

CITY OF SUNSET HILLS DEPT. OF PARKS AND RECREATION

2025 COMPREHENSIVE PARKS MASTER PLAN

Sunset
Hills

PREPARED BY: COCHRAN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Board of Aldermen

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Ann McMunn – Ward 1

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Cathy Friedmann – Ward 3

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Sunset Hills Parks and Recreation Department (Department) provides a comprehensive approach in the delivery of parks, recreation facilities, and program services to the citizens of the City of Sunset Hills (City) that greatly contributes to the quality of life for residents of the city.

The Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan) is a practical framework for meeting the City's changing parks and recreational needs and interests. It identifies policies, actions, and partnerships for planning parks, recreational facilities, and programs that reflect the vision of a citywide network of parks and recreational experiences to engage, inspire, and connect everyone.

The Master Plan is the benchmark policy document for the City's Parks and Recreation service delivery. It is intended to provide a consistent continuum of ideas, beliefs, and values, which define the mission, and vision for the parks and recreation system. It is the blueprint for decision making, because it identifies services that could be provided and guides the City in allocating resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Master Plan strives to provide opportunities for everyone to recreate citywide within a parks and recreation system that is relevant, accessible, iconic, sustainable, and equitable.

- **Relevant** — Parks and recreational programs should meet changing needs and wants of residents.
- **Accessible** – Every resident should be able to get to a park space or recreation program safely, conveniently, and actively.
- **Iconic** – Parks should reflect the unique qualities of their settings and enhance the image of the city and neighborhoods.
- **Sustainable** – Park improvements, programs, and management strategies should contribute to community economic development, social well-being, and a healthy environment.
- **Equitable** – Park planning and investments should address equitable distribution and access of parks and programs throughout the City.

Relevant parks and recreational programs should meet the changing needs and priorities of residents, both now and in the future. The system should offer safe, convenient access to a park space or recreation program for every resident. Parks

should be iconic, reflecting the unique qualities of their settings and enhancing the image of the City and its diverse neighborhoods.

Park developments, improvements, programs, and management strategies should contribute to community economic development, social well-being, and a healthy environment.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS AND PLANS

The Master Plan is not a stand-alone document, but rather an effort to integrate park planning with many other citywide visions. The Master Plan must work in concert with both citywide and community-based efforts to achieve shared goals. The Master Plan does not supersede any of the guiding plans or documents, but rather is intended to complement them.

PLANNING PROCESS SUMMARY

The process for developing this Master Plan included the formation of an integrated project team that included the Cochran team and City staff. This project team provided detailed input consistent with the planning process, allowing for a collaborative approach. The development of this Master Plan involved five key tasks categories, that when combined together, helped to frame and guide the development of the Master Plan:

1. Data Review

The Cochran team reviewed existing studies, comprehensive plans, concept plans, site master plans, programs, maps, budgets, policies and procedures, and all other relevant data in its possession to gain an understanding of the parks and recreation system.

2. Community Profile & Public Engagement

The Cochran team utilized the public input process to solicit community input on how the City of Sunset Hills park and recreation system meets the needs of residents into the future. This task was an integral part of the planning process. A range of community/participation methods were utilized.

- **Demographic & Recreation Trends Analysis** — The Cochran team utilized the city's projections and supplemented them with census tract demographic data obtained from the United States Census Bureau. This analysis provided an understanding of the demographic environment.
- **Key Leadership/Focus Group Interviews** — The Cochran team performed a stakeholder meeting evaluate their vision for parks and recreation in the City of Sunset Hills. The Cochran team also conducted employee group interviews as identified by the City. During these interviews, the Cochran team gained an understanding of staff values, as well as determined the priority for recreation facilities and programming, parks, arts, trails and open space development needs of the Department.

- **Public Workshop** — A Public forum was held to present information related to the project and project goals, gain input for the community’s vision and core values for the Department’s parks and recreation system. This meeting offered the public an opportunity to participate in the planning process and to provide feedback. The purpose of the meeting was to ensure an opportunity for the general public to discuss their priorities and perceptions surrounding the parks and recreation system. The forum also afforded the opportunity to subtly educate the public on the opportunities, benefits, and constraints of the system.
- **Electronic Survey** — Also, the Cochran team with the assistance of the City, created an online survey administered through Google. The survey provided data and guidance, in addition to the employee interviews, stakeholder meetings, and public meeting, in regards to the recommendations for park amenities, specific programs, trail linkages, facility components, usage, and strategies.

3. Parks, Facilities and Program Analysis

- **Trails, Open Space, and Facilities Inventory and Assessment** — An audit analysis was conducted to consider the capacity of each amenity found within the system (e.g. community center, driving range, playgrounds, ball fields, pavilions, parking lots, restrooms, trails, etc.) as well as functionality, accessibility, condition, comfort, and convenience. Each amenity was evaluated regarding its service from both resident and visitor perspective.
- **Maintenance Assessment** — Staff input was used along with the results from the Community/Public Engagement Process, as well as the Cochran team’s observations from the audit analysis to perform a review of current maintenance practices, and compare those with current trends and industry standards to develop a Maintenance Management Plan.
- **Geographical Analysis Through Mapping** —The Cochran team performed geographical mapping to identify service area analysis for park service areas. A service area is defined as a circular area around a park whose radius encompasses a ten-minute walk and/or a distance of one-half mile from a park.
- **Recreation Program Assessment** — The use staff input along with the results from the Public Engagement Process, as well as the Cochran team’s observations to perform a review of current program offerings, and compare those with current trends and industry standards. The assessment reviewed how well the Department aligns itself with community needs. The goal of this process was to provide recreation program enhancements that result in successful and innovative recreation program offerings.

4. Operational, Financial and Funding Analysis

- **Organizational Review** — The Cochran team performed a review of the current practices of the Department to evaluate its operational situation. This review identified future organizational and staffing needs of the Department, improved operational efficiencies, policy development, process improvements, and

marketing/communication opportunities.

- **Financial Analysis** — The Cochran team performed an analysis to document the financial situation of the Department. The financial analysis looked at the budget, pricing policy, user fees, current and other revenue generating opportunities, grant opportunities, and the revenue forecast.
- **Capital Improvements** — One of the purposes of conducting a Master Plan is to identify needed capital improvements/projects that could be funded over the next twenty years. These items come from a synthesis of all of the information and analysis that is collected through the audit analysis.
- **Funding and Revenue Strategies** — Funding strategies were developed based in part to the review and analysis process, as well as the experience brought by the Cochran team. The Cochran team has identified numerous funding options that can be applied to the Parks Master Plan based on the community values.

5. Master Plan Document Development

The Parks Master Plan was framed and prepared through a series of meetings with Department staff. The overall vision and mission statements were affirmed or modified, and direction for the Department was established. Specific tasks included:

- **Draft Report Preparation and Briefings** — The Cochran team prepared a “Draft” Master Plan with strategies taking into account all analyses performed and considered the fiscal and operational impacts to the Department. The recommendations and prioritization of needs were reviewed and discussed with the Department.
- **Master Plan Presentations, Preparation, and Production** — Upon comment by all vested Department staff the Cochran Team revised the “Draft” Master Plan to reflect all input received. Once the “Draft” Master Plan was approved by the Department, the Cochran Team prepared a final summary report and presented to the elected officials for final approval and adoption.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

A Community Engagement assessment was conducted to solicit feedback from employees, stakeholders and the general public to learn as much as possible about local concerns facing the community and its parks and recreation system. The following general assessments were concluded:

- **Accessibility** – 62% of respondents say enough parks/trails are within a 10-minute walking distance.
- **Park Usage** – 91% of respondents have visited a park in the last year.
- **Program Participation** – Over 58% of respondents stated that they had participated in a City program within the last year.

- Popular Facilities – The two most visited facilities according to the respondents were the Community Center and Aquatic Facility.
- Park Maintenance – 54% of respondents stated that maintenance was good, while 39% stated that maintenance was excellent.
- Facility Needs – Over 70% of the respondents stated that new multi-use trails were needed.
- Future Priorities – Over 46% of respondents stated that Maintenance/Upkeep of the existing parks was the highest priority.
- Funding Support – 66% of respondents stated that they were either very supportive or somewhat supportive using tax dollars and/or user fees to fund park and recreation improvements.
- Sales Tax Continuity – Approximately 68% of respondents state that they were supportive of continuing the Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax.

INVENTORY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

A thorough assessment of parks, trails, and facilities was completed. Based on visits to each park and/or facility, the following general assessments were concluded:

- An Aging system with differed maintenance issues and concerns.
- Large and well distributed parks.
- Trail system is great but could provide additional key connections and improvements.
- Good mix of active and passive components.
- Great potential for improving existing parks and to increase public access at lesser developed parks.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

A Capital Improvement assessment of parks, trails, facilities and equipment/vehicles was completed. Based on visits to each park and/or facility and community engagement the following general assessments and rough order of magnitude cost were concluded:

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Watson Trail Park	\$40,208,510
Minnie Ha Ha Park	\$2,432,775
Lynstone Park	\$1,694,920
Stieren Park	\$4,405,400
Nancy Eschbach Park	\$5,000
Bander Park	\$3,691,485
Kitun Park	\$854,920
Rock Alva Park	\$468,500
I-44 Bridge/Trailhead Park	\$190,000
Claire Gempp Davidson Park	\$32,500
Equipment and Vehicles	\$3,766,000
TOTAL	\$57,750,010

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Key Recommendations are developed from the Planning Phase, Existing Programs and Facilities Analysis, Needs Analysis, Goals and Objectives, and Physical Planning & Recommendations.

The following illustrates the specific recommendations related to each of the visions. The Cochran team developed these recommendations as specific implementation measures that will help the City and the Department realize the new vision for the Department. The Department should evaluate progress on this list of recommendations on an annual basis; adding, deleting, and adjusting recommendations as appropriate to respond to changing priorities and conditions.

This is a dynamic list of recommendations, which the Department should examine and re-evaluate annually or at least every five years. In doing so, however, the Department should retain the vision statement and the recommendations as the constant goal and framework toward which all actions contribute.

Policies and Procedures – Develop sufficient Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies to efficiently and effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in a satisfactory manner (See CAPRA Standards)

- This may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - Revenue and Pricing Policy
 - Updated Park Rules and Regulations Ordinance/Policies
 - Private, Corporate, and non-Profit Support Policy
 - Inventory and Fixed Assets Control Policy

- Consultants and Contract Employees Policy
- Donations for Park Improvements Policy
- Donations Policy
- Acceptance of Public Art Policy
- Park/Facility Naming Policy
- Park Facility Dedication and Memorial Policy
- Landscape Development Policy
- Sustainable Building Policy

Community Engagement – Incorporate a community input process to gauge the residents and user’s needs.

- Meet with public and private organizations to hold discussions on partnership opportunities.
- Coordinate efforts with the School District and community-based athletic organizations to further identify needs and wants for park facilities.
- Coordinate with public and private organizations and individuals to further identify their needs and wants for the parks system.

Benchmarking – Continue to provide facilities and programs that best serve the community’s needs while reflecting current standards and trends within the City’s park system.

- City should look at the NRPA Development Goals and Metrics and see what categories in which they are deficient, and determine what areas if any they would like to pursue.
- City should review the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to determine what areas they would need to work towards.
- The Department should work towards achieving standards called out for in the CAPRA Accreditation.
- The Department should work towards achieving standards called out for in the ACSP to become compliant with the EPA - ISO14001 standards.
- The Department should work towards achieving the 10-Minute Walk criteria when planning and designing parks.
- The Department should work towards achieving the 8-80 criteria when planning and designing parks.
- The Department should follow and keep up to date on industry standards and trends.

Inventory – Achieve the appropriate level of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces that best serve the community’s needs

- Department needs to develop a plan to replace and purchase ADA compliant picnic tables and trash cans.
- Further explore the possible development of trails within the community.
- Continue efforts to link parks with the community through enhanced biking and pedestrian access.
- Evaluate lighting throughout the City park system to ensure that it is adequate for park safety issues.
- City needs to consider the effects of serving individuals outside of the city limits (service area) has on the parks and recreation system. This must be considered when evaluating participation levels, athletic field needs, and user fees policies etc.
- Consider the expansion of the trail systems.

Distribution and Design – Develop and design parks, facilities and trails throughout the city in the most efficient and effective manner to meet the needs of the community.

- Develop a “Facility and Land Use Management Plan” which shall be designed to aid in the development of park lands and facilities.
- Acquire land either by purchase, lease or by easement for the purpose of extending the trail system.
- Engage the school district to establish a plan for surplus school site reuse and to consider reciprocal opportunities to provide parks and other community facilities.
- Accept park land dedications/fees from developers.
- Investigate the establishment of a set-aside program for open space through the City’s subdivision process.
- Work cooperatively with the development community to attempt to create public open space as part of their projects.
- Identify and inventory special open space resources.
- The City may not have a need for more parks based on acreage alone, but additional parks would create a more equitable distribution of park land.

- While geographical distribution of parks, facilities, and trails is important, the City's goal should be to ensure that the overall parks and recreation system offers a wide variety of passive and active parks and recreation opportunities throughout the City.
- To the greatest extent possible, decisions to develop new parks or redevelop aging parks must consider providing for multiple uses by multiple user groups. This approach maximizes the benefits available to users of a particular park.

Facilities – Maximize the utility of existing park properties and facilities that best serve the community's needs.

- Protect and invest in the parks and recreation system's infrastructure including all turf, landscaping, buildings, parking lots and other physical elements/improvements.
- Ensure the development of recreation facilities keeps pace with needs of the community but does not outpace the financial or organizational resources of the Department.
- Optimize the operation of facilities in system to meet the needs of the community.
- Improve key facilities and elements to address deficiencies and/or meet changing needs of the community.
- Provide a balance of active and passive recreation uses.
- Develop a plan to address the City's aging facilities.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program. Specifically, the Department should work towards the development of additional maintenance facilities to accommodate vehicle and equipment storage indoors so that they are in a controlled environment and free of contaminant runoff.

Maintenance – Maintain and operate safe, quality parks providing a level of care that best serve the community's needs.

- Maintaining and operating safe, quality parks and recreation facilities for everyone requires ongoing investment over time. Operation and maintenance funding and investment needs to increase as the park system expands and ages.
- The number of maintenance personnel and fiscal resources need to be increased to adequately maintain the parks and recreation system. This can be accomplished either by adding more City personnel or by contracting out maintenance functions such as

mowing/trimming, and swimming pool operations as other municipalities have begun doing. Fiscal resources can be increased through rental/user fees and lease agreements etc.; as well as the possibility of using a portion of the park's sales tax funds.

- Create low mow or no mow areas in out of play and buffer areas. This could be accomplished by converting turf grass areas with native plantings.
- City should consider contracting out the mowing of outlying parks and row's (Lynstone, I-44 Bridge, Kitun, Claire Gempp Davidson, Nancy Eschbach) this would allow City staff to focus and maintain the higher use and contiguous parks.
- Active use surfaces such as the Tennis and Pickleball Courts, Playground areas and Trails need to be maintained on a regular basis. A schedule should be developed based on life expectancy of each type of surface.
- Address erosion areas as soon as possible to prevent future failures and potential liability issues. This can be accomplished be either placing rock and/or vegetative blankets in these areas or by developing rain gardens and/or bio-swales etc.
- Provide additional opportunities for the training of staff. There are several low-cost options such as Missouri Park and Recreation Association seminars and conferences; Sports Field Managers Association seminars; and seminars/training provided through Missouri LTAP.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program. Specifically, the Department should work towards the development of additional maintenance facilities to accommodate vehicle and equipment storage indoors so that they are in a controlled environment and free of contaminant runoff.
- Implementation of future projects will have immediate and long-term impacts on staffing levels and maintenance costs. To ensure that these are properly accounted for, all future funding mechanisms shall include a determined percentage/amount dedicated to cover the maintenance costs of parks, trails and facilities.
- Promote financial sustainability by calculating and tracking the true cost of maintenance operations.
- Develop an asset management plan with a lifecycle replacement schedule to govern capital investment in existing facility infrastructure.

ADA - Establish parks and programming standards based on access, optimal level of service and a positive and inviting image.

- The Department should begin internal coordination to address programmatic barriers that may be identified in a Transition Plan.
- The Department should develop a budget to include in the next twenty fiscal years. Projects identified in an ADA Transition Plan should be programmed based on prioritization and other factors determined by the Department, such as how low barrier removal can be incorporated into existing projects or into future capital improvement projects.
- The Transition Plan should address specific needs regarding compliance with the ADA. It should include a specific action plan, identifying actions to be taken during the next ten years. In order to remain valid and current from one year to the next, the Plan shall be reviewed annually by the ADA Coordinator. The annual review will provide an opportunity to make minor adjustments as needed to reflect changes in construction costs, accessibility guidelines, the department's financial situation, and other factors. It is not the intent of this plan that the annual updates need to be comprehensive, nor that they will reflect significant shifts in priorities, or be formally adopted as amendments to the Transition plan. Changes arising from the annual review of the Transition Plan should be documented in each year's update and adoption of the department's CIP and fiscal year capital improvements budget.
- A more comprehensive update of the Transition Plan should be conducted approximately every five years. The five-year updates should include opportunity for public review and comment, and should be reviewed and adopted.
- Implement modifications according to the phased approach proposed in the Transition Plan to accommodate all users.
- Develop maintenance staff training and checklists to improve accessibility during routine maintenance. Items such as accessible routes, gaps, changes in level, door closing force and common obstructions can be part of ongoing routine maintenance work.
- Create an inter-departmental staff team, with representatives from each division to regularly meet and coordinate on ADA and accessibility issues.
- Update website with more details regarding ADA access at each park. This would include parking and restroom accessibility along with what is accessible and lengths of accessible trails, so park patrons can make informed decisions before traveling to the park.
- Continue to improve accessibility at special events by creating maps with ADA features (parking, accessible routes) and ensuring access to various programs that occur during the event.
- Work towards creating one overall transition plan for the City with Public Right of Way (PROW), parks and trails and City facilities prioritized in an overall list.
- Ensure all contracts have language regarding modifications that contractor will make

or provide equal access to services, programs and activities.

- Improve wayfinding signage so people with disabilities can more easily and conveniently navigate the park system.

Programming – Implement recreation programs that are economical and market-driven, focusing on youth, teens, seniors, wellness and environmental programs.

- Develop a Recreation Programming Plan. One of the missions of the Department should be to establish and maintain public policies that address recreation programming. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the recreation programming needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Recreation Programming Plan” to provide overall direction to the City in the planning of recreation programs. This plan should strive to provide City sponsored recreation programs and special events, as long as they do not compete or duplicate other organizations efforts within the City.
- The plan shall serve as a guide in managing the development, operations and evaluation of core areas, core programs and core components. Needs of the community should be determined through yearly program reviews, extensive analysis of current offerings, service area demographics, program cost analysis, and local and national trends.
- The Department needs to develop a program proposal method. A program proposal form needs to be developed for each new program that the Department looks to implement. That proposal needs to identify the following: full-time costs, part-time costs, contractual fee, facility time, consumables, etc. This provides the financial reality of offering the programs. Equally important, there needs to be a fee identified for the program, that falls within the Department’s Revenue and Pricing Policy.
- The program proposal needs to provide a timeline for implementation, how frequently the program is to be offered, and when it is expected to achieve the stated financial goal. This timeline helps “justify” the elimination of programs if they are not meeting the intended financial goal.
- Develop a Program Financial Sustainability Plan. Once developed, the Recreation Programming Plan will lay the groundwork for achieving a balanced approach to providing programs and facilities. It shall include strategies that will help the Department make decisions and develop a diverse portfolio of recreation programs and service offerings. Employing the funding strategies listed below will help the Department fill the gaps and make changes in programs, services, and facilities that add to achieving a sustainable Department.
 - Continue work to define service costs and set fees that cover expenses.
 - Determine which recreation services should be provided by the City and which should be provided by others.

- Determine how best to provide services with available resources, including partnerships and/or contracting services.
- Allocate resources (funding and staffing) appropriately within program areas.
- Develop a Communications and Marketing Plan. One of the missions of the Department should be to establish and maintain public policies that address communications and marketing of the Parks and Recreation Department. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the parks and recreation needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Communications and Marketing Plan” to provide overall direction to the City in the marketing and communications of recreation programs, facilities, and operations.
- Develop an inventory of recreational programs offered throughout the Sunset Hills community by both public and private providers.
- Prepare and distribute a recreation program survey to determine citizen interests.
- Cooperate with the School District and parochial schools to expand joint partnerships for recreation programs/activities.
- Increase programming, facilities, and amenities to mitigate the negative impact of poverty on park use in lower income neighborhoods.
- Recognize and use existing community resources to address shortages in programs and services whenever possible.
- Develop after-school and summer activities, skill-building programs, organized sports, unstructured play, and nature-based learning for children.
- Increase access to parks, recreation programming, and wellness and life skills activities.
- Provide support to community, citywide, and regional special events that enhance the City of Sunset Hills experience and promote community engagement.
- Utilize alternate service delivery options via partnerships with community-based organizations, volunteers, employment programs, and by outsourcing to enhance service levels.
- Regularly assess recreation program delivery systems and recreational facilities to ensure they reflect current interest, are easily accessible and safe, and are used to the greatest extent possible.
- Facilitate environmental outdoor education programs geared towards youth.
- Respond to the needs of the growing older adult population.
- The Department should focus on maximizing use of its facilities.

Partnership - Embrace a partnership philosophy to leverage facilities and services with other providers before developing new programs or facilities.

- The City should work with the school district to develop joint use facilities that would allow for the shared use of multi-purpose courts, sports fields, children's play areas, and pavilions etc. during non-school hours.
- The City and the school district should develop a reciprocal use agreement in which both the City and school district could use each other's facilities for recreational and sports programming use. The joint use facilities could be part of this reciprocal agreement.
- The City should enquire about developing a partnership with the Open Space Council of St. Louis for watershed planning.
- Look to partnerships with other public, private, non-profit, and volunteer interests to co-sponsor youth and adult programs and activities.
- Look to partnerships with other public, private, non-profit, and volunteer interests to acquire land and build parks. Efficient, flexible, multipurpose spaces meet more needs, while using fewer resources to operate and maintain.

Staffing - Recruit, hire, train, develop, recognize, competitively compensate, and retain a diverse and high-quality workforce.

- Look into the continuation of contracting out (outsourcing) select services (Mowing, Forestry, Turf Maintenance) this could help offset the shortfall of City staffing and could free up existing staff to work and focus on other areas of the operation.
- Look into hiring and/or training an individual who has specialized knowledge, training, background, and expertise for specialized maintenance responsibilities (such as horticulture, conservation, forestry, and turf grass management).
- Give staff the tools, training and support to leverage technology in serving the public.
- Developing a mentoring program within the Department that allows individuals to learn about one another's job and job responsibilities would be valuable in two significant ways. One, it would help to preserve and expand the institutional knowledge of the department. Two, it would greatly assist in each employee understanding the challenges of various positions in the Department.

Capital Improvements - Implement a Capital Improvements Plan to construct new facilities and rehabilitate existing parks.

- Several tools and factors should go into the process of determining capital improvements. As such, the City should develop and implement “Evaluation Filters” to assess and rank capital improvement priorities for the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Categorize capital improvement priorities into either Short Range, Mid-Range, or Long Range.
- A phased approach of implementation should be based upon the priorities that the City and the public have identified using the evaluation filter and through the funding process.
- Using the public input, a comprehensive facilities inventory, and other data analyses, a sophisticated fiscal model in the form of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be developed.

Funding – Incorporate financial management principles to all operations and all available funding sources to provide support to the park system.

- The financial planning for the Department should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the City and support the initiatives and strategies. Likewise, the Department’s goals and objectives which affect the revenue funding sources and will be consistent with revenue availability and financial projections. A specific Revenue Fund (i.e. Parks and Recreation/Stormwater Sales Tax) has been established and should be continued to be used to support specific parks and recreation capital, operational and maintenance costs.
- The Department should use a minimum of a five-year Financial Management Plan for establishing and implementing revenue funding sources without-year projections up to ten years. The Department’s Financial Plan should be updated at least annually, and should be used as the basis for the development of budgets and revenue/fee schedules.
- The Department’s budget should be developed as a program-based budget, ensuring the highest possible accuracy of revenue projections and the review and evaluation of budget expenditure requirements. Annual budget plan submittals should meet all the City of Sunset Hills budget requirements. All efforts should be to optimize productivity for improved service delivery at the lowest possible cost levels to the budget.
- A cost recovery ratio for the budget-planning year should be developed and integrated into the financial management plan for all programs and revenue producing facilities.

- All revenue producing facilities should develop an annual business plan and should establish direct and indirect costs associated with the services provided.
- New Parks and/or Recreation Facilities that may be coming on line should include a feasibility study prior to construction beginning to determine the cost to operate/maintain and revenues that can be gained from programs provided to determine the cost recovery level needed to support financial sustainability.
- These Financial Management Principles should be reviewed by the Director of Parks and Recreation annually to help the Department achieve financial sustainability.
- Seek enhancement to existing policies to support the recreation program and facility cost recovery goals. This would include an updated pricing policy, partnership policy, earned income policy, volunteer policy, and sponsorship policy.
- Continue efforts to work with civic organizations to develop funding options and work programs to help maintain and support the system through adopt a park type of programs and capital improvements in parks.
- Eliminate any service, amenity or park that is not achieving the outcomes desired.
- Develop a sponsorship program in parks to sponsor parks, fields, playgrounds, trails, art, recreation facilities and events.
- Look into the possibility of partnering with school district and other local and regional agencies to maximize opportunities and to leverage funding.
- The City should continue to look into more grant funding opportunities for capital improvement projects.
- Set aside a percentage of General Funds and/or Parks Sales Tax Funds to leverage grant opportunities.

CONCLUSION

This Master Plan endeavors to provide a guiding mechanism for continuing to meet existing and future community needs, and expanding the positive impact of the Departmental services. The strength of this Master Plan stems from the extensive research, community involvement, analysis of needs, and public review that form the basis for recommendations it contains. The recommendations of this Master Plan are designed to expand upon the goals of the Parks Department, cultivating:

- A Department focusing on consistently meeting and exceeding citizen expectations;
- A Department that utilizes innovative ideas and methods to successfully meet

challenges posed by budgetary, facility and staffing limitations;

- A Parks and Recreation System that benefits residents by increasing services to all age groups and providing diverse opportunities;
- A Parks and Recreation agency that sees itself as a viable partner in providing community recreation services;
- A stewardship approach to providing high-quality facilities, existing and future, through judicious use of public funds;
- Cooperation and partnerships among Department, schools, community-based recreational entities, other local and regional governments, and the private sector in providing recreational services and facilities; and
- A proactive planning process guided by community needs and executable strategies.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the Master Plan is to establish a practical and inspirational framework for meeting the City's changing parks and recreational needs and interests. A sustainable, flexible, and innovative parks and recreation system requires continued investment and commitment now and in the future. A great parks and recreation system makes a great city.

The Master Plan document is a flexible planning tool intended to be periodically reviewed and evaluated in light of changing conditions. Changes in key conditions that should be monitored include land availability, funding sources, changes in construction costs, and community recreation preferences. Due to the possible changes in these key conditions, the Master Plan should undergo a review and possible update every five years.

BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The emergence of park and recreation facilities and services as a responsibility of government in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was stimulated by a belief that they provided meritorious social outcomes to communities. In recent decades, this rationale has been replaced in many jurisdictions by a more myopic view that such services are provided because particular segments of a community want them. ***The focus has shifted from delivery of communitywide public benefits to serving selected user groups. This shift is a central reason accounting for the widespread perception of parks and recreation as being a relatively discretionary or luxury government service.***

Servicing user groups will always be a central element of the parks and recreation mission, but in many jurisdictions' user groups are too narrow of a constituency to justify sustaining or investing additional tax revenues in these services. User satisfaction, while necessary, is an inadequate indicator of the success of a park and recreation department when used alone, because it does not incorporate non-users' evaluations of the agency. Most taxpayers are not frequent users of these services. Thus, many of them have difficulty understanding why they should support them. This prevailing sentiment is often heard: If only some segments of our community use park and recreation services, why should the rest of us have to pay for them? To elicit the support of non-users, an agency has to provide a convincing answer to the fundamental marketing question, "What is in it for them?" ***Broader community support is likely to be dependent on building awareness not only of the on-site benefits that accrue to users, but also of the off-site communitywide benefits that accrue to non-users.***

There is increased recognition that the "private" benefits that accrue to users are likely to have relatively little impact on resource allocation decisions made by elected officials.

These benefits are described as “private” because they are enjoyed only by program participants and do not extend to the majority of the population who are only occasional users or nonusers. Providing resources to a parks and recreation department so a minority of residents can have enjoyable experiences is likely to be a low priority when measured against the critical economic, health, safety and welfare issues with which most legislative bodies are confronted.

To justify the investment of additional resources, elected officials have to be convinced that the park and recreation system delivers collective or “public” benefits. Public benefits are defined as those that accrue to most people in a community, even if some people in a community do not participate in an agency’s programs or use its facilities.

There are 10 widely accepted “public” benefits that may accrue from park and recreation services. They are classified into three broad categories: economic development, alleviating social problems, and environmental stewardship.

Economic Impact

According to a study on the Economic Impact of Local Parks conducted by the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) in 2021, it was found that there was a shared impact of operations and capital spending by U.S. local park and recreation agencies that resulted in nearly \$201 billion in economic activity and \$196.8 billion in added gross domestic product (GDP). They also supported 1.1 million jobs that paid salaries, wages and benefits totaling \$63 billion.

The report also found that local park and recreation agencies are growing in economic importance, not only as generators of jobs and local business opportunity, but as major contributors to local quality of life, and the availability of recreation amenities are increasingly important for attracting and retaining workers and employers, which extend the economic impacts of park and recreation spending.

Attracting Tourists: The major factor considered by tourists when they make a decision about which communities to visit on a pleasure trip is the attractions that are available. In most cities, those attractions are dominated by facilities and services operated by park and recreation agencies and their non-profit partners (parks, beaches, events, festivals, athletic tournaments, museums, historical sites, cultural performances, etc.). Without such attractions, there is no tourism.

Enhancing Real Estate Values: People are prepared to pay more (10%-20%) to live close to park areas. The enhanced value of these properties results in their owners paying higher property taxes to governments. If the incremental amount of taxes paid by each property that is attributable to the park is aggregated, it is often sufficient to pay the annual debt charges required to retire the debt to acquire and develop the park.

Attracting Business: In many cases, the viability of businesses in the highly recruited high-technology, research and development, company headquarters, and services sectors is dependent on their ability to attract and retain highly educated professional employees. The deciding factor of where these individuals choose to live is often the quality of life in the geographic vicinity of the business. No matter how quality of life is defined, park and recreation opportunities are likely to be a major component of it.

Attracting Retirees: A new clean growth industry in America today is the increasing number of relatively affluent, active retirees. Their decision as to where to locate with their substantial retirement incomes is primarily governed by two factors: climate and recreational opportunities.

Alleviating Social Problems

Preventing Youth Crime: Cities across the country recognize their responsibility to play a role in nurturing the development of their adolescent residents in the form of building cognitive, social, and emotional skills that will allow them to contribute to society as they grow older. Many municipalities are recognizing that resources can be more effectively utilized if youth are perceived as resources to invest in, rather than problems to be policed.

The use of park and recreation programs to alleviate youth crime was a primary political stimulant for much of the early recreation provision in major cities at the beginning of the twentieth century. There is strong evidence demonstrating that parks and recreation agencies have unique advantages that support the development of life skills in adolescents. As structured recreational programs and opportunities provide social support from adult leaders; leadership opportunities for youth; intensive and individualized attention to participants; a sense of group belonging; youth input into program decisions; and opportunities for community service. The return on investment of such programs is substantial when compared with the costs of incarceration.

Healthy Lifestyles: There is growing recognition that the key to curtailing health care costs lies in prevention of illness so it does not have to be treated by the expensive medical system. Park and recreation services contribute to this end not only by facilitating improvements in physical fitness through exercise, but also by facilitating positive emotional, intellectual, and social experiences. People with high levels of wellness have a productivity to act during their free time, rather than merely be acted on.

More than one-third of adults in the United States are clinically obese and the statistics for children are just as grim – One third of American children are overweight and one in six is obese. Leisure is the part of life where the most physical activity should occur. While exercise trends come and go, people tend to stick with physical activities that they enjoy most. Parks provide the venues for these activities – organized sports, running, biking, gardening, hiking, swimming, among many others.

Multiple studies indicate that time outdoors is the strongest correlate of children's physical activity. However, many children are deprived of outdoor time for lack of sufficient local options (i.e. a park within a ten-minute walk). Furthermore, parks also play a key role in the well-being of seniors. Studies have found that greater availability of local facilities and green space result in higher levels of basic physical activity.

In addition to enhancing physical health, the presence of neighborhood parks and tree-lined streets promotes psychological well-being. Numerous studies demonstrate that access to green views and environments can improve cognitive functioning, impulse control, resilience to stressful life events, and overall mental health. Conversely, studies report a link between low nature access with increases in deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), clinical depression, stress, and anxiety. Furthermore, to the anecdotal calming

benefits of a walk in the park, there's ample scientific evidence reinforcing the notion that green access reduces stress and anxiety.

Environmental Stress: Environmental stress may involve both psychological emotions (e.g. frustrations, anger, fear and coping responses) and associated physiological responses that use energy and contribute to fatigue. It is experienced daily by many who live or commute in urban or blighted areas. Parks in urban settings have a restorative effect that releases the tensions of modern life. Evidence demonstrating the therapeutic value of natural settings has emerged in both physiological and psychological studies. The cost of environmental stress in terms of work day's lost and medical care is likely to be substantially greater than the cost of providing and maintaining parks, urban forestry programs, and oases of flowers and shrubs.

Unemployment and Underemployment: Basic psychological needs that many people derive from their work are difficult to acquire when they are working in low-level service jobs such as cashiers, janitors, and cleaners, which are the major growth positions in the economy. And, of course, if they are unemployed, such needs may be totally unmet. These include self-esteem, prestige accruing from peer group recognition; ego satisfaction of achievement, a desire to be successful, excitement and self-worth. For the growing number of people in low-level jobs, these needs will be fulfilled in their familial or leisure milieus or they will not be fulfilled at all.

Environmental Stewardship

Historical Preservation: Without a cultural history, people are rootless. Preserving historical remnants offers lingering evidence to remind people of what they once were, who they are, what they are, and where they are. It feeds their sense of history.

The Natural Environment: People turn to the natural environment, preserved by humans as a park, wilderness, or wildlife refuge, for something they cannot get in a built environment. The quality of human life depends on an ecologically sustainable and aesthetically pleasing physical environment. The surge of interest in conserving open spaces by people motivated by ecological and aesthetic concerns is matched by a similar surge from those concerned that the inexorable rise in demands for outdoor recreation is not being matched by a commensurate expansion of the supply base.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES, AND GUIDING THEMES

The vision, mission, values and guiding themes, defined below, provide the framework for developing the Master Plan, and shall be included in each identified focus area. These statements are not set in stone, and can be refined or changed over time to ensure they continue to meet community needs.

- The **Vision Statement** states what the City finds important about Parks and Recreation and wants to strive toward. Vision statements inspire, energize, and create a mental picture of a community's aspirations.
- The **Mission Statement** states the Department's fundamental purpose and provides a roadmap for how the Department will achieve its vision. It describes what the Department will do today to make the City a better place tomorrow.

- **Values** are qualities that represent the public and the Department's highest priorities and beliefs. They describe in detail how the Department values the community, its employees, and the environment.
- **Guiding Themes** are central ideas which run throughout the plan.

Practical Visions

The first step in the developing the Master Plan was to define the expected or desired results at some time in the future. Our plan, with regular updating and input from the community, may serve the City of Sunset Hills through the next twenty (20) years.

The following are the practical visions which with citizen and management support, can help to optimize Sullivan's parks and recreation system and the services to users:

1. **Enhance Quality Of Experiences:** It is our intent to increase the satisfaction rate of those using our services by upgrading our facilities, staff, aesthetics and equipment.
 - Commitment to quality and excellence
 - Acquire facilities and equipment
 - Quality of facilities and experience
2. **Increase Community Support:** It is our intent to seek the support, heighten the awareness and encourage involvement of the community in appraising current and current and future needs.
 - Educate community
 - Sense of community
3. **Expand Opportunities:** It is our intent to provide a wide range of opportunities and experience designed to meet the needs of the entire community.
 - Serve all cross-sections of the community
 - Health, fitness, athletics
 - Park outreach (trails, shared services, adopt-a-park, etc.)
 - Environmental education
 - Identify needs/expand services
 - Acquisition of land/facilities
4. **Optimize Use Of Resources:** it is our intent to optimize the use of physical, financial and human resources and to effectively utilize all areas of facilities within our system.
 - Develop currently owned areas
 - Support staff
 - Maintenance of parks
 - Sponsorships and partnerships
 - User fees and taxes

Defined Visions

1. **Policies and Procedures** – Develop sufficient Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies to efficiently and effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in a satisfactory manner.

2. Community Engagement – Incorporate a community input process to gauge the residents and user’s needs.
3. Benchmarking – Continue to provide facilities and programs that best serve the community’s needs while reflecting current standards and trends within the City’s park system.
4. Inventory – Achieve the appropriate level of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces that best serve the community’s needs.
5. Distribution and Design – Develop and design parks, facilities and trails throughout the city in the most efficient and effective manner to meet the needs of the community.
6. Facilities – Maximize the utility of existing park properties and facilities that best serve the community’s needs.
7. Maintenance – Maintain and operate safe, quality parks providing a level of care that best serve the community’s needs.
8. ADA – Establish parks and programming standards based on access, optimal level of service and a positive and inviting image.
9. Programming – Implement recreation programs that are economical and market-driven, focusing on youth, teens senior wellness and environmental programs.
10. Partnerships – Embrace a partnership philosophy to leverage facilities and services with other providers before developing new programs of facilities.
11. Staffing – Recruit, hire, train, develop, recognize, competitively compensate, and retain a diverse and high-quality workforce.
12. Capital Improvements – Implement a Capital Improvements Plan to construct new facilities and rehabilitate existing parks.
13. Funding – Incorporate financial management principles to all operations and all available funding sources to provide support to the park system.

Mission Statement

The Department’s mission statement is **“We Create Community through People, Parks, and Programs”**. In doing so, it is the mission of the Department to contribute to a healthy community through an integrated system of exceptional parks, facilities, trails, recreation services, cultural, and environmental stewardship as mandated by the community through participatory and financial support.

A series of objectives relating to the parks and recreation system further define and support this mission:

- Strive to be the leader in the progressive development, maintenance and operations of parks and recreation facilities.
- Commitment to provide a balance of active and passive parks and recreational facilities that enhance and preserve the conservation of environmental and natural resources.

- Develop partnerships with community organizations and agencies.
- Provide programs so people can grow, develop character, mature, learn skills, and respect for themselves and others.
- Work with citizens and community leaders to enhance its position as a premier place to live, work, and play within St. Louis County.

Core Values

The Department's core values are centered on the following:

- Parks + Programming - Opportunities for everyone to play, explore, learn, and interact.
- Equity - Addressing inequities experienced by people in communities of concern and other marginalized populations allowing everyone to fairly share the same benefits from parks and attain full and equal access to recreational opportunities regardless of one's background, identity, ability, and location.
- Access – Provide access to parks within a reasonable walk or drive.
- Activation - Safe and inviting public spaces that support positive experiences for everyone and that further the equity and access goal.
- Co-Benefits - Multi-purpose park spaces that improve overall quality of life.
- Community Building - Parks that are the focal points of our city.
- Connectivity - A Citywide network of safe, active recreational trails that connects people with parks and public spaces.
- Arts & Culture - Parks that express the unique identities of our communities and connect people to arts and cultural experiences.
- Conservation, Sustainability, and Resilience - A parks system that preserves and enhances our natural environmental landscape.
- Partnerships - A network of partners and resources that improves and expands recreational opportunities throughout the City.
- Maintenance Operations - An efficient, effective, and well-maintained parks system that provides consistent, long-term quality to everyone.
- Parks - Well-maintained and accessible parks that offers everyday recreation throughout the City.
- Funding - Sustainable, equitable, and dedicated funding sources to invest in the City's parks system.

The Department's core values and the Community's core values are closely aligned, and in the future the Department should combine these values into measurable outcomes that

can be demonstrated in parks, facilities and programs provided by the parks and recreation system.

The City has some extraordinary park properties that have served the community well for a long period of years. The Department is at a crossroads and needs to determine how they can manage the system forward and operating in a sustainable manner. There are many opportunities available, but it requires a host of changes and repositioning the parks and recreation system in the eyes of the city's key leadership and the community as a resource worth investing in to help the City achieve the outcomes desired by the community.

Statement Of Strategic Initiatives And Goals

In developing the parks and recreation system, considerable time and emphasis has been placed on developing a comprehensive vision, the Master Plan identifies fifteen (15) "Focus Areas" where the Department should focus attention in order to meet the short- and long-term needs of the community.

- Goals and Objectives
- Demographic Analysis
- Policies and Procedures
- Community Engagement
- Benchmarking
- Inventory Analysis
- Planning and Design Analysis
- Facility Analysis
- Maintenance Analysis
- ADA Assessment
- Program Analysis
- Partnerships
- Staffing Analysis
- Capital Improvements
- Funding Analysis

These fifteen (15) "Focus Areas" should be analyzed to determine their impacts on the overall parks and recreation system and to explore or identify opportunities. Their analysis will serve as the basis for the planning and development of the Master Plan.

SUMMARY

All residents should join the effort to bring parks, open spaces, and greenways into the neighborhoods where all can benefit from them. While the City plays a vital role in the creation of public parks, the City cannot do the job alone. Achieving this vision will depend on the planning and transactional skills of nonprofit groups; on the input of neighborhood groups and community leaders in designing the parks; and on the financial support and moral leadership of community-minded individuals and businesses.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. There shall be an established mission statement that defines the direction and purpose of the agency. The agency mission is the purpose or reason for the existence of the agency and establishes the long-term direction for the agency services and activities.

Provide the established mission statement.

2. There shall be established, measurable goals and objectives for the agency and for each organizational component within the agency. Such goals and objectives shall be directed toward accomplishing the agency mission, be reviewed periodically, and distributed to all appropriate personnel.

Provide the measurable goals and objectives for each organizational component, with evidence of periodic review and distribution.

3. The agency shall have an established process for acquiring and considering input from personnel at various levels of the organization in the development of goals and objectives.

Provide examples of the methods utilized to obtain input from personnel at various levels of the organization (e.g. surveys, focus groups, etc.) and how the organization's goals and objectives are communicated to all personnel.

4. The agency shall provide an adopted Vision Statement that is aspirational, far reaching, and states where the agency is going. It should be available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.

Provide evidence of adopted Vision statement that is available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.

5. Technology shall be used to enable the agency to operate more efficiently and effectively. The agency should research and apply such resources progressively.

Provide examples of progressive adoption, upgrade, installation, and/or use of technology. Examples could include but are not limited to communications and security systems, energy and records management systems, data management and sharing systems, lighting and irrigation systems, work orders and work assignment applications, financial systems, and class registration systems.

6. The Agency shall have management information systems that can produce reliable statistical and data summaries of agency activities, such as daily, monthly, and annual reports for use in management decision-making. The reports shall provide comparative data and statistics.

Provide examples of recent statistical and data summaries and describe their use in management decision-making.

7. An agency shall have a strategic approved by the approving authority, stating how the agency will achieve its mission, goals, and objectives over an extended period of time, typically three to five years. The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually. The goals and objectives of the plan shall be measurable to demonstrated progress and results. The strategic plan shall support the priorities and initiatives of the whole organization. The strategic plan is a tool to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Provide the agency's strategic plan, date of approval by approving authority, evidence of last review, and indicate progress being made in implementing the plan.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Master Plan seeks to provide an overview, as well as an in depth look at the current demographic makeup of Sunset Hills. The following pages show population trends, race, ethnicity, age, and households.

The Sunset Hills planning effort that will involve capital facilities at some point, and is more likely to succeed when the citizen base is well defined as it relates to demographics, economics, market profile and relevant trends. The data provided in this Master Plan provides an accurate and detailed description of Sunset Hills based on numerous demographic, socio-economic, and financial records.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population characteristics of the City of Sunset Hills participatory base. This analysis demonstrates the overall size of the total population by specific age segment, race and ethnicity, and economic status and spending power of the residents through household income statistics.

Understanding community demographics and needs is an important component of the Master Plan. The data can help to project future needs in programming and facilities so that appropriate planning and budgeting can occur. Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from the Census Bureau and other census data sources. All data was acquired in March of 2025 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the April 1, 2020 Census and Population estimates from July 1, 2023.

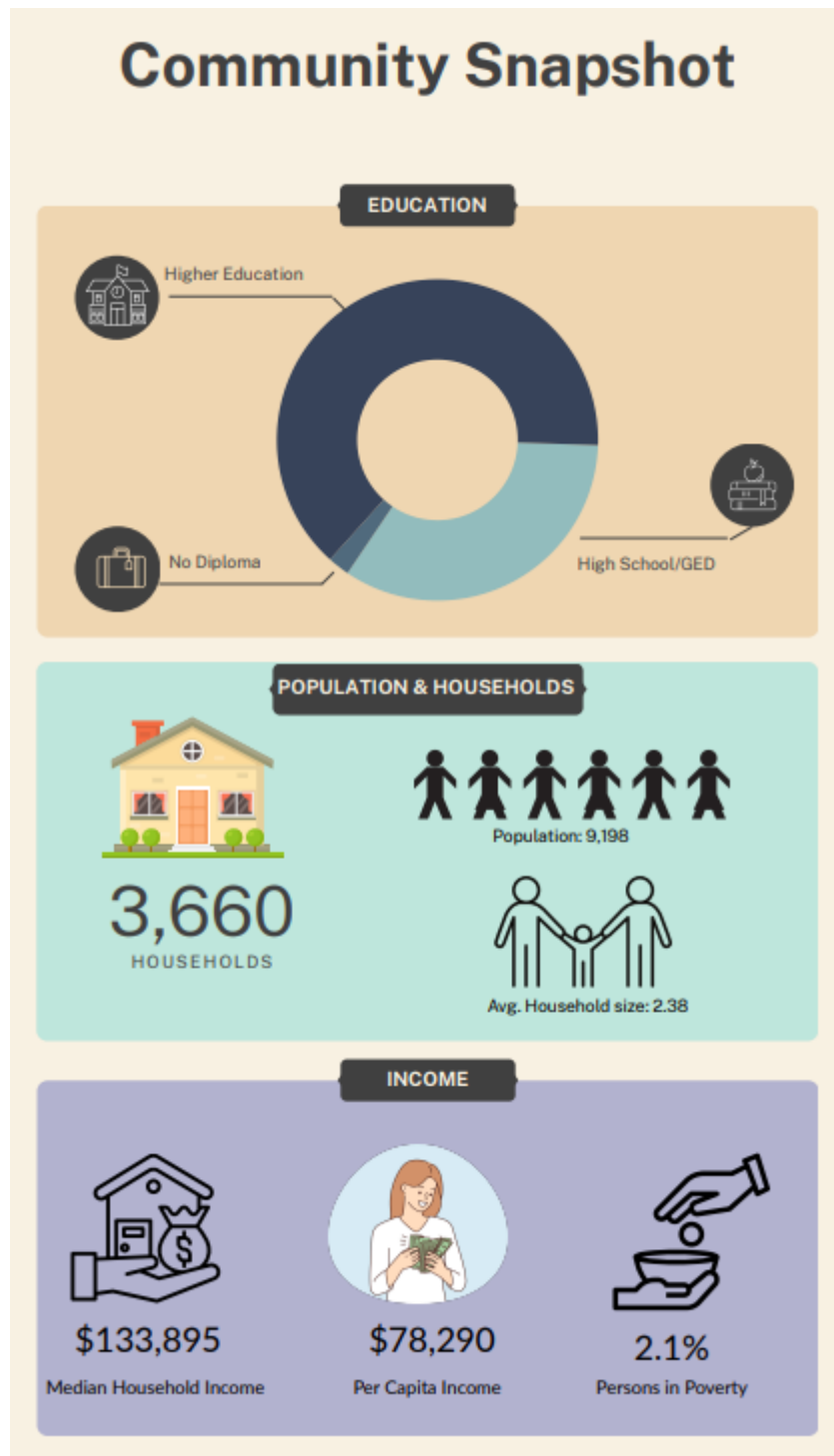
Community Background

The City of Sunset Hills is located in St. Louis County, Missouri, one of the 88 Municipalities within St. Louis County, and was incorporated in 1957. Sunset Hills is situated on the southwest side of the County and borders the cities of Kirkwood, Crestwood and Fenton.

Sunset Hills has a population, according to the 2020 Census of 9,198 and has gone through a tremendous growth spurt over the last 10 years. The Sunset Hills presently covers just over 9.14 square miles.

The City has a strong commitment to providing quality parks and recreation facilities and recreation programs for citizens of the community. Prior to 2007, dedicated funding did not exist for the Department. In 2007, voters approved a 20-year, ½ cent sales tax to provide direct funding. Over the past 20 years, many major upgrades have been made throughout the parks system to bring facilities up to date. City leadership is

seeking to continue to improve the park system and add to the quality of life the residents enjoy.



Population

The most comprehensive demographic information is collected and distributed by the United States Census Bureau. Every ten (10) years the Census Bureau collects and tabulates a nation-wide census of the population. The City had a Year 2023 estimated population of 9,041 persons, representing nearly a -1.6% decrease in population) from the from the 2020 census.

Census	Amount
2010 Census	8,496
2020 Census	9,198
2023 Census (Estimate)	9,041
Population per square miles	1,024.3
Land area in square miles	9.10

Age and Sex

The largest population age groups in Sunset Hills are persons 60-69, and second being persons 50-59, and third being persons 40-49. These predominant age groups suggest that Sunset Hills should consider more middle age to senior programming and amenities. Sunset Hills will have to provide a wider range of amenities to allow for their citizens to have access to recreational amenities. These age groups could be further dissected by looking at which neighborhoods, or parts of the city have a higher percentage of a certain age group to allow for more intentional placement of amenities. This would contribute to Sunset Hills residents having easier access to their favorite amenities.

Category	Amount	Percent
Persons under 5 years	271	3
Persons 5 – 9 years	481	5
Persons 10 -14 years	670	7
Persons 15 – 19 years	571	6
Persons 20 – 29 years	639	7
Persons 30 – 39 years	593	6
Persons 40 – 49 years	1,319	14
Persons 50 – 59 years	1,356	15
Persons 60 – 69 years	1,411	15
Persons 70 - 79 years	921	10
Persons 80 -84 years	399	4
Persons 85 years and over	482	5
Female persons	4,810	52.3
Male persons	4,388	47.7

Race

In analyzing race, the City's current population is predominately White Alone. The 2020 estimate shows that 93.6% of the population falls into the White Alone category, while 3.8% represents two races and Hispanic or Latino (1.7%) represent the largest minorities. The racial diversification of the City is less diverse than Missouri as well as to the national population. With a 2020 estimated 93.6% of the population categorized as White Alone, Sunset Hills is viewed as a homogenous City.

Sunset Hills being less diverse than Missouri, poses an opportunity for the City to implement equitable and inclusionary practices that not only make residents of all cultures and backgrounds feel welcome, but help cultivate each of the cultures present in Sunset Hills and celebrate them. This will contribute to the city's vibrance, population growth, and livability.

Category	Percentage
White alone	93.6%
Black alone	1.10%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.00%
Asian alone	1.40%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders	0.00%
Two or more races	3.80%
Hispanic or Latino	1.70%

Household Income

The table below summarizes some of the key benchmarks relating to household income of Sunset Hills.

Category	Amount
Median household income	\$133,895
Per capita income	\$78,290
Family Median Income	\$162,237
Married Couple Median Income	\$185,054
Nonfamily Household Median Income	\$67,596
Persons in poverty	2.1%

Education Attainment

The 2020 population of Sunset Hills residents is 9,198. Of this group 97.8% have a high school diploma, 64% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher. As an overall consideration, city programmers should be aware of educational differences but not rely on that data for marketing.

Category	Amount
No High School diploma	2.2%
High School or equivalent degree	13.4%
Some college, no degree	14.2%
Associate's degree	6.2%
Bachelor's degree	38.2%
Post Graduate degree	25.8%

Households/Population

Sunset Hills has a total of 3,660 households with 82.6% of them being owner occupied. Analyzing households and their different types allows for more informed decision making when creating recommendations. Each household type has a different day-to-day lifestyle and the more recommendations that are made to fit the residents of Sunset Hills lifestyles the better the quality of life will be.

Category	Amount
Households	3,660
Persons per household	2.38
Owner Occupied	82.6%
Renter Occupied	17.4%

Median Value of Housing

The table below summarizes some of the key benchmarks relating to the median value of owner-occupied housing units.

Category	Amount
Single Family Houses	45,740
Detached Houses	\$350,907
Townhouses	\$294,093
Two Unit Structures	\$413,479

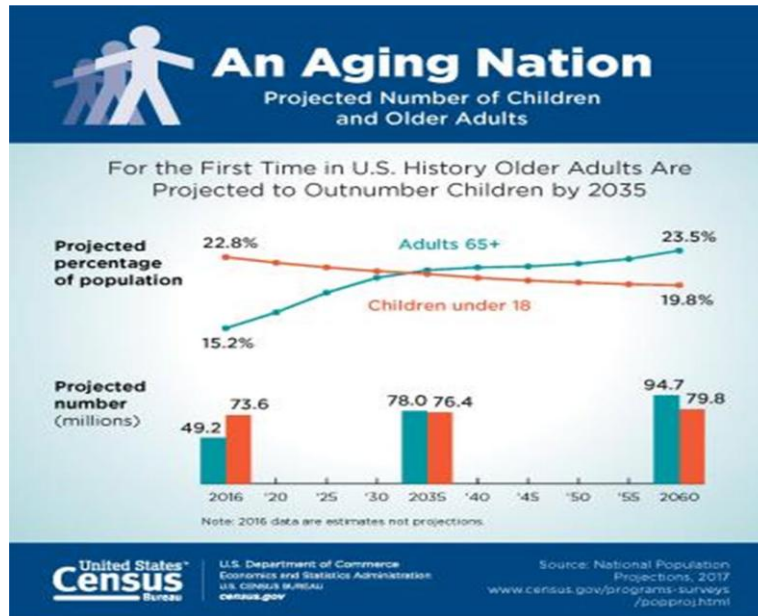
Geography And Service Area

The primary service area for the city is within the City of Sunset Hills, Missouri and its 9.1 square miles. However, secondary service area includes unincorporated areas of St. Louis County outside of the corporate city limits, as well as the cities of Kirkwood, Crestwood, and Fenton.

Category	Amount
Population per square mile	1,024.3
Primary service area per sq. mile	9.10

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Not surprisingly, the face of Missourians will change along with the state’s population numbers. These changes will have a direct impact on outdoor recreation provision in the state.



An Aging Population

The year 2030 marks an important demographic turning point in U.S. history, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2017 National Population Projections. By 2030, all baby boomers will be older than age 65. This will expand the size of the older population so that one in every five residents will be of retirement age. Even more noteworthy is the fact that, by 2035, adults aged 65 years or older are projected to outnumber children aged 18 years or less. Additionally, by 2060, minorities are projected to be close to half (45%) of seniors 65 years of age or older.

Missouri, too, will experience an aging population. By 2030, persons over age 65 will represent more than one-fifth of all Missourians. Senior citizens are expected to increase 87% between 2000 and 2030, when there are projected to be 1.4 million seniors in the state. With the increase in older adults will come an increase in age-related illnesses, many of which can be combated or minimized by regular physical activity.

The aging of Missouri’s population will have a profound effect on the services, facilities and programming expected of recreation providers. Providers will need to ensure that accessible trails and greenways connect parks to retirement communities, residential

facilities and senior centers.

A Diversifying Population

In addition to an aging population, the U.S. is growing increasingly racially, ethnically and socially diverse. Currently, 37% of the U.S. population is comprised of people of color. The U.S. Census predicts that by 2060, people of color will make up 57% of the U.S. population.

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 population estimates for Missouri indicate that its current minority population accounts for just over 20% of the total population, with African American populations accounting for the highest percentage of minority populations in the state. Furthermore, population growth is being shaped by international migration. While births continue to overall growth, rising international migration is offsetting the ongoing net domestic outmigration.

Each succeeding generation has been more diverse than the generations that came before it. For example, in 1980, the two newest generations in the population, the Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) and the Gen Xer's (born 1965-1980), were, respectively, 21% and 26% percent minority. Looking at the two newest generations today, the Millennials (1981-2000) and the Post-Millennials (2001-2020), the corresponding figures are 44% and 49% minority. Forecasting ahead to 2040, the Post-Millennial 2 Generation (2021-2040) is projected to be 57% minority. In 2060, the Post-Millennial 3 Generation (2041-2060) is projected to be 64% minority.

The outdoor recreation industry has long been challenged with this disparity in outdoor recreation participation. Studies abound with reasons for the lack of minority participation, but all agree that the reasons are varied and complex, ranging from cultural to socio-economic to historical. The lack of minority representation can mean that some people feel unwelcome in the outdoors, fearing prejudice or feeling apprehensive about heading outside because they don't see themselves reflected in the other participants around them. This is compounded by the lack of representation in the outdoor industry and media. Minority communities may also face economic and accessibility barriers that prevent them from pursuing outdoor activities. Lack of transportation, lack of close-to-home facilities, lack of affordable opportunities and lack of knowledge of places to go can create significant impediments to participation.

According to a 2017 survey of park and recreational professionals conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), 71% of park and recreation agencies across the U.S. offer programming and activities specifically for members of multi-cultural and multi-racial communities, while 27% provide programming and activities targeting members of refugee or immigrant communities. Recreation providers must continue to be cognizant of the obstacles and barriers that prevent all community members from taking advantage of recreation resources, and plan outdoor facilities and programming accordingly. Differing cultural norms and use patterns may require providing non-traditional facilities. For instance, some minority groups are motivated by experiencing the outdoors with family and friends, so providing facilities that can accommodate large groups would have considerable appeal to these groups. Ensuring that close-to-home facilities are abundant in communities with a higher percentage of minority residents is also crucial, as is ensuring that adequate transportation is available to these facilities.

PARKS AND RECREATION IS FOR ALL

Parks and recreation are for all. Ensuring safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming spaces is a top priority for park and recreation professionals. Nonetheless, not every community member feels welcome all the time. According to the 2023 NRPA Engagement With Parks Report, sixty-five percent of survey respondents describe their local parks and recreation facilities as easily accessible. Those saying that their local parks and recreation facilities are easily accessible include: Members of various generations - Gen Zer's (76 percent), millennials (70 percent), Gen Xer's (69 percent), baby boomers (76 percent) Members of different racial backgrounds - Those who identify as non-white (63 percent), those who identify as white (76 percent) Members of various ethnicities - Those who identify as Hispanic (74 percent).

U.S. adults also describe their park and recreation experiences as:

Safe and welcoming

- Generation - Gen Zer's (73 percent), millennials (68 percent), Gen Xer's (60 percent), baby boomers (73 percent)
- Race - Those who identify as non-white (57 percent), those who identify as white (72 percent), those who identify as Hispanic (62 percent)

Inclusive to people of all ages Generation - Gen Zer's (63 percent), millennials (58 percent), Gen Xer's (56 percent), baby beamers (69 percent)

- Race - Those who identify as non-white (55 percent), those who identify as white (63 percent), those who identify as Hispanic (44 percent)

Inclusive to people of all races and ethnicities

- Generation - Gen Zer's (58 percent), millennials (57 percent), Gen Xer's (48 percent), baby beamers (65 percent)
- Race - Those who identify as non-white (46 percent), those who identify as white (60 percent), those who identify as Hispanic (49 percent)

Inclusive to people of all incomes

- Generation - Gen Zer's (60 percent). millennials (53 percent), Gen Xer's (50 percent), baby beamers (63 percent)
- Race - Those who identify as non-white (41 percent), those who identify as white (60 percent), those who identify as Hispanic (46 percent)
- Income - Those who make less than \$35,000 annually (47 percent), those who make between \$35,000 and \$75,000 (53 percent), and those who make more than \$75,000 (60 percent)

Inclusive to people of all abilities

- Generation - Gen Zer's (53 percent), millennials (50 percent), Gen Xer's (44 percent), baby beamers (56 percent)
- Race - Those who identify as non-white (40 percent), those who identify as white (54 percent), those who identify as Hispanic (45 percent)

Inclusive to people of all gender identities, expressions and sexual orientations

- Generation - Gen Zer's (52 percent), millennials (46 percent), Gen Xer's (46 percent), baby boomers (54 percent)
- Race - Those who identify as non-white (39 percent), those who identify as white (52 percent)

percent), those who identify as Hispanic (43 percent)

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

- Median household income is above state average
- Median house value is significantly above state average
- Unemployed percentage is significantly below state average
- Black race population percentage is significantly below state average
- Hispanic race population percentage is below state average
- Median age is significantly above state average
- Those 65 and older are significantly above state average
- Foreign-born population percentage is below state average
- Renting percentage is below state average
- Length of stay since moving in significantly above state average
- Number of rooms per house above state average
- Percentage of population with a bachelor's degree or higher significantly above state average

Observations

- Sunset Hills service area is much larger than the corporate city limits.
- Sunset Hills primary service area is approximately 9.1 sq. miles.
- Sunset Hills serves people who reside outside of the corporate city limits.

Recommendations

- Sunset Hills should strongly consider the service area consisting of more than individuals within their corporate city limits when establishing Levels of Service.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Recreation and Park Association's 2023 Agency Performance Review, park and recreation agencies have various policies that address how residents enjoy amenities and programming in their communities. Many policies align with an agency's mission to increase a community's overall health and wellness, such as banning tobacco products, limiting the consumption of alcohol and ensuring the availability of healthy food options. Other policies address the collection of fees that help agencies with park upkeep and staffing challenges.

It is vital to the operations and management of the Department to have various policies, procedures and regulations in place to guide and give direction to employees, park patrons, and guests.

POLICIES

Alcohol & Tobacco

Three in four park and recreation agencies allow the consumption of alcohol by legal-age adults on at least some of their premises. Seventeen percent of agencies have a policy that allows the consumption of alcohol at all park and recreation agency locations in their jurisdiction. Agencies are more likely to permit the consumption of alcohol at only a few select locations rather than at all facilities. Further, 49 percent of agencies allow the sale of alcohol on their premises — mainly at select locations and by either the agencies themselves or authorized concessionaires.

More than four in five park and recreation agencies have policies that prohibit the use of tobacco products in their parks, at their facilities and on their grounds. Fifty- five percent of agencies ban the use of tobacco at all agency parks and facilities, while another 26 percent make exceptions for certain facilities (e.g., golf courses).

Health And Wellness

Park and recreation agencies promote health and wellness by offering healthy food options at their vending machines and concessions. At least two-thirds of agencies offer healthy food options in vending machines and/or concession stands at their facilities.

Relatively few park and recreation agencies charge an admission fee to enter or park a vehicle at their facilities. Eighteen percent of agencies charge fees to enter some of their parks and 16 percent of agencies have parking fees at some of their facilities. In both cases, the agencies that charge either admission or parking fees do so only at a limited number of facilities.

Diversity, Equity And Inclusion

Park and recreation professionals and their agencies are essential in the promotion and advancement of community health, resiliency and overall well-being. Given their mission to make communities better places to live, learn, work and play, park and recreation agencies also are in a unique position to champion efforts that advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Among the implemented DEI practices are:

- Eighty percent of park and recreation agencies have an expressed commitment to DEI in their foundational documents (e.g., vision, mission and strategic plan documents).
- Ninety percent of park and recreation agencies have hiring practices and policies that promote a diverse workforce.

