

1 INTRODUCTION

Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association has been actively engaged in their neighborhood planning process since April, 2005. Throughout that time, residents and other stakeholders have met continuously to discuss how they want their neighborhood to develop over the next three to ten years.

The scope of their planning incorporates the area between the following boundaries: Lake Mendota to the north, the Village of Shorewood Hills to the east, the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad on the south, and the Thorstrand Neighborhood and Camelot Drive to the west. Figure 1.1 outlines those boundaries.

There has been extensive public participation throughout this planning process. The main forum for neighborhood wide input has come from two neighborhood meetings. The first was a visioning meeting, while the second asked neighbors to review draft recommendations. Mid-way through the process, a series of focus groups were held to gather input from various types of neighborhood stakeholders. Finally, all of the Steering Committee meetings have been open to the public. In addition to public input,

related plans have been studied and the recommendations from them have been incorporated into this plan. Those plans include the Lake Court Decision and Maintenance Agreement, the Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association Plan for University Avenue, the City of Madison Urban Design Guidelines for District #6, the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan, Transport 2020, the Bicycle Transportation Plan for the Madison Area and Dane County (2000), and Madison Park and Open Space Plan (1997).

This plan is divided into three interrelated sections. The first section, the Introduction, provides an overview of the neighborhood and its history. The Existing Conditions section is an in depth look into what currently exists in the neighborhood. The section is broken down into ten elements. The Goals and Recommendations section provides specific ways the neighborhood can improve certain aspects of their neighborhood as well as maintain positive elements that are already in existence.



FIGURE 1.1
*Spring Harbor
Neighborhood
Planning Boundary*

Neighborhood History

The extensive history of the neighborhood has continual themes, many of which relate directly to the water resources that are provided within the neighborhood boundaries. Another theme that can be traced throughout the neighborhood is the role that transportation has played in the development of both the neighborhood and the region. The following points are instrumental in the creation of what is now the Spring Harbor Neighborhood.

- ✓ The retreat of the glacier 10,000 years ago left many 'kettle holes' in the Madison area. A pond surrounded by woods provides habitat for a variety of wildlife in this small 8-acre park that is known today as Kettle Pond Conservation Park.
- ✓ The Ho-Chunk called the Madison area "Taychopera" - meaning "land of the four lakes."
- ✓ In the early **1800s** the area was occupied by Winnebago Indians, who had a village next to the springs. The Winnebago called the springs "Makamai" which meant "medicine springs."



FIGURE 1.2 Photo of Pearson's cows standing where the Spring Harbor is currently located was probably taken in the early 1900s

FIGURE 1.3 A detailed plat map shows local land owners on the northwest side of Madison

- ✓ The first lots in the Spring Harbor area were sold to Eastern land speculators at \$1.25 per acre in **1835**. These purchases were made a "section" at a time, which represented about 640 acres. These owners didn't actually live on the land.
- ✓ During the **1850's** settlers who farmed and lived on their own land started purchasing acres around Spring Harbor. Alfred Merrill, for whom the local Merrill Springs is named, was one of these early farmers.
- ✓ In **1910** Ernest N. Warner gave Merrill Springs to Madison's Park and Pleasure Drive Association, which was a forerunner of the Madison Parks System. Merrill Springs Park was formed from this gift. He also gave the city an easement from the springs up to Lake Mendota Drive, which exists as a footpath today.
- ✓ Fred Risser, Wisconsin State Senator and a grandson of Earnest N. Warner still lives on the family homestead in the Spring Harbor neighborhood.
- ✓ The marshy land at the end of Spring Harbor's river was dredged in

1910 to form a harbor very similar to what is there today. Lake Mendota Drive had to be moved in order to accommodate this change to the lakefront. There had previously been a rock foot bridge spanning the marshy land, which was removed to create the harbor.

- ✓ University Avenue was constructed during **1934**, bisecting the Warner farm. Cattle would pasture on the lake side of University during the day and cross through a cement walkway which was located near Perkins in order to reach the barn at nightfall.
- ✓ The Spring Harbor area was incorporated into the City of Madison in **1949**.
- ✓ In **1958**, the Indian Hills development was platted and construction began, which would continue to further populate the neighborhood.
- ✓ The city of Madison placed a deep well in Indian Hills, upon developing the neighborhood in **1960**, in order to keep up with the demand for city tap water. As a result, many of the natural springs in Spring Harbor have gone dry.

