



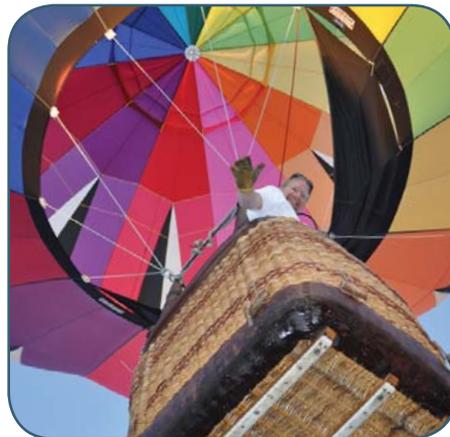
Grove City Parks and Recreation Department

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Parks, Recreation and Open Space



2011-2016



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acknowledgements

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Evans Center Senior Club
Franklin County Metro Parks
Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation
Grove City Division of Police
Gardens at Gantz Farm Volunteers
Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce
Grove City Arts Council
Grove City Evening Lions Club
Grove City High School Key Club
Grove City Kids Association
Grove City Kiwanis Club
Grove City Noon Lions Club
Grove City Rotary Club
Grove City Sertoma Club

Grove City Tomorrow
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V. APPENDIX



executive summary

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The City of Grove City's Parks and Rec does a fabulous job. The opportunities you provide to all ages is why we chose Grove City over all the other suburbs to raise our family.

- Planning Area B Resident

”

INTRODUCTION

Grove City has had a long and strong tradition of offering quality parks and recreational opportunities to its citizens. The parks system has continually evolved and developed to become the current network of more than 260 acres of public parkland and 135 acres of public open space to meet the growing demand of residents. To supplement this system, the Parks and Recreation Department also offers a growing number of recreational and educational programs.

To ensure that the wants and needs of residents continue to be met, the Parks and Recreation Department has prepared the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan to guide the development of parkland, recreational offerings and departmental organization for years to come. The intent of this plan is to provide decision makers with a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions and a policy framework to advance the parks system and recreational programs offered by the City.

PLANNING PROCESS

In the spring of 2010, the Parks and Recreation Department began preparing for the renewal of its accreditation through the Commission of Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). One of the requirements for accreditation is a comprehensive plan that guides the department and is updated every five years. In order to complete this task, the department began formulating an update to the 2006 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. The updated plan would involve heavy input from the public as well as a series of analyses conducted by staff in

executive summary

order to understand the needs of community in terms of parks and recreation. The result of this process is the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.

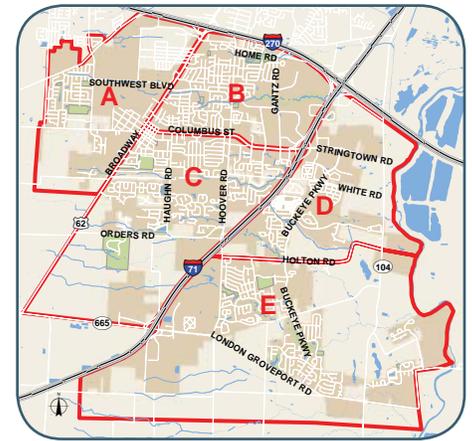
The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is a culmination of both technical research provided by City staff as well as input from the public, gained through a series of public meetings and online surveys. All recommendations outlined in the plan are based on either comments received from the public or findings from staff research.

Public Participation

The Parks and Recreation Department sought input from the public in order to compile the goals and objectives of this plan through a series of public meetings and online surveys. Three public meetings were held during the months of September and October 2010 in order to let residents state their needs and desires. The meetings were formatted in a way that residents were able to discuss their ideas for the parks system on a city-wide level as well as comments about parks in their neighborhood. After the public meetings, a survey was made available online for residents to give their comments who were unable to attend the public meetings.

Thirty-six people attended the public meetings and 332 surveys were completed online, for a total of 368 residents that gave their input as part of the public input portion of the plan.

In March 2011, the department presented a draft of the goals and objectives for the plan in another public open house, to ensure that the plan was being drafted in accordance with the public's desires. An online survey was also made available for additional feedback. For all plan elements, the majority of residents responding to the survey felt the proposed goals and objectives either met or exceeded their expectations.



PLANNING AREAS

In order to get a better understanding of residents' needs throughout the community, the city was divided into five planning areas. People attending the public meetings and completing the online survey were asked to indicate what planning area they lived in (or if they did not live in Grove City, they were asked to indicate the area they were most interested in).

Planning Area	Public Meeting Questionnaires	Online Survey Responses	Total
A	1	38	39
B	7	57	64
C	11	100	111
D	2	24	26
E	6	110	116
Unmarked	9	3	12
Total	36	332	368

“

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

- Planning Area E Resident

”

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KEY DIRECTION OF PLAN

Based on the more than 750 comments received at the public meetings and through the online survey, the Parks and Recreation Department formulated five main themes to guide the plan. These themes are carried out throughout the plan, in terms of the ideas discussed and the policies proposed to improve the system. The five goals formulated based on public input are:

1. **Improve Access and Connectivity**

The most popular theme in both the public input meetings and the online surveys was the need for better connectivity throughout the community, particularly by providing safe access to parks and expanding the City's recreational trail system. The majority of residents indicated that connecting trails to parks, schools and the regional trail network was either important or very important to them.

- Walking trails in parks
- Off-road bike trails
- Safe on-road bicycle options

2. **Upgrade Park Facilities**

While many comments were about creating new parks, more comments were received about maintaining existing parks through utility upgrades and proper maintenance. Although surveys indicated that 59 percent of residents want more invested in developing new parks rather than maintaining existing parks, the second most common comment was about the need to upgrade and expand existing facilities.

- Lighted ball diamonds
- Running water in parks

3. **Create Parks Appropriate for All Interests and Abilities**

Residents felt it was very important to have a variety of options in the parks. This includes active and passive recreational opportunities, ranging from basketball courts and picnic areas to preserved natural settings. Residents also discussed the need for parks that are appropriate for all ages and abilities.

- Dog park
- Natural areas
- Large parks

4. **Provide a Variety of Quality Programs for All Ages and Abilities**

The City of Grove City strives to offer a variety of programs throughout the year. Participants in the public input process voiced their desire to continue to expand the programs offered, including more educational opportunities within the parks, more sport leagues for children and adults and various other program ideas.

- Programs for teens
- Winter sports
- Programs for children with disabilities

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5. Be Mindful of Future Land Development Potential

Grove City is one of the fastest growing communities in central Ohio and is anticipated to continue at this pace in the coming decades. In order to ensure that land is set aside for proper park land programming, a broader view of potential future development should be taken. Concerns were voiced at the public meetings and through the online survey that the City be more proactive in targeting land for park development as well as anticipating future community needs for parks.

- Utilize undeveloped City-owned land
- Purchase land for parks before it is developed for another purpose

KEY FINDINGS AND POLICY FOUNDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is comprised of nine chapters, which contain policy recommendations related to the chapter content (excluding Chapter 1).

The policy foundation can be described at three levels: goals, objectives and actions. Their definitions, as they related to this plan, are as follows:

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

Each chapter is summarized as part of the executive summary, including the recommended policies.

CHAPTER 1 – BACKGROUND, CONTEXT, TRENDS & GROWTH SUMMARY

Grove City has grown considerably in recent years. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) anticipates that Grove City will have the highest population growth rate of all cities in Franklin County between 2005 and 2030. However, this growth will not be distributed equally throughout the city.

Grove City is home to a variety of neighborhood layouts and a diverse population. Because of this, the city was divided into five planning areas for the purpose of this plan in order to ensure that the needs of all residents are met with the parks system. In general, areas east of Interstate 71 are expected to experience more growth than neighborhoods west of I-71 because of the amount of land available for development.

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

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PLAN LIMITATIONS

When reading the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan, please be aware that the ideas outlined in it are guidelines and recommendations. Not all ideas discussed in the plan will be implemented and all will require detailed planning and consideration before any action is taken. The Parks and Recreation Department is not bound to this document for all decisions. Should an issue or topic arise that requires the attention of the Parks and Recreation Department that is not covered in this plan, the department has the right to address it. This plan is meant to be flexible and allow the parks system to grow with the community.

As part of the Parks and Recreation Department's accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the department's comprehensive plan must be updated every five years. These five year updates ensure that topics discussed remain relevant and that recommendations are current with the needs and desires of the community.

Planning Area A

Planning Area A includes all land west of Broadway, between Interstate 270 and Rensch Road. This planning area has the youngest population with the lowest median age of all five planning areas.

Planning Area B

Planning Area B is made up of land between Broadway and I-71, north of Columbus Street and Stringtown Road. The population in this planning area is the second highest of all areas, but is not expected to increase much because of the lack of developable land.

Planning Area C

Planning Area C contains land between Broadway and I-71, south of Columbus Street and Stringtown Road. This planning area is an interesting mix of older and newer developments and has the largest population of all planning areas with room to grow.

Planning Area D

Planning Area D is bordered by I-270 to the north, Holton Road to the south, I-71 to the west and the Scioto River to the east. This planning area includes the most commercial land of all planning areas and is anticipated to have the most population growth in the next five years.

Planning Area E

Planning Area E is the largest of the five planning areas and includes land east of I-71, west of the Scioto River and south of Holton Road. There is a large amount of undeveloped land in this area, and the population is expected to grow to reflect this fact. This planning area is the only one where the median age is expected to decrease in the next five years.

Growth Patterns

The manner in which Grove City is growing is also changing. New neighborhoods are being developed at much lower densities than older neighborhoods, meaning that houses are being built on bigger lots. Apartment and condominium developments are also getting larger. The existing parkland dedication requirements are based on the number of housing units proposed, meaning that lower density developments do not have to dedicate as much land to the City for parks or open space. This growth trend means that a single park cannot serve as many residents, as it takes people a longer distance to walk to reach a park. This presents a unique challenge to the parks system.

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CHAPTER 2 – PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department currently manages 18 public parks on more than 260 acres and an additional 135 acres of public open space. The parks system offers a variety of recreational opportunities, both active and passive, for residents to enjoy. In 2010, the estimated park attendance was roughly a quarter million visitors.

Types of Parks

The types of parks in Grove City can be divided into various categories, listed below. Park type is primarily based on size, how many people the park is expected to service and who maintains the park.

- Mini-Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- School Parks
- Private Parks

The various types of parks and open spaces in Grove City play an important role in creating a welcoming and vibrant community as well as providing recreational opportunities for residents.

Access to Parks

Many residential areas in planning areas C, D and E are not within safe walking distance to a public park. In fact, there are no public parks in planning area D, only private parks. There is still undeveloped land in these planning areas, making the development of new parks to serve these residents a possibility. In planning areas A and B, where developable land is harder to find, residents not within safe distance to parks will likely travel to a school to use their facilities.

As discussed in Chapter 1, homes are being developed on larger lots, meaning that a single neighborhood park cannot serve as many residents in newer subdivisions as in older ones. Furthermore, the popular response from the public was to have larger community-level parks, over smaller neighborhood parks. Because of this, the Parks and Recreation Department will be putting more of a focus on proactive acquisition of new land in desirable locations to serve the population at a community level.

Variety in the Parks

One of the five main themes identified from the public during the planning process is to create parks appropriate for all interests and abilities. While the parks system contains a variety of recreational opportunities, a number of additions were requested during the public input portion of the planning process. The most popular requests were:

Dog Parks

Dog parks create a safe environment for residents to take their dogs to enjoy off-leash play. A number of potential locations for a dog park have been identified by the City. A suitable site will be appropriately screened from neighboring properties

CHAPTER 2 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: A community knowledgeable of the city's parks and open space system

Objective 1: Promote public open space within the community and make the community aware of current parks, their sizes and components

Goal 2: A parks system offering the community a variety of park and open space options

Objective 2: Make all parks welcoming and accessible for all levels of users

Objective 3: Pursue and encourage joint uses with schools

Objective 4: Facilities should be able to support multiple activities

Objective 5: Create areas in the parks system for peaceful, passive, non active recreation

Objective 6: Create parks appropriate for the population they serve, while keeping in mind the greater parks system

executive summary

and will be large enough to accommodate separate areas for small breeds and large breeds.

Recreation Center

Although the Grove City YMCA in Fryer Park and the Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA in Urbancrest provide recreational amenities similar to those that would likely be found in a public recreation center, residents voiced their desire to have a separate public facility to meet the growing recreational demands of the community.

Adult Swimming

The Big Splash is currently the only public pool located in Grove City, and while this facility provides a great recreational opportunity for families, the public voiced their desire for a separate adult-focused swimming facility.

Passive Recreation

Land in future and existing parks should be identified for passive recreation, such as garden areas, tree stands and trails.

Utilities in Parks

Having clean and comfortable facilities is an integral part of a welcoming parks system. Installing lights and running water in parks will ensure they can be safely and comfortably enjoyed by residents.

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CHAPTER 3 – NATURAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

The desire for more natural areas in the City's parks was the sixth most popular comment gathered in the public meetings and online surveys. The preservation of natural resources plays an important role in regulating the impact of new development on the environment as well as providing important recreational opportunities to attract tourists. As Grove City continues to grow, it will be important to preserve natural resources within the City and on land to be developed for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

Natural Resources in Grove City

Grove City is home to a variety of natural resources, including streams, wetlands, ponds and large stands of trees. About 70 miles of streams flow through Grove City, the largest of which is Grant Run, which flows through Meadow Grove Park and Indian Trails Park before it flows into the Scioto River. Many of the City's other streams flow through parks or public open space, including Marsh Run (in Gantz Park) and Brown Run (along the Skate Park). Many of Grove City's parks also feature tree stands with trails through them such as Gantz Park, Fryer Park and Henceroth Park.

Threats to Natural Resources

Some natural resources are being threatened as development occurs in Grove City. According to the Central Ohio Greenways Plan, produced by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, many of the streams in Grove City are not in favorable ecological condition. Marsh Run is one of only two streams in Franklin County that was given a rating of "very poor" in the plan. In the same plan, Republican Run was rated "fair", and Grant Run was rated "poor" before it joins with Patzer Ditch and "fair" after it joins with Patzer Ditch. No streams in Grove City included in the analysis were given a "good" rating. As development expands and the city grows, it will be important to keep in mind potential threats to natural resources and determine ways to deter these threats.

Preserving Natural Resources

Although Grove City partners with a variety of regional groups to preserve natural resources and is involved in a number of natural resource protection initiatives, one of the most important ways to ensure that natural resources are protected is by educating the public. This can be done in a number of ways including signage in the parks, online initiatives and more courses about how to help protect natural resources.

CHAPTER 3 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: The protection of the city's natural resources

Objective 1: Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks

Objective 2: Preserve natural resources on land to be developed

Goal 2: A community aware of the natural resources found in and around the city

Objective 3: Provide the community with natural resource education opportunities

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are any feature occurring naturally within the environment that exist relatively undisturbed by mankind in a natural form.

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CHAPTER 4 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: A network of trails providing residents with connectivity to important elements throughout the community and surrounding region

Objective 1: Create a dynamic system that integrates easily into the surrounding regional systems

Objective 2: Strengthen inter-neighborhood connectivity and connect parks through the city's trail network

Goal 2: A community knowledgeable of the city's trail network

Objective 3: Keep the public informed and involved in the trail planning process

Objective 4: Provide bicycle and trail safety education opportunities

CHAPTER 4 – TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

The most popular topic raised by residents during the planning process was the desire for greater connectivity in the trail system. Bike paths and pedestrian trails are not only great recreational assets, they can also be vital to the development of the community. Grove City has more than 30 miles of bikeways, in a variety of forms, including recreational trails, sidepaths and bike lanes. Miles of additional bikeways are planned to accommodate residents' desires for non-motorized connectivity, particularly between the city's parks. Eighty percent of residents who participated in the public input portion of the plan felt that having parks connected by trails was important. By developing a complete and connected network of trails and bikeways, residents will have the ability to travel to parks, schools, and other local and regional destinations by bike or foot rather than relying on automobiles.

Six types of bikeways have been identified for installation to create a connected bikeway system.

Recreational Trail

A recreation trail is a bikeway within its own right of way, separate from the road network. These paths may be used by walkers, runners, skaters and wheelchair users in addition to cyclists.

Sidepath

A sidepath is a bikeway constructed on the side of the roadway within the street right of way, usually on only one side of the road.

Bike Lane

A bike lane is part of the roadway for exclusive use by cyclists. They are commonly used on higher volume streets that experience high demand due to multiple destinations being served. Space for a new bike lane may come from restriping the other lanes or removing parking.

Bicycle Boulevard

A bicycle boulevard is a low-volume roadway designed to give priority to bicyclists and pedestrians that has been modified to enhance bicycle safety and security.

Signed, Shared Roadway (Bike Route)

A signed, shared roadway is a system of on-street bikeways designated with appropriate directional and informational route markers where bicyclists share the roadway with motor vehicles.

Sharrow

Vehicular lanes marked with a "sharrow" symbol indicate that motor vehicles share the roadway with bicycles. Shared lanes are typically used when there is not adequate space for a separated bike lane.

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Grove City Bikeways

Fewer than half of the residents who attended a public meeting or completed an online survey felt that the City was well served by and accessible to trails. While the total miles of bikeways in Grove City increases every year, there is a strong desire in the community to expand the system even more. The Parks and Recreation Department will increase the number of recreational trails that are completely separated from the roadway network, as well as install a variety of other bikeways to create a complete system offering both recreational and non-motorized transportation options able to accommodate users of all skill levels.

Regional Connectivity

Grove City's bikeway network does not currently tie into any of the existing or proposed central Ohio bikeways, yet the City is within a few miles of many existing and proposed regional trails.

- Tying into the Camp Chase Trail would connect Grove City to the Ohio Erie Trail, connecting Cleveland to Cincinnati
- Creating a recreational trail between the Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park and the future Metro Park along the Scioto River (the former Talbott Park) would not only give Grove City residents connectivity to the two parks, but also encourage regional cyclists to travel through Grove City and promote the city as cyclist-friendly

Creating a safe crossing over I-71 will be the one of the largest obstacles faced when finding a safe route for cyclists crossing the city.

Miles of Bikeway by Planning Area

Planning Area	Miles of Existing Bikeways
A	4 miles
B	5.8 miles
C	12.3 miles
D	5.3 miles
E	7.1 miles

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CHAPTER 5 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: A Parks and Recreation Department engaged in partnerships with agencies throughout the community to ensure a variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are available for residents

Objective 1: Encourage local businesses and service organizations to donate services and/or provide sponsorships

Objective 2: Remain aware of other recreational offerings provided by other agencies and continue to partner with other associations to provide a greater variety of recreational opportunities to residents

Goal 2: A community with a wide variety of recreational opportunities available

Objective 3: Continue to provide and enhance recreation and educational opportunities for an aging population

Objective 4: Provide a greater variety of classes for adults

Objective 5: Provide more recreational opportunities for teens

Continued on page 22

CHAPTER 5 – RECREATION

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department has always strived to offer classes appealing to all residents. Some of the first programs offered by the department included tennis tournaments, softball and baseball leagues and hayrides. The department now offers more than 700 activities and programs, taught by more than 65 skilled instructors, each year. In 2010, more than half of all residents in Grove City and Jackson Township participated in a recreation service hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department can be categorized based on the age of the participant:

Preschool

Toddlers to six-year-olds are offered a variety of programs such as gymnastics, dance and arts and crafts. Enrollment in these courses has remained steady in recent years, drawing more than 1,200 participants annually.

Youth

Children between the ages of six and 12 are offered a variety of programs and athletic opportunities. Baseball, basketball and volleyball are the most popular programs for Grove City youth.

Teens

Grove City teenagers in seventh through 12th grades are able to participate in a variety of sports and get involved in City events through the Volunteer Involvement Program (V.I.P.).

Adult

More than 100 classes are offered each season for adults with a mix of informal and formal sporting activities and other programs. Some of the most popular adult programs are yoga, dance and card games.

Seniors (55+)

More than 130 classes and programs are offered annually to residents who are 55 and older. Popular programs include cards and local and regional shopping and entertainment trips.

Grove City partners with a number of service providers within the community including South-Western City Schools, the Grove City Kids Association, the Grove City YMCA, the Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA and Southwest Franklin County Historical Society to provide residents with a variety of recreational programs. These partnerships ensure that the Parks and Recreation Department has accessibility to proper facilities and can meet the recreational needs of residents.

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To expand the department's ability to offer recreational and educational programs, many residents requested the creation of a public recreation facility. Such a facility would help alleviate the strain on existing facilities and allow the department to grow its existing programs as well as offer additional programs.

CHAPTER 5 (CONTINUED) POLICY FOUNDATION

Objective 6: Provide more opportunities for families to participate in programs together

Goal 3: Facilities available for a variety of formal and informal recreational opportunities

Objective 7: Provide facilities and classroom spaces that can accommodate a variety of programs to meet the needs and desires of the community

Recreation Participation in 2010

Program	Participants
Preschool	1,250
P.A.R.K.	1,773
Youth Sports	2,121
Adult Sports	1,992
Evans Center Memberships	1,249

Programs Offered in 2010*

Age Category	Number of Programs
Preschool	37
Youth	136
Adults	81
Seniors	131
Total	385

* Not including multiple sessions of the same class

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CHAPTER 6 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: Grove City benefits economically from parks, recreation, and open space amenities

Objective 1: Demonstrate a positive return on major park investment

Objective 2: Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population

Objective 3: Identify and secure land for future park creation, before adjacent land is developed in order to maximize the value of park investment

Objective 4: Demonstrate a positive economic impact from parks and recreation-related tourism

CHAPTER 6 – IMPACT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the recreational, environmental and aesthetic benefits that parks and open space offer, they are also beneficial to the economic wellbeing of a community. Parks and open space have been shown to increase the value of surrounding properties and are important to attract and retain residents and businesses as well as tourists.

Increase in Property Values

Even in areas with forms of nuisance, such as traffic or noise, property values are positively affected by having a park nearby. A well-maintained, easily visible park increases the benefits even more. An increase in property value means an increase in tax revenue generated from those properties. In some cases, the cost to develop a park can be offset by the increase in property value and increased property tax generated from the development of the park. Furthermore, developing a park can be more fiscally beneficial to the community than developing the same land as residential.

In Grove City, the school district benefits greater than the City in terms of revenue from property taxes. Examining the effect on property taxes on neighboring properties from five parks spread throughout the community, the City gains approximately \$10,000 annually through income tax revenue, while the school district gains more than \$219,000 in revenue attributable to the five parks.

Attracting Residents, Tourists, and Businesses

Parks help create an environment in which people want to reside. In a technologically driven market, where businesses can generally choose where to locate, the perception that a business can attract and retain highly skilled workers is key. Quality of life for employees is ranked high among reasons why businesses locate where they do – particularly in the case of small businesses. Grove City currently has many items in place to help it attract businesses, such as CRAs, TIFs and Enterprise Zones. However, promoting the parks system may improve the likelihood of a business locating in the City.

Parks and recreation amenities can also help attract tourists to Grove City. Out-of-town visitors may come for special park and recreation programs such as cultural events and festivals, as well as competitive athletic events like races, golf tournaments and regional sports competitions. These visitors spend money in the community, which helps to support jobs in the local economy.

executive summary

CHAPTER 7 – LAND ACQUISITION AND PARKLAND DEVELOPMENT

As Grove City grows, land is being consumed for the development of a variety of uses including residential, commercial and industrial. The acquisition and development of parkland in Grove City should continue to be viewed as just as important as the development of land for other purposes.

