*looking east and west, respectively*)**

Ford Brook Park
Ford Brook is a neighborhood park in northeastern Ramsey located north of CSAH 27 / 179th Lane, east of MN 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard, and one mile west of the entrance to Rum River Central Regional Park along CSAH 7 / 7th Street. Its playground was constructed on site in 2020, as a 'gently used' replacement sourced from the county park to the east, with monies from the Lawful Gambling Fund. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing.

The playground consists of two distinct play structures, a balance beam, as well as a swing set with two separate bays—one with two belt swings, the other with a bucket swing and a chair swing. The first playset contains two curved plastic tunnels—one with two sections fastened together and the other with six sections; three slides—each straight with two parallel tracks, but one with a hump and a dip on respective track; and three means of entry—a stair case with metal bars for handholds, a chain-link ladder, and a corkscrew climber.

The other playset has three main means of entry—a staircase and two metal ladders—and two slides—one straight, the other enclosed and rotating 360 degrees. It also features an obstacle course consisting of three platforms connected to metal poles, a track-ride, a pull-up bar, and a log roll.

***Figures 38-39*: Ford Brook Park Playground, facing southeast and southwest, respectively**

Fox Park

Fox Park is a small neighborhood park in northeastern Ramsey, with a single tennis court and adjoining wetland boardwalk. It is located along Potassium Street,east of MN 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard, north of 167th Avenue and south of Green Valley Road. Its playground is 1994 in vintage. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

The playground is composed of two components, a swing set and the main playground structure. The swing set is divided into two sections, one with two tot swings and one with two normal sbelt wings.

The main playground has three means of entry—one transfer surface, one chain link ladder with metal steps, and one corkscrew climber—and three slides—one straight slide with two parallel tracks, one straight slide with a hump, and one curved slide that turns 180 degrees. Different components of the structure are connected by one plastic tunnel and one upwardly curving belt bridge. Lastly there is a set of monkey bars with seven bars that curl upwards, as well as a track-ride. All playground components are in good condition.

***Figure 40*: Fox Park Playground**

North Commons

North Commons is a neighborhood park in southern Ramsey, at the northern border of The COR (the city's downtown), located north of CSAH 116 / Bunker Lake Boulevard and between CSAH 83 / Armstrong Boulevard and CSAH 56 / Ramsey Boulevard. Its playground was built in 2012. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing. Overall, the playground is in excellent condition.

The playground consists of four components—the main playset with an attached climbing wall and monkey bars, a metal swing set, and two spinners (one globe spinner). The swing set has two bays, one for bucket swings and one for belt swing, with each bay containing two swings each. The main play set has three slides—one short and straight near the bottom, two long and winding near the top of the structure. One of the longer slides zig zags while the other turns 360 degrees. There are six points of entry—one transfer surface; one chain-link ladder; one ladder with circular footholds rotated 90 degrees from one another; three stepping platforms; a ladder with two flat platforms directly on top of one another; and the monkey bars.

The monkey bars consist of five triangular bars. The climbing wall is plastic with nine holds on the front side and seven holds on the back side and a hole near the bottom of the wall (on the right side when viewed from the front) that can serve as a hand hold or foot hold. The top portion of the structure is accessible via two separate ladders made from walls with two slots cut out for foot holds. The bottommost of these ladders may have accessibility concerns—although one can use the guardrails as handholds, there is not a lot of room to maneuver through the opening.

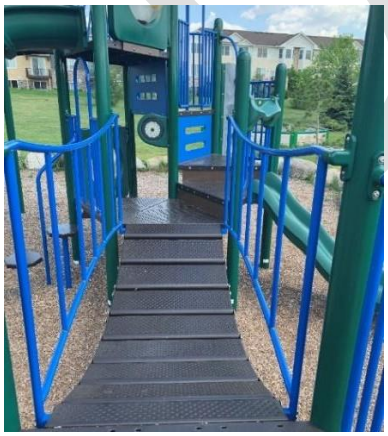


***Figure 41*: North Commons Park Playground wide shot; *Figures 42-44*: (*left to right*) bridge connecting to upper portion of the playground structure, ladder in the background, climber with five orthogonal rings; monkey bars and climbing wall**

Pearson Park
Pearson Park is the city's smallest neighborhood park in southwestern Ramsey at less than an acre, located along Rabbit Street, north of U.S. 10 and Bunker Lake Boulevard, and south of Alpine Drive. Its playground was built in 2018.