Revenue And Pricing Policy

One of the missions of the City should be to establish and maintain public policies that address fees and charges associated with use of a park, facility, and programming within its jurisdiction. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the parks and recreation needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Revenue and Pricing Policy” to provide overall financial direction to the Department.

The policy should serve as a guide in managing the development, operations and evaluation of revenue policy, policy definitions, competition and pricing, determining fees and charges, fee adjustments, programs and services, facilities, other sources of revenue, payments and refunds, and policy revisions.

DEFINITIONS/CATEGORIES/DISTINCTIONS

Typically, City’s make the following distinctions between Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies.

Ordinances

Ordinances are local laws that are a part of the Municipal Code. All City ordinances must be approved by the Board of Aldermen for the purpose of giving legal authority by state statutes to carry out or enforce policies, procedures, rules & regulations, etc. Ordinances are usually legal documents recommended by either a member of City Council, City Administrator, and/or Department Head.

City Policies

City Policies are broad statements or courses of action set forth by Board of Aldermen and/or City Administrator approving authority or requiring action to be followed by departments, divisions and personnel. These policies are usually administrative statements in the form of rules and regulations, procedures, guidelines and plans, which are usually developed by a member of City Council, City Administrator and/or Department Heads and are ultimately approved by the City Administrator, or when appropriate, approved by City Council.

Administrative Policies

Administrative Policies are broad statements or courses of action set forth by the City Administrator, approving authority or requiring action to be followed by all personnel. These policies are usually administrative statements in the form of rules and regulations, procedures, guidelines and plans, which are usually developed by the City Administrator and/or Department Heads and are ultimately approved by the City Administrator.

Department Policies

Department Policies are broad statements or courses of action set forth by the Director of Parks and Recreation, approving authority or requiring action to be followed by department personnel. These policies are usually administrative statements in the form of rules and regulations, procedures, guidelines and plans, which are usually developed by Senior Staff and/or Department Director and are ultimately approved by the Department Director. These policies are to be reviewed on an annual basis and revised/updated as needed.

REGULATIONS

Clean Water Act

In Missouri, a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit is a regulatory requirement for entities that operate storm sewer systems that discharge into water of the United States. MS4, is a conveyance or system of conveyances (roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, storm drains, etc.) that is also:

- Owned or operated by a public entity (which can include cities, townships, counties, military bases, hospitals, prison complexes, highway departments, universities, etc.) having jurisdiction over disposal of sewage, industrial wastes, stormwater or other wastes. This includes special districts under state law, such as a sewer district; flood control district, drainage districts or similar entity; an Indian tribe or an authorized Indian tribal organization; or a designated and approved management agency under section 208 of the Clean Water Act that discharges to waters of the United States.
- Designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater
- Not a combined sewer
- Not part of a publicly-owned treatment works

These permits are designed to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff and are mandated under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program of the federal Clean Water Act. MS4 permits are required for municipalities and counties that meet certain criteria, including 1) Urbanized Areas (40 CFR 122.32(a)(1)): Communities with a population density of 50,000 or more, and 2) Smaller Jurisdictions: Areas outside urbanized regions that serve populations of at least 10,000 with a density of 1,000 people per square mile or more.

Key Requirement of MS4 Permits:

1. Stormwater Management Program (SWMP): Entities must develop and implement a SWMP that outlines how they will manage stormwater and reduce pollutants. This includes six minimum control measures (MCM's) such as public education, illicit discharge detection, and construction site runoff control.
2. Annual Reporting: Permittees are required to submit annual reports detailing their progress in implementing the SWMP and achieving compliance with permit conditions.
3. Public Participation: The permit process often includes opportunities for public input and engagement regarding stormwater management strategies.

Land & Water Conservation Fund

The Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program was established by the LWCF Act of 1965 (Section 6, Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended; Public Law 88-578; 16 U.S.C. 4601-4 et seq.) to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring to all citizens of the United States of present and future generations such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation.

The program provides matching grants to States and through States to local units of government jurisdictions, on a matching basis for up to fifty percent (50%) of the total project-related allowable costs for the acquisition of land and the development of facilities for public outdoor recreation and for fulfilling the program's planning requirements. The LWCF Act requires the States to operate and maintain by acceptable standards the properties or facilities acquired or developed for public outdoor recreation use. Further, Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act requires that no property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance shall be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and only if he/she finds it to be in accord with the then existing Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and only upon such conditions as he/she deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location (36 CFR 59).

A Section 6(f)(3) conversion occurs when an LWCF-assisted property is to be conveyed for a non-outdoor recreation use such as indoor facilities, right-of-way or permanent easement. If it becomes necessary for a project to convert LWCF-assisted property, it must obtain National Park Service (NPS) approval before acquiring or making changes to the property. The LWCF Project Sponsor is the agency with jurisdiction over the park and is responsible for submitting an LWCF conversion 1 request. The State Liaison Officer (SLO) from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Missouri State Parks (MSP) is responsible for complying with and enforcing the Section 6(f)(3) provisions. The SLO and the MSP Grants Program Manager review the conversion request to ensure it is complete and submits the request to the NPS for approval.

Conservation Easements

A conservation easement (also called conservation covenant, conservation restriction or Conservation servitude) is a voluntary legal agreement and/or power invested in a landowner to restrict, as to a specified land area, the exercise of rights otherwise held by a landowner so as to achieve certain conservation purposes. The conservation easement “runs with the land”, meaning it is applicable to both present and future owners of the land. The grant of conservation easement, as with any real property interest, is part of the chain of title for the property and is normally recorded in local land records.

The conservation easement’s purposes will vary depending on the character of the particular property, the goals of the landowner. For example, an easement’s purposes (often called “conservation objectives”) might include any one or more of the following:

- Maintain and improve water quality;
- Perpetuate and foster the growth of healthy forest;
- Maintain and improve wildlife habitat and migration corridors;
- Protect scenic vistas visible from roads and other public areas; or
- Ensure that lands are managed so that they are always available for sustainable agriculture and forestry.

The most distinguishing feature of the conservation easement as a conservation tool is it enables users to achieve specific conservation objectives on the land, while keeping the land in the ownership of landowners for uses consistent with the conservation objectives.

The landowner who grants a conservation easement continues to manage and otherwise privately own the land and may receive significant state and federal tax advantages for having donated and/or sold the conservation easement. In granting the conservation easement, the easement holder has a responsibility to monitor future uses of the land to ensure compliance with the terms of the easement, and to enforce the terms if a violation occurs.

Although a conservation easement prohibits certain uses by the landowner, such an easement does not make the land public. On the contrary, many conservation easements confer no use of the land either to the easement holder or to the public. Furthermore, many conservation easements reserve to the landowner specific uses, which if not reserved would be prohibited. Some conservation easements confer specific uses to the easement holder or to the public. These details are spelled out in the legal document that creates the conservation easement.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that requires all state and local governments to provide equal access to programs and services for all community members. It was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990 and went into effect in 1992, with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design of 2010 taking full effect on March 15, 2012. The ADA extends similar protections provided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires entities that receive federal financial assistance to ensure they do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities when providing their services, programs, and activities.

The ADA is a landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in access to jobs, public accommodations, services, and programs, public transportation, and telecommunications conducted by state and local governments and for facilities owned by private businesses, even if no federal financial assistance is received. The ADA treats access as a civil right.

Title II of the ADA covers programs and services provided by public entities, including those offered by Sunset Hills Parks and Recreation Department. Under Title II, public entities must take all reasonable measures to ensure their services, programs, and activities are accessible to and useable by persons with disabilities. Additionally, Title II must reasonably modify policies, practices, or procedures to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities. The standards apply to all park facilities and where all governmental units are required to create a transition plan which identifies non-compliance items and defines time frames within which to address compliance remedies (See Section 10 – ADA Assessment for more information).

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. There shall be delegation of responsibilities for the policy-making functions of the approving authority and the administrative functions of the chief administrator and staff.

Show delegation of responsibilities among approving authority, chief administrator, and staff regarding development and implementation of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures.

2. There shall be policies and procedures, encompassing administrative aspects of the organization that are kept up-to date, reviewed periodically, and made available to pertinent administrative and supervisory personnel.

Provide access to the agency policies and procedures, demonstrate how they are made available to personnel, and provide evidence of periodic review by the approving authority and administrators.

3. The agency shall have approved policies that govern what information shall be released, when it should be released, and by whom it should be released and that demonstrate the agency's commitment to inform the community and news media of events involving the agency.

Provide the written statement of policy and procedure, indicating approval by the proper authority.

4. An agency shall have a policy on the use of social media in their public relations and marketing efforts. The policy should include how social media is issued in both community relations and marketing programs, identification of social media platforms, types of content and designated person for management and operation of the platforms.

Provide a copy of the Social Media Policy.

5. The agency shall have established policy and procedures for control, maintenance, and retention of records that are periodically reviewed. Records management policies and procedures address retention, disposal, access, disclosure and distribution of documents, including freedom of information requests, and they must be consistent with legal requirements.

Provide records management policy and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

6. There shall be an established records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures that are periodically reviewed for protecting records, storing them and recovering critical information after a disaster.

Provide the records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

7. There shall be established policies that are reviewed periodically and govern the administration of personnel procedures for both professional and nonprofessional employees. The personnel policies and procedures manual shall be available to each employee, as appropriate to the position.

Provide the personnel policies and procedures manual and the date of latest review. The personnel practices shall include procedures for

- a. *Selection, hiring, and dismissal;*
- b. *Benefits including retirement, insurance, leaves, and other benefits;*
- c. *Salary schedule;*
- d. *Incentive system; and*
- e. *Staff development program.*

8. There must be an established statement of ethical principles for agency personnel that provide a clear understanding of ethical responsibility involving issues as related to the park and recreation system, business dealings with other entities, interrelationships with other organizations and agencies, and interactions with participants.

Provide the code of ethics.

9. The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.

Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.

10. There shall be an established policy regarding diversity with evidence of implementation that assures equal opportunities for employment, promotion, and equity in employment working conditions and that complies with the American Disabilities Act.

Provide the equal opportunity and workforce diversity policy and show evidence of implementation.

11. There shall be comprehensive procedures for hiring personnel. The agency shall also have a role in determination of skills and the personal attributes required for positions.

Provide selection process procedures and evidence that procedures are being followed. The procedures shall include information about the purpose, development, validity, utility, fairness, adverse impact, administration, scoring, and interpretation of all elements used in the selection process.

12. The agency process for hiring personnel shall include procedures for a national background investigation prior to appointment, including verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials, review of a candidate's civil and criminal record, particular attention to drug and child/adult-abuse records, and driving record for employees assigned to operate motor vehicles.

Provide the background investigation procedures and examples of background checks completed.

13. There shall be a fair and systematic procedure for annual or periodic appraisal of job performance. Personnel evaluation shall be utilized for the development and improved quality of the individual's performance on the job, as well as a basis for promotion, monetary increments, and dismissal. Although evaluation is a day-by-day process, there shall be periodic specific reviews with the employee. An employee's personnel file shall include a written annual evaluation.

Provide the procedures and a sample of completed performance evaluations without identifying personal information.

14. There shall be an established policy and procedures available to all employees defining the promotion process and the agency's role. The park and recreation agency may rely upon a state or local civil service commission, or other public or private external organization to administer one or more elements of the process in accordance with legal, professional, and administrative requirements.

Provide the policy and procedures and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

15. There shall be an established disciplinary system based on the code of conduct and performance. The system shall specify the conduct expected of employees. Prohibitions should be specific, whereas approved behavior may be stated in general terms (e.g., courtesy, punctuality).

Provide the code of conduct and performance and the policies and procedures that guide the disciplinary system and how this information is communicated and made

accessible to employees. Include copies of disciplinary action steps included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable. This system shall address the following topics:

- a. *Compliance with agency statements;*
- b. *Unbecoming conduct;*
- c. *Appropriate appearance;*
- d. *Use of alcohol and drugs;*
- e. *Acceptance of gratuities, bribes, or rewards;*
- f. *Abuse of authority; and*
- g. *Proper care and maintenance of equipment.*

16. There shall be an established grievance procedure, available to all employees. The procedure shall identify matters that are grievable; establish time limitations for filing or presenting the grievance; establish steps and time limitations at each step in the grievance procedure; and establish criteria for employee representation. Formal grievance procedures shall be written in clear, concise terms.

Provide the grievance procedures and indicate how the procedures have been communicated to the employees. Include grievance procedures included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.

17. There shall be established policies and procedures for termination and end of employment.

Provide the termination and end of employment policies and procedures and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

18. There shall be established policies and procedures regarding the use of social media by staff.

Provide the social media policies and procedures regarding staff use of social media. The agency shall provide evidence for dates of adoption, review, annual updating and staff training.

19. The agency shall have an established procedure to ensure that leadership is available when the agency's chief administrator is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act.

Provide the written procedure, such as continuity plan, which indicates approval by the proper authority.

20. The agency shall have policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

Provide the agency's policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

21. Fiscal policies setting guidelines for management and control of revenues, expenditures, and investment of funds shall be set forth clearly in writing, and the legal authority must be clearly established.

Provide fiscal policies and legal authority.

22. There shall be an established revenue policy that is periodically updated regarding fees and charges for services and the strategies and methodologies for determining fees and charges and levels of cost recovery.

Provide the policy on fees and charges, the current fee schedules or cost-recovery procedures, and the most recent review or update.

23. The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and donations.

Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and donations.

24. Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall procure regional, state, federal and/or other applicable agency grants to supplement funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement grant opportunities. Prior to grant procurement, agencies shall evaluate how application, approval, implementation and management processes will be coordinated.

Provide the procedure to procure grants along with a summary of grants received by the agency for the past five years, including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor, date awarded, grant amount and agency match.

25. Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall solicit private, corporate, and nonprofit support to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement alternative funding options. Prior to acceptance of support the agency shall evaluate the terms of acceptance and how the implementation and management process will be coordinated.

Provide the procedure to solicit private, corporate and non-profit support along with a summary of such support received by the agency for the past five years including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor/sponsor, date awarded, and value of the contribution and method of recognition.

26. There shall be established procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

Provide the procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

27. Agencies shall have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.

Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

- a. *Bidding procedures;*
- b. *Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and*
- c. *Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and*
- d. *Use of procurement cards, if applicable.*

28. There shall be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency to secure equipment or services in a swift and efficient manner.

Provide the procedures for emergency purchases.

29. The agency shall have established procedures for maintaining control over the number and type of authorized filled and vacant positions to ensure that persons on the payroll are legally employed and that positions are in accordance with budget authorizations.

Provide the position authorization procedures and budgeted positions.

30. The agency shall have established procedures used for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds. The procedures shall enhance security and accountability of all monies received by the agency.

Provide the fiscal control and monitoring procedures. The fiscal control and monitoring procedures shall include:

- a. *Maintenance of an allotment system, if any, or records of appropriations among organizational components;*
- b. *Preparation of financial statements;*
- c. *Conduct of internal audits; and*
- d. *Persons or positions authorized to accept or disburse funds.*

31. The agency shall have procedures for budget control with periodic reporting of revenues and expenditures, and continuous management review.

Provide the procedures for budget control within the agency and examples of periodic reports.

32. The agency shall have established procedures for requesting supplemental or emergency appropriations and fund transfers to meet circumstances that cannot be anticipated by prior fiscal planning efforts. Mechanisms of adjustment may include transferring funds from one account to another and/or requesting that additional funds be granted for agency needs.

Provide the supplemental/emergency appropriations procedures.

33. The agency shall have established procedures for inventory control of property, equipment, and other assets to prevent losses and unauthorized use, and to avoid both inventory excesses and shortages. There shall be a complete and current listing of agency assets.

Provide procedures for inventory and fixed asset control.

34. The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the acquisition of lands for park, recreation, conservation, and historical-cultural purposes that are backed by legal authority and periodically reviewed. This authority usually originates in state enabling acts, is delegated to local governments and is implemented through local charters and ordinances.

Provide policy and procedures for land acquisition, the citation of legal authority to acquire lands, and last review.

35. The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the development of park and recreation land and facilities that are reviewed periodically. Policies and procedures should consider market projections, applicable open space and design standards and coordination with overall planning for the jurisdiction.

Provide land development policies and procedures, with the last review.

36. The agency shall complete an access audit of all existing sites and facilities. Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Title II regulation at 35.105, the agency must evaluate its existing facilities and sites against the most current final and enforceable Standard for Accessible Design.

Submit completed checklists, digital images and site reports as evidence of completion of the access audit.

37. The agency shall have procedures for protecting park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment. The procedures should include progressive steps to address escalated encroachment issues.

Provide the procedures regarding defense against encroachment.

38. The agency shall have established procedures regarding the disposal of park and recreation lands to ensure that public recreational benefits are not diminished through the sale or transfer of parkland.

Provide the procedures for disposal of park and recreation land.

39. Public safety and law enforcement within parks and recreation areas and facilities shall be governed by codes, laws, and ordinances, some of which may be enacted specifically for the control and management of parks and recreation areas and

facilities. The codes, laws and ordinances shall be posted or readily available to park patrons.

Provide documentation of the codes, laws, and ordinances that pertain specifically to areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency and describe how they are posted or otherwise readily available to park patrons.

40. The authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances pertaining specifically to activity within parks, recreation areas, and facilities shall be clearly established to ensure that enforcement actions are upheld. Authority to enforce laws and ordinances within parks and recreation areas and facilities must be established through assignment within the agency, by contract with another agency, or by policy of the government jurisdiction in which the agency operates.

Provide documentation that establishes the authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances within parks, recreation areas, and facilities.

41. Agency staff shall participate in educating and informing the public on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies that apply to parks and recreation areas and facilities. This role shall be established through policy directive.

Provide documentation that defines the role of agency staff in providing public information and education on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies. Provide examples of education and provision of information.

42. There shall be established procedures for agency staff on response to disruptive behavior at agency areas and facilities. Procedures shall identify the role of staff in intervention when an incident occurs, documentation of behavior and delineation of law enforcement roles in handling behavioral issues.

Provide current procedures regarding handling of disruptive behavior.

43. Procedures shall be established that guide agency staff in the preservation and handling of evidence until transferred to the appropriate law enforcement authority. Procedures shall be established in coordination with the appropriate law enforcement agencies to define staff roles in ensuring that evidentiary items are preserved until the proper law enforcement agency assumes command of the scene.

Provide the procedures defining the role and responsibility of agency staff in the discovery, preservation and handling of evidentiary items.

44. There shall be procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter to those in need during disasters or emergencies.

Provide procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter during emergencies.

45. The agency shall have a policy for risk management that sets direction and gives appropriate authority for implementing operational practices and procedures that is approved by the proper authority.

Provide the risk management policy including indication of approval by the proper authority.

46. The agency shall have an established risk management plan and operating procedures that are reviewed periodically, accessible to all agency personnel and approved by the proper authority that encompasses analysis of risk exposure, control approaches and financial and operational impact for the agency. The plan shall analyze the programs/services offered and facilities/areas managed for personal injury and financial loss potential and identify approaches to manage such injury, loss, and business and operational impact.

Provide the current risk management plan with approval by the proper authority, the most recent review, and indication of how the plan and procedures are available to staff. The risk management plan shall reflect all three phases of risk management:

- a. *Identification and assessment;*
- b. *Response strategies; and*
- c. *Management planning.*

47. There shall be established procedures for accident and incident reporting and analysis of accident and incident reports. There shall be an accident/incident report form available to all employees. Data shall be obtained in an appropriate manner to support planned and coordinated accident prevention programs within the agency.

Provide the accident/incident form(s) and the procedures for documenting and analyzing accidents and incidents. The accident/incident form(s) shall include identification information (who), specific location of accident (where), and description of accident in terms of sequence of activity (what).

48. The agency shall have a procedure for tracking and monitoring data trends and measuring performance against targets linked to achievement of goals and objectives.

Provide performance targets and measurement in use by the agency. Describe the process and frequency of performance measurement and cite examples for how the results have been used by the agency to affect decisions. The measures may include data gathered from the following qualitative and quantitative sources:

- a. *Recreation and demographic trends;*
- b. *Needs assessment;*
- c. *Community inventory;*
- d. *Surveys;*

- e. *Program and service statistics;*
- f. *Inspections;*
- g. *Customer feedback;*
- h. *Program evaluation;*
- i. *Risk management reports; and*
- j. *Budget and financial reports.*

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key recommendations are identified. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Department

Observations

- Although the City currently has Ordinances and Policies pertaining to the use of parks and fees associated with the use of parks, these policies are very limited and do not cover the full scope of what is needed to efficiently and effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in an effective, efficient, and satisfactory manner.

Findings

- The Department doesn't have sufficient Management plans and guidelines etc. to efficiently and effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in a satisfactory manner.
- The Department doesn't have sufficient Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies to efficiently and effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in a satisfactory manner.
- The Department has deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program.
- The Department has deficiencies in meeting/Complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the American Disabilities Act.
- The Department has parklands that are covered/regulated by the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- The Department operates and maintains land that is covered/regulated by a Conservation Easement.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Department develop sufficient Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies to efficiently and

effectively operate and maintain the parks and recreation system in a satisfactory manner. Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a goal as they move forward in the development of Ordinances, City Policies, Administrative Policies, and Department Policies.

- Update policies and procedures on an annual basis. Ensure that they create maximum flexibility for the staff in the field to do their work in a timely manner.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic barriers that may be identified in the ADA Transition Plan.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program. Specifically, the Department should work towards the development of additional maintenance facilities to accommodate vehicle and equipment storage indoors so that they are in a controlled environment and free of contaminant runoff.
- The Department should continue to educate City officials, employees, volunteers, and the general public on the rules and regulations related to parkland that is under the jurisdiction of Land and Water Conservation Funds regulations.
- The Department should continue to educate City officials, employees, volunteers, and the general public on the rules and regulations related to parkland that is under the jurisdiction of a Conservation Easement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Community engagement is a vital component of a park and recreation agency's efforts to have a successful planning process must incorporate a comprehensive community input process, to gauge the residents and users of the system desires and usage characteristics, and ultimately need, for park and recreation facilities and programs.

These activities may take the form of meetings and events, surveys, stakeholder groups and other relationship-building undertakings that make sure an agency hears views from every segment of the community, and provides for a mutual exchange of ideas, and helps meet the community's needs.

Citizen participation is imperative in providing a responsive, effective, and high-quality park and recreation system. park and recreation system is being developed on behalf of its residents. Therefore, Sunset Hills involvement of citizens throughout the planning and programming process ensures that resident's needs and values are reflected in the City's park and recreation system. It is intended that the feedback received will result in an understanding of community needs, while highlighting opportunities for system improvement and prioritizing future actions.

FINDING PHASE

The focus of all efforts in this phase was to gather data. The data consist of opinions, facts, and impressions of the park system and all aspects of its operation. At this stage, there wasn't an assessment of how well or poorly the system is working. There were no judgments on how to fix problems, or on how to improve the system, merely an attempt to gather as much information as possible concerning the status quo of the system as it stands.

One important function of the Finding Phase is that it provides a common baseline for understanding how the system and organization work. The later analysis of this unbiased collection of data identifies strengths and weaknesses in the system; it measures the effectiveness of service delivery; and it gauges the attitudes of staff, of citizens, of stakeholders, and of leaders. The intent was to hear from people, and in order to hear from them, multiple mechanisms and strategies were developed to encourage them to share opinions.

Data Collection

The first step of the Finding Phase, involved a broad collection of information on the existing conditions of Sunset Hills Parks and the community context of the City. During this phase, the existing conditions of the park were assessed by the Cochran team. Park land, greenways, trails and other recreation opportunities available in the area immediately

surrounding Sunset Hills were inventoried. GIS data was used to analyze flood plains around the City and their effect on City park land.

Demographic information of the City was analyzed to give the Cochran team an idea of the community character and to collect information relevant to recreation programming and park development. The Cochran team reached out to several organizations and individuals that use City parks to ask for input and suggestions for the Master Plan. Previous studies and reports that been conducted were reviewed for information that could be relevant to the planning process.

Key Stakeholder Interviews

The second step of the Finding Phase featured key leadership interviews with staff and community stakeholders.

Interviews with parks and recreation staff took place on March 27, 2025 at the Sunset Hills Community Center. Staff members representing administration, maintenance, facilities, aquatic facility, athletic facilities, and programs were interviewed. Parks and facility tours given by staff representatives were given to the Cochran team as well.

Stakeholders are persons who are in a position to know what the key issues are facing the overall community and its park system. A meeting took place on May 1, 2025 at the Sunset Hills City Hall. Participating in the interview were the Parks Commission and the Aquatic Advisory Committee.

Three important outcomes from the key stakeholder interviews were:

- To set the tone for the master planning process as one of creating a participatory process, of always striving to be accurate and thorough as data is collected and used during the analytical process, and to always strive to educate leaders about realistic possibilities for the parks and recreation system.
- To learn as much as possible about local concerns facing the community and its park and recreation system.

The results of these meetings were incorporated into subsequent findings.

Public Input Meeting

The third step of the Finding Phase processes featured a public meeting designed to further engage residents of the community. The meeting took place on June 3, 2025 from 6:00-7:30 pm at the Sunset Hills City Hall. At this meeting, the various planning efforts were discussed, and attendees were allowed an opportunity to offer feedback on the park and recreation system and to express their preferences for their future park system. The results of this meeting were incorporated into subsequent findings.

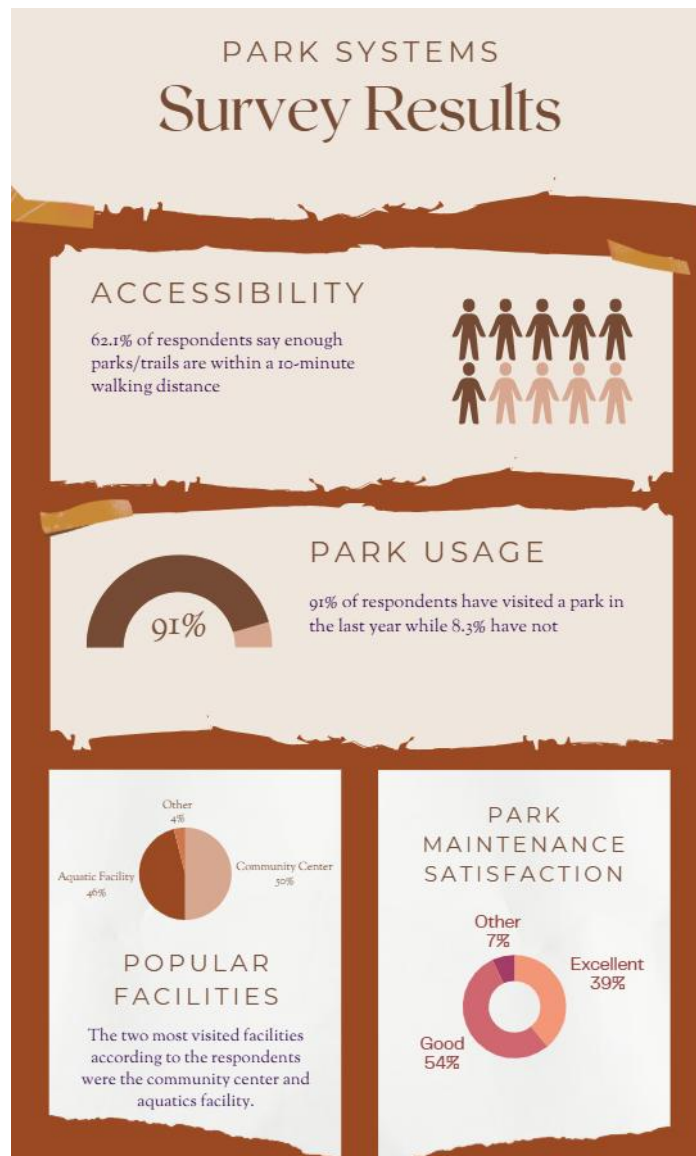
Outcomes from the Public Input Meeting were:

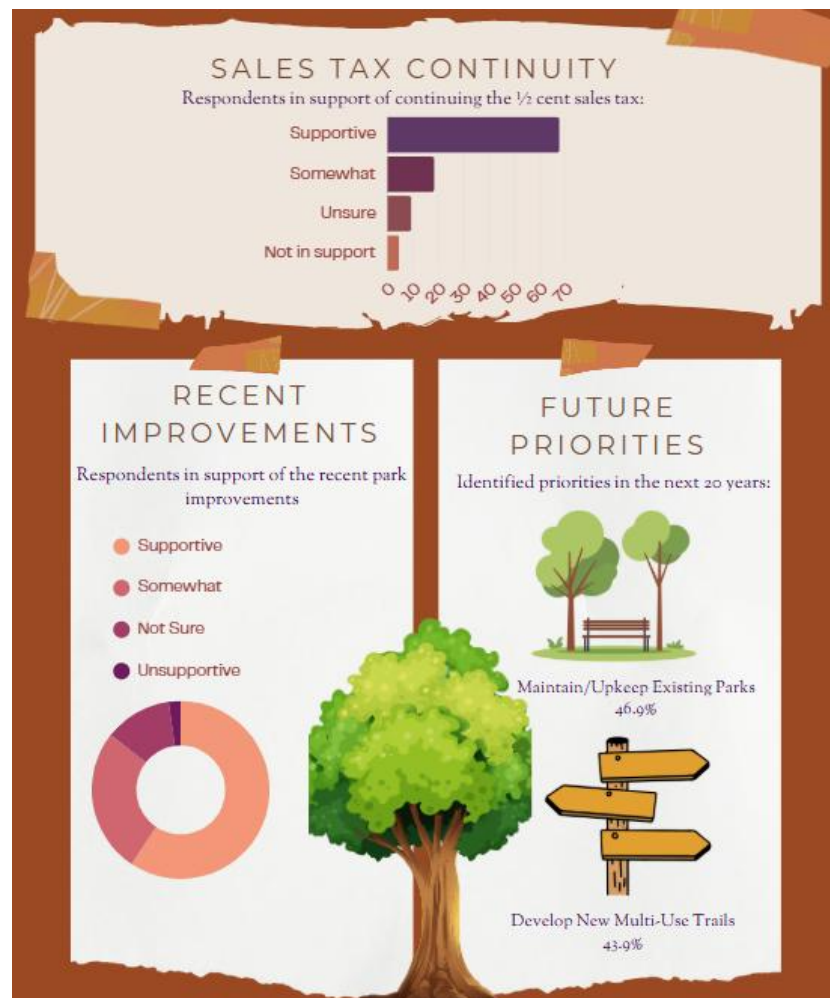
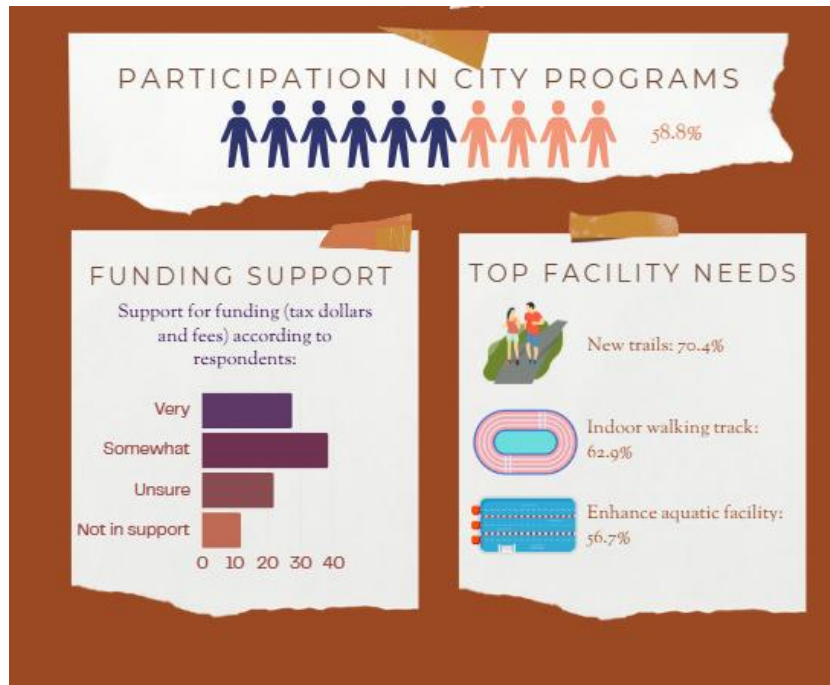
- To learn as much as possible about local concerns facing the community and its parks and recreation system.

Citizen Survey

A needs assessment citizen survey (See Appendix C for all survey results) was conducted from a sample of Sunset Hills households (80.6% of respondents were residents). The survey was posted on the city’s website as well as paper copies were made available at the community center for those without computer access). Mailers were sent to approximately 3,660 households and yard signs were placed in the parks to inform residents of the survey.

The purpose of the survey was to quantify issues that were identified in qualitative phase of the data collection, in which the Cochran team met with City staff and community residents to discuss park and recreation needs. Survey questions were based on feedback obtained during employee and stakeholder interviews, and a public input meeting. A number of important themes that emerged from the findings of the needs assessment citizen survey data included the following:





Master Plan/Survey Public Meeting

A second public meeting was held in conjunction with the Parks Commission meeting on September 24, 2025, where the Cochran representative gave an overview of the survey results and Master Plan findings. The Commission and general public were given the opportunity to ask questions and give input on the Master Plan and Survey results.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall include community involvement in the planning process that includes ongoing and systematic outreach to include the entire community. It is critical that the diversity of individuals (i.e. all cultures, ages, and abilities) and local, regional, and national non-governmental community organizations, agencies, businesses, and service providers such as the Red Cross, Sierra Club, Trust for Public Land, YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, and local foundations and employers are afforded opportunities for input.

Describe how the diverse interests (community organizations, businesses and individuals) of the community were involved in the planning process.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key issues were identified that needed to be resolved in order to frame the assessment. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive park system.

Recommendations

- Some of the findings listed above may take a longer time frame to accomplish than others. So, look at achieving short-term projects that may be accomplished by in-house staff and/or volunteers (i.e. better maintenance practices).
- Explore the various grant opportunities that would align with the projects desired (see Finance Analysis and Capital Improvement sections).
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

BENCHMARKING

INTRODUCTION

Thriving parks and recreation systems depend on public consensus. Consensus that park land is valuable enough to preserve and maintain for public use and that the array of services that the City provides is essential to the common good. Most people when asked express positive feelings about parks and all that they represent. Historically, however, parks and recreation agencies have had few concrete, performance-related facts and industry standards to offer the public. And in a time of diminishing budgets and increased competition for public and private funds, favorable public opinions of parks are simply not enough. As such, this section identifies standards, benchmarks, certifications, and trends that will be used as a tool to help guide the Department with informed decision-making.

SURVEY'S AND REPORTS

NRPA Agency Performance Review

Each year, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) presents a snapshot of local park and recreation agencies by releasing data to identify the best practices to optimally serve communities. The 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review summarizes the key findings from the NRPA's Park Metrics, which is a benchmarking tool to assist park and recreational professionals in the effective management and planning of their operating resources and capital facilities. This data represents the most comprehensive collection of parks and recreational related benchmarks and insights that inform communities of all sizes. The 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review does not include "national standards," instead this data acts as a guide for different agencies that serve communities of all sizes with unique needs, desires and challenges. Each agency is run differently and have diverse funding mechanisms; therefore, these benchmarks should be used as a tool to make broad comparisons to similar communities.

NRPA 2024 Engagement With Parks Report

Since 2016, the research team of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has conducted a yearly survey to better understand how people connect with parks and recreation across the United States. The survey results form the basis of NRPA's annual *Engagement With Parks* reports. The report series provides park and recreation professionals, advocates, policymakers and other key stakeholders with insights into how local parks and recreation facilities impact the lives of everyone in our nation.

Outdoor Participation Trends Report

Each year, the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) presents annual trends report that has served as the most trusted and comprehensive source of insights and narratives. Although, this report is primarily for outdoor retailers who use the information to determine the size of

the target market and how it can help brands determine the potential demand for their products and services, it can also help park and recreation agencies understand who's doing what, when, and how outdoors. This helps in the planning and designing of parks and facilities, as well as it provides insight to opportunities that might exist for programming.

Recreation Management Industry Report

Each year, the Recreation Management magazine produces an Industry Report. Like the NRPA Agency Performance Review and the OAI's trends report, the Industry Report presents a snapshot of data to identify the best practices to optimally serve communities as it also provides information as to who's doing what, when, and how. This report helps in the planning and designing of parks and facilities, provides insight to opportunities that might exist for programming, as well as it provides staffing and facility usage data.

The National Sporting Goods Association Participation Report

On an annual basis, the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) conducts an in-depth study and survey of how Americans spend their leisure time. This information provides the data necessary to overlay rate of participation a service area to determine market potential.

Xplor Recreation

Xplor Recreation (recreation management software company) conducts an annual parks and recreation trends guide that is derived from their proprietary data that was collected from parks and recreational professionals from across North America. The result is a robust collection of information that they have analyzed and defined as the most important trends to watch out for in 2025.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Several elements of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) are developed to guide outdoor parks and recreation planning for both public and private agencies. The SCORP is intended to recognize key issues, estimate and project outdoor statewide levels, identify agency roles and responsibilities, and based on all of these and other elements, establish priority goals and recommendations for all parks and recreation providers. This statewide/regional approach promotes a synergistic effort by guiding the planning and implementation efforts of all agencies in order to meet the established regional and statewide needs, goals, and recommendations. When establishing these, however, there must be some common denominators which can be used to maintain consistency among the various agencies. These usually take the form of outdoor recreation use standards, but at the statewide or regional level. Thus, when local agencies begin to establish or revise their own outdoor recreation use standards, SCORP can be used to identify the region's standard or average uses concomitantly with the regional and statewide needs, goals, and recommendations.

Furthermore, it is also important to understand the relationship between the Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) and SCORP - To be

eligible for these matching state grants, all grant applications submitted are measured to the SCORP standards.

ACCREDITATION, CERTIFICATION, DEDICATION

CAPRA National Accreditation

The Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) standards for national accreditation provides an authoritative assessment tool for park and recreation agencies. Through compliance with the standards of excellence, CAPRA accreditation assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and tax payers that an accredited park and recreation agency has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks and standards as delivering a high level of quality.

Every park and recreation agency, whatever its focus or field of operation, is rightfully concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. Often the process helps identify efficiencies and heighten areas of accountability, all of which translate into higher quality service and operation. With the importance of park and recreation programs and services to the quality of life, each agency has an essential role in the lives of the people it serves. CAPRA accreditation is a quality assurance and quality improvement process demonstrating an agency's commitment to its employees, volunteers, patrons and community.

More than 206 park and recreation agencies across the country and only four in the state of Missouri (Chesterfield, Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Springfield-Green County) are now accredited through CAPRA. It is the nation's only accreditation for park and recreation agencies that measures quality and service. CAPRA accreditation is a mark of distinction and indicates that an agency has met rigorous standards related to management and administration of lands, facilities, resources, programs, safety, and services.

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with ten (10) areas of concentration (Agency Authority, Role and Responsibility; Planning; Organization and Administration; Human Resources; Financial Management; Programs and Services Management; Facility and Land Use Management; Public Safety, Law Enforcement and Security; Risk Management; and Evaluation and Research) consisting of 144 standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 36 Fundamental Standards, and at least 85 percent of the remaining 108 standards.

CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes three phases: 1) Development of the agency self-assessment report; 2) The on-site visitation; 3) and the Commission's review and decision. The on-site visitation follows the agency's development of its self-assessment report. If accreditation is granted by the Commission at its meeting following the on-site visit, the agency will develop a new self-assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between on-site visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards.

Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary

Audubon International has created the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) that governs the Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary (CACSP), which provides an Environmental Management System Framework. Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) are increasingly being used by environmentally-leading City's as a means to set and meet performance goals, and improve upon them over time. The ACSP is designed to serve in the development of an EMS to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ISO14001 standards.

The principal components of the EMS are *plan, do, check, and act*. Within this framework are a number of key elements or steps related to the development and implementation of an EMS. The EPA - ISO14001 standards outlines 17 key elements as follows:

1. Environmental principles and policies.
2. Legal and other requirements.
3. Assess significant environmental aspects and impacts.
4. Objectives and targets.
5. Develop environmental management programs.
6. Structure and responsibility.
7. Training, awareness and competence.
8. Communication and outreach.
9. EMS documentation.
10. Document control.
11. Operational control.
12. Emergency preparedness and response.
13. Monitoring and measurement.
14. Nonconformance and corrective and preventive action.
15. Environmental records.
16. EMS audit.
17. Management review.

Tree City USA

The Tree City USA® program, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Missouri Department of Conservation, provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities that more than 135 million Americans call home.

The many benefits of being a Tree City include creating a framework for action, education, a positive public image, and citizen pride.

To be designated a Tree City a municipality must comply with the following standards:

1. Have a Tree Board or dedicated Department.
2. Have a Community Tree Ordinance.
3. Have a Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at least \$2 per capita; Mission Statement; Annual Work Plan; and Accomplishment Report.
4. Hold an Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation.

Community Wildlife Habitat

The Community Wildlife Habitat certification program, sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for backyard and community wildlife programs in towns, cities, schools, and backyards.

The many benefits of being a Community Wildlife Habitat program include creating a framework for action, education, a positive public image, and citizen pride.

To be certified a Community Wildlife Habitat a municipality must provide the following habitat components at each park site:

1. Food
2. Water
3. Cover
4. Places to raise young
5. Practicing sustainable gardening techniques such as eliminating pesticides, conserving water and planting native species.

STANDARDS

10-Minute Walk

The Trust for Public Land — along with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Urban Land Institute — is leading a movement to ensure that everyone in the United States has access to a quality park or green space within a 10-minute walk of his or her home. From Portland, Maine, to Honolulu, Hawaii, more than 200 mayors endorse the 10-minute walk as a park standard for all. While the U.S. has a vast and inspiring national parks system as well as much state-managed and protected parkland, the nation is short on community-level parks and green spaces — and there's an even greater deficit of high-quality community parks that are well-used and well-loved.

The 10-Minute Walk metric – equivalent to approximately a half-mile for an able-bodied person – is the average distance most people are willing to walk to reach a destination, a standard that helps planners/cities examine the number of opportunities and resources a person has close to home.

Ensuring that all people have access to a park within a 10-minute walk of home and that there's adequate park space in all neighborhoods is essential to creating safe access and quality spaces, that are central to achieving park equity.

8-80 Concept

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 8-80 Cities, and the Trust for Public Land have come together to highlight the importance of parks and give community leaders tools they can use to both create and improve green spaces and public places for people of all ages.

It is their belief that public parks are important places for building a sense of community and social belonging. They are spaces that belong to everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or income. However, the way parks are designed, maintained and programmed doesn't always reflect the purpose and promise of such uniquely public spaces. Pinched for funds by competing priorities, many municipalities neglect their park networks or fail to invest in these vital places as their communities grow and change. It is their belief that if everything we do in our public spaces that is great for an 8-month-old and an 80-year-old, then it will be great for people of all ages. As such, this philosophy has become a standard in park planning and design.

Level Of Service

The level of service (LOS) guideline is a quantified ratio of the number of parks, facilities, trails (or other appropriate unit; e.g. miles, acres) which represents the minimum amount needed per portion of the population to meet real time recreation demands of the citizens of a community.

The LOS is derived by identifying the spaces and facilities required to meet the community real time recreation demand, and the minimum amount of park land, facilities, trails, etc., needed to accommodate specific facilities and spaces needed for recreation activities. A LOS standard is nothing more than a benchmark or acceptable measure. Unless the LOS standard is mandated by law, there is no absolute requirement that it be used as anything more than a guideline.

In addition to the minimum LOS, there may be a host of other community considerations which, although not easily quantifiable, are nonetheless important in planning the park and recreation system of a community. These policy issues are unique to each community and must be considered in the light of local attitudes, values, economic conditions and historical precedents. After considering these issues the calculated LOS may be changed in order to more accurately reflect a LOS which community leaders can commit to.

The goal of the NRPA Development Guidelines is to examine the outdoor parks and recreation facility needs of communities. These needs are then quantified into LOS ratios of the number of facilities (or other appropriate unit; e.g. miles, acres) needed per portion of the population within a city or service area. These LOS ratios, called *Recreation Development Goals*, represent the number of facilities (miles, acres, etc.) per the City's population that would satisfy the City's parks and recreation needs. While the NRPA Metrics shows the actual number of facilities (miles, acres, etc.) per population group as surveyed across the U.S.

A. Outdoor Measurement Standards

Within the 2018-2022 State of Missouri State adopted Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the state proposed that all State agencies and local governments shift away from levels of service calculated by acres/miles/facilities per thousand residents to a system based upon statistically valid local public opinion and park and trail service area (or accessibility) standards. However, the Cochran team recommends the continued use of the NRPA Development Guidelines and Metrics (2023 Survey of Public Agencies) use the acres/miles/facilities per thousand in population guidelines as an

analytical tool to assist in decision making when appropriate.

The Cochran team believes that measurement standards can be an important tool for planning a balanced park system. Measurement standards consist of formulas used to project the amount or number of a given type of facility required to serve a given population. These formulas are applied to population numbers in order to give planners a rough measure of needs. They also provide a general map or direction for the department to focus its resources.

These standards only count facilities that are publicly owned and are open to the general public. As such, Places of Worship, Subdivisions/Home Owner Associations, Private Clubs, YMCA's, JCC's, Athletic Associations, Private Schools etc. do not count towards the overall total of facility/park inventory, as they are not available to the total population. Public Schools can count towards the overall total of facility/park inventory, as they are available to the total population. However, the actual Public-School facility/park inventory numbers must be divided in half, as they are only available to the general total population half of the time.

Parks Per Capita

The typical agency has one park for every 2,386 residents. For those agencies serving jurisdictions of less than 20,000 residents, there is one park for every 1,172 residents. The ratio increases to one park for every 2,062 residents in jurisdictions with populations between 20,000 and 49,999, and then rises further to one park for every 2,346 people at agencies serving areas with a population of more than 50,000 and 99,999.

The typical park and recreation agency manages 10.6 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents in its jurisdiction. The smallest agencies — those serving less than 20,000 residents — typically manage 12.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. That ratio narrows to 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents for agencies that serve a population of 20,000 to 49,999 people. Agencies serving jurisdictions with populations between 50,000 and 99,000 manage 10.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Parkland refers to both maintained parks and open space areas, such as green spaces and courtyards.

Site Amenities and Facilities

Park and recreation professionals oversee a wide range of facilities and features for which their agencies have responsibility. In addition, the number of amenities and facilities managed by park and recreation agencies varies. Ninety-three percent of park and recreation agencies provide playground facilities for their communities. At least half of agencies have basketball courts, diamond fields for baseball and/or softball, tennis courts, multi-purpose and/or youth soccer rectangular fields, dog parks, community gardens and outdoor swimming pools. The typical park and recreation agency has:

- One playground for every 3,750 residents
- One basketball court for every 8,000 residents
- One outdoor tennis court for every 6,003 residents
- One dog park for every 46,917 residents
- One diamond field for every 5,000 residents
- One rectangular field for every 46,917 residents

FACILITY	NRPA DEVELOPMENT GOALS	NRPA METRICS LESS THAN 20,000
Parkland (Acres)	1 Acre/47 People	10.6 Acre/1,000 People
Park	N/A	1 Park/2,386 People
Walking Trails (Miles)	1 Mile/4,446 People	N/A
Bicycle Trail (Miles)	1 Mile/2,624 People	N/A
Equestrian Trail (Miles)	1 Mile/4,854 People	N/A
Exercise Trail (Miles)	1 Mile/3,907 People	N/A
Nature Trail (Miles)	1 Mile/4,814 People	N/A
Multi-Purpose Trail (Miles)	1 Mile/4,220 People	4 Miles/20,000 People
Swimming Pool	1 Pool/6,500 People	1 Pool/9,500 People
Picnic Tables	1 Table/128 People	N/A
Picnic Pavilion	1 Pavilion/1,356 People	N/A
Golf Courses	1 Course/25,674 People	1 Course/9,626 People
Baseball Fields	1 Field/1,545 People	1 Field/1,833 People
Playgrounds	1 Playground/1,379 People	1 Playground/1,990 People
Tennis Courts	1 Court/2,333 People	1 Court/3,074 People
Open Playfields	1 Field/7,886 People	1 Field/10,584 People
Volleyball Courts	1 Court/4,659 People	1 Court/9,250 People
Basketball Courts	1 Court/4,410 People	1 Court/4,366 People
Football/Soccer Fields	1 Field/3,274 People	1 Field/2,493 People
Handball/Racquetball Courts	1 Court/43,187 People	1 Court/13,350 People
Multi-Use Courts	1 Court/6,073 People	1 Court/5,248 People
Horseshoe Courts	1 Court/2,810 People	N/A
Shuffle Board Courts	1 Court/4,251 People	N/A
Pickleball Courts	N/A	1 Court/3,390 People
Ice Rinks	1 Rink/108,838 People	1 Rink/8,015 People
Skateboard Park	1 Park/34,435 People	1 Park/11,284 People
Dog Parks	N/A	1 Park/10,327 People
Community Gardens	N/A	1 Garden/8,800 People

B. Indoor Measurement Standards

As outlined in the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review The typical park and recreation agency operates seven buildings. Agencies serving populations of less than 20,000 often operate between two and 10 buildings, with a median of four buildings; while those serving populations between 50,000 to 99,999 often operate between five and 20 buildings, with a median of eight buildings; with those serving populations between 100,000 and 250,000 often operate between 16 and 58 buildings, with a median of 31 buildings; and agencies serving a population of more than 250,000 operate between 36 and 176 buildings, with a median of 89 buildings under their purview.

Park and recreation agencies also offer many indoor facilities to their residents. Three in five have recreation centers and community centers. Also commonly offered are senior centers, performance amphitheaters and nature centers. According to the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review the typical agency that offers recreation centers have one facility for every 32,786 residents, while those agencies with community centers have one such facility for every 31,569 residents. A little more than two in five agencies offer senior centers, with one such facility for every 62,201 residents in their jurisdictions.

INDOOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES — POPULATION PER FACILITY (BY PREVALENCE AND POPULATION PER FACILITY)							
Types of Facilities	Percent of Agencies	Median Number of Residents per Facility					
		All Agencies	Population of Jurisdiction				
			Less Than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More Than 250,000
Recreation centers	62%	32,786	9,685	24,486	39,886	57,750	67,213
Community centers	59%	31,569	8,908	27,858	52,000	55,135	93,758
Senior centers	40%	62,201	14,286	31,985	67,190	125,817	311,014
Performance amphitheaters	40%	69,604	12,769	32,255	59,000	116,135	374,718
Nature centers	34%	133,773	9,430	33,669	71,360	139,248	378,408
Aquatics centers	30%	58,496	12,618	31,000	60,824	110,629	248,646
Restrooms	28%	5,580	2,579	4,905	5,520	6,850	11,925
Stadiums	19%	103,222	10,633	32,299	64,150	154,198	425,884
Teen centers	12%	58,712	14,797	31,785	58,712	124,264	360,153
Indoor ice rinks	12%	59,277	8,004	23,512	53,224	108,508	500,000
Arenas	9%	95,696	7,057	24,838	68,104	118,500	716,862

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY TYPOLOGIES

The City's parks system consists of varied park spaces and recreation facilities. park designations identified are intended as a guide to the types of parks that make up the Citywide parks system, but are not intended to suggest that any particular planning effort be limited to these particular park types, or that any particular effort must include each and every park type. Detailed guidelines for all park and facility types highlight a sample range of varying park and facility types. These guidelines offer basic tools for establishing minimum development standards and promoting equity in the delivery of recreation. Guidelines should be flexible enough to meet changing recreational priorities and accommodate creative opportunities to expand recreation throughout the parks system.

SUNSET HILLS PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY TYPOLOGIES

Park/Facility Type	Purpose
Open Space*	Undeveloped areas, and other natural landforms that protect habitat
River Parks*	Areas of habitat and resource protection, with compatible recreation
Community Parks	Parks that serve the community and may include recreation centers, aquatic complexes, multi-purpose fields, sand volleyball courts, tennis courts, pickleball courts, dog parks, amphitheaters, pavilions, picnic areas etc.
Neighborhood Parks	Parks that serve smaller populations and may include playgrounds, tennis/pickleball courts, basketball courts, splash pads, pavilions, picnic areas and trails.
Mini or Pocket Parks	Small, highly accessible parks near residential or business areas with features, such as picnic areas, fountains, art or historic elements.
Trailhead Pocket Parks*	Small parks near trailheads with directional, regulatory, and educational signage, seating, native planting, and other passive recreational features.
Conservation Parks	Parks with directional, regulatory, and educational signage, seating, trails, ponds/lakes, native planting, and other passive recreational features.
Recreation Center	Facilities that may include gyms, indoor courts, multi-purpose rooms, fitness areas, and community-serving facilities.
Aquatics Complexes	Pools and support facilities.
Trails/Connections	Linkages that connect people with open space and active public spaces.

TRENDS

Human Capital

Human capital is the idea that one's knowledge, skills, personal attributes, creativity and more are combined in the ability to perform a job that equates to a measure of economic value. There is a better understanding emerging within the park and recreation industry of what defines the human-capital needs of the field and what those professionals look like now and in the future. The human-capital needs for public parks and recreation are changing dramatically. While traditional roles, job classifications and employment types still predominate, new models are emerging rapidly, which sometimes provide fewer benefits and less security for workers and can require greater flexibility in job skills, training and education.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a new approach to the management of land and water that utilizes the processes of natural systems to slow, store and treat stormwater, thereby reducing the costs of traditional hard infrastructure such as channelization, underground stormwater storage tanks, and combined storm and sewer overflows. Key components of green infrastructure are water management and water quality, areas in which parks definitely play a role that will become increasingly important in the future because parks and conservation lands will increasingly be tapped for their potential to contribute to stormwater management and eco-benefits. Significantly, the cost of utilizing parks and conservation lands will be far less expensive than traditional gray infrastructure, and the best green infrastructure projects will bring new funding as well as new recreation opportunities and facilities for public use.

Demographics

Changing demographics have shaped our nation since its founding. For parks and recreation, understanding how communities are changing and responding to those changes is critical to ensuring relevancy. Referred to as "the societal piece" this is a recognition that parks and recreation must adopt a new role of being facilitators and innovators in terms of larger social contexts. Grasping the concept of social equity is key to understanding our role in participating in social innovation, placemaking and providing health solutions for communities.

This trend suggests that at the local level, agencies become the "one-stop shop" for the community, and can meet people where they are by being present and connecting with them in new ways, such as mobile apps, search engine optimization and search engine marketing, in order to effectively respond to community needs. To be fully engaged, we must develop partnerships with community organizations as well as responsively tailor programs to best serve the cultural and social makeup of the community.

Senior Initiatives

The aging of Missouri's population will have a profound effect on the services, facilities and programming expected of recreation providers. Providers will need to ensure that accessible trails and greenways connect parks to retirement communities, residential facilities and senior centers.

Programs that target older participants, such as walking programs, birdwatching, or senior

trips, will become increasingly popular. Additionally, communities will experience an increasing demand for the development of park amenities and facilities specific to older adults.

According to a 2017 national survey conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), more than nine out of 10 park and recreation agencies offer facilities, activities and programming that cater to older adults but, because of staffing and budgeting issues, these agencies frequently look for partners to assist with funding, programming, transportation, etc.

Among activities recommended to improve health in older adults is the game of pickleball, which has received considerable recent attention because of its rapidly growing popularity amongst seniors. A 2018 article in Missouri Life magazine suggests that "...Missouri might just have the fastest-growing pickleball community in the country." The oddly named sport has been described as a combination of tennis, ping pong and badminton, played with a racquet resembling a large ping pong paddle and a ball resembling a whiffle ball, with a miniature court half the size of a tennis court. Its popularity with the older generation is due in large part to its lower physical impact and its social nature. A plus for recreation providers is the minimal infrastructure investment if using an existing tennis court or other play court, only requiring painted lines delineating the pickleball court.

The New Narrative/Reframing our Proposition

Part and parcel of the societal piece is the new narrative of how parks and recreation must reframe value propositions. The basic value propositions for why parks were created as public "goods" remain, but clearly, parks and recreation must evolve into something more to remain relevant in a dramatically changing society and environment. The concept of park and recreation agencies as, first and foremost, a provider of services and programs to the public at large is rapidly changing. More and more, park and recreation agencies are being expected to be innovators for community solutions that involve conservation, health and wellness, and social equity, among other imperatives. Parks and recreation agencies must be contributors to the social innovation strategies that activate healthy communities and make them vibrant places that people value and where they want to live.

The Economic Forecast Factor

The status and health of parks and recreation serves as a bellwether for the state of the economy. However, perhaps more than any other public-sector service provider, parks and recreation agencies suffer direct consequences as a result of fluctuations in national and regional economies. Evidence shows that park and recreation agencies receive cuts in greater proportion to any other public-service sectors when economies decline. The simple fact is that the state of the economy is always going to be a driving factor for park and recreation budgets. Even if that fact is a given, the Great Recession of 2008–2011 has had a greater and more long-lasting impact than any other recession of modern times. The events of the past few years have had major implications for how agencies operate now and how they will be funded in the future.

Many who are knowledgeable about funding for public parks and recreation believe that economic models for these areas are changing irrevocably, and not always for the better. Certainly, this has been true at the state level, and some evidence is pointing to similar trends at the local and municipal levels as well. While recessionary pressures over the past

few years led to greater efficiencies and greater adoption of business-oriented models, it also led to what many fear are permanent declines in tax-supported funding devoted to parks and recreation. Moreover, new trends, such as the infusion of private capital into public parks, the growth of public-private partnerships, and the development of privately funded and managed parks and park systems through Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) or Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) mechanisms, have caused a re-evaluation of traditional methods of funding parks and recreation through tax-supported general funds. Critical to the success and future of public parks and recreation is engaging communities in understanding the benefits and value of parks and recreation. The greatest need to make the most compelling case for public parks and recreation is evidence-based research. The urgency level of understanding and responding to this trend is high.

NATIONAL TRENDS

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Neighborhood Parks – Best of Class agencies work with neighborhoods to customize the park design, or re-design of their neighborhood parks to match the demographics of the surrounding area and the corresponding preferences of those who live there. When possible, the agency will develop a partnership agreement with the neighborhood to share responsibilities for development and maintenance of the park.

Large Downtown Parks - Large downtown parks are framing cities and creating a sense of space. Many large and small communities select a downtown park to provide a sense of place, to encourage visitors and to otherwise showcase their community. Notable large downtown parks include Central Park in New York City, the Millennium Park in Chicago, the Golden Gate State Park in San Francisco, and Forest Park in St. Louis.

Community Parks – Community parks are larger in size and serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. They allow for group activities and offer other recreational opportunities not feasible, nor perhaps desirable, at the neighborhood level. As with neighborhood parks, they should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities.

Signature Parks – Signature parks are making a major comeback and are framing the way cities demonstrate their quality of life, their image of public managed space, and the creation of a sense of place and connectivity for the community. A Signature Park is defined as one which the entire community recognizes as one of its most important parks. The Signature Park is one which creates an image of who the community is and what it represents. The Signature Park often has the full complement of passive and active recreational activities and creates a high level of earned income. Examples include the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, Fairmont Park in Philadelphia, Central Park in New York, Millennium Park in Chicago, Grant Park in Chicago, White River State Park in Indianapolis. and Forest Park in St. Louis.

Special Use Parks – Special Use Parks are designed to serve the entire community with specialized facilities such as a sports complex, golf course or aquatic facility. Size is determined by the demand for the facilities located there and their space requirements.

These park types are becoming much more popular as they provide a destination for users with a similar interest. Another advantage of this park type is that park users who have no interest in active facilities can seek a passive experience in another park type.

Regional Parks – Regional Parks serve a larger purpose than community parks. Regional parks are larger and have more amenities than community level parks and attract users for longer periods of time due to their size and features. Regional parks typically include features such as playgrounds, shelters, walking trails and athletic facilities.

Preserves – Preserves are created to preserve land as undeveloped greenway space in and around communities. These parks often follow natural drainage ways or utilize land that is not developable, thus they require minimum maintenance and capital improvement dollars. Trails are a great addition to these parks and are a great way to link neighborhoods within the community.

Greenways and Trails - Greenways and trails continue to be the number one amenity that communities desire because they have wide age segment appeal, they connect neighborhoods to major attractions and stream corridors, and they allow people to move freely with very little vehicle interaction.

Clustered Sports Facilities - Development of clustered sports facilities that promote sports tourism and operational efficiency is a significant trend. Clustered sports complexes are developed to support youth and adults in one setting.

Revenue-Producing Facilities – Many communities now challenge their Park and Recreation Department to recover a very high percentage of its operating costs. Obviously, this means that the Department must offer the type of programs and services that citizens are willing to pay for.

Indoor Sports Facilities – Recreation facility trends for indoor facilities focus on multiple court field houses for basketball (10 to 12 courts), volleyball, soccer, and tennis. The trend is moving away from one court facilities.

Outdoor Tennis Complexes – Complexes are designed to support 20 to 24 courts in one setting for national events and 10 to 12 courts in one setting for statewide events. This trend moves away from the traditional one and two tennis courts in close-to-home neighborhood and community parks.

Recreation/Multi-Use Centers – Centers are now designed to offset operational costs and are multi-generational in design. Their size ranges generally from 40,000 sq. ft. up to 100,000 sq. ft. or more, with large functional space that supports gym activities, aquatic activities and fitness activities, with designated spaces for both teens and seniors. Some communities include indoor ice in their facilities which can add an additional 40,000 sq. ft. These facilities incorporate monthly pass fees and daily admission fees and return high operational revenues to the City. Some of these facilities are designed and located to serve their communities as Signature Facilities that assist with citizen retention, new resident attractions, and business development enhancements. These centers also tend to include indoor swimming pools that offer year-round swimming for competition, therapeutic and

fitness purposes. Surprisingly the pools are most desirable in communities with aging populations.

Ice Skating Facilities – The trend is toward multiple sheets of ice in one location due to the popularity of the sport and to accommodate the multiple user groups with unique interests. For example, there are competitive users, figure skaters, recreational skaters and those who are interested in the learn-to-skate classes. For several of the user groups, seating to accommodate 1,000 spectators is important.

Shaded Areas - Many communities are providing shade structures in their aquatic and athletic facilities. In aquatic facilities, it is not uncommon to see shade structures both in the water area and on the deck. In athletic facilities, shade structures are provided over the primary bleacher area for spectators, for covered dugouts and for commons areas where players and spectators congregate.

Outdoor Aquatics - Outdoor aquatic facilities continue to be very popular in most cities. These are family oriented and incorporate warm water and cool water pool facilities with shallow and deep water. These pools incorporate water play features, competitive swim opportunities, slides, flow riders, and lazy rivers with a bather capacity level at 1000 to 2000 people at a time.

Splash Pads - Many communities are providing splash pads which augment existing indoor/outdoor aquatic facilities in the same location, or, in areas of the community where there are no other existing aquatic facilities (stand-alone). Splash Pads are colorful and safe areas for water play for children which have no standing water. Typically, there are ground nozzles that spray water upwards and other interactive water features that spray water from all directions such as in the form of a mushroom shower or tree shower.

