



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Assembly Memorandum

No. AM - 2025

Meeting Date: June 24, 2025

From: MAYOR

Subject: AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 8.45 [05] [AND SECTIONS 8.45.015 AND 15.20.020] TO PROHIBIT CAMPING ON PROTECTED [PUBLIC] PREMISES AND PROHIBIT CONSTRUCTION ON PUBLIC LAND BY PROVIDING CRIMINAL PENALTIES [AND ENFORCEMENT PROTOCOLS CONSISTENT WITH CITY OF GRANTS PASS V. JOHNSON AND OTHER LAW].

This ordinance provides a targeted legal mechanism that will allow the Municipality to rapidly intervene and help prevent the most unsafe and inappropriate camping on public land. This version takes a balanced, practical approach that minimizes legal risks to the Municipality and can be implemented effectively with the existing resources.

At the very beginning of my term as Mayor, I asked the Municipal Attorney and Anchorage Police Department Chief to identify any legal changes they needed to protect public safety. This ordinance aligns with other public safety improvements we've made, including recruitment efforts that produced the first full Police Academy in many years, fully staffing the Municipal Prosecutor's office, and recently passed legislation that imposed meaningful penalties for unsafe fires.

This ordinance adds criminal penalties for certain camping activity and locations, giving us the ability to more quickly and efficiently deploy the Police Department to address camping in unsafe and inappropriate areas. It supplements existing legal tools, including the civil abatement process, which will still apply Muni-wide, as well as trespass law for previously-abated areas and private property.

It is never appropriate for someone to set up a prohibited campsite near playgrounds, schools, childcare centers, neighborhood recreation centers, and other areas frequently occupied by children. It is also critical to keep streets and trails clear. Anchorage has recently seen record numbers of pedestrian deaths, emphasizing the importance of keeping a safe buffer zone on and around our roadways and other frequently traveled thoroughfares. This ordinance will help deter people from setting up camps in or near these safety zones, and it will allow for swifter intervention to prevent large encampments from taking root.

And it is never appropriate for individuals to claim an area of public land

1 indefinitely with the unauthorized construction of structures. No one has the right
2 to build semi-permanent and dangerous buildings on public land. This ordinance
3 makes clear that hard-sided, hard-walled, and hard-roofed structures will not be
4 tolerated on public property.

5
6 This provision will help prevent camps in the Municipality from becoming
7 entrenched. Entrenched camps, like the encampments at Davis Park and the
8 nearby snow dump, become dangerous, and they are significantly more
9 expensive to clear, requiring substantial cross-departmental coordination and
10 lengthy clean-ups. By preventing camps from becoming entrenched in priority
11 areas, this ordinance will help to reduce the costs of abatement.

12
13 This ordinance supports the administration's balanced approach toward
14 addressing homelessness: The Municipality is providing a safety net of shelter
15 and services, enhancing crisis care and outreach efforts, enforcing laws and
16 removing unsafe and unauthorized camps, and improving access to housing.

17
18 Public parks, trails, and spaces must be safe and accessible for all.
19 Encampments are not safe – not for the people living in them, and not for people
20 nearby. This ordinance, like the civil abatement process, is not a solution to
21 homelessness, but it is a necessary means to protect public safety.

22
23 A map is attached for informational purposes only. It has not been verified for
24 completeness or accuracy and has no legal effect.

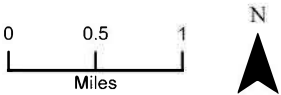
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26 **Summary of changes:** This substitute version (1) replaces the whereas clauses
27 of the original ordinance and (2) creates two different new misdemeanor offenses
28 (prohibited camping on protected premises and prohibited construction on public
29 property), instead of creating a single new misdemeanor offense in Title 8
30 (prohibited camping on public premises).