The Pearson Park playground is a nature-based play area. Most of its components are made from minimally-processed naturally occurring materials. The structural supports holding up the main play area are made from Tamarack logs, and the guardrails are logs cut into thin sheets. Another play feature, locatedon a hill to the north of the main playground structure, consists of short 'stepper' logs arranged in a figure-eight shape. Adjacent to the figure-eight feature is a ring of seven rocks with flat surfaces known as the Story-circle. Being Ramsey's first nature-based playground, it is unique within the city in a numberof ways. It utilizes both sand and artificial turf for surfacing, and also has three maple trees planted within the sand the play area for shade. Moreover, it has cut pieces of logs scattered throughout the play surface. All of the logs are from tamarack trees sourced from northwest of Duluth, Minnesota.

The playground includes a $35,000 long stainless steel slide (enclosed near the top, but open near the bottom) that bends slightly near the middle. The main point of entry is a wooden bridge accessible via a concrete sidewalk. The other three means of entry are a thin wooden climbing wall (background of *Figure 15*) and two rope climbing structures. The larger one lines the southeast corner of the playground structure, while the smaller rope structure is located in the center. An octagonal opening in the wooden deck of the playground structure allows one to enter via the smaller rope structure. The smaller rope structure is enclosed and also has large curved footholds for ease of use. All playgroundcomponents are in near-new condition.


***Figures 45-46*: *(left)* Pearson Park Playground *(not pictured: bridge)*; *(right)* Bridge**

Peltzer Park

Peltzer is a neighborhood park located in southern Ramsey, east of CSAH 56 / Ramsey Boulevard and north of CSAH 116 / Bunker Lake Boulevard. Its playground was built in 1995 andhas an ADA accessible by trail. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing. The playground consists of three main components—the main play structure, a swing set, and a spring rider.

The spring rider is in fair condition, though its paint is faded and some of the metal is in the initial stages of rust formation. The swing set consists of two bays with two swings each; one bay contains belt swings and the other contains bucket swings. The swings are all in good condition.

The play set contains four slides—two straight slides on the east side of the structure (one of which has a hump and the other of which has two tracks) and two slides on the west side (one enclosed and one curved 360 degrees). There are seven points of entry—one transfer surface and staircase on the southern end of the playground; one transfer surface at the end of a track-ride; five stepping platforms; one chain-link ladder with a curved metal handrail; one curved ladder with four semi-rectangular footholds; one straight ladder with five footholds; one corkscrew climber. There are also two plastic tunnels—one with a single 90-degree turn and one with two 90-degree turns.

Overall, the playground is in fair condition. The paint on the plastic components has faded and the wood on the decks and supports is slightly worn but the playground is structurally in working condition.

***Figure 47-48*: Peltzer Park Playground (*facing North and Southeast, respectively*)**

Rabbit Park

Rabbit is an approximate 5-acre neighborhood park located in northwestern Ramsey along Rabbit Street, roughly 2/3 of a mile east of CSAH 83 / Armstrong Boulevard and 1/5 mile north of 173rd Avenue. The park meets density requirements for replacement consideration, but is not as visited as most parks in the system. Its playground was placed in 1997, however some of the equipment had been previously used elsewhere and is now more than 30 years old. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing.

The playground consists of four components: a wooden-pole swing set with two belt swings, two separate play structures, and a metal slide atop an artificial mound. On one play structure, there are two slides—one curved and one straight—one transfer surface and one stationary metal ladder for entry, a roof over the top of the play structure, and an interactive sensory component.

