

VACANT PROPERTIES

Separate from the agricultural land that could be used for development is land classified as vacant within the city (see **Table 2-7**). The difference between these categories is that vacant properties have been previously platted and zoned for development. Many of these properties are in subdivisions that have not been developed because of the recent downturn in the economy creating a soft housing market. Some vacant lots are located in the core of the city as a result of the 2010 tornado, as the structures were destroyed beyond repair. **Table 2-7** outlines the amount of land and zoning of vacant land within the City of Wadena as of 2012 and in the surrounding area.

Table 2-7: Wadena Vacant Properties

Zoning	Acres	Percentage of All Vacant Properties
C-1 Commercial District	33.07	17.42%
I-1 Light Industrial District	13.63	7.18%
I-2 Heavy Industrial District	6.68	3.52%
PID – Planned Industrial District	17.12	9.02%
R-1 One to Four Family Residence District	78.55	41.38%
R-2 Multiple Family Residence District	2.21	1.16%
Extraterritorial Area	38.56	20.31%
Total	189.82	-

The majority of vacant parcels are zoned R-1 or R2, making up 42.54 percent of the vacant parcels. Several of these parcels are serviced by city utilities (water and/or sewer). **Figure 2-9** provides the location of the vacant parcels, and indicates which utilities are provided at each location. A total of 336 residentially zoned parcels are currently vacant. A majority of the vacant parcels (67.56 percent) do not currently have access to either water or sewer. Of the 336 vacant parcels, 26.19 percent have access to water and sewer, while the remaining 6.25 percent have access to sewer but not to water.

EXTRATERRITORIAL AREA

Table 2-8 displays the acreage consumption for the existing land uses within city limits and the extraterritorial area (ETA). A majority of the 23,958.35 acres of land are designated as Agricultural (62.26 percent).

Table 2-8: Land Use in Wadena and the ETA, 2012

Land Use	Acres	% of ETA
Commercial	236.39	0.92%
Industrial	546.09	2.13%
Rural Residential	769.85	3.01%
Low Density Residential	652.09	2.55%
Medium Density Residential	102.46	0.40%
Park & Open Space	358.16	1.40%
Agricultural	15,698.91	61.36%
Wooded	5,917.65	23.13%
Public & Institutional	204.71	0.80%
Water	32.43	0.13%
Vacant	190.31	0.74%
Roads	877.41	3.43%
Total	25,586.43	-

Per Minnesota State Law, the City of Wadena is allowed to have a voice in land classification and development with an area of two miles beyond their municipal limit. This area is referred to as an Extraterritorial Area (ETA). This additional area ensures that municipalities have ample room to expand when needed and that land uses surrounding the city do not conflict with one another or with the city's future land use plans.

The City of Wadena and the ETA is approximately 25,586 acres, which is approximately 40 square miles (including the City of Wadena). The city itself only covers 3,400 acres, which is only about 13 percent of the total area.

Agricultural uses make up the vast majority of land uses within the ETA. This land can be considered "Developable" as it pertains to the outward growth of Wadena.