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32
33 **There are no anticipated economic effects and therefore pursuant to AMC**
34 **2.30.053B.1., no Summary of Economic Effects is attached to this**
35 **ordinance.**

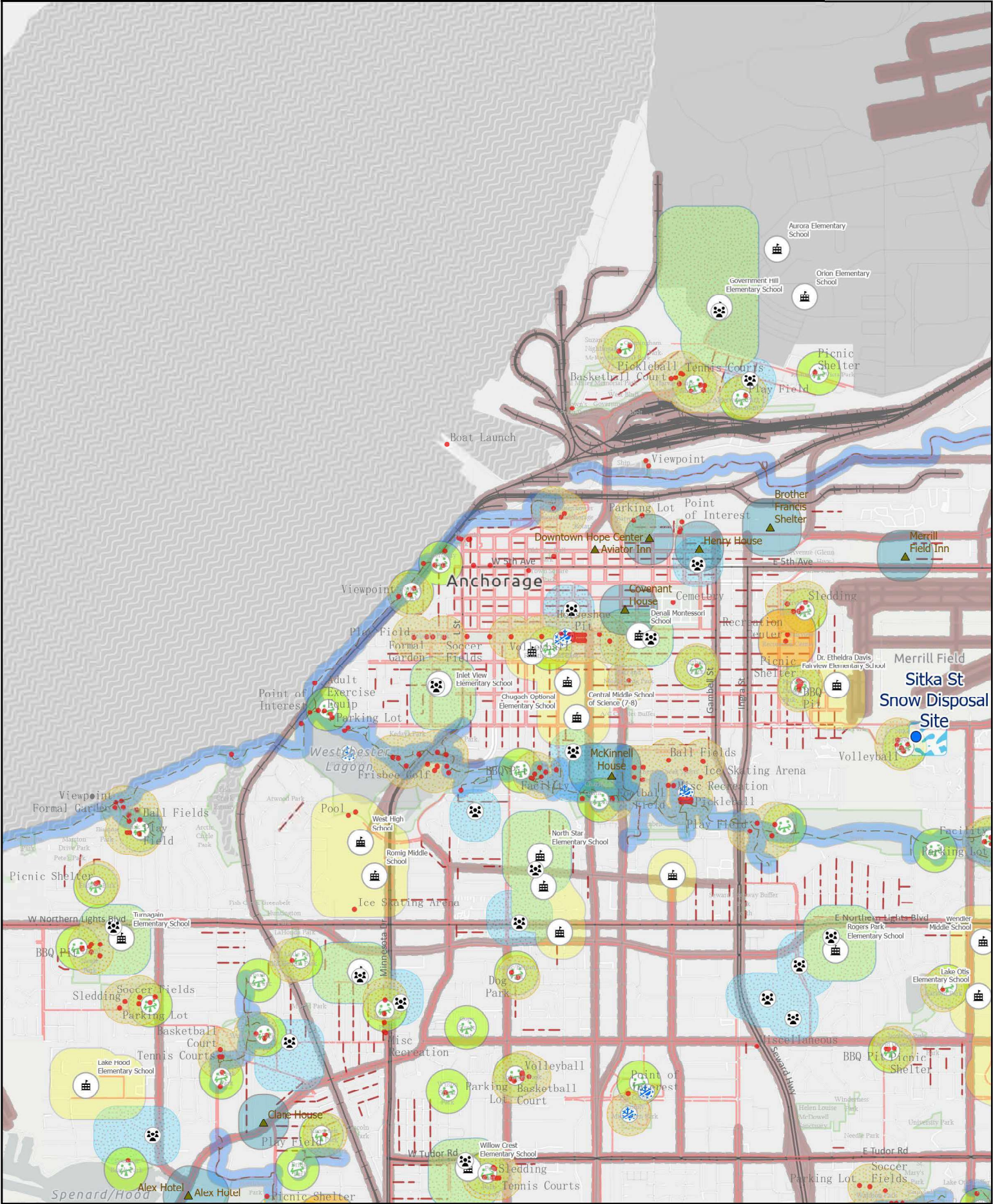
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37 Prepared by: Department of Law
38 Approved by: Eva R. Gardner, Municipal Attorney
39 Concur: Ona R. Brause, Director, Office of Management and
40 Budget
41 Concur: Sean Case, Chief, Anchorage Police Department
42 Concur: William D. Falsey, Chief Administrative Officer
43 Concur: Rebecca A. Windt Pearson, Municipal Manager
44 Concur: Dennis A. Wheeler, Municipal Prosecutor
45 Respectfully submitted: Suzanne LaFrance, Mayor