Dog Parks - Dog Runs (a term generally used in the eastern United States), and Dog Parks (a term generally used in the western United States) are places where dogs are legally allowed to be unrestrained or off-leash. Some examples are: fenced areas of city parks, piers, beaches, and very large parks with hiking trails. Surveys indicate that off-leash dog parks are typically composed of a fenced enclosed area one to three acres for a neighborhood facility and up to ten acres for a community facility. Smaller facilities have been developed in some communities, but the success of these areas creates a significant impact and wear on smaller sites. The facilities should include a double gate to assure that animals cannot escape as new ones enter the compound; plastic bags and waste receptacles to remove dog waste; water source; parking; benches (inside and out compound); shade shelter; bulletin board; emergency phone; and some areas include trails and dog training/obstacle course areas. *Recently there has been a trend in creating segregated areas for big and small dogs to improve pet safety.*

Adventure Parks (BMX Track, Skate Park and In-Line Skating) - Adventure sports are now very popular in the category of Special Use Parks. Typically, an adventure park may include a BMX Track, skate park and an in-line skating. According to the National Sporting Goods association 2023 Report, Mountain Biking and In-line Roller Skating for youth increased 4.2 % over the last year.

Skate Spots - A relatively new trend is for communities to provide close-to-home skate spots. These facilities are much smaller than a skate park and will typically include 2 to 4 obstacles. The interest in skate spots is driven by the fact that the average age of a skateboarder is 13.8 and 80% of skateboarders are under the age of 18, thus an inability for many skateboarders to drive to a larger facility by themselves. Providing a close-to-home skate spot enables children to enjoy the skateboarding experience on a frequent basis without having to rely on transportation to a larger skate park.

Golf Learning Centers – Learning centers targeted to youth and beginning golfers. These types of facilities are usually open 90 to 105 hours a week and can be high revenue producers, and have the capability to cover operating and capital costs.

Non-Traditional Sports - Pickleball, geocaching, rock climbing and winter/summer X Games, Mountain Biking courses/parks, are but a few of the non-traditional sports that are now attracting many participants away from the traditional sports of baseball, softball, soccer, football and tennis. According to the National Sporting Goods association 2023 Report, Pickleball for youth increased 7.2 % over the last year.

Outsourcing - In facility management and maintenance, the trends continue to focus on outsourcing elements of park services which include cleaning of hard surfaces and restrooms and care of landscaping.

Park Maintenance - Park maintenance trends include: a) the consideration of outsourcing for street tree maintenance, mowing and maintenance of medians; and b) smaller maintenance shops that are spread out over the City to replace large regional shops as agencies move to reduce windshield time by park crews.

Golf Course Maintenance - Parks and Recreation Management continues to outsource golf course maintenance operations to reduce operational costs which support the effort to solidify golf as a profit center.

MANGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Partnership Management - Striking a balance among not-for-profit agencies and special interest groups who rely on city-owned facilities to produce their programs.

Technology - Utilizing and controlling technology in a manner that supports community development while not encouraging its inappropriate use.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Seniors – According to the 2024 explor recreation survey, it's important to ensure that your agency continues to put effort into developing high-quality and engaging programming for the Baby Boomer generation. The trend is fueled by the undeniable demographic shift where the 65+ age group stands out as one of the fastest-growing segments.

Millennials – According to the 2024 explor recreation survey, millennials have overtaken baby boomers as the largest population group. Unsurprisingly, they are also seeing more

millennial parents. Millennials are a different breed, and you need to understand their distinct needs and behaviors.

PROGRAMMING

Management of Recreation Programming – Creating a recreation program whose program types, formats and age groups served are aligned with the community profile.

Increase in Planned Programming Types – Recent research from RecManagement shows a significant 16% increase in the number of agencies planning to expand their programming options over the next several years. The biggest areas on increase are Special Needs Programs, Teen Programs, and Environmental Programs.

Decrease in Planned Programming Types - According to the 2024 explor recreation survey, Fitness Programs, Mindbody Programs, Group Programs, and Arts & Crafts Programs have seen the biggest decreases in programming.

According to a survey conducted for the 2018-2022 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Plan (SCORP), both parents and youth enjoy and recognize the benefits of being outdoors, but struggle with barriers preventing greater participation in outdoor activities. Competing interests, particularly technology, hamper their ability to enjoy parks and recreation spaces as much as they'd like. Urban youth and their parents worry about violence in their neighborhood parks, and all parents and youth want neighborhood parks within walking distance of home. Teens and tweens feel that facilities designed specifically for them are lacking in the current park landscape. All youth, particularly teens and tweens, crave adventure-based facilities and activities that provide a sense of risk and freedom. Parents look for activities that are free or low-cost and that appeal to both.

An Importance-Performance (IP) analysis was conducted to further explore which type of facilities recreation providers feel are most in need of improvement and most likely to grow in demand over the next five years. Recreation providers feel trails, playgrounds, multi-use fields, nature parks/areas, soccer fields, outdoor swimming pools, splash pads, picnic areas, and baseball/softball fields are most in need of improvement.

Providers also recognize that teens and older adults are underserved in facility offerings, and are attempting to incorporate programming and facilities that appeal to multiple generations as well as install facilities that target specific age groups, such as pickleball courts, bike courses/pump tracks, and outdoor adventure fitness equipment/courses, and all-inclusive playgrounds. However, recreation providers are often hindered in their efforts to provide additional facilities and programming because of a lack of consistent funding.

PREDICTIONS (NRPA)

1. Parks Are Everywhere. More and more cities will develop parks in spaces never before thought suitable for parks — underground in abandoned utility or transportation spaces, on the roofs of large buildings, and in large towers built as urban sculptures. At least one city will develop a floating park. Imagination will be the only limiting factor.

2. [Want to Live Longer? Live Near Parks.](#) People who want to live longer and have a better quality of life will move to jurisdictions where there are great park and recreation systems. An increasing body of evidence shows that your zip code may be one of the most determinative factors on how long you live. Want to live longer? Move to where there are good parks, or better yet, insist on more parks and better parks where you live.
3. [Data Will Drive Budgets.](#) Returning to the Top 5 Predictions list for a second year in a row is how much data-driven analysis will factor in preparing and justifying budgets and expenditures. This top-rated prediction of 2016 will be equally true again in 2017. Data collection and analysis will increasingly drive cost/benefit calculations about the value of parks. Such data will be essential to validate proposed large-scale capital projects, and will be critical to justify annual operational budgets to elected officials. Two important NRPA research reports will be of great value to agencies: Economic Impact of Local Parks Study and Americans Engagement with Parks Survey.
4. [Conservation Will Become as Important as Recreation.](#) As open space is chewed up at the rate of 6,000 acres per day across the U.S. and climate change begins to impact wildlife and landscapes ever more directly, the natural values of every park, often taken for granted, will be considered one of the more important community-based means of adapting to climate-change conditions. Parks will be appreciated for their conservation values — places that reduce urban temperatures, habitats that protect nature and biodiversity, landscapes that naturally manage stormwater, and places that protect and preserve clean air and pure water. The public will turn out in ever greater numbers to volunteer for conservation activities in parks.
5. [Virtual Reality Tours Will Replace Maps and Brochures.](#) Park and rec agencies will increasingly develop virtual reality (VR), augmented reality and 360-degree tours of their parks. This will become the new standard replacing printed programs that describe park and recreational program offerings. For a taste of the new virtual reality tours, see ASLA’s stunning VR tour of Toronto’s Underpass Park. Take a ‘walk’ through the park — its best viewed on your cell phone with the YouTube mobile app.
6. [Health Activities.](#) Local healthcare providers will increasingly refer patients to evidence-based health activities in parks.
7. [Park/School Concept.](#) There will be more cooperation between park and rec agencies and school systems especially in the design and programming of park/school facilities.
8. [Technology.](#) More agencies will develop “Rec2Tech” initiatives in rec centers using technology, 3D printers, maker-training, and other tech-friendly activities to engage hard-to-reach teens.
9. [Drones.](#) Agencies will increasingly use drones as part of their light displays and/or festivals.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall have level of service (LOS) standards for provision of land, facilities and services within the jurisdiction. LOS standards are a type of performance measure associated with equitable provision service, such as the number of facilities per 1,000 residents in a service area or facilities available within a designated travel distance or travel time, e.g. percent of population that have a park within a 10-minute walk. LOS standard can also address other dimensions of equitable access, such as connectivity, maintenance and affordability, e.g. percent of parkland connected to the trail network.

Provide the LOS standards and describe how LOS standards are used to establish facility and service priorities.

2. The agency shall periodically conduct an assessment of assets and needs to identify existing and projected gaps in service and determine land, facility and service priorities. Need assessments are used to help determine priorities for developing services with the agency. Needs assessments can use a variety of methods to obtain input from the community, including focus groups, advisory boards, forums, and surveys.

Provide the current needs assessment, describe the procedural steps in conducting the assessment, describe the frequency of updates, and describe the use of the assessment in agency planning.

3. The agency shall collect and analyze statistics on its programs and services for evaluation and future program and service development.

Provide examples of statistics collected, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of the information.

4. The agency shall assess periodically societal and local recreation and leisure trends and determine how those trends impact existing and projected user populations.

Provide trends analysis, describe frequency of updates, and describe linkage to agency goals and objectives.

5. The agency shall conduct at least one experimental exploration or research investigation each year related to park and recreation operations. These are demonstration or pilot projects where performance data are collected before and after the test to determine effectiveness.

Provide a report on a current or recent experimental or demonstration research project designed to improve a product or to test a new process or procedure, including methods used and research findings; provide brief descriptions of other research investigations undertaken over the past five (5) years.

FINDINGS

- The City has begun the CAPRA accreditation process.
- The City has been designated as a Tree City USA for 14 years.
- As identified in the “Inventory Analysis”, “Facility Analysis” and “Program Analysis” sections, the City is above the majority of the LOS standards and are providing exceptional services to the community.
- The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) issued a Phase II Stormwater Permit to the City. The area served by the co-permittees is collectively known as the St. Louis Metropolitan Small MS4. One of the minimum control measures in the permit that must be addressed by the co-permittees includes pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations. Specifically, MCM 6 section of the permit requires each co-permittee to "develop and implement an operation and maintenance program that includes a training component and has the ultimate goal of preventing or reducing pollutant runoff from municipal operations."

A Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) for the St. Louis Metropolitan Small MS4 Stormwater is implemented under the Phase II permit. As a co-permittee under the state permit the City is bound by the commitments contained in the SWMP. The SWMP requires a model operation and maintenance program template and that each co-permittee implement a written operation and maintenance program.

This document represents the City’s implementation of the model operation and maintenance program as applicable and tailored to specifically meet City needs and goals. This program impacts all facets of municipal operations. It shall be the City’s intent to adhere to the policies and procedures in order to prevent pollution, to safeguard the environment for the health and benefit of all City employees, residents and visitors and to serve as a model for the entire regulated area. Where the municipal operations described in the manual are contracted, rather than performed by municipal employees, the best management practices (BMPs) shall be imposed to the maximum extent practicable on the contractor through purchasing or contract mechanisms by including BMPs in the scope of work or job/service specifications. Contractors will be required to obtain all applicable local/state/federal environmental permits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, the assessment summaries provide information to identify the key recommendations in order to meet the community’s needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Department.

- City should look at the NRPA Development Goals and Metrics and see what categories in which they are deficient, and determine what areas if any they would like to pursue.
- The Department should work towards achieving the 10-Minute Walk criteria when planning and designing parks.
- The Department should work towards achieving the 8-80 criteria when planning and designing parks.
- The Department should follow and keep up to date on industry standards and trends.
- The Department, regardless of obtaining accreditation, should follow standards set forth in CAPRA.

INVENTORY ANALYSIS

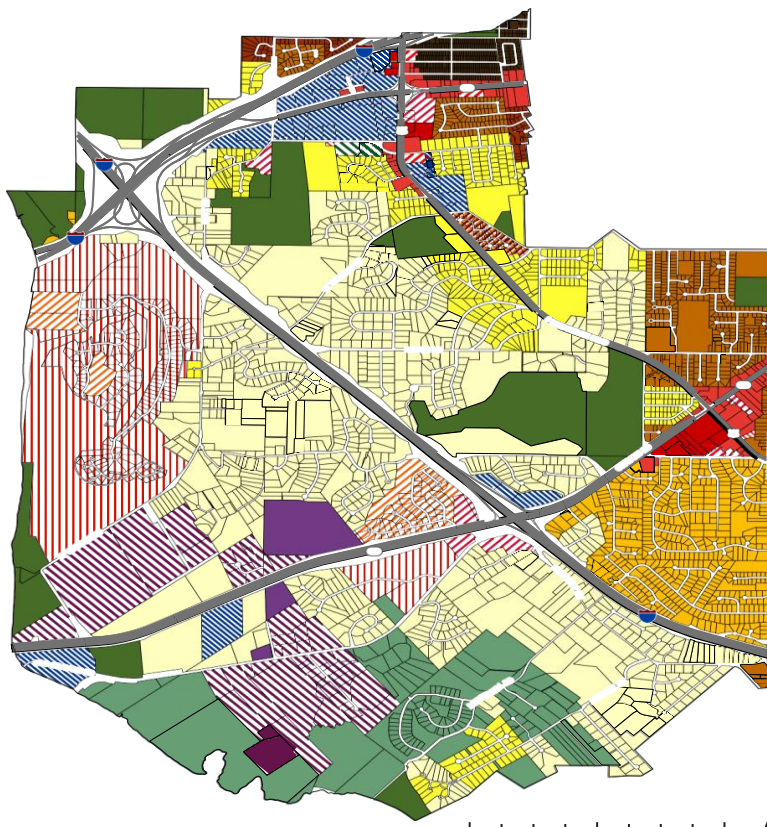
INTRODUCTION

In planning for the delivery of parks and recreation services, it is useful to think of parks, trails, indoor facilities, and other public spaces as parts of an infrastructure. The infrastructure, made up of elements and amenities, allows people to exercise, socialize, and maintain a healthy physical, mental, and social wellbeing. An element is a feature that people go to a park or facility to use, such as a pavilion, playground, tennis/pickleball court, athletic field and serve as an intended destination within a park or facility. An amenity is an item that supports the use of the park such as a trash can, park bench, picnic tables, grills, bike racks, drinking fountains etc.

The inventory for this study focused primarily on elements and amenities at park and open space sites available for use by the public. Each component was evaluated to ensure that it was serving its intended function within the system.

OVERVIEW

The City's parks and recreation system currently consist of approximately 300 acres of elements, including active recreation areas (athletic fields, playgrounds, tennis courts, pickleball courts, aquatic facility, dog park, driving range, and community center) and passive areas (trails, and conserved open spaces), managed by the Department.



INVENTORY ANALYSIS

An inventory of the City owned park sites was conducted to gain a better understanding of the number of and type of existing facilities and amenities within each park. The parks and facilities examined included facilities such as swimming pools/aquatic centers/splash pads, athletic fields, shelters/pavilions, trails, courts, lakes/ponds, playgrounds and open spaces. The full list of the parks and facilities that were inventoried are in tables below.

City Outdoor Inventory

Parks/Facilities	Watson Trail Park	Minnie Ha Ha Park
Acreage	35	43
Ball Fields	0	0
Soccer Fields	0	2
Football Fields	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0
Tennis Courts	5	0
Pickleball Courts	3	0
Golf Facility	0	0
Volleyball Courts	0	0
Basketball Courts	0	0
Skate Park	0	0
Playgrounds	2	3
Outdoor Fitness	1	0
Disc Golf	1	0
Pavilions	3	3
Multi-Use Trails	2 (miles)	2.5 (miles)
Walking Trails	.04 (miles)	0
Bicycle Trails	0	0
Equestrian Trails	0	0
Exercise Trails	0	0
Aquatic Facilities	1	0
Recreation Centers	1	0
Dog Parks	0	0
Nature Areas	1	0
Lake/Pond/Stream	1	1
Restrooms	2	3
Picnic Tables	36	42
Trash Cans	26	29
Bleachers	0	0
Park Benches	39	24
Grills	5	4
Bike Racks	0	2
Drinking Fountains	2	0
Parking Spaces	201	88
Multi-Use Courts	0	0
Ice Rinks	0	0
Community Gardens	0	0
Art/History	8	1

Parks/Facilities	Lynstone Park	Stieren Park
Acreage	5	30
Ball Fields	0	4
Soccer Fields	0	1
Football Fields	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0
Tennis Courts	0	0
Pickleball Courts	0	0
Golf Facility	0	0
Volleyball Courts	0	3
Basketball Courts	1	0
Skate Park	0	0
Playgrounds	1	1
Outdoor Fitness	0	0
Disc Golf	0	0
Pavilions	1	3
Multi-Use Trails	.5 (miles)	1.2 (miles)
Walking Trails	0	1
Bicycle Trails	0	0
Equestrian Trails	0	0
Exercise Trails	0	0
Aquatic Facilities	0	0
Recreation Centers	0	0
Dog Parks	0	0
Nature Areas	0	0
Lake/Pond/Stream	0	0
Restrooms	1	2
Picnic Tables	8	25
Trash Cans	6	28
Bleachers	0	6
Park Benches	9	15
Grills	1	2
Bike Racks	1	0
Drinking Fountains	2	2
Parking Spaces	11	122
Open Play Fields	1	0
Handball/Racquetball	0	0
Multi-Use Courts	0	0
Ice Rinks	0	0
Community Garden	1	0
Art/History	1	1

Parks/Facilities	Bander Park	Kitun Park
Acreage	122	5
Ball Fields	0	0
Soccer Fields	0	0
Football Fields	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0
Tennis Courts	0	0
Pickleball Courts	0	0
Golf Facility	1	0
Volleyball Courts	0	0
Basketball Courts	0	0
Skate Park	0	0
Playgrounds	0	0
Outdoor Fitness	0	3
Disc Golf	1	0
Pavilions	0	4
Multi-Use Trails	4.67(miles)	0
Walking Trails	0	0
Bicycle Trails	0	0
Equestrian Trails	0	0
Exercise Trails	0	.22 (miles)
Aquatic Facilities	0	0
Recreation Centers	0	0
Dog Parks	0	2
Nature Areas	1	0
Lake/Pond/Stream	8	0
Restrooms	1	0
Picnic Tables	1	5
Trash Cans	4	4
Bleachers	0	0
Park Benches	10	4
Grills	0	0
Bike Racks	0	0
Drinking Fountains	0	0
Parking Spaces	41	10
Multi-Use Courts	0	0
Ice Rinks	0	0
Community Garden	0	0
Art/History	0	0

Parks/Facilities	Claire Gempp Davidson Park	Nancy Eschbach Park
Acreage	13.5	16
Ball Fields	0	0
Soccer Fields	0	0
Football Fields	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0
Tennis Courts	0	0
Pickleball Courts	0	0
Golf Facility	0	0
Volleyball Courts	0	0
Basketball Courts	0	0
Skate Park	0	0
Playgrounds	0	0
Outdoor Fitness	0	0
Disc Golf	0	0
Pavilions	1	0
Multi-Use Trails	0	0
Walking Trails	.5 (Miles)	1.3 (Miles)
Bicycle Trails	0	0
Equestrian Trails	0	0
Exercise Trails	0	0
Aquatic Facilities	0	0
Recreation Centers	0	0
Dog Parks	0	0
Nature Areas	1	1
Lake/Pond/Stream	1	2
Restrooms	1	0
Picnic Tables	0	0
Trash Cans	2	1
Bleachers	0	0
Park Benches	19	3
Grills	0	0
Bike Racks	0	0
Drinking Fountains	1	0
Parking Spaces	8	0
Multi-Use Courts	0	0
Ice Rinks	0	0
Community Garden	0	0
Art/History	0	0

Parks/Facilities	Rock Alva Park	I-44 Bridge Park
Acreage	44	2
Ball Fields	0	0
Soccer Fields	0	0
Football Fields	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0
Tennis Courts	0	0
Pickleball Courts	0	0
Golf Facility	0	0
Volleyball Courts	0	0
Basketball Courts	0	0
Skate Park	0	0
Playgrounds	0	0
Outdoor Fitness	0	0
Disc Golf	0	0
Pavilions	0	3
Muti-Use Trails	.8 (Miles)	.9 (Miles)
Walking Trails	0	0
Bicycle Trails	0	0
Equestrian Trails	0	0
Exercise Trails	0	0
Aquatic Facilities	0	0
Recreation Centers	0	0
Dog Parks	0	0
Nature Areas	0	0
Lake/Pond/Stream	1	1
Restrooms	0	0
Picnic Tables	0	3
Trash Cans	1	1
Bleachers	0	0
Park Benches	1	0
Grills	0	0
Bike Racks	0	1
Drinking Fountains	0	0
Parking Spaces	0	19
Multi-Use Courts	0	0
Ice Rinks	0	0
Community Garden	0	0
Art/History	0	0

City, School, County Outdoor Inventory

FACILITY	CITY	SCHOOLS	COUNTY	TOTAL
Acreage	300	11	105	416
Ball Fields	4	2	0	6
Soccer Fields	3	4	0	7
Football Fields	0	0	0	0
Lacrosse Fields	0	0	0	0
Tennis Courts	4	0	0	4
Pickleball Courts	3	0	0	3
Golf Facility	1	0	0	1
Volleyball Courts	3	0	0	3
Basketball Courts	1	1	0	2
Skate Park	0	0	0	0
Playgrounds	7	2	0	9
Outdoor Fitness	1	1	0	2
Disc Golf	2	0	0	2
Pavilions	18	1	0	19
Muti-Use Trails (Miles)	12.5	.22	.64	13.36
Walking Trails (Miles)	1.8	0	.92	2.72
Bicycle Trails	0	0	0	0
Equestrian Trails (Miles)	0	0	0	0
Exercise Trails (Miles)	0	0	0	0
Aquatic Facilities	1	0	0	1
Recreation Centers	1	0	0	1
Dog Parks	1	0	0	1
Nature Areas	8	0	0	8
Lake/Pond/Stream	15	0	0	15
Restrooms	10	0	N/A	10
Picnic Tables	120	3	N/A	123
Trash Cans	102	1	N/A	103
Bleachers	6	0	N/A	6
Park Benches	124	0	N/A	124
Grills	12	0	N/A	12
Bike Racks	4	0	N/A	4
Drinking Fountains	7	0	N/A	7
Ice Rinks	0	0	0	0
Community Garden	1	0	0	1
Art/History	11	0	72	83

Although the Cochran team recognizes that there are several Federal, State and other municipal parks located within the service area that Sunset Hills residents may have access to, they will not be included in the current facility inventory, as they are not located within the Corporate City Limits of Sunset Hills.

However, these parks/facilities would be counted towards the population base of the municipality or unincorporated area that they are located in for the purpose of this inventory. Furthermore, the standards only count facilities that are publicly owned and are open to the general public. As such, Places of Worship, Subdivisions/Home Owner Associations, Private Clubs, YMCA's, JCC's, Athletic Associations, Private Schools etc. do not count towards the overall total of facility/park inventory, as they are not available to the total population.

Public Schools can count towards the overall total of facility/park inventory, as they are available to the total population. However, the actual Public-School facility/park inventory numbers must be divided in half, as they are only available to the general total population half of the time.

City/School vs NRPA Outdoor Inventory

FACILITY	CITY SCHOOL COUNTY	NRPA DEVELOPMENT GOALS	NRPA METRICS
Parkland (Acres)	416	195.70	97.50
Parks	14.00	N/A	4.02
Ball Fields	5.00	5.95	1.34
Soccer Fields	5.00	2.81	1.27
Football Fields	0.00	2.81	1.27
Lacrosse Fields	0.00	N/A	N/A
Tennis Courts	4.00	3.94	1.57
Pickleball Courts	3.00	N/A	0.66
Golf Facility	1.00	0.36	0.10
Volleyball Courts	3.00	1.97	0.53
Basketball Courts	1.50	2.09	1.24
Skate Park	0.00	0.00	0.00
Playgrounds	8.00	6.67	2.45
Outdoor Fitness	1.50	N/A	N/A
Disc Golf	2.00	N/A	N/A
Pavilions	18.50	6.78	N/A
Multi-Use Trails (Miles)	13.25	2.18	1.84
Walking Trails (Miles)	2.72	2.07	N/A
Bicycle Trail (Miles)	0.00	3.51	N/A
Equestrian Trail (Miles)	0.00	1.89	N/A
Exercise Trial (Miles)	0.00	2.35	N/A
Aquatic Facilities	1.00	1.42	0.24
Recreation Centers	1.00	N/A	N/A
Dog Parks	1.00	N/A	0.21
Nature Areas	8.00	N/A	N/A
Ice Rinks	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Gardens	1.00	N/A	0.00
Art/History	83.00	N/A	N/A

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall compile a complete and current inventory of parkland and recreation facilities, programs and services in the service area, including those provided by the agency and those offered by schools and other alternative public, private, non-profit providers.

Provide a complete and current inventory of parkland, programs and services available in the community, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of this information.

2. The agency shall create a profile in the national NRPA Park Metrics database that includes completion of an Agency Performance Survey.

Provide a copy of the Agency Performance Survey.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key issues were identified that needed to be resolved in order to frame the Recreation Facilities Assessment. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Recreation Division within the Department.

Findings

- City has more acres of parkland than what is identified in NRPA standards and/or metrics.
- City is above what the NRPA standards and/or metrics identifies in the categories of Parks, Acreage, Walking Trails, Pavilions, Playgrounds, Soccer Fields, Tennis Courts, Pickleball Courts, Golf Facility, Volleyball Courts, Outdoor Fitness, Disc Golf, Multi-Use Trails, Recreation Centers, Dog Parks, Nature Areas, and Community Gardens.
- City is below what the NRPA standards and/or metrics identifies in the categories of Football Fields, Bicycle Trail, Equestrian Trail, and Exercise Trail.

Observations

- Department has a lack of ADA/ABA picnic tables, benches and trash cans within the parks system.
- Department lacks restrooms and drinking fountains in Bander, Kitun, Nancy Eschbach, Rock Alva and I-44 Bridge Parks.
- Department lacks drinking fountains in Minnie Ha Ha Park.
- Department lacks bike racks in Watson Trail, Bander, Kitun, Stieren, Claire Gempp Davidson, Nancy Eschbach, and Rock Alva Parks.

Recommendations

- City needs to consider the effects of serving individuals outside of the city limits (service area) has on the parks and recreation system. This must be considered when evaluating participation levels, needs, and user fees policies etc.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

PLANNING & DESIGN ANALYSIS

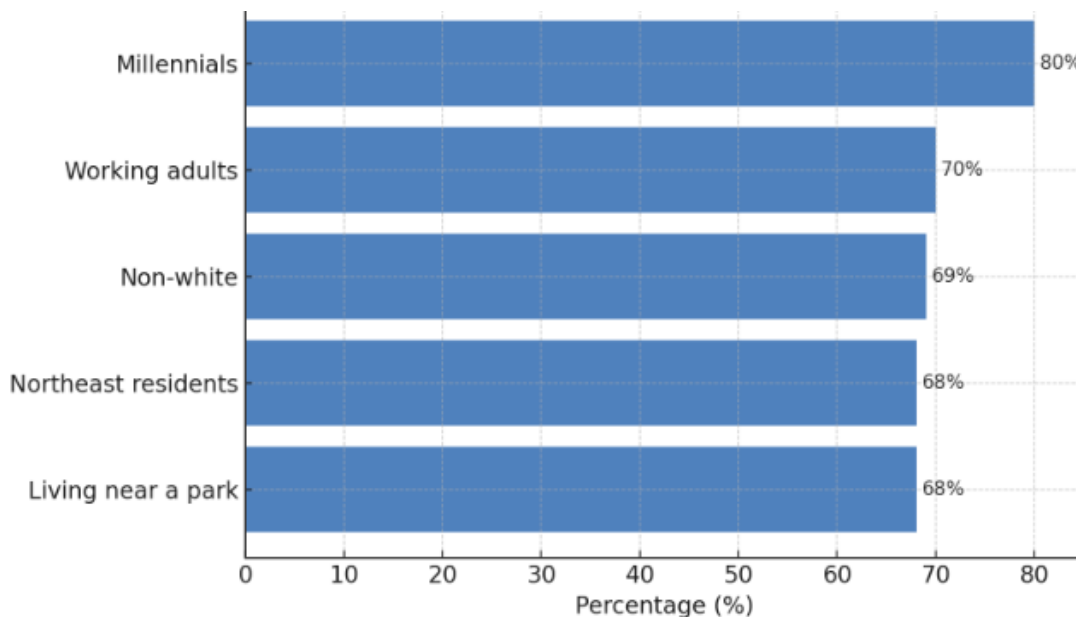
INTRODUCTION

Local parks and recreation are a staple in communities across the country. These facilities provide a wide variety of opportunities for local residents. From offering spaces for families and friends to come together, to providing moments of peace in an otherwise busy life, to playing a vital role in healthy ecosystems and endeavoring to make those facilities inclusive to and accessible by all people, local parks and recreation offers something for everyone.

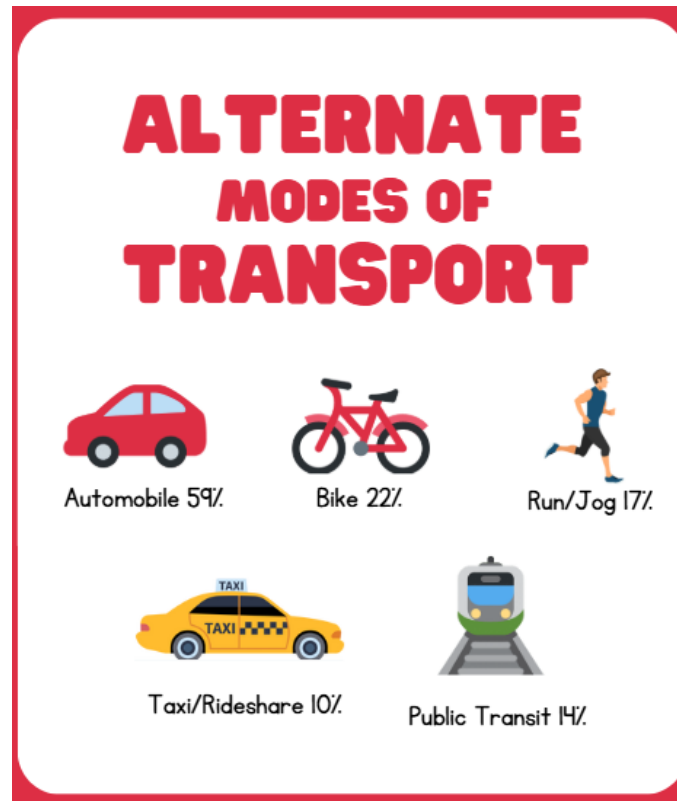
Local park and recreational opportunities shape a neighborhood. Eighty-four percent of survey respondents say proximity to high-quality parks, playgrounds, open spaces or other recreation facilities is important when choosing a neighborhood or area in which to live. A desire to live near high-quality park and recreation opportunities is common across nearly every segment of the U.S. population.

More than 60 percent of survey respondents say distance to these features is "extremely" or "very" important in their choice of residence. Unsurprisingly, survey respondents who are parents and those who identify themselves as very active indicate that proximity to these areas is "extremely" or "very" important in their choice of residence (both 79 percent).

Other segments for which the availability of quality park and recreation opportunities is extremely or very important include:



Traveling to parks, playgrounds, open spaces or recreation centers takes many forms for many reasons. While a majority of people travel by automobile to these areas (59 percent), nearly half of U.S. adults access these locations by walking. Other common travel methods include:



Proximity to at least one park increases the likelihood that people visiting these areas do so by "active" means (e.g., walking, biking, running). Sixty-four percent of respondents with at least one park nearby say they walk to local parks. Conversely, 70 percent of U.S. adults who do not live within walking distance of parks or recreation opportunities drive to those amenities.

Unsurprisingly, having nearby access to parks and recreational facilities leads to increased use of these offerings. Seventy-one percent of survey respondents say they live within a walkable distance of a park or recreation facility. Thirty-seven percent indicate that they live within a walkable distance of more than one of these areas. Twenty-nine percent of survey respondents - the equivalent of 97 million people in the United States - say they do not have walkable access to a park or other recreation facility.

The perceived availability of parks and recreation facilities within a walkable distance varies by region. Four in five respondents in the West report that they can walk to a local park, while 76 percent of those in the Northeast and 71 percent in the Midwest indicate the same.

Only 64 percent of respondents living in the South say there is a park within walking distance of their homes.

Respondents who regard themselves as very physically active are far more likely than their less-active counterparts to say they are within walking distance of a park or recreation facility. Adults identifying as Hispanic (84 percent) and non-white (81 percent) are more likely than their white peers (69 percent) to say they have walkable access to a park. Additionally, parents are more likely than non-parents to live within walking distance of a park or other recreational opportunity (83 percent compared to 65 percent, respectively). Eighty-two percent of Gen Zers and millennials report having walkable access to parks, while access for Gen Xers (69 percent) and, especially, baby boomers (61 percent) is far less common.

PARK LAND DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

The park land distribution analysis evaluates how evenly park land is distributed throughout the City and determines areas that are underserved in access to park land. The park land distribution standard is to have a park within a 1/2-mile, or about a ten-minute walk, of each residential household.

A mapping exercise was conducted by the Cochran team to geographically illustrate the distribution of existing public facilities and the application of the service level standards in relation to the respective facilities. In doing so, the Cochran team performed a park land distribution analysis by overlaying a map of Sunset Hills with 1/2-mile radius circles (10-minute walk) around each park, trail and school. This created a walkable access buffer, that when combined, shows at a general level, the degree to which Sunset Hills households are within walking distance to a park, trail or school. For this analysis, school sites are considered a public recreation amenity. While school yards add significant opportunities for neighborhood park access, they are not as fully accessible as the school district does limit access during school hours.

This mapping exercise was developed as a planning tool to conduct analysis with many applications. Specific applications will include the ability to:

- Geographically locate specific facility deficiencies based on the adopted facility service level standard.
- Determine where future parkland and facilities should be acquired, planned and constructed.
- Evaluate equitable distributions of facilities and parkland.
- Evaluate service level impacts of proposed new residential development on existing and planned park facilities.
- Evaluate relationships of facility deficiencies and existing undeveloped or underdeveloped public parkland.

This tool has limitations. The map simply shows how the adopted service level standards for public park facilities apply to park distribution. They need to be updated frequently as new facilities are added. They are one of many planning tools, and should be used with other data sources and considerations to determine the distribution of new facilities. Depending on the information sought, they require interpretation and analysis in

combination with other data, information, planning tools and techniques.

Despite the limitations, the standards-based mapping tool will provide decision makers a new dimension of geographic information to indicate locations with need and illustrate multiple complex factors in an understandable graphic format.



SECURITY AND SAFETY

According to the NRPA 2023 Engagement With Parks Report, feeling welcome at parks and recreation facilities drive's one's usage of those areas. People who experience safe, accessible and inclusive parks and recreation facilities visit those places far more often than do others who do not share the same experiences. U.S. adults who find that their local parks and recreation facilities are inclusive to those with all abilities visited those locations, on average 25 times during the past year – nearly twice as often as did those who did not find these facilities to be inclusive (less than 14 times). It was reported that three in four people stated that they were concerned about:1) Personal safety at the park/recreation facility; and/or 2) Personal safety traveling to or from the park/recreation facility.

Accordingly, park systems should provide a sense of security, safety, and well-being for its users. Anticipating these issues and designing parks accordingly can help avoid or limit unwanted activity. The use of Community Policing Through Environment Design (CPTED) principles and input from the Police and Fire Departments can help during the design process.

Signage and regulations publicize guidelines for acceptable behavior and let users know appropriate times and ways to use parklands and facilities. Police and/or Park Rangers patrolling parks during high-use periods are effective in regulating unwanted activities and making park spaces safer. Regular maintenance and appropriate planting enhance visibility into parkland from public rights-of-way, which increases the overall sense of security and safety.

Proper maintenance, renovation, and replacement of parks and park equipment prevents and corrects hazardous conditions, thereby protecting the public as well as reducing liability to the City.

FACILITY AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT PLAN

It is generally recognized that the development of parks and recreation land and facilities have a positive influence on the local economy and quality of life. Parks and recreation assets are of public interest and proven benefits in terms of social, economic and environmental qualities.

One of the missions of the City should be to establish and maintain public policies that address parks and recreation resources within its jurisdiction. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the parks and recreation needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Facility and Land Use Management Plan” which shall be designed to aid in land acquisition and in the development of park lands and facilities.

Objectives of the “Facility and Land Use Management Plan” should be:

- To ensure that the acquisition/purchase/lease, sales, transfer or liquidation of any land or other real property reflects the strategic development and planning goals endorsed by the Board of Aldermen.

- To provide streamlined process of input and review by the Board of Aldermen, Mayors Office, City Staff to allow for timely decisions at all levels of City government.
- To better outline the methods by which property is identified for acquisition, sale, transfer, or liquidation.
- To provide a mechanism to ensure that the Board of Aldermen is provided with regular reports on the status of various targeted properties for acquisition, City owned empty parcels & occupied buildings, and other tax-acquired properties so that the Board of Aldermen may be kept current on properties which may serve the policy interests of the City.

In summary, the Goals and Objectives, Department Philosophy and Decision and Design Factors provide a foundation to Support the City's efforts to:

- Obtain the land necessary to provide a broad range of Recreation opportunities throughout the community;
- Connect parks, neighborhoods, schools, and activity areas together through a coordinated system of trails and open spaces;
- Define and enhance city character by using open space as visual relief to separate and buffer between uses;
- Offer services and programs to all ages and segments of Healthy Productive lives; and public and private, to efficiently meet the community's needs for parks and open ace.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The specific geographical boundaries of the agency's jurisdiction shall be set forth by geographical description and map.

Provide the most recent map of the geographical boundaries of agency jurisdiction, service areas, and location of facilities.

2. The agency shall have planning functions with established responsibilities, including at least one staff member or consultant with planning capability.

Provide the responsibilities and functions of the planning entity. Provide resumes of training and experience for staff and/or consultants who have planning capabilities.

3. The agency shall have a working relationship with the regional, state, and federal agencies to ensure the coordination of planning efforts that affect the delivery of parks and recreation services within the jurisdiction.

Define the role of the agency personnel and documentation of involvement (minutes, agendas, cooperative agreements) in regional, state, and federal agencies planning.

4. The jurisdiction with land use authority within which the agency operates shall have a comprehensive plan adopted by the governing authority that dictates public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, public facilities, land use, recreation, and housing. In some jurisdictions the comprehensive plan is called the general plan or the land use plan. Zoning for the jurisdiction is based upon the comprehensive plan. To meet this standard, the comprehensive plan shall have a park and/or recreation component that discusses how the jurisdiction intends to meet the needs for parkland and public recreation facilities in concert with other land use priorities.

Provide the current plan, with date of official approval.

5. The agency shall have a comprehensive park and recreation system plan that provides recommendations for provision of facilities, programs, and services; parkland acquisition and development; maintenance and operations; and administration and management. The plan shall be officially adopted by the policy-making body, updated periodically and linked with a capital improvement budget and a phased development program. The system master plan shall implement policies adopted in the comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction. Interested and affected agencies, organizations, and groups shall be engaged in the planning process.

Provide the current plan with documentation of official approval; describe update process; and describe a phased implementation program with linkage to the agency's capital improvement budget. The system master plan shall include:

- a. *Agency mission*
- b. *Agency objectives*
- c. *Recreation and leisure trends analysis*
- d. *Needs assessment*
- e. *Community inventory*
- f. *Level of service standards*

6. The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the acquisition of lands for park, recreation, conservation, and historical-cultural purposes that are backed by legal authority and periodically reviewed. This authority usually originates in state enabling acts, is delegated to local governments and is implemented through local charters and ordinances.

Provide policy and procedures for land acquisition, the citation of legal authority to acquire lands, and last review.

7. The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the development of park and recreation land and facilities that are reviewed periodically. Policies and procedures should consider market projections, applicable open space and design standards and coordination with overall planning for the jurisdiction.

Provide land development policies and procedures, with the last review.

8. The agency shall have procedures for protecting park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment. The procedures should include progressive steps to address escalated encroachment issues.

Provide the procedures regarding defense against encroachment.

9. The agency shall have established procedures regarding the disposal of park and recreation lands to ensure that public recreational benefits are not diminished through the sale or transfer of parkland.

Provide the procedures for disposal of park and recreation land.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key issues were identified that needed to be resolved in order to frame the Recreation Facilities Assessment. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive parks system within the City.

Findings

- Over sixty-two percent (62.1%) of respondents stated that they felt that there were a sufficient number of parks, trails and open space areas within a ten-minute (1/2 mile) walk of their residence.
- Park Distribution map shows that there are several gaps (Central corridor, Southeast corridor, Southwest corridor) where residents were not within a ten-minute (1/2 mile) walk of their residence.
- Survey respondents shared that biggest facility need was to develop new trails (70.4%), development of an indoor walking track (62.9%), and enhancements to the existing aquatic facility (56.7%).
- Survey respondents shared that the two biggest areas that should be emphasized most over the next 20 years were: focus and maintenance and upkeep of existing parks (46.9%), and development of new multi-use trails (43.9%).

Observations

- The acquisition of land either by purchase, lease or by easement for the purpose of connecting the trail system should be considered.
- The City may not have a need for more parks based on acreage alone, but additional parks would create a more equitable distribution of park land.

- While geographical distribution of parks, facilities, and trails is important, the City's goal should be to ensure that the overall parks and recreation system offers a wide variety of passive and active parks and recreation opportunities throughout the City.

Recommendations

- Develop a "Facility and Land Use Management Plan" which shall be designed to aid in the development of park lands and facilities.
- Acquire land either by purchase, lease or by easement for the purpose of connecting neighborhoods, schools, etc. to the park and trail system.
- Engage the school district to establish a plan for surplus school site reuse and to consider reciprocal opportunities to provide parks and other community facilities.
- Identify and inventory special open space resources.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

FACILITY ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

According to recent survey conducted by the National Recreation and Parks Association, (NRPA) on average, people visited their local park and recreation facilities 20 times between June 2022 and May 2023. However, the frequency of these visits varied significantly. Sixteen percent of survey respondents report they visited a local park facility between six and 10 times within the past 12 months, while 13 percent made between 11 and 20 visits during the same time period. Another, nine percent visited their local park and recreation facilities between 21 and 50 times during the past year, while five percent (more than 16.7 million people) did so at least 51 times. Baby boomers visited their local parks and/or recreation facilities much more often than did any other generational group, logging 33 visits per year on average. The typical adult in the United States visits their local parks or recreation facilities nearly every other month.

Whether the goal is a relaxing afternoon at the park, a challenging workout at the recreation center, a friendly game of softball at the field or a computer class at the community center, visitors' options for activities at park and recreation facilities are many and varied. For two-thirds of survey respondents, a local park, playground, dog park or some other local open space is their destination of choice. Baby boomers and those living in the Midwest (both 74 percent) are the respondents most likely to say that visiting a local park, playground, dog park or any other local open space is their favorite park and recreation activity. Hiking, biking and walking on local trails is the second-most popular activity, with nearly half of all survey respondents indicating they take advantage of these offerings.

Thirty percent of survey respondents report that playing sports - such as basketball, golf and tennis with friends, family members and neighbors is a favorite park and recreation activity. Forty-five percent of millennials, 42 percent of parents and 38 percent of those identifying themselves as very active indicate that playing sports with friends and/or family is a top activity.

The most common reason U.S. adults visit their local parks and recreation facilities is to be with family and friends. Fifty percent of survey respondents say being with family and friends is a key reason for visiting local parks and recreation facilities. Visitors identifying as Hispanic (57 percent), those living in the Midwest and parents (56 percent) are most likely to cite family and friends as their primary motivation for accessing parks and recreation. Forty-seven percent of U.S. adults indicate that they visit a park and/or recreation facility to take a break from the day-to-day stresses of life, while 46 percent say their desire to be closer to nature is a critical reason. The desire to exercise and be physically fit is crucial for 46 percent of survey respondents; this is especially true for those who regard themselves as very active (56 percent). Additional reasons for visiting local parks and/or recreation facilities include:



According to a survey conducted for the 2018-2022 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Plan (SCORP), Playgrounds, trails, baseball/softball fields, and multi-use fields all show the most demand, whereas golf courses, football fields and volleyball courts show demand is remaining steady or declining.

The top five facilities growing in demand in urban/suburban communities include Trails (64%, Multi-Use Fields 64%, Splash Pads 61%, Playgrounds 55%, and Soccer Fields 55%.



AUDIT ASSESSMENT

As part of the Master Plan, the Department desired an audit assessment of the parks system. In June, July and August of 2025, the Cochran team visited the City's parks and recreational facilities and conducted audit assessments of the state of the parks to assess the overall appearance and operating efficiencies of the parks and/or facilities and to guide the recommendations of the Master Plan.

The evaluation process began with park assessment forms that were completed separately by the Cochran team. On the forms, the Cochran team inventoried park facilities, rated their condition, and provided initial recommendations for improvements. This audit assessment establishes a base-line understanding and a "snapshot" of the system's existing conditions and amenities. This audit assessment will be utilized with other technical research reports to assist with the final Master Plan including recommendations and action strategies.

Methodology

The Cochran team used an audit assessment to document observations. The audit assessment used is derived from various other audit tools such as Community Policing Through Environmental Design (CPTED), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and includes the following:

- General description
- Park classification & observed use

- First impressions
- Access & visibility
- Site structures & amenities
- Site/amenity conditions
- Site furnishing conditions
- General landscape/hardscape
- Signage
- ADA compliance
- Any identified corrective actions needed
- Capital Improvement opportunities
- Strengths, challenges and opportunities

Park conditions were rated using a differential scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor. The table below provides the condition descriptions utilized in this analysis.

Assessment Finding	General Description
Excellent	Facilities/amenities are in excellent condition and feature little or no maintenance problems noted. Facilities do not feature any major design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance.
Good	Facilities/amenities are in good condition and feature only minor maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these facilities appear to be the result of age and/or heavy use. Facilities may only feature minor design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e. drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).
Fair	Facilities/amenities are in fair condition and indicate ongoing maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these facilities appear to be the result of age and heavy use. Some maintenance issues may be compounding over time due to being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may only feature minor design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e. drainage, structural, utilities, etc.)
Poor	Facilities/amenities are in poor condition and clearly show ongoing maintenance problems that ultimately may result in suspended use for repair/replacement. Maintenance issues with these facilities are the result of age and heavy use, and generally are compounding over time due to being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may feature major design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e. drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).

System Summary

The following table contains a list of all parks organized by park classification and condition rating. See the previous sections for definitions.

Scale of Conditions		
Park	Classification	Overall Condition
Watson Trail	Community	Good
Minnie Ha Ha	Community	Good
Lynstone	Neighborhood	Good
Stieren	Community	Good
Bander	Community	Fair/Poor
Kitun	Community	Good
Claire Gempp Davidson	Community	Good
Nancy Eschbach	Neighborhood	Fair
Rock Alva	Community	Fair
I-44 Bridge	Community	Good



WATSON TRAIL PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ Good
- ✓ Usable

Restrictions:

- ✓ LWCF

Features:

- ✓ 1 - Aquatic Facility
- ✓ 2 - Playgrounds
- ✓ 2 - Pavilions
- ✓ 10 - Trail Sections
- ✓ 4 - Tennis Courts
- ✓ 3 - Pickleball Courts
- ✓ 1 - Lake

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ Parking Lot Sealing
- ✓ Trail Sealing
- ✓ Playground Sealing

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ Tennis Court Replacement
- ✓ Trail Replacement & Connection
- ✓ New Maintenance Facility
- ✓ ADA Compliant Tables
- ✓ Pool Improvements/Replacement
- ✓ Trail - Directional Signage
- ✓ Landscaping
- ✓ Electrical/Lighting/Security Cameras
- ✓ Playground Surfacing Replacement
- ✓ Playground Replacements
- ✓ Community Center Additions

Opportunities:

- ✓ Increased Use
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Safety



Watson Trail Park is the “Crown Jewel” of the Parks system. It is a 25-acre Community Park located at 12450 W. Watson Road on the northeast side of the city near the intersection of Lindbergh Blvd. and West Watson Road.

There are numerous recreational opportunities located in the park. A swimming pool on the northern side of the Park is heavily used during the summer by residents and area swim & dive teams.

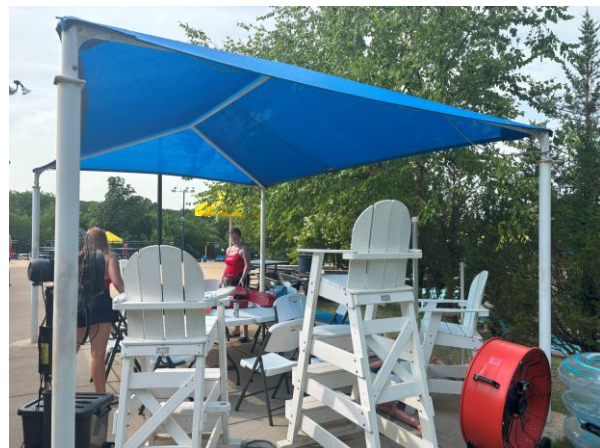
There are picnic areas with pavilions used by numerous groups during the summer for day activities, a large playground, swimming pool, disc golf course, tennis courts, trails, lake, pickleball courts, and a community center.

Watson Trail Park is the most utilized park in the City and offers many diverse recreation opportunities.

AQUATIC FACILITY

The aquatic facility consists of an eight lane Competition pool with two diving boards; a leisure pool and a lazy river.

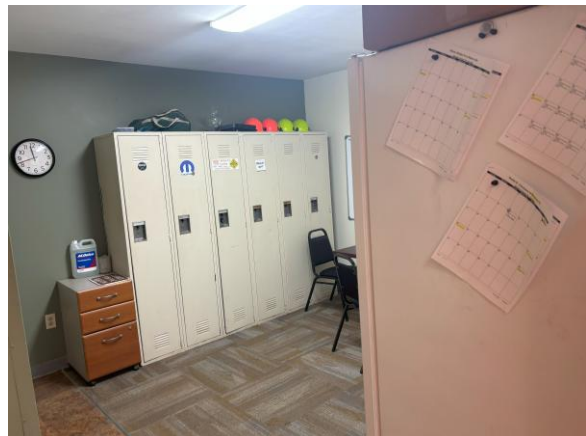
- Currently facility is in decent shape but is aging and will need to be replaced within the 20 year period.
- Concession area is very small and there is very little room for storage.
- Lifeguard lounge is located outside near the locker rooms. This is bad location as it is in the public eye and doesn't give lifeguards space for proper downtime, etc.
- There isn't enough storage space for equipment and supplies. Some equipment and supplies are currently being stored at the maintenance facility.
- Staff and patrons have requested new elements for the pool (climbing wall, slide, etc.).
- Locker room floors need to be replaced as the current flooring is not slip resistant.
- A family changing area/restroom would be a great element to add.
- Lighting needs to be replaced with LED lighting.
- Fencing is showing signs of aging and will need to be addressed.



MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The maintenance facility consists of Maintenance office, storage lot, and multiple storage structures.

- Facility lacks enough space to properly house and store equipment/vehicles and to meet MS4 guidelines.
- Basement walls of the office/maint. building is showing severe cracking and will need to be assessed further.
- There is not enough space for employees to take breaks, lunches, or shower and change.
- Current break room is also doubling as a locker room.
- Shower is being used as a storage closet.
- Restroom is only big enough for one person at a time.
- Maintenance facility does not have a wash bay to properly clean off equipment and vehicles to meet MS4 requirements.
- Facility does not have an equipment or vehicle lift to perform minor repairs, such as oil changes, drain transmissions, or to remove mower blades etc.
- Facility needs electric support upgrade.
- There is a lack of overall space, and could be expanded in the back and provide a secondary entrance/exit to the east of the existing facility.



COMMUNITY CENTER

The Community Center consists of a gymnasium, fitness area, meeting/banquet rooms, fitness rooms, locker rooms, an outdoor fitness area, and administrative offices for the Parks and Recreation Department.

- Facility lacks enough space to properly house and store equipment and supplies. Supplies are currently located at two off-site facilities (Maintenance Facility and a private Storage Facility).
- Parking issues occur when hosting banquets, large meeting etc. Staff currently has to limit the number of activity/programs in order to accommodate parking.
- There is the possibility that additional parking could be placed on the north side of the building as well as on the back side of the building as long as there wouldn't be any additions made to the existing facility.
- Request have been made as to having additional meeting/banquet rooms and larger kitchen facilities. Further studies would need to be conducted as to the feasibility of adding on to the building, as well as adding parking.
- Request have also been made as to having an additional gymnasium, walking track and a therapy lap pool. Again, further studies would need to be conducted as to the feasibility of adding on to the building, as well as adding parking.
- A trail connection from the existing north side trail to the outdoor fitness area could be made to allow for more access and visibility.



MINNIE HA HA PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ Good
- ✓ Usable

Restrictions:

- ✓ AE Flood Zone
- ✓ Floodway

Features:

- ✓ Playgrounds
- ✓ Pavilions
- ✓ River Overlook
- ✓ Restrooms
- ✓ Trails
- ✓ Soccer Fields
- ✓ River Access

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ Parking Lot Sealing/Striping
- ✓ Gravel Parking Lot Topping
- ✓ Trail Sealing
- ✓ Playground Surface Topping
- ✓ Restroom Accessibility
- ✓ General Signage

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ Playground Replacements
- ✓ Water Utility Extensions
- ✓ Pave Soccer Parking Lot
- ✓ ADA Compliant Tables
- ✓ Soccer Field Netting/Fencing
- ✓ Soccer Parking Lot Lighting
- ✓ Trail – Directional Signage

Opportunities:

- ✓ Increased Use
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Safety



Minnie Ha Ha is a 43-acre Community Park located at 801 Old Gravois Road along the Meramec River.

This park has many recreational elements and amenities such as a large multi-use trail network, soccer fields, playgrounds, pavilions, restrooms, river access, and a river overlook.

This one of the many parks in the system that creates a large walkable amenity as it links to the Stieren Park and subsequently links to the Bander Park and the Rock Alva Park.

The biggest weaknesses of the park include the lack of paved parking at the soccer fields, ADA accessibility, and that the park is located either in an AE Flood Zone or Floodway that is prone to frequent flooding. Wetlands have also been identified as being present on a small portion of the property along the Meramec River.

The extension of water lines and the addition of fire hydrants would not only increase safety, but it would greatly help with the cleanup efforts from the aftermath of each flood.

LYNSTONE PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ *Good*
- ✓ *Usable*

Restrictions:

- ✓ *None*

Features:

- ✓ *Pavilion*
- ✓ *Playground*
- ✓ *Basketball Court*
- ✓ *Restroom*
- ✓ *Community Garden*
- ✓ *Parking*
- ✓ *Trail*

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ *Parking Lot Sealing*
- ✓ *Trail Sealing*
- ✓ *Playground Surface Topping*
- ✓ *Gates for Fencing*

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ *New Senior/Adult Fitness Area*
- ✓ *New Splash Pad*
- ✓ *Fencing Replacement*
- ✓ *Lighting*

Opportunities:

- ✓ *Increased Use*
- ✓ *Inclusivity*
- ✓ *Safety*



Lynstone Park a 5-acre Neighborhood Park located at 251 Rayburn on the northeast side of the city and backs up to Interstate 44.

This neighborhood park has many different elements and amenities to offer the surrounding neighborhood. It has a playground with a variety of equipment. It also has a community garden, basketball court, pavilion, restrooms, a walking trail, and a large open space area.

The biggest weakness is that the park doesn't have much landscaping or lighting to accompany all of the elements that you could expect in a neighborhood park.



STIEREN PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ Good
- ✓ Usable

Restrictions:

- ✓ AE Flood Zone

Features:

- ✓ Baseball Fields
- ✓ Soccer Field
- ✓ Playgrounds
- ✓ Volleyball Courts
- ✓ Restrooms
- ✓ Pavilions
- ✓ Trail
- ✓ Parking

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ Parking Lot Sealing
- ✓ Trail Sealing
- ✓ Playground Surface Topping

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ Additional Parking
- ✓ Parking Lot Lighting
- ✓ Baseball Field Fencing
- ✓ Playground Barrier Fencing
- ✓ Volleyball Lighting
- ✓ ADA Compliant Sidewalks for Baseball
- ✓ Maintenance Building
- ✓ Directional Signage

Opportunities:

- ✓ Increased Use
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Safety



Stieren Park is a 35.5 - acre Community Park located at 13555 W. Watson Road on the southwest side of the city along the Meramec River.

This park is the primary location for youth and adult sports programming in the city. It offers a variety of outdoor baseball/softball fields, soccer fields and sand volleyball courts. The park has a very large playground that is shaded and a trail which has connections to Minnie Ha Ha Park, Stieren Park and Rock Alva Park.

The biggest weaknesses of the park include the lack of adequate parking and lighting, ADA accessibility, and that the park is located either in an AE Flood Zone or Floodway that is prone to frequent flooding.

Wetlands have also been identified as being present on a small portion of the property along the Meramec River.

GENERAL PARK AREAS

- Parking Lot along W. Watson Road should be removed and parking relocated at baseball field #1 as there is safety issues related to site distance and backing out into oncoming traffic.
- Remove baseball field #1 and build a new parking lot on the front half. This would make up for the loss of parking along W. Watson Road, as well as provide additional parking for volleyball and Baseball.
- Place batting cages in the left field area of the removed field #1.
- Add permanent lighting along the roadway and in parking lots.
- Place directional signage throughout the park as well as to trail areas.
- Add a permanent maintenance building to house equipment and staff.



ATHLETIC FIELDS

- If needed, relocate field #1 to one end of the area currently used for soccer practices and make it a multi-use field.
- Develop ADA accessible sidewalks from the parking lot to and in between baseball fields.
- Develop ADA accessible sidewalks from the parking lot to the pavilion and restrooms.



BANDER PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ Good
- ✓ Usable

Restrictions:

- ✓ AE Flood Zone

Features:

- ✓ Golf Center
- ✓ 18-Hole Disc Golf Course
- ✓ Trail
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Ponds/Lakes
- ✓ Nature Areas

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ Parking Lot Sealing/Striping
- ✓ Trail Sealing
- ✓ Invasive Plant Removal
- ✓ Pond/Lake Treatment

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ Golf Training Center
- ✓ Replacement of Golf Bay Covering
- ✓ Replacement of Concrete Plaza
- ✓ Additional Parking
- ✓ Parking Lot Lighting
- ✓ ADA Compliant Sidewalks/Plaza
- ✓ Directional Signage
- ✓ Replacement of Cart Paths with a Multi-Use Trail
- ✓ Trail Head and Restroom

Opportunities:

- ✓ Increased Use
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Safety



Bander Park is a 122 - acre Community Park located at 13550 W. Watson Road on the southwest side of the city across the street from Stieren Park.

Bander Park is the largest park in the City's park and recreation system. The property includes many elements including the Bander Golf Center, trails, lakes, ponds, 18-hole Disc Golf Course and nature areas.

While the park has many elements and amenities to offer residents, many of the elements lack ADA accessibility and lack of connection from one element to another. Improvements could be made to develop additional parking and to make connections between the two distinct uses of the park.

The biggest weaknesses of the park include the lack of parking, ADA accessibility, condition of existing cart paths, and that the park is located in an AE Flood Zone that is prone to frequent floods.

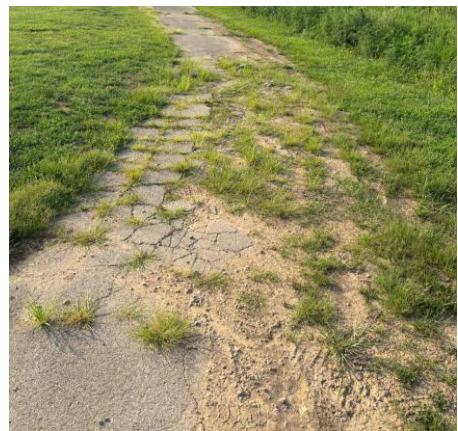
GOLF FACILITY

- Existing concrete plaza area is showing extreme cracking and needs to be replaced as it is creating a trip hazard and is in noncompliance with ADA guidelines.
- Add permanent lighting in parking lots.
- Parking is an issue. Additional parking lots could be developed in front of the putting green area as well as an extension to the existing disc golf parking lot.
- Remove and replace existing golf maintenance building and bay awning and replace with a new building that would include training areas and a restroom.
- Develop a short game training center on the south side of the existing building and parking lot. This would provide additional training opportunities as well as an additional revenue stream without interrupting normal operations.



DISC GOLF & NATURE AREAS

- Remove and replace existing golf cart path with a 10' wide multi-use trail.
- Provide an additional parking lot and a restroom on the northeast end of the disc golf course which could serve as a trailhead.
- Remove invasive species from native areas and around ponds/lakes.
- Provide directional signage for trails.
- Provide fishing access routes to ponds/lake.
- Dredge the large lake and add elements such as an ADA compliant fishing pier and program access.



KITUN PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ *Good*
- ✓ *Usable*

Restrictions:

- ✓ *None*

Features:

- ✓ *Dog Park*
- ✓ *Parking*
- ✓ *Trail*
- ✓ *Outdoor Fitness Equipment*

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ *Parking Lot Sealing/Striping*
- ✓ *Trail Sealing*
- ✓ *Turf*

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ *Additional Parking*
- ✓ *Restroom*
- ✓ *Adult/Senior Fitness Area*
- ✓ *Landscaping*

Opportunities:

- ✓ *Increased Use*
- ✓ *Inclusivity*
- ✓ *Safety*



Kitun Park is a 5-acre Neighborhood Park located at 857 Eddie & Park on the southeast side of the city adjacent to the Lindbergh Early Childhood School.

The park has many different elements and amenities to offer the surrounding neighborhood. It's home to the city's only off-leash dog park, which has two different areas for both large and small dogs, picnic tables with shade structures.

The park also consists of a .25-mile multi-use trail which has different fitness equipment stations. The trail connects to the adjacent school trail and outdoor recreation area which consists of outdoor fitness stations, playground, and multi-use athletic fields.

The biggest weaknesses of the park are the lack of parking, a restroom, and the absence of other park elements.

CLAIRE GEMPP DAVIDSON MEMORIAL CONSERVATION AREA

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ *Good*
- ✓ *Usable*

Restrictions:

- ✓ *Conservation Easement*

Features:

- ✓ *Restroom*
- ✓ *Parking*
- ✓ *Nature Trail*
- ✓ *Pond*
- ✓ *Nature Areas*
- ✓ *Prairie Areas*
- ✓ *Wetland*
- ✓ *Butterfly Gardens*
- ✓ *Boardwalk*
- ✓ *Bike Rack*

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ *Parking Lot Sealing/Striping*
- ✓ *Leveling and Topping Off of Trails*
- ✓ *Removal of Invasive Species*
- ✓ *Trimming and Removal of Trees*

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ *Forest Stand Restoration*

Opportunities:

- ✓ *Increased Use*
- ✓ *Inclusivity*
- ✓ *Safety*



Claire Gempp Davidson Park is a 13.5-acre Nature Park located at 9148 Sappington Road on the east side of the city adjacent to the Southview School.

The park is maintained and operated in conjunction with the Missouri Conservation Commission and the Lindbergh School District.

Students from Lindbergh High School use the park for various class projects, and the Conservation Commission has actively been working on the forest stand within the area have completed two of the sites.

The Claire Gempp Davidson Conservation Area is an excellent natural preserve that offers residents recreation and educational experiences.

The biggest weakness of the park is the condition and accessibility of the trail system.

NANCY ESCHBACH PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ Fair
- ✓ Usable

Restrictions:

- ✓ AE Flood Zone
- ✓ Floodway
- ✓ Wetlands

Features:

- ✓ Gravel Trail
- ✓ Park Benches

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ Spraying of Trail
- ✓ Topping off of Trail
- ✓ Removal of Invasive Species
- ✓ Tree Trimming
- ✓ Streambank Stabilization

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ Access to River
- ✓ Fishing Access

Opportunities:

- ✓ Increased Use
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Safety



The Nancy Eschbach Park is a 16-acre Neighborhood Park located at the intersection Forest Path Drive and Mentz Hill Road on the southwest side of the city along the Meramec River.

