

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the process of updating this plan several discussions, site visits, research and analysis brought to light a number of ways Parkville could enhance its park system. In 2015 the Board of Alderman and City staff held a Strategic Planning Workshop to identify critical success factors for the City of Parkville. In this workshop goals for 2016-2020 were identified to move the City closer to its Vision. The long-term goals identified for Parks were:

1. Create a stand alone Parks Department.
2. Increase staff resources to maintain all new park areas.

This following nine findings consider these goals with recommendations to better align the parks and recreation system with the newly created vision and mission statements for Parks.

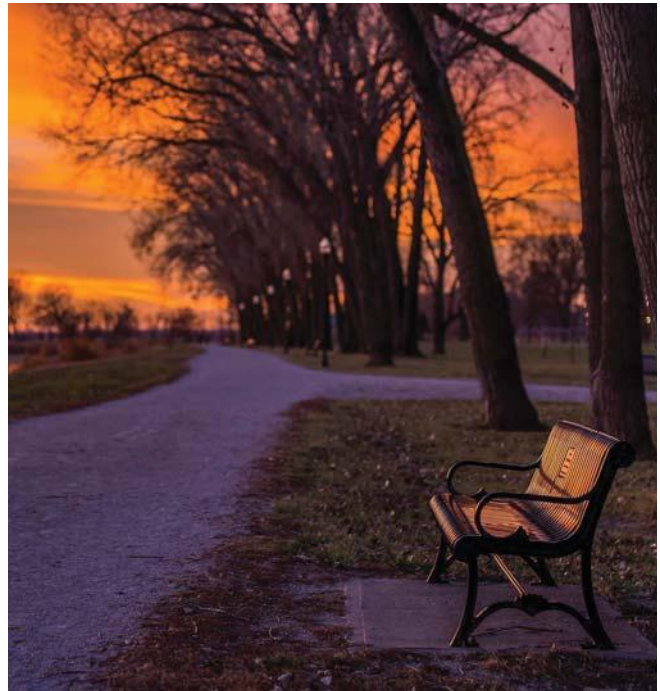
A. DEPARTMENT

FINDING

Currently, the Parks Department is a division of Public Works. The unification of these two departments has provided the City with efficiencies that have proven to be desirable yet challenging in some ways. If the City desires to expand parks and park facilities and add recreational programming at the riverfront then the need for Parks to operate as a stand alone department will be necessary. Additional staffing and possibly the addition of a Parks Director may be needed to oversee park facilities, programming and partnership opportunities. In addition to management of these resources additional maintenance staff will be needed to maintain the facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. If additional recreational facilities and activity spaces are desired in the Riverfront



Parks consider asking citizens for funding support.

2. If new facilities are approved, consider creating a Parks Director position to oversee park facilities, establish recreational programming services or consider programming partners such as the YMCA or Northland Sports Alliance, and foster new partnerships.

B. MAINTENANCE

FINDING

There is a gap between the resources available for current maintenance requirements and the resources needed to accomplish them. Seasonal positions have been difficult to fill this year and of the 4 positions budgeted for only 3 were filled. The third position was not filled until mid-season. As Parkville's parks grow and new facilities are approved with recreational programming to activate them additional maintenance staffing will be necessary to operate and maintain them.

Analysis of how Parkville Parks currently compare to national medians suggests that the additional resources identified above are warranted. This is especially evident considering that Parkville maintains over four (4) times the amount of park acreage than the national median on a per 1,000 residents basis, yet operates with half, or less than half, of the number of full-time equivalent employees than jurisdictions maintaining the same amount of park land.

