
Section 3 Community Background

Farmington has a relatively short history in regards to having a parks and recreation systems plan in place. In this chapter historical information will be presented that defines what Farmington's parks, open space, trails, recreation programs and recreational facilities consist of. The City has taken a fiscally conservative approach to the funding of park and trail improvements and has relied on development to pay for the improvements made to parks and trails over the years. Demographic information has also been included that provides a profile of the community's composition.

3.1 City Parks and Recreation: A Historical Perspective

Beginning in the 1970's with the purchase of its first park, Rambling River Park over 30 years ago a Park and Recreation System was born for the City of Farmington. Today the City provides 876 acres of parks that consist of active and passive areas for residents to enjoy. As a result of this growth in the system, a ratio of just less than 42 acres of park, open space and natural areas for every 1,000 residents has been provided for residents to enjoy.

As a result of this tremendous increase in the acreage of park, open space and natural areas, it has demonstrated the City's commitment to providing an appropriate ratio of park acreage to 1,000 residents. As development has occurred over the years in the City, the City has chosen to develop a park and recreation system that is diverse. Diversity has occurred through not only the procurement of active spaces but also through the acquisition of passive spaces that contains many natural areas that can be accessed through the City's trail system. The passive and active spaces have been acquired through the park dedication process, which is a process that allows cities, by Minnesota Statute, to require developers to dedicate park land within a development without financial compensation from the City to the developer. As a result, the City has been able to acquire a significant amount of its park acreage through development that has occurred since the first park was acquired back in the 1970's.

The City has been conservative on using property tax dollars for the construction of park and trail improvements. The City's park dedication ordinance has provided the impetus for the funding of park and trail improvements for the past 30 years. In situations where the City did not require land to be dedicated for a park, the City instead chose to take cash in lieu of the park land. The cash that was received has been used to complete park and trail improvements in both new parks and in existing parks. This has created a situation where the City's property owners have not had to pay property taxes in order to provide financial support for the improvements made to City parks and trails.

The City has held a referendum once in the past 35 years for parks and recreation. In 1975 a referendum was held to construct an ice arena. The ballot measure passed and an ice arena was subsequently built. Since then the City has investigated bringing several different park and facility referendums to the voters but neither one in the end materialized. One referendum formulated in 1997, would have provided a number of outdoor recreational facilities including the purchase of land for a park. A second referendum idea investigated was the construction of a community center. A third idea researched was the construction of outdoor recreational facilities.

3.2. Farmington School District

The Farmington School District provides both indoor and outdoor facilities for City residents to access for recreation. However during the school year, priority is given to school district activities and so access by the public is limited. The school district currently provides about 90% of the outdoor facilities for the public to use. All of the School District fields and acreage are contained within the existing City boundary with the exception of one elementary school that is located in the City of Lakeville. While the school district facilities are important to note, they serve a population that is beyond just the City boundary. Therefore the facilities and grounds that are owned and maintained by the school district will be identified but will not be included in the recommendations that come forward from the 2030 Master Plan.

3.3. Demographic Trends

The City's population has grown since 1990. Development of residential development surged during the late 1990's and into the early 2000. Due to this growth, the demographics of the community have changed. The 2000 U.S. Census and the Metropolitan Council were the two primary sources for the demographic information that was acquired. The demographic information has been formulated in the following categories:

- Population estimates and projections
- Age
- Gender
- Income and Education
- Race
- City Housing Types

1. Population Estimates and Projections

“Farmington has been one of the fastest growing communities in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.”

Since the 1990 Census, the City's estimated population as of September 30, 2007 has grown by 250%. Since the previous Master Plan was approved in 1998, the population has almost doubled. The 2000 U.S. Census has estimated that the City is the 56th largest community in Minnesota. Table 8.3 shows the 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2006 Census estimated population and a September 30, 2007 estimated population that was based on Certificates of Occupancies issued to home builders. Table 8.3 also shows projected populations for 2020 and 2030. If the City were to completely develop as residential development and without any constraints the remaining undeveloped land that is currently contained within the City boundaries, it is projected that the City could achieve a build-out population of 85,272. The projection made an assumption that certain types of housing were constructed that reflected a certain number of units per acre built.

Table 8.3: Farmington’s Population Estimates and Projections
Source: 2000 Census and Metropolitan Council

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2006 Census Estimate	2007 Staff Estimate	2020 Projection	2030 Projection	Complete Build-Out Projection
Population	5,940	12,365	18,207	20,768	27,100	32,000	85,272

2. Age

“The community has a younger population than the U.S population.”