The park offers a bit of respite and opportunities for passive recreation with gravel walking trails, natural areas, and open space. There are opportunities to develop general access to the river and fishing access.

It appears, over the years, the stream along the trail has caused some minor erosion and it could be beneficial to provide some streambank stabilization to protect the existing trail.

The biggest weaknesses of the park include the lack of adequate parking, ADA accessibility, and that a portion of the park is located in either an AE Flood Zone or Floodway that is prone to frequent flooding. Wetlands have also been identified as being present on a small portion of the property along the Meramec River.

ROCK ALVA PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ *Fair*
- ✓ *Usable*

Restrictions:

- ✓ *Floodway*

Features:

- ✓ *Asphalt Trail*
- ✓ *1 Park Bench*
- ✓ *1 Trash Can*

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ *Removal of Invasive Species*
- ✓ *Tree Trimming*
- ✓ *Trail Sealing*

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ *Park Benches*
- ✓ *Access to River*
- ✓ *Fishing Access*
- ✓ *Parking*

Opportunities:

- ✓ *Increased Use*
- ✓ *Inclusivity*
- ✓ *Safety*



Rock Alva Park is a 44-acre Community Park located at 13540 W. Watson Road on the southwest side of the city along the Meramec River.

The park is a linear park that runs adjacent to the Meramec River between Stieren Park and the Tapawingo Golf Course.

The park offers opportunities for passive recreation with natural areas, open space, and a multi-use trail that connects into Stieren Park,

The biggest weaknesses of the park include the lack of adequate parking, and that the park is located in a Floodway that is prone to frequent flooding. Wetlands have also been identified as being present on a small portion of the property along the Meramec River.

I-44 BRIDGE PARK

First Impressions and Activity Rating:

- ✓ *Good*
- ✓ *Usable*

Features:

- ✓ *Parking*
- ✓ *Pavilions*
- ✓ *Picnic Tables*
- ✓ *Bike Rack*
- ✓ *Trail*

Maintenance Needs:

- ✓ *Trail Sealing and Striping*

Capital Improvement Opportunities:

- ✓ *Restroom*
- ✓ *Drinking Fountain*
- ✓ *Park Entrance Sign*

Opportunities:

- ✓ *Increased Use*
- ✓ *Inclusivity*
- ✓ *Safety*



The I-44 Bridge Park is a 2-acre Trailhead Park located at 11911 Stoney Wood Drive on the north side of I-44 near the City of Kirkwood's Emmenegger Park.

The trail and trailhead are part of a partnership between the communities of Sunset Hills, Kirkwood and Fenton along with MoDOT and Great Rivers Greenway.

The trail and trailhead are a connection for people walking and biking to cross over the Meramec River by a shared use path that crosses the river and provides connections to get to or from an existing trail network and to parks, trails, businesses, neighborhoods and other destinations on either side of the river and/or interstate.

The trailhead currently provides parking, bike racks, pavilions, and picnic tables.

The biggest weaknesses of the park are the lack of a restroom and a drinking fountain.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. Feasibility studies shall be conducted to determine the feasibility of proposed facilities.

Provide examples of recent feasibility studies such as market, cost benefit, site transportation, environmental and economic analyses.

2. There shall be site plans to guide the use of existing and the development of future areas and facilities. A site plan is a depiction of a park site of that is drawn to scale and delineates features such as building and facility locations, roads and trails, use areas and utility.

Provide a representative sampling of the agency's area and facility site plans.

3. Historical and cultural plans include an inventory of historical, cultural resources and strategies for how they will be managed. These resources may be addressed as part of the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan or the agency's park and recreation system master plan.

Provide the historical and cultural plan(s).

4. The agency shall complete an access audit of all existing sites and facilities. Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Title II regulation at 35.105, the agency must evaluate its existing facilities and sites against the most current final and enforceable Standard for Accessible Design.

Submit completed checklists, digital images and site reports as evidence of completion of the access audit.

5. There shall be a regular review of legal requirements related to facilities, such as licenses, sanitary regulations, fire laws, and safety measures, and inspections of adherence thereto. Special attention should be given aquatic facilities, childcare facilities, concessions, kitchens, and zoos.

Provide a matrix showing a representative sample of facilities and the types of regulatory permits, licenses or inspections that are required including copy of last review or update.

6. The agency shall be aware of emergency operations planning within their jurisdiction and its role in emergency management systems. Roles may vary depending on the scope of services provided by the agency and the location of its facilities. Recreation agencies, having roles in emergency management systems within their local jurisdiction, shall be aware of the applicable operations plan. The agency's specialized staff, buildings and equipment may be integral to the plan and may be deployed in the event of a large-scale emergency. The U. S. Office of Homeland Security provides guidance and support for the preparation and maintenance of emergency management plans.

Provide the applicable emergency management plan with the most recent date of approval. If, due to security concerns, the emergency management plan is not available for public review, provide the emergency management plan table of contents.

7. Through in-service training, agency personnel shall understand their role in ongoing security and emergency management. In-service training should inform staff of their role in response to critical incidents and emergencies and provide specific procedures for routine operations.

Provide documentation of in-service training programs on general security and emergency management, including a dated outline of the presentation topics and a roster of participants.

8. There shall be a communications plan that is reviewed and updated periodically, to accurately and effectively communicate with the public and experts during a catastrophic event that attracts significant media attention, such as a health emergency, terrorist attack, earthquake or storm. The crisis communication plan shall delineate individuals responsible for communicating with the press, chain of command on notifying proper people of the incident and communicating status updates.

Provide a copy of the Emergency Risk Communications Plan and the most recent review.

9. There shall be procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter to those in need during disasters or emergencies.

Provide procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter during emergencies.

KEY FINDINGS

The Facilities Analysis identifies multiple challenges and recommendations that will need to be addressed either through regular maintenance operations or capital improvements. Further information regarding these areas can be found within the Maintenance Analysis, Program Analysis, and/or Capital Improvement sections of this Master Plan.

Findings

- Use of the park system by residents is extensive. Over 91% of households stated that they had visited a park in the year prior to the survey, opposed to over 8.3% stating that they had not visited a park within the last year.
- The Community Center (50.1%) and Aquatic Facility (46%) were the two most visited parks.

- Survey respondents shared that biggest facility need was to develop new trails (70.4%), development of an indoor walking track (62.9%), and enhancements to the existing aquatic facility (56.7%).
- Over fifty-nine percent (59.3%) of survey respondents stated that they were supportive of the various actions that had been taken to improve the parks and recreation system, with 26.3% somewhat supportive, 12.2% not sure and 2.2% not supportive.
- Survey respondents shared that the two biggest areas that should be emphasized most over the next 20 years were: focus and maintenance and upkeep of existing parks (46.9%), and development of new multi-use trails (43.9%).
- Maintenance Facilities do not fully meet requirements at outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program.

Observations

- Currently there is not an official reinvestment plan for facilities, parks or trails.
- The parks lack curb appeal or the “wow” factor, mainly due to the lack of funding and staffing for extensive landscaping and beautification efforts.

Recommendations

- Protect and invest in the parks and recreation system’s infrastructure including all turf, landscaping, buildings, parking lots and other physical elements/improvements.
- Ensure the development of recreation facilities keeps pace with needs of the community but does not outpace the financial or organizational resources of the Department.
- Optimize the operation of facilities in system to meet the needs of the community.
- Improve key facilities and elements to address deficiencies and/or meet changing needs of the community.
- Develop a plan to address the City’s aging parking lots and trails.
- The City may not have a need for more parks based on acreage alone, but additional parks would create a more equitable distribution of park land.
- While geographical distribution of parks, facilities, and trails is important, the City’s goal should be to ensure that the overall parks and recreation system offers a wide variety of passive and active parks and recreation opportunities throughout the City.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program. Specifically, the Department should work towards the development of additional maintenance facilities to accommodate vehicle and

equipment storage indoors so that they are in a controlled environment and free of contaminant runoff.

- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

MAINTENANCE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Parks operations and maintenance is one of the most important aspects of the parks and recreation system. Efficient and effective maintenance operations are critical to the success of the City's mission for several reasons:

1. *Enhancement of the Recreation Experience* – Maintenance policies and procedures must be geared to provide optimum recreation use; that is, areas and facilities that are functional, safe, and aesthetic. As a result, maintenance directly and continuously affects the parks and recreation experience of visitors to park and recreation areas and facilities.
2. *Economic Efficiency* – High-quality maintenance saves money for the City in many ways. If areas, facilities, and equipment are kept in operating condition, downtime and corresponding loss of services are minimized. Good maintenance practices permit the City to identify and correct problems when they are still relatively minor, instead of after they become major.
3. *Reduced Liability* – Regular preventive inspection programs permit the early detection and correction of potentially hazardous acts and conditions. If maintenance functions are not diligently planned, performed, and documented, the City's liability exposure and attendant costs can be greatly magnified. Proper maintenance of recreation areas and facilities is essential to prevent or reduce accidents to users.
4. *Improved Public Image* – Maintenance efforts directly reflect upon the public image of the City. Providing clean, attractive, and stimulating parks, recreation facilities and equipment significantly contribute to a high-quality experience for visitors, participants, and spectators, leaving them satisfied.
5. *Environmental Stewardship* – In recent years, the public has developed a strong environmental ethic. Cities are increasingly expected to exhibit responsible stewardship for land and other environmental resources under their jurisdiction. From a maintenance standpoint, this expectation is reflected in the proliferation of public recycling programs, integrated pest management policies, land use restrictions, and similar environmental considerations. A good maintenance program can help prevent overuse and preserve the recreation resource, extending the useful life of property, tools, structures, equipment, or materials and ensuring the carrying capacity of all facilities.

Due to these reasons, the City should develop a "Maintenance Management Plan" that sets forth maintenance standards which classify the way parks, trails and facilities shall be maintained. The plan could serve as a general direction for the parks and recreation system and the frequency and standard of maintenance for the parks, trails, facilities and

equipment. The plan should be complimented with ongoing input and training of maintenance staff to assist them in their job of providing safe, clean and aesthetic parks.

OVERVIEW

The City currently manages over 311 acres of park and public land. Included in this inventory are trails, aquatic facility, athletic fields, playgrounds, pavilions, lakes, tennis courts, pickleball courts, sand volleyball courts, disc golf course, dog park, driving range, open spaces, woodlands, and rights-of-ways. Due to the maturing of these areas along with deferred maintenance, some of the parks and facilities need attention. A combination of sound management policies, ongoing maintenance, and periodic renovation and/or refurbishment of grounds and structures are severely needed to protect public resources and ensure long-term functioning of the park and recreation system. This commitment to a properly maintained and safe parks and recreation system is expected by City residents and is a priority of the City.

To ensure efficiency, the City's maintenance program shall include:

- Necessary equipment to maintain efficiency and economical service delivery;
- Active pursuit of grants and alternative funding for renovation, energy consumption, and other projects to stretch limited funding;
- Ongoing staff training to ensure the highest level of maintenance and efficiency.
- Using a combination of part-time and full-time staff, contractors and volunteers when responding to specific workload demands throughout the parks and recreation system to ensure all maintenance and renovation needs can be met in a timely manner.
- Coordination of park, trail and facility maintenance schedules with park programming to reduce conflicts between park programming needs and necessary maintenance, and
- Customer feedback to ensure needs and concerns are met and acceptable performance measures are achieved.

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN

One of the missions of the City should be to establish and maintain public policies that address parks, trails and facility maintenance operations within its jurisdiction. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the maintenance needs of the people, the City should develop a "Maintenance Operations Management Plan" to provide overall direction to the staff in the management of park, trail, and facility maintenance.

This plan should strive to create 1) Maintenance Operation Standards; 2) Maintenance Investment Plan; 3) Refurbishment/Replacement Investment; and a 4) Capital Improvement Plan. The success of the parks and recreation system is ultimately measured on the ability to provide a high level of parks operations and maintenance. To a large extent this will be governed by the ability of the City to effectively incorporate the management of the strategy into ongoing operations.

The Maintenance Operations Management Plan should address the general upkeep of the parks and recreation system, as well as determining staffing needs to adequately carry out

the maintenance operations. This plan shall also serve the City in projecting maintenance and staffing needs in future parks projects and budgeting.

MAINTENANCE STANDARD CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The following information is excerpted from the “Park Maintenance Standards” – A cooperative project of the American Park and Recreation Society (APRS) and the National Society for Park Resources (NSPR), professional branches of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Development of a standard maintenance classification system has been extremely difficult because there have been problems devising a system comprehensive enough to apply to the wide variety of parks and recreation systems in existence. In order to be of help in setting up a standard approach at the local level, each maintenance Mode has a number of elements which make up the total maintenance cost program. Even the choice of nomenclature has avoided the term “class” so that less intense maintenance approaches avoid possible name stigma that might come to mind when “Class 2” or “Class B” is used.

Mode is meant to mean “the way of” maintenance ranging from the most intensive to the least intensive. Some parks and recreation systems may have parks, facilities, and trails that match only one or two of the defined modes. Some systems may have maintenance approaches that almost match the system but leave one or two elements out. An exact match is not necessary, but this is intended to give a wide enough set of options that a general match-up can be achieved. Some park and recreation departments may even designate a part of a park, trail or facility as one mode and the rest of the park, trail or facility as another mode.

Standards of Care

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) classifies “Standards of Care” by one of the following six modes of maintenance:

- Mode I:** State of the art maintenance applied to a high quality manicured and diverse landscape. Usually associated with high traffic urban areas such as golf courses, athletic complexes, aquatic facilities, public squares, governmental grounds, and high visitation parks.
- Mode II:** High-level maintenance associated with well-developed park areas with reasonably high visitation. Usually associated with high traffic areas such as tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, athletic complexes, playgrounds, open and landscaped areas, squares, governmental grounds, and high visitation parks.
- Mode III:** Moderate level of maintenance associated with moderate to high levels of development, moderate to high levels of visitation. Usually associated with moderate to high traffic areas such as tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, athletic complexes, playgrounds, open and landscaped areas, squares, and governmental grounds, or with agencies that because of budget restrictions can't afford a higher intensity of maintenance.
- Mode IV:** Moderate to low level of maintenance usually associated with moderate to low level of development, low visitation, or remote parks.

Mode V: Moderate to high visitation natural areas – usually associated with large urban or regional parks. Pathway or trail systems relatively well developed, Disc Golf course, lakes/ponds/rivers/streams. Other facilities at strategic locations such as entries, trail heads, building complexes and parking lots.

Mode VI: Minimum maintenance level - low visitation natural area or large urban parks that are undeveloped.

As indicated, the Standards of Care are not designed to give greater importance or significance to a particular park area, rather to indicate the level of maintenance and frequency needed to sustain the viability and appearance of an area. These standards will not only help guide daily maintenance activity, but will also provide the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable park conditions.

Mode I:

Turf care - Grass height maintained according to species and variety of grass. Mowed at least once every five working days but may be as often as once every three working days. Aeration as required, not less than four times per year. Reseeding or sodding as needed. Weed control should be practiced so that no more than one percent of the surface has weeds present.

Fertilizer - Adequate fertilization applied to plant species according to their optimum requirements. Application rates and times should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium percentages should follow local recommendations from your County Extension Service. Trees, shrubs and flowers should be fertilized according to their individual requirements of nutrients for optimum growth. Unusually long or short growing seasons may modify the chart slightly.

Irrigation - Sprinkler irrigated. Electric automatic commonly used. Some manual systems could be considered adequate under plentiful rainfall circumstances and adequate staffing. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, seasonal length and demands of plant material.

Litter control - Minimum of once per day, seven days per week. Extremely high visitation may increase the frequency. Receptacles should be plentiful enough to hold all trash generated between servicing without normally overflowing.

Pruning - Frequency dictated primarily by species and variety of trees and shrubs. Length of growing season and design concept also a controlling factor as are clipped hedges versus natural style. Timing usually scheduled to coincide with low demand periods or to take advantage of special growing characteristics such as low demand periods or to take advantage of special growing characteristics such as pruning after flowering.

Disease and Insect Control - Control program may use any of three philosophies:

1.) Preventative; a scheduled chemical or cultural program designed to prevent significant damage. 2.) Corrective; application of chemical or mechanical controls designed to demonstrated irritant in the case of flies, mosquitoes, gnats, etc. At this maintenance level the controlling objective is to not have the public notice any problems. It is anticipated at Mode I that problems will either be prevented or observed at a very early stage and corrected immediately.

Snow removal - Snow removal starts the same day as accumulations of ½ inch are present. At no time will snow be permitted to cover transportation or parking surfaces longer than noon of the day after the snow stops. Applications of snow melting compound and/ or

gravel are appropriate to reduce the danger of injury due to falls.

Lighting - Maintenance should preserve the original design. Damaged systems should be repaired as quickly as they are discovered. Bulb replacement should be done during the first working day after the outage is reported.

Surfaces - Sweeping, cleaning and washing of surfaces needs to be done so that at no time does an accumulation of sand, dirt and leaves distract from the looks or safety of the area. Repainting or re-staining of structures should occur when weather or wear deteriorates the appearance of the covering. Wood surfaces requiring oiling should be done a minimum of four times per year. Stains to surfaces should be taken off within five working days. Graffiti should be washed off or painted over the next working day after application.

Repairs - Repairs to all elements of the design should be done immediately upon discovery provided replacement parts and technicians are available to accomplish the job. When disruption to the public might be major and the repair not critical, repairs may be postponed to a time period which is least disruptive.

Inspection - Inspections of this area should be done daily by a member of staff.

Floral plantings - Normally extensive or unusual floral plantings are part of the design. These may include ground level beds, planters or hanging baskets. Often multiple plantings are scheduled, usually at least two blooming cycles per year. Some designs may call for a more frequent rotation of bloom. Maximum care of watering, fertilizing, disease control, disbudding and weeding is necessary. Weeding flowers and shrubs is done a minimum of once per week. The desired standard is essentially weed free.

Restrooms - Not always a part of the design but where required will normally receive no less than once per day servicing. Especially high traffic areas may require multiple servicing or a person assigned as attendant.

Special features - Features such as fountains, drinking fountains, sculpture, speaker systems, structural art, flag poles or parking and crowd control devices may be part of the integral design. Maintenance requirements can vary drastically but for this mode it should be of the highest possible order.

Mode II:

Turf care - Grass cut once every 5-7 days. Aeration as required but not less than two times per year. Reseeding or sodding when bare spots are present. Weed control practiced when weeds present visible problem or when weeds represent five percent of the turf surface. Some pre-emergent products may be utilized at this level.

Fertilizer - Adequate fertilizer level to ensure that all plant materials are healthy and growing vigorously. Amounts depend on species, length of growing season, soils and rainfall. Distribution should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium percentage should follow local recommendations from the State Extension Service. Trees, shrubs and flowers should receive fertilizer levels to ensure optimum growth.

Irrigation - Some type of irrigation system available. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, seasonal length, and demands of plant material.

Litter control - Minimum of once per day, five days a week. Offsite movement of trash

dependent on size of containers and use by the public. High use may dictate once per day cleaning or more. Containers are serviced.

Pruning - Usually done at least once per season unless species planted dictate more frequent attention. Sculptured hedges or high growth species may dictate a more frequent requirement than most trees and shrubs in natural growth style plantings.

Diseases and disease control - Usually done when disease or insects are inflicting noticeable damage, reducing vigor of plant materials or could be considered a bother to the public. Some preventative measures may be utilized such as systemic chemical treatments. Cultural prevention of disease problems can reduce time spent in this category. Some minor problems may be tolerated at this level.

Snow removal - Snow removed by noon the day following snowfall. Gravel or snow melt may be utilized to reduce ice accumulation.

Lighting - Replacement or repair of fixtures when observed or reported as not working.

Surfaces - Should be cleaned, repaired, repainted or replaced when appearance has noticeably deteriorated.

Repairs - Should be done whenever safety, function, or bad appearance is in question.

Inspection - Inspection by some staff member at least once a day when regular staff is scheduled.

Floral planting - Some sort of floral plantings present. Normally no more complex than two rotations of bloom per year. Care cycle usually at least once per week except watering may be more frequent. Health and vigor dictate cycle of fertilization and disease control. Beds essentially kept weed free.

Restrooms - When present should be maintained at least once per day as long as they are open to public use. High use may dictate two servicing's or more per day. Servicing period should ensure an adequate supply of paper and that rest rooms are reasonably clean and free from bad odors.

Special features – Should be maintained for safety, function and high-quality appearance as per established design.

Mode III:

Turf care - Cut once every 7-10 working days. Normally not aerated unless turf quality indicates a need or in anticipation of an application of fertilizer. Reseeding or resodding done only when major bare spots appear. Weed control measures normally used when 50 percent of small areas is weed infested or general turf quality low in 15 percent or more of the surface area.

Fertilizer - Applied only when turf vigor seems to be low. Low level application done on a once per year basis. Rate suggested is one-half the level recommended for species and variety.

Irrigation - Dependent on climate. Rainfall locations above 25 inches a year usually rely on natural rainfall with the possible addition of portable irrigation during periods of drought. Dry climates below 25 inches normally have some form of supplemental irrigation. When irrigation is automatic a demand schedule is programmed. Where manual servicing is required two to three times per week operation would be the norm.

Litter control - Minimum service of two to three times per week. High use may dictate higher levels during warm season.

Pruning - When required for health or reasonable appearance. With most tree and shrub species this would not be more frequent than once every two or three years

Mode IV:

Turf care - Low frequency mowing schedule based on species. Low growing grasses may not be mowed. High grasses may receive periodic mowing to aid public use or reduce fire danger. Weed control limited to legal requirements of noxious weeds.

Fertilizer - Not fertilized.

Irrigation - No irrigation.

Litter control - Once per week or less. Complaint may increase level above one servicing.

Pruning - No regular trimming. Safety or damage from weather may dictate actual work schedule.

Disease and Insect Control - None except where epidemic and epidemic condition threatens resource or public.

Snow removal - None except where major access ways or active parking areas dictate the need for removal.

Lighting - Replacement on complaint or employee discovery.

Surfaces - Replaced or repaired when safety is a concern and when budget is available.

Repairs - Should be done when safety or function is in question.

Inspections - Once per month.

Floral plantings - None, may have wildflowers, perennials, flowering trees or shrubs in place.

Restrooms - When present, five times per week.

Special features - Minimum maintenance to allow safe use.

Mode V:

Turf care - Normally not mowed but grassed parking lots, approaches to buildings, road/trail shoulders, may be cut to reduce fire danger. Weed control on noxious weeds.

Fertilizer - None.

Irrigation - None.

Litter control - Based on visitation, may be more than once per day if crowds dictate that level.

Pruning - Only done for safety.

Insect and Disease Control - Done only to ensure safety or when problem seriously discourages public use.

Snow removal - One day service on roads and parking areas.

Lighting - Replaced on complaint or when noticed by employees.

Mode VI:

Turf areas - Not mowed. Weed control only if legal requirements demand it.

Fertilizer - Not fertilized.

Irrigation - No irrigation.

Litter control - On demand or complaint basis.

Pruning - No pruning unless safety is involved.

Disease insect control - No control except in epidemic or safety situations.

Snow removal - Snow removal only on strategic roads and parking lots. Accomplished within two days after snow stops.

Surfaces - Serviced when safety is consideration.

Repairs - Should be done when safety or function is in question.

Inspection - Once per month.

Floral plantings - None.

Restrooms - Service based on need.

Special features - Service based on lowest acceptable frequency for feature. Safety and function interruption a concern when either seem significant.

MAINTENANCE COSTS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

This section is intended to serve as a benchmark for assigning standards of care to various park areas, help guide the current and future maintenance needs and procedures for the parks, standardize approaches to maintenance, and provide some cost data for the purposes of budgeting, and the allocation of funds.

Costs per unit for maintenance can vary from locality to locality because of labor rates, costs of materials, type of materials, extent of design, length of season, moisture availability, transportation costs and intensity of public use. It should be possible; however, to establish a local maintenance cost forecast for new developments by assigning the proper mode to the new development. At higher maintenance modes, it is assumed that the administering agencies will have adequate time and properly trained and certified personnel to accomplish the quality that should accompany the quantity of work done.

According to the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the national median cost per

capita on an annual basis is \$99.47; The national median cost per maintained acre on an annual basis is \$8,260.00; and the national average of full-time equivalent (FTE) maintenance personnel per acre is one (1) FTE per 12 acres. However, these numbers are just overall averages, and do not take into consideration the mode(s) of maintenance that may be required. The following classification table describes the actual operating expenditures per acre of park and non-park sites by jurisdiction population.

The following is a classification table that describes the mode levels of maintenance, and a range of what the costs per acre could be on annual basis:

CLASSIFICATION	ANNUAL COST PER ACRE
MODE I	\$22,050 - \$29,400
MODE II	\$14,700 - \$22,049
MODE III	\$7,350 - \$14,699
MODE IV	\$4,900 - \$7,349
MODE V	\$700.00 - \$4,899
MODE VI	\$0 - \$699.00

Costs are inclusive of day-to-day maintenance which includes: Maintenance Personnel = 55%, Contractual & Commodities = 38%, Equipment = 5%, and Other = 2%. However, it does not include: Administrative costs, programming, initial capital equipment/vehicles, capital improvements, or debt payments.

MAINTENANCE STAFFING CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Like the “Maintenance Costs Standard Classification System”, the development of a standard full-time equivalent (FTE) “Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System” has also been extremely difficult because there have been difficulties devising a system comprehensive enough to apply to the wide variety of park types and functions. This section is intended to serve as a benchmark for assigning staffing levels to various park areas, help guide current and future staffing needs, and to provide cost data for the purpose of budgeting and allocation of funds.

The following is a classification table that describes the standards of care (mode levels of maintenance), and what the FTE maintenance staffing per acre could be on an annual basis.

CLASSIFICATION	ANNUAL STAFFING PER ACRE
MODE I	1 Person per 5 Acres
MODE II	1 Person per 10 Acres
MODE III	1 Person per 15 Acres
MODE IV	1 Person per 20 Acres
MODE V	1 Person per 25 Acres
MODE VI	1 Person per 30 Acres

Note: This table does not take into consideration coverage for vacations, sick leave, holidays, workers compensation leave, family medical leave, shift rotations, job vacancies, nor does it take into consideration the level of supervisory staff necessary to supervise maintenance personnel.

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS ANALYSIS

The NRPA “Standards of Care” was used to form the basis for the modes of maintenance outlined in the following section. Given the unique uses and characteristics of the Sunset Hills parks and recreation system, this section has been tailored to identify the City’s current mode (Current mode in which the Department is trying to achieve). This approach allows the Department to assign different standards of care to different use and visibility areas in the parks. This section is intended to serve as a bench-mark for assigning standards of care and staffing to various park areas, help guide future maintenance needs and procedures for the parks, and standardize approaches to maintenance.

The modes of maintenance are based on each park being a stand-alone operation; however, due to the proximity of some parks, personnel and equipment can and should be leveraged whenever possible, thus reducing personnel and funding needs. As such, actual required personnel vs. the Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System could possibly be reduced.

Total Staffing and Maintenance Cost

These numbers represent the approximate acreage, staffing standard, and maintenance cost based off of the “Maintenance Standard Classification System”, “Maintenance Costs Classification System”, “Maintenance Staffing Classification System”, and maintenance operations analysis performed on each park area. These numbers only represent benchmarks and guidelines for the operations of the park system, based on current size and amenities.

Costs are inclusive of day-to-day maintenance which includes: Maintenance Personnel = 55%, Contractual & Commodities = 38%, Equipment = 5%, and Other = 2%. However, it does not include: Administrative costs, programming, initial capital equipment/vehicles, capital improvements, or debt payments.

Does not take into consideration coverage for vacations, sick leave, holidays, workers compensation leave, family medical leave, shift rotations, job vacancies, nor does it take into consideration the level of supervisory staff necessary to supervise maintenance personnel.

Watson Trail Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	2.24	0.09	\$1,568 – \$10,974
Tennis Courts	III	0.60	0.01	\$4,410 - \$8,820
Pickleball Courts	III	0.16	0.01	\$1,176– \$2,352
Active Space	III	3.12	0.30	\$22,932 - \$45,861
Pavilions	I	0.09	0.02	\$1,985 - \$2,646
Lake	V	0.97	0.04	\$4,753 - \$7,129
Open Space/Woodlands	V	19.9	0.80	\$13,930- \$97,490
Trails	III	5.30	0.35	\$38,955- \$77,905
Aquatic Facility	I	0.99	0.20	\$21,830- \$29,106
Community Center	III	0.38	0.03	\$2,793 - \$5,586
Playgrounds	II	0.62	0.06	\$9,114 - \$13,670
Maintenance Facility	III	0.63	0.04	\$4,631 - \$9,260
All Areas	All	35	1.95	\$128,077 - \$310,799

- Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed, sealed and striped every three to five years. Upper Parking Lot (Tennis Courts, Pavilions, and Playgrounds) needs to have four additional ADA parking spaces with one being van accessible located to the closest area of access. Pickleball/Lake Parking Lot to need to have two ADA parking spaces with one being van accessible located to the closest area of access to the pickleball courts.
- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular basis in order to keep from debris build up. Add bollards/delineators to all trail entrances.
- Street Side Sidewalks – curb ramps do not meet ADA standards as they do not have truncated dome detectors.
- Park Sidewalks – asphalt sidewalk is severely cracking and does not meet ADA standards. These sidewalks should be replaced immediately as this is the main route of travel to the tennis courts, pavilions, restrooms and playground areas.
- Playground – poured-in-place surfacing could use a coat of Aliphatic Polyurethane Binder to protect the overall surfacing as well as to protect it from fading and from further decline. Engineered hardwood surfacing needs to be topped off to maintain proper depth requirements (Fiber should be put down in 3" lifts, watered and compacted).
- Pedestrian Bridge – along Watson Road needs some type of filler between the back edge of the sidewalk and the fence, as there is a large gap that a pedestrian could fall into.
- Maintenance Facility – basement walls are cracking and occasionally leaks water. Needs electrical and lighting upgrades and the addition of security cameras.
- Traffic Signage – needs to meet MUTCD guidelines.

Lynstone Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	0.08	0.01	\$56 – \$392
Basketball Court	III	0.12	0.01	\$882 - \$1,764
Restrooms	III	0.01	0.01	\$74 – \$147
Active Space	IV	4.03	0.22	\$19,747 - \$29,616
Pavilion	III	0.04	0.01	\$294 - \$588
Trail	III	0.48	0.01	\$3,528- \$7,056
Playgrounds	II	0.21	0.06	\$3,087 - \$4,630
Community Garden	IV	0.03	0.01	\$147 - \$220
All Areas	All	5	.34	\$27,815 - \$44,413

- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.
- Steet Side Sidewalks – do not meet ADA standards as they are not wide enough for an accessible route.
- Fencing – along the street/playground has openings and would need gates to be in compliance with ASTM guidelines. Back fence needs to be replaced. Remove poison ivy on fence.
- Playground - engineered hardwood surfacing needs to be topped off to maintain proper depth requirements (Fiber should be put down in 3" lifts, watered and compacted).

Bander Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Driving Range Parking Lots/Drives	V	0.32	0.01	\$224 – \$1,568
Nature Area Parking	V	0.09	0.01	\$63 - \$441
Disc Golf	V	62.41	2.50	\$43,687 - \$305,747
Lake/Ponds	V	10.85	0.43	\$7,595 - \$53,154
Woodlands	VI	24.66	0.82	\$0- \$17,237
Trails	III	4.50	0.30	\$33,075 - \$66,146
Driving Range	III	16.15	1.08	\$118,703 - \$237,389
Putting Greens	I	1.01	0.20	\$22,271 - \$29,694
Driving Range	IV	2.01	0.10	\$9,849 - \$14,772
All Areas	All	122	5.45	\$235,467 - \$726,148

- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.
- Nature Areas – need to be cut back from trails as they are starting to encroach areas. They also should be brush hogged or have a prescribed fire annually. There is also a large population of invasive species within these areas that need to be eradicated.
- Ponds/Lakes – need to be treated for algae periodically and areas around the edges could be cut back to encourage fishing.
- Mowing – is currently be performed by zero-turn mowers. It would be more efficient to mow all open areas (driving range and disc golf fairways) with a wide-area mower.
- Trees – need to be trimmed up and some trees need to be removed.

Stieren Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	1.19	0.05	\$883 – \$5,830
Playground Area	II	1.60	0.16	\$23,520 - \$35,278
Volleyball Area	III	0.30	0.02	\$2,205 - \$4,410
Athletic Field Area	III	8.86	0.60	\$65,121 - \$130,233
Woodlands	V	20.25	0.81	\$14,175 - \$99,205
Trail	III	1.88	0.13	\$13,818 - \$27,634
Soccer Field Area	IV	2.28	0.11	\$11,172 - \$16,756
All Areas	All	35.5	1.88	\$130,894 - \$319,346

- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.
- Mowing – is currently be performed by zero-turn mowers. It would be more efficient to mow all open areas (athletic fields) with a wide-area mower.
- Playground – engineered hardwood surfacing needs to be topped off to maintain proper depth requirements (Fiber should be put down in 3” lifts, watered and compacted).
- Fencing – a barrier fence is needed between the street and playground to be in compliance with ASTM guidelines.
- Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed, sealed and striped every three to five years.
- Trees – need to be trimmed up in areas.
- Traffic Signage – needs to meet MUTCD guidelines.

Minnie Ha Ha Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	2.44	0.10	\$1,708 – \$11,954
Soccer Parking Lot	V	1.03	0.04	\$721 - \$5,046
Soccer Fields	III	2.57	0.17	\$18,890 - \$37,776
Playgrounds	II	0.54	0.05	\$7,938 - \$11,906
Pavilions	III	0.12	0.01	\$882 - \$1,764
Soccer Pavilion	III	0.02	0.01	\$147 - \$294
Soccer Concessions	III	0.03	0.01	\$221 - \$441
Woodlands	V	34.91	1.40	\$24,437- \$171,024
Trails	III	0.30	0.02	\$2,205 - \$4,410
Restrooms	III	0.02	0.01	\$147 - \$294
BMX	IV	1.02	0.05	\$4,998 - \$7,496
All Areas	All	43	1.87	\$62,294 - \$252,405

- Asphalt Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed, sealed and striped every three to five years.
- Gravel Parking Lot – in the short term, needs to have fines added to it to make it a little firmer and to provide a better driving/walking surface. Long-term the parking lot needs to be paved to be in compliance with city code.
- ADA parking spaces - (one being van accessible) need to be located to the closest area of access to a facility and/or element.
- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.
- Nature Areas – need to be cut back from trails as they are starting to encroach areas. They also should be brush hogged or have a prescribed fire annually. There is also a large population of invasive species within these areas that need to be eradicated.
- Restrooms – do not meet ADA guidelines as they do not provide an accessible route into them as there is about an inch to a two-inch lip between the sidewalk/trail and the foundation/slab to the entry of the restrooms.
- Playgrounds – engineered hardwood surfacing needs to be topped off to maintain proper depth requirements (Fiber should be put down in 3" lifts, watered and compacted).
- Crosswalks/Signage – needs to be in compliance with MUTCD standards.
- Electrical Panels – ladder does not meet OSHA standards and needs to be replaced and protected to provide for safe use.
- Fencing/Netting – needs to be placed on both ends of the soccer fields to prevent the ball from going into the woods.

Kitun Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	0.17	0.01	\$119 – \$833
Dog Park	III	1.90	0.13	\$13,965 - \$27,928
Park Trail	III	0.25	0.02	\$1,838 - \$3,675
School Trail	III	*0.25	0.02	\$1,838 - \$3,675
Active Area	IV	2.68	0.13	\$13,132 - \$19,695
All Areas	All	*5.25	0.31	\$30,892 - \$55,806

- Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed, sealed and striped every three to five years.
- ADA parking spaces - (one being van accessible) need to be located to the closest area of access to a facility and/or element.
- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.
- Sod – could transplant Bermuda grass from the back side of the pool to fill in dead spots in the lawn. The Bermuda would eventually spread and would provide a hardier surface for the dogs.

Claire Gempp Davidson Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	0.17	0.01	\$119 – \$833
Pond	V	0.27	0.01	\$189 - \$1,323
Trail	III	0.06	0.01	\$441- \$882
Rest Room	III	0.01	0.01	\$74 - \$147
Wood Areas	VI	12.49	0.42	\$0 - \$8,731
Active Areas	IV	0.50	0.03	\$2,450 - \$3,675
All Areas	All	13.50	0.49	\$3,273 - \$15,591

- Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed, sealed and striped every three to five years.
- Trails – engineered hardwood surfacing needs to be topped off to maintain proper depth requirements (Fiber should be put down in 3” lifts, watered and compacted) and need to be topped off annually to be in compliance with ADA. They also need to be leveled so that there is an even walking surface.

- Nature Areas – need to be cut back from trails as they are starting to encroach areas. They also should be brush hogged or have a prescribed fire annually. There is also a large population of invasive species within these areas that need to be eradicated.
- Pond – needs to be treated for algae periodically.
- Trails – need to be trimmed on a regular basis.

I-44 Trail Head Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Parking Lots/Drives	V	0.25	0.01	\$175 – \$1,225
Trail	III	0.88	0.06	\$6,468- \$12,935
Active Areas	IV	0.16	0.01	\$784 - \$1,176
Plaza	III	0.07	0.01	\$515 - \$1,029
Native Areas	V	0.64	0.03	\$448 - \$3,135
All Areas	All	2.00	0.12	\$8,390 - \$19,500

- Parking Lots and Drives - need to be crack sealed and striped every three to five years.
- Trails – need to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.

Nancy Eschbach Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Trail	V	1.80	0.07	\$1,200 - \$8,818
Native Areas	VI	14.20	0.47	\$0 - \$9,926
All Areas	All	16.00	0.54	\$3,273 - \$15,591

- Nature Areas – need to be cut back from trails periodically as they could start to encroach areas. They also should be brush hogged or have a prescribed fire annually. There is also a large population of invasive species within these areas that need to be eradicated.
- Gravel Trail – needs to be sprayed for weeds/grass and have fines added and rolled to make it firmer and to provide a better walking surface.
- Creek/Stream – need to provide some type of streambank stabilization as the streambank is showing signs of erosion which if not addressed will cut into the existing trail.

Rock Alva Park

Description	Mode	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Trail	V	0.97	0.04	\$679 - \$4,752
Native Areas	VI	14.26	0.48	\$0 - \$9,968
All Areas	All	23.00	0.52	\$679 - \$14,720

- Nature Areas – need to be cut back from trails periodically as they could start to encroach areas. They also should be brush hogged or have a prescribed fire annually. There is also a large population of invasive species within these areas that need to be eradicated.
- Trail – needs to be patched, crack sealed, sealed every three to five years. They also need to be swept on a regular bases in order to keep from debris build up.

All Parks

Description	Number of Acres	Staffing Standard	Maintenance Cost
Watson Trail Park	35	1.95	\$128,077 - \$310,799
Lynstone Park	5	.34	\$27,815 - \$44,413
Bander Park	122	5.45	\$235,467 - \$726,148
Stieren Park	35.5	1.88	\$130,894 - \$319,346
Minnie Ha Ha Park	43	1.87	\$62,294 - \$252,405
Kitun Park	*5.25	0.31	\$30,892 - \$55,806
Claire Gempp Davidson	13.50	0.49	\$3,273 - \$15,591
I-44 Trail Head Park	2.00	0.12	\$8,390 - \$19,500
Nancy Eschbach Park	16.00	0.54	\$3,273 - \$15,591
Rock Alva Park	23.00	0.52	\$679 - \$14,720
All Areas	300.25	13.47	\$631,054 - \$1,774,319

Currently levels of maintenance tasks are performed in a variety of categories, most areas are performed in the Mode III - IV categories with an annual budget of \$600,200.

Current staffing consists of five (5) full-time employees and 2.45 FTE part-time employees.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

The typical agency has nearly \$700,000 in deferred maintenance projects. This overall figure drops for small agencies serving fewer than 20,000 people and increases to a median more

than \$17 million for agencies in jurisdictions of more than 250,000 people. Deferred maintenance balances rise at agencies that:

- Serve larger populations
- Have a higher operating budget
- Have more full-time equivalent employees
- Maintain more acres of parkland
- Have more parks

Agencies with a population of less than 20,000 have a median deferment of \$80,000 up to an upper quartile of \$1,000,000.

MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT AND REFURBISHMENT/RENOVATION INVESTMENT PLANS

Over the past several years, the City has experienced a significant increase in maintenance and operation demands as the park and facilities have become more labor intensive due to their maturity and deferred maintenance. In addition, liability and accessibility issues will become increasingly important maintenance and operation concerns. Therefore, in the near future, renovation and/or refurbishment of facilities and amenities will become a high priority in order to optimize the use of park facilities and to protect the assets. A park and recreation system's standards of care, and renovation and/or refurbishment will play a major role in continuing to meet their expectations.

The City will need to realize that if park and recreation assets are to be protected, an orderly program identifying maintenance, repairs and renovations and refurbishments will need to be identified and implemented as part of the overall Maintenance Investment Plan (MIP) and/or the Refurbishment/Renovation Investment Plan (RRIP) to address these needs and to ensure long-term protection of the valuable park assets.

The City should develop a MIP and/or RRIP that would be reviewed and updated annually, which would identify and prioritize maintenance, renovation, and/or refurbishment needs throughout the park and recreation system. The goal of the plans should be to systematically maintain, renovate, or refurbish existing park structures and grounds to maintain the safety, integrity and function of the parks and recreation system.

In addition, these plans should establish an implementation strategy to handle risk management issues, correct high maintenance areas, and allow for ongoing preventative maintenance program. It is important to point out that these plans will not deal with the overall character of parks, facilities, and trails, which occurs through the redevelopment and site master planning process.

The MIP should typically identify ongoing routine maintenance functions that are covered in the City's operating budget. However, the RRIP shall fill the void between the MIP and the operating budget by covering non-routine renovation or refurbishment projects to fix the existing system. Therefore, the MIP shall serve as the keystone of the service delivery system and must continue to be funded at an amount necessary to meet the needs of the park and recreation system.

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

As previously stated, it is recommended that the City develop a Maintenance Management Plan that sets forth maintenance operation standards or level of care which classify the way parks, trails and facilities shall be maintained. The plan shall serve as general direction for the park and recreation system and the frequency and standard of maintenance for the park, trails, facilities and equipment. The plan should be complimented with ongoing input and training of maintenance staff to assist them in their job of providing safe, clean and aesthetic park.

1. PURPOSE AND GOAL

The Cochran team feels that it is necessary to establish a Maintenance Management Plan for the park system. Accordingly, there are several goals the City should achieve with the development of the Maintenance Management Plan:

- a. Provide, a safe and clean park and recreation facilities to the public as efficiently and effectively as resources would allow;
- b. Identify the highest and best use of full-time staff, part-time staff, and contracted staff based on meeting customer needs in the most cost-effective manner to provide the desired level of maintenance;
- c. Areas and facilities that are aesthetically pleasing should be developed and maintained;
- d. Provide for environmental management throughout the park system; and
- e. Maintenance should promote good public relations by providing areas and facilities where people have an opportunity for an enjoyable leisure and educational experience.

2. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The development of the Maintenance Management Plan should be accomplished through a review of the current and upcoming Park assets to determine maintenance standards or level of care as it applies to each asset by maintenance task. The City should then identify desired maintenance outcomes to be achieved for each asset, and document the maintenance tasks required to meet the desired outcomes and the financial and personnel resources required to meet the standards of care for each asset in the system. Recommendations should present a comprehensive approach to maintenance operations by asset, the cost to operate each asset, and it should identify new maintenance standards and management strategies to meet the desired outcomes.

Analysis of this information should be performed and translated into a maintenance management model, which organized each asset, acreage of each asset, the cost of personnel, equipment and supplies for each asset, all based on the mode or standards of care.

3. LEVELS OF CARE

Levels of Care should be developed for the ongoing maintenance of the park and recreation system. Listed below are typical levels of care that could be adopted into a Maintenance Management Plan.

a. Trails

Asphalt Trail – Typically a 10' – 12' wide asphalt paved trail designed to meet ADA/ABA Standards.

- Remove trash/debris and sweep regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim pavement edges.
- Repair/fill cracks.
- Repair damaged pavements when identified.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.
- Seal coat (3-5 years).
- Mill & Overlay (10-15 years).
- Reconstruction (25-30 years).

Concrete Trail – Typically a 10' – 12' wide asphalt paved trail designed to meet ADA/ABA Standards.

- Remove trash/debris and sweep regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim pavement edges.
- Repair and caulk expansion joints.
- Repair damaged pavements when identified.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.
- Reconstruction (25-30 years).

Gravel Trail – Typically a 10' – 12' wide gravel trail designed to meet ADA/ABA Standards.

- Remove trash/debris regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim edges.
- Finish grade and roll gravel to maintain smooth surface free of ruts, rills and holes.
- Repair and/or rehab gravel surface by adding surface fine aggregate fill to re-establish crown and address wash boarding, potholes and rutting.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.

Wood Chip Trail – Typically a 3' – 5' wide trail

- Remove trash/debris regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim edges.
- Finish grade and roll wood chips to maintain smooth surface free of ruts, rills and holes.
- Repair and/or rehab wood chip surface by adding wood chip fill to re-crown and address wash boarding, potholes and rutting.

- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.

Engineered Wood Fiber Trail – Typically a 3' – 5' wide trail

- Remove trash/debris regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim edges.
- Finish grade and roll EWF chips to maintain smooth surface free of ruts, rills and holes.
- Repair and/or rehab wood chip surface by adding EWF chip fill in 3' layers, water and roll. Re-crown and address wash boarding, potholes and rutting.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.

b. Site Furnishings

Related site furnishings including benches, tables, bike racks, and bollards:

- Keep clean by removing dirt, spills, sap and other materials.
- Check for and repair damaged components and remove graffiti.
- Thoroughly clean and touch up paint or seal.
- Check/tighten hardware fasteners.
- Sand and re-finish wood.

c. Mowing

Trail Shoulder – Typically 3'-5' width.

- Remove trash/debris regularly.
- Check for erosion or damage.
- Mow at a 3" height and remove clumps.
- Trim grass from along trail edge, fences, wall, signs.
- Blow clippings off trails, etc.
- Inspect areas for noxious weeds and treat with herbicide.
- Aerate/Overseed/Fertilize as needed.

Grass Lawns – High Use Areas

- Remove trash/debris regularly.
- Check for erosion or damage.
- Mow at a 3" height and remove clumps.
- Trim grass from along pavements, fences, wall, signs.
- Blow clippings off pavements, etc.
- Inspect areas for noxious weeds and treat with herbicide.
- Aerate/Overseed/Fertilize as needed.

Grass Lawns – Low Use Areas

- Remove trash/debris.
- Check for erosion or damage.
- Mow at a 5” – 8” height and remove clumps.
- Trim grass from along pavements, fences, wall, signs.
- Blow clippings off pavements, etc.
- Inspect areas for noxious weeds and treat with herbicide.
- Aerate/Overseed/Fertilize as needed.

Grass Lawns – Annual Mow Grass

- Remove trash/debris.
- Check for erosion or damage.
- Mow at 8” – 12” height.
- Inspect areas for noxious weeds (Johnson grass, Sericea lespedeza, etc.) spot treat with herbicide and manually remove seed heads.

Native Grasslands – Typically an area that has been seeded with native grasses (and perennials) to mimic prairie and savanna ecosystems.

- Remove trash/debris.
- Check for erosion or damage.
- Year 1 – High mow to a height of 6” – 12” throughout growing season to control weeds; spot spray herbicide to treat invasive/noxious weed as needed.
- Year 2 & 3 – Late winter mow. During growing season, spot mow and herbicide treatments.
- Year 4 - Late winter mow. During growing season, spot mow and herbicide treatments. Complete prescribed burn.
- Year 5 & beyond – Late winter mow and periodic inspections for invasive/noxious weeds.

d. Wildflower/Native Beds

- Remove trash/debris.
- Water during first two years to establish plants.
- Weed beds (April-September).
- Late winter cut down and remove plant material, and replace dead plants and refresh mulch.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicide treatment sparingly in spring.

e. Shrub & Perennial Beds

- Remove trash/debris.
- Water during first 2-years to establish plants.
- Weed beds (April-September).

- Prune plants 3' off trails.
- Prune dead/diseased branches.
- Rake and replenish mulch beds in spring
- Replace dead plants in spring or fall.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicide treatment sparingly in spring.

f. Shrub Massing's

- Remove trash/debris.
- Water during first two years to establish plants.
- Weed beds (April-September).
- Prune plants 3' off trails.
- Prune dead/diseased branches.
- Rake and replenish mulch beds in spring
- Replace dead plants in spring or fall.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicide treatment sparingly in spring.

g. Trees

- Water as needed to provide 15 gallons per 1" caliper, per week using a slow release water bag.
- Maintain & weed mulched saucer/donut ring – no mounding on trunk.
- Prune dead, broken or diseased branches.
- Trim and prune trees to a minimum vertical height of 10' and a minimum horizontal clearance of 3' of trails, sidewalks, parking lots, roadways, playground, pavilion, or any other structure.
- Trim and prune trees during dormant season at least every three years.

h. Woodlands/Forest - These are forested and semi-forested areas.

- Remove trash/debris.
- Clean up storm damaged downed trees/limbs when located within 10' of a trail, parking lot, pavilion, playground, etc.
- Trim and prune trees during dormant season at least every three years.

i. Wetlands

- Remove trash/debris.
- Clean up storm damaged downed trees/limbs when located within 10' of a trail.
- Herbicides and algaecides should be avoided, but, when necessary, it shall be applied by a state licensed applicator.

j. Roadway Signs and Wayfinding

- Check for proper installation and is compliant with MUTCD, ADA/ABA.
- Keep clean by removing dirt, spills, sap and other materials.
- Check for and repair damaged components and remove graffiti.
- Replace damaged, worn or faded signs.
- Touch up paint or seal.
- Replace 10-15 years.

k. Trash Cans and Pet Waste Dispensers

- Keep clean by removing dirt, spills, sap and other materials.
- Check for and repair damaged components and remove graffiti.
- Touch up paint or seal.
- Empty receptacles/replenish bag supply as needed.

l. Drinking Fountains

- Keep clean by removing dirt, spills, sap and other materials.
- Check for and repair damaged components and remove graffiti.
- Touch up paint or seal.
- Check/tighten hardware fasteners.
- Non-freeze proof fixtures should be winterized in late fall and operation re-started in spring.

m. Fencing

- Trim vegetation along fence and post and keep fence free of debris and trash.
- Repair damaged components and remove or paint over graffiti.
- Check condition and stability of fence components (post and rails) and gates.

n. Culverts

- Trim vegetation and keep free of debris and trash.
- Confirm culvert is clear to allow drainage through pipe.
- Check and repair eroded and unstable slope and rip rap at culvert ends.
- Check drainage structure joints and seams for failure.
- After major storm events, conduct a visual check of overflow and drainage structural components for any tree, limb or debris obstructions and to make sure of proper drainage.

o. Rock Blanket

- Trim vegetation and keep free of debris and trash.
- Confirm proper coverage, slopes and rock blanket thickness.
- Confirm allowable forms and amount of vegetation growth.
- Remove fallen trees/limbs and points of flow restrictions.

p. Ponds

- Check plant growth.
- Check and remove trash/debris.
- Check algae growth during summer and address source conditions.
- Check that overflow and drainage structures are clear and draining properly.
- Remove invasive non-native plants.
- Correct erosion on side slopes.
- Remove fallen trees/limbs and points of flow restrictions.
- After major storm events, conduct a visual check of overflow and drainage structural components for any tree, limb or debris obstructions and to make sure of proper drainage.

q. Shelters/Pavilions/Gazebos

- Sweep/blow off floors, and power wash as needed.
- Check and remove trash/debris.
- Check/repair lighting, electric outlets, structure damage, etc.
- Remove graffiti.
- Inspect for pest.
- Inspect and repair any damage to roof, post, masonry, siding, paint, caulking, grout, structural elements, flashing, lighting, etc.
- Check expansion joints in concrete pad and re-caulk as needed.
- Roof replacement – 15-20 years.

r. Restrooms

- Sweep/blow off floors, and power wash as needed.
- Check and remove trash/debris.
- Clean toilets and sinks.
- Replace supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, soap, etc.
- Check/repair lighting, electric outlets, structure damage, etc.
- Remove graffiti.
- Inspect for pest.
- Inspect and repair any damage to roof, post, masonry, siding, paint, caulking, grout, structural elements, flashing, lighting, etc.
- Check expansion joints in concrete pad and re-caulk as needed.

- Septic Systems: Inspect annually and pump out tank every 3-5 years.
- Roof replacement – 15-20 years.

s. Playgrounds

- Inspect structural elements and tighten hardware fasteners.
- Inspect surfacing elements
- Engineered Hardwood Fiber, rake out holes and low areas in order to maintain at least a 9" base (place EWF in 3" layers, water and roll to meet ADA requirements)
- Poured-in-place surfacing could use a coat of Aliphatic Polyurethane Binder to protect the overall surfacing as well as to protect it from fading and from further decline.
- Check and remove trash/debris.
- Check/repair lighting, electric outlets, structure damage, etc.
- Inspect for pest.
- Keep clean by removing dirt, spills, sap and other materials.
- Check for and repair damaged components and remove graffiti.
- Power wash as needed.
- Touch up paint or seal.
- Surfacing replacement every ten years.
- Component replacement every 20 years.

t. Parking Lots, Sidewalks & Boat Ramps

Asphalt

- Remove trash/debris and sweep regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim pavement edges.
- Repair/fill cracks.
- Repair damaged pavements when identified.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.
- Re-apply pavement markings to maintain high and consistent visibility.
- Seal coat (5-7 years).
- Mill & Overlay (10-15 years).
- Reconstruction (25-30 years).

Concrete

- Remove trash/debris and sweep regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim pavement edges.
- Repair and caulk expansion joints.
- Repair damaged pavements when identified.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.
- Re-apply pavement markings to maintain high and consistent visibility.

- Reconstruction (25-30 years).

Gravel

- Remove trash/debris regularly to maintain clean/safe surface.
- Trim edges.
- Finish grade and roll gravel to maintain smooth surface free of ruts, rills and holes.
- Repair and/or rehab gravel surface by adding surface fine aggregate fill and roll to re-establish crown and address wash boarding, potholes and rutting.
- Remove debris, eroded soils or flood silt deposition after storm events.

u. Electric & Lighting

- Verify electric/lighting is functioning, distribution as intended and timer or photo cell working.
- Re-lamp fixtures as necessary.
- Adjust control timers.
- Clean lamp/lens components of debris and dead insects.
- Check and repair covers, handholds, access points are tightened and secured.
- Check and repair banner arms attachments for stability.
- Touch up paint as necessary.

v. Boardwalks, Decks, Bridges & Fishing Piers

- Remove trash/debris and sweep as needed to maintain clean surface.
- Check for damage, graffiti and trip hazards.
- Clean all surfaces – pressure wash and/or brush as needed.
- Paint or repair component decking and fence/railing system coatings.
- Caulk joints needing repair.
- Caulk un-welded seams needing repair.
- After major storm events, conduct a visual check of structural components, abutments, piers, rip rap and for any tree, limb or debris hung up under structures.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall have established maintenance and operations standards that are reviewed periodically for management of all park and recreation areas and facilities, including specialty facilities such as marinas, ice rinks, golf courses, zoological facilities, equestrian facilities, aquatic or athletic facilities, nature centers, where applicable. Parks, facilities and other recreational elements should be identified according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed via a park classification or maintenance classification system. Each of these areas should be

assigned an appropriate set of maintenance standards including both recommended frequency and acceptable quality.

Provide the maintenance standards for all parks, facilities and specialty areas, including evidence of park maintenance classification according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed. Provide the most recent review or update.

2. There shall be a comprehensive preventative maintenance plan to provide periodic, scheduled inspections, assessment and repair, and replacement of infrastructure, systems and assets. This includes certifying, checking or testing for optimum operation based on applicable industry standards, local guidelines, city requirements and/or manufacturer's recommendation for maintenance and replacement of parks, with the intent to ensure that park assets are maintained for optimum use and safety and have the ability to reach or extend its full life cycle and expected return on investment.

Provide the preventative maintenance plan and examples of detailed preventative maintenance programs for identified parks, recreation areas and facilities with special attention given to playground equipment, aquatic facilities, pedestrian pathways, building infrastructure and other high impact assets, along with copies of completed, recent inspections and safety checks for a sampling of facilities/areas.

3. The agency shall have an established fleet management plan comprised of an inventory of all vehicles, rolling stock and other major equipment and inspection and replacement schedules.

Provide the fleet management plan.

4. There shall be policies and procedures for the management of and accountability for agency-owned equipment, materials, tools, and supplies, including procedures for purchase and distribution to authorized persons, proper training of appropriate personnel in use of equipment, safe and secure storage of equipment, and maintenance of all equipment in operational readiness and working order. Such property includes supplies, materials, tools, expendable items, vehicles, installed and mobile equipment, and personal wear items used by agency personnel.

Provide policy and procedures regarding agency-owned equipment and property.

5. The agency shall have on file floor plans, specifications, and/or as-built drawings for major facilities constructed since 1965. These records contain information necessary for efficient programming, quality facility maintenance and effective capital project programming. Projects funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions on use and disposition.

Provide evidence that plans and specifications for facilities with greater than 10,000 square feet of indoor space constructed since 1965 are on file.

6. The agency shall have records on file of all lands owned or property leased by or for the agency. Each record shall include ownership, leases, legal description, and easements and covenants that restrict use or disposition. The records shall also include date and manner of acquisition. The manner of acquisition can limit right to use and dispose of parkland, for example acquisitions funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions. Gifts and bequests often contain restrictive covenants that reflect the desires of donors.

Provide evidence that land records for land acquired since 1965 are on file.

7. The agency shall have an established policy on environmental sustainability that states the agency position on energy and resource conservation. The policy should address sustainable product purchasing; reduction and handling of waste; wise use and protection of land, air, water and wildlife; and sustainable design/construction of buildings and facilities.

Provide the agency's environmental sustainability policy and examples of projects and initiatives that demonstrate the agency's commitment to implementation. Examples include ecosystem and green infrastructure plans/programs, capital improvements utilizing green/sustainable designs, carbon footprint analysis and reduction goals, internal/external communication and outreach programs.

8. There shall be natural resource management plans for environmentally unique or sensitive areas such as valuable wetlands, riverbanks and woodlands and there shall be environmental protection procedures, such as for erosion control, conduct of nature studies, wildlife and habitat preservation, and protection of water supply reservoirs and water recharge areas. Even if the agency does not own or control the natural resource, there shall be procedures to encourage and ensure environmental stewardship through volunteer steward programs and/or interpretive education and other learning opportunities. The agency should work with other agencies to meet and promote environmentally sound maintenance and land management standards.

Provide the natural resource management plan(s) and procedures and examples of outreach and education.

9. There shall be a recycling and/or zero waste plan for park and recreation facilities and administrative offices that is systematically monitored and periodically reviewed. The plan shall also include an educational component for both users and employees. The recycling and/or zero waste plan should include all major products suitable for recycling in the given region with an emphasis on making the recycling process easy and convenient for park and recreation users.

Provide a description of the recycling and/or zero waste plan for facilities and administrative offices and provide the last review with statistics on the amounts of materials recycled or the percent of total waste recycled for the most recent reporting period.

10. The agency shall have procedures for the assignment of competent personnel with clearly defined duties for routine maintenance, repairs, and improvement of areas, facilities, and equipment, including responsibility for general cleanliness and overall attractiveness. Effective maintenance of grounds and facilities requires the selection, training, and supervision of workers in a wide variety of tasks ranging from seasonal laborers to skilled trades. Supervisory staff must be able to focus on maintenance management, such as workload control, as well as supervise the technical details of maintenance work.

Provide examples of methods used by the agency to assign staff.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key recommendations are identified. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive park system.

Findings

- Current Maintenance Staffing Levels are far below what's called out in the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System". The Department currently has a Full-Time parks maintenance staff of six individuals, as opposed to the 13.47 Full-Time parks maintenance employees identified by the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System".
- FTE maintenance staff per acre maintained: Sunset Hills currently has one (1) FTE maintenance person for every 44 acres, as opposed to the National average of one (1) FTE maintenance person for every 12 acres.
- The current cost per capita on an annual basis of \$65.25, is below that of the national median of \$135.53 for a city of less than 20,000.
- Current Funding Levels are \$31,054 - \$1,174,319 below what is identified in the "Maintenance Costs Standard Classification System".
- Current acre cost per maintained acre: Sunset Hills 1/\$1,926.81, Nationally 1/\$8,260.
- The survey collected public input on park maintenance, and satisfaction with the current conditions of the city parks. Over 54% of respondents stated that the maintenance was good, with another 39% stating that the maintenance of the parks was excellent.

- Over thirty-eight percent (38.5%) stated that they would be somewhat supportive of using existing tax dollars and other revenues, such as user fees to support maintenance operations and park improvements, followed by 27.7% who were very supportive, 21.9% not sure and 11.9% that were not supportive.

Observations

- Staff does an excellent good job in carrying out day-to-day maintenance of keeping the parks clean, free of graffiti, and mowed. However, due to the shortage of fiscal resources and personnel, some maintenance tasks are currently being deferred. Failure to provide adequate maintenance will result in the continual deferment of maintenance areas, which will affect the overall appearance of the parks and recreation system.
- Although maintenance tasks are performed in a variety of categories, most areas are performed in the Mode III - IV categories.
- Lake/Pond areas are showing signs of struggle. These areas need to be further investigated for proper treatment.
- City lacks the expertise for specialized maintenance responsibilities (such as horticulture, conservation, and turf grass management).
- PIP playground surfacing needs to be coated with an Aliphatic Polyurethane Binder to extend the life of the surfacing.
- The parks system is in dire need of a continuous infusion of money that will allow for the continual maintenance for existing assets and new facilities.

Recommendations

- Continue to ensure that parks, trails, and facilities are in compliance with health, safety, and welfare standards.
- The number of maintenance personnel and fiscal resources need to be increased to adequately maintain the parks and recreation system. This can be accomplished either by adding more City personnel, contracting out maintenance functions, and/or by utilizing volunteers such as mowing/trimming. Fiscal resources can be increased through rental/user fees and lease agreements etc.; as well as the possibility of using a portion of the park's sales tax funds.
- The Department should continue internal coordination to address programmatic deficiencies in meeting/complying with aspects of the regulations outlined within the Clean Water Act – MS4 program. Specifically, the Department should work towards the development of additional maintenance facilities to accommodate vehicle and equipment storage indoors so that they are in a controlled environment and free of contaminant runoff.

