



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

August 18, 2026 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

The Natural Resource Conservation Board is an advisory body to the City Council. The Board is charged with recommending acquisition of lands for open space and developing a Natural Resource Plan which includes environmental policy and guidelines for the maintenance and preservation of Blaine's existing and future open spaces and trail corridors. One of the Board's functions is to hold public meetings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item, the Board will receive reports prepared by City staff, provide the opportunity for public response, conduct Board discussions and make recommendations. The City Council, however, makes all final decisions on these matters.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1.** 2026-405 Approval of NRCB Meeting Minutes for May 19, 2026
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

4. Open Forum

Open Forum is an opportunity for the public to share comments, concerns, or input on other items. While Open Forum is not intended to provide responses or discussion during the meeting, city staff will contact the speaker(s) after the meeting if follow-up is needed. Each speaker is limited to three minutes, with a maximum of 15 minutes set aside for Open Forum.

5. New Business

- 5.1.** 2026-398 2050 Comprehensive Plan Introduction
Sponsors: Elizabeth Showalter, Housing Program Coordinator

- 5.2.** 2026-406 NRCB Updates
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

- 5.3.** 2026-432 Open Space NRCB Member Inspections

Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

6. Adjournment



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

May 19, 2026 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

Present – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Anderson, Mereness, Panning, Truchon

Absent – Boardmembers Dahl and Gramstad

Others Present: Stormwater Coordinator Megan Hedstrom.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1. 2026-235 Approval of NRCB Meeting Minutes for January 20, 2026
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Boardmember Panning requested the revised October 2025 NRCB minutes be sent to all boardmembers. Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom reported she would look into this.

Boardmember Truchon requested a correction to the minutes at the bottom of Page 5, noting her statement should should read this project could be organized through an organized group or outside help.

Boardmember Mereness requested a correction to the minutes at the bottom of Page 4, second paragraph from the bottom changing created to treated.

Boardmember Truchon requested the reference to Rice Creek Watershed District be capitalized on Page 5 in the second paragraph.

Boardmember Anderson requested a change to the minutes noting the property that would

be sold to the city would be from the Florin family.

Boardmember Anderson requested a change to the minutes on Page 5, third sentence in the first paragraph should read groundwater to be impacted.

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Panning, to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2026 board meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Approval of Agenda**

MOVED by Boardmember Panning, seconded by Boardmember Anderson, to approve the agenda as amended adding an item to allow for the discussion of the city's future open spaces and trail corridors and adding an item to discuss the potential of an NRCB open house.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Open Forum**

Open Forum is an opportunity for the public to share comments, concerns, or input on other items. While Open Forum is not intended to provide responses or discussion during the meeting, city staff will contact the speaker(s) after the meeting if follow-up is needed. Each speaker is limited to three minutes, with a maximum of 15 minutes set aside for Open Forum.

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

6. **New Business**

- 6.1.** 2026-243 Update on the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Wetland Bank Restoration and Monitoring
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom provided the Board with an update from ISG on the monitoring and work contracts that were in place for the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS) Wetland Bank Site 7. She explained a potential burn would be held in the next week, weather pending, in the fen restoration zone. She indicated she was seeking volunteers to assist with buckthorn removal. She reported the board would be given another update on the BWS at the June tour.

Boardmember Truchon requested staff speak to how future development would impact the BWS. Ms. Hedstrom reviewed the future developments that were proposed adjacent to the BWS.

Boardmember Truchon asked that as the property to the north of the BWS is developed that proper drainage be put in place. She suggested a vegetative buffer also be considered along the property line.

Ms. Hedstrom reported staff was actively pursuing grants to assist with the cost for the proposed trails through the BWS and noted partnerships with non-profits were also being pursued to assist with signage for the BWS.

6.2. 2026-236 NRCB Updates

Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Ms. Hedstrom provided the board with an update on the following items:

- Volunteer Opportunities - Staff was seeking volunteers to assist with buckthorn removal within BWS.
- Student Project at BWS - Staff was working with students at a local high school to create signs for BWS.
- June Open Space Tour Locations - Staff reported Legacy Woods, Hidden Ponds, Laddie Lake Park and the Florin property would be toured by the NRCB on Tuesday, June 16 at 6:30PM.
- Florin Property Update - Staff reported the council held a meeting on May 4 where there was a discussion regarding the property north of 131st Avenue and Legacy Parkway. It was noted the property owner was interested in donating open space to the city and the council was in favor of accepting the open space. The board suggested the donated parcel be named for the family that donated the land to the city. The board suggested this parcel be visited during the June tour. The board supported this land remaining open space and suggested a looped trail be considered. Staff reviewed the location of current trails surrounding this property.
- Ravenwood Development on the McKinley Property - Staff explained the council denied a development proposal for the McKinley property in April. It was staff's understanding the developer was now working on a new application that should be reviewed by the council on June 1. The board asked that a trail connection be made through this property.