The other play structure has two slides (one enclosed), three means of entry—one transfer surface, one chain-link ladder, and one-metal ladder—and a track-ride. The transfer surface steps are narrow and steep, and appear to not be ADA compliant. The chains for both swings are also worn and/or surface rusted. The playground is not accessible via an ADA trail.

***Figure 49*: Rabbit Park Playground**

Riverdale Park

Riverdale is a neighborhood park located in southern Ramsey along Riverdale Drive (just southof U.S. 10) between CSAH 56 / Ramsey Boulevard and CSAH 57 / Sunfish Lake Boulevard. Its playground was built in 1991, and one of the few in Ramsey that was funded by Tax Increment Financing (when that was permitted). The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing. An interesting aspect of this park, is it's location along the National Mississippi River Trail, and it's connection to the nearby Regional Park

The playground consists of three main components—two distinct play structures and one swing set—as well as four other components—a concrete camel sculpture, an excavator toy, and two spring-riders (one in the shape of a horse, the other in the shape of a bulldozer. The four components are in fair condition (however the concrete sculpture does have small cracks). The swing set has two bays with two swings each (two bucket swings and two belt swings in separate bays). The two talk tubes linking the two main play structures are deteriorating.

The smaller play structure consists of two points of entry—a transfer surface and a staircase, both with handrails—and two slides—one with two parallel tracks and one with a hump. One of the transfer surfaces is connected to a trail via a series of mats laid on top of the pebbles that comprise the playground surface. The top of the structure contains a house-like feature with two walls (each with a window), a bench, and a table. There is also a steering wheel and an interactive sensory component where children can customize animals by rotating nine blocks in a 3 x 3 grid, attached to three parallel bars. A similar sensory component is located at the bottom of the structure.

The larger play structure has a corkscrew climber and two slides—one straight with a single hump and one curved 360 degrees. Additionally, there is a set of monkey bars with eleven straight bars and a track-ride. Both are in good condition, though there is a small area on the grip for the track-ride with chipped paint. The transfer surfaces are in good condition but there are some accessibility concerns. The play set is not accessible via a flat surface and the transfer platforms are spaced vertically from one another by 18 to 24 inches. The six transfer surfaces are triangular and arranged together in a hexagonal shape with the last three being level with one another, forming a trapezoid. This top platform is alternatively accessible via a ladder formed by three slots cut into a wall, which is supplemented by two handholds. Even with the handholds, there are still accessibility concerns.

***Figure 50*: Riverdale Park Playground**

***Figures 51-52*: Transfer Surfaces on the Larger Playground at Riverdale Park (*note that the picture on the left is part of a vertical panorama and is compressed vertically and angularly distorted*)**

Rivers' Bend Park

Rivers' Bend is a 60-acre community park along the Rum River located in southeastern Ramsey, east of MN 47 / Saint FrancisBoulevard and straddling CSAH 116 / Bunker Lake Boulevard, though the playground is to the north. Park amenities include four tennis courts, one softball diamond, one soccer field, and a basketball hoop in the parking lot. Its playground was last replaced in 2001. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing, which occurred recently in 2020. The playground has seven components—the main play structure, a swingset, a set of four stepping pods (one in the middle and three surrounding the middle 180 degrees from one another), a dolphin-shaped spring rider, two "houses," and a tic-tac-toe board.

The two play houses are mirror-images of one another, each consisting of two plastic walls held togetherby three wooden posts. The walls facing each other both have a small window with a 3 x 3 pattern as well as a bench below the window. The other two corners of each of the houses are open. The houses are both in good condition. The swing set has two bays, one with two bucket swings and onewith two belt swings. The entire structure is in good condition. The paint on the dolphin spring-rideris chipped and the concrete base is worn, but it is otherwise in good condition.