46
47 Attachment: Map

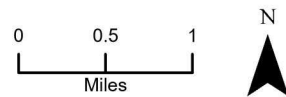
AO 2025-74(S-1)
Proposed Title 8 Restricted Camping Areas



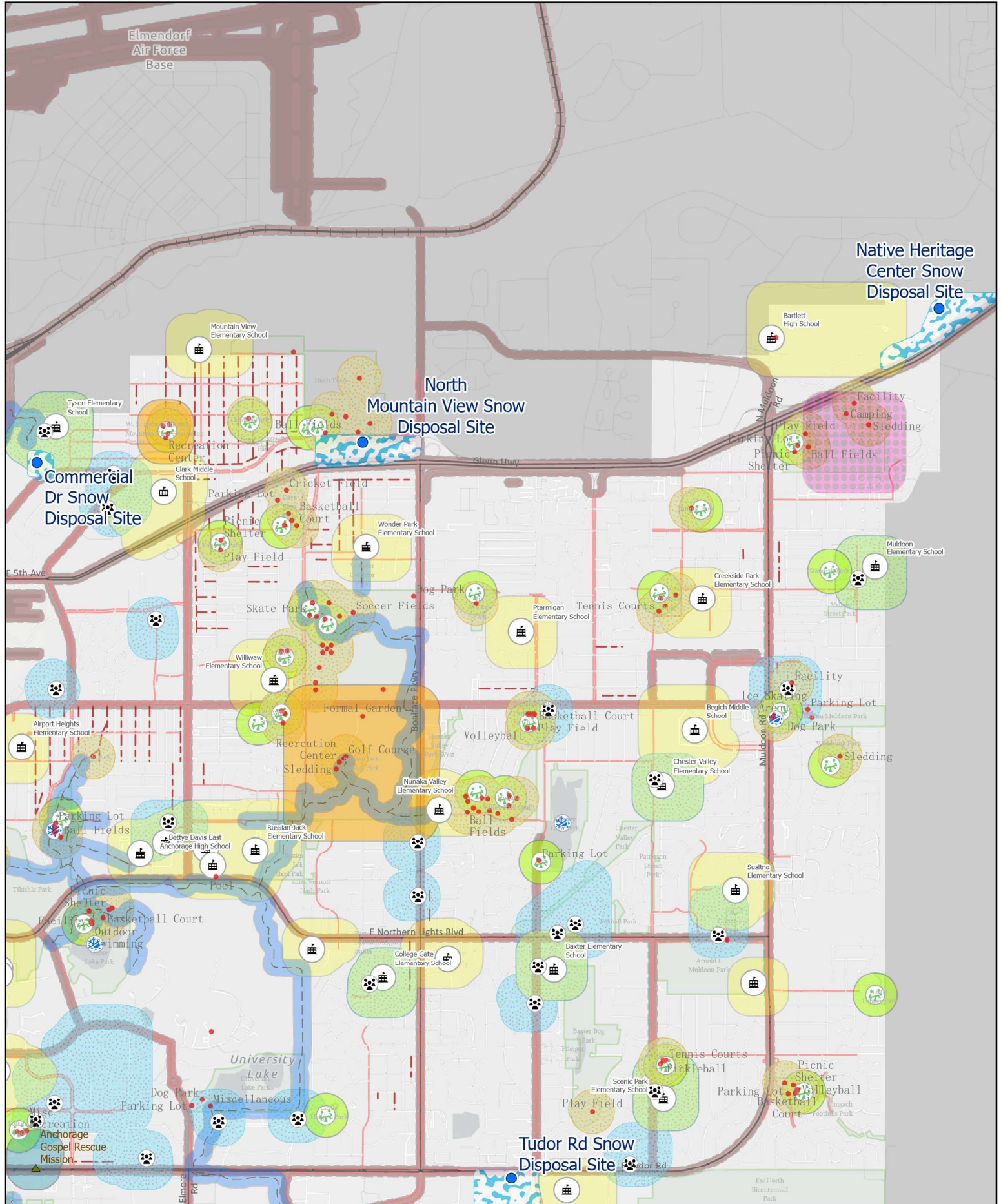
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