Parkland Acquisition

Grove City currently provides 7.4 acres of public parkland for every 1,000 residents, which is below the City's goal of 20 acres per 1,000 residents as identified in City Code. This deficit exists citywide, in all planning areas. Given this fact, it is important that the City identifies key pieces of land for acquisition and future development, both for park development and trail connectivity. Land can be acquired either through purchase, using the Recreation Development Fund, General Fund or a combination of the two; dedication, where developers set aside a portion of land to be developed for parkland or open space; or donation from land owners.

New land dedicated to the city as part of a residential subdivision is reviewed by City Administration and Planning Commission prior to being approved by City Council. This review process should be expanded to include the review by the Parks and Recreation Department and the Park Board to ensure that the proposed land for dedication meets the goals outlined in this plan for the development of the parks system. A variety of design considerations should go into the placement and development of parks such as the preservation of natural resources, the orientation and accessibility of the park and access to utilities for installation of water and electricity in the parks.

Parkland Development

After land is acquired for parks, it is programmed for public use. The development process establishes the use of the parks including what types of facilities are constructed and the quantity and location of park amenities, such as playground equipment, trails and restrooms. Public meetings are held when new land is acquired to ensure the park will meet the needs and desires of the community.

Sustainable practices should be used in the development of new parks, aligning with the principles of the Central Ohio Green Pact. Installing fixtures such as benches and shelters made of partially recycled materials, using permeable pavement for recreational trails, and installing storm water management tools such as rain barrels and rain gardens are all examples of sustainable development practices that should be considered when developing parkland.

CHAPTER 7 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: Parkland is acquired and developed to meet the needs and desires of the growing community

Objective 1: Establish land acquisition policies to promote the growth of the park system at a comparable rate to serve the growing population

Objective 2: Provide more opportunities for review and collaboration regarding land acquisition and development

Objective 3: Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population

Objective 4: Preserve natural resources on land to be developed

Objective 5: Encourage residents to donate property for open space uses throughout the community

Objective 6: Provide adequate amenities in parks to serve the community

Objective 7: Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks

executive summary

CHAPTER 8 POLICY FOUNDATION

Goal 1: A Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the community

Objective 1: Adequate staffing levels should be maintained for all departmental functions including administrative staff, program instructors, and parkland maintenance staff

Goal 2: A Parks and Recreation Department that strives to provide the best possible service to the public

Objective 2: Necessary training should be provided for departmental staff

Objective 3: A schedule of park maintenance should be outlined, prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance

Goal 3: The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation

Objective 4: Encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing a Grove City parks foundation

CHAPTER 8 – ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

The Parks and Recreation Department operates under the direction of the Mayor and City Administrator of Grove City. The department employs 18 full-time, 40 part-time and more than 100 seasonal staff. The department holds a variety of positions including a Director, Superintendent, Coordinators and support staff. There are a variety of components to the department, including Preschool/RecSchool, Youth/P.A.R.K., Sports, Adult, 55+, Herbs, Aquatics and Community Relations. A separate park maintenance crew is charged with the maintenance and operations of all City parks. The department also partners with a number of other departments including the Community Relations Office, the Public Service Department and the Development Department.

Park Board

The Park Board, per City Charter, acts as the eyes and ears of the community to serve as an advisory board for the Parks and Recreation Department. It consists of five citizen members appointed by the Mayor. Board members review and make recommendations regarding parks, recreation, open space and cultural arts.

Program and Service Evaluation

Evaluations of the programs and services offered by the Parks and Recreation Department are conducted throughout the year in a variety of forms. At the end of all classes, instructors distribute evaluations, asking the participants various questions about their enjoyment of the program and how it could be improved. The department also receives feedback from a survey conducted by an independent public opinion research firm. These surveys indicate that residents feel that they are treated well by staff and that they rank all programs offered by the city above average.

Professional Growth and Development

The Parks and Recreation Department encourages its employees to be involved and affiliated with professional organizations as well as attend conferences and seminars to stay informed of current events and trends in the field. Certifications are also required to be maintained for certain positions, such as CPR and First Aid for P.A.R.K. staff.

executive summary

CHAPTER 9– IMPLEMENTATION

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document, intended to assess the current status of the City's parks and recreation services as well as provide an analysis of future needs to ensure that as the parks system grows it continually meets the needs of residents. The goals contained in this plan are intended to lay the groundwork for future project and policy implementation. The plan will be used by a variety of bodies, including staff, City Council, Park Board and the public.

A total of 14 goals, 35 objectives and 131 actions have been identified in this plan for the continuous improvement of Grove City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space system. Realizing that some of these goals are ongoing while others require more immediate action, the Parks and Recreation Department reviewed all recommended policies in order to prioritize certain actions. The prioritization will help the department identify and determine appropriate projects for annual work programs and projects for the Capital Improvement Plan.

Just as important as the prioritization of the plan, is the monitoring of the plan. On an annual basis, at minimum, the plan should be reviewed, where the goals, objectives and actions are monitored for effectiveness and relevancy. This review will also allow the Parks and Recreation Department to monitor their progress toward the completion of the policies outlined in the plan.

	Goals	Objectives	Actions
Chapter 1	0	0	0
Chapter 2	2	6	71
Chapter 3	2	3	9
Chapter 4	2	4	12
Chapter 5	3	7	14
Chapter 6	1	4	6
Chapter 7	1	7	15
Chapter 8	3	4	4
Chapter 9	0	0	0
Total	14	35	131



plan format

PLAN FORMAT OUTLINE

1. **How to Read the Plan**
2. **How to Use the Plan**
3. **Plan Limitations**

HOW TO READ THE PLAN

This plan is formatted with nine chapters, starting with a background of Grove City's growth patterns and its place in the central Ohio region, followed by chapters detailing the parks system, recreational programs and how parkland is acquired and developed. Each chapter closes with an outline of the goals and objectives related to the chapter's content, as well as specific policy recommendations for how to achieve them. The final chapter is a detailed breakdown of all policies suggested throughout the plan and a prioritization outline of how to complete and implement these policies.

As a supplement to the plan, select chapters have appendices that provide further detail on many of the topics.

plan format

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This plan is a guiding document, intended to assess the current status of the city's parks and recreation services as well as provide an analysis of future needs to ensure that the parks system grows to continually meet the needs of residents. The goals contained in this plan are intended to lay the groundwork for future projects and policy implementation. The plan will be used by a variety of bodies, including City Council, staff, the Park Board and the public.

The Public

- Learn about parks and recreation facilities
- Understand the benefits of parks, open space and recreation
- Learn about the park development process
- Understand city decisions

City Council

- Direct priorities for parks and recreation services
- Guide planning for expected growth
- Understand public's issues and desires

Park Board

- Tool to promote parks and recreation in the city
- Advocate for priorities
- Determine committee priorities through policy framework

City Staff

- Guide decisions based on adopted policy
- Plan workload and resource needs
- Current park/facility inventory
- Measure accomplishments

Developers

- Detail definitions of park and recreation facilities
- Define baseline development standards for facilities
- Understand park development process
- Provide guidance for project and community design

Stakeholders

(Grove City Kid's Association, YMCA, South-Western City School District, etc.)

- Meet identified gaps in facilities and programs
- Have a policy framework for partnerships
- Compare services to avoid duplication

plan format

PLAN LIMITATIONS

When reading the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan, please be aware that the ideas outlined in it are guidelines and recommendations. Not all ideas discussed in the plan will be implemented and all will require detailed planning and consideration before any action is taken. The Parks and Recreation Department is not bound to this document for all decisions. Should an issue or topic arise that requires the attention of the Parks and Recreation Department that is not covered in this plan, the department has the right to address it. This plan is meant to be flexible and allow the parks system to grow with the community.

As part of the Parks and Recreation Department's accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the department's comprehensive plan must be updated every five years. These five year updates ensure that topics discussed remain relevant and that recommendations are current with the needs and desires of the community.



CHAPTER 1 OUTLINE

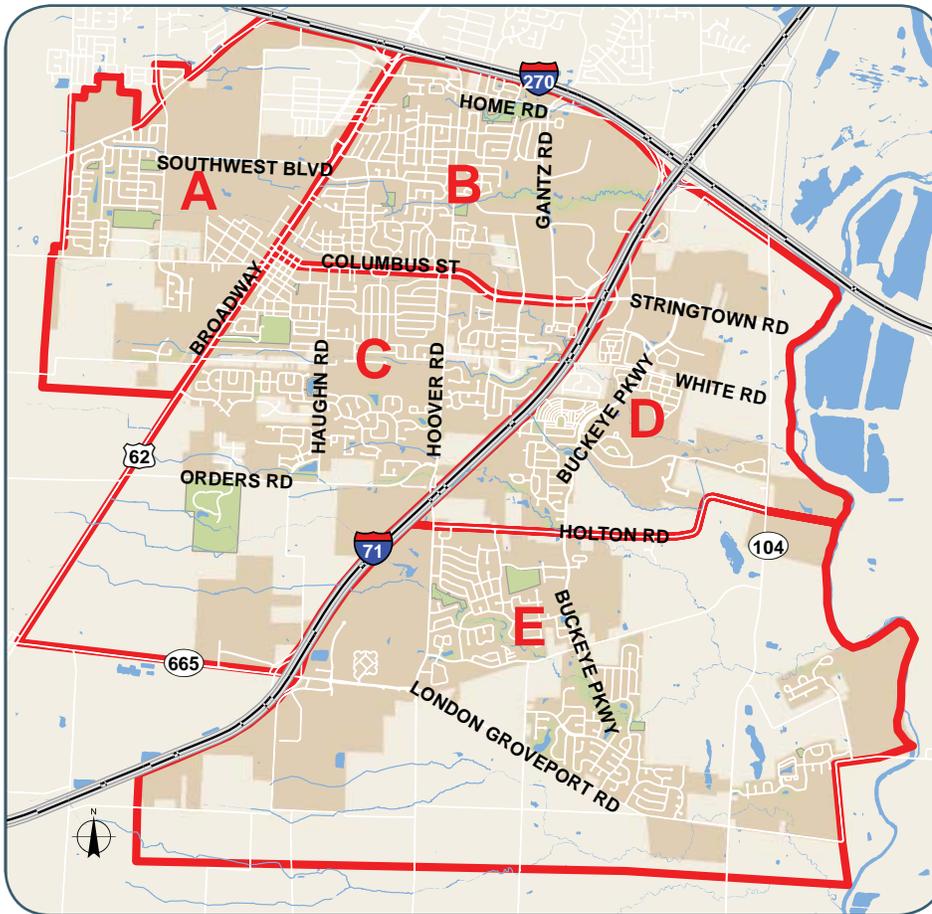
1. **Planning Areas**
 - a. Serving Residents
 - b. Requested Additions to the Park System
2. **Regional Context and Demographics**
3. **Market Trends**
4. **Development Projections**
 - a. Single Family
 - b. Multi-Family
 - c. Impact on the Parks System
5. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

background, trends and growth framework

INTRODUCTION

Grove City has grown considerably in recent years, and this rapid growth is expected to continue. In order to better understand how the parks system can meet the needs of current and future residents, it is important to understand the demographics of current and future residents as well as growth trends and framework for the future growth in the city. By gaining a clear understanding of the context of growth, the Parks and Recreation Department will work to develop parks and recreational programs that meet the needs and desires of current and future residents.

background, trends and growth framework



PLANNING AREAS

Grove City is a unique community that is home to a variety of housing styles, distinctive neighborhood layouts and a diverse population. In order to ensure the needs of all residents are met with the parks system, the City has been divided into five planning areas for the purpose of this comprehensive plan. The planning areas were determined by examining the geographic and demographic trends of the city. These planning areas will be referenced throughout the plan, as much of the decision-making actions will be at the planning-area level.

Planning Area A

Planning Area A is made up of land west of Broadway, between I-270 and Rensch Road, including Urbancrest and part of Jackson Township. A mix of uses can be found within this planning area, including entertainment (Beulah Park), manufacturing (Walmart and other distribution centers), commercial (Town Center) and residential. This planning area is comprised of the youngest population, with the lowest median age of the five planning areas. The population in this planning area is not expected to grow much in the next five years, partially because its growth is somewhat limited by I-270 to the north and Columbus to the west. Furthermore, this planning area has the lowest percentage of land devoted to residential uses, leaving little opportunity for population growth.

PLANNING AREAS

Grove City can be broken down into five planning areas. During the public input process, residents vocalized their suggestions for the city as a whole as well as for their specific area of interest. Each area has unique needs, land acquisition options, demographics and growth patterns.

Planning Area A

2010 Estimates

- 5,470 Residents
- 1,934 Households
- 2.83 People Per Household
- Median Age: 31.6

2015 Estimates

- 5,757 Residents
- 2,031 Households
- 2.83 People Per Household
- Median Age: 32.3

Planning Area B

2010 Estimates

- 10,005 Residents
- 4,109 Households
- 2.39 People Per Household
- Median Age: 38.5

2015 Estimates

- 10,291 Residents
- 4,250 Households
- 2.42 People Per Household
- Median Age: 38.6

background, trends and growth framework

Planning Area C

2010 Estimates

- 10,799 Residents
- 4,152 Households
- 2.58 People Per Household
- Median Age: 40.6

2015 Estimates

- 11,656 Residents
- 4,459 Households
- 2.61 People Per Household
- Median Age: 41.3

Planning Area D

2010 Estimates

- 2,805 Residents
- 1,092 Households
- 2.57 People Per Household
- Median Age: 45.9

2015 Estimates

- 3,471 Residents
- 1,355 Households
- 2.56 People Per Household
- Median Age: 47.1

Planning Area E

2010 Estimates

- 8,753 Residents
- 3,047 Households
- 2.87 People Per Household
- Median Age: 37.0

2014 Estimates

- 9,761 Residents
- 3,415 Households
- 2.86 People Per Household
- Median Age: 35.8

Planning Area A is home to three city parks and one township park, for a total of approximately 36 acres of programmed parkland. Also, one intermediate school and a high school are located in Planning Area A.

Planning Area B

Planning Area B contains land between Broadway and I-71, north of Columbus Street and Stringtown Road. This planning area contains a mix of uses including industrial (Southpark industrial park), commercial (Stringtown Road) and residential. The population in this planning area is second highest of all the planning areas, but is not expected to increase much over time because little land is left to be developed. Neighborhoods in Planning Area B are more established and were developed in a denser pattern than newer residential developments.

Planning Area B is home to five city parks, including the Grove City Skate Park, Gantz Park and the Big Splash at Evans Park, with a total of roughly 37 acres of programmed parkland. Multiple schools can be found in this planning area, including three elementary schools and one middle school.

Planning Area C

Planning Area C is made up of land between Broadway and I-71, south of Columbus Street and Stringtown Road. This area is primarily residential, except for the Stringtown Road corridor. Planning Area C offers a unique mix of residential development containing both the original plat of Grove City plus subdivisions currently under development. This area has the highest population and contains the most households of the five planning areas. The south half of Planning Area C is primarily agricultural and vacant land, providing potential for growth.

Planning Area C is home to seven parks including Windsor Park and Fryer Park, with a total of approximately 160 acres of programmable parkland. There are four public schools located in Planning Area C, including one high school, one middle school, one intermediate school and one elementary school.

Planning Area D

Planning Area D is bordered by I-270 to the north, Holton Road to the south, I-71 to the west and the Scioto River to the east. Home to Parkway Centre, this planning area has the highest percentage of commercial land out of all the planning areas. Development in Planning Area D has occurred most recently, with much development still underway. Planning Area D is also home to the Pinnacle Golf Club and is anticipated to have the highest percentage growth in population of all the planning areas in the next five years. Residents in Planning Area D have the highest median age of the planning areas, and this trend is anticipated to continue to increase in the next five years.

Planning Area D does not contain any public parks. The recreation center for the development is located here, as is its golf course. However, no public recreation facilities are located within this area. The Creekside subdivision contains a neighborhood park, and multiple pocket parks are located throughout Pinnacle, but they are not public. Additionally, there are no public schools located within Planning Area D.

background, trends and growth framework

Planning Area E

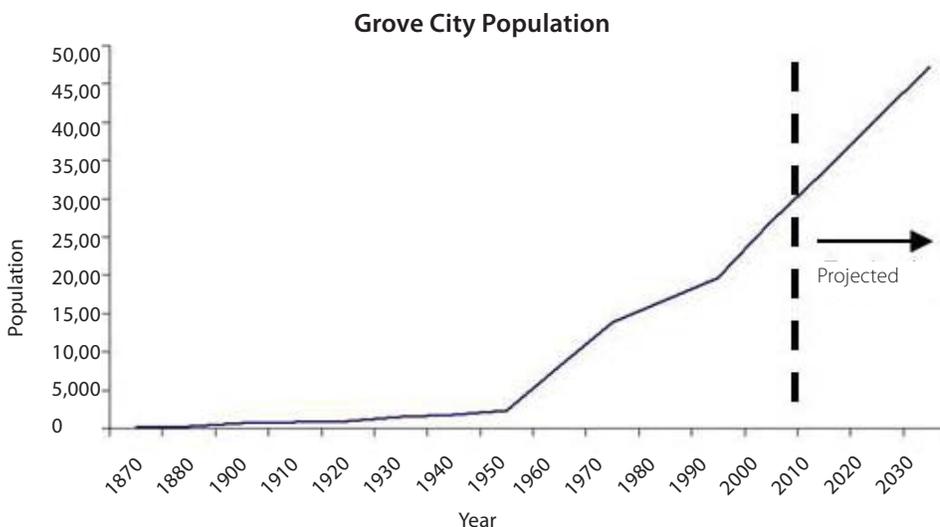
Planning Area E is the largest planning area, made up of the land east of I-71, west of the Scioto River and south of Holton Road. The population in this area is expected to increase considerably over the next five years, considering the amount of undeveloped land within it. The median age of residents in Planning Area E is younger than most of the other planning areas and is the only planning area that is estimated to have a decrease in median age in the next five years. Commercial and industrial uses can be found in this planning area, but in lower concentrations than other planning areas.

Five parks are located in Planning Area E including Henceroth Park, for more than 40 total acres of city parkland. The former Talbott Park lies within Planning Area E and was recently dedicated to Franklin County Metro Parks to be included as part of a future Metro Park along the Scioto River. There is also one elementary school and a middle school within this planning area.

REGIONAL CONTEXT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Grove City's close proximity to downtown Columbus combined with available land for development have helped the community become one of the largest suburbs of Columbus with a quickly growing population. Between 2000 and 2010, the population of Grove City grew approximately 26 percent. This growth is considerably higher than the 6 percent estimated population increase experienced by the combined population of Franklin County during the same time period. According to MORPC projections, Grove City will have the highest growth rate of all Franklin County cities between 2005 and 2030. By the year 2015, Grove City is projected to have a total population of more than 37,000 – a 36 percent increase from its 2000 population.

This growth will not be distributed equally throughout the city. The majority of growth is expected to occur east of I-71 where new developments such as Pinnacle and Meadow Grove Estates are bordered by hundreds of acres of undeveloped or underdeveloped land. Between 2000 and 2009, the area east of I-71 and north of



background, trends and growth framework

AN AGING POPULATION

Between 2000 and 2010, the median age of Grove City residents rose almost three years. The median age of all residents in Franklin County increased by only 1.6 years.

Holton Road the number of residents increased almost 380 percent. The north and west portions of Grove City, with an older housing stock and less land available for development, are expected to remain fairly stable in terms of population.

The population of Grove City is also aging. Between the years 2000 and 2010, the median age of Grove City residents rose almost three years, from 35.6 to 38.4. In the same time period, the median age of all residents in Franklin County increased by only 1.6 years.

Education and Employment

In 2010, it was estimated that more than 30 percent of the city's population over the age of 25 held a degree of some kind. An additional 22 percent had taken college courses, but had not yet earned a degree.

It is estimated that almost 70 percent of Grove City residents hold white-collar jobs, with about 45 percent of the city's workforce employed in the service industry. The second most common employing industry in the city is retail trade, employing approximately 12 percent of the working population, followed by finance, insurance and real estate, employing almost 10 percent of the working population. These figures are similar to those throughout Franklin County.

Less than 9 percent of Grove City's population older than 16 was estimated to be unemployed in 2010. This is less than the unemployment rate of Franklin County, which is at approximately 11 percent.

MARKET TRENDS

In order to understand how the parks system can better suit the community, it is important to understand current consumer market trends. The desires and needs of residents were voiced through a public input process. To supplement this input, market research reports were obtained for each planning area, showing the general likeliness of residents in that area to participate in certain activities.

Interest in bicycling in the city is very high. Market research indicates that four of the five planning areas had a market potential for cycling higher than the national average. Input from the public during the planning process confirmed that there is a strong desire for better connectivity of trails for cycling. Improving trails and connectivity was the most frequently expressed comment in the public meetings and online surveys.

There is also an expressed desire in the community for more opportunities to participate in passive recreation, including activities such as bird watching and photography, also reflected in market research reports.

More details about specific market research and public input will be mentioned throughout the plan.

background, trends and growth framework

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTIONS

Grove City contains a diverse stock of housing and other development, evident in the varying neighborhood designs and layouts. Recent development shows a trend of increasing land consumption, either through larger lots for single family dwellings or larger, more expansive apartment complexes and condominium developments. Development is occurring primarily in the south and east of Grove City, where vacant land is readily available.

Single Family Development

Single family development has changed considerably throughout Grove City's history. Development trends are evident throughout the city, including the original plat of Grove City in historic Town Center, still preserved in many housing arrangements and buildings, to the compact neighborhoods of the 1950's and the larger lot developments popular since the 1990's. Comparing a single family development from the 1950's to one from the 1990's illustrates the change in residential development patterns. The Brookgrove subdivision, located between Columbus Street and Woodgrove Drive, was built in the 1950's and contains approximately 350 houses and sits on 76 acres, for a density of about 4.6 dwelling units per acre. Hoover Crossing, developed in the 1990's and located between Haughn Road and Hoover Road, has a density half that of Brookgrove. It is also home to approximately 350 houses but consumes 155 acres, giving the development a density of 2.3 dwelling units per acre.

According to population projections, Grove City will add approximately 2,000 residents between 2009 and 2014. Based on the city's average household size of 2.59, these 2,000 new residents will require 800 new homes. If these 800 new houses are developed at the city's average density of development from the past five years, they will require about 2,500 acres of land to develop new lots. The entire city was approximately 10,000 acres in area in 2009, meaning that a 6 percent increase in population will increase in the city's size by approximately 25 percent. This is not a sustainable pattern by which to grow if the city intends to adequately serve all its residents while protecting the natural resources around it. It is important to note that this figure is based on the unrealistic assumption that all new residents will reside in single family houses. Grove City is also home to many multi-family developments, which have developed in their own unique manner over the years.

Multi-Family Development

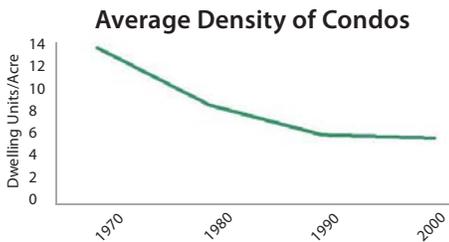
Since the 1980's, multi-family developments have shifted dramatically from apartments to condominiums. Prior to 1990, only three condominiums had been developed in Grove City, compared to 18 different apartment complexes built at the time. Since 1990, only seven new apartment complexes have been built, versus 18 condominium developments. This shift in development shows the changing demand in the market for housing types. According to a 2010 Columbus Dispatch article, Grove City apartments have a vacancy rate of approximately 20 percent with older developments experiencing higher vacancy rates than more recently developed establishments.