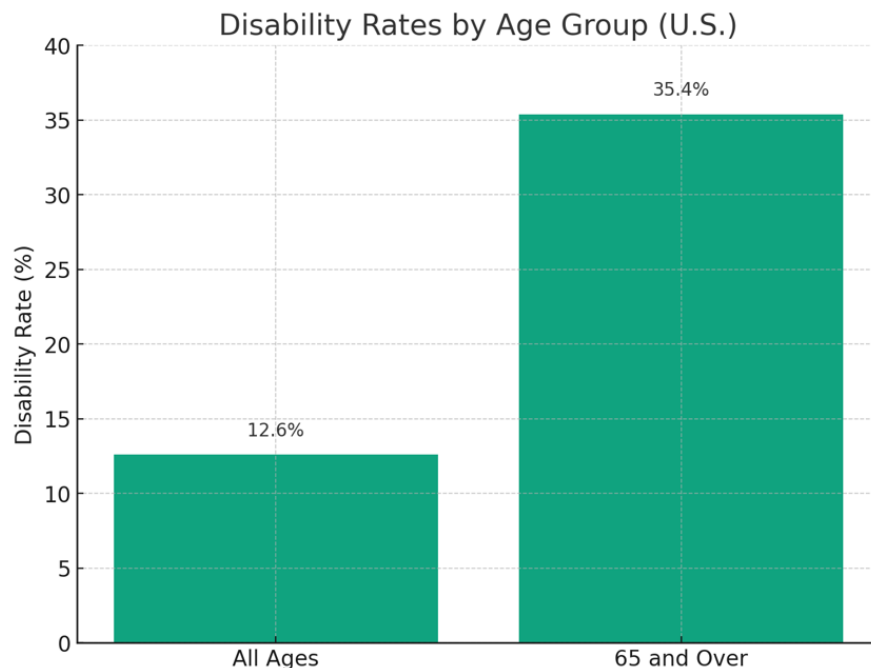
- City should consider contracting out the mowing of outlying parks and row's (Lynstone, I-44 Bridge, Kitun, Claire Gempp Davidson, Nancy Eschbach) this would allow City staff to focus and maintain the higher use and contiguous parks.
- The maintenance division seems to be short of certain types of vehicles/equipment that would allow them to perform their work in a more efficient and effective manner.
- Active use surfaces such as the Tennis and Pickleball Courts, Playground areas and Trails need to be maintained on a regular basis. A schedule should be developed based on life expectancy of each type of surface.
- Address erosion areas as soon as possible to prevent future failures and potential liability issues. This can be accomplished by either placing rock and/or vegetative blankets in these areas or by developing rain gardens and/or bio-swales etc.
- Provide additional opportunities for the training of staff. There are several low-cost options such as Missouri Park and Recreation Association seminars and conferences; and seminars/training provided through Missouri LTAP.
- Implementation of future projects will have immediate and long-term impacts on staffing levels and maintenance costs. To ensure that these are properly accounted for, all future funding mechanisms shall include a determined percentage/amount dedicated to cover the maintenance costs of parks, trails and facilities.
- Establish consistent and comprehensive maintenance standards for parks, trails, and facilities to uphold the quality of user experience and promote financial stability.
- Promote financial sustainability by calculating and tracking the true cost of maintenance operations.
- Develop an asset management plan with a lifecycle replacement schedule to govern capital investment in existing facility infrastructure.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

ADA ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II Transition Plan for Parks and Recreation describes barriers to access Sunset Hills's parks and facilities and the priorities and methods that will be used to remove those access barriers.

The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates the overall rate of people with disabilities in the US population is around 12.6 percent. The data shows that disability increases with age, for people 65 and over 35.4 percent have a disability. In short, thousands of people in the community face disabilities and many of those use Sunset Hills parks, trails and programs on a regular basis.



Sunset Hills Mission is to be a dynamic community where all can live, play work and invest. To make that mission a reality, it needs to be accessible. It is the City's vision is to build community through parks and recreation regardless of age or ability. The City owns and manages parks and public areas comprised of approximately 311 acres of land, along with 14 miles of trails. To ensure the parks system is accessible to all, an Audit Analysis was conducted in June and July of 2025.

This Audit Analysis was prepared in response to expectations set forth in Title II regulations issued September 14, 2010 and effective March 15, 2012.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that requires all state and local governments to provide equal access to programs and services for all community members. It was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990 and went into effect in 1992, with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design of 2010 taking full effect on March 15, 2012. The ADA extends similar protections provided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires entities that receive federal financial assistance to ensure they do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities when providing their services, programs, and activities.

The ADA is a landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in access to jobs, public accommodations, services, and programs, public transportation, and telecommunications conducted by state and local governments and for facilities owned by private businesses, even if no federal financial assistance is received. The ADA treats access as a civil right.

Title II of the ADA covers programs and services provided by public entities, including those offered by Sunset Hills Parks and Recreation Department. Under Title II, public entities must take all reasonable measures to ensure their services, programs, and activities are accessible to and useable by persons with disabilities. Additionally, Title II must reasonably modify policies, practices, or procedures to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities. The standards apply to all park facilities and where all governmental units are required to create a transition plan which identifies non-compliance items and defines time frames within which to address compliance remedies. Thus, entities must evaluate the accessibility of their programs and facilities, and create a Transition Plan documenting the steps the agency will take to remove accessibility barriers.

This section was designed to help the City adhere to the above ADA requirements.

The ADA states that the plan must, at a minimum:

- Identify physical obstacles to accessibility in park facilities, including parking areas, restrooms, playgrounds, shelters, picnic areas, trails, sidewalks, tennis courts, basketball courts, pickleball courts, athletic fields, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, etc.
- Describe how the agency will make the facilities accessible; and
- Provide a schedule for implementing facility upgrades.

Additionally, the ADA requires public entities to offer physically accessibility and program accessibility.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

An entity achieves physical accessibility when its facilities are free of barriers and obstacles that restrict their entrances and uses. The City will work toward ensuring visitors have barrier-free access at each park, including parking, restrooms, and access to at least twenty (20%) percent of all outdoor park and recreational features (benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, grills, etc.).

PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY

Program accessibility includes physical accessibility, but also includes all of the policies, practices, and procedures that allow individuals with disabilities to participate in programs and access important information. The ADA requires entities to provide individuals with disabilities an equally effective opportunity to participate in or benefit from its programs and services. As such, program accessibility must be achieved by both structural and non-structural methods. Examples of non-structural methods include acquiring or redesigning program areas to allow participation or providing alternate nearby sites for programming, where feasible. Whenever possible, The City will prioritize providing an integrated program setting that encourages interactions among all users, including individuals with disabilities.

EXEMPTIONS

The law allows for exemptions in specific cases:

- When removing a barrier would threaten or damage protected wildlife species, protected wildlife areas, and archeological, cultural, and historical features;
- When removing a barrier would cause an undue financial burden or fundamentally alter the nature of services and programs.

In these cases, the City will make every attempt to create alternatives to achieve program accessibility.

STANDARDS

Two sets of federal guidelines were applied to the Parks and Trails access audits. The first is the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), also known as the 1991 standards, which addresses entries, doors, service counters, showers, curb cuts on trails and within parks, sidewalks and other typical building elements. The Access Board is responsible for developing and updating these design guidelines. The second is 2010 Standards for Accessible Design that include requirements for amusement rides, exercise machines and equipment, sports facilities, swimming pools, playgrounds, golf courses, fishing areas, boating areas, and other outdoor developed areas.

This is an important distinction between the 1991 and 2010 standards since the City could be granted safe harbor if a building was built or altered to be compliant with the 1991 standards. Safe harbor states that buildings that meet the 1991 standards would not be required make further changes until the elements were subject to a planned renovation.

Certain parks elements do not yet have a final standard, these include trails, picnic areas, and outdoor elements such as grills. On these elements, the Outdoor Developed Areas Guidelines (ODAG) were used. The appended reports cite both the ADAAG, 2010 Standards and the Outdoor Developed Areas Guidelines.

In some circumstances, if certain grants or Federal Funds are to be used for a new project, the City may be required to adhere to the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) for those section(s) of the project. ABA is the current standard to be used for all Federally owned and operated facilities and projects.

This report identifies the barriers and performance-based solutions in the form of project recommendations. Some of these projects will require further design prior to implementation. All improvements will require maintenance over time to ensure continued compliance with ADA.

ADA SELF EVALUATION

As required by Title II (Part 35, Section 35.105) the City shall conduct a self-evaluation and transition plan of its parks. The City shall maintain a plan, listing accessible facilities, barriers, and tracking of projects that are completed, and planned enhancements to accessibility within the community.

TRANSITION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

ADA requires community involvement in the development of the Transition plan, and it must include the following features:

- A list of physical barriers that limit accessibility of programs or activities to individuals with disabilities, this is also called a self-evaluation.
- A detailed description of the methods that will be used to make it accessible.
- The official responsible for implementation of the plan.
- A timeline for corrections.

The Transition Plan timeline is designed to provide flexibility to the City around specific parks and facilities while ensuring that continuous access improvements are being made.

PROGRAM ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

The US Department of Justice test for existing facilities is known as the “program access test”. A “program” is an opportunity made available by the Department. A program is not just an activity for which a person registers and pays a fee. It can be the program of picnicking, parking or fishing. It is a program if it is an activity made available by the City.

The program access test does not apply to new construction or alterations and additions. New construction and alterations and additions must be designed and constructed to comply with the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design or the ABA Design Standards.

There are multiple ways in which a program can be made accessible. In the title II regulation, section 35.150(b) describes the methods an entity can use to make programs accessible. They include:

- Redesign or acquisition of equipment;
- Move program to accessible buildings/facilities;
- Assignment of aides to program beneficiaries;
- Delivery of services at alternate accessible sites;
- Alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities;
- Use of accessible rolling stock or other conveyances; and

- Any other methods that result in making its services, programs, and activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

The program access recommendations are based on a minimum of one out of three assets should be accessible. All unique assets should be accessible.

Some barriers, identified in the site reports as “City Option”, will not need to be changed until a renovation or rebuild based on technical infeasibility, historical preservation, construction tolerances or no current guidance.

ADA RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

As required by ADA Title II (Part 35 35.107), a public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall designate at least one (1) employee to coordinate its effort to comply with and carry out its ADA responsibilities and shall adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for resolution of complaints. Below is a list of qualifications for ADA Coordinators that are recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice:

- Familiarity with the entity’s structures, activities, and employees;
- Knowledge of the ADA and other laws addressing the rights of people with disabilities, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
- Experience with people with a broad range of disabilities;
- Knowledge of various alternative formats and alternative technologies that enable individuals with disabilities to communicate, participate, and perform tasks;
- Ability to work cooperatively with local entities and people with disabilities;
- Familiarity with any local disability advocacy groups or other disability groups;
- Skills and training in negotiation and mediation; and
- Organizational and analytical skills.

The City strives to accommodate all users of facilities and services, and make every attempt to respond to concerns and complaints at the appropriate staff level. A City representative, ADA Coordinator should be ready to meet with users to discuss suggestions for improvement and possible solutions to accessibility concerns.

Users do have the right to file a formal grievance if they believe the City has not provided reasonable accommodation or response to concerns.

Transition Plan Development Process

As required by Subpart D of ADA Title II (Part 35.149) The City should make accessible its facilities, services, programs, and activities to all individuals. As required by Subpart D of ADA Title II (Part 35, 35.150) the City shall maintain an ADA Transition Plan for its parks. To keep records current and relevant, appendices are updated as projects are completed and new information is available. When completed, the ADA Transition Plan should be made available for public inspection at City Hall and should be published on the City webpage.

The foundation for the Transition Plan is an access audit. The audit is a detailed compilation of each non-compliant item, a description of the item, the section of the accessibility code violated by item, a proposed resolution and corresponding cost to resolve the item. The Transition Plan provides a priority ranking based on a general implementation timetable as well as additional notes and comments that may otherwise address non-compliant items. The Transition Plan should provide an overview of the City management of the implementation of compliance measures.

ACCESS AUDITS

To obtain current information on accessibility at its parks, the City should conduct audits for all parks and trails. The audits should consist of an overall site report and individual checklists that cover parking, exterior accessible routes, means of access, play areas, shelters and picnic areas, athletic fields, trails and other outdoor recreation areas.

The overall site report for each park facility should include a description of the specific barriers at each location and reference to the regulation or guideline citation.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

In order to consistently measure accessibility in the parks, an audit analysis should be developed as a survey instrument. The audit analysis should be based on several established environmental survey instruments.

Improving accessibility to the parks system, particularly in older facilities-built decades ago, requires substantial improvements. The City should be committed to continual improvement, with the understanding that funding constraints make implementing the goals outlined in this plan a long-term process.

The site evaluations can reveal a variety of barriers across the park system. Certain barriers are very common and occur at many parks, while others can be unique to only a few parks. The prevalence of barriers can diminish the park experience for individuals with disabilities.

BARRIERS AND PRIORITY APPROACH DEVELOPMENT

Removing common barriers across the park system may not address all of the priorities, but it will help improve outdoor recreation experiences for individuals with disabilities in the City.

Barriers should be categorized based on barrier removal complexity, resources, and funding. These barriers should be categorized into three sections: low, medium, and high barriers. The City also recognizes the need to prioritize these projects with consideration to funding and capacity resources.

Low Barriers

- Requires minimal resources to remediate
- Can be fixed without reasonable delay
- Examples: relocating soap dispensers, replacing sink fixtures controls, adding or correcting signage, relocation of parking spaces within an existing parking lot, etc.

Medium Barriers

- Requires project planning and scheduling, and additional skill and resources to complete
- Requires budget planning consideration
- Examples: adding surface material, replacing plumbing fixtures, creating accessible paths

High Barriers

- Requires significant project scoping, planning, logistics, resources and expertise skill
- Requires funding sources to be considered at each biennium
- Examples: paving project, playground replacement, retrofit restrooms, replacement or addition of sidewalks, etc.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The ADA section 35.105 states that a public entity is required to enable interested individuals to participate in the development of the transition plan by submitting comments and making specific recommendations. As part of the Self Evaluation process, the City should initiate an outreach program to draw out community concerns and thoughts on ADA accessibility issues within the parks system. This process should begin with a notice on the city website communicating the intent and current status of the initiative.

A public notice should be followed by an outreach effort that provides residents the opportunity to attend a meeting to share the findings from access audits and gather feedback on priorities. Recognizing that the City has limited funds and cannot immediately make all parks fully accessible the City shall solicit community input on where to prioritize its access modifications.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR ACCESS TO PARKS AND TRAILS

Through the staff and public involvement strategies, the city should learn what the community's priorities are for accessibility.

Transition Plan

The Transition Plan analysis each parks unique facilities and identifies individual barriers. The plan prioritizes projects and provides an implementation timeline. Budget constraints always create a significant challenge, but nonetheless, the City is committed to ensuring a wide range of opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the Department should maintain equipment and features that provide access and/or reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities.

It is important to note that the City may not be able to remove all barriers identified in an ADA site evaluation. The City may consider the following factors when deciding to remove a barrier: life expectancy for the barrier identified; any applicable exemptions; whether the redesign plans include introducing a new barrier; and whether replacements for barriers already exist.

The City's ADA Coordinator shall document reasoning for any barriers the city determines cannot be removed.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR ACTIVITY

Not to be overlooked is the potential impact the ADA actions may have on the City's current maintenance and repair activities. As some of the specific ADA actions may be accomplished with in-house resources rather than by third-party contractors, sufficient advance analysis should occur to thoroughly identify the resources that would be required to successfully follow a path of utilizing department operations. Considerations should include labor (including identification of skill area, number of personnel, duration of activity, and number of hours), materials (including materials to be purchased as well as bulk inventoried materials to be drawn from), and equipment (including tools or equipment needing to be purchased or rented, quantity of equipment to be used, duration of use, as well as maintenance, repair, and replacement triggered by usage.). The total cost of providing in-house action should be identified, particularly the cost of providing additional, overtime, or replacement labor, the cost of purchased materials and inventory replacement; and the cost of a job-specific purchased equipment, or additional equipment maintenance, repair, or replacement generated by the in-house activity. The impact upon existing operations should be identified. Resources directed towards the ADA actions which would normally be available for routine preventative maintenance or allowed for normal repair or replacement activity should be identified and consciously made available through other means. Ideally, some of the low and medium priority items may be addressed as routine maintenance items. Lastly, in-house maintenance and repair impacts should be similarly incorporated into the budget process.

FUNDING

While the challenge to become ADA compliant present a temporary financial strain, the City has an opportunity to invest more intentionally in staff and facilities that lower the barrier to participation for every member of the community. Barrier removal and other accessibility measures are critical to the department's mission, with the highest-priority projects selected for immediate attention.

The City may also seek grant funding opportunities and community partnerships to assist with barrier removal and improve park access as there are no dedicated sources of federal funds for accessibility renovations to existing sites.

- Community Development Block Grant Funds: Many agencies receive federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for accessibility renovations at existing sites. CDBG funds often have a scale of priority. It is important to establish accessibility as a priority for CDBG applications.

- Recreation Trails Program: Agencies may be eligible to receive grants from the State of Missouri for the development and/or renovation of recreation trails.
- Land Water Conservation Fund Program: Agencies may be eligible to receive grants from the State of Missouri for the development and/or renovation of parks and facilities.

Regardless of the funding mechanism, work can be done through three main channels. Maintenance and repair, small capital projects, and Capital Investment Plan (CIP) projects. CIP projects should be reviewed to see if they may be amended to capture additional access improvements.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall develop and adopt a phased plan for the removal of barriers at existing recreation facilities, parks, and amenities owned or operated by the agency, pursuant to the requirements of the US Department of Justice Title II regulation issued September 14, 2010 and effective March 15, 2011.

Submit minutes of the approving authority meeting approving the transition plan, or a copy of the plan noting the dates and times when plan tasks were completed.

2. The agency shall complete an access audit of all existing sites and facilities. Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Title II regulation at 35.105, the agency must evaluate its existing facilities and sites against the most current final and enforceable Standard for Accessible Design.

Submit completed checklists, digital images and site reports as evidence of completion of the access audit.

3. There shall be a policy or procedure available to all members of the public and staff which address issues pertaining to ADA compliance, either in a written or electronic format.

Provide a written policy or procedure available to the public and staff that outlines the steps to resolve questions, concerns, or complaints of accessibility along with a reasonable timeline for completion and have a process for face-to-face meetings in place.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key recommendations are identified. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Department.

Findings

- In 2015, the City's ADA/Inclusion Coordinator conducted a self-evaluation and put together an ADA Transition plan.
- The City has an ADA Grievance Procedure.
- The City has Participant Eligibility Requirements.

Observations

- As outlined in the "Facilities Analysis" section, the park system has some type of deficiencies in regard to meeting ADA standards.
- The majority of the parks do not have an accessible route of travel to and from facilities, and trails.
- Most of the parks do not have ADA/ABA compliance for 20% of their outdoor recreation areas.

Recommendations

In addition to the audit findings and observations, opportunities to improve accessibility via policies and procedures were identified through the assessment. The following recommendations are not an exhaustive policy review, but highlighting best practices based on discussions with staff and stakeholders.

- The City should continue internal coordination to address programmatic barriers that may be identified in the Transition Plan.
- The City should continue to develop a budget and allocate funds to be included in the Capital Improvement Plan. Projects identified in an ADA Transition Plan should be programmed based on prioritization and other factors determined by the City, such as how low barrier removal can be incorporated into existing projects or into future capital improvement projects.
- The Transition Plan should address specific needs regarding compliance with the ADA. It should include a specific action plan, identifying actions to be taken. In order to remain valid and current from one year to the next, the Plan shall be reviewed annually by the ADA Coordinator. The annual review will provide an opportunity to make minor adjustments as needed to reflect changes in construction costs, accessibility guidelines, the department's financial situation, and other factors. It is not the intent of this plan that the annual updates need to be comprehensive, nor that they will reflect significant shifts in priorities, or be formally adopted as amendments to the Transition plan. Changes arising from the annual review of the Transition Plan should be documented in each year's update and adoption of the department's CIP and fiscal year capital improvements budget.

- A more comprehensive update of the Transition Plan should be conducted approximately every five years. The five-year updates should include opportunity for public review and comment, and should be reviewed and adopted.
- Implement modifications according to the phased approach proposed in the Transition Plan to accommodate all users.
- Develop maintenance staff training and checklists to improve accessibility during routine maintenance. Items such as accessible routes, gaps, changes in level, door closing force and common obstructions can be part of ongoing routine maintenance work.
- Create an inter-departmental staff team, with representatives from each division to regularly meet and coordinate on ADA and accessibility issues.
- Update website with more details regarding ADA access at each park. This would include parking and restroom accessibility along with what is accessible and lengths of accessible trails, so park patrons can make informed decisions before traveling to the park.
- Continue to improve accessibility at special events by creating maps with ADA features (parking, accessible routes) and ensuring access to various programs that occur during the event.
- Work towards creating one overall transition plan for the City with Public Right of Way (PROW), parks and trails and City facilities prioritized in an overall list.
- Ensure all contracts have language regarding modifications that contractor will make or provide equal access to services, programs and activities.
- Improve wayfinding signage so people with disabilities can more easily and conveniently navigate the park system.
- If portable toilets are provided at a park site, make sure at least one is accessible.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

PROGRAM ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Park and Recreation (NRPA) 2023 Agency Performance Review, 275 million people visited a local park or recreation facility in 2022 and were able to select from a wide variety of offerings that met their needs and desires. Each of those people represents a touchpoint or “contact” for parks and recreation. “Contacts” include many different types of interactions with a park and recreation agency, such as visits to a local park, running or biking on local trail, visits to a local recreation center or other interactions with any park and recreation facility operated by an agency. Moreover, a person can have more than one contact with parks and recreation. Someone who swims at their local agency’s aquatics center 10 times a year and bikes along a local trail five times a year would have 15 contacts.

Programming is a crucial driver of engagement with parks and recreation, and that a typical park and recreation agency generates more than 20,000 contacts through its programs alone. The review goes on to report that the level of programming provided by agencies spans a variety of park and recreation activities – many of which touch on one or more of NRPA’s Three Pillars: Health and Wellness, Equity, and Conservation.

The 2023 NRPA Engagement With Parks Report stated that nearly three in five U.S. adults have personally participated - or have a member of their household who has participated - in a park and recreation offering in the past year. Eighty-three percent of survey respondents who report they have personally participated or have a member of their household who has participated in a park and recreation program or offering within the past year did so within the past three months (February 2023 to May 2023). The typical agency serving a population of less than 20,000 typically hold 30 fee-based programs per year.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

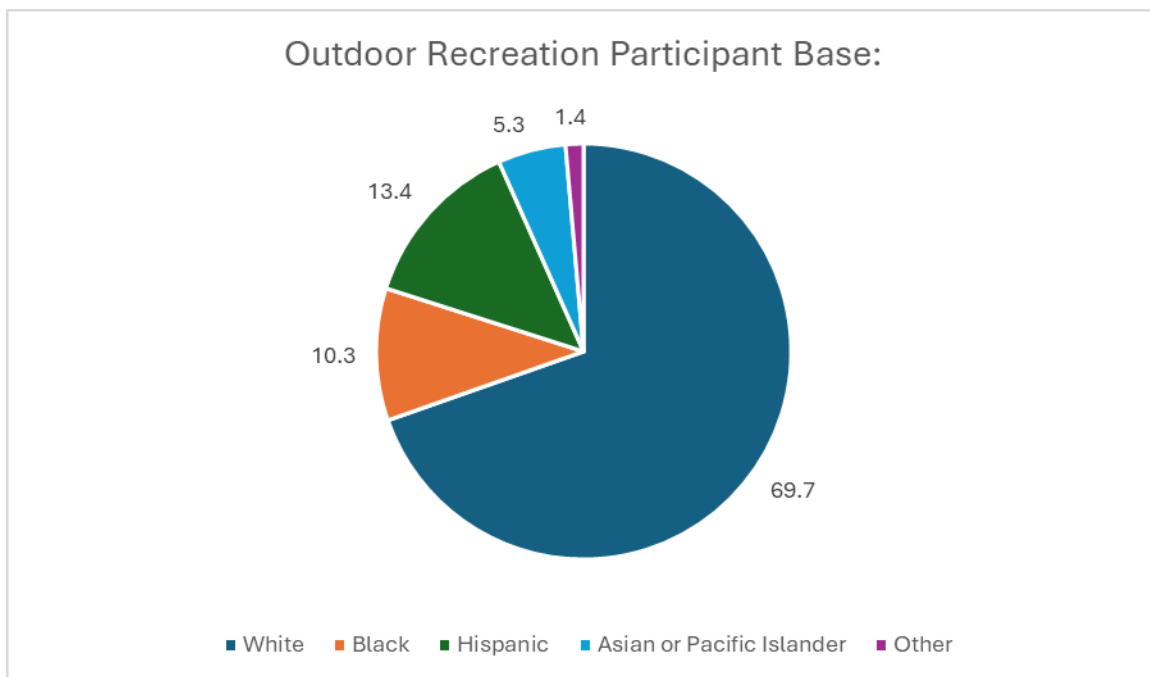
The outdoor recreation industry has long been challenged with this disparity in outdoor recreation participation. Studies abound with reasons for the lack of minority participation, but all agree that the reasons are varied and complex, ranging from cultural to socio-economic to historical. The lack of minority representation can mean that some people feel unwelcome in the outdoors, fearing prejudice or feeling apprehensive about heading outside because they don’t see themselves reflected in the other participants around them. This is compounded by the lack of representation in the outdoor industry and media. Minority communities may also face economic and accessibility barriers that prevent them from pursuing outdoor activities. Lack of transportation, lack of close-to-home facilities, lack of affordable opportunities and lack of knowledge of places to go can create significant impediments to participation.

According to a 2017 survey of park and recreational professionals conducted by the

National Recreation and Park Association, 71% of park and recreation agencies across the U.S. offer programming and activities specifically for members of multi-cultural and multi-racial communities, while 27% provide programming and activities targeting members of refugee or immigrant communities. Recreation providers must continue to be cognizant of the obstacles and barriers that prevent all community members from taking advantage of recreation resources, and plan outdoor facilities and programming accordingly. Differing cultural norms and use patterns may require providing non-traditional facilities. For instance, some minority groups are motivated by experiencing the outdoors with family and friends, so providing facilities that can accommodate large groups would have considerable appeal to these groups. Ensuring that close-to-home facilities are abundant in communities with a higher percentage of minority residents is also crucial, as is ensuring that adequate transportation is available to these facilities.

According to the Outdoor Industry Association's 2024 trend report, outdoor recreation grew 4.1% in 2023 to 175.8 million, amounting to 57.3% of the U.S. population. 22.2 million more Americans aged six and older are participating in outdoor recreation in 2023 than were participating in 2019.

The report also stated that diversity is growing the outdoor recreation participant base, especially among new and young participants. New and young outdoor participants are driving more ethnic/racial diversity into the participant base. The participant base became more ethnically and racially diverse in 2023, but not by much:



In addition to racial/ethnic diversity, new participants are driving increased participation among older adults and members of the LGBTQIA+ community who make up 11.3% of the outdoor participant base and continue to be the most active adult cohort in outdoor recreation with total participation rates above 60%. These trends appear to be accelerating along with the increase in diversity across the US population.

Youth Outdoor Programs/Activities

According to the 2018-2022 SCORP study, access to outdoor recreation opportunities is critical to the health and wellbeing of children as nearly 30% of children in Missouri are overweight or obese, and that recreation providers, healthcare professionals, education professionals and the like should look for ways to encourage participation in outdoor recreation activities.

Both parents and youth enjoy and recognize the benefits of being outdoors, but struggle with barriers preventing greater participation in outdoor activities. Competing interests, particularly technology, hamper their ability to enjoy parks and recreation spaces as much as they'd like. The study went on to state that parents reported that access to more free outdoor programs or activities would be the greatest determining factor for helping to get their kids outside. The second most important factor would be having parks within walking distance. The majority of parents reported that a reasonable walk to a park is less than 15 minutes, very similar to the national standard of a 10-minute walk.

The Outdoor Industry Association's (OAI) 2024 trend report indicates that the outdoor activity categories with the highest growth rates among kids in 2023 included hiking, fishing, running/jogging, camping, bicycling (road, mountain, BMX). While 2023 National Sporting Goods Association Participation Report indicated that Pickleball participation nearly doubled and mountain biking grew by 4.2%; activities such as baseball, football remained relatively flat; and softball declined sharply among youth.



Adult Outdoor Programs/Activities

According to a 2024 trend report conducted by the Outdoor Industry Association, the number of outdoor recreation participants increased 4.1% to a total of 175.8 million Americans in 2023. Programming/Activities such as snowshoeing, camping, cross country skiing, BMX bicycling, boardsailing/windsurfing, scuba diving, birdwatching, sport/boulder climbing, surfing, road/mountain biking, rafting, and trail running had the highest growth rates, with outdoor activities such as hiking, bicycling, fishing, camping, and mountain biking having the highest outdoor participation rates among adults. Another outdoor activity seeing an increase in participation is the game of pickleball.

Senior Outdoor Programs/Activities

By 2030, persons over age 65 will represent more than one-fifth of all Missourians. Senior citizens are expected to increase 87% between 2000 and 2030, when there are projected to be 1.4 million seniors in the state. With the increase in older adults will come an increase in age-related illnesses, many of which can be combated or minimized by regular physical activity. The aging of Missouri's population will have a profound effect on the services, facilities and programming expected of recreation providers.

Outdoor Recreation Programs/Opportunities that target older participants, such as walking, hiking bicycling, birdwatching, fishing, or camping, has become increasingly popular, and participation rates have significantly increased in 2023 according to the Outdoor Industry Association trend survey. Another outdoor activity recommended to improve health in older adults are the game of pickleball, which has received considerable recent attention because of its rapidly growing popularity amongst seniors.

The 2024 Outdoor Industry Association trend survey stated that the participation rates for Americans aged 55 to 64 increased from 41.2% in 2019 to 49.7% in 2023; those 65 and older increased from 28.8% in 2019 to 39.5% in 2023. The participation rate for Americans aged 65 and older grew 11.5% between 2022 and 2023 alone.

As outlined in the 2024 NRPA Supporting Older Adults Through Parks and Recreation report, 92 percent of park and recreation agencies offering older adult programs and facilities extend a breadth of activities and other offerings to their community. Fifty-three percent of these activities are conducted in parks, trails and greenways. The activities offered include:

- Exercise classes
- Sports and games
- Arts and crafts classes
- Volunteer opportunities
- Special events and festivals
- Field trips, tours and vacations
- Activity-related job opportunities within the agency
- Cultural enrichment opportunities
- Social clubs
- Organized group outdoor recreation

Outdoor Recreation Program Summary

According to the 2018-2022 SCORP study, there is an increasing disconnect between communities and the outdoors that is contributing to health problems and chronic disease. People of color, low-income populations and people with disabilities still face disparities regarding healthcare and access to parks. Public park and recreation agencies have a vital role to play in addressing these societal and health-related issues, but are hampered by a lack of funding that is needed to provide programming that keep up with the changing demographics and demands of their citizenry. Agencies should prioritize programming that targets specific user populations, as well as utilize technology to attract a diverse user base.

KEY PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES

According to the National Park and Recreation (NRPA) 2024 Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency offers the following:



PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The Cochran team performed an assessment of the Department program offerings. The Program Assessment offers a perspective of the recreation program offerings and helps to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, duplication of programs with other recreational service providers in the community, and determining future program offerings for residents.

Existing Programs

The Department currently offers a variety of program opportunities within the community (See Core Program Areas). These programs are reviewed and analyzed on an annual basis to determine participation rates, fees, trends, etc. and to determine if a particular program/event should continue and/or if new programs/events should be introduced.

Core Recreation Values

The core values are the values that residents desire for the recreation services and facilities offered by the Department. These core values should include:

- Effective Program Management
- Effective Pricing of Services and Affordability
- Leadership
- Creativity
- Professional and Quality Staff
- Quality Communication
- Partnerships
- Accountability

Core Program Areas Include

Rentals. Rental of indoor and outdoor spaces falls within the programming category. This is a common practice amongst Parks and Recreation Departments. The rental opportunities could include athletic fields, shelters/pavilions, meeting rooms, banquet rooms, gymnasiums, senior centers, aquatic facilities, amphitheaters, etc.

Community Events. This is a common program/service provided by Parks & Recreation Departments. These events could include Halloween, Markets, Concerts, Garage Sales, etc.

Aquatics. This category encompasses a wide variety of programs (Swim Team, Swim Lessons, Riverwalk, Fitness Classes) and rentals for the full age spectrum.

Camps. This category encompasses a wide variety of programs (Day Camps, Sports Camps, Drama/Theater Camps, Outdoor Adventure Camps) and rentals for the full age spectrum.

Youth Sports. This category encompasses a wide variety of programs (Camps, Lessons, Training, Leagues, Tournaments) and rentals for club/select teams and organizations.

Adult Sports. This category is generally limited to sports leagues and tournaments.

Fitness. This area is one of the fastest growing areas with adults. These programs can include aerobics, yoga, martial arts, and cross training.

Senior Activities. This category encompasses a wide variety of programs (Cards, Bird Watching, Educational, Bridge, Trips/Tours, etc.).

Special Events. This is a common program/service provided by Parks & Recreation Departments. These events could include Triathlons, Road Races, Holiday Events, Fishing Derby's, etc.

The core programs identified are in line with what one would anticipate given the facility inventory within the City. The biggest detractor from the Department offering more programming is a lack of staffing.

In carrying out its mission, the Department is committed to a comprehensive approach in the identification of its varied customers and to a broad range of recreational and leisure interests and human service needs. Customers are viewed from varied perspectives (age, user, and interest) so that programs and services are responsive to the individuals served and/or the groupings with which they associate. Furthermore, the City is committed to a variety of roles and responsibilities in fulfilling a mission that places great emphasis on developing partnerships with other organizations so as to maximize the opportunities available to the community.

The future success of the Department will heavily rely on its ability to capitalize on market conditions and adapt to trends and demographics by providing facilities, amenities, and programs that are geared toward the needs and interests of the local community.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall have an established community relations plan that identifies and addresses community needs for all segments of its service population, which is evaluated periodically for effectiveness.

Provide the community relations plan and latest evaluation. The community relations plan shall address the following:

- a. *Community relations policies for the agency;*
 - b. *Process and procedure for establishing contact with community organizations and other community groups;*
 - c. *Training needs for staff and community. The community relations plan and marketing plan is often included in a single document.*
2. The agency shall have an established marketing plan, based on market research that is evaluated periodically for effectiveness. The fundamental principle of marketing is to gain an understanding of customer needs, wants, concerns and behaviors. The marketing plan addresses the appropriate mix of communications tools to promote agency programs, facilities, events and services and to provide

accurate, timely and useful information to the various segments of the target audience.

Provide the plan and latest evaluation. The plan shall include:

- a. *Marketing objectives;*
- b. *Situation assessment, to include:*
 - a. *Examination of demographic trends*
 - b. *Economic climate*
- c. *Market coverage by alternative providers;*
- d. *Segmentation, targeting, and positioning;*
- e. *Marketing mix;*
- f. *Marketing methods*
- g. *Evaluation criteria and methods.*

Research is important to support segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Common evaluation methods include surveys, focus groups, customer comment cards, and mystery shopping.

3. Leisure and recreation are integral to a community's social, cultural and economic development. The agency shall have a Recreation Program Plan (RPP) covering 2-3 years that is updated periodically and shall address all leisure and recreation programs and services. Show the agency's program planning model, services management matrix, orientation to those served, including activity development and selection, type and scope of programs and outreach initiatives as well as an organizational chart.

Provide the current Recreation Program Plan and describe the implementation process. This RPP shall address how the agency delivers programs and services to persons of all ages and abilities and shall show how it develops and addresses the lifecycle of high-quality offerings (how programs are developed, evaluated and discontinued). Mission, goals, and evaluation measures shall be included in a planning and framework model.

Provide evidence of how the RPP connects with the Master and Strategic Plans while referring to the following enumerated components in the Plan (to be explained in greater detail in Standards 5, 6 and 10):

- a. *Cover page with visible approval signature and date;*
- b. *Table of contents (electronically linked to the page where the section begins);*
- c. *Introduction (vision, mission, core program/organizational philosophy, conceptual foundations, community opportunities/participant involvement, commitment to community education for the leisure process (6.4), connection to strategic plan and master plan);*
- d. *Staff organizational chart*
- e. *Program Planning Model and Framework*
 - i. *Program and service determinants (6.1.1);*
 - ii. *Program goals (with broad outcomes/benefits) (10.3);*

- iii. *Program and service statistics (10.5);*
 - vi. *Recreation and leisure trends analysis (10.5.1);*
 - v. *Community inventory (10.5.2)*
 - vi. *Fees and charges policy and schedules (5.1.1)*
 - vii. *Measurement, evaluation with data collection (10.3) (show how programs are developed, evaluated and improved; include how new programs are introduced and, when appropriate, programs are discontinued).*
 - f. *Programs and Services Management Matrix (include agency's matrix for a sample facility, program, service and special event with the following categories):*
 - i. *Program types (self-directed [6.1.3], leader-directed [6.1.4], etc.);*
 - ii. *Genders, life stage/age groups (pre-school, teen, senior, family, etc.);*
 - iii. *Data/statistical collection (surveys, demographic reports, etc.);*
 - iv. *SMART (specific, measurable, relevant, achievable, time-bound) program objectives and evaluation (6.2*);*
 - v. *Scope of program opportunities/classification formats (6.3) (special event, drop-in, etc.; equipment rental and checkout, etc.; leisure education open house, checklist, etc.; aquatics, after-school, arts, etc.);*
 - vi. *Outreach to diverse and underserved populations (6.31*);*
 - vii. *Health and wellness promotion (6.4.1) (physical, emotional, social, etc.); and*
 - viii. *Program promotion*
 - g. *Appendices*
 - i. *Agency Organization Charts*
 - ii. *Evaluation Forms*
 - iv. *Participant and Spectator Code of Conduct (6.5)*
4. A systematic and studied approach shall be taken in determining what programs and services shall be provided by the agency.

Provide documentation and examples demonstrating that the six (6) program and service determinants are used in providing programs and services. The programs and services provided by the agency shall be based on the

- a. *Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure;*
 - b. *Organizational agency philosophy, mission and vision, and goals and objectives;*
 - c. *Constituent interests and desired needs;*
 - d. *Creation of a constituent-centered culture;*
 - e. *Experiences desirable for clientele; and*
 - f. *Community opportunities.*
5. The development of agency programs and services shall involve participants.
- Describe the process and provide examples of how the agency obtains and utilizes participant input. Participants shall have involvement in:*
- a. *Recommending policy;*

- b. *Planning activities;*
 - c. *Conducting activities; and*
 - d. *Sponsoring activities.*
6. The agency shall offer self-directed recreation opportunities for individuals and groups to participate without leadership, under only general supervision. Examples include picnic facilities, tennis courts, roadways in scenic areas, bridle trails, self-guiding nature trails, and open playgrounds.

Provide examples of how the agency provides self-directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

7. The agency shall offer leader-directed recreation opportunities that provide recreation opportunities where participant involvement is directed by a leader, including skills instruction classes. Examples include tennis, crafts, dance; synchronized swimming performance; creative dramatics for children.

Provide examples of how the agency provides leader- directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

8. The agency shall facilitate assistance to individuals and groups of individuals that provide or want to provide recreation programs and leisure services independently from the agency. An example of facilitated programs and services is an individual or group that wishes to start a community theater organization; the agency may help initially by providing a meeting place, some administrative help in publicity, and "seed money" with the intent that the organization will become self-sustaining. Demonstration projects may be utilized for this purpose.

Provide examples of how the agency provides facilitated recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

9. The agency shall enter into cooperative agreements with public, commercial, and nonprofit entities to provide programming.

Provide current examples of cooperative programming with documentation, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), Memoranda of Agreement (MOA), or partnership agreements.

10. There shall be specific objectives established for programs and services that are reviewed periodically. Objectives shall be specific and measurable as to the actual outcome or impact desired by the program or service so that progress on meeting objectives can be evaluated (see standard 10.2 Outcomes Assessment). Objectives shall be defined by program area, such as nature, dance, music, sports, fitness, special events and they can be further defined into levels such as beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Provide measurable objectives for each program and service area and the last review.

11. The content of agency programs shall be related directly to stated program objectives and shall provide for individual differences of interests, abilities (mental, social, physical), and backgrounds. Activities selected shall be suited to and contribute toward fulfillment of the basic physical, emotional, social, and intellectual requirements of individuals. The agency should take into consideration the total community offerings; some opportunities may be offered by other organizations, private, public, and non-profit.

Provide a matrix or listing of programs by fields, demonstrating clearly how the agency provides opportunities for proficiency levels, socioeconomic levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, and genders.

12. The agency shall proactively extend programs and services to residents who may be underserved in the community. To encourage participation in parks and recreation programs and services, agencies shall identify and address barriers that may limit access as demonstrated by the demographic profile of the community. Agencies should offer inclusionary support services to ensure access to programs and services for people of all abilities and all socioeconomic status.

Identify underserved populations (provide methodology and data used for this analysis), describe specific barriers including physical, social, financial, geographic, and cultural that limit participation and provide examples of outreach programs and services offered by the agency to meet the needs of these populations and overcome barriers to access.

13. The agency shall have a process to educate the general citizenry about the use of leisure time and the outcomes, benefits, values, and positive impacts of leisure and recreation services. The process shall be periodically evaluated for effectiveness. Educating the public about leisure and recreation shall be ongoing and systematic and should be done in cooperation with the community, e.g., schools, other leisure agencies, business, industry, and commercial recreation establishments.

Provide examples of the methods utilized by the agency to educate the community on the benefits, values, and impacts of leisure and recreation services to a diverse range of participants and non-participants. Provide the last review of effectiveness.

14. The agency shall have policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community.

Provide the agency's policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community such as:

- a. *Physical activity;*
- b. *Healthy food and beverage offerings;*
- c. *Nutrition education;*
- d. *Substance abuse prevention.*

Also provide examples of implementation.

15. The agency shall have “code of conduct” guidelines for appropriate participant and spectator conduct at programs and events, and the agency shall proactively inform and remind staff and all users about the code of conduct.

Provide a copy of approved code of conduct for all users and describe how the users are informed of the code of conduct.

16. The agency shall have an established policy and procedures for potential concussion injury in any agency program or any authorized third-party program that use the agency’s facilities.

Provide a copy of an approved concussion policy and /or procedure for addressing concussion protocol.

17. The agency shall coordinate with the official law enforcement agency having jurisdiction on large-scale events hosted or facilitated by the agency that require planning and coordination of traffic, parking and crowd control. Plans shall specifically define the roles of the event sponsor, agency staff, and the law enforcement agency regarding traffic layouts at the venue, traffic routes and personnel assignments.

Provide a recent example of coordination with law enforcement on traffic control, parking plans and crowd control for activities and events hosted or facilitated by the agency.

18. The agency shall have systematic processes for evaluating programs, facilities and services and operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Describe what is evaluated and the methods and frequency of evaluation of programs facilities and services. Evaluation is the process of determining the effectiveness of current practice and procedures.

19. The agency shall assign specific responsibility for managing elements of the evaluation program, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis.

Provide job descriptions for the person(s) (staff or consultants) responsible for supporting and monitoring evaluation processes, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis. If consultant services are used, provide the current contracts or service agreements. The documentation should also include the resumes of persons providing the service, including experience and training.

20. The agency shall provide training on how to evaluate programs, services and facilities for personnel involved in managing facilities and delivering programs and services.

Provide examples of recent evaluation trainings completed by the agency, including curriculum content, training dates and participant lists. Examples of training subjects could include but are not limited to qualitative and quantitative measurement, identification of applicable evaluation tools, data analysis and use of findings.

21. The agency shall use evaluation results to assess the outcomes of park and recreation programs, services, and facilities and assess the operational effectiveness of the organization. Outcomes show the relationship between resource inputs and the resulting impacts and benefits of the outputs. Outcomes are measurable changes in behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, conditions or skills.

Provide examples of how evaluation results are used to determine levels of performance and effectiveness in the organization and how evaluation is used to determine if specific programs, services or facilities are achieving planned or projected results.

22. The agency shall have a procedure for tracking and monitoring data trends and measuring performance against targets linked to achievement of goals and objectives.

Provide performance targets and measurement in use by the agency. Describe the process and frequency of performance measurement and cite examples for how the results have been used by the agency to affect decisions. The measures may include data gathered from the following qualitative and quantitative sources:

- a. *Recreation and demographic trends;*
- b. *Needs assessment;*
- c. *Community inventory;*
- d. *Surveys;*
- e. *Program and service statistics;*
- f. *Inspections;*
- g. *Customer feedback;*
- h. *Program evaluation;*
- i. *Risk management reports; and*
- j. *Budget and financial reports.*

23. The agency shall collect and analyze statistics on its programs and services for evaluation and future program and service development.

Provide examples of statistics collected, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of the information.

24. The agency shall monitor and evaluate the quality of its programs, services and facilities from the user perspective. Examples include but are not limited to customer comment cards, secret/mystery shopper surveys, user satisfaction surveys, program evaluations and focus groups.

Provide recent examples of methods used to collect, monitor and evaluate quality assurance data from users.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key issues were identified that needed to be resolved in order to frame the Recreation Program Assessment. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Department.

Findings

- On a national basis, half of U.S. adults have personally – or have a household member who has participated in a park and recreation program in the past year.
- According to the 2018-2022 Statewide Comprehensive Plan (SCORP), parents and children desire more outside recreation opportunities.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau's population projections, by 2030, all baby boomers will be older than age 65. This will expand the size of the older population so that one in every five residents will be of retirement age. Seniors in Missouri are expected to increase 87%. As such, the aging of the population will have a profound effect on the services, facilities and programming expected.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that the prevalence of obesity in American adults is 39.8%. Child obesity too, is a serious problem in the U.S., putting children and adolescents at risk for poor health. Missouri adults rank 17th highest in the nation and children ranks 32nd highest. Accordingly, the need for programming and recreational opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle exist.
- A little over fifty-eight percent (58.5%) of the respondents stated that a member of their household had participated in a City program during the past year.

Observations

- The City is served by a wide variety of public, non-profit and private providers or recreation, fitness and arts programs. Households that utilize many of these providers are in particular churches/houses of worship, schools, athletic associations, and neighboring municipalities.
- Busy lifestyles create a demand for activities that can be done spontaneously, with a focus on health and socialization. This trend means that the City must prepare to

complement traditional recreation offerings with a flexible mix of park spaces and program options.

- The Department has a variety of formal and informal pricing policies in place, but lacks a unified and comprehensive approach to establishing fees. All new fees should be set based on established program cost recovery goals.
- Given the differences in how active older adults participate in recreation programs, recreation programming trends point towards offering experiences to at least two different segments of older adults (55-74 and 75+).
- Income characteristics of residents are very encouraging as median household income and per capita income are higher than state and national averages. The fact that residents have a greater earning capability signal that they are likely willing to pay for high-quality programs and services that require greater financial commitments, as long as the quality reflects the price.

Recommendations

- Develop a Recreation Programming Plan. One of the missions of the Department should be to establish and maintain public policies that address recreation programming. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the recreation programming needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Recreation Programming Plan” to provide overall direction to the City in the planning of recreation programs. This plan should strive to provide City sponsored recreation programs and special events, as long as they do not compete or duplicate other organizations efforts within the City.

The plan shall serve as a guide in managing the development, operations and evaluation of core areas, core programs and core components. Needs of the community should be determined through yearly program reviews, extensive analysis of current offerings, service area demographics, program cost analysis, and local and national trends.

The Department needs to develop a program proposal method. A program proposal form needs to be developed for each new program that the Department looks to implement. That proposal needs to identify the following: full-time costs, part-time costs, contractual fee, facility time, consumables, etc.

This provides the financial reality of offering the programs. Equally important, there needs to be a fee identified for the program, that falls within the Department’s Revenue and Pricing Policy.

Finally, the program proposal needs to provide a timeline for implementation, how frequently the program is to be offered, and when it is expected to achieve the stated financial goal. This timeline helps “justify” the elimination of programs if they are not meeting the intended financial goal.

- Develop a Program Financial Sustainability Plan. Once developed, the Recreation Programming Plan will lay the groundwork for achieving a balanced approach to providing programs and facilities. It shall include strategies that will help the

Department make decisions and develop a diverse portfolio of recreation programs and service offerings. Employing the funding strategies listed below will help the Department fill the gaps and make changes in programs, services, and facilities that add to achieving a sustainable Department.

- Continue work to define service costs and set fees that cover expenses.
 - Determine which recreation services should be provided by the City and which should be provided by others.
 - Determine how best to provide services with available resources, including partnerships and/or contracting services.
 - Allocate resources (funding and staffing) appropriately within program areas.
- Develop a Communications and Marketing Plan. One of the missions of the Department should be to establish and maintain public policies that address communications and marketing of the Parks and Recreation Department. In order to consistently carry out its mission and serve the parks and recreation needs of the people, the Department should develop a “Communications and Marketing Plan” to provide overall direction to the City in the marketing and communications of recreation programs, facilities, and operations.
 - Implement consistent program management principles for all programs to ensure equitable service delivery, quality delivery, and long-term financial sustainability.
 - Develop an inventory of recreational programs offered throughout the Sunset Hills community by both public and private providers and align program offerings with community needs and priorities.
 - Prepare and distribute a recreation program survey to determine citizen interests.
 - Cooperate with the School District and parochial schools to expand joint partnerships for recreation programs/activities.
 - Recognize and use existing community resources to address shortages in programs and services whenever possible.
 - Increase access to parks, recreation programming, and wellness and life skills activities.
 - Utilize alternate service delivery options via partnerships with community-based organizations, volunteers, employment programs, and by outsourcing to enhance service levels.
 - Regularly assess recreation program delivery systems and recreational facilities to ensure they reflect current interest, are easily accessible and safe, and are used to the greatest extent possible.
 - Facilitate environmental outdoor education programs geared towards youth.
 - Respond to the needs of the growing older adult population.
 - Even if the City doesn’t achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

PARTNERSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

Partnerships are a strong trend and the way of the future within the Parks & Recreation industry, and the development of partnerships between municipal departments and other organizations in a community. These partnerships usually include public/public, public/private, and public/not-for-profit, and all three types of partnerships are designed to allow a city to leverage their resources and build additional public advocacy and support. Each type requires a policy approach that is different from the others due to the outcomes the partners are expecting from each type.

PUBLIC/PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Seek to acquire a 50/50 equity level of resources both partners provide to the partnership. It is very important that the partners involved share a common vision, values, and an understanding that by partnering they are growing their impact for serving the community. Typical public/public partnerships include:

- City Park and Recreation/School District
- City Park and Recreation/ Libraries
- City Park and Recreation/Colleges and Universities
- City Park and Recreation/County Park and Recreation Services
- City Park and Recreation/State Parks
- City Park and Recreation/Other City Departments

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Focus on the public sector gaining revenue from profits of the private sector partner. These partnerships are based on efficient businesses operating public attractions or operating services the city does not provide. Public/Private partnerships require the city to track good output measurements to hold the private partner accountable because they are operating as an agent of the city and must adhere to a level of standards and expectations. Typical city and Private Partnerships include:

- Golf Course Management of all operations including maintenance
- Tennis Center Management
- Catering Services
- Camping and Campground Services
- Concession Management at Sports Complexes

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Generally, cover three to four years for management contracts and 10, 15, and 20 years for lease management contracts. The private partner invests \$2 - \$10 million in a public attraction and requires time to gain a return on their investment.

PUBLIC/NOT-FOR-PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS

Typically share the cost to provide the facility or program services. The not-for-profit typically has more flexibility to provide a service than the city and it allows both partners to gain revenues or efficiencies in operations from that partnership agreement. Depending on the amount of the not-for-profit investment, the partnerships are based on three, five, ten, or fifteen-year agreements. Both partners must establish a common vision and values. A good activity-based costing system is required to track and demonstrate the value both partners are putting into the partnership agreement. Examples of public/not-for-profit partnerships on a city basis include:

- City Parks and Recreation/Youth or Adult Sports Associations: Developing sports complexes jointly. Managing of the respective sport is done by the not-for-profit organization.
- City Parks and Recreation/Hospital: Providing health and wellness services inside a multi-dimensional recreation center.
- City Parks and Recreation/Environmental Associations: partnering on land trusts, environmental centers, and greenway development coordination.
- City Parks and Recreation/Friends of Specific Attractions: Raising funds or assisting in managing an attraction.

PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES

The biggest challenges for most cities as they identify potential partners fall into two broad categories: finances and fit. Sometimes these two items are intertwined, while at other times they are stand along issues.

Finances. Most cities are not able to fill every need outlined by the public, elected officials, and staff. This means that difficult decisions must be made. There are occasions when cities are provided with a funding opportunity in the form of a partnership. In these instances, a group or individuals pledges dollars for a specific facility or program within the park and recreation system. It is incumbent on the city to understand all the conditions that come with said gift. In some cases, cities are so excited to receive the gift and move forward with an opportunity, that they do not understand all the conditions surrounding the gift, nor are they aware of the future operational impact and obligation.

Fit. It is important to make sure that whom a city chooses to partner with is an appropriate fit with the organization. Most park and recreation systems are funded or subsidized by taxes. As a tax supported entity understanding who your partner is and their position on a variety of issues is important. Taking the time to vet potential

partners is much more important than executing a speedy partnership and regretting it later. This is especially true, when the partnership comes in the form of contract staff offering programs through a park and recreation system but can be applied to financial gifts as well.

The most common downfall of cities that have partnerships in place is that they do not take the time to review them on a consistent basis. For new partnerships the Cochran team would recommend that all agencies involved (sometimes there is more than two) review the partnership on a quarterly basis. During that review it is important to talk about what is going well, what is going poorly, and items you did not anticipate. At the end of a year in the partnership the partnership agreement should be updated based on the years feedback. Moving forward the partnership and partnership agreement should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Some cities are guilty of having handshake agreements, or partnerships. The Cochran team is a strong advocate of having formal partnership agreements in place to protect both parties involved and to specifically outline the parameters surrounding the partnership.

PARTNERSHIP ANALYSIS

Based on the information that the Cochran team has reviewed there are a few significant partnerships that the Sunset Hills Parks & Recreation Department has in place.

School District. It is common for there to be a strong partnership between school districts and parks and recreation departments. In many instances they are reliant on one another to adequately supply gymnasium space and athletic field space. In some communities each organization has a first right of refusal to use those associated spaces. If a reciprocal agreement is not in place, the Cochran team would recommend that some type of agreement or memorandum of understanding is put into place.

Community/Civic Organizations. The City of Sunset Hills has a few community and civic organizations that utilize the parks system. As these partnerships continues the Cochran team would recommend the Department either continue with, or put in place, the following:

- **Legacy Planning.** Many community and civic organizations are run and led by volunteers. As leadership and volunteers' transition, these organizations can decrease or increase in participation. Many parks and recreation departments have begun to get involved in the leadership of these types of groups to provide some stability. The Cochran team is not suggesting the Department take over the operation, but by having someone involved on a board or committee they can help ensure the long-term viability of the group. This also translates into long-term revenue stream.
- **User Fees.** These organizations should pay some level of fee to use facilities. Regardless of the fees charged, the Department will want to be proactive in discussing them with the groups so they can incorporate them into their own fee or operational structure.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. There shall be ongoing liaison roles with complementary organizations, such as nearby park and recreation agencies, social service organizations, and other governmental units and regulatory bodies.

Provide evidence of cooperative efforts, including a list of staff with liaison responsibility. This information may be evidenced through Memoranda of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements, etc.

2. There shall be established agreements with other agencies, organizations, or individuals that entail cooperative use and maintenance of facilities, programming, facility design, land development, finances, etc.

Provide examples of cooperative agreements.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key issues were identified that needed to be resolved in order to frame the assessment. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive park and recreation system.

Findings

- The City has a cooperative partnership with the City of Crestwood with the Kitun Dog Park.
- The City has a cooperative partnership with the Missouri Conservation Commission and the Lindbergh School District with the operations and maintenance of the Claire Gempp Davidson Conservation Area.
- The City has a cooperative partnership with the City of Kirkwood with the operations and maintenance of the I-44 Bridge Trailhead.
- The City currently has a partnership with the Open Space Council for honeysuckle removal, and operation Clean Stream. Parks Director, Gerald Brown serves on the Open Space Council Board, and the open Space Council rents office space from the City at the Parks Maintenance Facility.
- The City has done a wonderful job working with the community on donations, and brick memorials.

Recommendations

- Continue to emphasize partnerships as a way to provide programs, facilities and maintenance.

- Continue to leverage partnerships/donations to achieve business outcomes and enhance service delivery.
- The City should work with the school district to develop joint use facilities that would allow for the shared use of multi-purpose courts, sports fields, children's play areas, and pavilions etc. during non-school hours.
- The City and the school district should develop a reciprocal use agreement in which both the City and school district could use each other's facilities for recreational and sports programming use. The joint use facilities could be part of this reciprocal agreement.
- The City should enquire about developing a partnership with the Open Space Council of St. Louis for watershed planning.
- Continue to look at partnerships with other public, private, non-profit, and volunteer interests to co-sponsor youth and adult programs and activities.
- Continue to look at partnerships with other public, private, non-profit, and volunteer interests to acquire land and build parks. Efficient, flexible, multipurpose spaces meet more needs, while using fewer resources to operate and maintain.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

STAFFING ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Supporting programming, facilities and other offerings of park and recreation agencies requires adequate staffing. Park and recreation staff are essential to ensuring the success of each agency and creating safe, inclusive spaces for all community members.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association's 2023 Agency Performance Review, at its core, parks and recreation is responsible for just that: parks and recreation. But park and recreation professionals oversee myriad services and facilities in their communities beyond their "traditional" roles of operating parks and related facilities and providing recreation programming and services. In addition to those two core functions, the top responsibilities for park and recreation professionals are to: Operate and maintain indoor facilities; Have budgetary responsibility for their administrative staff; Operate, maintain or manage trails, greenways and/or blueways; Conduct major jurisdiction-wide special events; Operate, maintain or manage special-purpose parks and open spaces; Operate, maintain or contract racquet sport activities/courts/facilities; Operate and maintain non-park sites; Operate, maintain or contract outdoor swim facilities/water parks; Administer or manage tournament and/or event-quality outdoor sports complexes; and Administer community gardens.

Responsibilities of Park And Recreation Staff

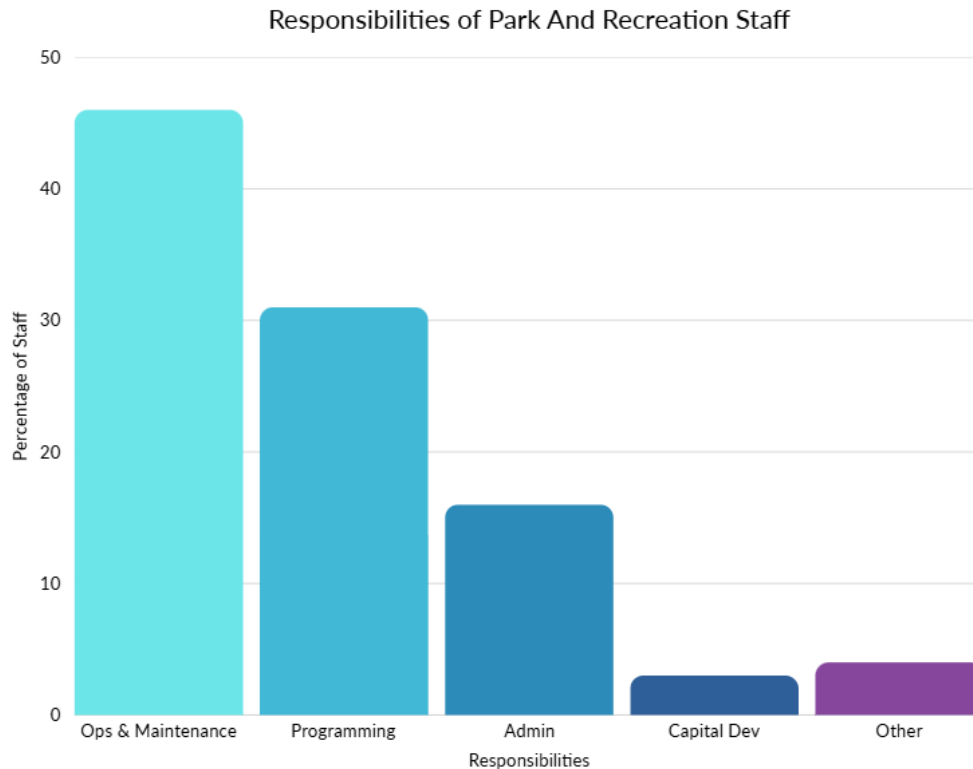
Operations and Maintenance = 46%

Programming = 31%

Administration = 16%

Capital Development = 3%

Other = 4%



STAFFING CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS

The development of a standard full-time equivalent (FTE) of employees needed has been extremely difficult because there have been difficulties devising a system comprehensive enough to apply to the wide variety of park types, functions, acreage, programming, number of residents served etc. However, the following classification systems are a good resource to use in determining the FTEs needed for an agency as well as to determine the amount of maintenance staff needed.

Agency Classification System

According to the National Recreation and Park Association’s 2024 Agency Performance Review, it states that because park and recreation agencies differ by size and jurisdiction served, so too do staffing levels. Park and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions of less than 20,000 residents have staffing levels that range from 6.1 to 30 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) on staff, with a median of 14. The report went on to state that one way to view agency staffing is to measure it relative to the population that an agency serves. Using the median, the typical park and recreation agency serving jurisdictions of less than 20,000 residents would have 13.7 FTEs on staff for every 10,000 residents in the jurisdiction served by that agency.

Category	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 49,999	50,000 99,999	100,000 250,000	More than 250,000
Median	8.9	13.7	11.2	10.5	7.9	4.7
Lower Quartile	4.9	6.9	5.8	6.5	3.8	2.1
Upper Quartile	16.6	25.3	20.3	17.1	12.2	7.8

*To calculate the FTE’s required, you would use the median of the jurisdiction classification for every 10,000 residents in the jurisdiction served by the agency.

The typical park and recreation agency with a population less than 20,000 has between \$73,418 to \$146,913 in annual operating expenditures for each employee (as measured by full-time equivalent (FTE) employees) with a median of \$101,304. As is the case for most government entities, personnel services account for the largest share of the operations budget at the typical park and recreation agency. As is the case for most government entities, personnel services account for the largest share of the operations budget at the typical park and recreation agency.

Maintenance Classification System

As previously stated, the development of a standard full-time equivalent FTEs needed has been extremely difficult because there have been difficulties devising a system comprehensive enough to apply to the wide variety of park types and functions. This section is intended to serve as a benchmark for assigning staffing levels to various park areas, help guide current and future maintenance staffing needs, and to provide cost data for the purpose of budgeting and allocation of funds.

The following is a classification table that describes the standards of care (mode levels of maintenance), and what the FTE maintenance staffing per acre could be on an annual basis.

CLASSIFICATION	ANNUAL STAFFING PER ACRE
MODE I	1 Person per 5 Acres
MODE II	1 Person per 10 Acres
MODE III	1 Person per 15 Acres
MODE IV	1 Person per 20 Acres
MODE V	1 Person per 25 Acres
MODE VI	1 Person per 30 Acres

Note: This table does not take into consideration coverage for vacations, sick leave, holidays, workers compensation leave, family medical leave, shift rotations, job vacancies, nor does it take into consideration the level of supervisory staff necessary to supervise maintenance personnel.

CURRENT STAFFING OVERVIEW

The City is currently staffed with fifteen (15) full-time employees, and approximately 130 part-time/seasonal employees that are solely dedicated to the various operational divisions of the Department.

- 1 Director of Parks and Recreation
- 1 Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation
- 1 Superintendent of Facilities
- 1 Superintendent of Parks
- 1 Marketing Supervisor
- 1 Recreation Assistant Aquatics & Special Events
- 1 Recreation Assistant Athletics
- 1 Recreation Assistant Special Events
- 6 Parks Maintenance Workers
- 1 Facility Maintenance Worker
- 130 Seasonal/Part-Time Workers

STAFFING EXPERTISE, KNOWLEDGE, AND CERTIFICATIONS

To handle the vast diversity of programs, facilities, parks and trails, the City must employ staff who must be disciplined in a variety of areas. As it has been stated, that to work in parks and recreation, you must be a part-time chemist, creative troubleshooter and problem solver, part-time engineer, plumber, hydraulic expert, mechanic, electrician, custodian, purchasing agent, accountant, turf manager, arborist, horticulturalist, landscape architect, planner, aquatic specialist, conservation specialist, policy administrator, amateur attorney and legal advisor, lifeguard, instructor, coach, referee, concessionaire, entrepreneur, teacher, leader, part-time police officer, human resource manager, risk manager, ADA specialist, salesman, a nurse, master of public relations, baby sitter, and yes, a psychiatrist. You must employ all-around miracle workers!