Boardmember Truchon requested the board review the city's trail system at the next NRCB meeting.

6.3 Discuss City Future Open Spaces and Trails

Boardmember Truchon stated she would like to review the city's future open spaces and trails given how the city was developing quite rapidly. She wanted to see land set aside for open space and trails before it was too late.

Boardmember Panning anticipated the city council heard the same messages she was hearing about the loss of trees and overdevelopment of the community. She encouraged the city council had to consider what land should be set aside for open space and trails.

Chair Rafferty was of the opinion the city council did a great job working trails and parks into new developments as they come before the city. He indicated open space was another issue.

Boardmember Truchon supported the city council further discussing this topic. She commented further on the 2020 comp plan viewpoints survey that was completed and noted the residents of Blaine were in support of the community having open space and clean water.

Ms. Hedstrom reported the city was in the early stages of the 2050 comprehensive plan and noted someone from the planning department would be attending the August NRCB meeting. She explained this would be an opportunity for this group to weigh in on important topics for the community when it comes to open space and trails.

Boardmember Anderson asked when the 2050 comp plan had to be completed. Ms. Hedstrom reported the plan had to be completed by the end of 2028. She explained the 2050 comp plan would be completed both by staff and outside consultants.

Boardmember Anderson recommended the NRCB be represented throughout the 2050 comp planning process and to serve as a liaison for the NRCB. He asked how closely the city coordinates with neighboring cities and the county through the comprehensive planning process. Ms. Hedstrom explained the city coordinates when it comes to shared utilities, but it was her understanding the city does not connect road systems with adjacent communities.

Boardmember Truchon stated it would have been nice to have a roadway connection with Ham Lake at Harpers Street noting there was a recent explosion at a home in Ham Lake and this home would have been better served by emergency vehicles had a connection been in place.

6.4 Discuss Potential for holding an NRCB Open House

Boardmember Panning explained she would like more information shared with the public regarding the NRCB. She believed the public would benefit from hearing updated information from the city regarding trails and the history of the open spaces in Blaine.

The board supported this recommendation.

Boardmember Anderson indicated now would be the time to hold an open house with the public, because it would allow for public feedback regarding trails and open spaces. He noted this feedback could be incorporated into the 2050 comprehensive plan. He stated this may lead to another referendum if open space was the priority for residents.

Boardmember Truchon reported the city had more than 70,000 residents at this time. She noted the city had approved a referendum for trails and open space in the past and perhaps it was time for the community to consider another referendum item for open space and trails

Boardmember Panning questioned how an NRCB open house could move forward. Ms. Hedstrom explained she could speak with the city manager, would have to see what has been done in the past, and could report back to the board at a future meeting.

Boardmember Anderson spoke to the ordinance that was recently approved by the city council and asked if e-bikes were allowed on city trails. Ms. Hedstrom explained the ordinance addressed e-motos and not e-bikes. She reported e-motos were being used off trails and on city streets, which was leading to enforcement issues. She clarified for the record that e-bikes were allowed on city trails.

Chair Rafferty asked if the NRCB would be holding a joint meeting with the city council. Ms. Hedstrom explained the NRCB would be holding a joint meeting with the council in October of this year.

Chair Rafferty requested staff speak to the decision that was made by the council regarding the trails in the southern portion of the BWS. Ms. Hedstrom reported the city council would not be putting this project out for bid, at this time, but had approved a grant application through the DNR to assist with funding the trails at some point in the future. She indicated the grant has been submitted and the city was waiting to hear back from the DNR. She noted there was a Met Council grant opportunity that the city would be applying for as well.

7. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:17PM.



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2026-398

Agenda Date	Status
August 18, 2026	
In Control	File Type
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Presentation

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.1

2050 Comprehensive Plan Introduction

Background

The City is required under state statute to update its comprehensive plan every 10 years. The 2050 plan must be completed and submitted to the Metropolitan Council by the end of 2028. Staff will provide a brief overview of the plan requirements and process for drafting the plan.