- ✓ Originally opened in 1965, then closed in 1979, Spring Harbor Middle School reopened in **1996** as a magnet school in the Madison Metropolitan School District. The school emphasizes environmental science throughout all aspects of the regular curriculum.



FIGURE 1.4 *An early 1900s photo of Gertrude (Jenkins) Pearson, an early Spring Harbor resident, wading in Lake Mendota.*

Neighborhood Profile

It is important to distinguish the neighborhood boundaries that are used throughout this plan. The Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association boundaries encompass:

- ✓ Old Middleton Road and the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad on the south,
- ✓ Lake Mendota on the north,
- ✓ Whitney Way, the City of Madison Boundary on the east, and
- ✓ Camelot Drive on the west.

The Neighborhood Planning Boundaries follow the boundaries of the Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association, but also include:

- ✓ University Place (the triangle lot between University Avenue, Old Middleton Road, and Whitney Way); and,
- ✓ One lot deep along University Avenue from Baker to Allen Boulevard.

The Spring Harbor Neighborhood truly came of age during the 1950's, as 49.9% of all homes were constructed during that decade. However, as the history provided earlier in this plan

outlines, the neighborhood area has been active for thousands of years. The statistics below highlight that the neighborhood is still a vigorous place to call home, both for work and business. The tables on the following pages outline more specific details about who lives in our neighborhood.

Our Homes

- ✓ The typical home in the Spring Harbor neighborhood was constructed in 1961; this is slightly older than the average Madison home which was constructed in 1967.
- ✓ The neighborhood consists mostly of single family detached homes. 69% of the housing stock falls within this category.
- ✓ However, there is currently an ample stock of multifamily homes. Almost 30% of the homes in the neighborhood are located in structures that have 5 or more units. Many of the multi-family units in this neighborhood are being converted from apartments to condominiums, therefore decreasing the number of rental units available in the neighborhood.

- ✓ In the neighborhood, rental costs are slightly lower than the city average; the average rent in the neighborhood is about \$600 a month, the city average being closer to \$650 a month (U.S. Census 2000).
- ✓ On the other hand, average home prices for the neighborhood tend to be slightly higher than City averages. The average neighborhood price for a home is \$148,100. In the City, the average home price is \$137,700 (1999 data from the 2000 U.S. Census).

Our Residents

- ✓ The residents of the Spring Harbor neighborhood tend to be older than the residents of the City of Madison as a whole. The City median age in 2000 was almost 31, while the neighborhood average was nearly 39.
- ✓ Neighborhood residents have an exceptionally low rate of unemployment with 98.5% of residents either employed or not in the labor force. This leaves the neighborhood with an unemployment rate of only 1.5%, while the City of Madison has 3.5% unemployment rate.
- ✓ Of those residents that are employed, the majority of the residents work in education, health ,or social services sector. Nearly 40% of all residents are employed by one of the above three professions.
- ✓ The neighborhood household median income of \$48,000 is nearly \$7,000 more than the city's median of \$41,941. This follows the trend of median per capita income, which in the neighborhood is \$33,285, compared to the City's \$23,498.
- ✓ While the main source of income for the neighborhood is wages or salary, the neighborhood has a large number of residents living on retirement income. Over 20% of residents use this income as an income source. This is in comparison to only 12% of City residents using it as a source of income.
- ✓ The poverty rate in the neighborhood is less than half the City's poverty rate. Approximately 7.3% of the neighborhood residents live with an income below the poverty line. The City's poverty rate is 15%.

Big Picture Analysis

The big picture analysis provides a framework for understanding how the neighborhood fits into the larger Madison metropolitan area. Specifically, this analysis describes the neighborhood's:

- ✓ Location
- ✓ Assets
- ✓ Parks, recreation and natural resources
- ✓ Transportation system and connections
- ✓ Shopping and employment districts

The neighborhood's function and character is defined by its location and characteristics.