As such, the viability and success of the park and recreation system is undeniably linked to the staff members responsible for the parks, facilities, trails, programs and services. Without qualified administrators, managers, coordinators, supervisors, secretaries, and maintenance staff, the parks and recreation system would find it very difficult to fulfill the mission and achieve goals and objectives. It is the staff members within the City who design, develop, operate, maintain and deliver park and recreation services.

To produce the level of quality that the City should expect, the City must employ qualified staff. Qualified personnel bring to the City the knowledge, skills and abilities in specialized areas that are needed to design and deliver the “benefits” that the residents seek from recreation and park experiences. If the City continues to employ staff members who are

qualified and capable of packaging and delivering parks and recreation benefits, the City will attract and retain a strong and satisfied customer base.

Employing qualified staff members is not only one of the most important functions of the City; it is also one of the most expensive. More than half of the operational expenditures of a City are allocated to staff members' salaries and benefits. Considering the vital importance of hiring quality staff members and the associated expense, it is essential for each employee to have a working knowledge of the principles, practices, and procedures for their position and/or discipline. As such, it should be the City's' goal for personnel in each to be certified in their area of expertise, and to continue educational training appropriate with each position and/or discipline.

The City is a dynamic entity. As the needs and wants of the community using parks, facilities, trails and participation in programs and services change over time. For the City to consistently deliver the level of quality the community wants and needs, the City must also change. Understandably, change creates major shifts in the nature of work performed by staff members employed by the City. Residents' heightened interest in community aesthetics, health and wellness, environment, conservation, outdoor recreational facilities, active and passive areas, and inclusion of persons with disabilities has had a major impact on staff alignments. As interests in parks and recreational experiences change, so must the job duties, responsibilities, and job qualifications of those staff members be performing the work. As such, the City must anticipate change and continually plan to realign, retrain and hire new staff members to best serve the needs of its residents.

The Department currently has staff with the following certifications/licenses:

POSITION	NUMBER OF STAFF	CERTIFICATIONS
Director of Parks and Recreation	1	CPRP, AFO, CPSI
Asst. Director of Parks and Recreation	1	CPRP
Facilities Superintendent	1	CPRP
Aquatics Recreation Supervisor	1	CPRP, CPO
Marketing Supervisor	1	CPRP, CPO
Program Recreation Assistants	3	CPRP
Parks Superintendent	1	CPSI, Certified Arborist
Parks Maintenance Workers	2	Certified Arborist
Parks Maintenance Workers	1	Small Motor Repair
Parks Maintenance Workers	1	CPSI
Parks Maintenance Workers	6	CDL

Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP)
 Certified Pool Operator (CPO)
 Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO)
 Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI)
 Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. The agency shall establish a staff organizational structure that reflects its methods of operation, its relationship to the community, and the relationships among the different organization components.

Provide a chart showing the agency's organizational structure, interrelationships among organizational components, and the function of each component. Organizational components are the major subdivisions of the organization, e.g. departments and divisions. Indicate how this information is made available to staff and the public.

2. The agency administrative offices shall be accessible to the public and staff. There shall be administrative, meeting and storage space, and equipment adequate to perform the agency's functions and responsibilities.

Provide documentation that describes the types of office space and administrative equipment used by the agency and how access is provided to the staff and the public.

3. Sufficient and appropriate equipment, technology, clerical and administrative staff shall be provided to enable the professional staff to perform their appropriate functions.

Describe the equipment, technology, and services used to support professional staff.

4. A communication system shall be established to ensure the accurate and timely transfer of internal information among staff.

Provide a communication matrix illustrating how internal communications are managed by the agency.

5. A specific position in the agency shall be designated to direct the public information and community relations functions. The position serves as a point of control for information dissemination to the community and the media. The intent of the standard is to establish the authority and responsibility for developing and coordinating the agency's community relations function in an identifiable position.

Provide the position description that reflects responsibilities for public information and community relations functions.

6. A specific position shall be designated to direct the marketing function. Marketing functions shall be the responsibility of a permanent position of the agency that works closely with all agency units in developing, coordinating, and implementing the agency marketing plan.

Provide the position description that includes responsibility for marketing.

7. There shall be a comprehensive recruitment process to attract qualified personnel that is based upon established recruitment procedures with specific recruitment objectives that are reviewed periodically. It is understood that in certain cases an agency is required to handle its personnel through a state or local civil service merit system, and is, therefore, linked to that system in the recruitment of its park and recreation personnel. Agencies are obligated to comply with all applicable statutes and policy statements.

Provide recruitment procedures, recruitment objectives, and last review.

8. There shall be an established employee benefits plan. Each of the benefits provided to employees shall be described in terms of what is provided, under what conditions, and the extent of the benefit. Types of benefits often include administrative leave, holiday leave, sick leave, vacation leave, retirement program, health insurance program, disability and death benefits program, liability protection program, provision of clothing and equipment used by employees in performing park and recreation functions, employee education benefits, if any, and personnel support services to employees.

Provide the employee benefits plan.

9. There shall be constructive and effective supervision of all personnel to help them grow professionally and improve programs and services. Supervision is an on-going and systematic process that is helpful for the well-being of the individual and agency. Important characteristics of effective supervision are the ability to communicate expectations, delegate authority commensurate with the assigned tasks, provide feedback, and motivate. There should be supervisory processes, procedures, or tools that highlight staff orientation, staff coaching, mentoring and training, performance review, and human resource policies affecting supervision of staff such as those dealing with harassment and discipline.

Provide examples of processes, procedures, or tools used to assure constructive and effective employee supervision.

10. There shall be an established compensation plan that establishes equity of compensation among units within the agency that is reviewed periodically. The compensation plan for an agency shall take into account agency employment standards, agency skill needs, and compensation levels offered by other local employers.

Provide the compensation plan and a copy of its most recent review or update.

11. There shall be a fair and systematic procedure for annual or periodic appraisal of job performance. Personnel evaluation shall be utilized for the development and improved quality of the individual's performance on the job, as well as a basis for

promotion, monetary increments, and dismissal. Although evaluation is a day-by-day process, there shall be periodic specific reviews with the employee. An employee's personnel file shall include a written annual evaluation.

Provide the procedures and a sample of completed performance evaluations without identifying personal information.

12. There shall be an established policy and procedures available to all employees defining the promotion process and the agency's role. The park and recreation agency may rely upon a state or local civil service commission, or other public or private external organization to administer one or more elements of the process in accordance with legal, professional, and administrative requirements.

Provide the policy and procedures and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

13. There shall be an established disciplinary system based on the code of conduct and performance. The system shall specify the conduct expected of employees. Prohibitions should be specific, whereas approved behavior may be stated in general terms (e.g., courtesy, punctuality).

Provide the code of conduct and performance and the policies and procedures that guide the disciplinary system and how this information is communicated and made accessible to employees. Include copies of disciplinary action steps included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable. This system shall address the following topics:

- a. *Compliance with agency statements;*
- b. *Unbecoming conduct;*
- c. *Appropriate appearance;*
- d. *Use of alcohol and drugs;*
- e. *Acceptance of gratuities, bribes, or rewards;*
- f. *Abuse of authority; and*
- g. *Proper care and maintenance of equipment.*

14. There shall be an established grievance procedure, available to all employees. The procedure shall identify matters that are grievable; establish time limitations for filing or presenting the grievance; establish steps and time limitations at each step in the grievance procedure; and establish criteria for employee representation. Formal grievance procedures shall be written in clear, concise terms.

Provide the grievance procedures and indicate how the procedures have been communicated to the employees. Include grievance procedures included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.

15. There shall be established policies and procedures for termination and end of employment.

Provide the termination and end of employment policies and procedures and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

16. The agency shall employ staff qualified to develop and operate programs and services in furtherance of goals and objectives. Staff shall be qualified for the positions as provided in the job descriptions and possess specified licenses and certificates. Park and recreation personnel shall have certification and/or educational training appropriate to the position.

Provide job descriptions for a representative sample of key positions and resumes for the current incumbents.

17. Established job descriptions for all positions shall be based on the job analysis and reviewed periodically.

Provide a job description for a full-time, part-time, temporary and internship position, and, if applicable, an example of a job analysis with last review. The job descriptions shall include, at a minimum:

- a. *Duties of each position;*
- b. *Responsibilities of each position;*
- c. *Tasks of each position; and*
- d. *Minimum level of proficiency necessary in the job-related skills, knowledge, abilities, and behaviors.*

18. The agency shall have a chief administrator responsible to the approving authority for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the agency and with authority to perform such responsibilities. The chief administrator shall be employed full-time, year-round, and be qualified by experience, education, certification, and/or training in park, recreation, leisure services, tourism, or related disciplines. These qualifications shall be verified and demonstrated specifically as to how it is related to park and/or recreation management.

Provide the chief administrator position description and the resume of the current incumbent. If she/he is from a related discipline, provide a summary of how the person's qualifications relate to park and/or recreation management.

19. The agency shall have an established procedure to ensure that leadership is available when the agency's chief administrator is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act.

Provide the written procedure, such as continuity plan, which indicates approval by the proper authority.

20. The agency shall have an employee health and wellness program showing periodic evaluation of the program status.

Provide evidence of the agency's employee health and wellness program, level of participation and most recent evaluation.

21. There shall be an orientation program for all personnel employed by the agency.

Provide outline of the orientation program and a representative example of materials distributed at an orientation. The orientation program should include:

- a. *Philosophy, goals, and objectives;*
- b. *The history and development of the agency;*
- c. *Pertinent sociological and environmental factors of the community and specific neighborhoods in which the individual is to serve (environmental scan); and*
- d. *Review of program/parks policies and procedures manuals, job duties, staff procedures, first aid and safety concerns and guidelines and forms review.*

22. There shall be a program of employee development which is available to employees throughout the agency. It should be based on needs of individual employees, future organizational needs, and is evaluated and updated periodically. The program must notify personnel of available and/or required training, maintain training records, and assure that required training programs are attended. The program should incorporate in-service training and succession planning to ensure the continued effective performance of the organization after the departure of key staff.

Describe the scope and components of the employee development and training program, provide an outline of training offered (mandatory and discretionary), and provide lists of participants for the prior calendar year, and last review.

23. Professional staff shall be active members of their professional organization(s) and pursue professional certifications within their respective disciplines. "Active" means more than holding membership, including attendance at meetings, making presentations, participating in committee work, holding elected and appointed positions, and participation in educational opportunities.

Provide a list of staff with professional certifications and also provide a list of staff that have actively participated in a professional organization during the prior calendar year, indicating the nature of participation. The following are examples for park and recreation professionals e.g. Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE), Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) for park and recreation professionals.

24. There shall be a volunteer management function within the agency, including a comprehensive volunteer management manual that includes policies and procedures related to the management of volunteers.

Provide the volunteer management manual.

25. Volunteers shall be used by the agency in a variety of positions.

Provide list of functions in which agency volunteers are used, the extent of use, and examples of volunteer position descriptions.

26. There shall be an on-going function within the agency for the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and retention of volunteers, including procedures on background screening. Background investigations shall be made for all volunteers who work routinely with vulnerable populations, especially youth, senior adults, and persons with disabilities.

Provide the agency's recruitment, selection, orientation, training, and retention procedures. Provide the agency's background investigation procedures for volunteers and evidence of implementation.

27. Agency volunteers shall be monitored, shall receive supervisory visits, and be evaluated regarding performance. Supervision and evaluation of volunteers is important to ensure adequate training is provided and to verify satisfactory conduct and performance. The degree to which the agency supervises and evaluates volunteers may vary depending on the role of the volunteers.

Provide written description of the monitoring system including current practices for supervisory visits, and examples of evaluations.

28. There agency shall recognize volunteers for their contributions. Recognition may take many forms, depending on the nature of volunteer roles.

Provide a description of the recognition program and recognitions given over the past calendar year.

29. Agency volunteers shall be covered for negligence liability.

Provide documentation indicating coverage of volunteers for negligence liability.

30. The agency shall have policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

Provide the agency's policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

31. There shall be established liaison assignments for agency staff to the official law enforcement officers providing public safety and law enforcement service to the agency.

Provide current documentation of staff liaison assignment(s) with the law enforcement authority responsible for enforcement of laws and ordinances within the parks and recreation areas and facilities.

32. Law enforcement officers with the authority to enforce laws within areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency must have proper training in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Provide a summary of the current training program for law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within the parks and recreation agency, including provision for refreshers and updates.

33. Agency staff shall understand their role in public safety and law enforcement and relationships with law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within parks and recreation areas and facilities. The purpose of this training to ensure that staff understand where their authority ends and when an incident should be referred to law enforcement. In-service training shall be extended to front line staff such as lifeguards and park attendants to assure they are fully prepared to respond to law-enforcement incidents.

Provide documentation of most recent in-service training for agency staff, defining their role in public safety and law enforcement, including agendas and attendance rosters.

34. Through in-service training, agency personnel shall understand their role in ongoing security and emergency management. In-service training should inform staff of their role in response to critical incidents and emergencies and provide specific procedures for routine operations.

Provide documentation of in-service training programs on general security and emergency management, including a dated outline of the presentation topics and a roster of participants.

35. The agency risk management function shall involve and train personnel at all levels on risk management procedures.

Demonstrate how personnel at all levels are involved and trained regarding risk management.

36. A specific position within the agency shall be designated with risk management responsibility and authority to carry out the policies established for risk management.

Provide the position description that includes responsibility for risk management.

37. There shall be a policy or procedure available to all members of the public and staff which address issues pertaining to ADA compliance, either in a written or electronic format.

Provide a written policy or procedure available to the public and staff that outlines the steps to resolve questions, concerns, or complaints of accessibility along with a reasonable timeline for completion and have a process for face-to-face meetings in place.

38. The agency shall assign specific responsibility for managing elements of the evaluation program, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis.

Provide job descriptions for the person(s) (staff or consultants) responsible for supporting and monitoring evaluation processes, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis. If consultant services are used, provide the current contracts or service agreements. The documentation should also include the resumes of persons providing the service, including experience and training.

39. The agency shall provide training on how to evaluate programs, services and facilities for personnel involved in managing facilities and delivering programs and services.

Provide examples of recent evaluation trainings completed by the agency, including curriculum content, training dates and participant lists. Examples of training subjects could include but are not limited to qualitative and quantitative measurement, identification of applicable evaluation tools, data analysis and use of findings.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key recommendations are identified. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive park and recreation system.

Findings

- Staffing costs account for 54% of the operating budget for a typical park and recreation agency. Sunset Hills staffing costs accounts for 62% of the operating budget.

- In a typical park and recreation agency, about 54% of FTEs are responsible for operations/maintenance, with 30% for programming, and 16% for administration. Sunset Hills has about 24% for operations/maintenance, 72% for programming, and 4% for administration.
- Current Maintenance Staffing Levels are far below what's called out in the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System". The Department currently has a Full-Time parks maintenance staff of six individuals, as opposed to the 13.47 Full-Time parks maintenance employees identified by the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System".
- FTE maintenance staff per acre maintained: Sunset Hills has one (1) maintenance person for every 44 acres, as opposed to the National average of one (1) maintenance person for every 12 acres.
- The typical park and recreation agency with a population less than 20,000 has between \$73,560 to \$152,404 in annual operating expenditures for each full-time employee with an average of \$101,304. The City of Sunset Hills has a FY2025 annual operating expenditures personnel budget of approximately \$136,308.13 for each full-time employee.
- The City has a part-time ADA/Inclusion Coordinator whose function is to assist the City in being compliant with ADA/ABA rules, regulations and guidelines.
- The City has several employees who have been certified/licensed in specialized areas of the operations.

Observations

- The minimum wage in the State of Missouri is \$13.75 per hour as of January 1, 2025 and will rise to \$15.00 per hour as of January 1, 2026. There will continue to be subsequent increases or decreases based on the cost of living pursuant to the Consumer Price Index. Several communities within the State already have a starting minimum wage of \$15.00 - \$15.50 per hour for most part-time positions, and up to \$19.00 per hour for part-time maintenance positions. This would impact the annual costs in wages and to the overall operations budget.
- With the increase in minimum wage there is a greater potential for wage compression with that of full-time employees unless full-time employees pay scales are adjusted at the same percentages as the minimum wage rates.
- The number of maintenance personnel and fiscal resources need to be increased to adequately maintain the park and recreation system.

Recommendations

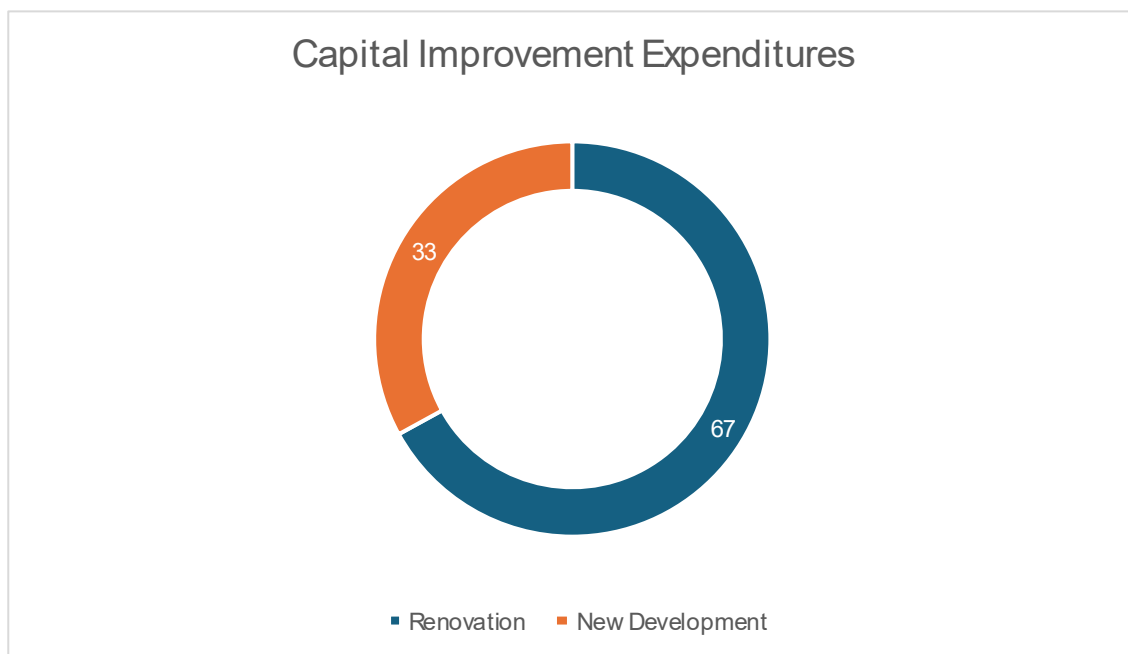
- Look into the possibility of contracting out (outsourcing) select services (Mowing, Turf Maintenance, Athletic Field Maintenance, Irrigation, Forestry and Horticulture) this could help offset the shortfall of staffing and could free up existing staff to work and focus on other areas of need within the maintenance operations.
- Look into partnerships with civic organizations and/or volunteers to assist in the maintenance operations of the park.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

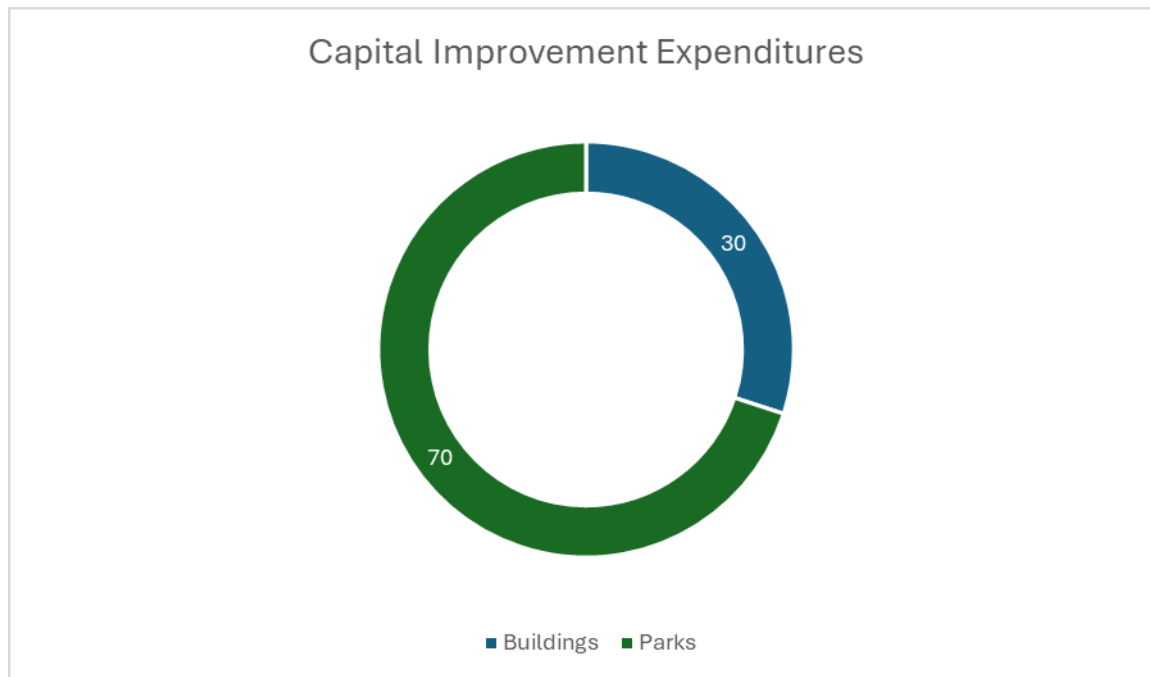
INTRODUCTION

The typical agency designates 88 percent of its capital budget to improvements, seven percent to land acquisition, and the remaining five percent to other endeavors.

Capital Improvement expenditures designated to improvements typically fall under renovations and/or new development. Two-thirds of the improvement expenditures are designated to renovation (67%) while a third is new development (33%).



Further, the average percentage of improvement dollars split between buildings and parks is 30 percent (buildings) and 70 percent (parks).



OVERVIEW

It is critically important to note that the identification of capital improvement needs and cost projections is a dynamic process that requires continuous review and adjustment. The actions and progression of events outlined herein reflect a starting point for this dynamic process.

It should be made abundantly clear that many factors will influence the ultimate actions taken by the City. The City must work closely with leadership to prescribe specific funding commitments and actions based on further analysis of need, feasibility and cost benefit analysis, active public engagement and support, and compliance with laws, ordinances, standards and guidelines.

2007 MASTER PLAN UPDATE PRIORITIES AND STATUS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH 2024

The Department last prepared a systemwide Master Plan for parks and recreation in 2007, when the Department was much smaller. The 2007 Master Plan provided a strategy of meeting parks and recreation needs for the year 2012, and recommended a phased approach for the implementation of a wide variety of items.

In 2007, voters approved a 20-year, ½ cent parks/stormwater sales tax to provide direct funding of the Department. In addition to the funding provided by the ½ cent

parcs/stormwater sales tax, the Department has been able to leverage funding by applying for and being granted multiple grants from the Municipal Parks Grant Commission of St. Louis County as well as from various other grants and donations. Over the past 20 years many minor and major upgrades have been made throughout the parks system to bring facilities up to date.

The 2007 Update to the Master Plan for Parks and Recreation Services identified priorities for implementation. The Department has either fully addressed these priorities, or continues to focus resources and planning in these areas.

2007 Master Plan Update Priorities and Status accomplished through 2025

PRIORITIES	STATUS
Added more park land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock Alva Park • I-44 Bridge Park • Kitun Park • Bander Park • Stiernen Park • Nancy Eschbach Park
More developed or redeveloped playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson Trail Park • Stiernen Park • Lynstone Park • Minnie Ha Ha Park
Added restrooms and/or pavilions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiernen Park • Lynstone Park • Minnie Ha Ha Park • Claire Gempp Davidson Park
Built a Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson Trail Park
Built a new Aquatic Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson Trail Park
Built Outdoor Sand Volleyball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiernen Park
Built a Basketball Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lynstone Park
Built a Dog Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitun Park
Built Pickleball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson Trail Park
Developed Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson Trail Park • Minnie Ha Ha Park • Stiernen Park • Lynstone Park • Kitun Park
Developed an 18-hole Disc Golf Course Developed a 9-hole Disc Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bander Park • Watson Trail Park
Lighting Upgrades of Athletic Fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiernen Park
Driving Range Renovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bander Park

ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS

The Cochran team understands that a primary purpose behind this master planning effort is to derive a list of possible capital projects that could be funded over the next twenty years. These capital improvement items came from a synthesis of all of the information and analysis collected throughout the planning process, as previously described in this report. What follows are those projects and their order of Rough Order Of Magnitude Opinion Of Probable Costs.

All pricing contained in this document is for budgetary purposes pending final design and construction approval by the City and by any governmental agencies with authority in this matter. In providing the rough order of magnitude cost, the City understands that the Cochran team has no control over costs or the price associated with labor, equipment, materials, or over a Contractor's method of pricing, and that the order of magnitude pricing provided herein are to be made on the basis of the Cochran team's qualifications and experience. Overall cost could be impacted by designs, or requirements that would require additional work, time or investment beyond the scope of work as detailed. The Cochran team makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy of such opinions as compared to bid(s) or actual costs.

Minnie Ha Ha Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Soccer Field Parking Lot – Asphalt and Stripe	\$192,975
Soccer Field Parking Lot - Lighting	\$268,080
Trails, Parking Lot, Road – Various Asphalt Work	\$260,000
Trail – Addition	\$50,000
Fire Hydrants – New	\$110,000
Playground – Replacements	\$1,200,000
Soccer Field – Netting/Fencing	\$216,000
Directional Signage – New (Allowance)	\$25,000
Picnic Tables – Replacement	\$71,520
Landscaping – New (Allowance)	\$25,000
Park Maintenance – Various Repairs	\$14,200
TOTAL	\$2,432,775

Nancy Eschbach Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Directional Signage - New	\$5,000

Watson Trail Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Trail - Section Replacement	\$70,525
Trail – Patch, Crack Seal & Seal	\$128,000
Tennis Courts - Replacement	\$803,020
Tennis Courts – LED Lighting	\$15,000
Community Center - Expansion	\$8,216,440
Community Center – Various Upgrades/Replacements	\$2,526,000
Parking Lot - Addition	\$70,590
Parking Lot Lighting – Addition	\$114,975
Sidewalk - Replacement	\$123,120
Pool Climbing Wall - Addition	\$32,400
Pool Slide - Addition	\$745,000
Aquatic Complex – Various Upgrades/Replacements	\$3,016,000
Aquatic Complex - Replacement	\$19,490,760
Maintenance Facility - New	\$2,200,000
Directional Signage – New (Allowance)	\$50,000
Picnic Tables – Replacement	\$47,680
Landscaping – New (Allowance)	\$50,000
Playground Surfacing – PIP Replacement	\$220,000
Playground Component - Replacements	\$2,000,000
Bridge – Replacement	\$105,000
Dredge Lake	\$80,000
Irrigation – Replacement	\$10,000
Restroom/Pavilion – Update	\$94,000
TOTAL	\$40,208,510

Lynstone Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Senior/Adult Fitness Area – New	\$300,000
Splash Pad – New	\$673,560
Playground – Replacement	\$400,000
Picnic Tables – Replacements	\$23,840
Fencing – Replacement	\$236,520
Fencing Gates – New	\$5,000
Lighting – New	\$51,000
Landscaping – New (Allowance)	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$1,694,920

Stieren Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
ADA Compliant Baseball Field Sidewalks – New	\$250,380
Baseball Field Fencing – Replacement	\$232,310
Baseball Field Lighting – New	\$225,000
Field Grading – New	\$60,000
Batting Cages – New	\$14,000
Playground Fencing – New	\$69,985
Playground Component - Replacement	\$2,000,000
Volleyball Court Lighting – New	\$51,000
Parking Lot Lighting – New	\$230,000
Parking Lot – Addition	\$410,545
Directional Signage – New (Allowance)	\$20,000
Maintenance Building – New	\$742,500
Material Bin Covering – New	\$27,000
Landscaping – New (Allowance)	\$25,000
Picnic Tables – Replacements	\$47,680
TOTAL	\$4,405,400

Bander Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Golf Center Building – New Development	\$726,000
Concrete Plaza – Removal and Replacement	\$139,900
Short Game Practice/Training Area – New Development	\$135,000
Golf Parking Lot - Addition	\$64,620
Golf Sidewalk - Additions	\$74,280
Trail Head Parking Lot - Addition	\$24,345
Parking Lot Lighting - New	\$230,000
Driving Range Lighting – New	\$115,000
Trail Head Restroom - New	\$237,170
Trail - Removal and Replacement	\$1,384,435
Landscaping	\$255,315
Directional Signage - New	\$50,000
Pond/Lake Dredging	\$165,890
Fishing Pier - New	\$39,530
Driving Range Tee Pad – Replacements	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$3,691,485

Kitun Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Parking Lot - Addition	\$183,750
Restroom - New	\$237,170
Senior/Adult Fitness Area - New	\$300,000
Directional Signage - New	\$10,000
Landscaping – New (Allowance)	\$10,000
Umbrella – Replacement	\$34,000
Artificial Turf – Replacement	\$45,000
Asphalt Trail – Repairs	\$35,000
TOTAL	\$854,920

Rock Alva Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Parking Lot – New	\$73,500
Asphalt Trail – Repairs	\$90,000
Directional Signage - New	\$5,000
Restroom/Shelter	\$300,000
TOTAL	\$468,500

I-44 Bridge/Trailhead Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Restroom - New	\$180,000
Entrance Signage - New	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$190,000

Claire Gempp Davidison Park

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Asphalt Gravel Road - New	\$10,000
Solar Parking Lot Lights – New	\$7,500
Solar Park Lighting – New	\$7,500
Directional Signage – New	\$7,500
TOTAL	\$32,500

Equipment and Vehicles

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Dump Truck - New	\$480,000
Maintenance Truck - New	\$290,000
Wide Area Mower - New	\$420,000
Mower - Replacements	\$185,000
Pickup Truck – Replacements	\$1,017,000
Activenet – Upgrade	\$65,000
Trailer - Replacement	\$74,000
SUV - Replacements	\$330,000
Excavator – Replacement	\$136,000
Dingo – Replacement	\$180,000
Mule – Replacement	\$75,000
Skid Steer Attachments – New	\$40,000
Skid Steer – Replacement	\$300,000
Toolcat Attachments – New	\$30,000
Computer/Scanner/Plotter – Replacement	\$24,000
Bandwagon Painting – Repair	\$20,000
Vehicle Lighting – New	\$40,000
Misc. Tools – Replacement	\$60,000
TOTAL	\$3,766,000

Total C.I.P.

Description	Order of Magnitude Cost
Watson Trail Park	\$40,208,510
Minnie Ha Ha Park	\$2,432,775
Lynstone Park	\$1,694,920
Stieren Park	\$4,405,400
Nancy Eschbach Park	\$5,000
Bander Park	\$3,691,485
Kitun Park	\$854,920
Rock Alva Park	\$468,500
I-44 Bridge/Trailhead Park	\$190,000
Claire Gempp Davidson Park	\$32,500
Equipment and Vehicles	\$3,766,000
TOTAL	\$57,750,010

- Rough Order Of Magnitude Opinion Of Probable Costs is based on individual market value September 2025. The City should use the Construction Price Index to calculate yearly construction increases beyond 2025.
- Construction Contingency (20%) would need to be added to all projects.
- Design (10% of Construction Costs) would need to be added to all projects.
- Construction Administration (12% of Construction Costs) would need to be added to all projects.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This Master Plan provides the City with very valuable information. Using the public input, a comprehensive facilities inventory, and other data analyses, a sophisticated fiscal model in the form of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be developed. The CIP should be created to outline critical actions that must be achieved in order to transform the City's park system into the quality-of-life asset the citizen's desire. The increasingly competitive demand for capital resources requires that a needs-based 20-Year CIP be prepared. The CIP should be based upon community needs identified through various data collection and analysis techniques.

The CIP shall provide guidance to City decision makers for the allocation of funds and the distribution of projects based on demonstrated needs, deficiencies and priorities identified in the Needs Assessment process. The CIP's primary purpose is to address the following question:

How should the City of Sunset Hills enhance and allocate capital resources over the next twenty years to address the identified needs?

Projects include new park facility development that expand a facility's capacity and renovation projects that maintain or restore the design capacity of existing facilities.

The most current information available was gained from the extensive data collected in the Needs Assessment process. It should be noted that citizen preferences may change over the next 20 years and the City should continue to collect citizen participation data to ensure that the Capital Improvement Needs truly meets the overall current needs of the community. The CIP should provide the overall long-range framework with recommended allocation of capital resources by facility type to meet the projected citizen's park and recreation needs.

Evaluation Filters

The Sunset Hills Park and Recreation System finds itself a moment in its history when there are several high priorities. A case can easily be made that each of the priorities should be #1. Because that cannot happen, city leaders will need to evaluate each priority with a set of Evaluation Filters for this very reason.

Use of the Evaluation Filters (priority criteria and scoring points were developed by the Cochran team and recommended to the City) will not make the decision(s) any easier; however, they will help facilitate the discussion.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Mandates and Codes	Does the project meet legal mandates, codes and public safety needs?	5
Infrastructure	Does the project involve existing infrastructure?	5
Replacement	Does the expenditure involve existing equipment and/or vehicles etc.?	5
Partnership(s)	Does a partnership opportunity exist with the project that could leverage programming, usage, and funding?	4
Project Outcome	Does the project take care of facilities you have or enhance facilities you have?	4
Revenue Producing	Does the project generate revenue and is this necessary?	3
Citizen Preferences	As expressed in the survey, stakeholder interviews, and public meeting.	3
Quality of Life	Consideration for equitable citizen access to quality parks and facilities. How does the community feel about the project and its relationship to what it feels is a "quality of life issue".	3
Standards/Benchmarks/Trends	Shortcomings and/or trends as identified in the SCORP, NRPA, and other industry reports and studies.	2
Health and Wellness	Does the project enhance or contribute to the overall health and wellness of the community?	2
Service Area	Availability of facilities within the service area.	1

The use of the list of suggested Evaluation Filters is recommended as discussions take place to determine the priority that is assigned to each of the identified Capital Improvements. Capital Improvements shall be identified by the following categories: Short Range (0-5 years), Mid-Range (5-10 years), and Long Range (11-20 years).

Implementation Strategies

Knowing that capital funding needed to implement the CIP far exceeds present available and projected funding, a phased approach for carrying out the projects is suggested. The phased approach should be based upon the priorities that the City and the public have identified using the evaluation filter and through the planning process. The phasing sequence may vary depending on factors such as funding sources, implementation logistics, construction operations, bid packaging, and cost/pricing efficiencies.

By phasing the various components of the CIP into use, the City will begin to see recognizable improvement in the park system that would not be otherwise realized if it waited to implement each facility or component under an “all or nothing” method. Small steps toward the completion of each recommendation can be implemented slowly over time that will serve residents in the near term. This approach allows the City to show results toward the improvements of the park system and should create a favorable climate toward future parks and recreation spending.

Implementation of the CIP is a long-term process that will require updates as existing facilities are improved or new ones are built and as population demands change. It is recommended that the CIP be reviewed every few years in order to incorporate current conditions and maintain progress towards meeting the future goals of the community.

A determination can be made by City staff and elected officials on whether the update warrants external assistance from a park planning consultant to prepare more detailed master plans or updates to the Plan or whether the update can be completed internally by City staff.

NEXT STEPS

Once a determination has been made by City staff, parks board and elected officials on the phasing and funding, the project(s) will need to be moved to the implementation phase.

Precise planning and design will be required for implementation of the projects outlined within the Master Plan. The planning and design process will vary based on the unique requirements of each improvement project, but will typically follow a similar general sequence of activities. Not all projects will require all of these steps. Some of the recommendations contained within the Master Plan could be met by providing basic upgrades to various facilities in existing parks or completing future phases of park projects already underway. The planning and design process for these projects will be fairly straightforward. Other recommendations involve construction of major new facilities, and would likely require most or all of these steps.

Concept and Site Master Planning

Accordingly, before a park project moves to the development or redevelopment stage, a Concept Plan for that specific project should be conducted. Conceptual design or visioning is an early phase of the design process in which it plans out the scope of work it will take to achieve your vision.

Once the “concept” has been identified, the site master plan (Schematic Design), the overall design or development concept for the project should be developed. This phase develops broad outlines of function and form of the project. At its core, it serves as the bridge between a vision and the physical structure that emerges from it. At the end of this phase the consultant should present a document that includes:

- An overview of your park or facility’s basic features
- An assessment of the needs and/or wants
- A physical drawing and/or layout to help craft the construction project
- Suggestions for sizing and locations
- Initial costs estimation

With the completed Site Master Plan, detailed planning “Design Development” can be conducted.

Design Development

Once the Site Master Plan has been conducted and funding approved, the next step would be to begin the Design Development phase of the project. This phase could include surveying, engineering, landscape design, architectural design, environmental review, plan drawings, code compliance, and refined cost estimation.

Construction Documents and Bidding

Upon completion of the Design Development phase, the development of construction plans, final cost estimation and bidding documents shall be completed, and the project shall be placed out to bid based on the City’s and/or grant bidding requirements.

Construction Administration

Once the bids have been received and approved, construction and construction administration of the project shall begin.

Construction administration deals with overseeing that the construction contract is being adhered to throughout preconstruction and execution. This may include the handling of contracts, communicating with stakeholders, ensuring compliance with regulations and drawings, and overseeing the project’s progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop and implement “Evaluation Filters” to assess and rank capital improvement priorities for the Capital Improvement Plan.

- Finalize capital improvement priorities into either Short Range, Mid-Range, or Long Range.
- A phased approach of implementation should be based upon the priorities that the City and the public have identified using the evaluation filter and through the funding process.
- Planning sequence be open to public review and input.
- Using the public input, the facilities inventory, capital improvement assessment, and other data analyses, a sophisticated fiscal model in the form of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be developed.

FUNDING ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The Department's Master Plan is a practical and inspirational framework for meeting the City's changing parks and recreational needs and interests. A sustainable, flexible, and innovative system requires continued investment and commitment now and, in the years, ahead.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The nation's local parks have a vast economic impact, according to a report from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The Economic Impact of Local Parks report states that the shared impact of operations and capital spending by U.S. local park and recreation agencies in 2021 resulted in nearly \$201 billion in economic activity and \$196.8 billion in added gross domestic product (GDP). They also supported more than 1.1 million jobs that paid salaries, wages and benefits totaling \$63 billion. This is a conservative estimate that does not capture parks' other economic benefits, such as higher real estate values, health and wellness benefits, tourism and other economic development activities.

AGENCY BUDGET

According to the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review, funding sources for park and recreation operation vary greatly by agency; however, support from the local jurisdiction's general fund tax base is common. On average, park and recreation agencies derive slightly more than three-fifths of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support. However, the percentage of funding from general fund tax support tends to be lower for those agencies with larger operating budgets.

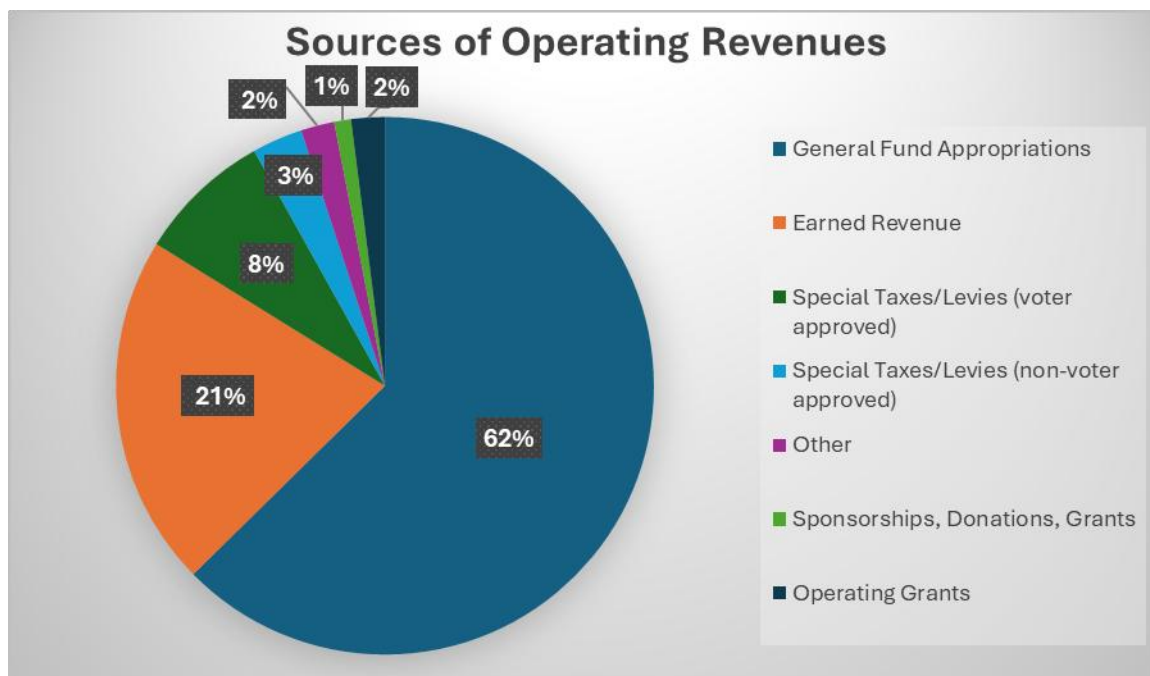
The second-largest source of funding for most agencies is earned/generated revenue, accounting for an average of 22 percent of operating expenditures. In addition, many agencies have access to special, dedicated taxes (personal property tax, capital improvement sales tax) that cover a part of their budgets, while others obtain much of their funding from tax levies dedicated to park and recreation purposes (parks/stormwater sales tax) approved by citizen referenda.

A recent survey conducted as part of the NRPA Engagement With Parks Report, concluded that nine in 10 adults agree that their local and state governments must sufficiently fund local park and recreation agencies to ensure every community member has access to the amenities, infrastructure and programming offered. Nearly three-quarters of these adults say this funding is "extremely" or very- important. The survey went on to state that sufficient and sustainable funding from local and state governments is critical to ensure parks, facilities and programming provided by parks

and recreation remain ubiquitous, accessible and affordable.

Revenue Generation

Many agencies generate funding from non-tax revenue. Registration fees for special programming are the largest source of non-tax revenue for most agencies. Agencies serving a population of less than 20,000 typically hold 30 fee-based programs per year. The typical park and recreation agency generates nearly \$1.3 million in non-tax revenues annually, although this amount can vary significantly based on agency size, the services and facilities offered by an agency and the mandate from agency leadership and policy-makers. Agencies with annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000 typically generate nearly \$44,000 in non-tax revenues. In comparison, those with annual budgets greater than \$10 million generate a median of slightly more than \$5.9 million from non-tax revenue sources.



The typical park and recreation agency generates \$22.58 in revenue annually per each resident in the jurisdiction it serves. Agencies operating in less densely populated areas generate less revenue than do those with a greater population density. The typical agency serving a jurisdiction of 20,000 or fewer people receives between \$13.22 to \$109.72 per resident with a median of \$47.71.

Another way to look at revenue generation is by examining cost recovery as a percentage of operating expenditures. The typical agency recovers 25.2 percent of its operating expenditures from non-tax revenues. The amount of cost recovery differs significantly among agencies based on an agency's portfolio of facilities and programming, the demographics of the populace it serves, the agency's mission and possible revenue mandates from the agency's governing authorities. Agencies serving less than 20,000 people recover between 13.5 to 56 percent and have a median percentage cost recovery

of 29.5 percent.

Operational Expenditures

The typical goal of annual operating expenditures, such as personnel services, contracts, commodities and supplies, and capital outlay, is to balance the needs of the community with the fiscal capabilities of the governing body. Each park and recreation agency must be aware of its annual operating expenditures in order to continue to provide the vital programs and services expected of parks and recreation in its community.

U.S. Census Bureau data indicate that local park and recreation agencies' operating expenditures totaled \$45 billion in 2020 (most recent data available). Per National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Park Metrics data, the typical park and recreation agency has current annual operating expenditures of approximately \$6.4 million, although budget size varies widely depending on a number of factors (including population served, services offered).

Normalizing operating expenditure data by population served by an agency is a more meaningful way of articulating and comparing spending. By this measure, the typical park and recreation agency with a population less than 20,000 has annual operating expenses of \$707,145 to \$3,004,473 with a median of \$1,451,763. At the same time, per capita operations spending is inversely related to the population of the area served.

One can normalize operating expenditures by the amount of parkland managed by an agency. The typical park and recreation agency serving a jurisdiction of less than 20,000 people will spend between \$3,856 to \$27,711 per acre of park and non-park sites, with a median of \$9,777.

The typical park and recreation agency with a population less than 20,000 has between \$73,560 to \$152,404 in annual operating expenditures for each employee (as measured by full-time equivalent (FTE) employees) with a median of \$101,304. As is the case for most government entities, personnel services account for the largest share of the operations budget at the typical park and recreation agency.

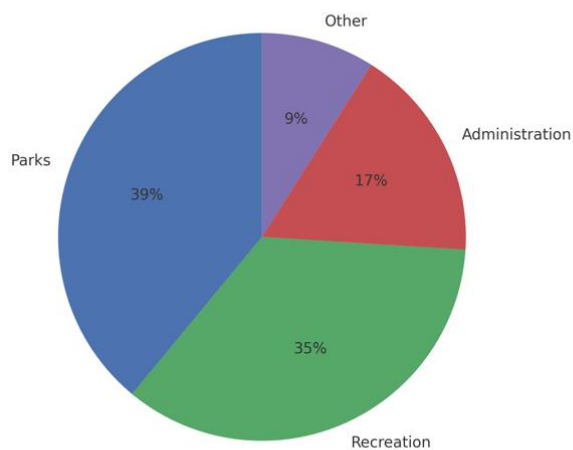
Dedicated Operating Expenditures

On average, agencies designate 39 percent of their operating expenditures on parks, 35 percent on recreation, 17 percent on administration and 9 percent on other items.

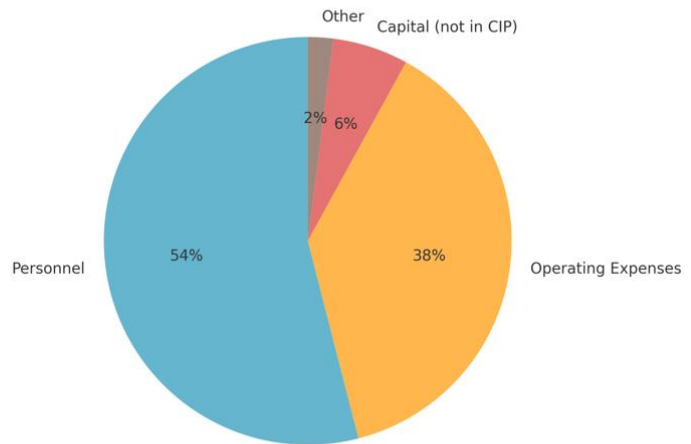
Distribution of Operating Expenditures

On average, agencies designate 54 percent of their operating expenditures on personnel, 38 percent on operating expenses, 6 percent on capital expenses not in CIP, and 2 percent on other items.

Breakdown of Operating Expenditures by Function



Distribution of Operating Expenditures by Category

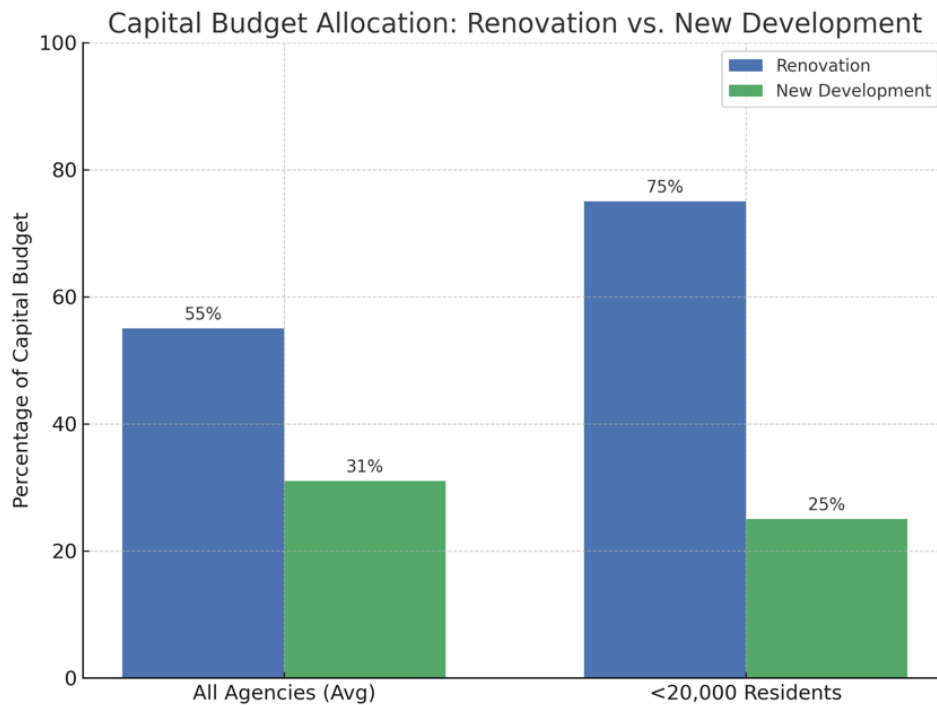


Capital Expenditures

Beyond day-to-day operations, park and recreation agencies have a median of \$10 million in capital expenditures budgeted for the next five years. The typical park and recreation agency serving a population of less than 20,000 has a median five-year capital budget of \$1.5 million. In addition, factors that are positively related to the size of the five-year capital budget include:

- The number of parks maintained: Less than 10 parks — \$1.7 million; 50 or more parks — \$35.1 million;
- Acreage of parks maintained: 250 or fewer acres— \$2.6 million; more than 3,500 acres — \$42 million; and
- Operating budgets: Annual operating budgets less than \$500,000 to \$350,000; annual operating budgets greater than \$10 million to \$32.9 million.

On average, agencies designate 55 percent of their capital budget for renovation and 31 percent toward new development. Park and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions of less than 20,000 residents designate 75 percent of their capital budget on renovations and 25 percent toward new development.



Deferred Maintenance

On average, park and recreation agencies report having \$16.5 million of deferred maintenance projects on their books. Agencies operating in less densely populated areas have fewer deferred projects than do those operating in areas with a greater population density. Agencies serving a jurisdiction of fewer than 500 people per square mile have an average of \$9.8 million in deferred maintenance projects compared to \$27 million for agencies serving a jurisdiction of more than 2,500 people per square mile. Average deferred maintenance balances rise at agencies that:

- Have higher operating budgets: \$368,833 at agencies with operating budgets less than \$500,000 compared to \$38.4 million at agencies with operating budgets that exceed \$10 Million.
- Have a larger staff: \$1.8 million at agencies with a staff of fewer than 10 FTEs compared to \$38.5 million at agencies with 100 or more FTEs.
- Serve larger populations: \$1.2 million at agencies in jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people compared to \$57.8 million at agencies serving jurisdictions of more than 250,000 people.
- Have more parks: \$1.4 million at agencies with less than 10 parks compared to nearly \$47.6 million at agencies with 50 or more parks.
- Maintain more parkland: \$3.5 million at agencies that maintain 250 acres or less of parkland compared to \$62 million at agencies that maintain more than 3,500 acres of parkland.

CURRENT FUNDING

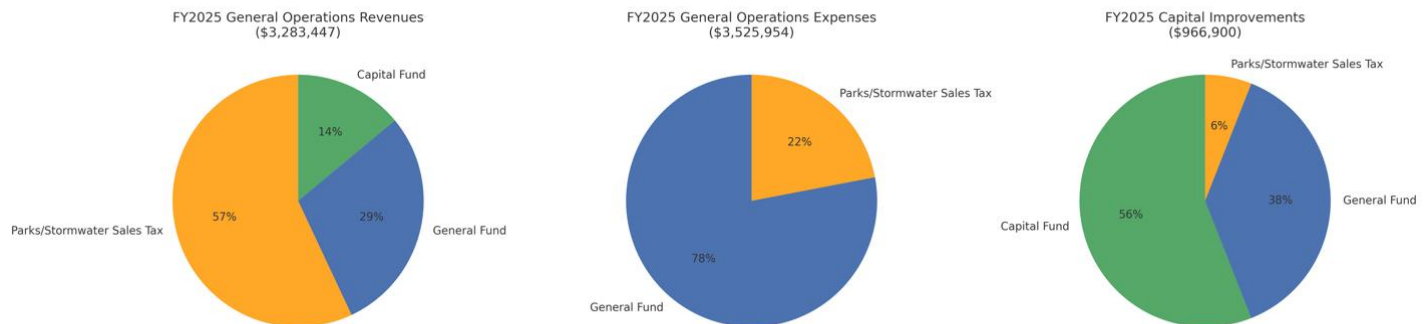
A key component for implementing this Master Plan involves understanding the funding opportunities, identifying the options, and developing strategies. The following summarizes the current funding of the Department.

As part of the master plan process, the Cochran team has reviewed the budget information that has been provided to them by the City of Sunset Hills. It is important to note that when discussing expenses, the team was provided the FY2025 Adopted budget.

General Operations Revenues - The FY2025 Department’s revenues are funded through various sources (General Fund - 29%, Capital Fund - 14%, and Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax 57%) in the amount of \$3,283,447.00.

General Operations Expenses - The FY2025 Department’s operations and maintenance needs are funded through various sources (General Fund - 78%, and Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax 22%) in the amount of \$3,525,954.00.

Capital Improvements – The Department’s capital improvements are currently funded through various sources (General Fund - 38%, Capital Fund - 56%, and Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax 6%). The FY2025 capital expenditures are budgeted at \$966,900.00, with a five-year budget of \$3,691,900.00.



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NEW NORMAL

The field of parks and recreation is in transition. The move from a mostly tax-supported community service to a more self-supporting model has been greatly accelerated during the recession. Today, much of the talk in the field is adjusting to the “new normal” of self-supported programs and facilities. While this is a challenge, it does not have to mean doing less with less. It can be the openings of new opportunities to provide value-added services to the community that help financially support the park and recreation facilities and programs that make a community stronger.

The experience of park and recreation services is determined by the demands of the customer. The economics are simple supply and demand: The City provides programs and services demanded by the customer at a price that generates revenue sufficient to support the success of the Department. Understanding customer demand clearly will assist with

prioritizing the core business of the Department. Historically, park and recreation departments are notorious for creating business models designed to mean all things for all people. This model is doomed if the Department is striving for financial sustainability.

One of the latest trends in program budget development is focused on Performance Budgeting. Revenues are created from many options including a designated funding source. These are tracked against inputs, outputs, measurable outcomes, performance levels, and is based on what the Department achieves against the dollars requested.

This requires the Department to implement a sound activity-based costing system to create good baseline data. They must measure the results of the products and services against a set of performance measures. Typical measures include the following:

- Customer satisfaction levels met
- Cost per experience
- Revenues to expenses achieved
- Capacity levels obtained
- Cost per unit to deliver a service
- Retention levels obtained
- Partnering resources leveraged

OPERATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

In order to implement the recommendations, set forth in the Master Plan, additional funding alternatives will be needed to augment existing dollars. While funding solutions are needed for capital projects, funding sources for ongoing operations and maintenance must also be determined prior to carrying out the capital projects. Accordingly, operations and maintenance funding plans will need to accompany construction of any new facility and/or land acquisition.

Future development, redevelopment and renovation, absent specific funding sources, will result in an ever-increasing portion of dollars being spent for operations and maintenance, leaving less to fund renovation projects. As such, the City shall continue to seek partnerships, donations and grants.

The objective of any Master Plan is to make the proposed changes implementable and sustainable. Doing less will doom a plan from the start. Citizens in every community have performance expectations of their parks and recreation system. Those expectations range from customer service to program offerings and from program costs to park cleanliness. If the City consistently falls below the expectations, it becomes very difficult for the City to create change. In Sunset Hills, community expectations are for positive change, thus the City will require much diligence as its preferred future is implemented.

There are basically five ways to accomplish the objective of making this Master Plan implementable and sustainable. They are:

- Utilize creative funding and financing tools (to implement and sustain)
- Create revenue producing facilities and programs (to sustain)
- Outsource inefficient operations to businesses that can provide higher quality of services at a lower price (to sustain)
- Utilize outside volunteer resources (to sustain)
- Control costs (to sustain)

The City must explore any and all combinations of these options in order to maximize the potential for success of the Master Plan. Obviously, some of the processes will come as the Plan evolves; however, the policies and groundwork must be developed now.

FUNDING STRATEGIES

While there are a variety of revenues that fund the City, they are not immune from fluctuations in the local and regional economy. Any slowdown in the economy can affect the City’s ability to support current and future operations. Economic slowdown can limit available funding for several years, so the City must be cognizant of alternative means of financing ongoing operations, as well as capital projects if it would want to further implement the Master Plan.

ITEM	FUNDING OPTIONS
Capital Improvement Program for park amenity upgrades and new facilities/amenities	Naming Rights Sponsorships Bond Issue Park Sales Tax Capital Improvement Sales Tax Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants
Recreation Programs	Fees and Charges Sponsorships Partnerships with other providers as appropriate General Fund Various Grants
Maintenance Program	Rental Fees and Charges Parks Sales Tax Capital Improvement Sales Tax Public Improvement District General Fund Recreation Trails Program (RTP) Grants

<p>Land Acquisition</p>	<p>Parks Sales Tax Capital Improvement Sales Tax General Fund Philanthropic Donation/Naming Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants</p>
<p>Trail Construction</p>	<p>Parks Sales Tax Capital Improvement Sales Tax Bond Issue Recreation Trails Program (RTP) Grants Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grants</p>
<p>ADA Accessibility Improvements</p>	<p>Parks Sales Tax Capital Improvement Sales Tax Community Development Block Grants</p>

Listed below are a few funding strategies that are currently available:

- **Inter-local Agreements** - Contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.
- **H.B. #88 For Parks, Trails and Stormwater Improvements** – This bill authorizes municipalities to assess up to a ½ cent sales tax dedicated solely for parks, trails and/or stormwater improvements, maintenance and operations. Most municipalities within the State have passed this mechanism more than any other. The City is currently using this funding mechanism, however, the tax will sunset in 2027.
- **Capital Improvement Sales Tax** – Allows municipalities to assess up to a ½ cent sales tax for capital improvement projects. The City is currently using this funding mechanism to make capital improvements throughout the City.
- **CDBG Funding** - Funding received in accordance with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs national objectives as established by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. Funding may be applied to such programs as Infrastructure Improvements, Public Facility and Park Improvements, Human Service Enhancements, Lead-Based Paint Education and Reduction, Housing Education Assistance, and Economic Development and Anti-poverty strategies.
- **Public Improvement District (PID)** - New developments can establish a Public Improvement District (PID) when authorized by the city council and set up according to state law. This taxing district provides funds especially for the operation and maintenance of public amenities such as parks and major boulevards.
- **Special Improvement District/Benefit District** - Taxing districts established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, the erection of fountains, and acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and

promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements.

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** – This fund is federally funded and eligible applicants include city, county and state government agencies. School districts are also eligible. This fund is also administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR). Grants under LWCF rules limit reimbursement to 50% of total project costs. Projects may include land acquisition and park capital improvement projects, and all funded projects must be maintained in perpetuity for public outdoor recreational purposes.
- **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** - This fund is federally funded and eligible applicants include city, county and state government agencies. School districts are also eligible. This fund is also administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR). Grants under RTP rules limit reimbursement to 80 percent of total project costs up to a maximum amount of \$250,000. Projects may include the development of recreation trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.
- **Community Stewardship Grant** – Missouri Department of Conservation’s (MDC) Community Stewardship Grant Program aims to support conservation in Missouri Communities in an amount of up to \$10,000. Eligible partners in the St. Louis Region may receive funding for partner – and volunteer-based habitat improvement projects.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** – The Transportation Alternatives Program grant provides federal funding for a variety of small transportation projects and activities such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to schools, and environmental mitigation. The grant is a reimbursement type grant program in which the program provides for an 80 percent federal share with a 20 percent match required by the city.
- **Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program** – Is a new program providing dedicated funding for the planning and construction of safe and connected active-transportation networks and long-distance spine trails. The program was authorized in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and received its first appropriation in the Fiscal Year 2023 federal funding bill. The first grant opportunity is expected to be announced soon. Congressional champions and partners across the country are continuing to advocate for full program funding in the FY 2025 federal budget.
- **Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) Grant** – Missouri Department of Conservation’s (MDC) TRIM Grant Program aims to support with the management, improvement or conservation of trees on public lands. Projects eligible for TRIM funding include tree inventory, removal or pruning of hazardous trees, tree planting, and training of volunteers and city employees to best care for our community forests. The program provides reimbursement of \$1,000 to \$10,000.

- **American Hiking Society**: They have grants to help fund the development of recreation trails. Grants range from \$500 to \$10,000. For more information go to: <http://www.americanhiking.org/alliance/fund.html>
- **Rails to Trails Conservancy**: (www.railtrails.com): They provide reports and information on the value and importance of trails and greenways. They also have a TrailDART (Trail Development Assistance Response Team) which offers referrals and information for organizations who seek more local assistance with trail development. This is a fee for service program.
- **Federal Transportation Enhancements Grants**: This program addresses bicycle and pedestrian accommodations that are made with road improvements and other transportation projects. For more information, and for state specific information go to: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/guidance/
- **American Trails**: They are a nonprofit organization that advocates for the planning and development of trails and greenways. A link to funding resources is found at: <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/index.html>
- **Bank of America** - Bank of America, is helping to build thriving communities by addressing issues fundamental to economic health and sustainability. We are advancing economic mobility by addressing issues related to workforce development and education, community development, and basic needs. As a financial institution, we respond in two ways—by helping to address the immediate need as well as longer term solutions for economic self-sufficiency. Contact Information: Foundation@bankofamerica.com
- **Finish Line Youth Foundation**
<http://www.finishline.com/store/corporate/youthFoundation.jsp>
Purpose: The Finish Line Youth Foundation strives to make a difference in the lives of youth in the communities where employees and customers live, work and play. The Foundation financially supports opportunities for participation in youth programs that place an importance on youth development and an active lifestyle.
- **Tony Hawk Foundation Skatepark Grants**: The focus of this program is to facilitate and encourage the design, development, construction, and operation of new skatepark facilities, primarily located in low-income communities in the United States.
- **Bronco Wild Fund Grant (Ford)** <https://www.ford.com/bronco-wild-fund/> – To increase access, stewardship, and preservation of public lands (e.g. trail management, campground restorations, beach cleanups, signage installations, responsible off-roading events, adaptive equipment resources and projects that help expand access to outdoor recreation.
- **The Kerr Foundation, Inc.** <http://www.thekerrfoundation.org/guidelines.php>
Purpose: The Kerr Foundation, Inc. supports 501(c)3 organizations, programs and institutions that provide new or enhanced opportunity to those within the granting areas, particularly the young. We believe that this is best accomplished in the areas of education, health, cultural development and community service. While

preference is given to Oklahoma organizations and institutions, we recognize that such located outside the state and region can also have a beneficial impact on the economic, social and cultural growth and development of Oklahoma. *Geographic Focus:* The Foundation only supports non-profit organizations located in: Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. We recognize the significant and continuing influence of the Federal government on our state and region, so we accept proposals from the Washington, D.C. area. Oklahoma organizations will receive first priority for available funds.