The City will be utilizing an advisory group for the Comprehensive Plan which will include representatives from city commissions, members of the public, and city council members. NRCB members will be asked to express interest in the advisory group either at the meeting, or by emailing staff following the meeting. The advisory group will generally meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:30, with a total of eight meetings expected between October 2026 and August 2027. Meetings may occasionally be held on other Tuesdays.

Recommendation

Informational

Attachment List

None



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2026-406

Agenda Date	Status
August 18, 2026	
In Control	File Type
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Report

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.2

NRCB Updates

Background

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Site 7 Wetland Bank Monitoring

Herbicide treatment is underway at test locations in Site 7. Trial herbicide treatments are being conducted this year in test plot locations to measure and assess success rates to develop a more detailed and confident cost estimate on treatment of large areas of reed canary grass. A site walk-thru with the TEP group and contractor is scheduled for later this month to assess current monitoring efforts in relation to unlocking the bank at the end of this year.

Grant Funding for Blaine Wetland Sanctuary

Staff just heard on Thursday that we are being recommended about \$2.1 million of funding from the state lottery proceeds. The state legislature has to approve the funding allocations next session (sometime between January and May) and we are expected to be able to start construction in the fall of 2027. Since the legislature occasionally makes changes, we aren't planning to make any public announcements until the legislature approves the funding. Once we have that approval in hand, I will connect you with the NRCB & communications team to coordinate public announcements.

Recommendation

Informational

Attachment List

None



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2026-432

Agenda Date	Status
August 18, 2026	
In Control	File Type
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Report

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.3

Open Space NRCB Member Inspections

Background

City Staff and Board Members will conduct open space inspections and provide reports at an upcoming NRCB meeting later this fall.

Please see attached inspection Report Form.