The 2000 Census identifies that the City has a median age of 30 years, which compares to a U.S. median age of 35.3 years. The following is a breakdown of the age makeup of the community’s population and how it compares to the U.S. average:

Table 8.4: Population by Age City of Farmington and U.S. Comparison 2000
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Ages	Population Number	% of Total	U.S. Population %	Difference
-5	1,424	11.5	6.8	+4.7
5-9	1,251	10.1	7.3	+2.8
10-14	1,055	8.5	7.3	+1.2
15-19	736	6.0	7.2	-1.2
20-24	543	4.4	6.7	-2.3
25-34	2,769	22.4	14.2	+8.2
35-44	2,364	19.1	16.0	+3.1
45-54	1,005	8.1	13.4	-5.3
55-64	525	4.3	8.6	-4.3
65+	693	5.6	12.5	-6.9
Total	12,365	100.0	100.0	

The demographic makeup of the population age when compared to the characteristics of the national population indicates that there are a higher percentage of individuals in the 5-15, 25-34 and 35-44 age categories and less in the 15-19, 20-24, 45-54, 55-64 and the 65 5-17 and 25-44 age categories. The table illustrates that the age of the City’s population has a larger younger population than what the U.S. average shows. It would appear that this demonstrates that the population of younger members of the community has grown either because households are moving to Farmington with young children or that households are moving to the community and are starting families after moving. The lower the median age, the higher the participation rates

are for most activities. Since the population of Farmington has a higher percentage of a younger population, it would seem to indicate that a focus for the City in the short term should be on youth programs and building recreational facilities that provides opportunities for families to recreate together in family-type activities. Attention should also be paid to the fact that long term transitional planning for 2030 in Parks and Recreation should focus on the community’s population becoming older.

3. Gender

“The City’s male to female ratio is higher than the overall U.S population ratio.”

The number of males living in the City is slightly higher than the number of females living in the City. This male to female ratio may change in the future given the trend that is taking place with the U.S. population. The male to female ratio shows that the City has a make up of 49.6 percent of its population being female and 50.4 percent of its population being male. The 2000 census shows that there is slightly higher percent of females to males in the total population of the U.S.

Table 8.5: Population by Gender Farmington and U.S. Comparison in 2000

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Gender	Population Number	% of Total	U.S. Population %	Difference
Female	6,130	49.6	50.9	-1.3
Male	6,235	50.4	49.1	+1.3
Total	12,365	100.0	100.0	

4. Income and Education

“The median household income in Farmington is higher than the national median household income.”

Median household income is \$61,864 for the City of Farmington, which is about 50% higher than the national median household income of \$41,994. The City also has a higher number of people who live in a household that are employed in the work force. According to U.S. Census figures, 79.8% of people who are 16 years and older are employed in the work force. This compares to the national average of 63.9% of people who are 16 years and older being employed in the work force. Regarding the poverty level in Farmington, 1.3% of the population in the City falls below the federal poverty level (defined for a family of four as earning \$17,050 or less annually) while on a national level 9.2% of the U.S. population falls below the poverty level. What this all means is that the population of the Farmington has a higher number of people in the work force earning a higher income than what is earned on a national level. A higher amount of income in a household is a significant factor that drives participation in Parks and Recreation services.

Regarding the level of education achieved by residents living in Farmington, a higher percentage of people 25 years and older living in Farmington have completed a high school education than

the U.S. population. 90.4% of Farmington’s population are high school graduates, which represents a number that is 10% higher when compared to the 80.4% of the U.S. population being at least a high school graduate. 23.6% have a bachelor’s degree or higher, which is slightly lower than the 24.4% of the U.S. population having a bachelor’s degree or higher. It appears that Farmington has a solid population base that has at least a high school education.

5. Race

“Farmington’s population has little racial diversity.”

A significant majority of the Farmington population is of the white race. Table 4.4 below shows the racial cross section of the community.

Table 8.6: Racial Makeup of Farmington
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Racial Group	Number of People	% of entire population	U.S. Population %
White	11,824	95.6%	75.1%
Hispanic or Latino	232	1.9%	12.5%
Asian African Americans	180	1.5%	3.6%
Black or African American	92	0.7%	12.3%
Some other Race	35	0.6%	5.5%

6. City Housing

Farmington’s housing units have increased by more than 3,000 units since 1999.

Housing types can be a good indicator in determining parks and recreational needs in the community. While the City has added more single family type housing units than multi family units since 1999, there has nonetheless been an increase in the overall number of multi family residential units in the City whether they be owned or rented. There are many different types of multi-family units that can be built including townhomes, multiplexes and apartment buildings. It is important to remember that multi family unit neighborhoods become dependent on public parks as the primary area for play because multi family units generally do not have sizeable yards. In Farmington there are many multi-family areas that do not have sizeable yards and so they have become dependent on the use of City parks for play. It will be important that as multi-family developments occur that the City makes sure that adequate public park space is provided.

The City of Farmington has added 3,016 new housing units since 1999. 1,250 units of this total are multi-family units. **Table 8.6** below shows the breakdown of the housing types that have been built since 1999.

Table 8.6: *Housing Types*

Housing Type	Units Built	% of All Units Built
<i>Single Family</i>	<i>1,766</i>	<i>59%</i>
<i>Multi Family</i>	<i>1,250</i>	<i>41%</i>
Total	<i>3,016</i>	<i>100%</i>