Similar to single-family developments, the size of multi-family development has increased over time. Except for the 1980's, the size of apartment complexes, including

background, trends and growth framework

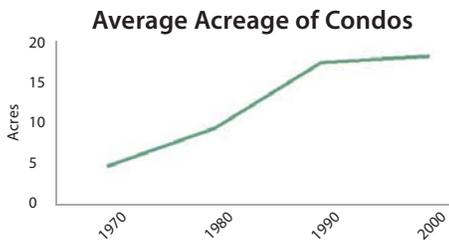
the total acreage of development, the number of units in the complex and number of buildings housing these units has increased in every decade over the past five decades. This increase was even more pronounced in apartments developed since the 1990's, where the average number of units in apartment complexes has almost tripled and the total number of parking spaces on the site has approximately doubled.

As with apartments, the total acreage, number of units and number of buildings in condo complexes have increased in every decade since the 1970's. The number of parking spaces per unit has almost doubled from the 1980's to the 2000's. Much like single-family developments, the size of the developments are increasing and developing at a lower density, consuming more land.

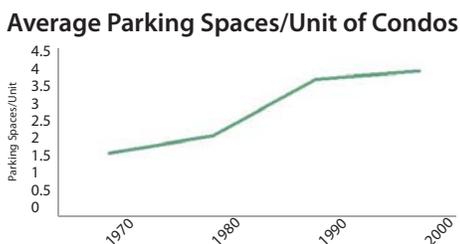


Impact on the Parks System

The varying development patterns found in Grove City creates a challenge for the parks system. In the older neighborhoods, there are more neighborhood and pocket parks. These parks have smaller service areas and are best suited for developments with higher densities. In newer developments, with much lower densities, a single pocket park cannot serve as many residents because the houses are spread much farther apart, and the subdivisions are much larger in total area.



Density also plays a key role in the amount of open space required in a development. Currently, the Grove City Planning and Zoning Code requires residential developments to dedicate a certain amount of the land within the development to be used for open space or parkland. This figure is calculated based on the number of proposed dwelling units in the development. Therefore, a development with a lower density (i.e. fewer houses proposed) would be required to dedicate less land to open space.



Development will likely occur rapidly in the coming years in Grove City. As this growth occurs, it will be important for the parks system to grow with the community in order to provide all residents with appropriate recreational opportunities. A closer examination of park development requirements and recommended policy adjustments are outlined in Chapter 7.



CHAPTER 2 OUTLINE

1. **Grove City's Park System**
 - a. Serving Residents
 - b. Requested Additions to the Park System
 - c. Passive Recreation
 - d. Welcoming and Accessible Parks
 - e. Partnerships
 - f. Keeping the Public Informed
2. **Parks and Open Space by Planning Area**
 - a. Park and Open Space Details
3. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

parks and open space

INTRODUCTION

Grove City is home to a diverse system of parks and open space, distributed throughout the community. The city's parks offer a variety of recreational opportunities both active to passive. As the city grows, it will be important to understand what assets the park system currently holds and also to have an idea of potential recreational needs of future residents.

One of the five main themes identified from the public during the planning process is to create parks appropriate for all interests and abilities. Through the public input process of this plan, specific ideas were generated on how to improve the system. This chapter will examine Grove City's parks and open space and identify ways in which the Parks and Recreation Department can work to improve the system to meet the needs and desires of community residents.

parks and open space

OVERVIEW

The Parks and Recreation Department aims to create and maintain a parks system that pleases all residents with a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. Part of creating a parks system that meets the needs of residents is ensuring that residents are aware of existing features. Two main goals have been identified by the Parks and Recreation Department related to parks and open space that will guide the contents of this chapter:

1. A community knowledgeable of the City's parks and open space system.
2. A parks system offering the community a variety of park and open space options.

PARKLAND DEFINITIONS

Grove City's parks system is made up of a variety of public parks, which are supplemented by a number of private parks in subdivisions as well as public school parks that provide additional recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents.

Park

A facility designed to serve the recreational, educational or cultural needs of the residents of the community. Such facilities include mini, neighborhood, community, private and school parks as described below.

Mini-Park

Mini-parks address the unique recreational needs of the immediate area around it. Typically, mini-parks are less than one acre in size and serve only the neighborhood directly around it.

Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks are the basic unit of the park system and serve the recreational needs of the neighborhood within easy walking distance, uninterrupted by roads and physical barriers.

Community Park

Community parks meet community-based recreation needs.

School Park

Parks on school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community and special-use parks.

Private Park/Recreational Facility

Private parks and recreational facilities are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.

parks and open space

Open Space

Open space is land and/or water areas retained for the preservation of which in its present use would:

1. Conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources; or
2. Protect streams or water supply; or
3. Promote conservation of soils and wetlands; or
4. Enhance neighboring parks, forests, or other open space; or
5. Enhance recreation opportunities.

CHAPTER 2 APPENDICES

An inventory of park features also allows the Parks and Recreation Department to see trends in park development and ensure all parks are developed to their full potential.

GROVE CITY'S PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Grove City is home to 18 uniquely developed parks, one undeveloped park and many additional acres preserved as open space. Each park offers residents a variety of recreational opportunities both active and passive ranging from ball diamonds and playground equipment, to picnic tables and charcoal grills. A number of private parks as well as school properties help to complement the city's public parks to give residents a variety of recreational opportunities.

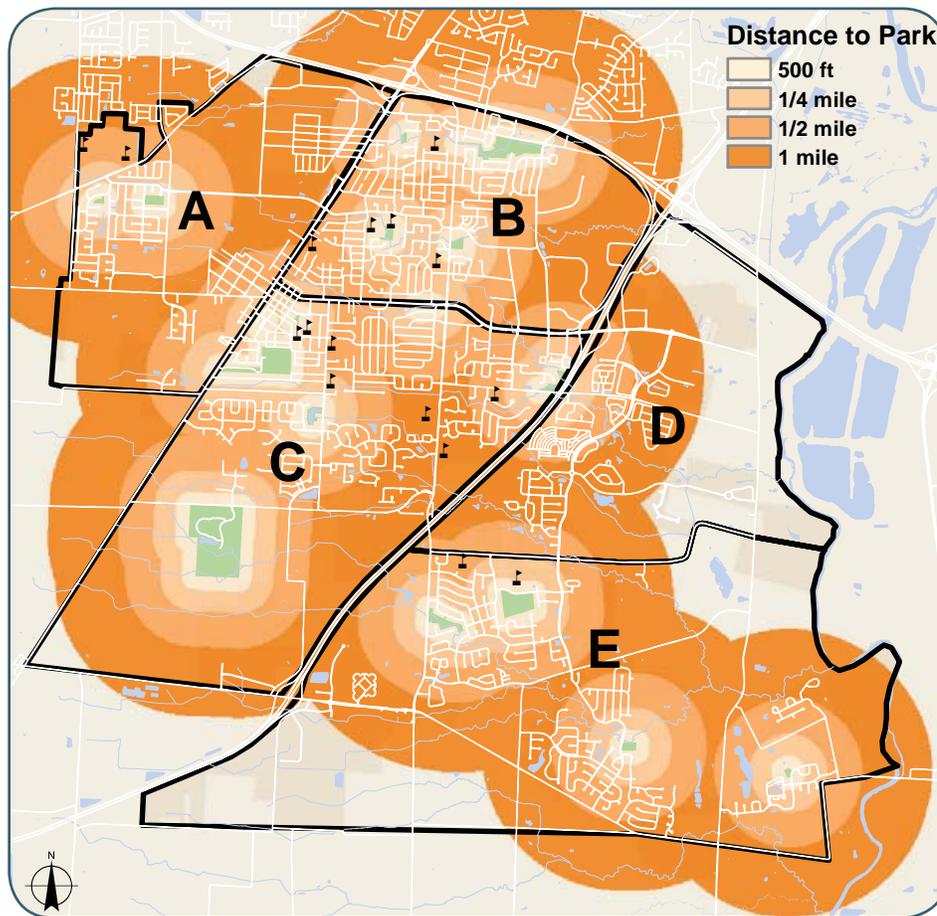
A comprehensive inventory of park features was collected in order to understand what features are in each park and how they can be improved to better serve residents. An inventory of park features also allows the Parks and Recreation Department to see trends in park development and ensure all parks are developed to their full potential. For example, all city-owned parks have uniform entry signs except Concord Lakes Park, Hoover Park and Scioto Meadows Park. These entry features play an important role in increasing awareness of the parks. The inventory also shows that almost all of the city's parks include some form of playground equipment. While play equipment is important to keep young residents active, it is also important to keep some parks in the system for passive use only, such as Sesquicentennial Park. The Parks and Recreation Department can also use park features to convey important messages to the public. For instance, the placement of recycling containers in all of the parks will show residents the city's commitment to sustainability.

Serving Residents

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) suggests that different types of parks have different "service areas," or distances that residents are expected to travel. For example, a small pocket park will likely only attract residents within a couple blocks of the park, while people from across the city will travel to a community park. It should be noted that community-level parks also serve as neighborhood parks for those who live within safe walking distance of that park. For example, residents who live in close proximity to Gantz Park utilize it as their neighborhood park even though it is classified and used by the greater Grove City community as a community park. Fryer Park on the other hand, is not easily accessible to residents without traveling by car and does not serve on a neighborhood level.

parks and open space

Park Service Area Map



It should be noted that the distances displayed on the service area map are straight-line distances and do not necessarily reflect the actual distance a resident would have to travel to reach a park. For instance, a stream or major roadway might create an obstacle for a resident, making them walk a greater distance around the barrier to reach a park than the figure shows.

Based on the service area map, many residents in Planning Area D are not within reasonable walking distance of a public park. This comes as no surprise as there are no public parks within this planning area. Many residents in Planning Area C are also underserved by parks, primarily in the Hoover Crossing and Briarwood Hills subdivisions. Planning Area A will benefit greatly from the development of the Demorest Road Park, as many of the residents in Concord Park and Elginfield subdivisions are not currently within easy walking distance to a public park.

The public stated in meetings and through the online surveys that, in general, there is a desire for more attention to be dedicated to the larger, community-level parks over the small neighborhood parks. As was discussed in Chapter 1 - Background, Trends and Growth Framework, homes are being developed on larger lots, making it harder for a single park to service as many residents as homes on smaller lots. Making this fact even more challenging is that parkland that is donated to the city is often not desirable for residential development and is in an inconvenient location for residents.

Because of these factors, the Parks and Recreation Department will be making a more focused effort to proactively acquire new land in desirable locations to serve the population at a community level. More information about how the city acquires land for parks can be found in Chapter 7 – Land Acquisition and Parkland Development.

SERVICE AREAS

The type and size of the park greatly impacts the number of residents that utilize that park and from how far away residents will travel to use the park. For the purpose of analyses conducted in this plan, mini-parks are assumed to have a service area of 1/4 mile, neighborhood parks serve a 1/2 mile and community parks serve one mile.

parks and open space

“

I believe that Grove City needs a water park for adults that is deeper than 5 feet and has fun activities that can pertain to adults. It would be wonderful if the facility had an indoor and outdoor pool that also the whole family could enjoy.

- Planning Area C Resident

”

OBJECTIVE 4

Facilities should be able to support multiple activities.

“

The Veterans Memorial is a great idea... Grove City is and always will be a huge veterans supporter.

- Planning Area C Resident

”

FUTURE ADDITIONS TO THE PARK SYSTEM

Throughout the public input portion of the planning process, residents voiced their desire for various additions to the parks system. Some of these requested items include a dog park, recreation center, adult swimming pool, more traditional playground equipment and a performing area.

Dog Park

Dog parks were the fourth most mentioned item during the public input process of the plan, accounting for almost 9 percent of all comments. A number of potential locations for a dog park have been identified, but significant consideration must be given to the impact it would have on neighboring properties. A suitable site will be appropriately screened from neighboring properties, be large enough to accommodate separate areas for small breeds and large breeds and have adequate room for parking. It should also be located in an area that is connected to the trail network so residents can safely walk their dogs to the park.

Recreation Center

Having a public recreation center in the city was the fifth most mentioned topic during the public input process of the plan. More than 60 comments were generated relating to recreation centers. Although the Grove City YMCA and the Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA in Urbancrest provide recreational amenities similar to a public recreation center, residents voiced their desire to have a separate public facility to meet the growing recreational demands of the community. A more detailed look at recreation centers is found in Chapter 5 – Recreation.

Adult Swimming

The Big Splash at Evans Park provides great recreational opportunities for families. During the public input portion of the plan, residents requested a separate adult swimming facility. An additional swimming facility would expand programming options and increase the number of classes offered.

Memorial Park

Grove City is proud of its veterans and takes pride in honoring their time and dedication to their country. During the public input portion of the plan, residents were asked if they would prefer to see a memorial park located in an existing park or a new park. The answers received were split, with half the responders wishing for a new park to be designed with a memorial in it. Half of the responders felt locating a memorial in an existing park was more appropriate. Residents had positive comments regarding the potential memorial park, regardless of its location.

parks and open space

PASSIVE RECREATION

A complete parks system is one that offers both active and passive recreation opportunities. Grove City currently has examples of both active and passive recreation in its parks and open spaces. Many of the existing park features are considered active recreational features, such as ball fields and playgrounds. Trails through wooded areas and opportunities for bird watching are examples of passive recreation.

More natural areas was the sixth most popular comment received from the public during the planning process, with almost 50 individual comments. It will be important to identify significant natural resources to protect and preserve as the city grows to potentially integrate into passive recreational areas. Information about the natural resources located in Grove City and their importance to the parks system are outlined in Chapter 3 – Natural Resources and Management.

In addition to identifying land in future parks to be used for passive recreation, land in existing parks should be set aside for passive recreation. For example, Fryer Park has approximately 15 acres of preserved woods with trails leading through them. This passive recreational amenity could be expanded by creating a garden area at the north entrance to the trails. The garden area could have a variety of passive recreational and educational opportunities such as a community garden, naturalist stations or educational signage.

Community Gardens

Community gardens offer residents recreational and educational opportunities. Many central Ohio communities offer community gardens, including Urbancrest, with multiple garden plots behind the Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA. The gardens promote wellness and nature education and are a great place for community members to connect. Anyone in the community may utilize community gardens, but they are particularly important for people who don't have space at home, such as people who live in condominiums or apartments. Communities typically rent out plots a season at a time to allow gardeners the ability to plant and watch their gardens grow the entire season.

The location of a community garden should be carefully considered. Good soil and access to water are the two most important features, and there should be room for the garden to expand as demand increases. Several plot sizes and costs should be offered.

WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE PARKS

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department prides itself on a parks system that may be enjoyed by all users. Examples of full-interaction park features are Braille and sign language features in the Windsor Park play area, accessible parking spaces at community parks and ramps into play areas. Perhaps the most accessible element of Grove City's park system is Discovery Frontier at Fryer Park. The playground was specially designed for people of all abilities, and the play equipment is wheelchair accessible and stimulating for people of all development levels. The parks system also

OBJECTIVE 5

Create areas in the parks system for peaceful, passive, non-active recreation

ACTIVE RECREATION

Leisure activities, usually performed with others, often require equipment and take place at prescribed places, sites or fields. The term active recreation includes but is not limited to swimming, court games such as tennis, field sports such as baseball, golf and playground activities.

PASSIVE RECREATION

Recreational activities that generally do not require a developed site and that can be carried out with little alteration or disruption to the area in which they are performed.

OBJECTIVE 2

Make all parks welcoming and accessible for all levels of users.

parks and open space

offers recreational opportunities for all levels of athleticism ranging from passive trails through wooded areas to active exercise equipment in Henceroth Park.

Welcoming and accessible parks are also defined by clean and well-maintained facilities. Many residents stated that running water in more parks was a priority in order to create more sanitary restrooms and install drinking fountains. These features are not always feasible because of a lack of utility lines in the area. However, the Parks and Recreation Department aims to provide clean facilities in the parks whenever possible.

OBJECTIVE 3

Pursue and encourage joint uses with schools.

PARTNERSHIPS

While Grove City has a variety of facilities for recreational programs, a strong partnership with the South-Western City School District provides supplemental ball fields and program facilities, including space for the P.A.R.K. after-school program. However, a rental application must be submitted every time the city wishes to use these facilities. As the city grows, it will be important to maintain and potentially expand this partnership to include more facilities and create a more formal agreement for facility rental and utilization.

Schools are also important because of the informal recreational opportunities they provide. Residents use school property for play equipment, ball fields or the surrounding grounds. Schools act as important additions to the parks system, particularly in Planning Area B, where the majority of Grove City's elementary schools are located and few neighborhood parks exist. In more fully developed planning areas, where land to create new parks is not available, it will be important for the city to partner with schools to ensure the school property meets the needs of nearby residents who use them in place of public parks. To create a more official relationship regarding the utilization of schools for parkland, the city should enter into an agreement with the schools to help maintain and develop school properties to meet the needs of residents.

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote public open space within the community and make the community aware of current parks.

KEEPING THE PUBLIC INFORMED

No matter how expansive a parks system is, if the public is not aware of what the system offers, park attendance will not meet its full potential. Grove City currently publishes information in a variety of forms about the parks system for residents. As the system expands, it will continue to be important to keep the public informed of the variety of parks and recreational opportunities available to them. A variety of tools should be utilized to ensure all residents have access to this information.

The Source Activity Guide

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department publishes The Source, a tri-annual activity guide that outlines classes, events, city news and general park information. The Source is mailed to all residents in Grove City as well as Evans Center members. In addition to the online edition, hard copies are available at City Hall, the Grove City Library, Grove City Welcome Center and Museum, Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce, Jackson Township Administration Building, Evans Center and Grove City YMCA.

parks and open space

Grove City Website

The Grove City website offers a wealth of information related to the parks system. Specific information about city parks, programs, recreational facilities, departmental news and more is available at www.grovecityohio.gov. As the system continues to expand, the Parks and Recreation Department will maintain and update website to keep the public informed.

Social Media

The City of Grove City maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts to communicate with the public. These platforms are used to disseminate event and program information, have conversations with followers and post photos and videos.

Communication with the Schools

The partnership with the South-Western City School District opens a line of communication for students and staff in Grove City schools. In addition to making morning announcements at the schools, promotional print pieces may be distributed through the central office.

From the Grove E-News

The Grove City e-news, From the Grove, is a free subscription-based e-mail update for city news. Several thousand subscribers choose the news they are interested in receiving, including sports, events, youth programs, senior programs and more.

Maps

Grove City has maps available for select parks in the system. The trails map contains information about trails and parks in Grove City and maps of some community park features. Maps are also available for other parks such as the Gardens at Gantz Farm.

Rules and Regulations

The majority of public park rules and regulations were approved in 1999 and have not been amended since that time. As the park system grows to meet the needs of residents, it will be important to keep these rules and regulations up-to-date. The rules should also be easy to locate on the city's website to help residents understand what is permitted in the parks.

parks and open space

OBJECTIVE 6

Create parks appropriate for the population they serve, while keeping in mind the greater parks system.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE BY PLANNING AREA

Grove City is home to a variety of parks, located throughout the city. Parks are programmed for the population they aim to serve, which varies based on the type of park. For the purpose of this plan, the city was divided into five planning areas in order to better understand the needs of residents. Each park has been examined based on its strengths, weaknesses and future opportunities for development in order to meet the needs of park users. The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department aims to create parks that meet the needs and desires of all city residents.

PLANNING AREA A PARKS:

Concord Lakes Park

Neighborhood Park
1.9 acres

Westgrove Park

Neighborhood Park
5.7 acres

Demorest Road Park

Under Development
23.0 acres

Tanglebrook Park

Township Park
5.5 acres

Total Park Acreage: 36.1

PLANNING AREA A OPEN SPACE:

Public Open Space

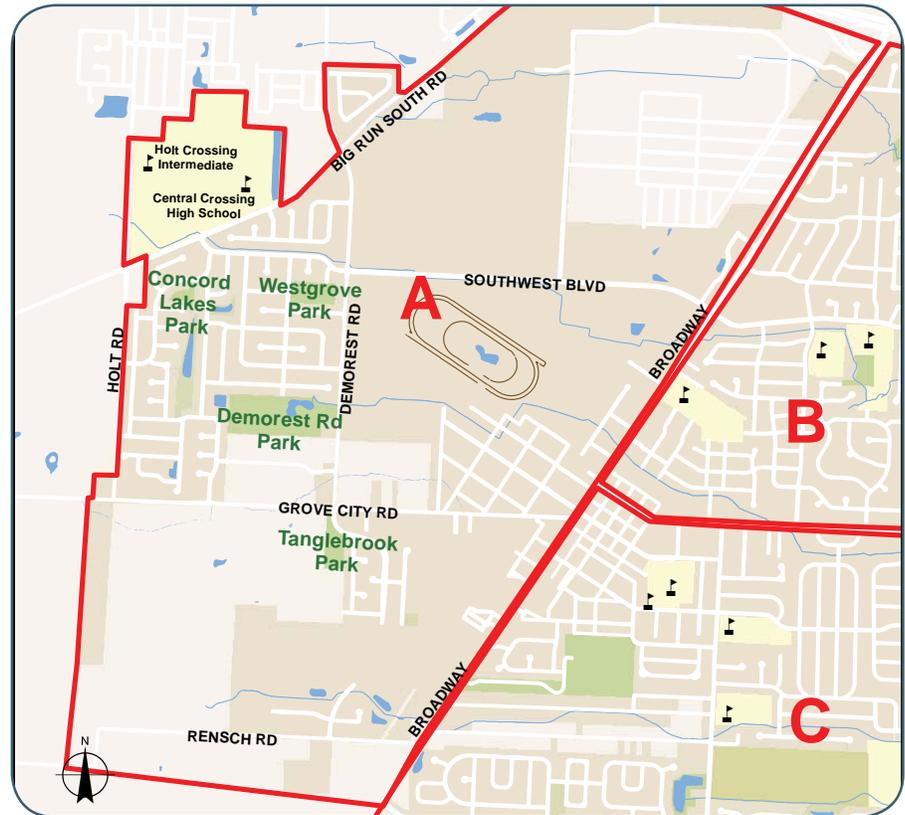
10.3 acres

Private Open Space

11 acres

Total Open Space Acreage: 21.3

PLANNING AREA A



Planning Area A is home to three city parks and one township park for a total of approximately 36 acres of programmed parkland.

During the public input phase of the planning process, approximately half of the residents from Planning Area A who responded to the survey felt their neighborhood was well served by parks, and more than 25 percent felt their neighborhood was not well served by parks. Considering that Planning Areas A is one of only two planning areas without a community park and has the second fewest parks, it is understandable that residents feel this way. However, with the development of the Demorest Road Park, it is the city's intent to provide a multi-use park for residents in this planning area.

parks and open space

Concord Lakes Park

Concord Lakes is a neighborhood park dedicated to the city with the creation of the Concord Lakes subdivision. It is almost two acres in size and accessible from Lake Mead Drive. Within the park, there is a half basketball court, a shelter house with picnic tables and a grill. A variety of playground equipment is located in this park, as well as a large, open area for free play.

Concord Lakes Park is well developed and receives a lot of traffic on school days because it is located between many houses in the Concord Lakes and Elginfield subdivisions and Central Crossing High School and Holt Crossing Intermediate.