Spring Harbor's primary functions are to provide:

- ✓ Quality places for people to live near the lake and in close proximity to downtown, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and other employment and activity centers
- ✓ Access to Lake Mendota
- ✓ Gateway to Madison
- ✓ Mixed use centers – office, commercial, retail, service, residential – near the Whitney Way and Capital Avenue intersections
- ✓ Transportation connections, primarily via University Avenue and

Whitney Way, and possibly future rail

Significant neighborhood features include:

- ✓ Diverse residents
- ✓ Neighborhood and Community oriented businesses
- ✓ Lake Mendota
- ✓ University Avenue
- ✓ Densely wooded residential areas near the lake with narrow streets, and a mix of urban and suburban residential areas on the south side of University Avenue
- ✓ Tree-lined streets
- ✓ Convenient access to downtown, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- ✓ Spring Harbor Middle School
- ✓ Open spaces – parks, recreation, natural and cultural resources

This analysis is the first step in identifying and understanding neighborhood attributes, issues, and opportunities. It is a framework or "big picture" of the neighborhood that allows the neighborhood to see what areas might remain the same and possibly identify places for change. It is the beginning of the process to provide neighborhood and city leaders with information to make good decisions

about the future of the Spring Harbor Neighborhood.

The analysis is briefly described in the text below and in the graphics Spring Harbor Neighborhood Assets (Figure 1.5) and Big Picture Analysis (Figure 1.6).

Location

Spring Harbor is an established lakeside neighborhood on Madison's west side. It is bordered by the City of Middleton and Village of Shorewood Hills, as well as several other Madison neighborhoods. It serves as the City's northwest gateway.