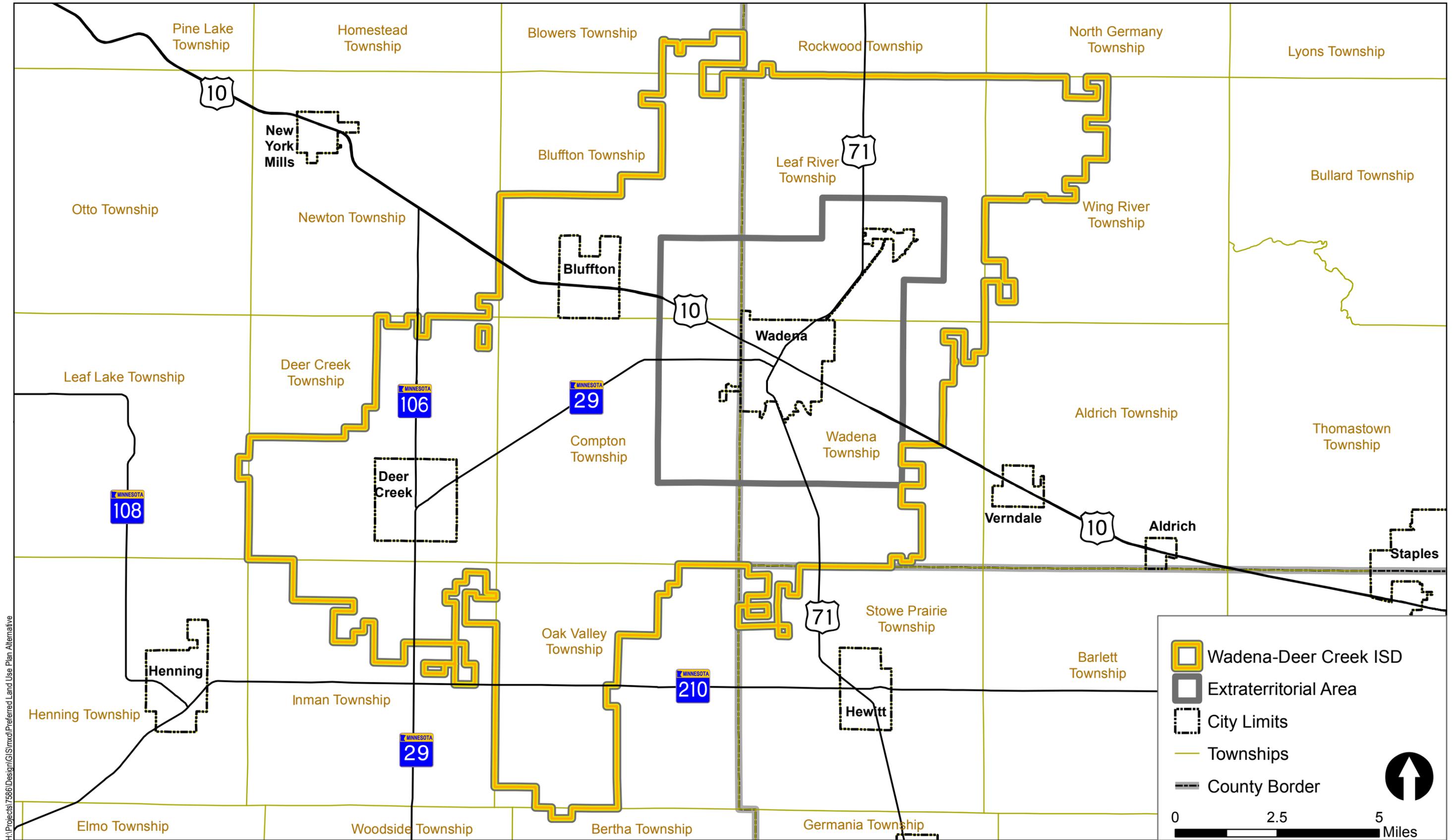
The second largest land use within the ETA is land designated as wooded. This classification is given to areas with dense tree stands. These areas often include hilly terrain and water features such as lakes or streams. Wooded areas classified on the existing land use map are considered natural areas that could largely be preserved. Due to the nature of the land in these areas, any other form of development would typically need to be very low density development, which would likely prevent or complicate future annexation and would gradually degrade the wooded designation of the property.

2.10 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Public education is offered through the Wadena-Deer Creek Public Schools Independent School District 2155, which provides PK-12 education to both rural and urban populations in and around Wadena, including the City of Deer Creek and the City of Bluffton. **Figure 2-20** shows the boundaries of the school district. This school district has approximately 999 students split between two schools, a Kindergarten through 6th grade, and 7th through 12th grades. The four-year graduation rate for the school district is 78.3 percent which is three percent above the state average.

The high school in Wadena took a direct hit from an EF-4 tornado that swept through Wadena and surrounding areas on June 17th, 2010. The damage to the building was catastrophic, rendering the building completely unusable. This facility housed approximately 450 students in grades 7-12. The middle school and high school have now been merged into the same facility with the completion of the new Wadena-Deer Creek Middle/High School for the 2012/2013 school year. This new school houses approximately 600 students between the eight grades.

Minnesota State Community and Technical College has a campus located in Wadena. M-State offers job training/retraining, individual classes, and two-year degrees in technical fields. It also offers an Associate of Arts program that would fulfill the first two-years of a four-year degree upon transferring to other institutions within the State of Minnesota. The Wadena Campus currently enrolls 790 students and provides many of the same amenities as a traditional four-year institution.



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Figure 2-20

2.11 EMERGENCY SERVICES

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Wadena Police Department is located on Colfax Avenue Southeast in the core of Wadena. The department employs eight officers and one secretary/dispatcher.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Emergency medical services are provided to the residents of Wadena through Tri-County Health Care. This service is provided by paramedic and advanced EMTs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Ambulance Department also provides medical care to the communities of Sebeka, Menahga, New York Mills, Bluffton, and Verndale.

FIRE PROTECTION

The Wadena Fire Department was established in 1883, with an all-volunteer staff. The department has grown to a 20 member paid on-call staff. The fire station is located at 121 Colfax SE in downtown Wadena.

2.12 CITY FACILITIES

CITY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

The overall operations of the Wadena City Departments are handled within the City Administration Office location at 222 Southeast 2nd Street. Administration, finance, and human relations offices are housed in the building. The city commission chambers are also located in the building. Citizens can visit the building to discuss issues, pay their utility bills, apply for licenses and permits, and reserve park spaces.