Concord Lakes Park serves the youngest demographic of all the city parks. Its potential service area also has the highest average household size, meaning houses within the Concord Lakes neighborhood are very likely to have children.

Although the park currently offers many amenities, there is room for improvement. Currently, the park does not have any type of signage indicating that it is a city park. While there are trash receptacles, there are no recycling containers in the shelter area to encourage residents to recycle appropriate materials. There is no formal parking for residents who drive to the park, but on-street parking is permitted on Lake Mead Drive. The park is not currently connected to other parks through the trail network. However, this plan will outline possibilities for how to provide this connection in Chapter 4 - Trails and Connectivity.

Actions:

- *Install entry sign*
- *Install recycling containers at shelter*
- *Connect park to trail network (see Chapter 4)*

Westgrove Park

Westgrove Park is a neighborhood park located off of Magnolia Street and was dedicated to the city as part of the Westgrove subdivision, and partially developed with funds from the Land and Water Conservation Grant. It is almost six acres in size and offers a basketball court and large shelter with four picnic tables and a grill. A large playground area offers a variety of equipment and benches. A large open area in this park is used to host soccer games, and a small parking lot is available at the end of Red Oak Street. On-street parking is permitted on Magnolia Street for additional accessibility.

Westgrove Park serves the second youngest demographic of all city parks, only behind Concord Lakes. Its potential service area also has the second highest average household size, meaning houses within the Westgrove neighborhood are very likely to have children.

The playground is the same as that at Concord Lakes. Residents in this planning area and others requested a greater variety of playground equipment be installed in city parks.



CONCORD LAKES PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 2,598
Households: 812
Household Size: 3.20
Median Age: 31.2

parks and open space



WESTGROVE PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 2,665

Households: 835

Household Size: 3.19

Median Age: 31.3

While there is a trail leading from the park entrance off of Magnolia Street to the basketball court, there is the potential to extend the trail around the perimeter of the park, creating a walking trail (more than a third of a mile in total distance) for exercise. The addition of drinking fountains to the park would also encourage activity. There are currently no recycling containers in Westgrove Park. To encourage recycling, it is recommended that containers be placed at the shelter and near the basketball court.

Westgrove Park has had minor issues with vandalism, partially due to its size, making it harder to monitor despite its frontage on Magnolia Street and neighboring houses. A potential solution is to install security cameras to deter vandals, as well as install more lighting to improve visibility.

Actions:

- Install recycling containers at the shelter
- Install an entrance sign at the parking area off Red Oak Street
- Install drinking fountain
- Extend the walking trail around the perimeter of the park

Demorest Road Park

The Demorest Road Park is 23 acres of currently undeveloped property located on Demorest Road. The park is also accessible from Magnolia Street and contains a large pond, more than an acre in size. Because of the park's size, there is the potential for multiple uses including walking and leisure trails, a large playground area, a picnic area and remaining land for open space. The development of this park will bring a community park to an area that currently lacks a large-scale park.

Actions:

Develop Demorest Road Park as a community park with a variety of recreational features

Tanglebrook Park

Tanglebrook Park is a township park located on Demorest Road, south of Grove City Road. The park is more than five acres in size and features a variety of playground equipment as well as a jogging trail. A parking lot with more than 20 spaces is available for park users.

Town Center

Grove City's Town Center is a walkable environment with a network of small parks and open spaces and is the site for many festivals and special events. This creates a park atmosphere with the benefit of commercial and civic uses. Grove City Road Park, located at the intersection of Grove City Road and Broadway, offers a picturesque gazebo and a small green space with benches. The Town Center Plaza is located at the northwest corner of Broadway and Park Street. The Plaza is home to a variety to city events such as the Summer Sizzle Concert Series.



parks and open space

The former Lumberyard site located behind City Hall has been the topic of numerous studies and plans. The 2011 Supplement to the 2008 Grove City Town Center Plan identified this land as prime land for development and states that a major park should not be developed on the lumberyard property. The plan further states that if a permanent park is installed it should be conceived as part of the redevelopment of the immediate surroundings. The plan supplement also identifies the Lumberyard as the potential site of community gardens or a mixed use development with varying amounts of green space.

The 2011 Supplement to the Town Center Plan also identifies multiple locations throughout the Town Center that could act as future pocket parks. One of these locations is the vacant land across the street from the library on Arbutus Avenue.

School Parks

Planning Area A is home to Holt Crossing Intermediate School and Central Crossing High School. These schools offer many acres of open recreational space available to the public as well as ball fields and a track.

Open Space

A number of public open spaces are located in Planning Area A, particularly in the Concord Lakes subdivision. Many of these open spaces have ponds, some with trails around them.

Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA and Park

The Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA is located on First Avenue in Urbancrest. This facility has an outdoor walking track, an indoor swimming pool, two basketball courts, baseball/softball diamonds and a variety of cardiovascular and strength equipment. There is facility space such as a library, kiln and kitchen for additional programming opportunities.

parks and open space

PLANNING AREA B PARKS:

Grove City Skate Park

Community Park
4.0 acres

Gantz Park

Community Park
27.5 acres

The Big Splash at Evans Park

Community Park
3.4 acres

Walden Bluff Park

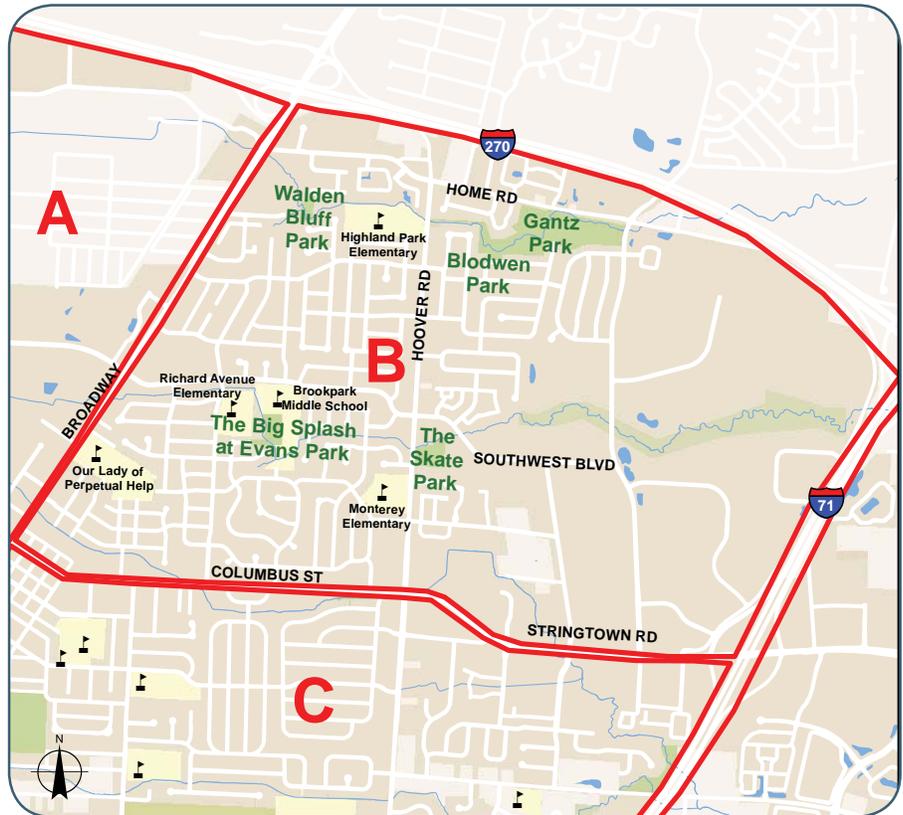
Neighborhood Park
1.8 acres

Blodwen Park

Mini Park
0.6 acres

Total Park Acreage: 37.3

PLANNING AREA B



PLANNING AREA B OPEN SPACE:

Public Open Space

44.5 acres

Private Open Space

0 acres

Total Open Space Acreage: 44.5

Planning Area B is home to five city parks including the Grove City Skate Park, Gantz Park and the Big Splash, with a total of roughly 37 acres of programmed parkland.

Planning Area B had the overall highest opinion of parks from residents during the public input process, with only 14 percent of residents not satisfied with the parks in their neighborhood. Planning Area B is home to the most community parks of all the planning areas, and the compact neighborhoods make the parks more accessible to residents.

“

It would be wonderful if our neighborhood had a small city park. At this point we have to drive to other parks to enjoy the city parks. Having one in the neighborhood would give our children access to a park and promote better health by being outside playing.

- Planning Area B Resident

”

parks and open space

Grove City Skate Park

The Grove City Skate Park was constructed in 2006 and is approximately 4 acres in size. The 11,000 square foot park is made up of a street skating area with ramps, rails and boxes and multiple bowls with side heights varying from 3 to 18 feet. The park is the location of annual competitions and attracts users of all abilities. Rollerblading and skateboarding are permitted in the skating area, but the use of bikes is prohibited.

The park is located off of Hoover Road, just south of Southwest Boulevard, and has a parking lot with almost 40 parking spaces. There are bike racks, multiple trash receptacles and drinking fountains for park users. There are currently no permanent restroom facilities at this park.

Actions:

- *Install permanent restroom facilities*
- *Install a shelter area*

Gantz Park

Gantz Park is a 27-acre community park offering residents and visitors a variety of features, including The Gardens at Gantz Farm, the Gantz Park Arboretum, approximately 1 mile of leisure trails through wooded areas and rolling terrain, and a variety of traditional recreational opportunities including tennis courts and a half basketball court. The park also features a large shelter house and playground. The main entrance to the park is located on Home Road, but the park is also accessible from Park Ridge Drive. Gantz Park is connected by a leisure path to Blodwen Park, a neighborhood park located off Blodwen Circle.

A two-story barn located at the main park entrance accommodates a variety of youth activities, including the RecSchool early childhood program, as well as many other youth activities and programs. In addition to the large shelter house at the main entrance, there is also a gazebo and smaller shelter house with six picnic tables, a grill and trash receptacles located at the Arboretum.

The Gardens at Gantz Farm is a public herb garden with an estimated 10,000 visitors per year. The brick farmhouse, built in the 1840's, is the headquarters for the herb garden staff and volunteers and educational programs. The gardens have been developed into three main themes to demonstrate a wide range of gardening styles – The Garden of Yesterday, The Garden of Today and the Garden of Tomorrow. Various events are held throughout the year at the Gardens at Gantz Farm.

The Gantz Park Arboretum offers residents the opportunity to learn about different tree species with more than 50 marked trees throughout the Arboretum.

A large parking lot is available at the main entrance to Gantz Park, providing more than 70 parking spaces. An additional 11 spaces are available in a small parking



GROVE CITY SKATE PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

(1 mile radius around park)

Population: 13,734
Households: 5,635
Household Size: 2.40
Median Age: 39.6



GANTZ PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

(1 mile radius around park)

Population: 14,255
Households: 5,460
Household Size: 2.59
Median Age: 36.5

parks and open space



BIG SPLASH AT EVANS PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1 mile radius around park)

Population: 14,096
Households: 5,973
Household Size: 2.33
Median Age: 38.9

lot at the end of Park Ridge Drive. The Gardens at Gantz Farm also has a separate parking lot with more than a dozen parking spaces.

Actions:

- *Install entrance sign at Park Ridge Drive entrance*
- *Repair damaged tree markings in Arboretum*
- *Implement recently adopted Gantz Park Arboretum Plan*

The Big Splash at Evans Park

The Big Splash at Evans Park is a seasonal, municipal, family aquatic facility that features a zero-depth entrance, interactive water toys, a large body slide, tot slide, two-drop slides, an aquatic climbing wall and a six-lane lap pool. In addition to the water features, the Big Splash at Evans Park also features a sand volleyball area and a sand play area with toys. The park is located behind Brookpark Middle School and utilizes the school’s parking lot for park attendees.

Possibilities for future redevelopment within this park include installing a sprayground in the existing sand play area. There are also small areas of green space within the fenced park, leaving room for future expansion and development.

Actions:

- *Install a sprayground/baby pool play area*
- *Install a shelter house*



WALDEN BLUFF PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 3,730
Households: 1,533
Household Size: 2.43
Median Age: 35.6

Walden Bluff Park

Walden Bluff Park is a mini park located at the end of Walden Bluff Court. It offers a half basketball court, playground and swing set. This park is fairly undeveloped, but offers great potential in terms of natural areas and trail connectivity. More than half of the park is made up of a stream corridor, offering the potential for nature trails and connectivity to other trails. There is also space in the park for a shelter.

The stream that currently runs through the park creates a barrier for residents to the south, mainly the Walden Bluff subdivision. This barrier limits residents’ direct access the park. This park could be better utilized if a connection was established to the surrounding neighborhoods and the greater parks system through trails. Walden Bluff Park extends to the west to connect to Harrisburg Station Lane, off of Broadway. However, the existing path through the wooded area is not safe. Creating a safe connection point at this location would open up the Broadway Corridor to residents as far away as Hoover Road. More detail on this proposed new trail can be found in Chapter 4 – Trails and Connectivity.

The population within Walden Bluff Park’s service area is younger than average for Grove City’s neighborhood parks so it is important to develop this park with families in mind. Creating a trail through the park will give school-age children a safe route to school, as the connection trail would connect the neighborhood to Highland Park Elementary School.

parks and open space

Actions:

- *Install a trail through the south and southwest portion of the park connected to the trail network*
- *Install a shelter and picnic tables*
- *Install new playground equipment*

Blodwen Park

Blodwen Park is located off Blodwen Circle and offers neighborhood residents a playground with benches and a shelter house with two picnic tables. There is also considerable open space in the rear of the park. A trail leads from Blodwen Park to Gantz Park, providing connectivity to larger facilities and trails. The park offers a more intimate park experience for residents not wishing to utilize Gantz Park’s playground.

Providing delineation of the park boundaries might encourage residents to use the entire park, particularly the open space at the rear of the park, which could be easily mistaken for private property belonging to the neighboring houses. Installing a portion of white fencing to match the existing corner fencing at the park entrance would better define the park boundaries and improve the overall park usage. While Blodwen Park offers a well-maintained shelter house with picnic tables, there is no grill. Installing a similar charcoal grill to those throughout the parks system would allow families to enjoy a full picnic experience at the park.

Actions:

- *Install a charcoal grill*
- *Install fencing at the northwest corner of the park to delineate park boundary*

School Parks

School parks play a particularly important role in Planning Area B because many of the neighborhoods in the area do not have access to neighborhood parks. Residents with children likely utilize the play areas and open space on school property in place of a neighborhood park.

Three elementary schools are located in Planning Area B: Highland Park Elementary, Monterey Elementary and Richard Avenue Elementary. Each of these schools have playgrounds and open space. Brookpark Middle School offers additional open space.

Private Park

The Regency Arms apartment complex has three small playgrounds for residents.

Open Space

More than 40 acres of public open space is located along Brown Run within the Southpark Industrial Park. This land is heavily wooded and is currently inaccessible for residents. Chapter 4 outlines the possibility of locating a series of trails through this open space along the stream.



BLODWEN PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/4 mile radius around park)

Population: 985
Households: 378
Household Size: 2.61
Median Age: 40.7

parks and open space

PLANNING AREA C PARKS:

Fryer Park

Community Park
111.5 acres

Windsor Park

Community Park
34 acres

Hoover Park

Neighborhood Park
6 acres

Keller Farms Park

Neighborhood Park
5.5 acres

Creed Lawless Park

Mini Park
0.3 acre

Sesquicentennial Park

Mini Park
1 acre

Swearingen Park

Mini Park
1 acre

Total Park Acreage: 159.3

PLANNING AREA C OPEN SPACE:

Public Open Space

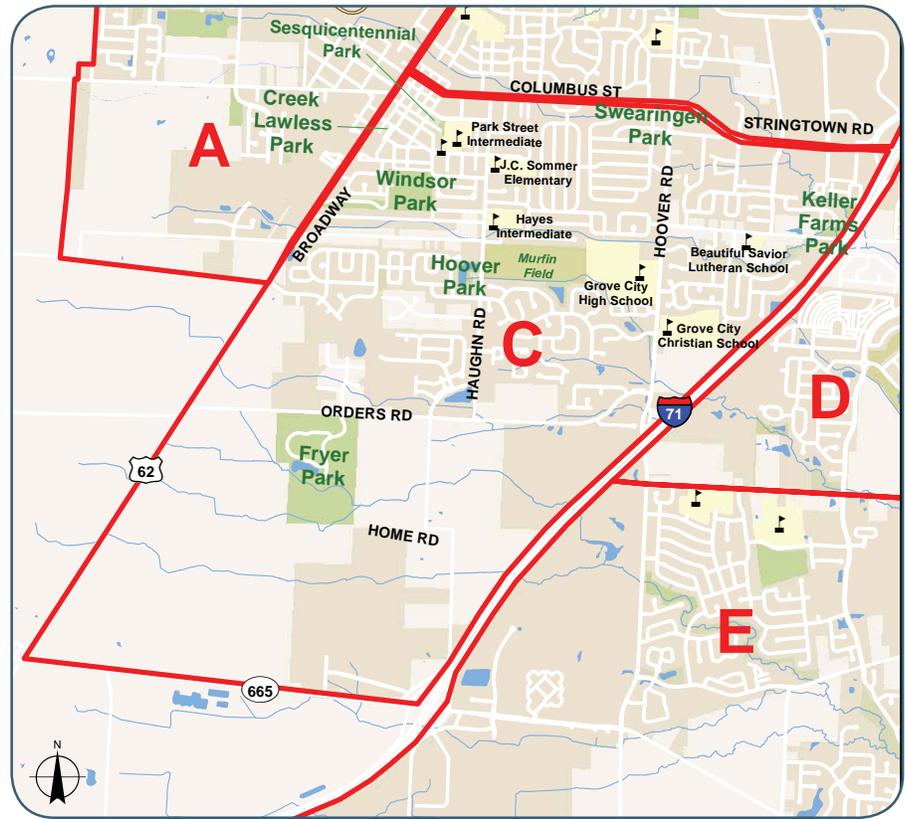
18.8 acres

Private Open Space

20.5 acres

Total Open Space Acreage: 39.9

PLANNING AREA C



Planning Area C is home to seven parks including Windsor Park and Fryer Park, with a total of approximately 160 acres of programmed parkland.

Planning Area C has the most parks of all the planning areas, and all park types are represented. Almost 60 percent of residents said they felt their neighborhood was well served by parks, the highest percentage of all the planning areas.

parks and open space

Fryer Park

Fryer Park is the largest city-owned park in Grove City. It is home to the Grove City YMCA, Century Village, Discovery Frontier, Rotary Lake and eight softball diamonds. Fields at the park are also used for soccer, and a large hill on the west side of the park serves as a sledding hill in the winter.

Discovery Frontier is an all-accessible playground with a space theme. A wide variety of play equipment is available for children of all ages and abilities, including a horizontal climbing wall.

Century Village is a turn-of-the-century historic area featuring a number of historic buildings including a one-room schoolhouse, log crib barn, barn with animal pen, log houses and an outhouse.

Rotary Lake offers scenic views as well as catch-and-release fishing without a license. A trail wraps around the lake with benches and picnic areas along the way. Distances are marked around the trail, making this loop very popular with walkers and joggers. Trails can also be found through the park's nearly 14 acres of naturally wooded area to the east of Discovery Drive.

Many comments were received from the public regarding running water in the park. With the installation of a new water tower at Fryer Park, water is now available. The public also voiced a desire to have lights at the softball fields.

Fryer Park is somewhat isolated from residential areas, so it will be very important as the city grows to consider what the neighboring population requires from a park. Currently, the median age within Fryer Park's one-mile service area is the highest of all community parks at 40.5. This means that while the park will likely attract younger residents for the playground and sporting facilities, it is also important to develop the park to be attractive for an older population. Providing more information about the wooded trails and installing a scenic garden area to the north of the preserved wooded area are possibilities for attracting a population more interested in passive recreation and interaction with nature.

Actions:

- *Install lights at the softball diamonds*
- *Install restrooms and concessions with running water near the softball diamonds*
- *Promote the wooded trails*
- *Create a scenic natural garden area to between the former mud volleyball courts behind the Fryer House and wooded area*
- *Continue to develop Legacy Grove*
- *Complete Century Village*
- *Install a three-season pavilion*
- *Install a sprayground in Discovery Frontier*
- *Expand acreage to the south and west*
- *Install outdoor amphitheater*
- *Install multi-sport playing fields*



FRYER PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1 mile radius around park)

Population: 2,584
Households: 914
Household Size: 2.78
Median Age: 40.5

“

A glass blowing furnace, pottery wheel and blacksmith shop at the historical site would be nice.

- Planning Area C Resident

”

parks and open space



WINDSOR PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1 mile radius around park)

Population: 12,363
Households: 4,921
Household Size: 2.48
Median Age: 39.6

Windsor Park

Windsor Park is home to 11 baseball fields, four tennis courts and an interactive playground. There is also a large shelter with many picnic tables and a grill nearby for gatherings. This park is also the location of the Evans Center where many classes and events for seniors are held.

In 2010, a new road, Babbert Way, and leisure trail were installed providing access to Windsor Park from Broadway and additional parking near the southern baseball diamonds. The parkland next to Babbert Way is currently undeveloped. Preliminary plans for this area suggest the installation of more ball fields. However, the final plans of installation have not yet been determined.

Windsor Park is located near Grove City's Town Center and is bordered by well-established neighborhoods. The average household size is small, and the median age is higher than average, meaning that many of the park features are likely not utilized by those residents directly bordering it. Windsor Park is used for many travel baseball tournaments for both residents and visitors.

Actions:

- *Keep the public informed of development on park addition off of Broadway*
- *Install a three-season pavilion*
- *Redevelop parking areas*
- *Install an all-accessible playing field*
- *Continue to acquire property to expand the park as it becomes available*



HOOVER PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 3,850
Households: 1,461
Household Size: 2.61
Median Age: 40

Hoover Park

Hoover Park is an 8-acre park home to a large pond with a trail around the perimeter and benches along the way to view the scenery. It is accessible on foot from Haughn Road and Windrow Drive. The park also has a small playground area.

The median age within the park's service area is higher than most neighborhood parks and has one of the lowest household sizes. This park is well programmed for its somewhat high median age, given its passive recreational amenities such as trails and benches.

Although this park offers great recreational opportunities, the park is not visible from any public area. Acquiring land on Haughn Road would not only improve the visibility of the park, but would also provide land for the installation of a shelter house and the potential for other park development. Currently, there is no signage for the park indicating that it is a public park. Installing signs at the entrance off Haughn Road and Windrow Drive would improve awareness of the park.

Actions:

- *Install entry signs at both the entrance off Haughn Road and Windrow Drive*
- *Acquire property on Haughn Road to expand the park and improve visibility*

parks and open space

Keller Farms Park

Keller Farms Park is located off of White Road, bordered by I-71 on the east. It is also accessible from a walkway from Michelle Court. The park offers a small playground area, a shelter and a half basketball court. Republican Run bisects the park, creating a natural corridor in the park. This corridor is currently inaccessible from the rest of the park. Makeshift trails have been created through the wooded area but are not safe for the public unless access to them is improved.

Keller Farms' service area has the highest median age of all the neighborhood parks, but the median household size is about average. The half basketball court is a heavy draw for this park, but the playground equipment is designed for very young children. Installing playground equipment for a wider age bracket might improve park usage.

There are no markings from Michelle Court directing residents to the park. The park is only visible from White Road. While area residents are likely aware of the park, it might be difficult for new residents to locate it.