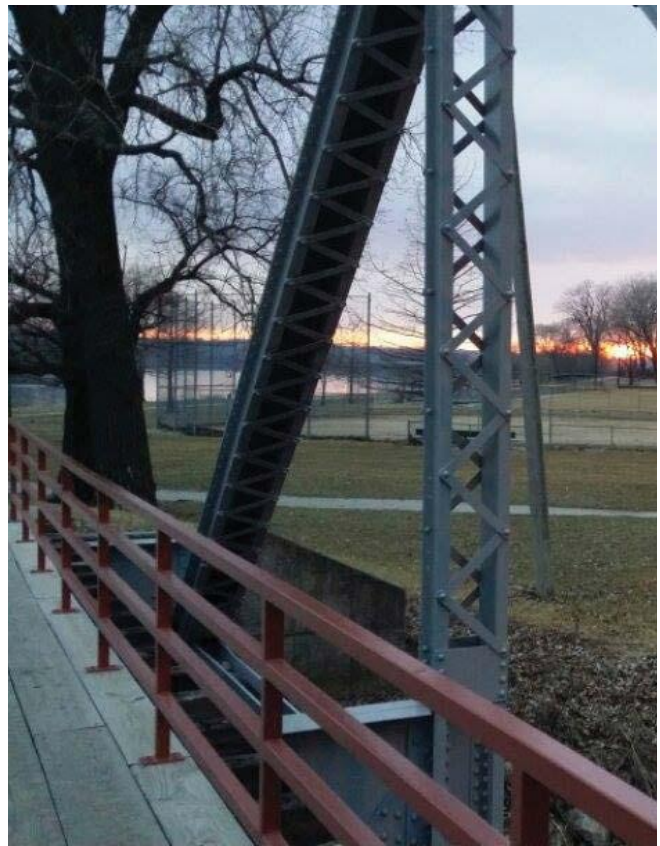
RECOMMENDATION

In order to begin closing this gap in maintenance resources the City should:

1. Increase the rate of pay for seasonal positions to be more competitive.
2. Add 3 additional seasonal Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions.
3. Out-source mowing of rights-of-way.

Additional measures can be taken to improve efficiencies within the department, close the gap in staffing needs, and provide the necessary data to support capital improvements requests. Such measures include:

- Creating and formally adopting a Park Maintenance Management Plan (PMMP).
- Purchase and implement a Work Order System to allow the Department to manage all aspects of its operations and provide data for analytical purposes.
- Create and formally adopt an Equipment Review Program to anticipate and prepare for future capital needs in advance of aging equipment.
- Actively seek out partnerships with local community groups to help close the gap in maintenance needs.



C. FUNDING

FINDING

Parkville does not have a dedicated funding source for the operating and capital improvement budgets of a Park Department. While Parkville's partnership with Platte County has made tremendous accomplishments, it is possible that County tax contributions may be reduced or eliminated. If so, Parkville will need to identify alternate sources of revenue for parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider a 10-year 1/2 cent sales tax dedicated to park operations and development of new facilities. Over 10 years this has the potential to generate about \$5 million, or \$500,000 annually.
2. Consider re-investing capital dollars back into the system at a percentage acceptable to the Board of Aldermen.

D. SERVICE AREA GAP / CONNECTIVITY

FINDING

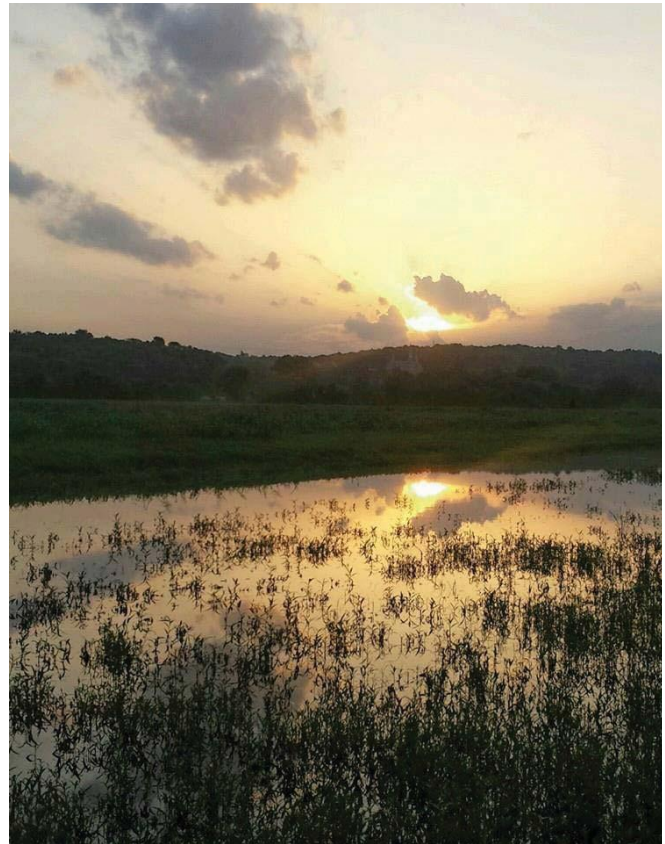
Review and analysis of the dispersion of parks throughout the community reveals gaps in service for neighborhood parks. Currently all of Parkville's neighborhood parks are clustered near the downtown area. A few of the surrounding neighborhoods do have play equipment and clubhouses with pools which, although private, help to serve neighborhood park needs. The Parkville Nature Sanctuary serves as the City's only Community size park and assuming a normal reach of 3 miles serves the majority of Parkville with the exception of the western edge.

The western edge of Parkville provides little opportunity for a neighborhood park and the 2014 Market Feasibility & Economic Impact Analysis indicated that a sports complex in this area suitable for regional or national tournaments similar to the Overland Parks Soccer Complex was not feasible.