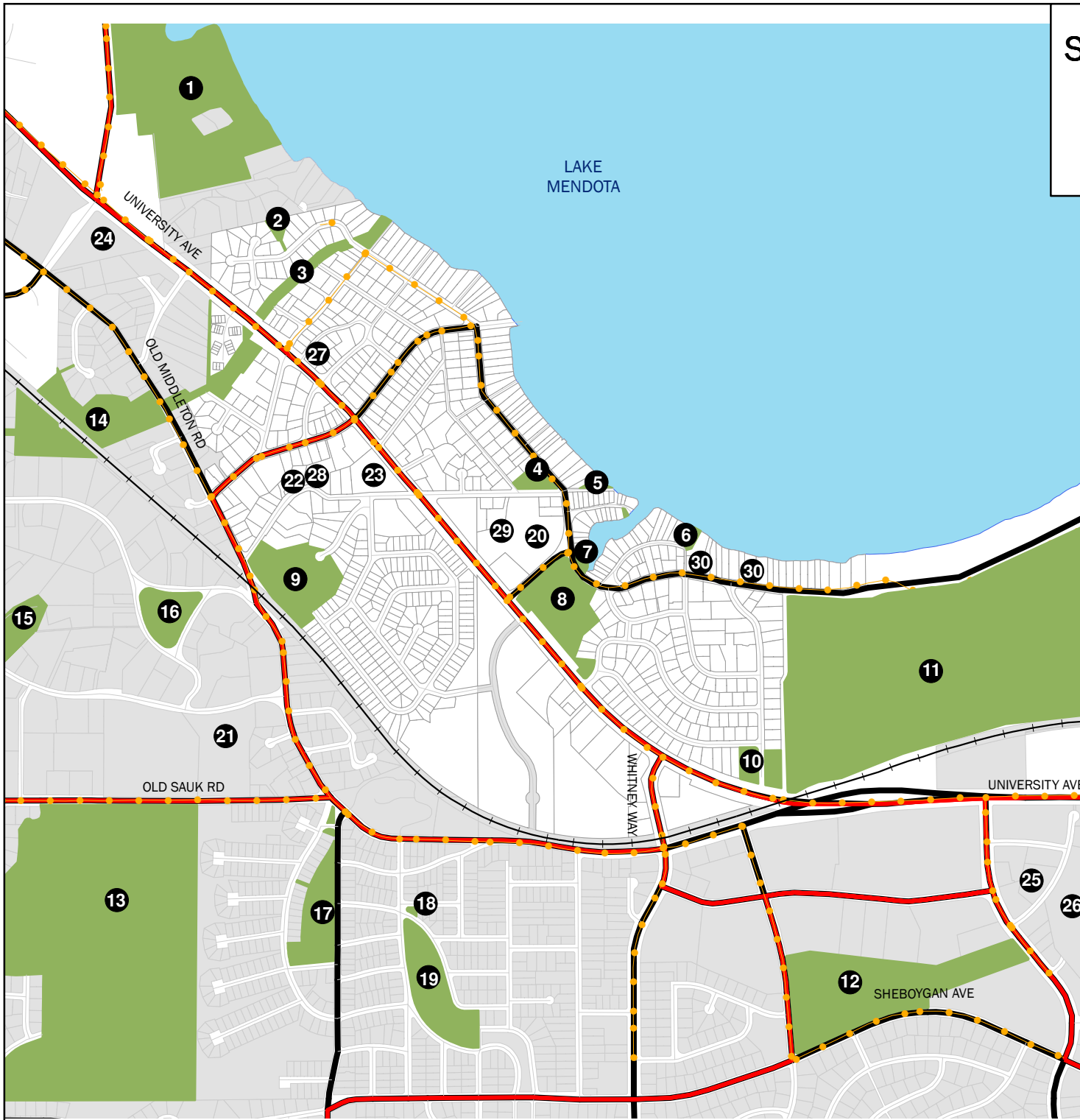
Assets

Map 1 illustrates the many existing assets within and nearby the neighborhood, including:

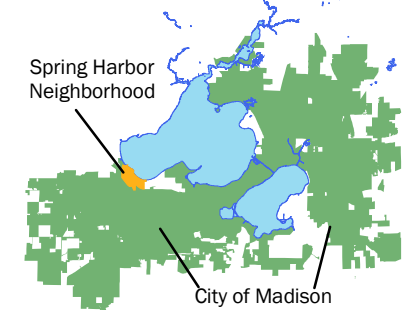
- ✓ Parks and Open Spaces
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Child Care
- ✓ Centers of Worship
- ✓ Transit Options
- ✓ Public Services
- ✓ Shopping Centers
- ✓ Historic/Cultural Locations

Spring Harbor Neighborhood Assets Map

Figure 1.5
May 2006



- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Parks and Open Spaces | Schools |
| 1 Marshall Park | 20 Spring Harbor Middle |
| 2 Camelot Open Space | 21 Crestwood Elementary |
| 3 Greenway | Child Care |
| 4 Parking for Spring Harbor & Beach | 22 Playful Kids Learning Center |
| 5 Spring Harbor Beach | Centers of Worship |
| 6 Merrill Springs Park | 23 Dale Heights Presbyterian Church |
| 7 Spring Harbor Boat Launch | 24 Asbury United Methodist Church |
| 8 Spring Harbor Park | Public Services |
| 9 Kettle Pond | 25 Westside Senior Center |
| 10 Indian Hills Park | Shopping Center |
| 11 Blackhawk County Club | 26 Hilldale Mall |
| 12 Rennebohm Park | Historic/Cultural |
| 13 Owen Conservation Park | 27 Hickory Hill House |
| 14 Skyview Park | 28 John R. Commons House |
| 15 Highlands West | 29 Spring Harbor Effigy Mound |
| 16 Highlands East | 30 Merrill Springs Effigy Mound |
| 17 Bordner Park | |
| 18 Hampton Court | |
| 19 Glen Oak Hills Park | |
| | Transit Alternatives |
| | Madison Metro (2, 8, 14, 15, 60, 61) |
| | Bike Path/Lane |



Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources

- ✓ The neighborhood is fortunate to have seven parks (see Page 27 for a complete listing) and three natural areas (Lake Mendota, Kettle Pond and Merrill Springs) located within its boundaries, for a total of more than 25 acres of dedicated park land. These open spaces offer a variety of activities for neighbors to utilize. Some highlights include a beach, an oak savanna, a conservation pond, and formal playground space. Within a one-mile radius surrounding the neighborhood there are an additional eight parks that are open for the public, and one private golf course.
- ✓ Residents can access Lake Mendota in nine separate places; seven lake court access points, Spring Harbor, and Spring Harbor Beach, along the entire northern border of the neighborhood. While most of these access points are street ends and therefore are narrow strips of land between private properties, they provide neighbors the opportunity to see and use the lake. The beach and the boat launch are active spaces that offer boating, fishing, and swimming opportunities. There is a part-time lifeguard on duty daily

throughout the summer at the beach.