Improvements to White Road will create a trail connection from Keller Farms Park to the Buckeye Parkway Trail. However, White Road blocks residents to the south who could potentially walk to the park. Creating a safe crossing point along White Road would improve the park's accessibility. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4 – Trails and Connectivity.

Actions:

- *Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the natural corridor in the park*
- *Clean the existing informal trails through the natural areas*
- *Install signage at the Michelle Court entrance*

Creed Lawless Park

Creed Lawless Park is a mini park located on Arbutus Avenue, fronting Kingston Avenue. It offers a small playground area as well as a gathering area with a grill and small gazebo.

The median age of this park's service area is fairly low with a small average household size. The park offers a variety of play equipment as well as passive gathering places to suit nearby residents.

Actions:

- *Install recycling container near shelter*



KELLER FARMS PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 2,946
Households: 1,039
Household Size: 2.82
Median Age: 41.9



CREED LAWLESS PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/4 mile radius around park)

Population: 771
Households: 344
Household Size: 2.24
Median Age: 35.4

parks and open space



SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/4 mile radius around park)

Population: 915
Households: 423
Household Size: 2.16
Median Age: 36.4

Sesquicentennial Park

Sesquicentennial Park is located on Park Street next to Park Street Intermediate School. It is a 1-acre passive park with a short walking path through a garden setting. While the park is small in size, there is a small amount of open space to the west of the developed garden area.

Sesquicentennial Park's service area has an average household size of just more than two people per household. This likely means that there are many couples with no children. Sesquicentennial Park is appropriate for this demographic, who would not have use for a park with play fields and playground equipment.

Actions:

- *Maintain the existing passive character of the park*

Swearingen Park

Swearingen Park is located on Columbus Street near the intersection of Hoover Road. It offers a small playground and two shelter houses with grills. Republican Run runs along the south edge of the park, making the park inaccessible to residents bordering the park to the south. The city owns property that crosses Republican Run and connects to Queensway Drive, but the land has not been utilized. In order to make the park accessible to more residents, the city should reclaim its property extending to Queensway Drive and install a bridge over Republican Run to connect the neighborhood to the park.

Swearingen Park's service area has the highest median age of all Grove City parks' service areas at almost 47 years old. This park appears to be appropriately developed for this demographic, given the two pavilions for gathering with friends and family. Due to its location along Columbus Street, Swearingen Park would also be a prime location for public art.

Actions:

- *Reclaim the city's property fronting Queensway Drive connecting to the park*
- *Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the park from the south*
- *Install public art within the park*



SWEARINGEN PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/4 mile radius around park)

Population: 1,263
Households: 442
Household Size: 2.60
Median Age: 46.8

School Parks

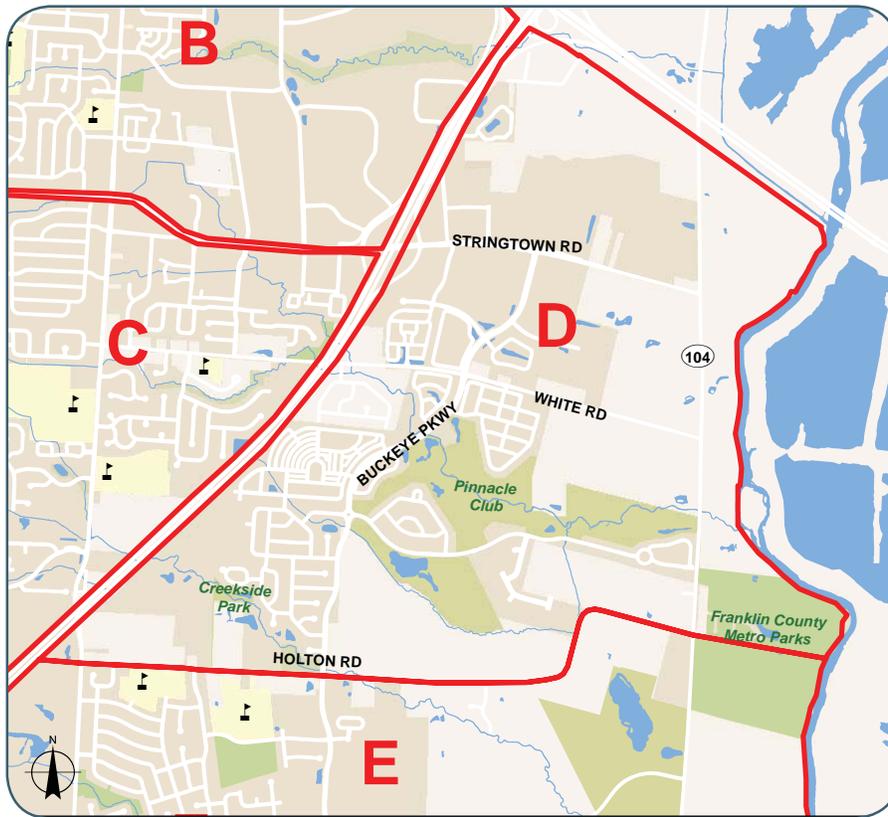
Planning Area C has many schools, including one elementary school, two intermediate schools and a high school. The elementary school has a large playground and open space for free recreation. The intermediate and high schools also have large amounts of open space.

Open Space

Many of the residential subdivisions in Planning Area C have dedicated open space in them for residents to enjoy. Hoover Park, Claybrooke Crossing, Hoover Crossing and Margie's Cove are all subdivisions in this area with open space, many of which offer connectivity to the trail network. Slightly less than half of the open space in the area is public, with the remaining open space owned by homeowners associations.

parks and open space

PLANNING AREA D



PLANNING AREA D OPEN SPACE:

Public Open Space

7.0 acres

Private Open Space

27.2 acres

Total Open Space Acreage: 34.2

Planning Area D does not contain any public parks. The recreation center and golf course for the Pinnacle Club are located here, but there are no public recreation facilities in this area. The Creekside subdivision contains a neighborhood park, and multiple pocket parks are located throughout Pinnacle, but these too are not public parks.

Less than a quarter of the residents from Planning Area D who participated in the public input portion of the plan felt their neighborhood was well served by parks. Many comments from Planning Area D residents expressed a desire for a public park in their neighborhood. This planning area is expected to grow considerably in the coming years, and it will be important to plan for public parks for current and future residents of this area.

Actions:

- Amend subdivision requirements to require reserves to be given to the city to be developed into public parkland (Details in Chapter 7)

“

A park in this area of town would be nice. It doesn't have to be a large one but something with a small water feature, walking trail and picnic tables. There are a lot of condos and apartments in this area so we don't have a lot of open space to get outside.

- Planning Area D Resident

”

parks and open space

Private Parks

Planning Area D residents have a variety of private parks and recreational opportunities available to them. Creekside Park, located off of Holton Road, offers a playground area, a shelter and an abundance of open space. Small pocket parks are located throughout The Greens subarea of Pinnacle as well as multiple open green spaces. The Pinnacle Club recreation center is also located in Planning Area D, offering residents a variety of recreational equipment, a basketball court, tennis courts and swimming pools.

Open Space

Neighborhoods in Planning Area D offer residents a great variety of open spaces, but the majority of these open spaces are privately held.

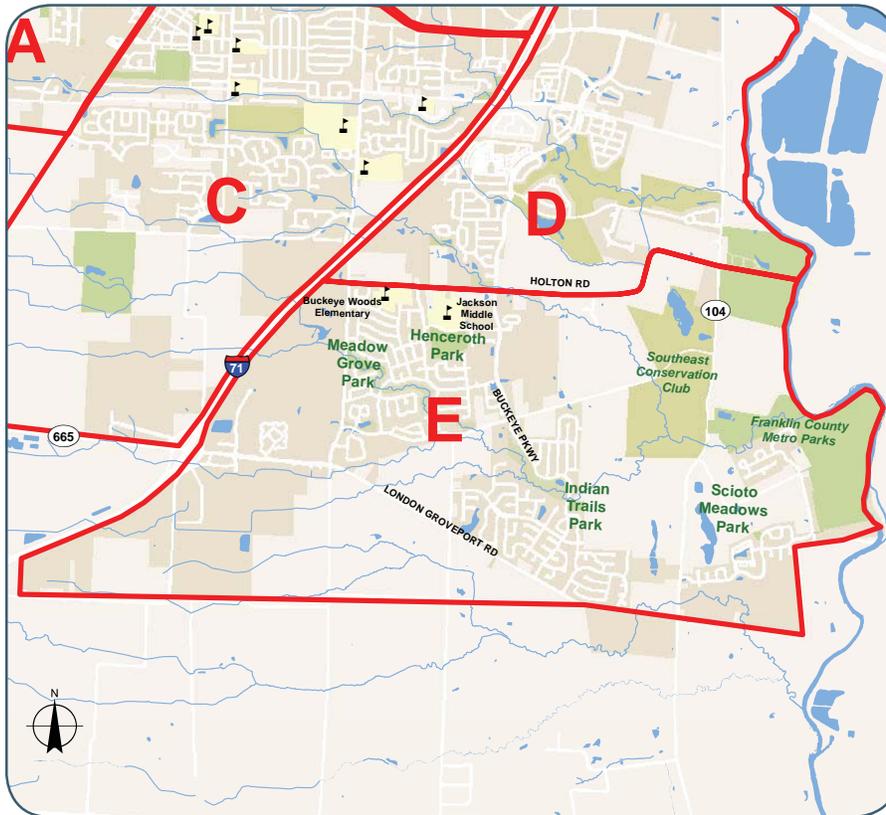
Potential Park at Pinnacle, Holton Road

In 2010, conceptual plans were drawn for a park on the north side of Holton Road. The proposed park is approximately 35 acres in size and offers a nine-hole disc golf course, a playground area, dog park, community garden plots and plentiful green space and walking trails. Additionally, the plan calls for numerous sustainable practices such as a pervious pavement parking area, bioretention areas and preserved natural areas.



parks and open space

PLANNING AREA E



PLANNING AREA E PARKS:

Henceroth Park
Community Park
21.3 acres

Indian Trails Park
Neighbor Park
3.8 acres

Meadow Grove Park
Neighborhood Park
9.5 acres

Scioto Meadows Park
Mini Park
1.5 acres

Total Park Acreage: 36.1

PLANNING AREA E OPEN SPACE:

Public Open Space
54.7 acres

Private Open Space
60.1 acres

Total Open Space Acreage: 114.8

Five parks are located in Planning Area E including Henceroth Park, for a total of more than 40 acres of programmed parks. The former Talbott Park, which was recently dedicated to Franklin County Metro Parks to be included as part of a future Metro Park along the Scioto River, is in Planning Area E.

More than half of the residents participating in the public input portion of the plan from Planning Area E responded that they feel the city is well served by parks, but only about a third of the residents feel their neighborhood is. While this planning area does include a community park, two neighborhood parks and a mini park, it is the largest planning area, and many of the parks are on the outskirts of a neighborhood and not easily accessible for residents.

parks and open space



HENCEROTH PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1 mile radius around park)

Population: 4,578
Households: 1,670
Household Size: 2.74
Median Age: 35.8

Henceroth Park

Henceroth Park is considered the city’s “green” park and features many sustainable elements such as solar powered lighting fixtures, a rain garden and playground and exercise equipment made of recycled materials. A leisure trail surrounds the perimeter of the park. There are also multiple educational opportunities throughout the park, including a butterfly garden and a trail through the woods with trees identifiers.

The park is well connected to the trail system, with a trail along Mallow Lane connecting to the Buckeye Parkway Trail, and trail access from Blue Star Drive to the south. A parking area is available off Mallow Lane, with 20 spaces.

The interior of the park, more than 5 acres in size, is largely undeveloped and has the potential for the development of a variety of park features. Henceroth Park currently does not have a shelter or picnic area for residents to gather, nor are there any sports fields.

Actions:

- Promote the “green” features of the park*
- Install a shelter with picnic tables and a grill*
- Install recycling containers*



INDIAN TRAILS PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 2,136
Households: 687
Household Size: 3.11
Median Age: 37.4

Indian Trails Park

Indian Trails Park is located off of Buckeye Parkway and is accessible from the Buckeye Parkway Trail. It has a large playground area, a shelter house with a grill and a basketball court. It also has a walking trail around the perimeter and a small parking lot with 10 parking spaces.

Grant Run runs along the north edge of the park, creating potential for additional recreational opportunities. Grant Run has been targeted for the future site of a recreational trail, which Indian Trails Park could easily tie into. The proposed Grant Run Trail would create a series of trails starting at Hoover Road and ending at the Scioto River. An informal trail currently leads from Indian Trails Park to Grant Run, but at this time is not safe for all users and would need to be improved for future connectivity or access to Grant Run. Grant Run can also provide an educational opportunity in the park, with signage about natural stream corridors. More details about the Grant Run Trails and Indian Trails Park’s connection to the trail can be found in Chapter 4 – Trails and Connectivity.

Actions:

- Install a path to Grant Run, with educational signage about the natural area and benches for resting*

parks and open space

Meadow Grove Park

Meadow Grove Park is located along Grant Run, accessible on foot from Spring Hill Road or Hoover Road. The park offers a small shelter with a single picnic table, a playground area and an abundance of open space. The park borders Grant Run with many informal paths leading to the stream. No safe trail currently exists to or along Grant Run.

Grant Run bisects Meadow Grove Park, with a portion of the park on the south side of the stream with no connection across. The land on the south side has not been developed, and the residents to the south cannot access the improvements installed on the north side of the park unless they walk to Hoover Road to cross Grant Run.

The city owns land along the length of Grant Run until it crosses Borror Road, making the potential for a trail along the stream viable. Further discussion on the potential Grant Run Trail is discussed in Chapter 4 – Trails and Connectivity. Meadow Grove Park would be an ideal linear park along this trail. The park fronts Hoover Road, with space available to potentially install a small parking area to access both the park and future trails within the park and connecting to the larger trail system.

Actions:

- Install a larger shelter with more picnic tables and a grill and recycling containers*
- Install a bridge across Grant Run, connecting the southern portion of the park to the northern portion*
- Install a trail to and along Grant Run*
- Preserve the southern portion of the park as a passive recreation area, with benches and a walking path*

Scioto Meadows Park

Scioto Meadows Park is the only park located east of Jackson Pike and services the Scioto Meadows subdivision. It is the newest park in the system and offers a half basketball court, small shelter, drinking fountain and interactive playground area.

The park currently appears somewhat unwelcoming due to the lack of vegetation. Adding trees to the western boundary will give the park a more intimate feel. Its location, at the bend in Scioto Meadows Boulevard and the fact that it does not have many houses around it has lead to the park suffering from minor vandalism, including graffiti and pieces broken and taken from the playground. A variety of actions could be taken to reduce vandalism, including installing lighting or security cameras.

Actions:

- Install trees along the western park boundary*
- Install lighting near the playground area*
- Install park signage*



MEADOW GROVE PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 3,145
Households: 1,171
Household Size: 2.68
Median Age: 35.6



SCIOTO MEADOWS PARK SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS (1/2 mile radius around park)

Population: 956
Households: 337
Household Size: 2.84
Median Age: 37.6

parks and open space

School Parks

Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle School are located in Planning Area E and offer residents acres of open space, a ball field and a playground area. Access to these school properties can be gained from the Holton Road or Mallow Lane trails and also from the residential streets bordering the sites.

Open Space

Planning Area E contains an abundance of open space located along stream corridors with ponds and wooded areas. Open space in this planning area is primarily owned by the city. The homeowners association for Indian Trails owns much of the open space within its subdivision.

Future Metro Park

The former Talbott Park was recently donated to the Franklin County Metro Parks for the creation of a Metro Park along the Scioto River. Plans for the park have not been released. Land has been dedicated along the Scioto River within this park for the installation of a new shared use path and recreational trail. This trail would connect to the existing Scioto Trail to take cyclists from Grove City to downtown Columbus and north, connecting to the Olentangy and 670 trails.

Former Grovebrook Golf Course

The former Grovebrook Golf Course, located between Hoover Road and Interstate 71, was mentioned by many residents participating in the public input portion of the plan as an ideal location for a large park and potential location for a public recreation center. The property is more than 100 acres in size and offers scenic ponds, hills and an abundance of green space. The presence of two large ponds, streams and the fact that much of the property lies in the floodplain make much of this property undevelopable. Should the property be purchased for development, it is likely that much of it would remain as open space, likely dedicated to the city for parkland. Residents voiced a variety of desires for the park, aside from the potential location for the recreational center, including an off-leash dog area, fishing, playgrounds, shelter houses and natural green space with trails and the opportunity for hiking and passive play. Its location makes it accessible to many residents in the Meadow Grove and Quail Creek subdivisions, with the potential to service many more residents by tying into the city's trail network on the Holton Road Trail and the proposed Grant Run Trail.

“

A tremendous opportunity exists with the former golf course site... It would provide a 'showcase' and positive impression on those driving on I-71.

- Planning Area E Resident

”

parks and open space

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

G1. **A community knowledgeable of the city's parks and open space system.**

Grove City currently publishes information in a variety of forms about the parks system for its residents. As the system expands, it will continue to be important to keep the public informed of the variety of parks available in the city and the recreational opportunities available in them.

O1. **Promote public open space within the community and make the community aware of current parks, their sizes and components.**

In order to ensure that the parks are being utilized to their fullest, it will be important for the Parks and Recreation Department to continue to educate the community on what is available in the parks system. Keeping the public informed through a variety of tools will increase the chances of more residents having access to the information.

- A1. Continue to publish seasonal newsletters about the parks system
- A2. Keep the website updated with park information
- A3. Provide the community with up-to-date maps and descriptions of parks
- A4. Adopt Code revisions for park definitions, such as Greenway, Community Park, Neighborhood Park, and Pocket Park
- A5. Update the rules and regulations for public parks, outlined in Chapter 903 of the Grove City Code of Ordinances
- A6. Brand the parks by creating standards for signage, lighting and site furnishings

G2. **A park system offering the community a variety of park and open space options.**

A successful park system has something for everyone. Grove City's parks are very popular and offer residents a great variety of recreational opportunities. As the city grows, it will be very important for the department to continue to develop parks for all potential users and facilities for a variety of activities.

O2. **Make all parks welcoming and accessible for all levels of users.**

Having parks usable for all levels of users will ensure that the parks are utilized to their full potential. Parks should be welcoming for children and adults of all ages and physical abilities, creating spaces people want to spend time in.

- A7. Provide clean restroom facilities in the parks when feasible
- A8. Provide park features usable for citizens of all abilities in every park

parks and open space

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

O3. Pursue and encourage joint uses with schools.

The Parks and Recreation department currently holds an agreement with the South-Western City School district to utilize select ball fields for city use. In the future, the city should consider expanding the facilities shared to offer more opportunities for residents.

A9. Maintain a working relationship with schools for the use of select ball fields

A10. Draft a formal agreement for the utilization of the currently rented South-Western City School facilities/building use

A11. Explore the possibility of using school facilities for a wider variety of recreation and educational offerings

O4. Facilities should be able to support multiple activities.

Grove City is growing quickly and as the population expands it will be important to have facilities that can accommodate a variety of activities to offer the growing population. Throughout the public input process, the public voiced their strong desire to have a public recreation center to house the growing recreational demands of the community.

A12. Create a public recreation center in Grove City

O5. Create areas in the parks system for peaceful, passive, non active recreation.

A13. Create areas in all new parks with no designated programming, for passive, non active recreation

A14. Target areas for passive recreation in existing parks and city-owned property

O6. Create parks appropriate for the population they serve, while keeping in mind the greater parks system.

While it is important to view the park system at a macro level to ensure that the community is served properly, it is also important to target each park individually and examine specific improvements for each park. By examining the information at the neighborhood – level, specific recommendations can be made about each park to better serve the users of the park.

A15. Determine an appropriate location for a Memorial Park

A16. Amend subdivision requirements to require reserves to be given to the City to be developed into public parkland

parks and open space

SPECIFIC PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

The Big Splash

- A17. Install a sprayground/baby pool play area
- A18. Install a shelter area

Blowden Park

- A19. Install a charcoal grill
- A20. Install fencing at the northwest corner of the park to delineate a park boundary

Concord Lakes Park

- A21. Install entry sign
- A22. Install recycling containers at the shelter
- A23. Connect the park to the trail network

Creed Lawless Park

- A24. Install recycling container near shelter

Demorest Road Park

- A25. Develop Demorest Road Park as a community park with a variety of recreational features

Fryer Park

- A26. Install lights at the softball diamonds
- A27. Install restrooms with running water and concessions at softball diamonds
- A28. Promote the wooded trails
- A29. Create a scenic natural garden area between the mud volleyball courts and wooded area
- A30. Install a sprayground at Discovery Frontier
- A31. Complete Legacy Grove
- A32. Install a three season pavilion
- A33. Expand acreage to the south and west
- A34. Continue to develop Century Village
- A35. Install an amphitheater
- A36. Install multi-sport fields

Gantz Park

- A37. Install entrance sign at Park Ridge Drive entrance
- A38. Repair damaged tree markings in Arboretum
- A39. Implement the adopted Arboretum plan

Grove City Skate Park

- A40. Install permanent restroom facilities
- A41. Install a shelter area

parks and open space

Henceroth Park

- A42. Promote the “green” features of the park
- A43. Install a shelter with picnic tables and a grill
- A44. Install recycling containers

Hoover Park

- A45. Install entry signs at both the entrance off Haughn Road and Windrow Drive
- A46. Acquire property on Haughn Road to expand the park and improve visibility

Indian Trails Park

- A47. Install a path to Grant Run, with educational signage about the natural area and benches for resting

Keller Farms Park

- A48. Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the natural corridor in the park
- A49. Clean the existing informal trails through the natural areas
- A50. Install signage at the Michelle Court entrance

Meadow Grove Park

- A51. Install a large shelter with more picnic tables and a grill and recycling containers
- A52. Install a bridge across Grant Run, connecting the southern portion of the park to the northern portion
- A53. Install a trail to and along Grant Run
- A54. Preserve the southern portion of the park as a passive recreation area, with benches and a walking path

Open Space (Planning Area D)

- A55. Amend subdivision requirements to require reserves to be given to the city to be developed into public parkland

Scioto Meadows Park

- A56. Install trees along the western park boundary
- A57. Install lighting near the playground area
- A58. Install park signage

Sesquicentennial Park

- A59. Maintain the existing passive character of the park

Swearingen Park

- A60. Reclaim the city’s property fronting Queensway Drive connecting to the park
- A61. Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the park from the south
- A62. Install public art within the park

parks and open space

SPECIFIC PARK RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

Walden Bluff Park

- A63. Install a trail through the south and southwest portion of the park connected to the trail network
- A64. Install a shelter and picnic tables
- A65. Install new playground equipment

Westgrove Park

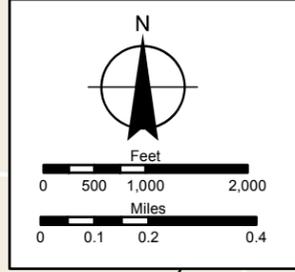
- A66. Install recycling containers at the shelter
- A67. Install entrance sign at the parking area off Red Oak Street
- A68. Install a drinking fountain
- A69. Extend the walking trail around the perimeter of the park

Windsor Park

- A70. Keep the public informed of development on park addition off of Broadway
- A71. Redevelop parking areas
- A72. Install a Miracle Field/all-access field
- A73. Install a three-season pavilion
- A74. Continue to acquire property on Ventura Boulevard to expand the park as it becomes available

Legend

- Public Park
- Public Open Space
- Private Park





CHAPTER 3 OUTLINE

1. **What are Natural Resources?**
2. **Why Natural Resources are Important**
 - a. Citywide Natural Resources
 - b. Natural Resources by Planning Area
 - c. Threats to Grove City's Natural Resources
3. **Natural Resources in Grove City**
4. **Preserving Natural Resources**
 - a. Park and Open Space Details
5. **Education/Involvement**
6. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

natural resources and management

INTRODUCTION

Natural resources such as trees, streams and other natural areas are very important to the community and are invaluable to the parks system. The preservation of natural resources is important to maintain beautiful scenery for current and future residents and to regulate the impact of new development on the environment with cleaner waterways and natural flood control. As Grove City continues to grow, the city has an obligation to future residents to preserve the natural resources in the city, including those on land that is yet to be developed. The Parks and Recreation Department aims to preserve as many natural areas as possible as the city expands in order to provide educational opportunities and to create passive recreational opportunities to residents.