Contact Information: The Kerr Foundation Inc., 12501 N May Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73120, 405-749-7991

- **Kroger Co. Foundation** <http://www.thekrogerco.com/community/kroger-foundation>
Purpose: The Kroger Co. Foundation supports charitable activities in the communities where Kroger customers and associates live and work. Support will be provided only to programs that address a clearly identified need in the community and do so with clearly defined goals and objectives. Organizations should reflect a strong base of community support. *Geographic Focus:* The Foundation exists for the betterment of the people and communities where the Kroger Co. has operations. Therefore, only organizations that serve the geographic areas where Kroger operates are eligible. The states in which the Kroger Co. has stores are: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. Refer to website for eligibility requirements.
Contact Information: Foundation Administrator, The Kroger Co. Foundation, 1014 Vine St, Cincinnati, OH 45202, 866.221.4141

- **The Scoular Foundation** <http://www.scoular.com/about/community-involvement/>
Purpose: Scoular realizes that its employees have diverse talents and that local charities look to us for leadership and support. To support their employees and home communities, the Foundation looks first to provide financial assistance to groups and organizations in which our employees are actively involved: Children & Youth, Education, Social Service, Public Health and Arts & Culture. Refer to website for eligibility requirements.

Unsolicited requests for funding are welcome, but such requests will only be considered secondary to internally generated requests, subject to available time and funding availability. *Geographic Focus:* The states covered include: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, So Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. Areas in Canada are also listed A list of locations can be found at <http://www.scoular.com/locations/>.

Contact Information: Contact your local Scoular office for more information.

- **Union Pacific Foundation**
<https://www.up.com/aboutup/community/foundation/grants/index.htm>
Purpose: The Foundation has a strong interest in promoting program effectiveness among nonprofits. To that end, the Foundation will dedicate the majority of these

grants to help nonprofit organizations build their capacity by helping new or existing programs reach more people or reach them more effectively. The Foundation will be particularly receptive to proposals that fall within the following categories:

- **Community and Civic**: To assist community-based organizations and related activities that improve and enrich the general quality of life in the community. This category includes organizations such as aquariums, botanical gardens, children's museums, history/science museums, public libraries, public television and radio, zoos, etc.
- **Health and Human Services**: To assist organizations dedicated to improving the level of health care and providing human services in the community. Local affiliates of national health organizations may apply for local programs only, but not for general operating support. The Foundation awards grants through an annual application process through which nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations and municipalities located in Union Pacific communities may apply. Applications are accepted only through the online process. Refer to website for eligibility requirements.
- **Geographic Focus**: The community where the organization is based must be along Union Pacific railroad lines. A Union Pacific map can be found at: http://www.up.com/aboutup/reference/maps/system_map/index.htm. The states include: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming

Contact Information: Union Pacific 1400 Douglas St Stop 1560, Omaha, NE 68179, 402-544-5600

- **Wal-Mart Foundation** <http://giving.walmart.com/our-focus>
It's our mission to create opportunities so people can live better. We consider it our responsibility to make a positive impact in the communities we serve. Whether it's through the grants we provide to the thousands of organizations that share our mission or through the inspiring volunteer efforts of Walmart associates, we are passionate about helping people live better. One community at a time. Refer to website for eligibility requirements. **Types of Grants**: National Giving Program, State Giving Program, Local Giving Program, NW Arkansas Giving Program. Contact Information: Phone: 800-530-9925
- **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)** – Provides competitive grants (Conservation Innovation, Wetland Mitigation Banking, Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program) to support conservation of natural resources and maintaining healthy ecosystems.
- **Sponsorships, Partnerships and Outsourcing** – Sponsorships and strategic partnerships are exceptional resources the Department can use to maximize and leverage opportunities in the community.
- **Parks Foundation** - Parks foundations with a 501(c) (3) status can leverage many opportunities for the Department that it may otherwise miss out on. The ability of a foundation to react quickly to funding options, create match opportunities with other

providers, support individuals in the community with estate planning, and serve as a trust for recreational, scenic or conservation easements is invaluable. By its structure it also provides a community-based board of directors with some arms-length management of long-term funds for the Department.

- **Fees and Charges** – One of the underlying principles of financing parks and recreation systems is to offer an efficient, balanced program of parks, facilities, trails and services. Frequently, the demand upon parks and recreation systems is greater than the general tax revenues available to support the demand. Therefore, it is necessary to charge user fees for selected programs, services and facilities, particularly in instances where a program, service or facility is directly consumed by the individual(s), group or organization for his/her or their own personal benefit. As such, user(s) of the program service or facility should pay for the cost of the use.
- **General/Resident Discount Fees** – A philosophy of pricing activities based on the value and benefits to the participant is necessary to create equity for the Washington residents and residents of other communities. A policy could be created to charge a “General Rate” to all individuals (Resident and/or Non-Resident) using or participating in City facilities and programs; and a “Resident Discounted Rate” could be charged to those residents who provide proper proof of residency.
- **Non-reverting Funds or Enterprise Funds** – This is another method of funding program and capital projects. Non-reverting funds designate programs that generate excess revenue and that income is placed in a separate account. Program, operational and maintenance support for the designated program can then be drawn from this account to support or subsidize the tax supported needed. This must be created by an ordinance from the enabling legislative body.
- **Impact Fees** – Another tool used in Cities that are undergoing a lot of development, or anticipates doing so, is a developer impact fee. This funding method calculates an amount of land and/or fee a developer would have to donate to the City for the purpose of purchasing and/or developing parks.
- **Revenue Bonds** – A popular funding method for financing high use specialty facilities. In order for this vehicle to work, it must produce enough excess revenue to cover its operational costs and service its bond debt.
- **Maintenance Endowment** – Any time funds are raised to develop or acquire a park and/or land, a maintenance endowment should be included. For developed parkland the Department should project a dollar amount per year maintenance budget per acre.
- **Naming Rights** – A creative funding method for special use facilities is the contracted naming rights by organizations. This includes anyone who finds value in having a popular facility named after his/her company or organization. The value should be determined by the market value of the ongoing promotion of the facility and should include dollars to maintain the facility to a high level.

- **Easements** – Every landowner holds a “bundle” of rights associated with the property. In using easements to create parkland, the Department leverages the property without actually purchasing the land.
- **GuideStar** www.guidestar.org
If you know the foundation you’d like to research, start With GuideStar. This collection of information about tens of thousands of foundations and nonprofits offers the most recent 990 tax returns for all 501(C)(3)’s for free. Foundations are considered 501(C)’s so, you can read the list of grantees for any foundation.
- **Grants.gov** www.grants.gov
Grants.gov is the portal for finding federal opportunities.
- **Afterschool.Gov: How to Get Money** <http://www.afterschool.gov>
This database offers information about more than 100 sources of federal funding for after-school and youth development programming.
- **Conservation Grants Center** <http://www.conservationgrants.com>
Conservation, ecology, environment and natural resource projects.

CAPRA STANDARDS

1. Fiscal policies setting guidelines for management and control of revenues, expenditures, and investment of funds shall be set forth clearly in writing, and the legal authority must be clearly established.

Provide fiscal policies and legal authority.

2. There shall be an established revenue policy that is periodically updated regarding fees and charges for services and the strategies and methodologies for determining fees and charges and levels of cost recovery.

Provide the policy on fees and charges, the current fee schedules or cost-recovery procedures, and the most recent review or update.

3. The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and donations.

Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and donations.

4. Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall procure regional, state, federal and/or other applicable agency grants to supplement funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement grant opportunities. Prior to grant procurement, agencies shall evaluate how application, approval, implementation and management processes will be coordinated.

Provide the procedure to procure grants along with a summary of grants received by the agency for the past five years, including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor, date awarded, grant amount and agency match.

5. Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall solicit private, corporate, and nonprofit support to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement alternative funding options. Prior to acceptance of support the agency shall evaluate the terms of acceptance and how the implementation and management process will be coordinated.

Provide the procedure to solicit private, corporate and non-profit support along with a summary of such support received by the agency for the past five years including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor/sponsor, date awarded, and value of the contribution and method of recognition.

6. There shall be established procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

Provide the procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

7. The agency's chief administrator shall be designated as having the authority and responsibility for the fiscal management of the agency. Although an agency's chief administrator is ultimately responsible for all agency fiscal matters, the size and complexity of the agency may dictate the need to delegate responsibility for fiscal management functions to an identifiable person or component within the agency.

Provide documentation demonstrating clear delegation of fiscal authority for the agency.

8. Agencies shall have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.

Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

- a. *Bidding procedures;*
- b. *Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and*
- c. *Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and*
- d. *Use of procurement cards, if applicable.*

9. There shall be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency to secure equipment or services in a swift and efficient manner.

Provide the procedures for emergency purchases.

Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

- a. *Bidding procedures;*
- b. *Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and*
- c. *Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and*
- d. *Use of procurement cards, if applicable.*

10. The agency shall have a comprehensive accounting system to ensure an orderly, accurate, and complete documentation of the flow of funds. The accounting system shall facilitate rapid retrieval of information on the status of appropriations, expenditures and revenue any time the information is required.

Provide a description of the accounting system.

11. The agency shall periodically, monthly at a minimum, provide financial status reports. Each appropriation and expenditure shall be classified according to function, organizational component, activity, object, and program.

Provide financial status reports for the previous three months. Financial status reports shall include, at a minimum:

- a. *Initial appropriation for each account (or program);*
- b. *Balances at the commencement of the regularly defined period;*
- c. *Expenditures and encumbrances made during the period;*
- d. *Unencumbered balances; and*
- e. *Revenue status.*

12. The agency shall have established procedures for maintaining control over the number and type of authorized filled and vacant positions to ensure that persons on the payroll are legally employed and that positions are in accordance with budget authorizations.

Provide the position authorization procedures and budgeted positions.

13. Agencies shall have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.

Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

- a. *Bidding procedures;*
- b. *Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and*
- c. *Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and*
- d. *Use of procurement cards, if applicable.*

14. There shall be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency to secure equipment or services in a swift and efficient manner.

Provide the procedures for emergency purchases.

15. The agency shall have established procedures for maintaining control over the number and type of authorized filled and vacant positions to ensure that persons on the payroll are legally employed and that positions are in accordance with budget authorizations.

Provide the position authorization procedures and budgeted positions.

16. The agency shall have established procedures used for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds. The procedures shall enhance security and accountability of all monies received by the agency.

Provide the fiscal control and monitoring procedures. The fiscal control and monitoring procedures shall include:

- a. *Maintenance of an allotment system, if any, or records of appropriations among organizational components;*
- b. *Preparation of financial statements;*
- c. *Conduct of internal audits; and*
- d. *Persons or positions authorized to accept or disburse funds.*

17. There shall be an independent audit of the agency's fiscal activities conducted annually or at a time stipulated by applicable statute or regulation. The audit may be performed by the government's internal audit staff (external to the agency being audited) or by an outside certified public accounting firm.

Provide the most recent independent audit and management letter, or most recent Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and provide the response to the audit recommendations.

18. There shall be an annual or biennial operating and capital improvements budgets, including both revenues and expenditures. Operating budgets include both capital and operating expenses, cover a one-year or two-year period and capital improvements may extend five or six years with annual review. The nature of an agency's budgetary system may be determined by the kind of system in use by its governmental authority.

Provide the current and approved operating and capital improvements budgets.

19. The agency shall establish guidelines to inform the heads of organizational components of the essential tasks and procedures relating to the budget preparation process. The guidelines shall include instructions for preparing budget request documents and for providing adequate justification for major continuing expenditures or changes in continuing expenditures of budget items. Information should be included regarding operating impact.

Provide the budget development guidelines.

20. The agency shall establish guidelines to inform the heads of organizational components of the essential tasks and procedures relating to the budget preparation process. The guidelines shall include instructions for preparing budget request documents and for providing adequate justification for major continuing expenditures or changes in continuing expenditures of budget items. Information should be included regarding operating impact.

Provide the budget development guidelines.

21. Major organizational components shall provide recommendations, based on operational and activity analysis, for use in the development of the agency's budget.

Provide examples of agency component recommendations and evidence of their consideration in the budgeting process. Recommendations shall include:

- a. *Assessment of current and future personnel needs;*
- b. *Costs per program element;*
- c. *Line items.*

22. The agency shall have procedures for budget control with periodic reporting of revenues and expenditures, and continuous management review.

Provide the procedures for budget control within the agency and examples of periodic reports.

23. The agency shall have established procedures for requesting supplemental or emergency appropriations and fund transfers to meet circumstances that cannot be anticipated by prior fiscal planning efforts. Mechanisms of adjustment may include transferring funds from one account to another and/or requesting that additional funds be granted for agency needs.

Provide the supplemental/emergency appropriations procedures.

24. The agency shall have established procedures for inventory control of property, equipment, and other assets to prevent losses and unauthorized use, and to avoid both inventory excesses and shortages. There shall be a complete and current listing of agency assets.

Provide procedures for inventory and fixed asset control.

25. The agency shall have an established depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets including buildings, facilities, and equipment that have predictable life cycles. Schedules should identify the useful life of each element and the associated costs of replacement. Capital asset depreciation and

replacement schedules, including projected costs of replacement, should be reflected in the agency's financial plan.

Provide the capital asset depreciation and replacement schedule.

KEY FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and observations, key recommendations are identified. The assessment summaries provide information to identify the key issues in order to meet the community's needs and desires, provide management direction that focuses on best practices in the industry, and the creation of a highly productive Department

Findings

- The typical park and recreation agency serving a population of less than 20,000 has a median five-year capital budget of \$1.5 million. Sunset Hills has a projected five-year capital budget of \$3,691,900.
- The typical park and recreation agency with a population less than 20,000 has between \$73,560 to \$152,404 in annual operating expenditures for each full-time employee with an average of \$101,304. The City of Sunset Hills has a FY2025 annual operating expenditures personnel budget of approximately \$136,308.13 for each full-time employee.
- Staffing costs account for 54% of the operating budget for a typical park and recreation agency. Sunset Hills staffing costs accounts for 62% of the operating budget.
- Cost recovery levels for operating budget from charges for services: Sunset Hills 27%, Nationally 29.5%
- Agency Revenues per capita from charges for services: Sunset Hills 1/\$103.12, Nationally 1/\$47.71. This number is skewed as not all revenues from charges for services comes from the residents of Sunset Hills.
- Current Maintenance Staffing Levels are far below what's called out in the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System". The Department currently has a Full-Time parks maintenance staff of six individuals, as opposed to the 13.47 Full-Time parks maintenance employees identified by the "Maintenance Staffing Standard Classification System".
- The maintenance cost per capita on an annual basis of \$65.25, is far below that of the national average of \$99.47.
- Current maintenance funding levels are \$31,054 - \$1,174,319 below what is identified in the "Maintenance Costs Standard Classification System".
- Acre cost per maintained acre: Sunset Hills 1/\$1,926.81, Nationally 1/\$8,260
- Over thirty-eight percent (38.5%) stated that they would be somewhat supportive of using existing tax dollars and other revenues, such as user fees to support

maintenance operations and park improvements, followed by 27.7% who were very supportive, 21.9% not sure and 11.9% that were not supportive.

- Over sixty-seven percent (67.7%) of respondents stated that they would be supportive of continuing the ½ cent Parks and Stormwater Sales tax into the future, 18.4% that would be somewhat supportive, 9.3% not sure and 4.6% not supportive.
- The City has done a wonderful job of working with the community on donations and brick memorials.
- The City has done an excellent job of obtaining grants. So, far the Department has received over \$13 million in grants obtained through the Municipal Parks Grant Commission, Recreation Trails Program, Land, Water and Conservation Fund, St. Louis County Recycling, and the United States Tennis Association.

Observations

- There is a concern about future resource allocation and sufficient funding for park operating and capital budget. Without the continuance of the existing Park Sales, the City's fiscally constrained budget will be balanced only if revenue growth is sufficient to offset future increases in operating expenses.
- Recreation Trails Program (RTP) would be a good grant for the possible expansion of trails. Grant funds could be leveraged by the Parks Sales Tax Fund as part of the City's match.
- The Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant would be good for the development of parks that the city does not plan on expanding, changing use, or selling in the future. Grant funds could be leveraged by the Parks Sales Tax Fund as part of the City's match.
- The Continued use of the Municipal Parks Grant would be the best fit for the continued development of the parks system as there is not a requirement to match funds. Grant funds could be leveraged by the Parks Sales Tax Fund as part of any City match if desired.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds could be used for ADA accessibility improvements. Grant funds could be leveraged by the Parks Sales Tax Fund.
- The USTA Grants would be a possible grant to use for the tennis courts. Grant funds could be leveraged by the Parks Sales Tax Fund as part of the City's match.
- The parks and recreation system needs to be totally repositioned for the future for it to survive and thrive in the next twenty years.

Recommendations

- The financial planning for the Department should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the City and support the initiatives and strategies. Likewise, the City's goals and objectives which affect the revenue funding sources and will be consistent with revenue availability and financial projections. A specific Revenue Fund (i.e. Parks and Recreation Sales Tax) has been established and should continue to be used to support specific parks and recreation capital, operational and maintenance costs.
- The City should use a minimum of a five-year Financial Management Plan for establishing and implementing revenue funding sources with out-year projections up to ten years. The City's park Financial Plan should be updated at least annually, and should be used as the basis for the development of budgets and revenue/fee schedules.
- The City's budget should be developed as a program-based budget, ensuring the highest possible accuracy of revenue projections and the review and evaluation of budget expenditure requirements. Annual budget plan submittals should meet all the City budget requirements. All efforts should be to optimize productivity for improved service delivery at the lowest possible cost levels to the budget.
- A cost recovery ratio for the budget-planning year should be developed and integrated into the financial management plan for all programs and revenue producing facilities.
- Promote financial sustainability by calculating and tracking the true cost of operations.
- Develop an asset management plan with a lifecycle replacement schedule to govern capital investment in existing facility infrastructure.
- New Recreation Facilities that may be coming on line should include a feasibility study prior to construction beginning to determine the cost to operate and revenues that can be gained from programs provided to determine the cost recovery level needed to support financial sustainability.
- These Financial Management Principles should be reviewed by the City Council annually to help the City achieve financial sustainability.
- Seek enhancement to existing policies to support the recreation program and facility cost recovery goals. This would include an updated pricing policy, partnership policy, earned income policy, volunteer policy, and sponsorship policy.
- Continue efforts to work with civic organizations to develop funding options and work programs to help maintain and support the system through adopt a park type of programs and capital improvements in parks.
- Eliminate any service, amenity or park that is not achieving the outcomes desired.

- Develop a sponsorship program in parks to sponsor parks, fields, playgrounds, trails, art, recreation facilities and events.
- Look into the possibility of partnering with school district and other local and regional agencies to maximize opportunities and to leverage funding.
- The City should continue to look into grant funding opportunities for capital improvement projects.
- Set aside a percentage of General Funds and/or Parks Sales Tax Funds to leverage grant opportunities.
- Develop a long-term financial plan consistent with the goals and objectives of the City and support the initiatives and strategies as reflected in the Master Plan.
- Even if the City doesn't achieve CAPRA accreditation, the City should use the standards as a guide to reach their goals as they move forward.

APPENDIX A

REFERENCES

ACT Government Territory and Municipal Services

America In Bloom

American Journal of Public Health

American Park and Recreation Society

American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM)

American Trails

Arbor Day Foundation

Audubon International

Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA)

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Great Rivers Greenway

KaBoom – Playful City USA

Missouri Department of Conservation

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Missouri Park and Recreation Association (MPRA)

Missouri Prairie Foundation

Missouri State Parks

National Association of State Foresters

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

National Society for Park Resources

National Sporting Goods Association

National Swimming Pool Foundation

National Wildlife Federation

North West Parks and Tourism Board – Africa

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Outdoor Foundation

Outdoor Industry Association

Parks and Recreation Professionals Group

Rails to Trails

Recreation Management

Sports Field Managers Association

Trailnet

United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service

United States Department of the Interior

United States Federal Access Board

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

United States Recreation Trails Group

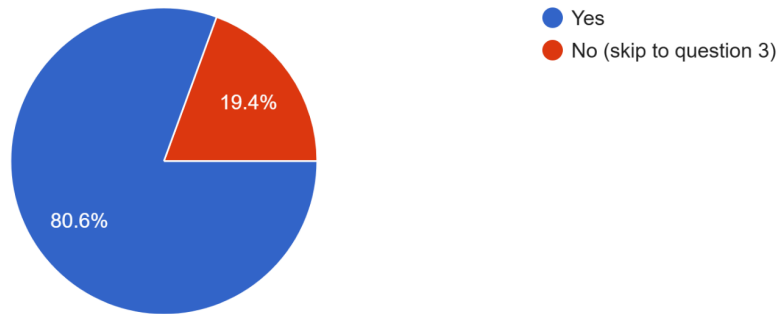
United States Tennis Association (USTA)

Xplor Recreation

APPENDIX B

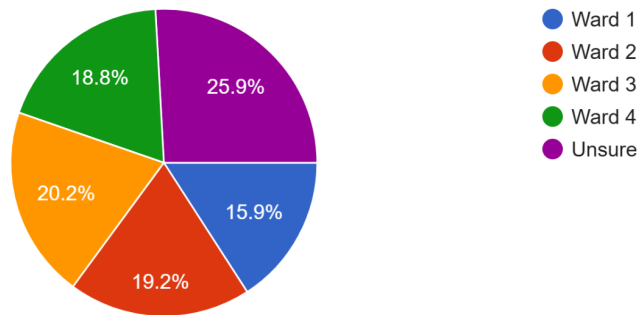
Do you currently live in Sunset Hills?

917 responses



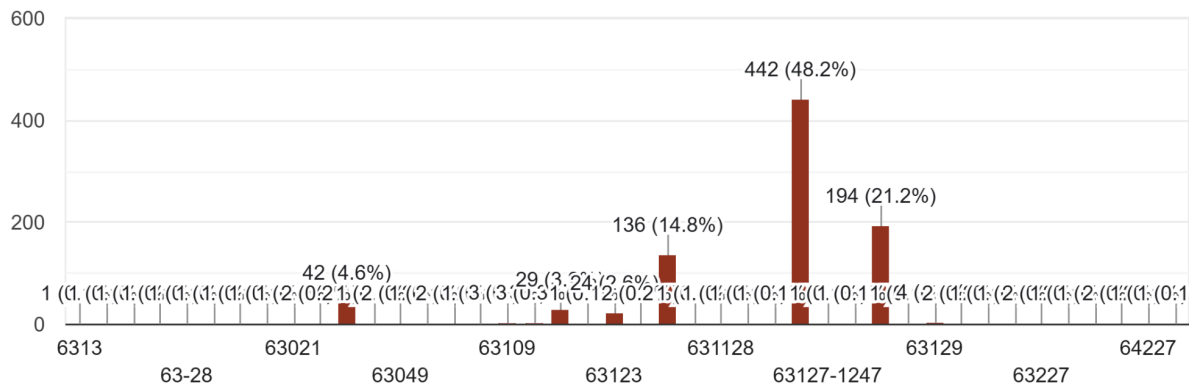
What Ward do you live in?

738 responses



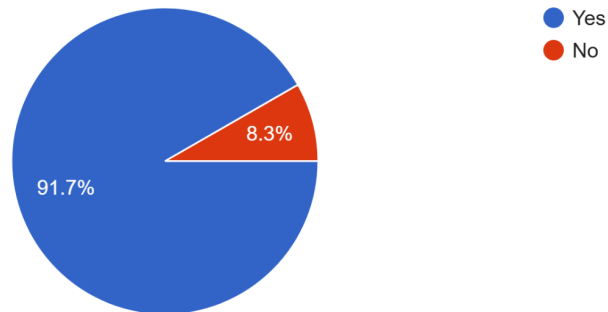
(Question 3) Please enter your zip code.

917 responses



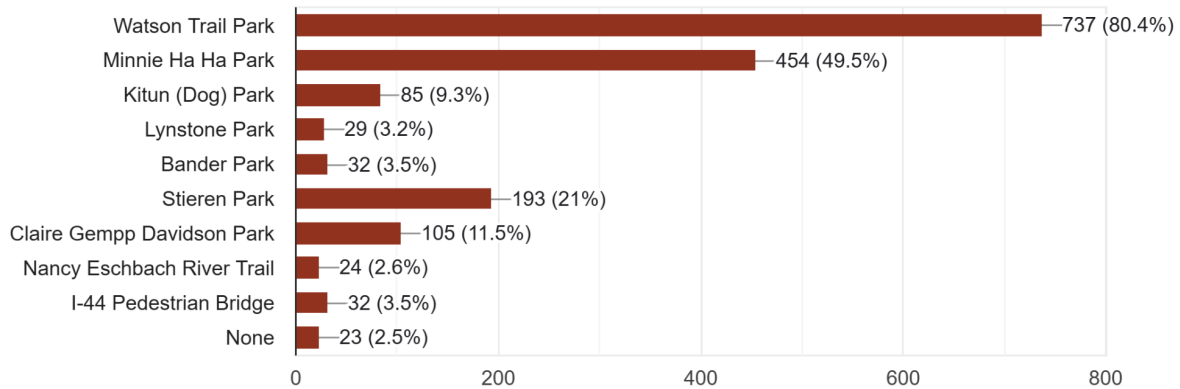
Have you or a member of your household visited any CITY parks during the last year?

917 responses



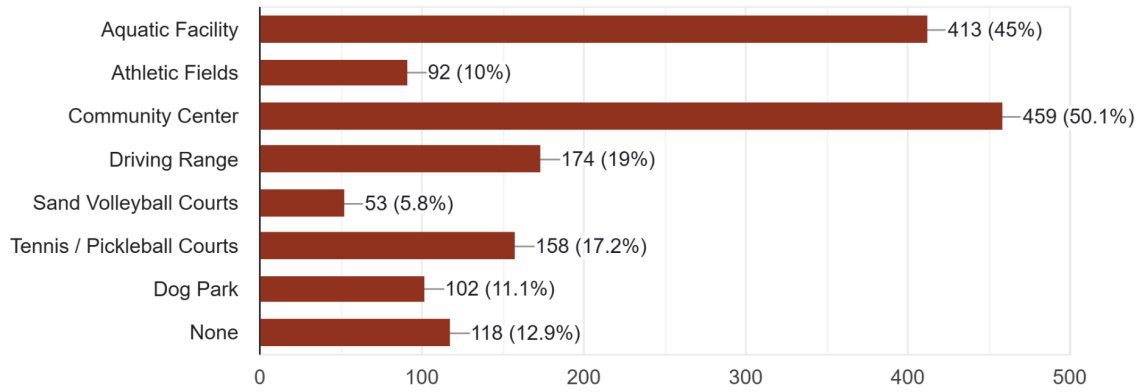
From the following list of park areas located within the City of Sunset Hills, please check the TWO (2) parks that you and/or members of your household visit the most:

917 responses



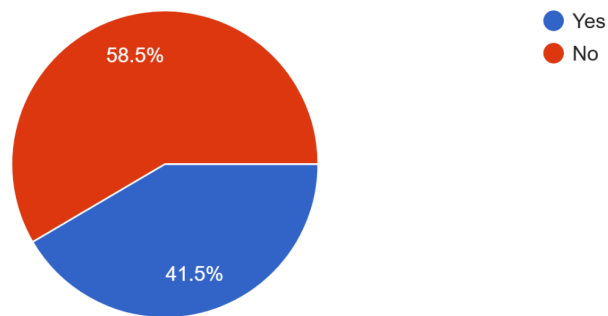
From the following list of facilities located within the City of Sunset Hills, please check the TWO (2) facilities that you and/or members of your household visit the most:

917 responses



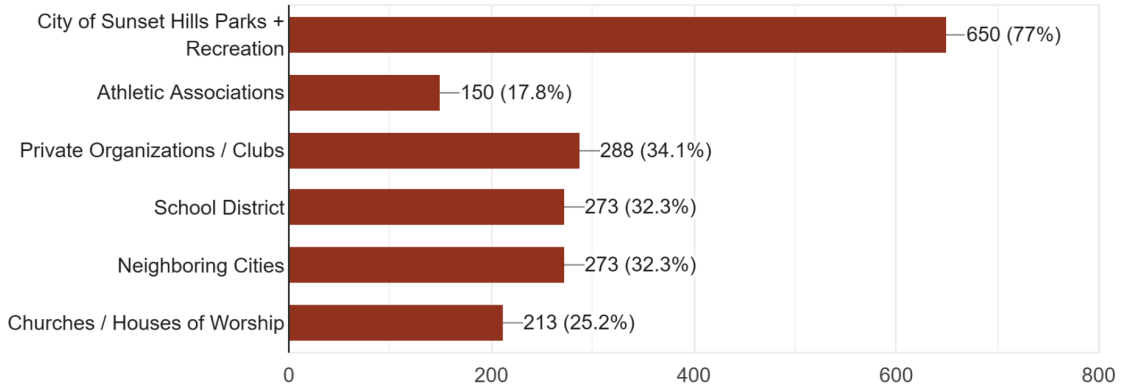
Have you or a member of your household participated in any CITY programs during the past year (ex. Day Camp, Markets + Music, Triathlon, Riverwalk, etc.)?

917 responses



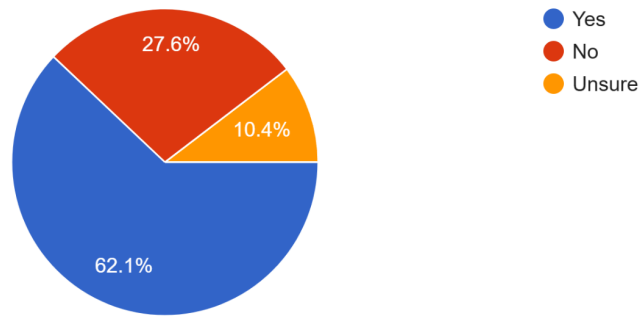
From the following list, please check ALL the organizations that you or members of your household use for recreation, fitness programs, and facilities:

844 responses

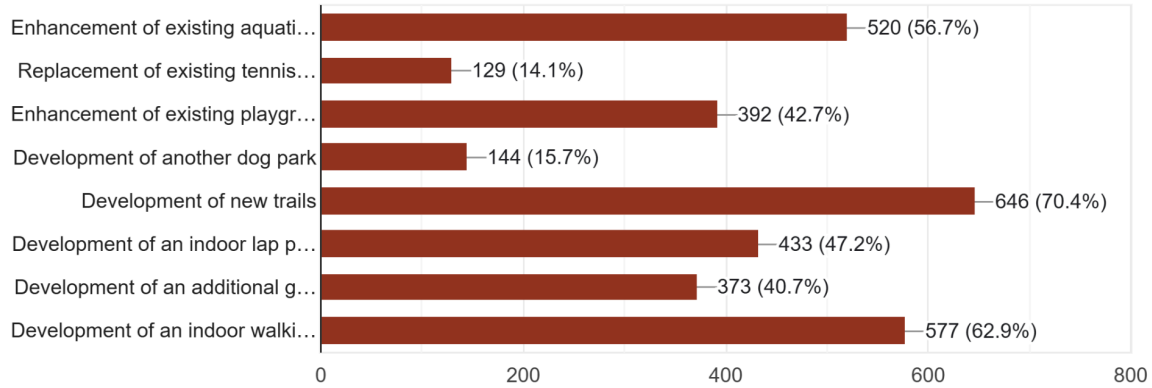


Do you feel that there are sufficient Parks, Trails, and Open Space Areas within a ten-minutes (1/2 mile) walking distance of your residence?

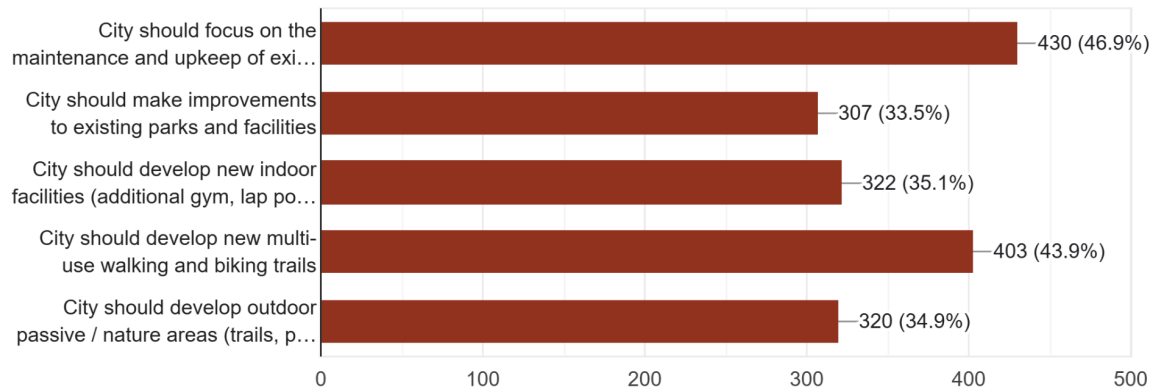
917 responses



If additional funds were available for Recreation and Park facilities in Sunset Hills, which FOUR (4) of the following items do you think the City of Sun...ills should emphasize most over the next 20 years:
917 responses

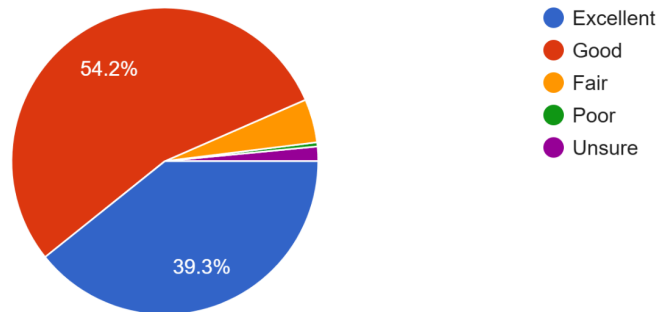


Which TWO (2) of the following do you think the City of Sunset Hills should emphasize most over the next 20 years?
917 responses



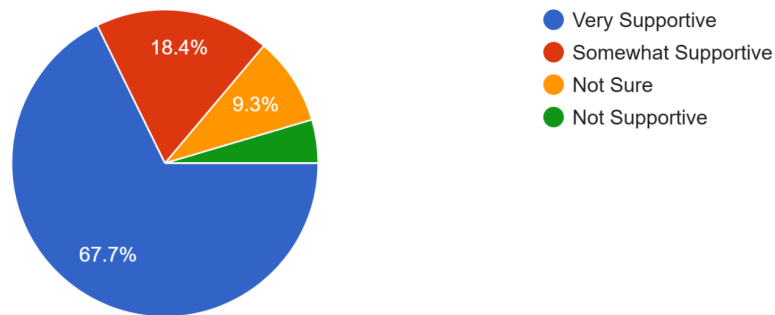
How would you describe the current maintenance of Sunset Hills Parks?

917 responses



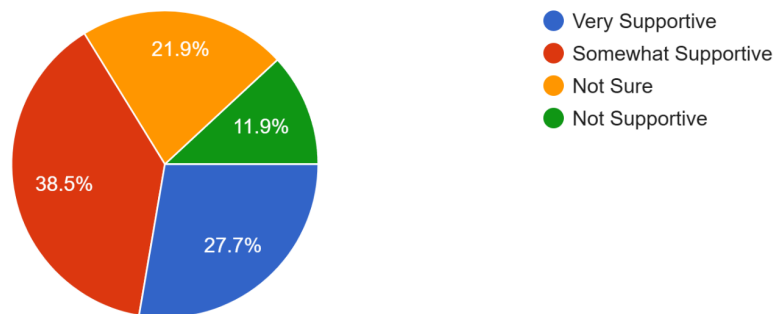
Our Parks and Recreation Facilities are currently funded by the revenue generated from a 1/2 cent Parks and Stormwater sales tax that was passed by... the Parks and Recreation System into the future?

917 responses

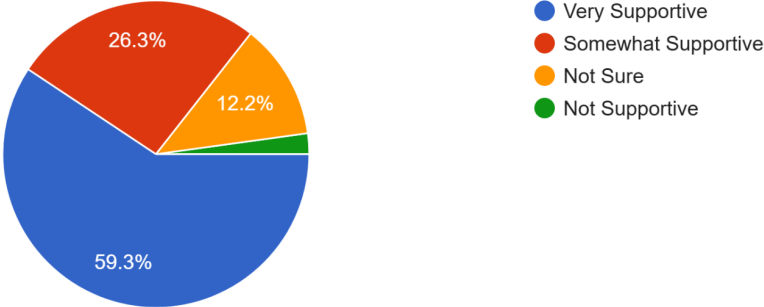


Costs to maintain and operate park and recreation improvements require a combination of existing tax dollars and other revenues, such as user fees...ng maintenance operations and park improvements?

917 responses



How supportive are you of the various actions (overall upkeep of the park system, additions to Stieren Park, Driving Range, Bander Area, addition... taken to improve the Parks and Recreation System?
917 responses



The pool needs to replace most of the chair with loungers

Safety within the parks are very important too.

As a mother of young children, it would be amazing to have fenced in areas for children to play in along with more shade on the actual playgrounds! Minnie Ha Ha is an amazing park, but the playgrounds are subpar! Take a look at all the wonderful things Crestwood has been doing over the last couple of years!

Resting benches with cleared views of river

Repave the cart path throughout Bander Park and the entirety of the old Sunset Hills Golf Course to create a walking path

The indoor lap pool is much needed!

Indoor water aerobics

"We love walking Stieren/Mini Haha. It has really been looking rough lately though. We would also love to have somewhere to walk indoors that wouldn't cost.

The way this survey is set up is forcing me to say what facilities I use and choose several. I don't use any of them listed — only parks. I also only wanted the city to spend money on three things listed and you're forcing us to choose four. Your results are gonna be skewed. I'll go just stick an answer in so these comments come thru. "

Please open the pool earlier. Noon is late

"We love the pool and the lifeguard staff!!! They are awesome!!!

Would love to see more money spent on invasive species removal and native plantings at Gempf Davidson CA (and other city parks). It has a lot of potential but is overrun with invasives. Would be a great educational experience for students to see a healthy ecosystem. "

I love the lazy river in the complex. It is becoming very crowded at the Riverwalk, because so many other cities are lacking and or are closed. It would be nice to have more days for the Riverwalk including Sundays. Saturdays they seem to have reduced the time for the Riverwalk and it's kind of a bummer. It does not need as many lifeguards to open the Riverwalk. They currently use one that rotates with a couple others and someone at the front desk. Just a suggestion.

I think Sunset Hills has done a phenomenal job of maintaining its park system. I'm proud to live in a city that embraces outdoor recreation and leisure.

A walkway and bike trail with a view from a bluff similar to what cliff cave park did in south county would be nice.

"Instead of recreational development I would like to see a safe sidewalks development and the city law enforcement being strengthened.

I suggest to update this form with: ""NONE"" option under ""facilities that you and/or members of your household visit"" and ""which FOUR (4) of the following items do you think the City of Sunset Hills should emphasize"". - as for me, I rather see a proper maintenance of the current facilities than creating more and then needing to maintain new facilities in addition to the current ones. "

A slide at the pool would be awesome.

The neighborhood that consists of Matthew's In, Ronnie In, and cinema In and black oak drive, should have an accessible walking path to the community center and Watson trails park. It's very upsetting that I cannot walk my toddlers to such great parks. Or can we make a sidewalk from Ronnie lane that goes to the community center or leads to the park? I also suggest more water features that the kids can play in at our parks. I also suggest more kid friendly events to be hosted- maybe a bubble bus night with popsicles, open play in the gym just for kids that have bikes and balls etc, toddler time at our pool that opens before noon. Just some ideas from a mom who loves sunset hills and sees neighboring communes do really fun things and wishes we could too!!

Make bike trails and add clear biking lanes to roads. Paint lanes green for safety and visibility.

"The pool fees are entirely too low to keep from overcrowding. Additional fees means additional pay to attract guards.

The vocal "special use" people are preventing extra hours from being added to the pool hours and team practice times so they can be coddled with their water aerobics and lazy river walk times. At least keep it open late a few days a week for us dads who work and can't get there by 7"

Families and residents need robust and well maintained green spaces and biking/walking trails. Please keep our community green, walkable and beautiful. It means a lot. <3

Focus your efforts and funding for police dept first. We are park heavy given our size.

Need a pool for citizens over 55.

It would be nice if there were sidewalks to some of our parks!

We are multi year members of the pool and have hardly been able to attend on weekends this summer due to the crowds (especially June). Surrounding areas including Crestwood and Kirkwood charge a \$10 membership card fee to users of the pool who are non-residents without a membership. This is a very simple and immediate way to increase revenue to sunset hills and to also control the crowds for people paying the \$300 summer membership and expecting a good pool experience. My family is considering a different pool for 2026 that we can actually enjoy on the weekends when off work.

Great Job! This is my favorite part about living in Sunset Hills.

Our new pool lacks fun space for young kids compared to all neighboring community pools.

Proximity to the rec center is the reason I moved back to Sunset Hills. It's a true community gem and it truly makes our city special!

My #1 suggestion is to expand the indoor facilities or encourage something like the YMCA to build within the city. I have young kids something for them that is indoors would be amazing. (Currently members of Riverchase Y)

Whatever can be done to incorporate more of the SH area into the greenway system, will be a winning decision long term. I believe a mix use facility near/on the greenways is more aligned with the modern and walkable environment we want as a society.

More sidewalks

Would LOVE to see an indoor aquatic facility for lap swimming, water fitness classes, and swim lessons!

The pool hours, especially on weekends, needs to be longer. Ideally it would be open 10/11 am - 8pm.

An indoor lap pool would be amazing!! An indoor pool for adults and kids is the only thing sunset hills is missing compared to neighboring communities

It would be nice for an area where there are pool and snooker tables. Maybe two pool tables and one snooker tables.

"Sunset Hills does a nice job maintaining their parks. Upgrades are necessary over time. It would be good to have budgets where some money is held for those improvements to be made every 10 years or so. Raising taxes is always a difficult ask. If 10-15% of budgets each year were held for future renovations, it would be much easier to manage improvements. Public entities in general seem to always operate in the - use all we have each year - style. It's not the correct way to budget. Sad government entities do not have this mindset. (And I realize this Sunset Hills is no different from others.)

Thank you for keeping our parks in great shape. It is one of the reasons we enjoy Sunset Hills! "

I'd like to see Riverwalk times outside business hours, more indoor activities during the colder months (community events, a walking track, and indoor pool), and making the city more walkable.

No, thank you.

P-L-E-A-S-E don't ruin your aquatic center by making it a ZOO like the Webster Pool. Your pool is fun, relaxing, and the lazy river is amazing exercise for seniors, those with joint problems, and anyone looking to boost their fitness level.

I don't think that Sunset Hills markets their exercise classes very much or very well. I do like the text alert system and happy it includes the classes. Also I did not want to put 4 things for additional funds but the survey would not let me submit. I only wanted development of an indoor walking track. I think you are getting bad data for that answer because even though I disagreed with my answer it was the only way it let me hit submit

The community center and pool are pathetic, they should have never been built that basic and small. The existing parks are fair bit more needs to be done.

The city needs more athletic fields for children. We used to take our kids to sportport and similar turf fields over thirty minutes from home for soccer practice multiple times weekly. We did this for years until it just took too much time and energy for our family. We should have similar facilities here in sunset hills which would have made our life a lot easier. I don't care what some residents say about the whole no traffic no lights bs. Kids need to be active and sports are the best option in today's society. So quit playing it safe and do what is needed for the kiddos to play on high quality fields close to home. Also said turf fields are cash positive from what I've heard.

No

I am all for improvements. Our property taxes are already so high. Higher than any other areas that we've lived in. I feel like we already provide enough money that we should not have to increase taxes in order to have these facilities.

"The aquatic pool should consider an earlier opening. Perhaps 11 am.

Seniors would appreciate the opportunity to exercise prior to the midday heat. Plus, there has been far too many delays/ closure of the pool this season. Extra high temps will generate thunder without rain or lightning. One thunder sound shouldn't be the criteria for delay/ closure"

We do not need any more parks in Sunset Hills and definitely need to reduce taxes. However, all funding and brain power should go to expanding business that are needed for our community to thrive and expand revenue (ie grocery store or market (ie Straubs, Smokehouse etc).

An indoor pool for recreation along with being able to do laps, also an indoor walking track. Better upkeep at Mini ha ha by taking out raised asphalt patches.

No

Continue to improve condition of lake as it is a popular fishing spot with residents. Maybe make the pool private again so the residents who pay taxes can use it without all the crowds camps and non residents.

Need pool updates to attract more families. Many SH families are joining Crestwood due to the amenities.

You are doing a great job but more parks is always GREAT and I'm willing to pay tax for them

I'm very happy with our local parks.

No

This wasn't an option but my number one concern and wish for funding is sidewalks. You can't walk in many places in Sunset Hills without walking in the streets and taking your life into your hands!

No more taxes....!!!

Need several outdoor pickleball courts

Due to flooding in Minnie ha ha, ongoing minimum investment

My suggestion is to build a center median with green space and trees lined from Gravios Road to Watson Road through the heart of Sunset Hills on Lindbergh. It would be beautiful addition and make our city more special and attractive as you bike or drive through.

Continue adding sidewalks so parks can be safely walked to.

Indoor pool and longer hours at outdoor pool!

Aquatic Center - River Walk AM and PM are so valuable to this community and allows adults to improve their health. Dave Lundemann is the man!

Turn the water on for the community garden at Lynstone park

Bring back Sunset Lakes Golf course.

Keep up wth. People who are degrading their property& others that do . & living in filthy conditions.....not keeping their trash picked up.....(give them a warning)!!

Our aquatic facility needs significant improvements to be competitive with neighboring facilities.

I would use mini ha ha more but it is not safe. It needs more of a police protection. I don't want my car vandalized. Promote health and wellness programs more for the fitness center. The pool is not kid friendly.

Improvements to our pool is necessary to keep up with neighboring cities! Ours is boring. We go to other pools that have slides, indoor wave pools, etc.

I would love to see recreation options for paddling like a boat house (kayak, stand up paddle boarding, rowing) on the Meramec River. St. Louis Rowing Club is busting at the seams with members, so there's definitely demand.

Wonderful improvements to Stieren Park! We walk there frequently and all of the offerings are always being enjoyed by families!

No

Survey required me for example to select 4 .. I was only interested in two ... by selecting more I am giving u the impression I am supportive which is not true

Thank you just wish I could afford to live in Sunset Hills or Kirkwood.

Thank you for having the Lindbergh district pool pass option since I live across the street from the boundary in unincorporated. Thanks for supporting Long PTO. My kids dream of having slides at the pool someday.

The parks are fantastic. I'd prefer Sunset Hills to use resources on sidewalks vs investing in things like indoor walking trails. My daily walk to the bus stop on Hilltop with my kids is regularly dangerous. We're forced to walk in wet grass or risk close calls from drivers cutting through Leebur and Hilltop.

"The overall level of our parks is pretty high but we suffer greatly from a severe lack of connective infrastructure. We have many children, adults and seniors who cannot access our community center, major parks and schools due to the lack of sidewalks and safe crossings at Lindbergh. Any parks master plan should seriously consider access (non-vehicular!) to these community services - or we are disclosing a large portion of our community and potential users.

Please also dramatically increase the use of native and adaptive species throughout the parks. We can add to the beauty AND function of our open spaces by setting a standard for our community by broadening the plant selections in our parks. "

"I selected only one park visited because I haven't visited any other park besides my selection.

Des Peres Lodge has some amenities that are great. If the fitness facility ends up chosen for improvement, a wish list item is an infrared sauna for gym members. "

We need to connect and link the parks together into our own greenway style network. Right now we have some isolated pieces that generally don't get used in combination or allow access to each user in the community.

Keep the roads maintained and the grass cut/weeds controlled

Chair yoga and similar activities for older residents with compromised ability.

Any new walking trails should have a surface to accommodate walkers. Would also like to see more senior programs like bridge lessons so we don't have to go to other facilities like the Lodge at DesPeres.

Need to add a LOT more pickleball courts, especially outdoor. Bander Park needs more walking trails; it is currently under utilized and has great potential. An indoor lap pool would be a great addition to our recreation facilities.

"The workout/fitness area in the Community Center seems to be well used, but it is relatively small. Expanding this area should be evaluated also.

Not sure if this falls under Parks and Rec, but Sunset Hills should also look at improving the landscaping and accessibility at the "entrances" of Sunset Hills, specifically 270/Gravois exit and 270/Watson/44 exit. The City of Creve Coeur has done a great job of this at Olive and 270. The City of Chesterfield and O'Fallon also do this well on 64 throughout Chesterfield valley. "

This survey is skewed, and is likely to be manipulated so that one could say 100% of the residents chose one of these options, while in practice, some of us didn't want any of those developments. Sunset Hills is not efficient with its spending, I have observed law suites and waste causing much drain on the city finances. Sunset Hills is already on an upper tier of taxes, relative to some of the neighboring cities, it is time to curb that.

We love the parks! Can't wait to see more development of the facilities and more opportunities to see the community. Thanks to all the great sponsors, volunteers, and both full time and part time employees!

Keep the swim pool as is. Love it for lap lanes. No water slides! Please prioritize removal of invasive species in the parks. Get help from MDC or someone to identify them and make a plan for getting rid of them. They will only get worse and continue to degrade the park ecosystems. I find it hard to walk on trails when I see so many invasives and know how bad they are and only getting worse. They also cause more ticks (ie honeysuckle)
Thank you

I think Sunset Hills does an excellent job on our streets and parks

Not enough sidewalks or biking trails and lanes

Bander Park should stay low utilization. I am concerned about safety around Stieren due to vehicle traffic and the proximity of traffic to pedestrians.

No

Supportive of parks and green spaces

I love living in Sunset Hills. I walk in the lazy river everyday it is open. I would love to see the pool season extended to the week after Labor day. I would also, like to see the pool hours extended to 8:00pm. I plan to go to the gym more often this upcoming year and take some classes. I would love to see a Dancersize class too.

"Keeping the aquatic center open past Labor day would be an added bonus. Going back to the previous hours opening at 11am and closing at 9pm. Also adding some slides or kid friendly improvements to the aquatic center would help gain more members.

Improvements to the Pavillion at Watson Trails Park would be great.

An indoor walking track would be very beneficial to the residents and the fitness center. "

Need indoor walking

Thank you for this survey, I do wish there was a side walk along geyer by the country club. This road is very unsafe to walk or bike on

I think it would be nice to have another great playground or a splash pad! Watson is great but gets crowded quickly. We also love stieren but it's always a debate of whether we want to go there with the sand volleyball and sand pits. Kids can't avoid it but not always up for a sandy mess.

Keep it up! Protect & maintain what we have and spruce up some existing features, please!

Build a wiffle ball park and sponsor leagues. Expand aquatic facilities, esp. for swim/dive competitions. Increase Parks & Rec staff salaries.

No

Would love an indoor pool to continue water exercise

Would love them connected, not really easily done but that would be neat. Anything additional would be great, lots of new family's in the area.

"Why is lynstone park STILL pitch black in the center of the park. Gerald has promised to address this problem and light this area. FAILURE!!!!!!

The east and west ends are nice and lit up, the center where there are homeless people camping in the woods by the creek is STILL a very long stretch of very dark and dangerous. Even after a \$450,000 federal grant was approved for the park. Gerald has once again FAILED. What is wrong with back pack portable blowers. Why did we invest in a giant wind tunnel ride along blower COMPLETE OVERKILL AND WASTE OF MONEY. The park budget is being spent unwisely! Stop asking for more money. You get approved for federal grants, leave us tax payers alone and light up the middle of the park. Bring back the missing BBQ pits and picnic tables. We need more trash cans also especially near the new parking lot on Rayburn. Which has become a 24/7 commuter lot. Which needs more late night patrols by the police. Spread the tables and bbq pits out and make better use of tables, they do NOT all belong under the pavilion.

Lynstone park \$450,000 federal grant was not budgeted properly. "

Side walks on Lindbergh past west Watson to Gravois please!

Hate basketball use in pool, please use lighter safer option

More tennis courts please

The Aquatic Center calendar needs improvement. Season ending date/reduced hours and storm-close notices need to be added.

The gym has always gotten a lot of use. Expand the weight area Allow for additional rooms to be utilized for stretching etc Maintain the equipment at all times Possibly put in a sauna

I believe if taxes get raised, the roads at geyer and rott, as well as the Watson ramps to/from Lindbergh need to be replaced. They are a disaster.

We currently have enough parks & recreation in Sunset Hills. Any further development needs to be revenue-enhancing, i.e., a food market such as Staub's or some other smaller format grocery store. Perhaps the Syberg family could develop something such as Annie Gun's smokehouse, where food could be purchased in Sunset Hills.

My family doesn't visit many of the above parts of the parks you have listed. I don't know what Stieren Park is. I probably won't use the driving range and am not sure what the Bander area is, though I have heard the name. I don't know what additional walking trails have been added. My family does just as much at the Crestwood Parks and programs, which is great for us to have both options of course. With that said, I have always felt that Crestwood does a better job of advertising their events (which it seems they have more of, and they come out with a nice booklet in the mail for the upcoming year's programs and events), and their fees seem to be lower as well. I think Crestwood's aquatic center is a better, more fun facility for patrons. And I just don't think our facility is reasonably priced for citizens. My teenage son and I went there one time this summer, and day camps had overtaken the facility for the entire day. It just wasn't fun for him or relaxing for me, and for the price and the risk of camps we really have no desire to go back. I have always felt the website and calendar seems somewhat outdated and not user friendly. I am excited about the new pickleball courts coming, and I do appreciate that we have Watson Trails only a few minutes drive away, and we do like visiting Mini Ha-Ha and Gempp for walks. I just think more events and better advertised events to keep up with Crestwood would be awesome.

no

No.

You all are the best!

Would like to have more lakes/areas for fishing.

I'd be more interested in sidewalks so we could walk to parks and venues

Connect Nancy Eschback Trail to Minnie Ha Ha to Emmenegger

We live off Weber Hill Rd. on Eagle Crest Ct. and would love to see a trail/sidewalk connector from Weber Hill to the existing trail that begins near Andre's banquet hall and ends at Stieren Park. It is very dangerous to walk/run on Weber. Thank you for asking.

Thanks for asking for input!

We could use a trail or sidewalk on Weber Hill with a connection to the sidewalk on WWatson leading to Stieren Park which also connects to Minnie HAHa...

The community center gym needs to be expanded upon. More options/better amenities/indoor pool & sauna. Look at des peres lodge or SC YMCA for examples.

Love our parks and so proud of how beautifully they are maintained. Please keep up the good work!

No

Would really love to see an indoor lap pool and walking track for the winter months.

Please consider indoor pool and walking/walking track

Park System is very clean.. I would like to see a new facility for park maintenance staff. We need new amenities to our outdoor pool.

I would love to see a larger pool that keeps up with others in the area, but what I want most is a sidewalk on geyer so we can safely walk the kids out of our neighborhood.

The pool river walk is great- we need to keep the hours we have for it and continue to invest resources to maintaining our pool. The lap lanes at the pool should be open longer.

The city should unite the Moore's, Tapawinggo, and Great Rivers Greenway to connect paths.

"I don't believe the city should develop any indoor recreational facilities nor any additional dog parks. In fact, I strongly object to the question asking me to select FOUR options for additional development in the next 20 years. That question distorts the needs and desires of the community. That is a bogus question that the parks department can use to justify unnecessary and unneeded expansion of their department. It's infuriating that this question was included. It's even worse that O could NOT submit the survey without selecting your options. It ruins any belief on my part that this is an honest effort to assess the needs of our city. That's sad. I hope my comments are included in any final report on this survey.

""The neighborhood behind the community center/city hall/ police campus has no direct safe access to Watson trail park or the community center. Roosevelt, Lincoln, cinema , Ronnie, Matthews, black oak, sappington estates, and Robyn. Have no safe walking path to these facility's. I wonder if an easement could be purchased from one or two of the homes that back up to the community center or Watson trails park? Maybe cheaper than building sidewalks down Lindbergh? If not, at least a sidewalk on Lindbergh from Ronnie lane to the city hall entrance. The only current walking option is to take the shoulder on Lindbergh. Really Nerve-racking with a stroller going to the machine madness or summer Wednesday live music events! Thanks!

I would gladly form a committee to explore the options for this.

Andrew Schoenberg 314-315-6105"

Sidewalks, we need sidewalks/bike paths. Our neighbors and neighborhood cannot safely get to aquatic or recreational facilities by foot or bike. This is what residents and families want. We have to share Robyn Rd with dangerous vehicles whom rarely follow the speed limit or stop at stop signs. Unfortunate that our youth will grow up never knowing or being able to walk to a park or pool.

"Sidewalks to connect more neighborhoods to parks are necessary and safer crossing of major roads like Lindbergh.

"Can't wait for outdoor pickleball courts

Love the idea of another dog park and biking trails!

Yall are a great example to other cities. I think the heavy equipment day for kids is really cool. Do more stuff like that!

Doing ecological restoration on the frisbee gold course at stieren park, it is full of invasive species like callery pear and sericea Lespedeza. I would love to see a native plant restoration with prairie species in mind

Many of the parks including the pool are not easily accessible by bike or walking due to a lack of sidewalks most importantly on Lindbergh from Eddie and park down to Gravois on the west side of the roadway. Possibly the East side as well. There should be sidewalks for bikes and pedestrians shared use all the way around Robyn Rd and Rott rd from Lindbergh back around. Many tax paying residents don't have safe access to walk and ride bike to many locations. Overall Sunset Hills is not friendly for bikes or easily accessible for walking to places. Overall anyone that has to traverse Lindbergh, robyn rd or rott by bike or foot is taking a risk.

Would be awesome if they would add sidewalks down Alswell lane to Anton street. Many cars drive through there and a lot of people walk/live down Anton street. Adding a sideway further down Alswell would benefit this area!!

More sidewalks to connect Parks and make safer for residents to visit.

Not at this time.

Prefer that Bander Park is kept as passive use. And that Rugby doesn't disrupt the serenity of that area.

Not at this time

I couldn't click on an updated dog park for some reason.

Expand trails within Bander park and place a bridge over the canal

Stop destroying parks to build overpriced paper McBride-esque homes! We are devastated with what you all did to Lynstone Park. Also make it easier to sign up for fitness classes, notify people ahead of time so they have the opportunity to sign up on time and advertise them better.

Upgrade the aquatic center and add slides to the facility

"For the pool.. Pool slides/climbing ropes/walls

For mini-haha maybe a second boat ramp and/or boat lockers so you could combine hiking/biking/and boating."

Sidewalks so we can get safely to community center and watson trail without walking in street!!

Extension of walking trail along river to I44

Silver Sneakers classes are excellent! I would like more group fitness classes for seniors.

Playground improvements are very nice! 11 am pool opening would be nice.

No

Not nearly enough choices for a 20 year plan. eg missing: Soccer fields, 9 hole course at Bander, more volleyball courts, fishing facilities at Meramec and ponds, more overlooks at Meramec,connector path connecting all Meramec parks etc. seems to me Hausfeld did a similar thing 10+/- years ago. What did we get from them for the \$100,000 or so spent with them?

Your survey is invalid because it presumes i visit facilities and i do not. I utilize parks for their outdoor features

The parks are a great asset to our city.

We use Watson Trails every day to walk our dog(s). Stieren and West Watson playgrounds are our grandchildren favorites. My husband and I use the Community Center. Sometimes there is broken glass or dead fish and broken fishing line with hooks that are bad for curious dogs. My only input for improvement. Love the new paved areas also.

Trim trees around pool. Steps when leaving pool should be up to code. There should be adults only in lazy river a few hours each day.

We need a slide for the pool.

As a Senior homeowner, my income is low, \$1,550 a month. Taxes may cause me to sell my house.

Brown and Taylor are hard workers who support P&R and take it to the next level. They are kind and engaging. It's nice to see this level of commitment by city officials. Thanks!

More native plant material to increase biodiversity

I am 67. I use the Disc golf courses and the driving range. I would support a non-resident fee.

"Improving tree canopy coverage should be a priority now so that mature trees help create cooler areas.

Bus shelters should be prioritized, there are very few. "

Our grandkids love Watson trail park. It's their favorite.

A slide at the pool would be great

We can always use more third spaces for the public to enjoy without needing to pay for things. Obviously the money has to come from somewhere but it's so important and appreciated!

"please update the pool and add a slide, rock wall"

Bike trails. Walking trails are essential to keep up with newer cities. Being able to walk to restaurants etc. very difficult to do in sunset hills.

Crestwood is where we live but do parents as teachers and are at Lindbergh early childhood so do other things. Watson trail park is so lovely. The pool is ok but for the area it's probably the best. Could maybe use just one more area of entertainment for kids.

Revamp leisure pool to replace the whirlpool and mushroom shower

Great job, keep up the work!

No

Maintain the streets. Stop increasing the size of government.

"I walk Crestwood and Sunset Hills parks DAILY.

City of Crestwood nowhere keeps up their parks like Sunset Hills. I see the Watson Trails park workers everyday working hard. Trails are kept tidy, grass cut, and tree debris cut and removed. I wish we had them in Crestwood!"

The parks need to be better maintained as far as getting rid of the wild honeysuckle and encouraging native Missouri plants

I walk in Watson Trails everyday. It's a great park and well maintained. I'd like to see more attention given to cleaning up around the lake, specifically trash and fishing tackle left behind. Also, more frequent cut/trim and cleaning (trash and broken glass) of frisbee golf trails. These improvements would move my score from Good to Excellent! Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Please connect to gateway greenway. It is hard to get access to the bike trails without dodging traffic

Would love slides at the aquatic facility!

Please add more shade to the Watson Trail park upper playground

More sidewalks would be a huge asset to the city

This is not related to the parks but the upkeep of the appearance of the streets and or curbs (aka weeds galore!!!) needs to be maintained better. I am not sure if this is something sunset hills can do or if the city handles that but it needs major improvements

We pay enough taxes. Use the existing funds already allocated.

We love what you have done with Stieren park and that entire area. It is soo nice and love the updates that have been made.

Upgrade the playground equipment in Minnie Ha Ha park and add a slide or two in the swimming pool.

"My taxes keep getting raised and your gym facilities are borderline the cost of other newer technology efficient gyms.

You also need to market your events and facilities better. I've been living in Sunset Hills for six years and never knew there was a driving range so maybe having open houses for various facilities"

Please put in a baby swing at Watson trails playground!

No

Increase walk ability. I really think a boulevard style street on lindberg would slow down traffic and improve businesses. We need to be more like Kirkwood get drivers to slow down. It would also be nice to have a better aquatic center focused on younger children

Sirens Park and trails could be improved within the wooded area. Its a little spooky in there. Would like to see police patrolling occasionally.

Pickleball courts

Add sidewalks on Lindbergh to connect the community center area to the high school area. The lack of sidewalks cuts people off from the south to be able to walk or ride bikes to the community center

Houses in our subdivision going unfinished and becoming a nuisance thank you

More deciduous trees, seating, and shade at dog park.

NTA

How about some just bike trails, so they don't run over people walking, or walking dogs.

More trees and additional benches are needed in Kitun Dog Park

Do not widen Kennerly Road. We have noticed more Police cars on Kennerly Road to keep traffic to 35 miles per hour. We appreciate our Police officers and First Responders very much!

Pool needs to be expanded and slides need to be added to keep up with other area pools

We have excellent parks, particularly for a municipality of our size. The only suggestion I would make is after winter precipitation if the main loop trail in Watson Trail could be cleared, that would be good.

Please put a sidewalk along Robyn road

Perhaps, trim high weed growth at river front area more regularly. Commendable maintenance and care of all facilities otherwise.