The main play structure is a mix of plastic (slides, tunnels, roofs, and sensory components), metal (transfer platforms, some guardrails and supports), and wood (most platforms and supports).Visually the playground is in great condition, besides some faded paint and mud on the side of someof the plastic components. The main play structure has six entrances—two transfer surfaces, one chain-link ladder, one metal ladder with four alternating semicircular rings forming eight footholds,one metal ladder with four flat rungs, and one corkscrew climber. The main play structure also consists of five slides—one straight enclosed slide, one curved enclosed slide rotating 360-degrees,one straight slide with two parallel tracks, one straight slide with a hump, and another curved slide rotating 360-degrees. Additionally, there is a set of monkey bars with seven round rings. Tying the structure together are a clatter bridge, a belt bridge, and two tunnels each with two 90-degree turns.

The play structure also has four interactive sensory components—a board with letters on it, an abacus, a tic-tac-toe board (similar to the one outside of the main play structure), and a toy similar to the tic-tac-toe boards but with numbers painted on them.

***Figure 53*: Rivers' Bend Playground**

Shawn Acres Park

Shawn Acres is a neighborhood park located in a low-density area in northern Ramsey along Chameleon Street, 1/5 mile north of 173rd Avenue, and west of Thorn Lake. Its playground was placed there before 1980, and it is believed that it was used components at that time. The playground consists of three separate small elements: a rusted metal-pole swing set with three swings, a stand-alone metal slide, and a parallel set of metal bars akin to monkey bars without rungs. The paint on each of three components is peeling. Two of the three swings are inaccessible to younger children and those with mobility limitations without the help of an adult. The slide is also inaccessible to those with mobility impairments. The playground is not ADA compliant, nor does it have resilient surfacing, and has limited or low 'play value'. *The terms of this Interim Playground Replacement Policy point to the playground components removal, without replacement.*

***Figure 54*: Shawn Acres Park Playground**

Solstice Park

Solstice is a neighborhood park located in southeastern Ramsey at the end of Erkium Street, 1/5 mile east of CSAH 5 / Nowthen Boulevard and ¼ west of MN 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard viaSunwood Drive. The park has a grass infield softball field, and misting station adjacent to the play structures. Its playground was built in 1995, following input on the design by the new neighbors. Originally red in color, some of the components have faded to pink, showing their 26 years of service. The playground uses pea gravel for surfacing, within the boulder containment system.

The playground is composed of four components—a composite play structure with monkey bars and track-ride attached to the end, a swing set (containing three bays with two swings each), a climbing structure in the shape of a Stegosaurus dinosaur, and a sandbox excavator toy.

There are two curved slides, the shorter one turning 90 degrees and the longer one turning 360 degrees. There is a third straight slide. All of the slides are in good condition, however there are scratch marks in several places.

There are three main points of entry for the main composite playground structure—one transfer surface / staircase, one metal ladder curving upwards then horizontally, and one chain link ladder. Additionally, a corkscrew climber can be used for entry. Transfer platforms serving the monkey bars can also serve as a means of entry. There is a tunnel linking different parts of the structure that is in fair condition.

The sandbox excavator like many, due to their popularity, is in poor condition with paint chipped and metal rusted in several places. The swing set has three sections, divided by supports with two legs each, with two swings per section. One of the sections has two tot, bucket swings. All of the swings are in good condition. The monkey bars, comprised of nine triangular metal rings, are in good condition, as is the track-ride, though there is chipped paint in one place. There are two miscellaneous interactive sensory components, a tic-tic-toe board and a steering wheel, both of which are in good condition. Finally, there is a pull-up bar and talk tubes, both of which are in fair condition.

The dinosaur-shaped climbing structure has a spine of parallel metal bars with 17 rectangular ‘ribs’on the underside for climbing, linking the two bars. On the top there are 12 pentagonal scales on alternating sides of the spine for climbing. The structure is held up by four of the Stegosaur’s legs. All components of this structure are in good condition.