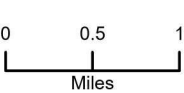
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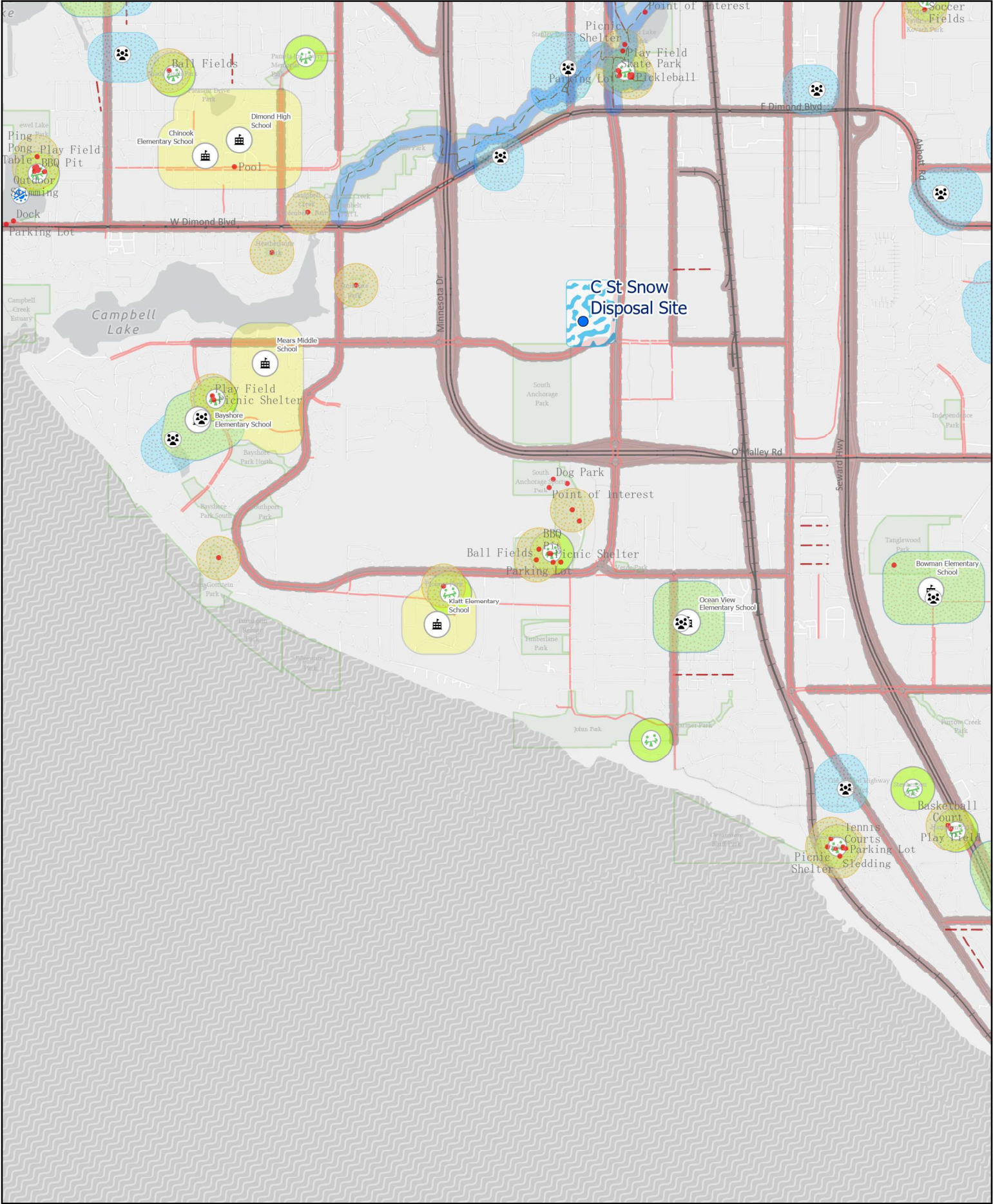
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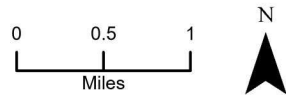