Would love to see an indoor walking track. I love the gym and work out there everyday. The one missing element is a walking track. Doesn't need to be fancy just something simple.

We think our parks in Sunset Hills are excellent. How about an archery range and more picnic areas?

I would love to be able to leave my house on foot or bike for exercise, but I live off Rott Rd and there is no sidewalk or shoulder. This road is incredibly dangerous.

More sidewalks!

If Trump continues to off load taxes on the states, will SSH be in a position to fund more park facilities?

More trails, more lakes, connect the lakes in Bander Park.

Thank you to the parks and recreation department. They do an amazing job.

I would like to see a sidewalk added to Denny Road between Lindbergh and Sappington for pedestrian safety.... there are many walkers in our area and Denny Road is high traffic!!

I think user fees for residents at the community rec facility and aquatic center should remain as low as possible so that more average citizens are not priced out of using the facilities their taxes help pay for, which is the reason for my "not sure" response on the question regarding increasing fees for special uses because I am not clear on what that actually involves or means to families.

We are 80 and 77 years old and just use the current gym and the future use will be somewhat limited, but to keep the city as a desirable space in the future we need to keep our amenities top rate.

We use mini haha on regular basis. Thankful for the excellent maintenance. Also use the rec center facilities and always impressed with cleanliness and very complete options for workouts

Let's keep Sunset Hills vibrant, active and fun, with places for rest and relaxation as well.

Kathryn A Hernton

Minnie Ha Ha is looking spooky again with the over growth of brush. Not sure why but trees limbs from previous flooding and winter storm took a toll in it...I was hoping this summer it would have gotten cleaned up. Also will a monument be forthcoming for the tree that caught fire and had to be removed? Please take the time and clean up Minnie Ha Ha I totally enjoy walking there everyday - hot/cold we are there ☐

enforce residential standards for yard waste disposal, weed control, and respect for neighbors and neighborhood.

No

Would love more evenings for river walking

More inter-connected multi-use paths and trails please

Would love indoor water aerobics in cooler weather

Thank you for all that you do. The playgrounds at Minihaha need maintenance, and I would be in support of more public art

Indoor aquatics would advance the HEALTH and welfare of our residence so they wouldn't have to go other places in the winter time for their health purposes.

Why was the sidewalk along Lindbergh NOT completed from Eddie and park to Gravois? We are all wondering and hoping!

NO rugby fields. Disc golf is a waste of funds. Make lakes in old Sunset Lakes golf course more accessible to kids fishing.

No

There are minimal to no options for accessible play or small children to play safely

Our parks are wonderful, but they're not very accessible by anything but car. Connectivity BETWEEN neighborhoods and parks (bike/walking trails or sidewalks) would benefit the parks most and allow families to access them more freely. How many nearby kids should be able to easily walk or bike to the pool but can't because SSH is so unwalkable? Look at Kirkwood, Crestwood. Their residents can safely access amenities. We can't. The parks need more connectivity!

More outdoor pickleball courts

Advertise facilities and outdoor spaces better.

I am supportive of some additional funding but only if I know the details of where this funding will go and the amount of additional tax or fees.

Maintaining our existing parks and recreational areas is very important to us. Don't let them slide into ugliness.

add more sidewalks to west watson/rott so that pedestrians can get to minnie haha ball fields without walking in road. Pull stop signs forward at west watson rott road so that all drivers can see each other before continuing. Cars frequently continue on without seeing bicyclists and other motorists causing issues.

I went to Chesterfield AMPHITHEATER for the 1st time and believe something like that would be awesome

The old Sunset lakes Golf course area needs to be utilized and kept up. More outdoor walking and play pavilion's for special events would be great.

no

There would be no need for a survey, such as this, where half the questions pertain to financial support if the City of SH would not have frivolously wasted \$800K on a dog park and instead invested the money wisely and used to maintain and/or improve the amenities that majority of residents might use vice the select few of the dog park. Actions like this make it difficult to support anything more than maintenance of existing facilities.

More sidewalk areas to get to parks and rec center

Would like more swings at the Watson Trail Park.

Any enhancements should incorporate "best practices" pertaining to accessibility, and not just what is required by law

More pickleball

Playgrounds with more quote unquote 'dangerous' attractions, (i.e rotary swing, merry go round, jungle Jim) sunset hills has been doing well on this, but could be doing more, and as playgrounds age and need to be replaced, the question is wether they'll be those 'inclusive playground of the future' that don't encourage free -thrilling- play wich is crucial for childhood development, or a playground that children view as a tool to enhance their play.

I Love Watson Trails!

Indoor walking track would be the best addition!

Please connect the parks to the community through sidewalks!

A splash pad area could be a good addition.

As a Crestwood resident I believe the partnership between the two cities has been very beneficial. I believe Sunset residents should benefit from Crestwood parks and rec like Whitecliff aquatic and the future pickleball court and the cities shoud save money to provide more activity options rather than redundancies. As a Crestwood resident I greatly appreciate the driving range and the dog park being available to Crestwood residents. Thank you!

No rugby

We enjoy and appreciate the current facilities and use them often.

no

A small playground in the middle of Claire Gempp in the unused area near the gazebo would be attractive. Or a natural playscape area..

Mayor Patricia Fribis does an outstanding job. It's obvious to me that she loves Sunset Hills as much as I do. The citizens of Sunset Hills are very fortunate to have Mayor Fribis.

Delighted to be back in this region, and to be in Sunset Hills!

I would love to see an indoor lap pool and support anything needed to maintain and improve our current aquatic facility

Our current parks are being kept up nicely. Indoor lap lanes and indoor walking track would be a great asset to Sunset Hills.

"Dog Park- I would like to see more, possibly 2 -3 handicapped parking spots placed in the center of the parking lot.

Also repair the sprinkler system originally installed to working order.

More shade in small dog park area. Could members purchase a tree?

As mentioned on the survey, another dog park addition, especially for medium sized dogs, would be a welcomed benefit.

Sunset Hills has a great parks system, thank you!

A skatepark would help keeps children and teens from damaging private or public property and give them a safe space to skate. It helps them and it helps business and it helps parents.

Improve existing facilities, do not build additional buildings. Keep green space.

"Kitun park could use another handicap parking spot, or two. If another dog park was created, would love to have a space for medium size dogs. More shade in small dog side would be beneficial. A separate code for small dog side and large dog side. Hand sanitizer at all trash cans instead of just at the front gate.

A huge help would be to deter the Truman parents from taking up ALL the parking spaces while waiting to pick up kids from school to avoid waiting in the pickup line. If it was stopped immediately at the start of school, maybe it wouldn't be an ongoing issue all school year. Thank you."

Increase pedestrian traffic to our parks to include sidewalks down Lindbergh from the community center to reach to Lindbergh and Gravois. Improvement of commercial offerings to build up the hub of Sunset Hills along Lindbergh. With additional offerings and safe sidewalks it generates great community and increased use of parks and facilities.

Would love to have sidewalks on Rott Road to be able to walk safely. Residence who live off Rott Road cannot walk to any park due to lack of sidewalks.

Please, more walking trails and sand volleyball courts. Thank you.

none

Stop putting sculptures in the parks. Let nature be nature. The sculpture added to Lynstone park is nonsense.

We live across from Lynstone and are very happy with the upkeep and maintenance of the park. We always have dog poop bags, they are always cleaning the bathroom, there is never trash floating around. And the landscaping it very very nice.

Keep up the excellent work. We love our parks and community. Bikes trails would be wonderful!

More biking trails would be nice.

I think there should be a large development of pickleball courts. Fenton park has a nice group of 8 courts, and those get filled all the time.

So happy with the additional sidewalks and trails Sunset Hills has added to our city - please keep it up. Love the beauty of the city and the emphasis on outdoor spaces. Would love a butterfly garden or nature preserve, and to be more intentional with the park space across from Tappawingo/Stieren (like bike trails, gardens, and natural playscapes like in Forest Park/TGP).

we need a bigger better athletic facility with indoor pool and other amenities like Lifetime has. I think id rather pay more as a member but then have all the classes free like they have at Lifetime. Check it out, I'm going to join this year because of what it has to offer but I'd rather support Sunset Hills.

Would be nice to have more senior citizen programs like beginner bridge lessons, Mai jon

Wish more focus would be on the maintenance of street corners. Lots of businesses with unkept areas. Lots of weeds and debris. Wish Sunset Hills had a more defined aesthetic with street lights, walk-ways, etc.

Resurface the tennis courts please!

More shade for playgrounds, especially Watson Trails green playground

Loved the Fishing day at Watson Park with the PD

Trails Especially Mini Haha Park NEEDS 1/4 mile markers for ALL Trails. Wood posts with markers on both sides. MANY MANY walk or ride bikes down to the golf course and back. MARK IT PLEASE. I walk fast for one hour I think it is 3.5 Miles to do both loops and the walk to the golf course? And please fix the BENT rolling bar on the back playground. It has been broken for over one year. THANK YOU!!!

Create appropriate net and court size for pickleball.

Neighborhood sidewalks

More disc golf courses

I'd add that we've only lived in Sunset Hills for a little over 7 months. We haven't learned about the little parks. If anything we've been to the new Creatwood Park a lot with our 2 and 4 year olds. Also, could there be a park closer to the Sappington side of Sunset? Thanks

Indoor pool with exercise classes, a walking track inside and walking trails would be amazing.

We must prioritize more sidewalks to be able to get to the parks from neighborhoods

Great maintenance of trails at mini hah and stieren park area.

no

I would rather keep existing facilities properly maintained before any new facility is acquired.

Living in Ward 2, the only Sunset Hills park within a half mile is the Claire Gemp area. I'd love to see this given more love or kid-friendly additions. Ex: a storybook along the trail like at Powder Valley. A vending machine to buy food for the fish or turtles like at Watson Trails.

Sunset hills has always been known as a very pleasant, clean and prestigious place to live. I support maintaining that without raising tax dollars. The cost of living continues to go up without a rise in taxes. Our city is wonderful as it is, so maintaining that would be my preferred course of action. Thank you for your time!

no

Make ample parking (including enough handicap spaces) always a priority.

We have more than enough park space and we aren't interest in paying/supporting more.

Add pickleball courts, add fitness classes

No. Thank you

We need an indoor pool to be a competitive community in the STL area

Walking trails as they have in a wildwood would be nice that connect everything

Would love an indoor pool for water aerobics and lap swimming when summer pool closes

Sidewalk from Geyer- Rott to West Watson- Maple AT LEAST!

Thanks for all you do!

Love all the new sidewalks and crossing signals!! Would love to make sunset hills more bike-able as well with the addition of bike lanes on existing roads (and/or designated paths) to avoid using sidewalks for biking.

City has a good existing park system

I am very supportive of maintaining the current parks and facilities we have as city. There are other needs that have to be addressed besides the expansion of parks and facilities such as repaving some streets that haven't be addressed in many years.

Make it more clear when lights go off on tennis courts and how to keep the lights on longer if they could be.

Remove the dog park .

Dredge the pond in Claire Gempp Davidson Park to increase fish and other wild life.

Dry Sauna for the existing community center

Build more pickleball courts

No

"I truly value the upkeep and enhancement of our outdoor spaces and believe they're important for the community. However, I have some reservations about increasing taxes or fees as a means to fund these improvements, since past efforts haven't always resulted in the intended outcomes. It's important to ensure that any additional funding is used effectively and transparently.

We have nice facilities but they can always be improved.

Not at this time feel the city is doing a great job

More fishing opportunities would be great. Watson trail park pond has frequent die-offs. Outside of the river, there is basically no other fishing in Sunset Hills.

Need to focus on adding sidewalks to be able to walk to existing parks

1) Please clarify what "special uses" means in the question about raising user fees.

"The City should consider hosting managed hunts for deer coordinated by the Missouri Department of Conservation in Minne Ha Ha and Stieren Park.

Thanks for all you do; these are great facilities that we can all be proud of and thankful for."

More trails throughout the city and parks would be great, especially in collaboration with Crestwood to have a trail of some kind throughout and connecting to Grants trail. We've seen how receptive people are to the sidewalks so would excellent if the city could be more pedestrian friendly.

- Making Sunset Hills more walkable by connecting neighborhoods and parks with walking trails/sidewalks.
- Planting shade trees around playgrounds to keep them cool.

Stieren Park volleyball courts are in SERIOUS need of upgrades. 1) Proper lighting. The mobile lights are too low and shine right in your face, making it impossible to see the ball during league night play. The lights need to be permanent and be higher. The diesel smell from the mobile lighting is nauseating. 2) Tall fencing/netting needs to go up on both sides of the courts. Balls routinely sail into the parking lot or into the woods. 3) The ref stands need to be taller and placed at the net. The referees can't properly call plays at the net or see if balls hit in or out of bounds.

Safety measures for new playground at Watson Trails Park: Please remove rock/stone water feature near wonderful new playground, it is a slippery hazard and signs to stay off don't work. Also, consider a nice fence around the new playground as it is near busy roads and would help keep wondering kids from wondering into the streets.

"I feel the city does an excellent job maintaining the city of Sunset Hills. I have no complaints.

Al Baker "

The police are overall great people, so are the staff at the community center and aquatic park.... thanks for everything

Kai Yarasheski is my hero

Security at the parks has been questionable-We do not need anymore parks-there is enough expense with the flooding of Minni Ha Ha park over & over and the other park areas. We need to look to cut spending-not add more to it-

More shade at Kitun, a medium dog area, more parking and more handicap parking

please leave watson trails park tennis courts available for Pickleball, new pickleball courts notwithstanding. I was told that the sunset hills watson trail park tennis courts are going to be resurfaced and dedicated to tennis only. I very surprised that you would consider this. it's not fair.

I'd like to occasionally see a map showing the location of the parks in the monthly news letter. I've not heard of Stieren Park, Bander Area, Lynstone Park, or the Nancy Eschbach River Trail. I thought I was reading most of the news letters.

More sidewalks

There is a real opportunity to install beginner and intermediate level mountain biking courses / trails in the undeveloped sections of Bander Park. The nearest are Eureka/Wildwood/Cliff Cave and while excellent as scenic trails, these are not really challenging courses. City should consider looking at Bentonville, Arkansas as a model.

Appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback!

I LOVE the River Walking! Thank you, lifeguards!

- 1) Expand Eshmann Trail down to the Meramec. Make river access for canoest/kyakers access.
- 2) Provide more shaded area at Acquatic Center with natural shade (Trees)

Continue to develop the disc golf course and facilities. This sport continues to have positive growth on a national and international level. Even is 55 year olds enjoys a well designed disc golf course. Thanks.

"not at this time, glad to see that there is a 20 year ""Look Forward"" view

More consistent opening of the Minnie Ha Ha gate (Gravois entrance). Too many mornings when it is opened late.

I am not impressed with the use of our tax payer money in Sunset Hills. There needs to be a beautification project for our entrance/ exit ramps and overpasses, similar to Creve Coeur and Webster Groves. At I44 and 270 there is usually equipment parked and not being used, at this moment there are cars parking there. Even if you planted wild flowers it would look so much better! I live by Laumeier Sculpture park and there are no sidewalks along Rott Road to access the park and walking paths and trails!

Please keep improving the sand volleyball courts and athletic fields. It's important to our youth and they get used a lot.

Keep up the excellent work you do and programs you provide.

1)More shade at pool and Watson Trail park.2)Indoor swimming and walking please!

Overall, I'm very happy with the upkeep of our parks and facilities. The effort placed on improvements to Watson Trail and the Aquatic Center (where I primarily go) has been terrific. I do recommend/request we explore adding additional shade structures to the Aquatic Center. Thank you!

Raise fees for non residents.

The non-paved trail addition at Stieren Park is fantastic!

I would like tp see the Watson Trail lake be dredged and the dam raised to deepen the water.

The pond / lake at Watson Trail Park needs more aeration. It's a bit of an eyesore always seeing green muck. Webb's Water Gardens, Webbsonline.com, has great prices on muck remover and also pond dye. Just a suggestion. :)

Sunset hills does a very good job

Parks are great

Biking trails and user fee for aquatic facilities without having to pay for season.

Indoor pool is needed. If adding on another space to Ccenter, no tearing down walls. The hvac will never be right (even if engineers say so!) never comfortable. Add walled structure with its own system.

"Accepting of SILVER SNEAKERS, Seniors.

I have received mixed answers of who can use pool"

Please finish the sidewalk on west Watson and robyne

It is becoming more difficult to find a place to play tennis because of the pickleball competition, so building more pickleball only courts so the Watson Trail tennis courts could be used for tennis only would help.

Annual pool membership is high compared others in the area, and the facility isn't as big. Were one of the only community pools without a slide and other amenities.

Talk Fred daues into running for mayor

We're very proud of our city parks and playgrounds; we use Watson Trails and Stieren Park all the time with our grandkids. Don't EVER close them again during a BS pandemic again!

Love our parks!

"It wasn't an option, but for this question: If additional funds were available for Recreation and Park facilities in Sunset Hills, which FOUR (4) of the following items do you think the City of Sunset Hills should emphasize most over the next 20 years: I would have selected something about adding a new park or nature area. We are in the Sturdy Estates neighborhood right behind Bass Pro and we have no parks within a 10 minute walk. The closest parks are a 30 minute walk or require kids to cross Watson. "

"The dog park could more shaded area, more seating and 4 to 6 more parking spots. Also, an automatic water system for each tree would be helpful. The trees really suffer.

The small red tree in the small side needs to be staked, it's hard to watch that tree struggle year after year.

Overall, I think you all do a fantastic job caring for the parks. I love the aquatic center. (Thanks for hiring so many lifeguards and keeping it open as long as possible)

Thank you to all the hard working employees that keep everything so nice and clean. Great work!"

My two daughters are swimmers and in St. Louis there is a shortage of indoor pools.

Would like to see city sell off some land to fund enhancements to main city parks. Would prioritize getting the pool at parity with surrounding community pools and investing in trail development

More basketball courts/tennis courts. Indoor lap pool would also be great.

Would be for tax increase for the indoor walking track. All neighboring areas have this. Fenton, Des Peres etc.

We're lucky to have the variety of parks in our City. It's important residents and visitors have the opportunity to experience the outdoors, especially children. The Parks & Recreation Department does a good job of maintaining the parks, especially given the challenges of events like the Meramec River flooding we recently experienced.

It is a joy to go to Minnie Ha Ha and Stieren Park and the I-44 pedestrian bridge is wonderful. Your upkeep in the parks is noteworthy and appreciated.

I'd like to know where the Nancy Esbach trail is. We're doing well, don't need much change or improvement. Don't need to spend a lot for razzledazzle improvements. Keep bedroom community attitude if we can.

Please make an indoor lap pool

Need sidewalks to be able to walk to many of these parks.

Dog friendly trails! The asphalt is so hard on their paws in the summer. I don't know of any parks/trails nearby that don't use it on a majority of their trails. I do love the mulched, shaded trails at Minnie Ha Ha.

Yes to make the fitness room bigger at the community center!

The aquatic center is much too expensive. I have a nanny pass at Crestwood so I can take my grandkids to their pool. SH day camp is so much better run than Crestwood's. Keep up the excellent work but take more kids and offer 4 week option instead of weekly so kids can build friendships.

More beginner/intermediate pickle ball sessions

Our parks and facilities are among the best. Keep up the good work and keep moving forward with improvements and enhancements.

No rugby fields

We have been very appreciative of the added path from Tapawingo to the Athletic facilities and enjoy the trails behind the volleyball courts and in Minnie HaHa park. Please fix the path near the river behind the baseball/soccer field.

I'd like to see more disc golf courses and upkeep and improvements to the current ones.

Upkeep of current park areas are important .I do not want to pay for indoor pool. Dog parks are questionable bc of different dog behavior and what owners allow dogs.

Desperately need indoor aquatic facilities. I have to go to Kirkwood for indoor aquatics.

add more benches in Watson Trail Park in shade so can keep track of my children playing. Gets hot sitting in sun and picnic tables are at a distance to see your child playing.

Sunset Hills is a great place to live

The maintenance guys at Minnie HaHa and Stieren are GREAT!!!! Park always looks nice.

We have a nice pool facility but it just does not compare to other public facilities near us as far as attracting kids and families. I am thankful we can accommodate swim meets.

We love the parks. Keep up the good work!

Thank you for this opportunity to share our opinions.

The workers do a wonderful job with the parks. Thank you.

To replace BMX Track: flatten out the dirt track area, put in a sport court surface, fence it inside somehow, use it for pickleball, futsal, possibly basketball + roller/foot hockey



Park Master Plan – Stakeholder Meeting

On the evening of April 30, 2025, at 6:30 pm a meeting with stakeholders (Parks & Recreation Commission and the Pool Advisory Committee) took place. The Cochran representative (Mr. Darren Dunkle) served as the facilitator for the meeting with the assistance of the Director of Parks and Recreation (Mr. Gerald Brown), who gave a review of the master plan process and what would occur during the meeting, and asked for the groups input on what they see as needs, wants and priorities.

The group met for discussion for approximately one and a half hours. Below are the notes and general discussion topics from the meeting:

MAINTENANCE & SAFETY

- Provide continuous funding for the maintenance and upkeep of parks and facilities.
- Add a new or expanded maintenance facility building.

FACILITY UPGRADES

- Extension of the Community Center to include a four-lane lap pool.
- Extension of the Community Center to include additional basketball, volleyball, and pickleball courts.
- Extension of the Community Center to include additional meeting/banquet space with kitchens.
- Extension of the Community Center to include an indoor walking track.
- Extension of the Community Center to include a climbing wall.
- Add an amenity (Rock Climbing Wall, Waterslide, etc.) for kids at the Pool.
- Add restrooms, storage and event space at the Driving Range.
- Provide additional hitting bays/stations (covered) at the Driving Range.
- Provide teaching space (chipping and putting green) at the Driving Range.
- Provide a short course for training/teaching at the Driving Range.
- Provide additional artificial turf at the Dog Park.
- Provide additional parking at the Dog Park.
- Replacement of the existing Tennis Courts.

PARKS

- Protect erosion/streambank stabilization at Minnie-Ha-Ha Park.
- Add bike lane and distance markers on pathways at Minnie-Ha-Ha Park.
- Improve Athletic Fields to include batting cages, bullpens, dugouts and lighting.
- Add a second dog park location.
- Add more shelters/pavilions throughout the park system.
- Add more beautification and landscaping throughout the park system to create an inviting and safe appearance.
- Develop walking trails at Bander Park.
- Develop a fishing lake with a fishing pier at Bander Park.
- Add a restroom to Bander Park.
- Develop a parking lot at Bander Park.
- Add benches at Bander Park.
- More walking/biking trails throughout the park system.
- Add a skate park to the parks and recreation system.

OPERATIONS/SERVICES

- Expand offerings at the pool concession stand.

NEXT STEPS

- The Cochran representative stated that a meeting similar to the Stakeholder meeting would be taking place for the general public in the near future. He further stated that after the public meeting had been conducted, a Survey would be conducted to solicit the input and opinions of the residents.
- The Cochran representative stated that the Public Engagement process was just one of the many tools that would be used to complete the Master Plan document.

Park Master Plan – Public Input Meeting

On the evening of June 3, 2025, at 6:00 pm a meeting with the general public took place. The Cochran representative served as the facilitator for the meeting and gave a review of the master plan process and what would occur during the meeting.

A group of six individuals as well as the City Administrator and Director of Parks and Recreation met for discussion for approximately one hour. Below are the general notes from the discussion:

MAINTENANCE & SAFETY

- Need for continuous maintenance and upkeep of parks and facilities.
- Expressed safety concerns related to parks and parking.
- Review of staffing needs.

FACILITY UPGRADES

- Need for major upgrades to existing maintenance facility and grounds.
- Utility upgrades
- Replacement of Playgrounds
- Erosion control and Streambank Stabilization at Minnie Ha Ha Park
- Repair and/or replacement of existing Tennis Courts.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Possible partnership with neighboring municipalities on joint facility use.
- Possible partnerships with schools, civic groups, community service programs, and residents at large to assist in the development and upkeep of the park.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- Discussion of possible grant opportunities through Local, State and Federal Government.
- Discussion primarily revolved around the Land Water Conservation Fund grant (LWCF).

MISSION STATEMENT

- Discussion took place regarding the current Mission Statement and if it would be reviewed and possibly changed to reflect current thoughts and visions.

REGULATORY/RESTRICTIONS

- Discussion took place regarding the need to upgrade parks and facilities to meet the various regulations (Floodplain/Floodway, Wetlands, Clean Water Act, etc.)
- Discussion took place regarding possible grant restrictions (LWCF)

SURVEY

- It was explained that a survey would be coming out within the coming weeks so that residents could have further opportunities to express their views and desires.
- It was further explained that the survey would be advertised through the city's website and various social media applications.
- The survey would also be available in a paper format.

NEXT STEPS

- The Cochran representative stated that the Public Engagement process was just one of many tools that would be used to complete the Master Plan document, and stated that once the document was completed the City would need to decide how they would like to move forward.

APPENDIX C

ADA Audit

Site Evaluations

Another requirement of the ADA is completing site evaluations of all City parks. To date the Cochran team has assessed ten (10) city parks in terms of their overall access, access to goods and services, comfort stations, accessible parking spaces, accessibility route to the facilities, sidewalks, restrooms, picnic areas, pavilions, tennis courts, basketball courts, pickleball courts, playgrounds, trails, athletic fields, etc. For the audit, all sidewalks on city rights-of-way adjacent to park properties were excluded from data collection.

The following City parks have been inventoried:

1. Watson Trail Park
2. Minnie Ha Ha Park
3. Lynstone Park
4. Stieren Park
5. Bander Park
6. Kitun Park
7. Claire Gempp Davidson Park
8. Nancy Eschbach Park
9. Rock Alva Park
10. I-44 Bridge Park

A brief description of data collection for these parks are listed below:

Watson Trail Park

Watson Trail Park is a Community park consisting of approximately 25 acres of land. The park consists of a Community Center, two playgrounds, four tennis courts, three pickleball courts, swimming pool, two pavilions and multiple parking lots, a lake and two miles of multi-use trails. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from parking lot to playground components, tennis courts, pavilion, trails, aquatic facility, community center, etc.).

Minnie Ha Ha Park

Minnie Ha Ha Park is Community park consisting of approximately 43 acres of land. The park consists of two soccer fields, three playgrounds, four pavilions, multiple parking lots, restrooms, river access and 2.5 miles of multi-use trails. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from parking lot to playground components, trails, restrooms, pavilion, etc.).

Lynstone Park

Lynstone Park is a Neighborhood park consists of approximately five acres of land. The park includes a pavilion, restroom, playground, walking trail, basketball court and two parking lots. The survey assessment consisted of a partial survey of the park and park facilities. Required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities as well as internal pedestrian facilities connecting amenities (e.g., from parking lot to playground components, trails, restrooms, basketball court, pavilion etc.) were inventoried.

Stieren Park

Stieren Park is a Community park consists of approximately 35.5 acres of land. The park includes four baseball fields, one soccer field, three volleyball courts, several pavilion type facilities, maintenance facilities, restrooms, concessions, parking lots, and 1.2 miles of multi-use trails. The survey assessment consisted of a partial survey assessment of the park and park facilities. Required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities as well as internal pedestrian facilities connecting amenities (e.g., from parking lots/roadways, restrooms, playgrounds, pavilions, athletic fields, volleyball courts, etc.) were inventoried.

Bander Park

Bander Park is a Community park consists of approximately 122 acres of land. The park consists of a driving range, practice greens, 18-hole disc golf course, eight ponds/lakes, nature areas, two parking lots, and 4.67 miles of multi-use trails. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from parking lot to driving range and trails).

Kitun Park

Kitun Park is a Neighborhood park that is approximately 5 acres and includes a dog park, fitness stations, .22 miles of multi-use trails, and a parking lot. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from parking lot to dog park and trail).

Claire Gempp Memorial Conservation Area

Claire Gempp Memorial Conservation Area is a Community park that is approximately 13.5 acres and includes a restroom, parking lot, pond, nature areas, boardwalk, and .5 miles of nature trails. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from parking lot to restrooms and trail).

Nancy Eschbach Park

Nancy Eschbach Park is a Neighborhood park that is approximately 16 acres and includes 1.3 miles of gravel trails. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes

connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from street to trail).

Rock Alva Park

The Rock Alva Park is a Linear park that is approximately 44 acres and includes an .8 mile multi-use trail. The park runs along the Meramec River and is connected to Stieren Park. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from trail to parking lots/streets).

I-44 Bridge Park

The I-44 Bridge Park is a Linear park that is approximately two acres and is a trail head for the Meramec Greenway Trail and includes a parking lot, three small pavilions, picnic tables, bike rack, and a connection to the trail. The park runs along I-44 and is located near the City of Kirkwood's Emmeneggar Park. The survey assessment also included all required accessible routes connecting site arrival points to amenities and all necessary internal connecting routes (e.g., from trail to parking lot, sidewalks and pavilions).

ADA Audit

Parks List

Park/Site	Acres	Classification	Ward
Watson Trail Park	25	Community	Three
Minnie Ha Ha Park	43	Community	Four
Lynstone Park	5	Neighborhood	One
Stieren Park	35.5	Community	One
Bander Park	122	Community	One
Kitun Park	5	Neighborhood	Two
Claire Gempp Davidson Park	13.5	Community	Three
Nancy Eschbach Park	16	Neighborhood	Four
Rock Alva Park	44	Community	One
I-44 Bridge Park	2	Trailhead	One

ADA Audit

Prioritization Designations

Rating	Rating Number	Criteria
High	1	Major safety issues
High	1	New Construction built out of compliance with requirements
High	2	Older Construction severely out of compliance (accessible routes, ramps, etc.)
High	2	Alterations that did not bring required elements into compliance
High	2	Non-compliant accessible route from parking to building entrances
High	2	No accessible route to adjacent sidewalk/trail system
High	2	No accessible restroom stalls
High	3	No accessible parking, insufficient number of spaces, non-compliant
High	3	Severely non-compliant accessible route (structure solution)
High	3	Non-compliant parking (structural solution)
High	4	No directional warnings present at curb ramps
Medium	5	Non-Compliant door/gate clearances (width issues, protruding objects)
Medium	5	Protruding objects obstructing clear pathway (fire extinguisher, AED)
Medium	5	Non-compliant public access spaces (pavilion, dugout)
Medium	5	No accessible drinking fountains
Medium	6	Non-compliant amenities (picnic tables, benches, grills, trash cans)
Medium	7	Accessible route with moderate access issues (level changes)
Medium	7	Non-compliant detectable warnings at curb ramps (high contrast, length)
Low	10	Minor level changes, gaps, or cracks in accessible route
Low	10	Non-compliant drinking fountains

ADA Audit
List of Corrections

Park/Site	Type of Correction	Recommendation	Project Type
Watson Trail Park	Sidewalks	Sidewalk from parking lot to pavilions, tennis courts, playgrounds, etc. is not in compliance. Need to replace sidewalk and add curb ramp.	2
Watson Trail Park	Upper Parking Lot	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Watson Trail Park	Pickleball/Lake Parking Lot	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Watson Trail Park	Sidewalks	Sidewalk along W. Watson Rd. at the parking lot entrances do not have proper curb ramps.	7
Watson Trail Park	Tennis Courts	Gates are not wide enough for ADA accessibility.	5
Watson Trail Park	Picnic Tables	Twenty percent of all tables must be ADA accessible.	6
Watson Trail Park	Park Benches	Twenty percent of all benches must be ADA accessible. Develop accessible bench pads.	6
Watson Trail Park	Picnic Areas	Twenty percent of all picnic areas must be ADA accessible.	6
Watson Trail Park	Playground #2	Non-compliant surfacing (depth, compaction)	7
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Soccer Fields	Develop accessible routes from parking lots to Fields.	2
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Parking – Soccer Fields	No accessible parking, insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Playground – Shelter D	Play component is not accessible	2
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Playgrounds	Non-compliant surfacing (depth, compaction)	7
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Restrooms	There are lips from the sidewalk to the restroom facilities	7

Minnie Ha Ha Park	Parking – Shelter D	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Picnic Areas	Twenty percent of all picnic areas must be ADA accessible.	6
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Picnic Tables	Twenty percent of all picnic tables must be ADA accessible.	6
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Park Benches	Twenty percent of all benches must be ADA accessible. Develop accessible bench pads.	6
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Parking - Scenic Overlook	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Parking – Shelter F	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Minnie Ha Ha Park	Parking – Shelter E	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Stieren Park	Athletic Fields	Develop accessible routes from parking lots to athletic fields and restroom/pavilion.	2
Stieren Park	Athletic Fields	Develop accessible routes to dugouts and field access	5
Stieren Park	Athletic Fields	Develop accessible routes to bleachers/Seating	5
Stieren Park	Volleyball Courts	Develop accessible routes to volleyball court access	5
Stieren Park	Parking Lot	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Stieren Park	Playground	Severely non-compliant accessible route. Non-compliant surfacing (depth, compaction)	3
Stieren Park	Picnic Tables	Twenty percent of all picnic tables must be ADA accessible.	6
Stieren Park	Park Benches	Twenty percent of all benches must be ADA accessible. Develop accessible bench pads.	6
Bander Park	Parking Lots	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Bander Park	Trails	Severely non-compliant accessible route	3
Bander Park	Park Benches	Twenty percent of all benches must be ADA accessible. Develop accessible bench pads.	6

Bander Park	Driving Range - Plaza	Non-Compliant accessible route due to severe level changes, gaps, or cracks	2
Kitun Park	Parking	Insufficient number of spaces/types/locations/signage, non-compliant.	3
Claire Gempp Davidson Park	Trails	Severely non-compliant accessible route. Non-compliant surfacing (depth, compaction)	3
Lynstone Park	Park Benches	Twenty percent of all benches must be ADA accessible. Develop accessible bench pads.	6
Lynstone Park	Picnic Tables	Twenty percent of all picnic tables must be ADA accessible.	6
Lynstone Park	Playground	Severely non-compliant accessible route. Non-compliant surfacing (depth, compaction)	3
Lynstone Park	Basketball Court	Non-Compliant public access to restroom	5
Nancy Eschbach Park	Trail	Non-compliant accessible route. Non-compliant surfacing (compaction)	3

ADA Audit

ADA Grievance Procedure

The procedure to file a complaint or grievance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is as follows:

1. The City will attempt to resolve complaints by using informal resolution procedures at the appropriate staff level. The Sunset Hills Parks and Recreation Department ADA Coordinator will meet with the grievant to discuss possible solutions to concerns.
2. Should informal complaint resolution attempts fail, a formal written grievance may be filed by the grievant at the Office of the ADA Coordinator, using an ADA Grievance form. A formal written grievance must be filed within (180) calendar days of an alleged violation, and must contain the following:
 - The name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person filing the grievance.
 - The name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person alleging ADA violation, if other than the person filing the grievance.
 - A description, date and location of the alleged violation and the remedy or relief which is requested.
 - Information regarding whether a complaint has been filed with the Department of Justice or other federal or state civil rights agency or court.
3. The ADA Coordinator will return a written response to a formal written grievance by certified mail within (14) calendar days of the grievance filing date. The written response will include any proposed resolutions and notice of the complainant's right to appeal. If the grievance does not concern a Sunset Hills Parks and Recreation facility or program, it will be forwarded to the appropriate agency and the complainant will be notified.
4. If the grievant is not satisfied with the written response from the ADA Coordinator, the grievant may request an appeal. Such request of an appeal must be in writing and filed with the Office of the City Clerk within (14) calendar days of certified mailing date of the Office of the City Clerk's written response.

ADA Audit

ADA Grievance Form

Instructions:

- 1. Please print or type all information. Use a separate form for each complaint.
- 2. Sign the form and initial and date any separate pages.

1. Person making complaint: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

2. I wish to complain against: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

3. Have you filed a complaint or grievance with any other agency, organization, the federal government, or labor union, or taken any other action based on this complaint?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, give details on a separate sheet.

4. Explain the alleged violations. Include the date or dates of all incidents where possible. A short statement in your own words is enough, but you may use additional sheets of paper if needed. If so, be sure to sign/initial and date each additional sheet.

5. Remedy or Relief which is requested:

6. Has the complaint been filed with another bureau of the Department of justice or any other Federal, State, or local civil rights agency or court?

No _____ Yes _____

If yes: Agency or Court: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

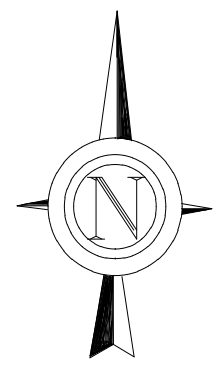
Telephone: _____ Date Filed: _____

Complaint Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit or mail to:

City of Sunset Hills
Parks & Recreation Department
Attn: ADA Coordinator
3915 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
Sunset Hills, Missouri 63127

APPENDIX D

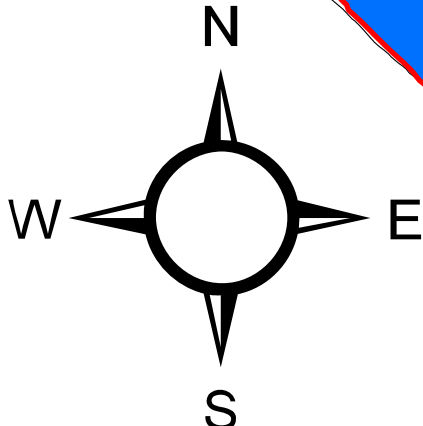
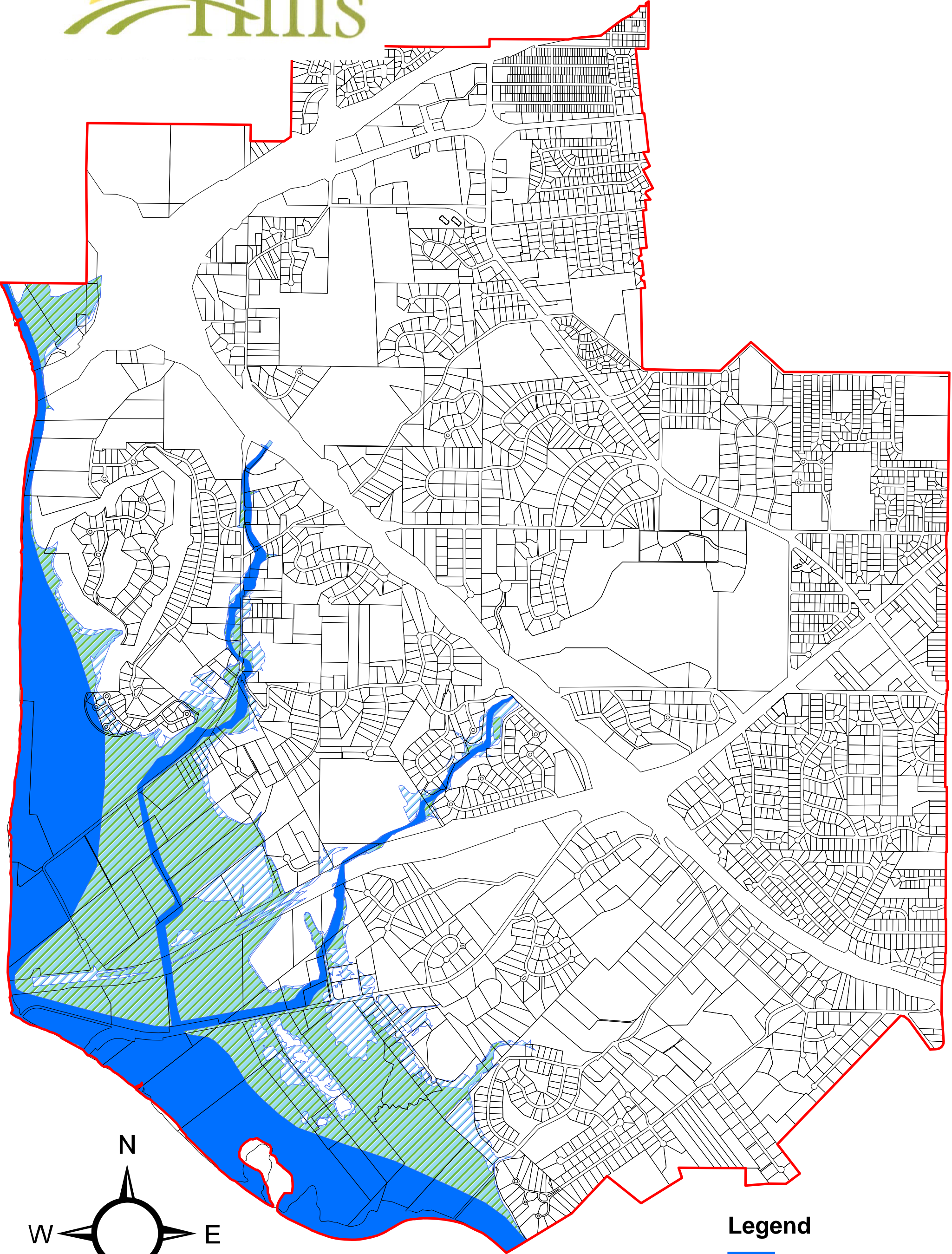


LEGEND
EXISTING PARK/SCHOOL

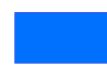


PROXIMITY TO EXISTING PARK/SCHOOL (1/2 MILE RADIUS)



APPENDIX E



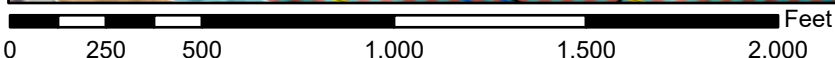
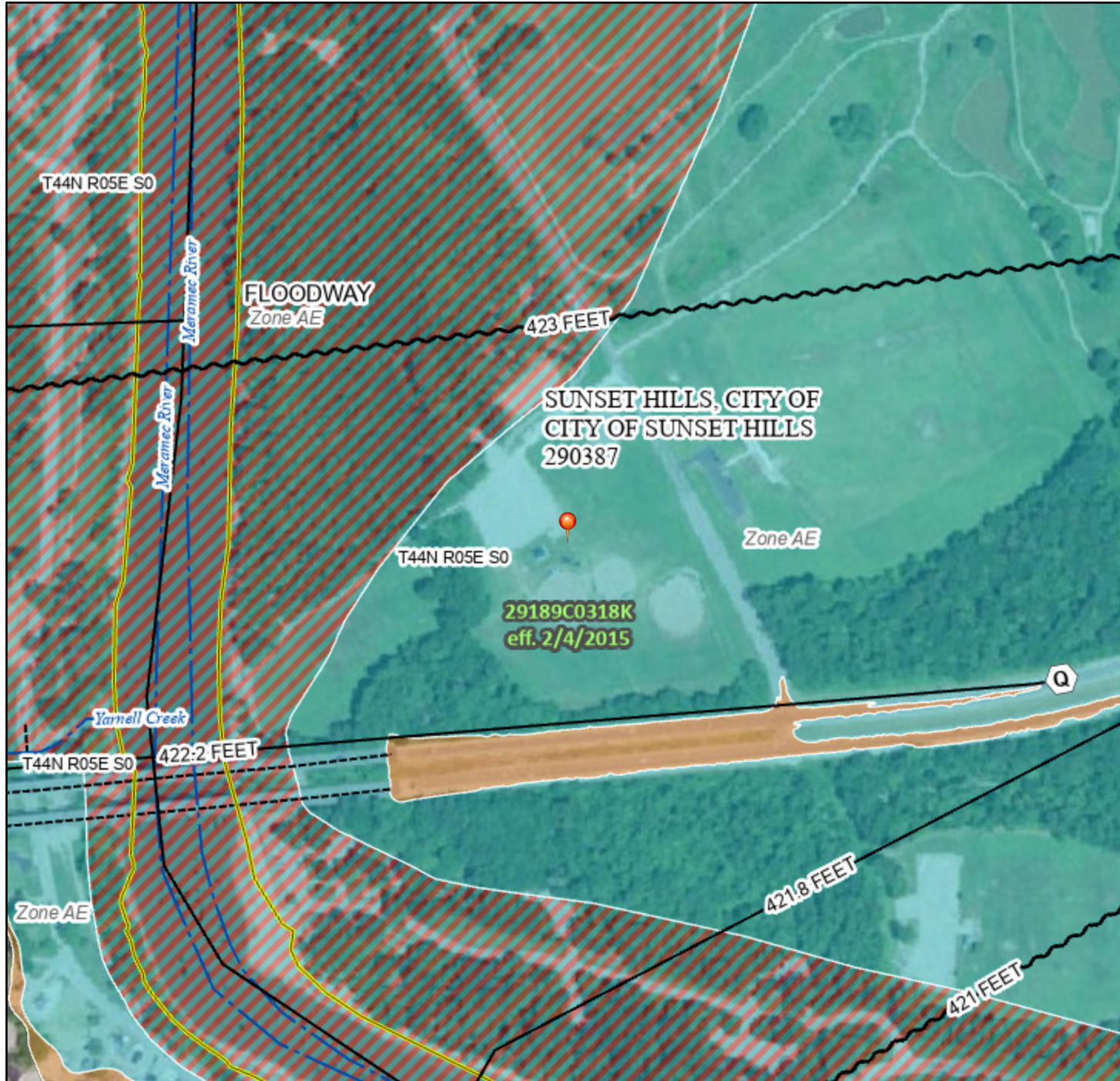
Legend

-  Floodway
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  500 Year Floodplain

National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



90°26'14"W 38°31'18"N



1:6,000

90°25'37"W 38°30'50"N

Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023

Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS		Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, V, A99
		With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR
		Regulatory Floodway

OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD		0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone X
		Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone X
		Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. Zone X
		Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone D

OTHER AREAS		NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone X
		Effective LOMRs
GENERAL STRUCTURES		Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
		Levee, Dike, or Floodwall

OTHER FEATURES		20.2 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
		17.5 Coastal Transect
		Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
		Limit of Study
		Jurisdiction Boundary
		Coastal Transect Baseline
OTHER FEATURES		Profile Baseline
		Hydrographic Feature

MAP PANELS		Digital Data Available
		No Digital Data Available
		Unmapped
		The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.



This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 8/25/2025 at 5:15 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX G



ANDRE'S BANQUETS

PROJECT SITE

DISC GOLF COURSE

DRIVING RANGE

SHELTERS
PLAYGROUND
SAND VOLLEYBALL

BALL FIELDS

Larkin Williams Rd

Rocky Awa Rd

W Watson Rd

Kimber Ln

Edelen Ln

Maurer Rd Dr

30



- PARK FEATURES**
- 18 Hole Disc Golf Course
 - Driving Range
 - Walking Trails (3.3 Miles)
 - 1 Shelter
 - Playground
 - Sand Volleyball
 - 4 Baseball Fields
 - Rugby Complex

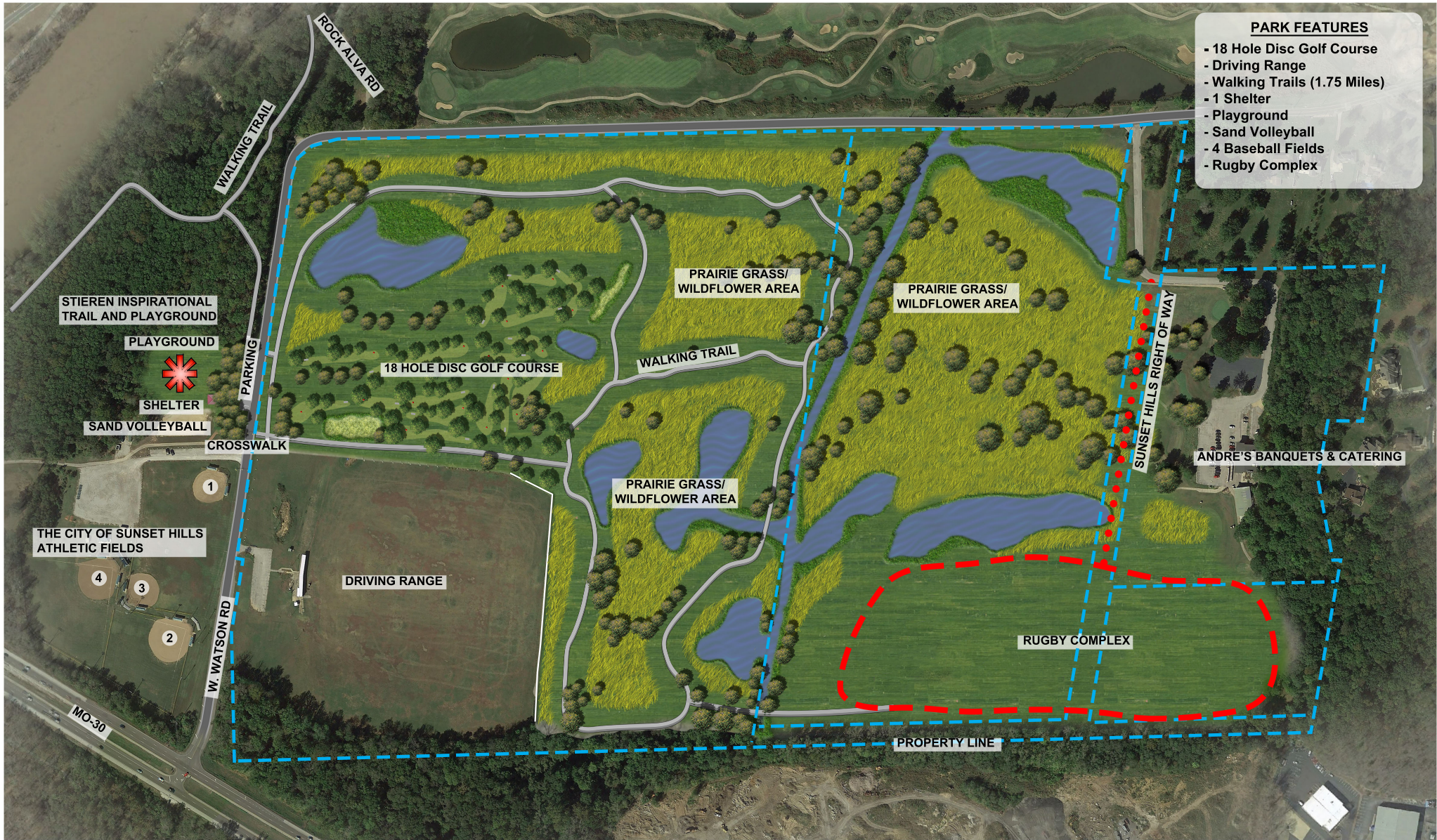
STEVEN J. BANDER PARK - CONCEPT PLAN: PASSIVE USE A





STEVEN J. BANDER PARK - CONCEPT PLAN: PASSIVE USE B1





STEVEN J. BANDER PARK - CONCEPT PLAN: PASSIVE USE B2



Steven J. Bander Park



Passive Use Concept A

January 14, 2020

Prepared for: City of Sunset Hills

Rough Order of Magnitude Costs

Improvements

Site Preparation / Demolition

Existing Concrete Pavement	9,215	sy	\$ 20.00	\$	184,300
Foot Bridge	1	al	\$ 10,000.00	\$	10,000
Building	1	al	\$ 20,000.00	\$	20,000

Earthwork / Utilities

Allowance for Disc Golf	1	al	\$ 50,000.00	\$	50,000
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Crosswalk

Striping - High Visibility Crosswalk (24" Wide)	1	LS	\$ 1,000.00	\$	1,000
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon	2	ea	\$ 10,000.00	\$	20,000

Paths

New Asphalt Trail - 4" depth - 8' wide	746	ton	\$ 140.00	\$	104,440
Aggregate base for Trail - 6" depth - 8' wide	572	cy	\$ 45.00	\$	25,740
Asphalt Trail Overlay - 2" depth - 8' wide	935	ton	\$ 140.00	\$	130,900

Landscaping

Prairie planting	37	ac	\$ 3,000.00	\$	111,000
Turf Seeding	31,800	sy	\$ 1.50	\$	47,700
Trees	72	ea	\$ 350.00	\$	25,200

Estimated Budget Costs* \$ 730,280.00

Total Rounded \$ 731,000.00

* Estimated budget cost does not include project contingency, contractor mark up, design & engineering, survey and construction period services.

Steven J. Bander Park Passive Use B

Passive Use Concepts B1 & B2

January 14, 2020

Prepared for: City of Sunset Hills

Rough Order of Magnitude Costs



Improvements

Site Preparation / Demolition

Existing Concrete Pavement	9,215	sy	\$ 20.00	\$	184,300
Foot Bridge	1	al	\$ 10,000.00	\$	10,000
Building	1	al	\$ 20,000.00	\$	20,000
Selective Clearing & Invasive Species Removal Along Stream	0.9	ac	\$ 10,000.00	\$	9,000

Earthwork / Utilities

Allowance for Disc Golf	1	al	\$ 50,000.00	\$	50,000
Excavation for pond connections (10' wide, 7' avg. depth)	1,090	cy	\$ 10.00	\$	10,900

Crosswalk

Striping - High Visibility Crosswalk (24" Wide)	1	LS	\$ 1,000.00	\$	1,000
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon	2	ea	\$ 10,000.00	\$	20,000

Paths

New Asphalt Trail - 4" depth - 8' wide	770	ton	\$ 140.00	\$	107,800
Aggregate base for Trail - 6" depth - 8' wide	585	cy	\$ 45.00	\$	26,325
Asphalt Trail Overlay - 2" depth - 8' wide	315	ton	\$ 140.00	\$	44,100

Landscaping

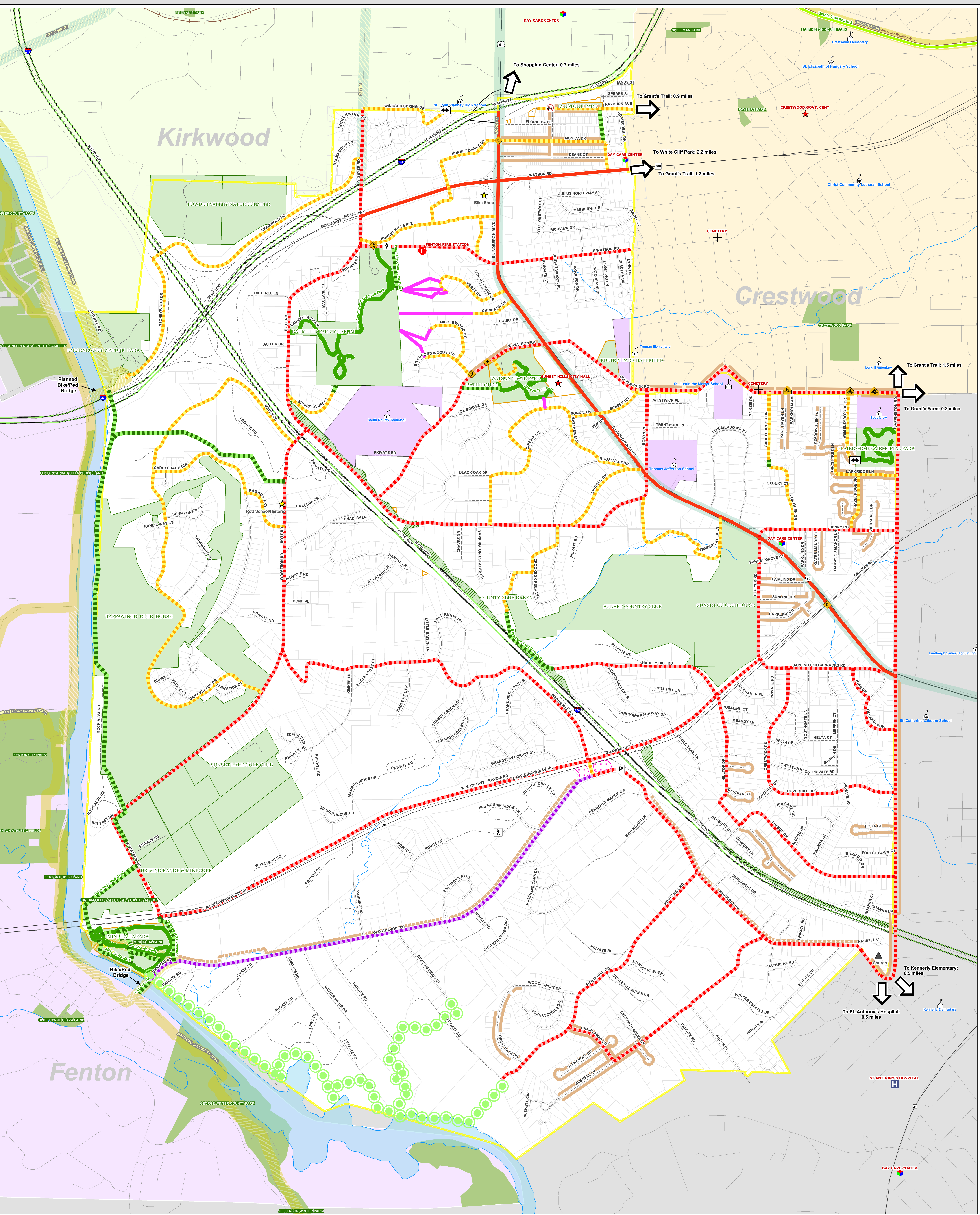
Prairie planting	37	ac	\$ 3,000.00	\$	111,000
Turf Seeding	31,800	sy	\$ 1.50	\$	47,700
Trees	72	ea	\$ 350.00	\$	25,200

Estimated Budget Costs* \$ 667,325.00

Total Rounded \$ 668,000.00

* Estimated budget cost does not include project contingency, contractor mark up, design & engineering, survey and construction period services.

APPENDIX H



Legend

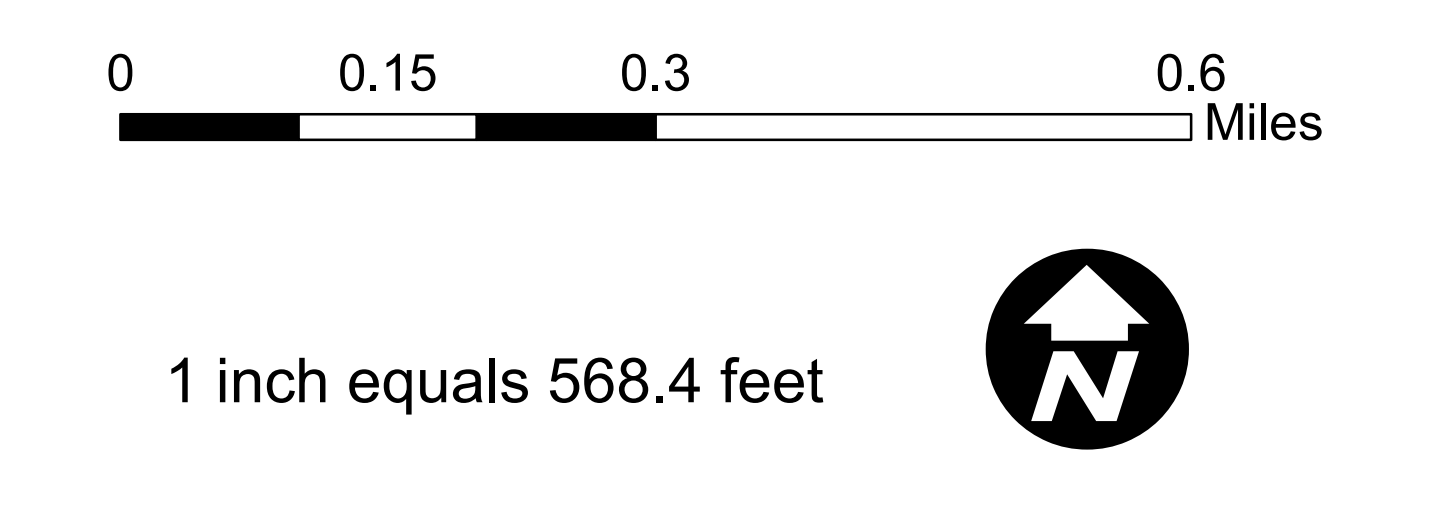
Existing Accommodation	Destinations
Existing Trail	Church
Planned Accommodation	Cemetery
Planned Bike Lane	City Hall
Planned Bike Route	Fire Station
Planned Trail	Hospital
Potential Easement Trail	Day Care Center
Planned Greenways	Public School
Existing Sidewalk	Private School
Planned Sidewalk	School Property
Potential Sidewalk	Park/Open Space
Potential Connection	Planned Park/Greenway
Planned Crossing	Commuter Parking Lot
Commuter Parking	EWG Open Space
Cross Walk Symbol	Interstate
No Bicycle	US Highway
Pedestrian Crossing	State Route
School Crossing	SH Street Centerlines
Existing GRG Route	SH Parcels
Existing GRG Trail	SH City Owned Parcels
Proposed GRG Route	Bodies of Water
Proposed GRG Trail	Railways
	Streams

On-Street Treatment Typology

Accommodation on Shared Roadway	For busier roads with physical limitations that do not allow for widening in conformance with an official bicycle facility (such as a signed bike route or bike lane)	Urban Section (i.e. with curbs): Wide outside lane would provide some level of accommodation when the preferred width is not available. 15' is preferred where extra space is required for maneuvering such as on steep grades or at railroad crossings which are not perpendicular to the direction of travel. Widening can often be accomplished through line re-striping, and by reducing the width of the inside lane or left turn lane.
	Accommodation roadways are intended for use by experienced bicyclists who are comfortable traveling on roadways.	Rural Section (i.e. no curbs) A paved shoulder of any width up to 4' is better than none at all; however, it cannot be signed as a bicycle facility. A width greater than 4' is preferred, excluding gutter pans and rumble strips. 5' is recommended from obstructions such as guardrails, signs, etc. Additional width is also recommended for higher bicycle traffic, motor vehicle speeds above 45 mph, and for higher truck/bus traffic. Warning Signage: "Share the Road with Bicycles" signs every 1/4-mile.

Treatment Type	Applicability	Design Treatment ¹
Bicycle Lane (Class II Bikeway)	For busier roads with higher speeds and traffic volumes, including collectors and arterials with an urban or rural section. (Where roads may not be of sufficient width to enable the installation of bicycle lanes, consider reductions in vehicle speeds and/or traffic volumes to accommodate bicycles as per Type a treatment.) *Busier road* is defined as either a road with permitted speeds of up to 35 mph and volumes of 10,000+ vehicles per day, or permitted speeds of 40 mph and volumes of 1200+ vehicles per day.	Urban Section (i.e. with curbs): Min. 5' shoulders with 5' striped bicycle lanes (5', 12', 5'). Widen shoulder on busier roads to provide more separation between motor vehicle lane and bike lane. 4-lane Rural Section: Min. 8' shoulders with 5' striped bicycle lanes (5', 3', 12', 12', 12', 3', 5'). Widen shoulder to provide more separation between motor vehicle lane and bike lane. 2-lane Urban Section: Min. 5' striped bike lane, excluding gutter pan. With curb parking, add 5' bike lane between parking and motor vehicle lane. (Min. 13' between curb lane and motor vehicle lane, including gutter pan.) 4-lane Urban Section: Min. 5' striped bike lane, excluding gutter pan. With curb parking, add 5' bike lane between parking and motor vehicle lane. (Min. 13' between curb lane and motor vehicle lane, including gutter pan.)
Bicycle Route - Signed Shared Roadway (Class III Bikeway)	Bicycle routes should be so-marked if they are continuous and meet standards identified in the AASHTO publication, "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities," and if they are at least one mile long. Shorter bike routes may be marked if they connect with other bike routes.	14' outside lanes, "Bicycle Route" and "Share the Road with Bicycles" Signs.

¹ Consult MDOT Policy document, PBIC, AASHTO Guide, and MUTCD for specific design guidance and standards.



Trailnet in Association with James Pona & Associates and Southwestern Illinois GIS Resource Center October 9, 2007
Reference data courtesy of City of Sunset Hills (2007) and St. Louis County Department of Planning (2006)