***Figure 55*: Solstice Park Playground**

Titterud Park

Titterud is a neighborhood park in central Ramsey along CSAH 56 / Ramsey Boulevard, just south of the intersection of CSAH 5 / Nowthen Boulevard. There is a single softball field at the park, and the playground was replaced in 2005, and located entirely within the pastoral Bur Oak stand. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing, with two separate boulder borders. One unique element is the porous ADA concrete sidewalk connecting the parking lot, which allows precipitation and air to reach the tree's rooting zone beneath.

There are three areas for playing—one with the main play set, one with a swing set and two pieces of equipment for bouncing, and an empty sandbox (with pea gravel for surfacing). The bouncing equipment is in good condition. One consists of a spiral pole with a singular platform from bouncing and the other is in the shape of a ring, allowing for two children to take turns jumping and launching the other upward.

The swing set is made of wooden posts and a metal crossbar, and has two belt swings.
The main structure is largely wooden, but with metal guardrails and a single plastic slide with three parallel tracks and a plastic tunnel. The main means of entry is a transfer platform and staircase. Another entrance is via a gray plastic rock climbing wall attached to a series of twelve green arched climbing platforms arranged in circular patterns. Adjacent to this is a rope climbing ladder with four parallel ropes at the top for handholds. On the opposite end of the playground structure is another means of entry—a ladder consisting of seven rungs and another ladder connected at a 135-degree angle with four rungs. The fifth and sixth means of entry are a narrow ladder with a rope for balancing, and a corkscrew climber. One of the boards on the transfer surface was recently replaced, with the structure in overall in good condition.

***Figure 56*: Titterud Park Main Play Area**

***Figure 57*: Titterud Park Secondary Play Area**

Woodland Green Park
Woodland Green is a neighborhood park in eastern Ramsey located east of MN 47 / Saint Francis Boulevard and north of Alpine Drive. Amenities include a single soccer field, and a hexagonal shelter in proximity to the playground, which was replaced in 1998. The playground uses engineered wood fiber for surfacing, with a timber border.