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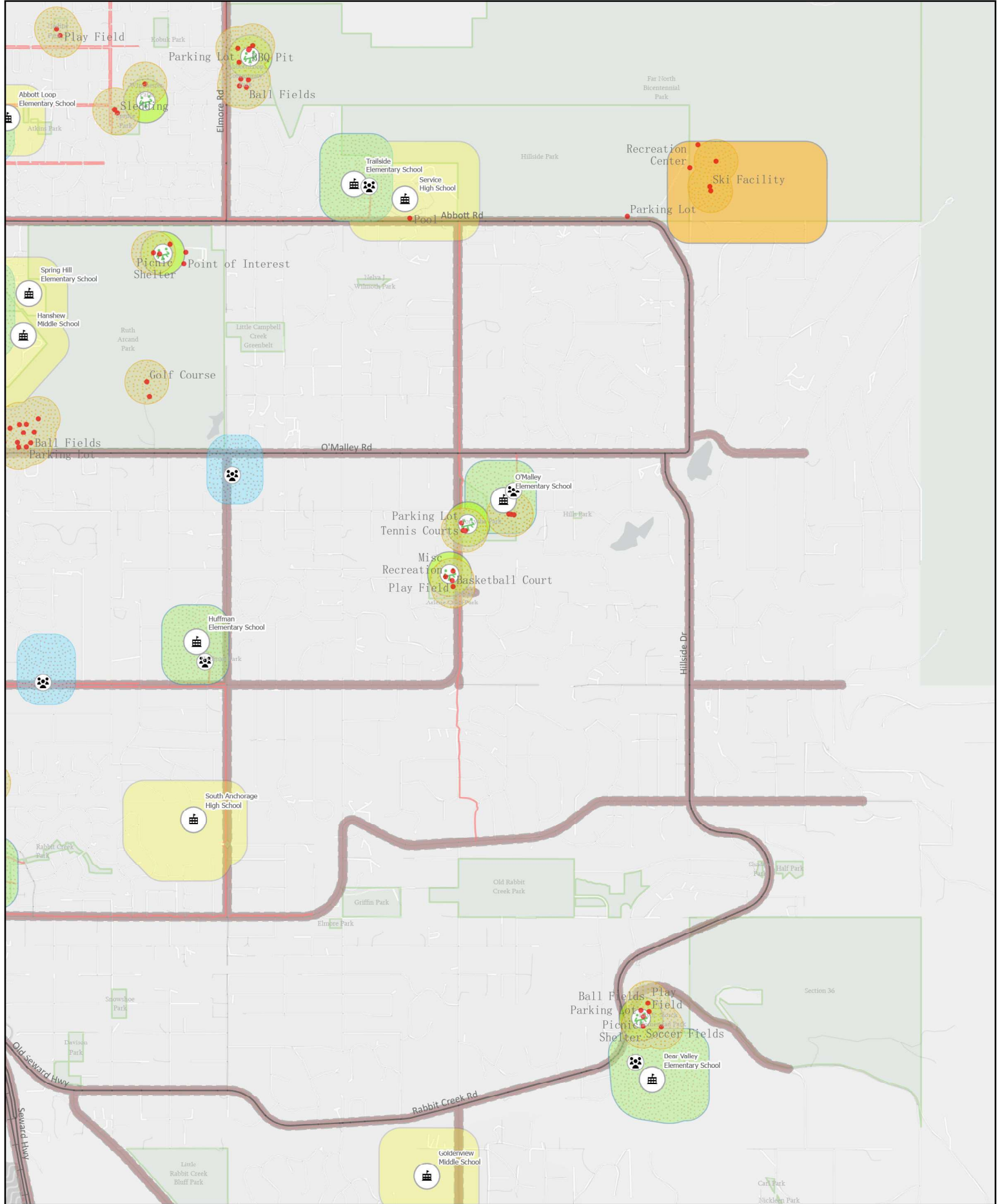
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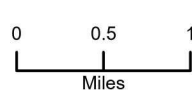