WADENA CITY LIBRARY

The Wadena City Library is part of the Kitchigami Regional Library System, which serves a five-county area in north-central Minnesota. There are 30,000 titles available for check-out with the city library, and 200,000 are available through the regional system. The Wadena City Library offers a variety of activities, which include pre-school story time and group book discussions. Furthermore, free public internet access and WiFi is provided in the library on seven computers. Patrons can research titles from any location using the web catalog.

WADENA CITY LIBRARY

The City of Wadena provides a website at www.wadena.org which offers a variety of resources and information about the community.

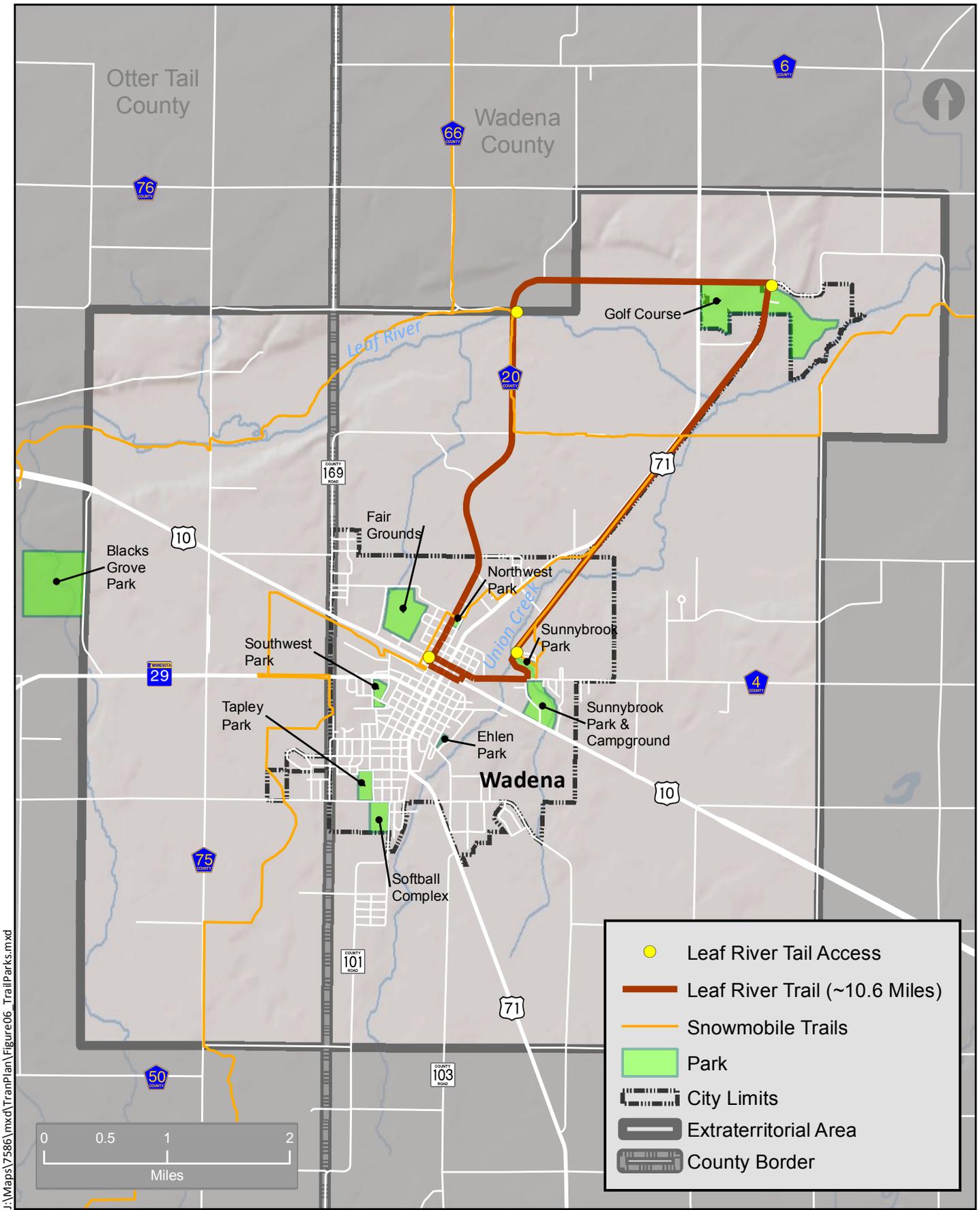
2.13 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

There are seven parks located within the city limits of Wadena. Black's Grove Park is located just outside of the City in Otter Tail County (see **Figure 2-21**). Information about each of the park facilities is listed in **Table 2-9**.