OVERVIEW

The desire for more natural areas in the city's parks was the sixth most popular comment gathered in the public meetings and online surveys. While Grove City's parks currently contain a variety of natural resources, it will be important to ensure the continued protection of these resources in and around the park system.

Two goals have been identified by the Parks and Recreation Department related to Natural Resources and Management:

1. The protection of the city's natural resources
2. A community aware of natural resources found in and around Grove City

natural resources and management

WHAT ARE NATURAL RESOURCES?

Natural resources come in a wide variety of forms, from streams and ponds to large stands of trees. Any feature occurring naturally within the environment that exists relatively undisturbed by mankind in a natural form is considered a natural resource. Grove City contains many natural resources, many of which are highlighted in the parks system. Most natural resources in the city include streams, natural ponds, wetlands and tree stands.

Definitions

Below are a series of natural resources definitions that will be referenced throughout the chapter.

Natural Resources

Natural resources occur naturally within the environment and exist relatively undisturbed by mankind in a natural form.

Bioretention Areas

Bioretention areas are designed to provide infiltration and plant uptake by temporarily storing, treating and slowly releasing runoff to remove pollutants.

Open Space (Natural Open Space)

Open space is land permanently reserved as a nature preserve, stream protection corridor or other land that naturally regulates storm water. This space provides habitat for natural flora and fauna or protects ecologically sensitive sites such as wetlands and significant forested areas.

Streams and Waterways

Streams and waterways are channels that have a well-defined bed and bank, either natural or artificial that confines and conducts continuous or periodic flowing water in such a way that terrestrial vegetation cannot establish roots within the streambed.

Perennial Stream

Perennial streams carry water more than 80 percent of the year, drying out only during long, dry spells.

Intermittent Stream

Intermittent streams carry water 10 to 80 percent of the year.

Ephemeral Stream

Ephemeral streams carry water only after rain events and shortly thereafter, and carry water less than 20 percent of the time.

Waterbody

A waterbody is any natural or artificial pond, lake, reservoir or other area that ordinarily or intermittently contains water and has a discernible shoreline into which surface waters flow.



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Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater with a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

One of the most important reasons to preserve natural resources is the benefits they offer over time. A 30-inch diameter tree provides 70 times the ecological services of a 3-inch diameter tree.

WHY NATURAL RESOURCES ARE IMPORTANT

Natural resources are important to both the environment and the city's residents because they provide important recreational opportunities and attract tourists. Preserving these resources will ensure their benefits are enjoyed not only by Grove City's current residents, but by future generations.

Flood Control/Storm Water Management

Natural, undeveloped areas such as fields, forests and wetlands allow storm water to make its way through the soil into the groundwater supply. By contrast, buildings and pavement block rain from reaching soil, instead quickly directing it through storm drains that transport the water to streams. Overwhelmed by the brief but intense water volume, floodwaters scour the stream banks of natural vegetation and erode the stream bed. After wet periods, these creeks often are dry because storm water never enters the groundwater supply, which is a significant source of stream water.

Trees absorb large quantities of water after rainfall events, by taking storm water up through their roots. A mature tree with a 16-inch diameter trunk has a root system that can hold almost 1,500 gallons of rain water. For every 5 percent of tree cover added to a community, storm water runoff is reduced by approximately 2 percent, as the tree directs rainwater down its trunk to the earth.

Habitats

All natural resources, including streams, ponds, trees and wetlands provide important habitats for wildlife, either temporarily during migration or as permanent homes. Many wildlife species are dependent on the natural resources in which they reside and can be dramatically impacted by even the slightest change to their habitat.

Aesthetic Benefits/Increase Property Value

The most observable benefit natural resources provide is their ability to improve the character of the community and enhance the general appearance of development. Natural resources have a positive emotional effect on people by connecting us to nature and reducing stress. Therefore, it should be no surprise that natural resources such as streams and woodlands have a positive impact on property values and enhance the desirability of a location. Creating a more desirable community is also key in attracting and retaining skilled residents and businesses.

Tourism/Recreational Opportunities

Although natural resources are meant to be protected, minor development can safely be conducted within a certain distance of these features to make the resources accessible for recreational purposes. For example, stream corridors make excellent sites for recreational trails. Many of Grove City's streams have been targeted as potential

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corridors for the city's expanding bikeway system. Chapter 4 - Trails and Connectivity details potential routes along the city's streams and identifies the potential for connectivity between the Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park and the future Metro Park located at the former Talbott Park site. Creating this connection and directing cyclists through Grove City could bring significant benefits to Grove City businesses. According to MORPC, visitors to the Little Miami Scenic Trail spend an average of more than \$13 per person per visit.

Cost Savings

Some people may consider natural resources and the steps taken to protect them as an extra financial burden to development. This, however, is not always the case. One central Ohio community installed a rain garden and filtration swale instead of traditional storm drain lines during repair work to help drain a small 2.5 acre area. The cost of the traditional improvements would've been more than \$31,000. However, by installing the rain garden and new catch basin for less than \$8,000, the city was able to save more than \$23,000 on the project.

NATURAL RESOURCES IN GROVE CITY

CITY-WIDE NATURAL RESOURCES

Streams

Not including the Scioto River, about 70 miles of waterways flow through Grove City. The majority of streams in the city are perennial streams, with running water most of the year. Most streams hold water seasonally near the stream source, but become perennial streams farther downstream as they collect more runoff.

The longest stream in Grove City is Grant Run, which begins west of Harrisburg Pike and flows into the Scioto River. It also flows through Meadow Grove Park, along a series of public greenways and Indian Trails Park, and joins with the Scioto River at the former Talbott Park, now owned by the Franklin County Metro Parks. Other notable streams in Grove City include Brown Run, which flows along Southwest Boulevard and creates the northern boundary of the Skate Park and Plum Run, in southern Grove City.

Ponds

A variety of ponds are located throughout Grove City, many of which are man-made to regulate storm water from developments. Regardless of origin, ponds are an important feature that should be preserved because over time, even man-made ponds can become important habitats. Ponds can also provide opportunities for both active recreation such as boating and swimming, and passive recreation such as fishing or enjoying the natural scenery.

Wetlands

Grove City has more than 40 acres of wetlands within its borders, though many of these are not wet all year long and are not very large, with an average size of a half acre. These wetlands are most often located in undeveloped portions of the city in the

TREE CITY USA

Grove City has been a Tree City USA community for 17 years. This designation is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. Gaining and retaining Tree City USA recognition is an award to the workers, managers, volunteers, board members and others who work on behalf of better care of the city's trees.

WATERSHEDS

Grove City is located in two watersheds: the Big Darby and the Upper Scioto. This means that all water flows into either the Big Darby Creek or the Scioto River.

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south, though a smaller number are scattered in more developed locations as well. These wetlands are located in agricultural areas, in low-lying wooded areas, and in tall grasses, and are usually close to a small stream.

Tree Canopy

Grove City is home to many significant tree stands, many of which are located along stream corridors. Tree stands have been preserved in many of the city's parks, including Gantz Park, Henceroth Park and Fryer Park.

NATURAL RESOURCES BY PLANNING AREA

	Planning Areas				
	A	B	C	D	E
Streams (Miles)	5.6	6.5	15.9	5.9	18.7
<i>Perennial</i>	4.2	5.9	9.7	4.7	15.0
<i>Intermittent</i>	0.8	0.1	4.7	0.7	3.0
<i>Ephemeral</i>	0.3	0.1	4.7	0.7	3.0
<i>Culvert</i>	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.4
Pond (Acres)	14.6	5.6	21.2	31.0	80.0
Floodplain (Acres)	129.7	125.9	135.1	307.4	803.6
Wetlands (Acres)	23.0	7.4	12.2	17.9	87.5
Tree Canopy (Acres)	53.1	109.6	157.8	190.7	429.2

Planning Area A

Planning Area A is the smallest of the five planning areas and typically has the fewest natural resources when compared to the other planning areas. For example, Planning Area A has the fewest miles of streams flowing through it, at less than six miles. This planning area also has the least amount of tree canopy. The southern portion of this area is primarily agricultural and is the location of many acres of wetlands as well as floodplains from the streams that flow through it. Whiteman Ditch, flowing over the northern portion of the planning area creates much of the floodplain found in Planning Area A.

Planning Area B

Planning Area B does not have many natural resource areas, partially due to the denser development patterns. Much of Planning Area B was established several decades ago, which gives the area a more mature tree canopy. While the trees are more mature within this area, many of the residential subdivisions do not contain dedicated open space or natural areas that are required in new developments. There are 6.5 miles of streams flowing through this area. These streams are more likely to suffer from erosion than those in other planning areas though. Most of the floodplain in this planning area is around the longest stream in the planning area, Brown Run.

GROVE CITY'S LONGEST STREAMS

Grant Run

7.7 miles

Brown Run

5.7 miles

Plum Run

4.4 miles

Grove City Creek

3.9 miles

Patzer Ditch

3.0 miles

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Planning Area C

This planning area is the second largest and contains a wide range of development patterns. The northern portion is heavily developed, resulting in fewer preserved natural areas, while the southwestern portion of the planning area is primarily agricultural in nature. Multiple streams are located in the southern portion of this planning area such as Plum Run, Patzer Ditch and Grant Run as well as several wetlands. These streams will need to be protected in the future as development extends south into the land that is currently agricultural. Planning Area C has fewer floodplains and less tree canopy than its size would suggest.

Planning Area D

Planning Area D is only slightly larger than smaller planning areas A and B, but enjoys considerably more natural resources. It has the second highest quantity of many natural resources including more than 300 acres of land in the floodplain, almost 200 acres of tree canopy and 30 acres of ponds. The Scioto River borders the western section of the planning area, causing the significant land within the floodplain in this area. The most significant stream is Republican Run, also called Grove City Creek.

Planning Area E

Planning Area E is the largest of the five planning areas and contains the most natural resources. Almost 20 miles of streams can be found in this planning area, including Grant Run, Patzer Ditch and Plum Run. The numerous streams and its proximity to the Scioto River give this planning area the most land in the floodplain and also help contribute to the more than 400 acres of tree canopy, preserved along stream corridors. Roughly 80 acres of ponds and almost 90 acres of wetlands are located here.

THREATS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

Many of the important natural resources found throughout the city are also the most vulnerable. Streams and wetlands both degrade quickly when vegetation is removed from their banks. As development expands and the city grows, it will be important to keep in mind potential threats to natural resources and determine ways to deter these threats.

Growth and Development

Growth and development means increasing the amount of impermeable surface in the city. Roads, parking lots and buildings all prevent rainwater from naturally infiltrating into the ground. This change in the flow of storm water can lead to flash flooding as streams receive storm water quickly from the runoff over roads and parking lot instead of slowly percolating through the soil to the stream. This also leads to erosion of stream beds, which only compounds the stream's inability to naturally regulate storm water. This phenomenon increases the odds of a stream flooding.

Increasing impermeable surface also leads to the pollution of streams, as water flows over pavement picking up any debris, chemicals or other substances that might be on the paved surface. According to the Central Ohio Greenways Plan, produced by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, many of the streams in Grove City are

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not in favorable ecological condition. Marsh Run is one of only two streams in Franklin County that was given a rating of “very poor” in the Plan. In the same plan, Republican Run was rated “fair”, and Grant Run was rated “poor” before it joins with Patzer Ditch and “fair” after it joins with Patzer Ditch. No streams in Grove City included in the analysis were given a “good” rating.

Lack of Knowledge of the Value or Existence of Natural Resources

Grove City has protected a number of streams and wooded areas in conservation easements when a development is platted. Problems arise when properties bordering these easements are sold and the new homeowners are not aware of the existence of the easement. These easements can carry regulations regarding what uses can be conducted in the area, as well as specific preservation guidelines. However, property owners must be made aware of the regulations.

Furthermore, the benefits of many types of natural resources are often misunderstood. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources considers wetlands to be one of the most misunderstood ecosystems in Ohio. For this reason, it is important for the city to have many educational opportunities available to the public to help residents understand the importance of natural resources and their preservation.

PRESERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

The city recognizes the importance of preserving natural resources and has enacted several policies and joined various organizations in order to raise awareness and work toward the protection of natural resources.

PARTNERSHIPS

Planning for the preservation of natural resources is frequently a regional task as natural resources rarely follow jurisdiction lines. Grove City is involved in a number of regional partnerships to promote the protection of natural resources.

Central Ohio Green Pact

In 2007, Grove City signed the Central Ohio Green Pact, an agreement made by a number of local governments and agencies to follow certain principles of sustainability and set an example to the community by implementing sustainable practices. The Parks and Recreation Department aims to follow the principles outlined in the Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks, particularly in the use of sustainable materials and general practices in development of parks.

Upper Scioto Planning Partnership

In 2010, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Agency organized the Upper Scioto Planning Partnership, in which Grove City is involved to help create a Watershed Balanced Growth Plan. A variety of principles guide the partnership, aiming to attain equilibrium between a strong, diversified economy and a healthy ecosystem. These principles include encouraging new development and redevelopment of historic, cultural or scenic resources; promoting public access and enjoyment of central Ohio natural resources; and minimizing the loss of green space.

OBJECTIVE 1

Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.

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Big Darby Accord

Grove City is one of 10 jurisdictions located within the Big Darby Watershed that has participated in the Big Darby Accord, a plan to preserve and protect the Big Darby Creek and its tributaries. The Accord allowed Grove City to give input on the best possible ways to ensure long-term environmental stewardship while allowing economic and neighborhood growth that respected property owners rights within the watershed. The Accord partners hold regular meetings to communicate, coordinate and advance recommendations outlined in the plan.

CITY POLICIES

Grove City currently has regulations pertaining to the protection of natural resources, both within the Codified Ordinances as well as separate adopted policies. These regulations ensure that new developments take natural resources into consideration and protect natural features in the city.

Stream Corridor Protection Policy

Grove City currently has a Stream Protection Policy that establishes a required riparian setback for all natural open watercourses. The policy also limits the uses that are permitted within the riparian setback and outlines various other regulations for the protection of the stream. When land is developed around streams, these corridors are frequently placed in conservation easements for the protection of the stream.

Tree Preservation Policy

Currently, all preliminary and final development plans submitted for Planning Commission review are required to submit plans showing existing trees of six inches diameter at breast height or larger. The city also has regulations for the preservation of trees during construction, including marking trees to be protected and installing fencing around areas to be preserved. Trees that are affected by the installation of driveways, parking lots or proposed buildings are encouraged to be relocated or replaced with new trees of the same species. These are only recommendations though, and not requirements.

BEST PRACTICES

A variety of tools and development strategies can be used to protect natural resources. By encouraging new developments to utilize these practices, Grove City can grow in a sustainable manner. Many of these development tools and their incorporation into the parks system during the park development process will be reviewed further in Chapter 7 - Land Acquisition and Parkland Development.

Nature Reserves

Nature reserves are used in communities throughout central Ohio to protect environmentally significant areas at the time land is developed. The city determines the location of a nature reserve based on a number of criteria such as the presence of streams, floodplains, poorly drained soils or wooded areas.

CENTRAL OHIO GREEN PACT

In 2007, Grove City signed the Central Ohio Green Pact, an agreement made by local governments and agencies to set an example to the community by implementing sustainable practices.

1. Greener Public Fleets

Agree to take responsibility to reduce air pollution by adopting a Green Fleet Policy, including anti idling directives, higher performance vehicles, alternative energy sources, and retrofitting existing vehicles.

2. Grow a Strong, Green Economy

Collaborate with the rest of the region to pursue development of emerging "green" business such as recycling and other environmentally friendly businesses.

3. Collaborate to Purchase Green Products

Purchase products that are environmentally friendly, preserve natural resources, and reduce waste going to landfills. Consider joint purchasing for these products and review purchasing codes to implement green procurement practices.

4. Adopt Sustainable Land Use Policies

This includes creating walkable, bikeable communities, preservation of trees, riparian corridors, and promoting bio-swales and rain gardens.

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5. Build Green Facilities

Explore creation and rehabilitation of buildings that are more energy efficient, conserve water, and use environmentally friendly products.

6. Reduce Waste

Lead by example to establish recycling programs and reduce physical waste generated by daily operations.

7. Educate and Engage Our Communities

Encourage environmental stewardship by educating residents through the use of programming and hands on activities.

8. Reduce Emissions and Climate Protection

Inventory greenhouse gas emissions and develop an action plan to address those emissions. Collaborate on regional solutions by engaging the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission.

9. Preserve Green Space and Creating Greenways

Provide abundant parkland for community use and develop a highly accessible system of pathways. Conserve streams, wetlands, forests, and other environmentally significant areas.

10. Promote Mass Transportation

Improve and promote alternative modes of transportation such as bus, bike, or carpooling.

Rain Gardens

A rain garden, or bioretention area, is a landscaping feature that is created to hold rainwater on-site and provide storm water a chance to percolate into the soil. Rain gardens usually consist of a shallow depression with relatively well draining soils and filled with attractive landscaping that is tolerant of standing water. Downspouts can be directed into the rain garden, and sometimes a drain is installed for when the rain garden is full. According to Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District, an estimated 69 rain gardens in Franklin County collect approximately 46.5 million gallons of storm water every year.

Rain Barrels

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. A rain barrel is typically composed of a 55-gallon drum, vinyl hose, screen grate to keep debris and insects out, and other off-the-shelf items. Rain barrels allow property owners to collect rainwater until they need it, saving money and energy, while decreasing the impact of runoff on streams.

Permeable Pavement/Pavers

Permeable pavement allows water to soak through the pavement and into the groundwater supply. It may either be a poured concrete material or be made of individual pavers. Permeable pavement dramatically reduces storm water runoff and ponding in roadways. The effect of storm water on streams is reduced by allowing storm water to more naturally infiltrate into the ground.

EDUCATION/INVOLVEMENT

The protection of natural resources and the environment starts with awareness and education. By providing educational opportunities in the parks, the community will learn more about the unique central Ohio environment and interact with the city's parks system. Educational opportunities can come in a variety of forms, particularly environmental education. Learning opportunities that cater to multiple learning styles are critical to creating meaningful educational experiences for the community.

Organizations

Currently, a number of Grove City residents engage in volunteer efforts such as the Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative (CORGI), building rain gardens, and Keep Grove City Beautiful, an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. These groups actively engage in sustainable projects such as collecting hazardous household waste for safe disposal and educating the community about sustainability issues.

Civic bodies such as the Tree Commission also play a role in resident involvement in natural resource protection. This all-volunteer group works on events such as Community Environmental Day and the Gardens at Gantz Farm Plant Sale. Members also prune trees on a monthly basis during the growing season.

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Programs

Grove City offers a variety of sustainable practice educational programs such as the rain barrel workshop, where participants attend a lesson on the benefits and use of a rain barrel, and are given a rain barrel for their own use. Grove City also helps organize stream cleanups where volunteers remove debris from the city's waterways.

As a member of the Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative (CORGI), the City also offers rain garden workshops to teach residents how to properly install a rain garden on their property. This can serve as a model for other outreach efforts to communicate the benefits of best practices relating to environmental stewardship.

City Website

Grove City's website is already a heavily used resource for residents researching parks and programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department, making it a good starting point for residents who wish to know more about environmental features in the parks. Information that may be included on Grove City's website includes a map of the parks, illustrating the location of natural resources. The website can provide overall characteristics of each park's natural features as well as any programming or educational opportunities relating to these natural resources.

Naturalists in the Parks

Several residents expressed an interest in educational programming in the parks, including a naturalist who could share information with park visitors. This individual could offer sessions that vary with the seasons or could speak during educational sessions.

Handouts and Signage

Brochures in parks as well as educational signage can complement natural features such as tree specimens, aquatic habitats or other natural features. This is an opportunity for residents to "discover" interesting details about park features as they enjoy their park visit. This will also be an important communication approach for park features that are not significant enough to warrant a naturalist or to have available when a naturalist is not present.

Community Gardens

Community gardens offer residents recreational and educational opportunities. They are a great place for community members to meet and mingle, offer a source of fresh fruits and vegetables and provide an interactive educational experience. Community gardens are particularly important for people who don't have space at home, such as people who live in condominiums or apartments. A well-kept community garden can also serve as a landscape feature that shows the residents care about their neighborhood.

OBJECTIVE 3

Provide the community with natural resource education opportunities.



“

[I would like] more programs like the rain barrel workshops.

- Planning Area E Resident

”

natural resources and management

“

[It would be great to have a] nature observation/viewing building... Fryer Park would be perfect to have a bird feeding/water fowl observation building with feeding stations. In the viewing building there should be opportunities for community member/children to learn about the environmental sciences.

- Planning Area D Resident

”

Educational Attractions

Grove City already has several successful educational attractions, including the arboretum and herb gardens at Gantz Park. Attractions like these are attractive natural landscaping features, but also serve as learning opportunities for park visitors. Installation of a “nature garden” has proven popular in other communities. The nature garden could include plants native to the area, sensory activities, learning stations to familiarize people with different plants and animals, an example bioretention area and descriptions of natural features. Informational signage would guide visitors by explaining the different attractions.

“

During the bird migration it would be nice to have an expert at programs in the area that migrating birds would be coming through.

- Planning Area B Resident

”

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GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

G1. **The protection of the City's natural resources.**

Grove City has many unique natural resources. As the city grows, it is important that these resources are protected and that future development is conducted in a sustainable manner. Developing parks and following policies mindful of environmental stewardship will aid in the protection of our resources and ensure that they will be protected for future generations.

O1. **Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.**

The Central Ohio Green Pact is a document signed by local governments (including Grove City) and organizations pledging to follow 10 principles to set an example for their jurisdictions on how to grow greener. Many of the City's long-term environmental goals can be founded in the principles outlined in the Pact, including creating walkable/bikeable communities, protecting our natural resources, and using environmentally-friendly products.

- A1. Use sustainable materials and practices in park development when feasible to do so
- A2. Encourage recycling by placing recycling containers in convenient locations in all parks and along public trails

O2. **Preserve natural resources on land to be developed.**

Natural resources can be found throughout the city, not just in city-owned parkland. By reviewing our existing policies aimed to protect natural resources and comparing them to that of other cities', we can ensure that our policies are as effective as possible in protecting our natural resources.

- A3. Adopt Code revisions that require developers to design sites around the existing natural resources and replace any trees removed or damaged during the development process
- A4. Adopt Code revisions that require stream protection corridors and conservation easements by dedicated to the city
- A5. Adopt Code revisions for natural resource definitions, such as wetlands and bioretention area

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POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

G2. **A community aware of the natural resources found in and around the city.**

The protection of natural resources and the environment starts with awareness and education. By providing educational opportunities in the parks, the community will have the opportunity to learn more about the unique environment found in central Ohio as well as have an additional opportunity to interact with the city's parks system.