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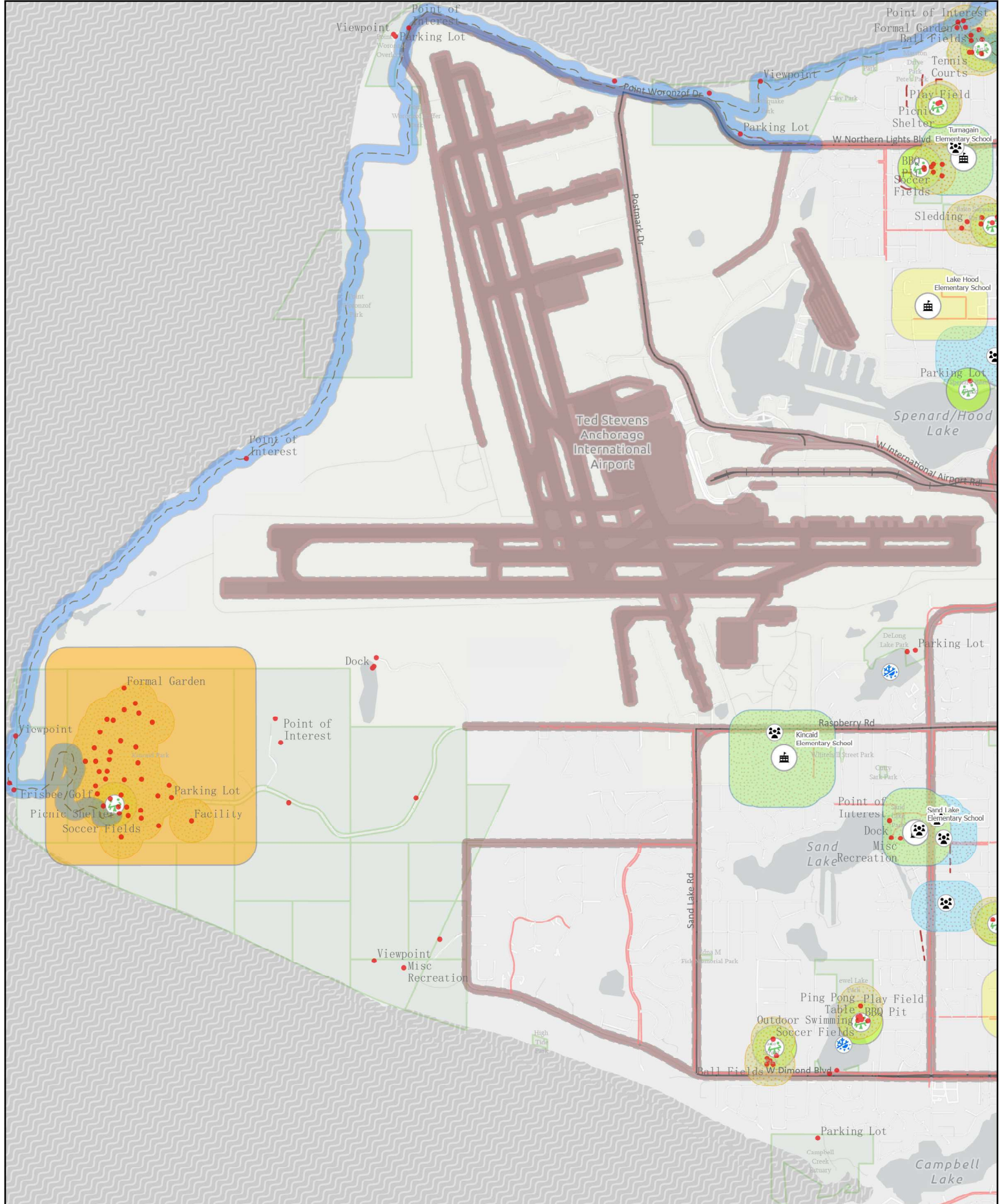
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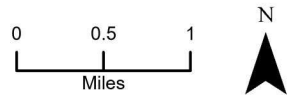