Table 2-9: Park Facilities, 2012

Park	Owner	Acres	Park Facilities
Sunnybrook Park	City of Wadena	78 Acres	Picnic Shelter, Children's Zoo, Playground Equipment, Softball Fields, Volleyball Courts, Restrooms
Northside Park	City of Wadena	2.5 Acres	Playground Equipment, Basketball Courts, Ice Rink/Warming House
Southeast Playground	City of Wadena	1 Acre	Playground Equipment, Softball Fields, Basketball Courts
Southwest Playground	City of Wadena	.5 Acre	Playground Equipment, Basketball Courts
Finks Park	City of Wadena	5.6 Acres	Playground Equipment, Picnic Shelter, Tennis Court, Softball/T-Ball Field, Outdoor Ice Rink, Swimming Pool
Burlington Northern Park	City of Wadena and Burlington Northern Railroad	2 Acres	Picnic Shelter, Depot Building, Gazebo
Tapley Park	City of Wadena	38 Acres	Picnic Shelter, Basketball Court, Soccer Fields, Playground Equipment, Softball Fields, Horseshoe, Sledding Hill
Black's Grove Park	City of Wadena	66 Acres	Picnic Shelter, Hiking, Cross-Country Skiing, Horseback Riding, Log Cabin





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2.14 UTILITIES

WATER

The mission statement of the Wadena Municipal Water Utility is to provide, “a safe potable water supply for human consumption and at the same time maintain adequate fire protection for the community.” The system extends to much of the development within the municipal boundary of Wadena except for the residential development in the northwest corner of the city. City water service has been extended beyond the municipal boundary to the west, past the new high school facility. This has likely been done in anticipation of new residential development in this area.

Areas outside of the city likely get their water from individual wells since the water table is fairly high throughout the region and the state.

Much of the core area is serviced by four-inch water mains that are below current standards set by the Minnesota Health Department which requires six-inch mains. Although mains are undersized they are still adequate for short-term infill development. Throughout the life of this plan, however, it may become necessary to increase the size of these mains to service new developments on the fringe of municipal limits.

Currently, the city is serviced by three wells, each with the ability to pull 7,500 gallons per minute. This is a total pumping capacity of 3,240,000 gallons per day, though the water treatment plant only has a capacity of 1,750,000 gallons per day. Currently peak demand is around 900,000 gallons per day with an average usage around 500,000 gallons per day with the capability to store 500,000 gallons in the water tower. This leaves significant capacity for additional usage with a limiting factor of modernizing the distribution system.

SANITARY SEWER

All of the core areas of central Wadena are serviced by the sanitary sewer system. Newly developed areas on the fringe of the corporate boundaries are largely not serviced by this utility leaving them to either operate on a community or individual septic system.

The sanitary sewer collection system is generally in a state of good repair because of its age. There are some areas in the core of Wadena that have aging pipes that were installed in the 1920s. These areas will likely need modernization. Most lift stations are either new or have been refurbished. Currently there is capacity to service infill development.

Expansion of the sanitary sewer system could easily occur in the Kingsley area towards the southwest side due to the pre-existing lift station. A gravity line on 7th Street on the southeast side could be extended to provide for additional outward growth. Areas other than those would require a lift station as a prerequisite for service.

The waste water treatment plant has a capacity of 750,000 gallons per day. Currently the plant is undergoing improvements to modernize the facility and comply with current standards. The plant is at 81 percent capacity which may be adequate for an additional 20 years of new hookups at the current growth rate.

STORM SEWER

Wadena's street system provides a network of storm sewer pipes that drain impervious surfaces such as streets, rooftops, and on-site paved areas, and sometimes needs to handle runoff from pervious surfaces during times of heavy rainfall or snowmelt. Wadena experiences challenges for handling storm water because of the high water table throughout the community and surrounding area. For example, storm sewer back-ups and street flooding occur periodically in the 2nd Street SW and Irving Avenue SW area because of the high water table and the inability of the storm sewer to handle the water volume during heavy precipitation.

Union Creek, which runs through the east side of the city, accommodates storm water collected in the majority of the city. The high water table creates challenges in creating storm water detention ponds, but ponds that serve as amenities in new development areas can be designed with the capacity to accommodate a "bounce" of storm water inflow during and after rain events. When the system can handle the detained water, it is gradually released into the storm sewer collection system. In areas where storm water detention/retention ponds are not feasible or desirable, on-site grading and landscaping that includes swales and rain gardens will help address the need for on-site storm water detention in a manner that adds to the aesthetic quality of the property.

ELECTRIC

The City of Wadena has its own municipal electric utility which transmits power to areas within city limits. Wadena is a member of the Missouri River Energy Service (MRES) which is a not-for-profit energy provider to states in the northern Midwest. A link to MRES can be found on the City of Wadena's website.

The current electric transmission system has a capacity of 10 megawatts. In the next three to five years there are plans to upgrade the system to a 40 megawatt capacity. The new capacity should be more than ample to handle any growth in the foreseeable future.