- ✓ Marshall Park, located within a mile of the center of the Spring Harbor neighborhood, provides an additional beach and boat launch. Owen and Kettle Pond are two of the City's 14 conservation parks giving neighborhood residents access to native landscape and open spaces that replicate the area's historic landscape.

It is important to note that the combination of several public resources, mainly parks and lake access, create a civic campus for the neighborhood. The civic campus is a neighborhood focal point with public gathering spaces, including Spring Harbor Park, Middle School, Harbor, and Beach. The existence and enhancement of such a civic campus should be considered as the planning process continues.

Retail/Employment Opportunities

- ✓ The neighborhood is directly served by two (2) commercial districts centrally located along University Avenue. One commercial district is located around the University Avenue and Capital Avenue intersection. The neighborhood level commercial district currently offers a wide variety of goods and

services to the neighborhood, including Brennan's, a specialty food market, a car wash, auto clinic, and several restaurants. The commercial buildings in the district tend to be one story structures with parking lots set between the building and the street.

- ✓ The second commercial district is also home to a large employment center within its boundaries. It is at the intersection of Whitney Way and University Avenue, a gateway to the neighborhood; there are various businesses and state government agency offices. The properties in this district range in size from a veterinary clinic to the 4-story office building housing the State's Public Service Commission, University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority, and other institutional and commercial tenants.
- ✓ Spring Harbor neighborhood is located less than a mile from the Hilldale shopping center and other adjacent retail enterprises. This retail center, under redevelopment at the time of this planning process, is regional in scope offering significantly larger retail opportunities that would be hard to find in a neighborhood retail district. A large supermarket, department store, and movie

theater are examples of businesses currently located at Hilldale.

- ✓ The neighborhood also has access to the redevelopment of a former Kohl's grocery site at the intersection of Midvale Boulevard and University Avenue. This retail development now offers neighbors a pharmacy, a book store, and a full service grocery store. Spring Harbor residents can reach the development by the Blackhawk Bicycle Trail.

Transportation Connections

- ✓ Pedestrian access and connections vary throughout the neighborhood. The southern residential section of the neighborhood has sidewalks as do the retail and civic nodes of the neighborhood.
- ✓ The remainder, and majority, of the neighborhood tends to lack sidewalks, but provides narrow, arbor lined streets that act as traffic calming measures. The lack of sidewalks is an important feature to many residents in the neighborhood, who enjoy the rural, character that comes from not having sidewalks along their tree-lined streets.
- ✓ There are significant numbers of streets in the neighborhood that are designated bike routes. These routes effectively connect the neighborhood to other

neighborhoods, municipalities, and regional destinations, such as the UW campus. However, there are significant places in which connections are lacking and should be improved for better bicycle connectivity.

- ✓ The neighborhood only has two small areas of dedicated off street bike lanes located within the neighborhood. While they are strategically placed along sections of University Avenue, the neighborhood benefits from many arterial streets, and the Madison Comprehensive Plan calls for connections to be made on many of those highly traveled streets.
- ✓ There are two (2) primary bus routes, 8 and 60, that travel through the neighborhood and connect it to all of Madison and Shorewood Hills and several others that transverse through or near the neighborhood. Transit is highly used by neighborhood residents and provides a critical alternative to automotive travel. These connections are invaluable and truly tie the neighborhood to its surrounding context.
- ✓ The Madison Comprehensive Plan calls for light rail to be constructed along the southern border of the neighborhood. The proposed route follows the Wisconsin and Southern

Railroad tracks and University Avenue. This improvement would provide the neighborhood with access to most of Dane County without a car. The implementation of rail to this intersection would encourage the neighboring sites to be redeveloped in a transit oriented way. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) would provide for an increased density of residential, retail, and office uses surrounding the rail station.

- ✓ The neighborhood has University Avenue, one of the largest streets on the west side of Madison, traveling through it. This is both a benefit and a major concern for the neighborhood. The street provides convenient access to many places throughout the region. However, it divides rather than connects the neighborhood and is unattractive. Current traffic counts for the street number around 36,000 cars per day.
- ✓ In contrast to University Avenue, the majority of the neighborhood streets are quiet residential streets, many of which are cul de sacs, frequently ending at the lake shore. The two exceptions to this are Capital Avenue and Whitney Way, larger streets, which connect the neighborhood to other parts of the City.