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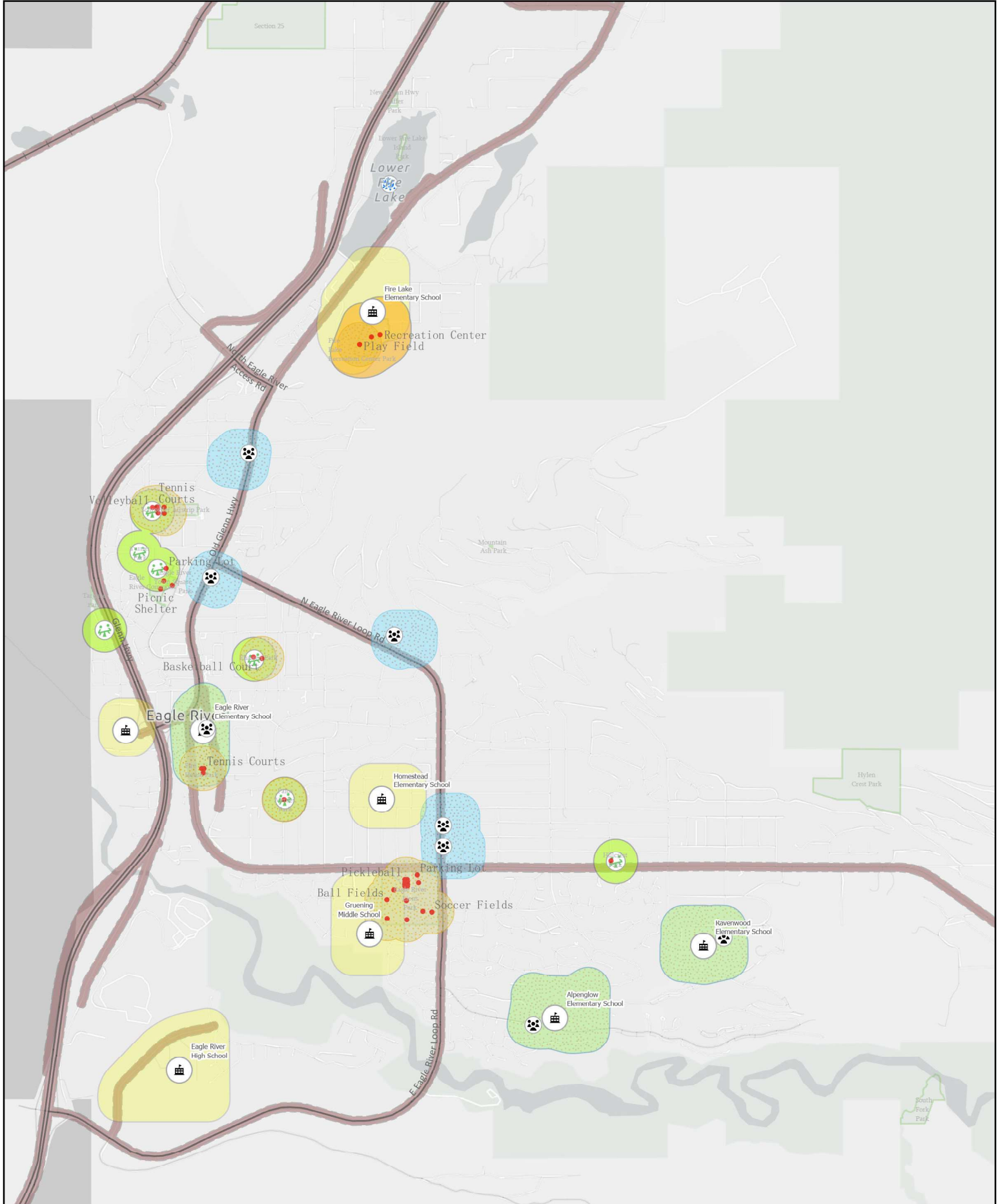
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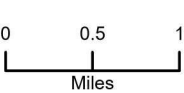
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