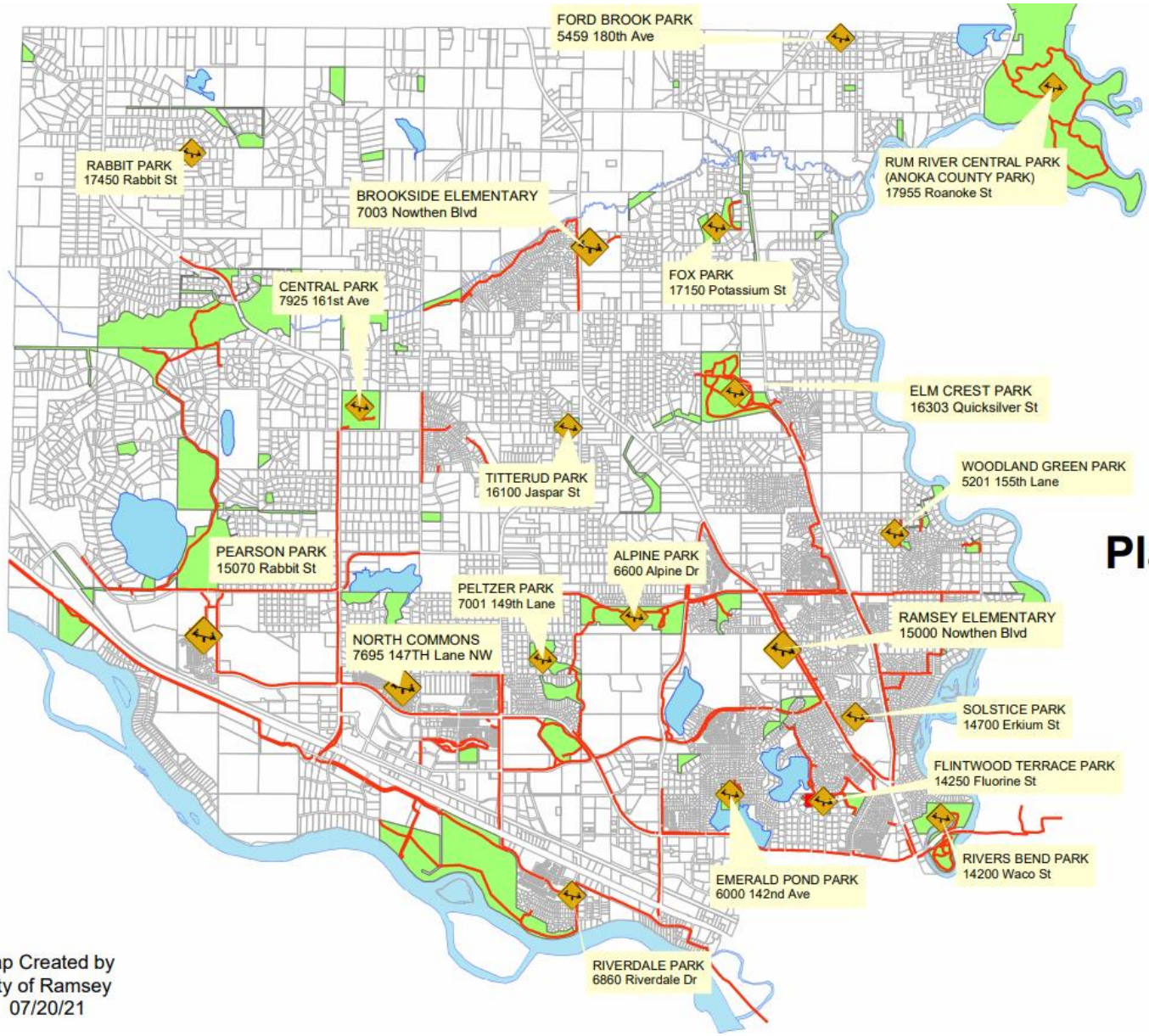
The playground features four components—the main structure with an attached jungle gym, a swing set, and two spring riders (both of which are in good condition). The swing set, consisting of two bays with two belt swings and two bucket swings in the respective bays, is in fair condition, though the crossbar is beginning to rust.

The main play structure has two curved slides, one with parallel tracks and curving roughly 45 degrees and another slide (longer than the first) zigzagging, but curving roughly 45 degrees as well. There are six means of entry, the main one being a transfer surface and staircase. There are three metal rope-like ladders—one enclosed with a metal ring on top, one with two parallel metal bars on the sides, and one with a single climbing track. A fifth means of entry is a green plastic climbing structure adjacent to the longer slide. A sixth possible method of entry is the jungle gym attached to the main structure. It also consists of a rope climbing wall, a set of monkey bars made up of five rings each attached to the end of a chain, a pull-up bar, and a set of monkey bars with three tilted, rotating, circular handholds. The second set of monkey bars is slanted. The jungle gym and main playground structure are both in good condition.

***Figures 58-59*: Woodland Green Park Playground (looking east and west,respectively)**

APPENDIX

Example of Public Engagement re 2020 Playground replacement



City of RAMSEY

N
W E
S

Playground Finder Map

Legend

Play Equipment

Trails

Parks

Lakes & Ponds

Map Created by
City of Ramsey
07/20/21

Ideas? Questions?

CITY OF RAMSEY
763-433-9883

Solstice Park's Play Structure — safety inspections, maintenance labor and repair expenses

Safety inspections, minor labor/repairs in first 15-20 years of playgrounds, approximately $784 annually.

After useful life period, $784 + $2,860 in labor costs annually (approximated).

The above does not include playground 'weeding' or vandalism expenses, nor resilient surfacing replacements.

$400 (x2)

$1,500

$480

$1,560

No longer Available

1995 '96 '97 '98 '99 2000 '01 '02 '03 '04 '05 '06 '07 '08 '09 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

|----------Assumed Useful Life ----------|