O3. **Provide the community with natural resource education opportunities.**

Educational opportunities can come in a variety of forms, particularly in terms of environmental education. Having learning opportunities catering to multiple learning styles will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn in their own manner.

A6. Provide educational links / facts on the city's website

A7. Provide naturalists in parks, where applicable

A8. Create handouts and signage to place in parks explaining educational opportunities

A9. Install and promote community gardens as educational opportunities



CHAPTER 4 OUTLINE

1. **Overview of Grove City's Trail System**
2. **Education and Encouragement**
3. **Bikeways by Planning Area**
4. **Regional Connectivity**
5. **Additional Considerations**
 - a. Trail Safety
6. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

trails and connectivity

INTRODUCTION

As Grove City continues to grow, so should its trail system. Bike paths and pedestrian trails are not only great recreational assets, they can also be vital to the development of the community. According to the National Association of Homebuilders, trails are the number one amenity potential homeowners cite when asked what they would like to see in a new community.

Grove City currently has more than 30 miles of bikeways, in the form of recreational trails, bicycle lanes and bicycle boulevards. The future trail system for the City of Grove City will consist of a network of bikeways designed to create a legible, usable, extensive system that provides various recreational opportunities and connects to the regional system in central Ohio. Grove City's trail system has grown considerably in recent years, but there is room for improvement in order to create a community with a range of non-motorized transportation options.

The need for connectivity throughout the community, and the parks system in particular, was the most popular topic during the public input portion of the plan. Fewer than half of residents who attended a public meeting or completed an online survey felt that the city was well served by and accessible to trails.

By developing a complete and connected network of trails and bikeways, residents will have the ability to travel to parks, schools, and other local and regional destinations by bike or foot rather than relying on automobiles. In this chapter, trail connectivity will be examined from both a recreational perspective as well as a transportation perspective.

trails and connectivity

OVERVIEW

The completed trail network for Grove City will:

1. Create a dynamic system that integrates easily into the surrounding regional systems.
2. Strengthen inter-neighborhood connectivity and connect parks through the city's trail network.
3. Provide bicycle and trail safety education opportunities for the community.

DEFINITIONS

Below are a series of definitions for trails and connectivity that will be referenced throughout the chapter.

Bikeways

Bikeways is a generic term for any road, street, path or way which in some manner is specifically designated as being open to bicycle travel. A bikeway may be designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or may be shared with other modes of transportation.

Shared Roadways

Bike Lane

Bike lanes are part of a roadway for exclusive use by cyclists. They are commonly used on higher volume streets that experience high demand due to multiple destinations being served. Space for a new bike lane may come from restriping the other lanes or removing parking.

Signed, Shared Roadway (Bicycle Route)

Bicycle routes are a system of on-street bikeways designated with appropriate directional and informational route markers in which the bicyclists shares the roadway with motor vehicles.

Bicycle Boulevard

Bicycle boulevards are low-volume roadways designed to give priority to bicyclists and pedestrians that have been modified to enhance bicycle safety and security.

Shared Lane (Sharrow)

Vehicular lanes marked with a "sharrow" symbol indicate that motor vehicles share the roadway with bicycles. Shared lanes are typically used when there is not adequate space for a separated bike lane.

Multi-Use Paths

Recreational Trail

A bikeway within its own right of way, separate from the road network. These paths may be used by walkers, runners, skaters, and wheelchair users in addition to cyclists.

PROXIMITY TO WORK

Market research shows that it takes approximately 14 percent of Grove City residents less than 10 minutes to get to work. About 87 percent of residents drive alone to work, and about 8 percent carpool. Less than 2 percent walk or take non-motorized transportation to work.



trails and connectivity



Sidepath

A sidepath is a bikeway constructed on the side of the roadway within the street right of way, usually on only one side of the road.

OVERVIEW OF GROVE CITY'S TRAIL SYSTEM

Grove City has more than 30 miles of bikeways for residents to enjoy. The bikeways come in the form of recreational trails, sidepaths, bike lanes, signed shared roadways and bicycle boulevards. Most of the bikeways in the city are sidepaths, located along the roadway, but separated from the road by a landscape median. These bikeways are convenient because improvements are located within the existing road right of way and do not require easements over land or new land to be acquired for the sidepath. They are also a safer alternative to riding in the road for less advanced cyclists while allowing room for multiple users to enjoy the path at the same time.

Currently, many of Grove City's parks are connected to the bikeway network, offering a safe alternative to vehicular travel to parks. However, there are a number of parks that are not. Eighty percent of residents participating in the public input portion of the plan felt that having parks connected by trails was important to them. One of the goals of the Parks and Recreation Department is to have all parks connected to the bikeway network. This chapter will detail how this can be accomplished, through a unique network of bikeways that include sidepaths, shared use paths, bike routes and bike lanes.

Eighty percent of residents participating in the public input portion of the plan felt that having parks connected by trails was important to them.

Bikeways also provide safe access to schools. A number of schools in Grove City are connected to the bikeway system, including Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle School from the Holton Road sidepath, Central Crossing High School and Holt Crossing Intermediate from the Big Run South sidepath, and Grove City High School from the Hoover Road sidepath.

Grove City's bikeway network does not currently tie into any of the existing or proposed central Ohio bikeways, yet the city is within a few miles of many existing and proposed regional trails. Extending our bikeways to tie into the regional system will give residents greater recreational and transportation options, as well as bring in tourists to the city that are traveling along the trails.

The need for connectivity throughout the community, and the park system in particular, was the most popular topic during the public input portion of the plan, with more than 120 comments generated about trails and connectivity.

OBJECTIVE 2

Strengthen inter-neighborhood connectivity and connect parks through the city's trail network.

There are a number of challenges that the City will face when planning for the expansion of the bikeway network. One of these challenges is Interstate 71. There are currently only three east/west connectivity points between Grove City, split by I-71: the Stringtown Road interchange, White Road and the London Groveport Road interchange. Hoover Road has an overpass allowing people to travel over I-71, but this road is oriented north/south and not east/west. Interchanges are often planned to increase the efficiency of traffic moving through it, meaning that cars and trucks

trails and connectivity

would move quicker and not necessarily be aware of pedestrians or cyclists. Although the Stringtown Road interchange has a sidewalk on the south side and the redesigned London Groveport Road interchange will have a sidepath on the south side over the bridge; additional points of connectivity should be sought to create a safer recreational experience for cyclists not comfortable utilizing the interchanges. The reconstruction of White Road will also include the installation of a sidepath on the north side of the road connecting McDowell Road to Buckeye Parkway.

EDUCATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Residents must be kept informed and taught the proper ways to use the completed network as Grove City's bikeway system is developed. Classes and guided tours of the trail system will teach potential trail users safe and effective trail and bikeway practices. Grove City residents will need to be educated on the different benefits and programs that trails can offer, as well as encouraged to use the trails properly.

It will also be important to keep the public informed and involved in the trail planning process. This can be done in a variety of ways, from keeping the city website updated, to giving the public the ability to voice opinions at various public meetings related to trail planning.

Online

A portion of the Grove City website provides a general overview of the existing trails in the city. Each trail is listed with information such as the distance, width and presence or absence of restrooms or parking along the trail. The official Grove City Trails Map and Directory is available on the website as well as the trail planning map. In the future, the City will continue to keep the website updated in order to keep residents informed of future trails as well as update information about the existing trails.

Maps

The Grove City Trails Map and Directory is available digitally and in print. As the trail system grows, the City will work to keep the map updated and available to the public. Furthermore, staff will work toward the creation of individual maps for the City's trails.

Boards and Commissions

Unless trails are proposed as part of a development plan, few public boards or commissions currently review plans for proposed trails. Having public boards or commissions review plans is important because these groups hold meetings open to the public where the public is welcome to voice their opinions. Another way to achieve consistent and continual trail education is by establishing a Trail or Bikeway Advisory Committee consisting of enthusiastic residents who monitor the educative initiatives.

Adopt-A-Trail

An Adopt-A-Trail program will allow citizens to get more involved in the trail network, either through monetary contributions or trail cleanup. Trail "adoption" could be done by individuals, groups or organizations.

OBJECTIVE 3

A community knowledgeable of the city's trail network.

trails and connectivity

Educational Opportunities

The City can also provide a number of educational opportunities for residents through formal classes that teach the benefits of active transportation, bicycle safety skills and traffic laws for cyclists. The City can also expand on events that promote walking and bicycling such as Bike to Work Week.

BIKEWAYS BY PLANNING AREA

PLANNING AREA A BIKEWAYS:

Recreational

0.8 miles

Sidepath

2.1 miles

Bike Lane

1.1 miles

Signed

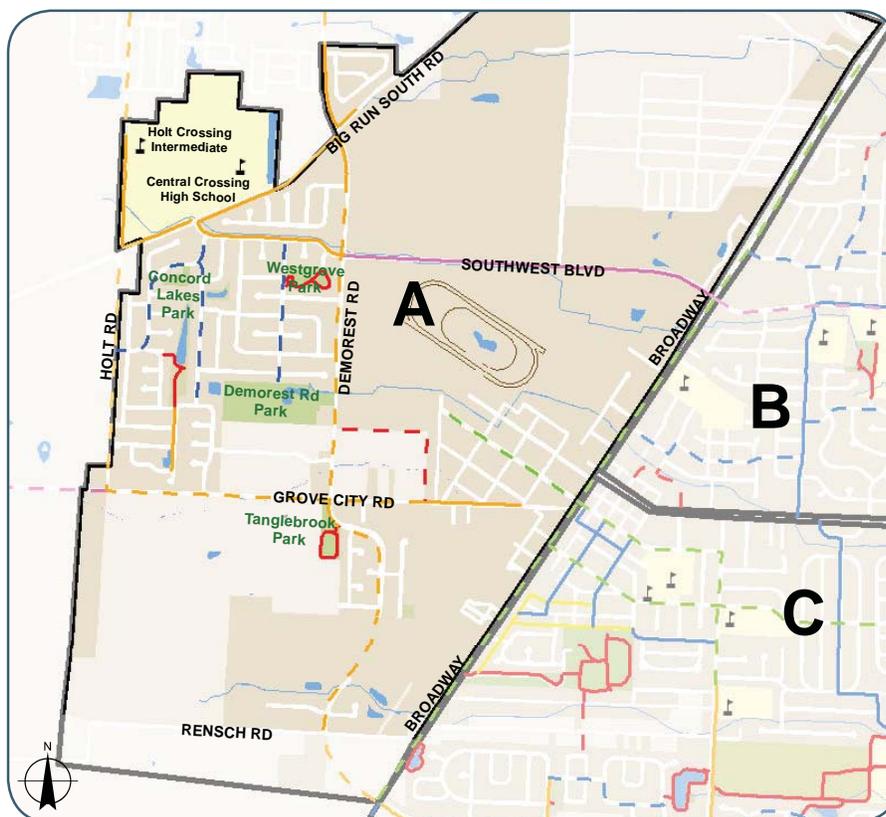
0 miles

Bicycle Boulevard

0 miles

Total Miles of Existing Bikeways: 4

PLANNING AREA A



Planning Area A has the fewest miles of bikeways, with only 4.5 miles of trails and bike routes. Sidepaths in this planning area exist along Southwest Boulevard, Holt Road, Big Run South Road, and Grove City Road. Additional recreational trails can be found in Westgrove Park and leading to the pond behind Carlotta Street. The Southwest Boulevard bike lane is also in this planning area.

Residents from Planning Area A who participated in the public input portion of the plan showed that they had a desire for the trail network to expand in their neighborhood. Almost half of the residents from this planning area that took the online survey or participated in the public meetings felt their neighborhood was not well served by or accessible to trails.

Legend

- Recreation Trail, Existing
- - - Recreation Trail, Proposed
- Sidepath, Existing
- - - Sidepath, Proposed
- Bicycle Lane, Existing
- - - Bicycle Lane, Proposed
- Bicycle Boulevard, Existing
- - - Bicycle Boulevard, Proposed
- Signed, Shared Roadway, Existing
- - - Signed, Shared Roadway, Proposed
- - - Sharrow, Proposed

trails and connectivity

Planning Area A Existing Bikeways

The majority of bikeways in Planning Area A are sidepaths, within the right of way of roads. These sidepaths can be found along Southwest Boulevard, west of Demorest Road, along Grove City Road, Holt Road, and Big Run South Road. A small section of sidepath extends south on Demorest Road from the Big Run South sidepath; however it turns into a sidewalk before Westgrove North subdivision.

Grove City's only designated bike lane is located in Planning Area A, on Southwest Boulevard between Demorest Road and Broadway. A bike lane can be found for both directions of traffic. The bike lane ends at the start of the Southwest Boulevard sidepath to the west; however there is no bikeway connectivity at the east end of the bike lane at Broadway.

The Southwest Boulevard bikeway provides important access and a safe route to both Central Crossing High and Holt Crossing Intermediate for residents of Westgrove and Concord Lakes subdivisions. Expanding the bikeway network to include signed shared roadways on select residential streets such as Carlotta Street and Lake Mead Drive would help connect residents safely to the existing bikeway network.

Planning Area A Proposed Bikeways

Proposed Sidepaths

Demorest Road

A bikeway south along Demorest Road could connect both the Big Run South sidepath and the Southwest Boulevard sidepath and bike lane to the greater bikeway system.

Holt Road

A sidepath currently exists along Holt Road, north of Big Run South Road. Extending the sidepath south would allow connectivity to the future extension of the Grove City Road sidepath.

Proposed Recreational Trails

Westgrove Bike Paths

In addition to a proposed sidepath along Demorest Road, a trail is proposed to connect from Demorest Road east along a series of city-owned alleyways then south to the existing Grove City Road trail. This proposed trail will provide more direct connectivity between Grove City's Town Center and the Demorest Road Park. It will also separate bicycle traffic from vehicular traffic by taking advantage of existing right-of-ways for the exclusive use of bicycles.

“

I think it would be nice to have sidewalks connecting all the way from Southwest Boulevard to Grove City Road.

- Planning Area A Resident

”

“

Our neighborhood has no safe access to downtown Grove City by walking or by bike.

- Planning Area A Resident

”

trails and connectivity

Proposed Signed, Shared Roadways

Magnolia Street

Magnolia Street runs north/south between Southwest Boulevard and Demorest Road Park. Westgrove Park is located along this street, making this a very important connection route for area residents. Designating this road as a signed, shared roadway would alert motorists to the possibility of cyclists traveling from the various parks to the Southwest Boulevard sidepath.

Lake Mead Drive

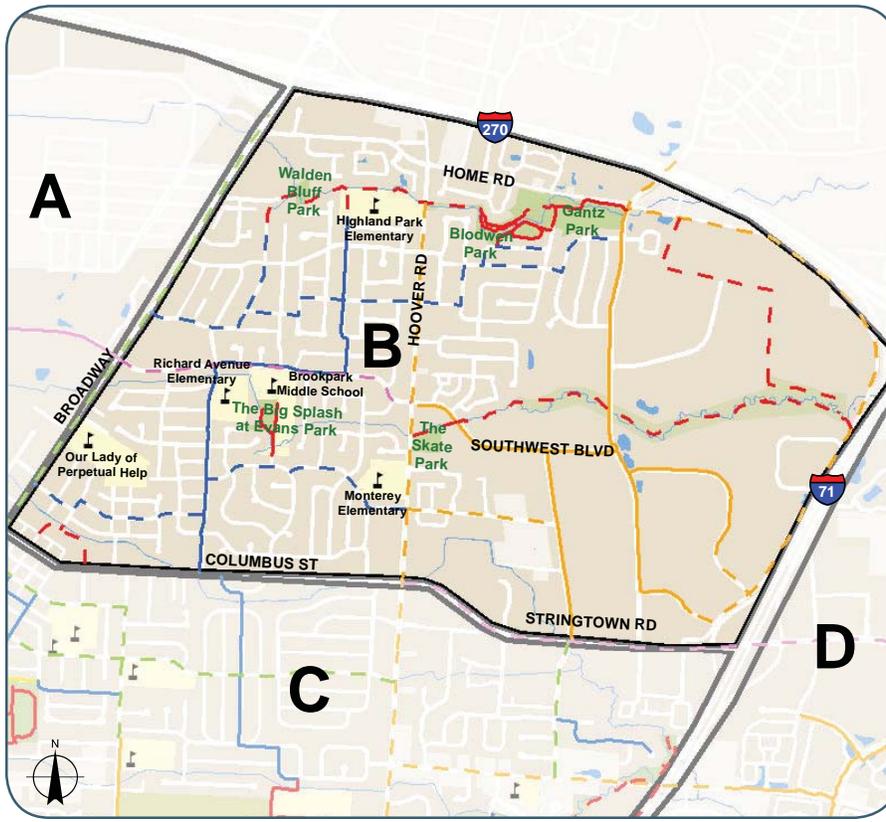
Lake Mead Drive is a residential street that connects to Southwest Boulevard. Designating this road as a signed shared roadway would connect Concord Lakes Park into the bikeway network and would also provide a safe, designated route for school age residents to travel to either Central Crossing High School or Holt Crossing Intermediate.

Proposed Sharrows

Parks Street would be an ideal road to designate for shared traffic between cyclists and motorists, with sharrows. The road west of Broadway is lightly traveled and wide enough to accommodate cyclists and motorists.

trails and connectivity

PLANNING AREA B



PLANNING AREA B BIKEWAYS:

Recreational

1.3 miles

Sidepath

3.0 miles

Bike Lane

0 miles

Signed

1.5 miles

Bicycle Boulevard

0 miles

Total Miles of Existing Bikeways: 5.8

Legend

- Recreation Trail, Existing
- - - Recreation Trail, Proposed
- Sidepath, Existing
- - - Sidepath, Proposed
- Bicycle Lane, Existing
- - - Bicycle Lane, Proposed
- Bicycle Boulevard, Existing
- - - Bicycle Boulevard, Proposed
- Signed, Shared Roadway, Existing
- - - Signed, Shared Roadway, Proposed
- - - Sharrows, Proposed

Planning Area B has almost six miles of bikeways, through a combination of recreational trails, sidepaths, and bike routes. The Southpark Trail network is located in this planning area, as well as the extensive trails found in Gantz Park. Castleton Street, Richard Avenue and Southwest Boulevard have all been designated as bike routes in this area.

During the public input portion of the plan, residents from Planning Area B had mixed feelings on how well their neighborhood was served by trails. While 41 percent of responders from this planning area felt their neighborhood was not well served by trails, more than 30 percent felt they were well served. The remainder of residents were indifferent and did not feel strongly one way or the other.

Planning Area B Existing Bikeways

Recreational Trails

The Gantz Park Trails

The Gantz Park Trails feature a network of trails over rolling terrain and through wooded areas near a flowing river/stream. Along the trail is an herb garden, arboretum, and gazebo. This trail covers a total distance of .88 miles, and is 8 feet wide equipped with parking and restrooms.

trails and connectivity



The Gantz Park Trails offer some of the most scenic views and challenging topography of any of Grove City's trails. They also offer a convenient and safe way for residents to explore Gantz Park. The trails currently connect to the Gantz Road trail at the intersection of Home Road and Gantz Road, providing connectivity to the Southpark area and another unique trail network. There is potential to extend the Gantz Park Trail to the west to Hoover Road along Marsh Run. This trail could eventually, if continued along the stream, connect to schools and other parks in the city.

Sidepaths

The Southpark Trails

The Southpark Trails wind through Grove City's premier industrial park, providing important connections between residential subdivisions to the west and commercial establishments on Stringtown Road, in addition to access to Gantz Park. Off Road sidepaths can be found along Southwest Boulevard, Gantz Road, McDowell Road, Brookham Drive, and Ohio Drive within this network of trails which covers a total distance of 2.5 miles. They provide connectivity between Gantz Park and the Grove City Skate Park as well as many subdivisions and other residential developments. The McDowell sidepath currently ends at Stringtown Road, which will be the location of a designated bike lane west to Hoover Road.



Planning Area B Proposed Bikeways

Proposed Bike Lanes

Stringtown Road

As part of improvements to Stringtown Road between Hoover Road and McDowell Road, bike lanes will be installed for both east-bound and west-bound riders. The lanes will be clearly marked and provide a designated lane for bicyclist along this portion of Stringtown Road. The improvements end at McDowell Road, which offers an existing sidepath to the north and the potential for a bikeway to the south, leading to the existing bike route along Shirlene Drive and Michelle Drive leading to Keller Farms Park. The proposed bike lanes on Stringtown Road will create a key point of connectivity as well as set an example of how future roadways should be developed, with non-motorized transportation in mind.

Proposed Sidepaths

Hoover Road

Hoover Road currently has a sidepath, south of White Road near Grove City High School. Extending this sidepath north to Home Road would allow the neighborhoods in Planning Area B the ability to safely travel to a variety of destinations without a motor vehicle.

Sonora Road

A sidepath along Sonora Road would provide connectivity between the existing McDowell Road sidepath, part of the Southpark Trails, to the proposed Hoover Road sidepath.

trails and connectivity

Proposed Recreational Trails

Marsh Run

Marsh Run flows south along Walden Bluff Park, creates the northern boundary of the Highland Park Elementary school property, and eventually flows through Gantz Park. Creating a trail along the streams would connect the parks and school, as well as create additional points of access for residents to safely travel to these destinations. Currently, residents to the south of Walden Bluff Park cannot access the park. Creating this trail and other related improvements could allow this park to serve its full potential service area. The park currently extends west to Harrisburg Station Lane. Creating a trail that extends to this road would provide an important access point to Broadway. There is evidence that residents currently walk along the northern edge of Highland Park Elementary as an informal trail, so a trail in this location would likely be well utilized. Gantz Park property currently extends west to Hoover Road; however the trail currently ends before the property boundary. Improving this land would allow for the extension of the Gantz Park Trails and would tie the park further into the greater Grove City bikeway system.



Brown Run

Brown Run forms the northern boundary of the Skate Park and then flows through a series of greenways until it crosses Interstate 71. This trail would provide connectivity to the existing trails through the Southpark industrial center, as well as the existing Gantz Road sidepath that leads north to Gantz Park. This trail would be primarily recreational, creating a series of trails for residents wishing to enjoy the scenic views of the natural Brown Run corridor.



Proposed Signed Shared Roadways

Salem Avenue/Blodwen Circle

Designating Salem Avenue, Blodwen Circle and the connecting roadways between Hoover Road and Gantz Road as shared roadways would tie Blodwen Park into the bikeway network. Using these residential roads would also connect residents to Gantz Park, through the sidewalk connection from Blodwen Park.

Lotz Drive/Gunderman Avenue/Dennis Lane

Lotz Drive and Gunderman Avenue provide connectivity between Broadway and the existing bike route on Richard Avenue. Designating Dennis Lane as a shared roadway would provide connectivity between the Richard Avenue bike route and the proposed extension of the Hoover Road sidepath. More importantly, this road provides access to the trail leading to the Big Splash.