A resounding priority voiced by the community throughout development of this plan was that of the need to connect parks to points of interest. This input is consistent with recommendations made in planning documents such as the Route 9 Corridor Study, Vision Downtown Plan, and the Multi-Modal Access and Livable Community Study. Specific priority connections are:

1. Completion of the Loop Trail.
2. Better trail connections to downtown and the Riverfront Parks.
3. Provide a trail along the western edge of Parkville.

Topography and City boundary lines present the biggest challenge to future opportunities for parks to better serve the more densely populated areas of the City and surrounding neighborhoods that consider themselves part of Parkville. With that being said, there are opportunities to improve pedestrian



connectivity and expand the reach of park amenities to parts of the City that are currently under served.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Partner with Platte County to construct a 10' wide paved trail along the Brush Creek Greenway extending from the Missouri Riverfront Trail to Tiffany Springs Park.
2. Construct a segment of the Missouri Riverfront Trail from Platte Landing Park to I-435, as identified in the MetroGreen and Platte County Trail Plans.
3. Coordinate with Kansas City to connect the Brush Creek Greenway Trail to the roundabout at NW Hampton Road. This is the last segment along Hwy 45 that connects 9 Hwy to the western edge.
4. Construct the proposed plans made in the Route 9 Corridor Study.

E. REGIONAL RIVERFRONT PARKS

FINDING

A key component to the update of this Master Plan was a concept plan for the Riverfront Parks. While multiple planning documents have offered recommendations for pieces of the Riverfront Parks and Downtown area, until now there has not been a concept plan that ties them all together into one plan. Included with this Master Plan for the park system as a whole is a Master Plan Design Concept for the Riverfront Parks which ties them to the downtown area. The design concept (as shown and discussed in Chapter 5) breaks the Riverfront Park areas into three zones:

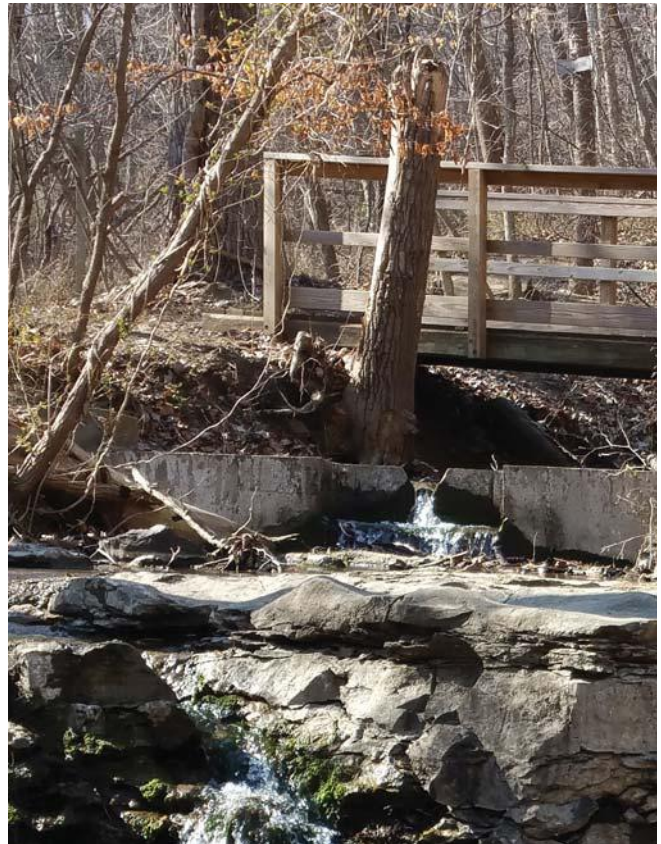
1. The Downtown Transition Zone.
2. English Landing Park.
3. Platte Landing Park.

The following are a list of amenities recommended for each zone. Appendix C provides enlargements for each area as well as conceptual costs for various phases that could be expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Downtown Transition Zone

1. Small Plaza with Retail Incubators.
2. Entry Gateway on East Street Just South of the railroad tracks.
3. Farmer's Market.
4. Central Lawn.
5. Screened Maintenance Facility.
6. Art/Memorial Plaza.
7. Pedestrian Bridge.
8. Multi-Purpose Open Green.
9. Plaza / Stage.
10. Playground.
11. Picnic Shelters.
12. Missouri River Overlook.
13. Boardwalk.



14. Pedestrian Bridge over Rush Creek.

English Landing Park

1. Enhancements to White Alloe Creek.
2. Pedestrian Bridge over White Alloe Creek.
3. New Trails Connecting Points of Interest.
4. Convert large areas of pavement to grass.
5. Extend McAfee Street deeper into the park and add parking.