Recommendation

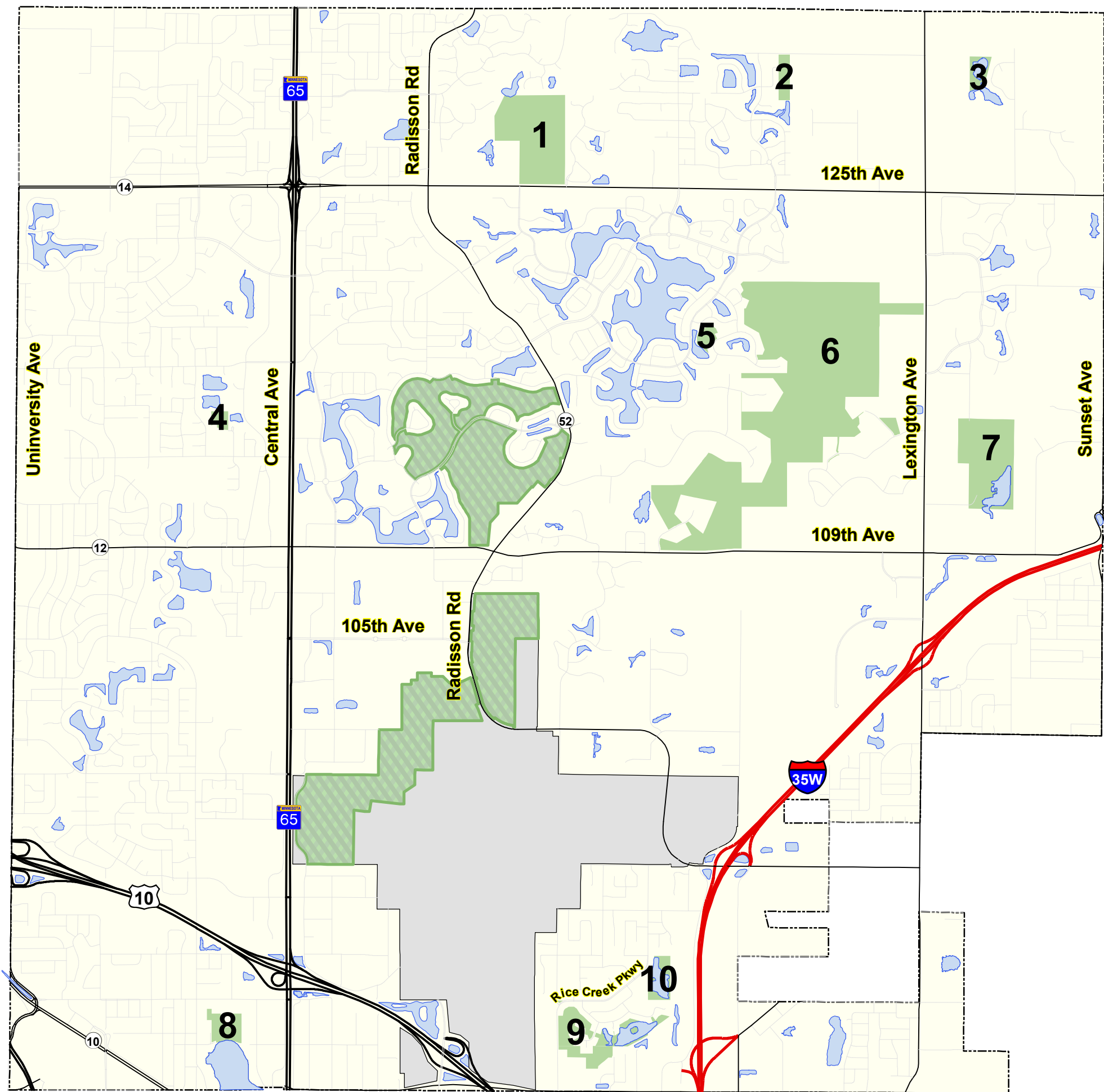
Informational

Attachment List

1. Open Space Overview Map
2. 2026 INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR BLAINE OPEN SPACES

CITY OF BLAINE

OPEN SPACE



- 1 Pioneer Park, 2491 125th Ave NE (100 acres)
- 2 Legacy Woods Open Space, 3560 131st Ave NE (10.1 acres)
- 3 Sunrise Ponds Open Space, 13000 Jewell Cir NE (11.8 acres)
- 4 Hidden Ponds Park, 11465 Polk St NE (5.3 acres)
- 5 Oak Savannah, 11730 Naples Cir NE (6.7 acres)
- 6 Blaine Wetland Sanctuary, 11980 Lexington Ave NE (521.6 acres)
- 7 Lochness Park, 11121 Lexington Ave NE (89.2 acres)
- 8 Laddie Lake Park, 1051 87th Ave NE (15.1 acres)
- 9 Kane Meadows South, Southwest of 2946 Rice Creek Pkwy NE (12.5 acres)
- 10 Kane Meadows North, East of 2946 Rice Creek Pkwy NE (17.6 acres)

Map Created by: City of Blaine GIS
Map Date: March, 2020

Disclaimer: This document has been compiled using information gathered from various governmental offices and other sources and is to be used for reference purposes only. Every effort has been made to make sure the completeness and accuracy on this document. The City of Blaine does not represent that the data can be used for exact measurement of distance or direction or precision in the depiction of geographic features. If errors or discrepancies are found, please contact (763) 717-2639.





INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR BLAINE OPEN SPACES

LOCATION: _____ DATE: _____

INSPECTOR(S): _____

Instructions: Please complete a thorough evaluation of your assigned open space. Make note of the condition of all amenities from a safety and aesthetic viewpoint. If there is an amenity that is not on this sheet, add it to the section titled "other". When identifying an issue, please be as detailed as possible about the location and take photos if possible.

PARKING LOT	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are appropriate signs posted and visible?			
Are the parking areas free of trip hazards?			
Is the lighting sufficient?			
Is it free of debris?			
Are stalls clearly marked?			
Other			
TRAILS/BOARDWALK	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are the trails free from trip hazards? (eg. No pot holes, cracks, etc)			
If trails are wood chip, are the wood chips still functioning?			
Are there any safety hazards? (eg. trees across trail, trees leaning over trail, etc)			
Are the trails free from debris? (eg. Garbage, dog poop, etc)			
Other			

PICNIC SHELTERS	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Is the park shelter free of debris?			
Are the picnic tables stable & in good shape? (markings, bolts)			
What is the condition of the roof?			
What is the condition of the posts/concrete pad?			
Is there vandalism?			
Other:			
KIOSKS/SIGNS	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are the kiosk/signs in good condition?			
Is there vandalism?			
Do the posters need replacing?			
Other:			

OVERALL SITE CONDITION	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are there invasive species?			
Is the site free of debris?			
Is there any vandalism?			
Are there any washouts to water bodies/drainage areas?			
Is there any encroachment from neighboring properties?			
Are there opportunities for additional plantings, signage, or amenities?			
Other			
OTHER:	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR CONCERNS: _____