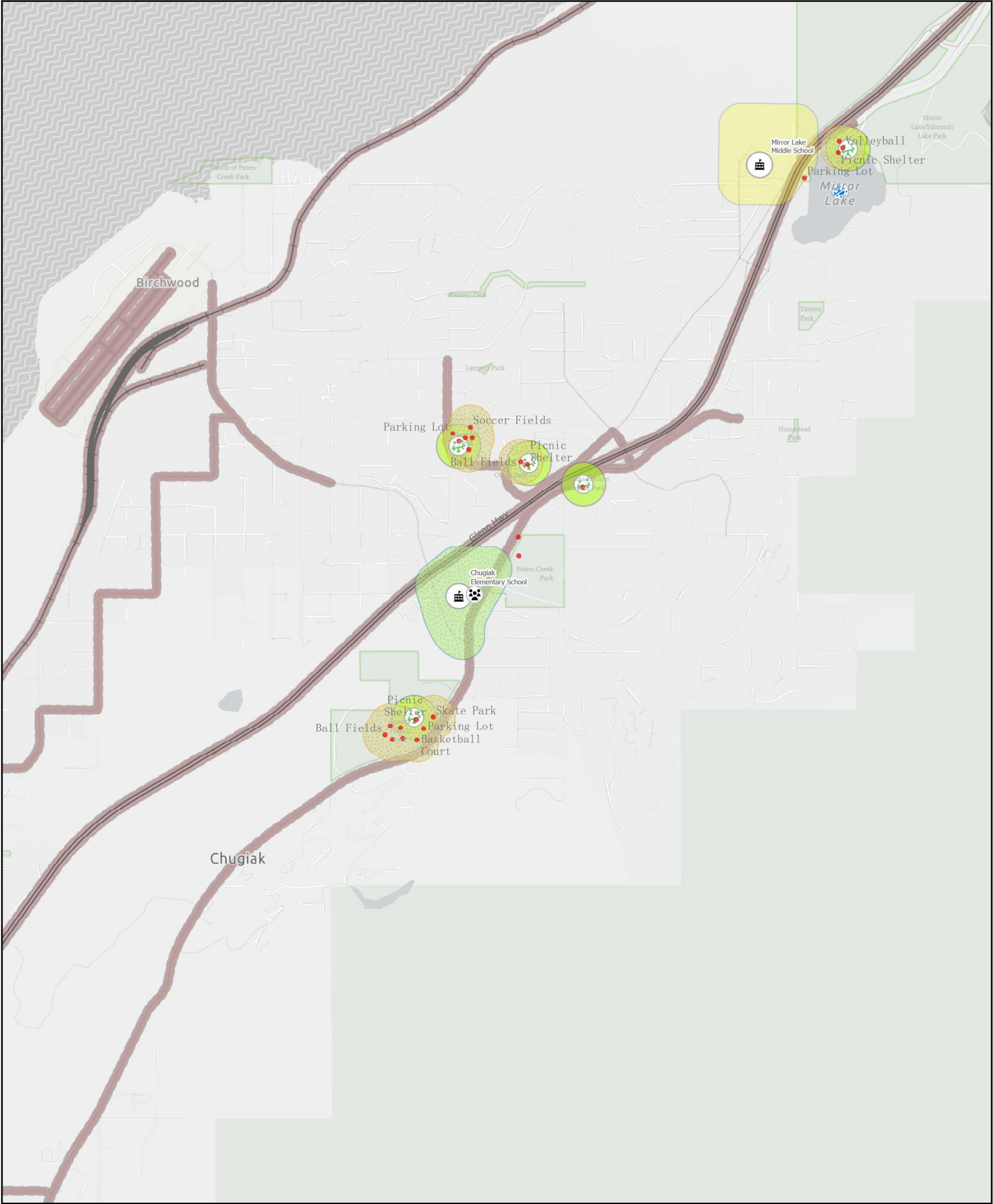
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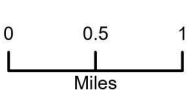
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