Platte Landing Park

1. Wetland.
2. Multi-Purpose Activity Fields for uses such as soccer, football, and lacrosse.
3. Baseball/softball fields.
4. Canoe lockers.
5. Parking stalls with views to the river.
6. Picnic areas near Sullivan Nature Sanctuary.

F. REMAINING PARKS & PARK PROPERTIES

FINDING

One of the sentiments heard during focus group discussions was the need to “take care of what we have.” During the inventory of parks and park amenities that occurred with this update a level of service was determined for each park identifying varying levels of attention that were needed in all Parkville Parks (Chapter 3). The following are recommendations for each of Parkville’s mini and neighborhood parks (Pocket, Adams, and Watkins) as well as the various properties maintained by Parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pocket Park

1. Replace wood decking.
2. Update landscaping.
3. Ensure stability of railings and repaint.

Adams Park

1. Replace the concrete pad under the shelter and the walk leading to it.
2. Replace shelter.
3. Provide new picnic table and seating under shelter.
4. Consider the potential for flower beds.

Watkins Park

1. Replace play areas with updated equipment which accommodates a wider demographic.
2. Repair asphalt trail.
3. Replace shelter.
4. Consider the potential for raised bed community gardens. Interest to champion this was expressed by a Main Street resident during public engagement.

Gresham Memorial Spirit Fountain Park

Continue to maintain the fountain and provide access for it to serve as an important civic space.



Dorsey Property

1. Severe topographical, accessibility, and visibility constraints prevent it from being able to provide park amenities. Otherwise, this property should remain a natural woodland.

Bell Road Property

1. Accessibility and visibility into this property are severely constrained. Consider leaving this as an undeveloped natural area, or acquiring additional property along Bell Road to improve access and visibility.

Gateway Property

1. Currently this is undeveloped land that was identified as an opportunity for the City to build a gateway sign to serve as an artful entry into Parkville. Landscaping could be added around the structure to further enhance and beautify this entryway.

G. PROGRAMMING

FINDING

While the 2014 Market Feasibility & Economic Impact Analysis revealed a sports complex similar the Overland Park Soccer Complex was not a feasible option for Parkville, the study did say that, “An eight-field [soccer] complex could adequately support Northland based clubs for practice and league play, while also providing the minimum critical mass of fields to enable the complex to host smaller local and regional tournaments.”

Multi-use activity fields and baseball/softball fields are proposed for Platte Landing Park. Once these amenities come on-line Parkville will have the park resources available to support the need for the City to provide programming services to the community. Should the City decide to do so, a position should be created to establish recreational programming services.

In the meantime, the City could take steps to better capitalize on the regional draw of the Riverfront Parks, create more events to draw people to the downtown area and patron shops, increase the community’s awareness of the natural beauty Parkville parks have to offer, and continue to partner with others to create opportunities for citizens to interact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Once the improvements in the Riverfront Parks begin to move closer to construction, namely the athletic fields, the City should begin programming them. This may present the need for the City to hire a Recreational Programming Coordinator.
2. CLARB should consider adopting a policy to create or partner to host four new community events to be held annually in the parks. Ideally one could be held each season of the year. Example events might be:



- Movies in the park - could be held once a month from May to October.
 - Winter tree decorating contest - local businesses & community groups sponsor a tree.
 - Host a fishing tournament on the Missouri River.
 - Partner with local schools to create an augmented reality web-app that families can download and use on their phones to explore Parkville parks.
3. Continue to preserve existing relationships with outside agencies programming activities in Parkville parks.
 4. Actively market Parkville parks to surrounding community groups who may have a need that could be served in Parkville parks.

H. DEVELOPMENT FEES

FINDING

The previous P3 Master Plan identified the incorporation of a development fee (Impact Fee) as a way to fund capital improvements to parks and for land acquisition.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Board of Alderman and City Administrator consider revisiting this previous recommendation and consider writing and adopting an ordinance assessing impact fees for new developments for the purpose of funding park improvements and land acquisition.

I. CITY CODES

FINDING

Review of current municipal codes for new subdivisions in Parkville revealed that the City has a code for Parkland Dedication (Section 505.220). The Board of Aldermen also have the ability to approve cash in-lieu of dedication of open space at a rate of \$7,000 per acre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review the cash in-lieu rate against current land values to determine whether or not this rate should be increased.
2. Current trends suggest that this could also be applied to commercial developments as studies suggest parks and open space are beneficial to employee health and workplace productivity. It is recommended that the Board of Aldermen and City Administrator consider this as a potential opportunity to further fund parks.