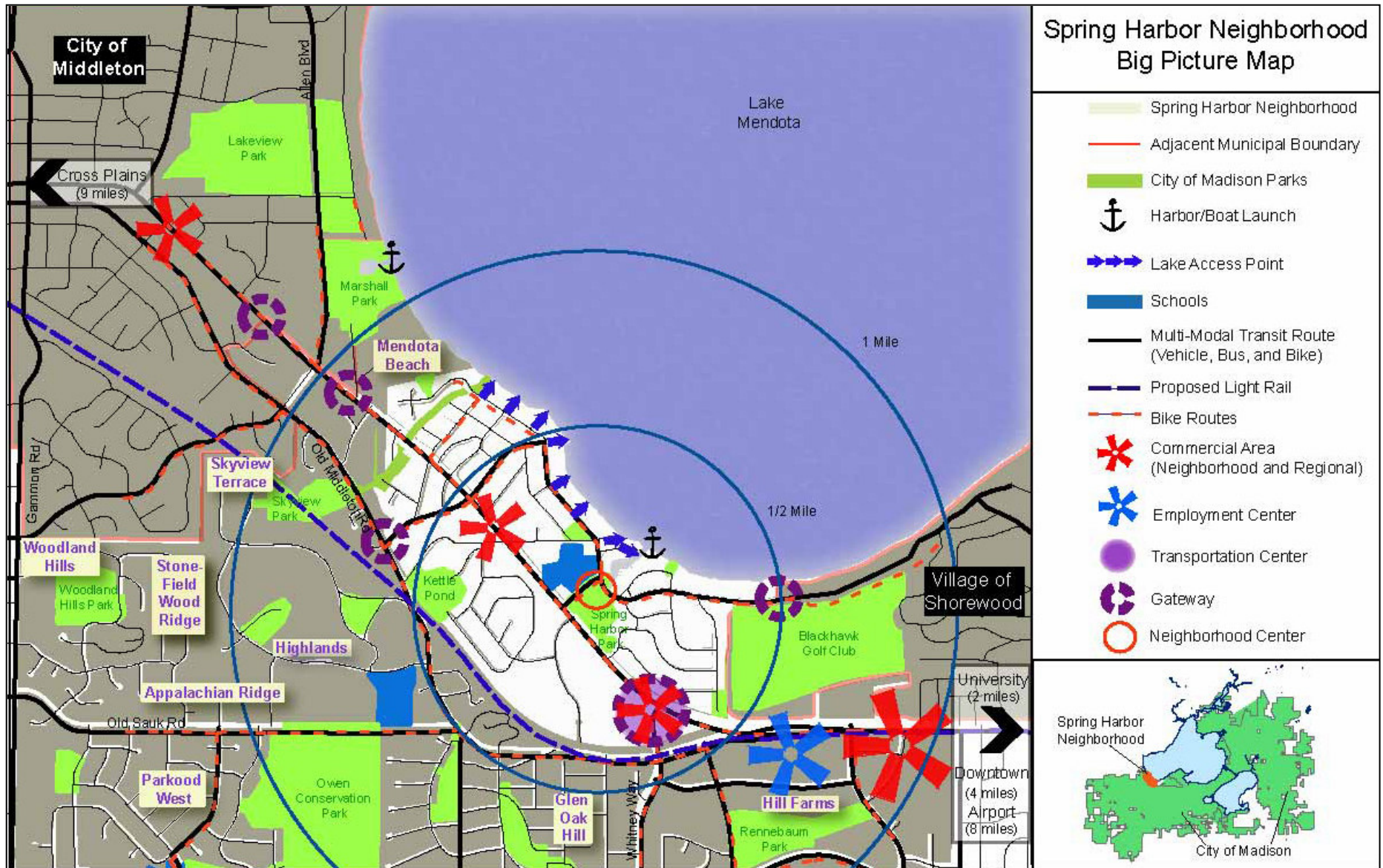


FIGURE 1.6 Big Picture Map