GREENWAY TRAILS

The city owns acres of land along streams such as Brown Run and Grant Run in the form of natural greenways. These areas are prime locations for recreational trails because they are already city-owned and will allow trail users to enjoy natural areas previously inaccessible to residents.

trails and connectivity

PLANNING AREA C BIKEWAYS:

Recreational

4.7 miles

Sidepath

3.9 miles

Bike Lane

0 miles

Signed

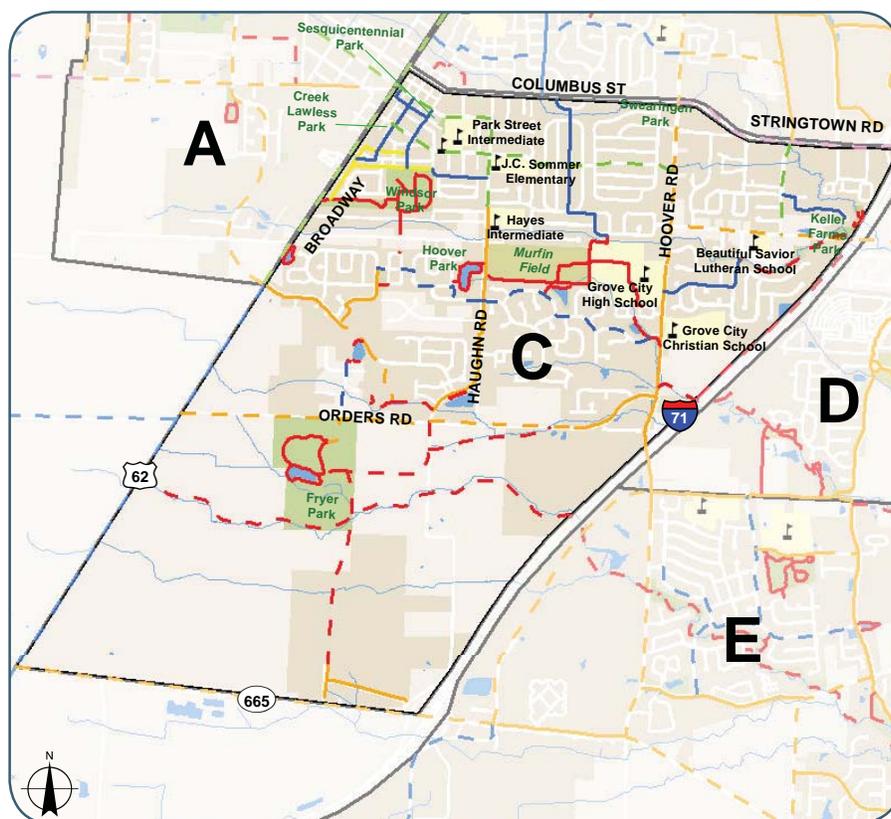
2.8 miles

Bicycle Boulevard

0.9 miles

Total Miles of Existing Bikeways: 12.3

PLANNING AREA C



Planning Area C has the most bikeways out of all the planning areas, with more than 11 miles of combined trails, bike routes, and bicycle boulevards. The Town Center trail network is located in this planning area, as are the Hoover Road and Haughn Road sidepaths. Trails can also be found in the Holton Run subdivision and Murfin Field. The Fryer Park and Hoover Park trails are also included in this area.

Even though this planning area has the most miles of bikeway, 40 percent of residents from this planning area that responded to the online survey and participated in the public meetings felt their neighborhood was not well served by or accessible to trails. This shows the need for additional connectivity s in the area, to provide access for area residents to the trail network in the area.

“

Many of the bike trails go nowhere and present traffic hazards to riders.

- Planning Area C Resident

”

Planning Area C Existing Bikeways

Recreational Trails

Fryer Park Trail

The Fryer Park Trail circles Rotary Lake and the Grove City YMCA. This trail covers a total distance of 1.1 miles and is 9 feet wide, equipped with restrooms and ample parking along the way.

Although the Fryer Park Trail is a beneficial feature for the park, the trail has no connectivity to the greater Grove City bikeway system. By extending a trail out to Orders Road to connect to the proposed Orders Road sidepath and extending additional trails out from the park, more residents could safely

trails and connectivity

travel to Fryer Park to enjoy the Fryer Park Trail without having to travel to the park by car.

Murfin Field Trails

The Murfin Field Trails provide a connection between the Haughn Road Trail and the Hoover Road Trail. Access to Grove City High School and the amenities at Murfin Field are also available along this trail. The trails throughout the park cover a distance of about 1.4 miles and provide a point of connection to Clark Drive and the Grove City Heights subdivision.

The Murfin Field Trails connect to the existing bike route on Brookpark Drive from the access onto Clark Drive. Another trail stems to the south, providing access to the Hoover Crossing subdivision. By targeting roads such as Dunmann Way, Hoover Crossing Way, and Longridge Way as potential bike routes, additional connections could be made to the Hoover Road and Haughn Road Trails, as well as provide safe access to schools and parks for many residents.

Windsor Park Trails

These trails circle the features of Windsor Park such as the ball diamonds, tennis courts and play areas, and connect to the Town Center bikeways.

The Windsor Park Trails are well connected to the Grove City Trail system with the connection to the Town Center bikeways as well as a designated bike route on Angela Drive, providing access to the Haughn Road Trail. Improvement to Broadway would create the potential for future bikeways connecting to the Holton Road Trail and the existing sidepaths along Demorest Road and Edgerton Drive.

Sidepaths

Haughn Road Trail

The Haughn Road Trail starts at Hayes Intermediate School and runs south to Orders Road. Both Murfin Field and Hoover Park, offering additional trails and recreational opportunities, are located along this sidepath. The trail is approximately 1 mile in length.

The location of the Haughn Road Trail has great potential for further connectivity in the trail system, including connections to a future Orders Road sidepath. A designated bike route on Angela Drive currently stems from this sidepath and leads to Windsor Park and the Town Center trail network. Extending the Haughn Road Trail north could provide residents with safe access to J.C. Sommer Elementary School.

Hoover Road Trail

This trail leads cyclists from Grove City High School south to Orders Road. A separate trail through Murfin Field connects this 1-mile trail to the Haughn Road Trail.



trails and connectivity

The Hoover Road Trail's central location already offers connectivity to Grove City Christian High School, Grove City High School and Murfin Field. By expanding this centrally located trail to the north along Hoover Road, many subdivisions and city parks could be connected to the bikeway system. This trail could also expand to the south, over Interstate 71, to connect to the Holton Road Trail, Meadow Grove Park and London Groveport Road.



Signed Shared Roadways

Town Center Bikeways

A number of residential streets within Grove City's Town Center are designated bike routes, including Arbutus Avenue, Dudley Avenue, and Civic Place. These bikeways provide connectivity between Windsor Park and the shopping and restaurants in the city's historic core.

Bicycle Boulevards

Residential alleyways behind Woodlawn Avenue and other area streets provide bicycle boulevards that connect to Windsor Park and designated bike routes leading to the city's Town Center.

Planning Area C Proposed Bikeways

Proposed Bike Lanes

Stringtown Road Bike Lanes: As part of improvements to Stringtown Road between Hoover Road and McDowell Road, bike lanes will be installed for both east-bound and west-bound riders. The lanes will be clearly marked and provide a designated lane for bicyclist along this portion of Stringtown Road. The improvements end at McDowell Road, which offers an existing sidepath to the north and the potential for a bikeway to the south, leading to the bike route along Shirlene Drive and Michelle Drive leading to Keller Farms Park. The proposed bike lanes on Stringtown Road will create a key point of connectivity as well as set an example of how future roadways should be developed, with non-motorized transportation in mind.

Proposed Sidepaths

White Road

As part of improvements to White Road east of McDowell Road, a sidepath is being installed on the north side of the road that will connect to the existing path west of Buckeye Parkway. The path is proposed to connect to the Keller Farms entrance off of Michelle Court. This path will be a vital connection between the west and east sides of Grove City and will help make Keller Farms more accessible to nearby residents.

Orders Road

A sidepath currently exists along a portion of Orders Road, west of Hoover Road. Extending the sidepath west would provide connectivity to both the Haughn Road sidepath, and Broadway. Most importantly, this sidepath would provide safe access to Fryer Park, currently not connected to the bikeway network.

trails and connectivity

Proposed Recreational Trails

Holton Run Trails

As part of the development plan for the Holton Run subdivision, a sidepath will be extended along Demorest Drive (east of Broadway) connecting to the Claybrooke Crossing subdivision and Haughn Road. Additional trails are proposed off of this sidepath that loop around ponds and connect to Southern Grove Drive, directly across Orders Road from the entrance to Fryer Park. Providing this connection will be an important step in giving residents safe non-motorized transportation options to Fryer Park.

Mulberry Run

To the west of Hunting Creek Drive, Mulberry Run flows across city-owned greenways until just before it crosses White Road. This greenway is located behind the properties fronting Geyerwood Court and Presley Drive. This recreational trail could provide a safe connection to Keller Farms if a safe crossing is established across White Road. This recreational trail, combined with the existing bike route on Gershwin Avenue and Hunting Creek Drive would offer a safe route to Grove City High School and the Hoover Road Trail.

Republican Run

Creating a shared use recreational path along Republican Run, between McDowell Road and Keller Farms Park would provide an alternative to cycling on McDowell Road to gain access to Keller Farms and the proposed White Road sidepath. The majority of land along this portion of Republican Run is privately-owned yet undeveloped land. By obtaining a series of easements or acquiring the property along the stream, an additional half mile of recreational trails could be added to Grove City's trail network.

Proposed Sharrows

Kingston Avenue

Kingston Avenue provides wide lanes and ample room for cyclists comfortable riding with traffic between Broadway and Hoover Road. This bikeway would provide key connectivity to Grove City's Town Center.

Proposed Signed, Shared Roadways

Summer Glen Drive / Longridge Way

Summer Glen Drive and Longridge Way in the Hoover Park subdivision are residential roadways that would be appropriate as designated bike routes. This bikeway would provide connectivity from the existing Edgerton Drive sidepath to the Haughn Road sidepath, and provide access to Hoover Park.

Wynridge Drive/Dunmann Way/Hoover Crossing Way

These three roads in the Hoover Crossing subdivision would provide connectivity between the Haughn Road and Hoover Road sidepaths. A recreational trail leading to the Murfin Field trails extend from Dunmann Way, making this an access point to reach either the park or Grove City High School.



Trails within ODOT's Right-of-Way: Interstate 71

Grove City is bisected by Interstate 71, which creates a challenge for bikeway planning. With a right-of-way that extends as many as 80 feet back from the roadway, space exists to install a trail along I-71 that would create an important point of connectivity in Grove City. Several examples of trails within the Ohio Department of Transportation's highway right-of-way can be found in central Ohio, including along I-670 and SR 315. Proper screening between the highway and the trail would be important to make the trail safe and welcoming for cyclists.

trails and connectivity

PLANNING AREA D BIKEWAYS:

Recreational

0.9 miles

Sidepath

4.4 miles

Bike Lane

0 miles

Signed

0 miles

Bicycle Boulevard

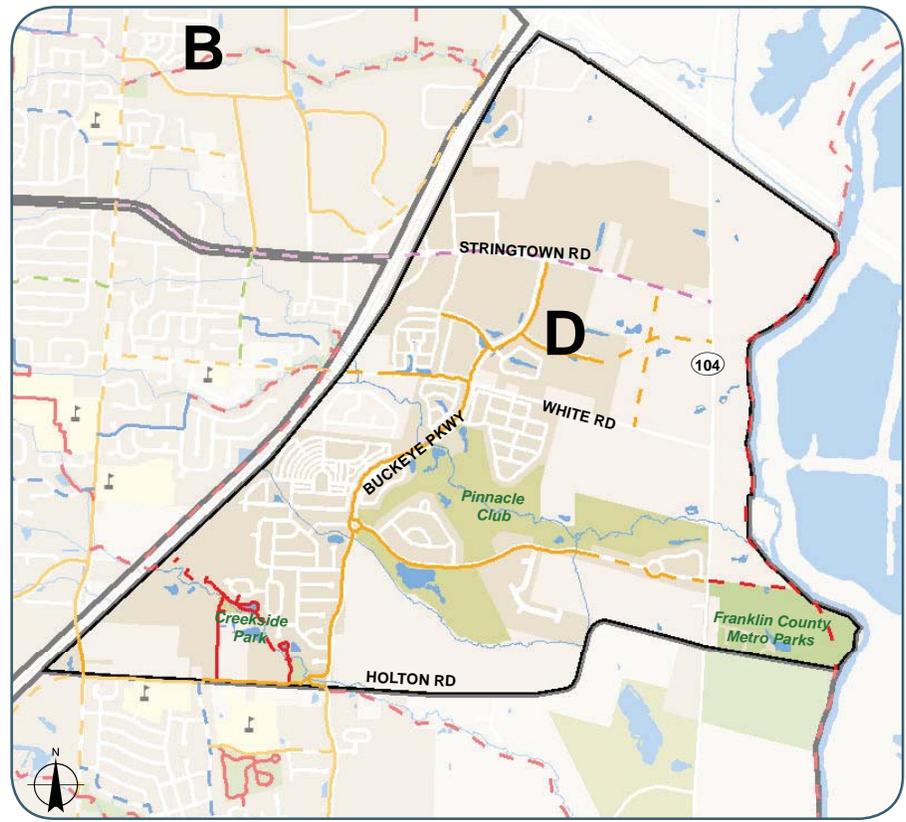
0 miles

Total Miles of Existing Bikeways: 5.3

Legend

- Recreation Trail, Existing
- - - Recreation Trail, Proposed
- Sidepath, Existing
- - - Sidepath, Proposed
- Bicycle Lane, Existing
- - - Bicycle Lane, Proposed
- Bicycle Boulevard, Existing
- - - Bicycle Boulevard, Proposed
- Signed, Shared Roadway, Existing
- - - Signed, Shared Roadway, Proposed
- - - Sharrow, Proposed

PLANNING AREA D



Planning Area D has more than five miles of bikeway. This includes the Buckeye Parkway Trail north of Holton Road, the Pinnacle Club Drive trail east of the roundabout and private trails located in the Creekside subdivision.

Planning Area D had the overall best response from residents during the public input portion of the plan. About 45 percent of residents that participated in the online survey and public meetings felt their neighborhood was well served or very well served by trails. Many of the subdivisions in this planning area are oriented off of Buckeye Parkway, giving easy access to the Buckeye Parkway Trail.

Planning Area D Existing Bikeways

Recreational Trails

Buckeye Parkway Trail

The Buckeye Parkway Trail is a 3.7 mile long trail that runs from Stringtown Road to London Groveport Road, giving cyclists access to the shopping and dining opportunities at Parkway Centre as well as provide important connections to city parks and schools. This trail also provides users with scenic views of The Pinnacle community and golf course as well as a connection to many residential subdivisions including Pinnacle, Creekside, Meadow Grove and Indian Trails. The Buckeye Parkway Trail also leads to Indian Trails Park and Henceroth Park.

trails and connectivity

The Buckeye Parkway Trail is the longest trail in Grove City, and connects to a variety of destinations such as parks and other trails. Improved connections between this trail and surrounding trails and residential streets will allow more residents to utilize the trail for non-motorized transportation to shopping and dining destinations, or for recreational purposes.

Holton Road Trail

The Holton Road Trail leads from the Buckeye Parkway Trail to Hoover Road and provides access to Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle School. Separate trails leading into the Creekside subdivision and Creekside Park branch off this trail. The Holton Road Trail has very good connectivity to the existing trail network, with its connection to the Buckeye Parkway Trail. An extended Hoover Road sidepath would provide even greater connectivity to southern Grove City on the trail network.



Planning Area D Proposed Bikeways

Proposed Sidepaths

White Road

As part of improvements to White Road east of McDowell Road, a sidepath is being installed on the north side of the road that will connect to the existing path west of Buckeye Parkway. The path is proposed to connect to the Keller Farms entrance off of Michelle Court. This path will be a vital connection between the west and east sides of Grove City and will help make Keller Farms more accessible to nearby residents.

Proposed Recreational Trails

Pinnacle Trails

Leisure trails are proposed along Republican Run east of Interstate 71, along the southern boundary of "The Greens" subarea of The Pinnacle Club of Grove City. The trail will connect to the existing Creekside subdivision trails, giving residents in Pinnacle the ability to connect to both the Holton Road trail and the Buckeye Parkway Trail.

trails and connectivity

PLANNING AREA E BIKEWAYS:

Recreational

1.7 miles

Sidepath

5.4 miles

Bike Lane

0 miles

Signed

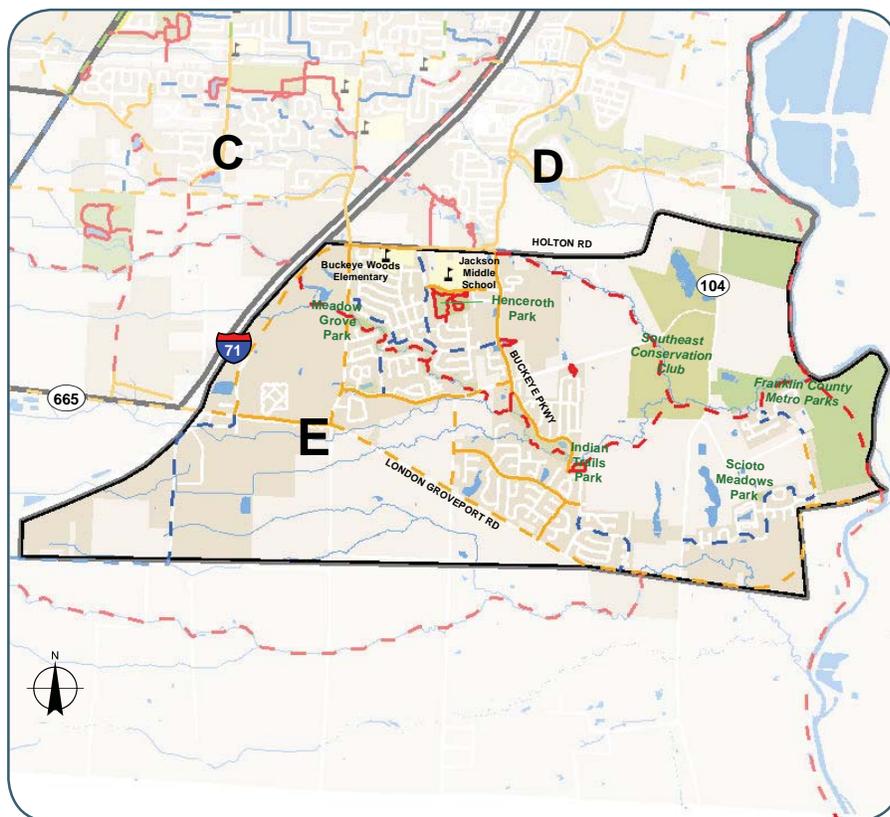
0 miles

Bicycle Boulevard

0 miles

Total Miles of Existing Bikeways: 7.1

PLANNING AREA E



Planning Area E has the second most trails of all the planning areas with more than six miles of bikeways. The Buckeye Parkway Trail south of Holton Road is in the area, as is the Holton Road trail. Sidepaths are also present along portions of Quail Creek Drive and Hawthorne Parkway. The trails within Indian Trails Park and Henceroth Park offers an additional 1.5 miles of trails.

Trails in Planning Area E received the lowest rating from area residents during the public input portion of the plan, with more than half of the responders saying they felt their neighborhood was not well served by or accessible to trails. Although there are many trails in this planning area, Planning Area E is considerably larger than any other planning area. So while there may be many trails in the area, they are not necessarily accessible to residents.

Planning Area E Existing Bikeways

Recreational Trails

Henceroth Park Trail

The Henceroth Park Trail circle this “green” park’s butterfly and herb gardens, as well as fitness stations for those seeking additional fitness opportunities. This trail covers a total distance of 0.7 miles.

The Henceroth Park Trail is well connected to the Grove City trail system. A trail along Mallow Lane connects the park to the Buckeye Parkway Trail and a trail to the south leads to a series of residential streets in the Meadow Grove

Legend

- Recreation Trail, Existing
- - - Recreation Trail, Proposed
- Sidepath, Existing
- - - Sidepath, Proposed
- Bicycle Lane, Existing
- - - Bicycle Lane, Proposed
- Bicycle Boulevard, Existing
- - - Bicycle Boulevard, Proposed
- Signed, Shared Roadway, Existing
- - - Signed, Shared Roadway, Proposed
- - - Sharrow, Proposed

“

There isn't one large space that's committed to a natural area and is trail based.

- Planning Area E Resident

”

trails and connectivity

subdivision. This trail is also very near to the Holton Road Trail, providing access to both Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle Schools.

Sidepaths

Buckeye Parkway Trail

The Buckeye Parkway Trail is a 3.7 mile long trail that runs from Stringtown Road to London Groveport Road, giving cyclists access to the shopping and dining opportunities at Parkway Centre as well as provide important connections to city parks and schools. This trail also provides users with scenic views of The Pinnacle community and golf course as well as a connection to many residential subdivisions including Pinnacle, Creekside, Meadow Grove and Indian Trails. The Buckeye Parkway Trail also leads to Indian Trails Park and Henceroth Park.

The Buckeye Parkway Trail is the longest trail in Grove City and connects numerous to a variety of destinations such as parks, and other trails. Improved connections between this trail and surrounding trails and residential streets will allow more residents to utilize the trail for non-motorized transportation to shopping and dining destinations, or for recreational purposes.



Holton Road Trail

The Holton Road Trail leads from the Buckeye Parkway Trail to Hoover Road and provides access to Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle School. Separate trails leading into the Creekside subdivision and Creekside Park branch off this trail.

The Holton Road Trail has very good connectivity to the existing trail network, with its connection to the Buckeye Parkway Trail. An improved Hoover Road trail would provide even greater connectivity to southern Grove City on the trail network.

Proposed Bikeways

Proposed Recreational Trails

Grant Run

Grant Run offers tremendous connectivity and recreational opportunities for the city. By creating a recreational trail along the stream starting at Hoover Road, residents could travel from Meadow Grove Park to Indian Trails Park without getting on the road. Public greenways currently border Grant Run between Hoover Road and Borror Road, and a majority of the land between Borror Road and Buckeye Parkway is also public greenway. There is also potential to extend the trail east of Buckeye Parkway along Grant Run to provide connectivity to the Franklin County Metro Park located along the Scioto River (the former Talbott Park).



trails and connectivity

TRAIL MARKINGS

When relying on markings to guide trail or roadway traffic, proper maintenance is a vital component to maintain their effectiveness, especially in the case of painted markings. Proper and consistent debris (snow, leaves, water, dirt, etc) removal is necessary to ensure visibility of markings. Marking durability is also subject to inevitable 'wear and tear' due to traffic volumes, weather, and location. Therefore, markings should be maintained to reduce the lack of visibility due to fading.

Proposed Signed Shared Roadway

Meadow Grove Drive

Meadow Grove Drive connects Stargrass Avenue and Holton Road and is an important access road for many residents in the Meadow Grove Subdivision. Increased signage would alert motorists to the cyclists that would utilize this road for connectivity to the Holton Run sidepath, or the Mallow Lane sidepath, both of which provide access to area schools Buckeye Woods Elementary and Jackson Middle School.

Springhill Road/Stargrass Avenue

Designating Springhill Road and Stargrass Avenue as bike routes would provide connectivity between a future Hoover Road sidepath and the existing Buckeye Parkway sidepath. This route would also connect Meadow Grove Park to the bikeway system.

Rising Sun Drive/River Trail Drive

Indian Trails subdivision east of Buckeye Parkway currently does not have access to any bikeways. Designating Rising Sun Drive and River Trail Drive as bike routes would connect the subdivision to the proposed extension of the Hawthorne Parkway and London Groveport Road sidepaths.

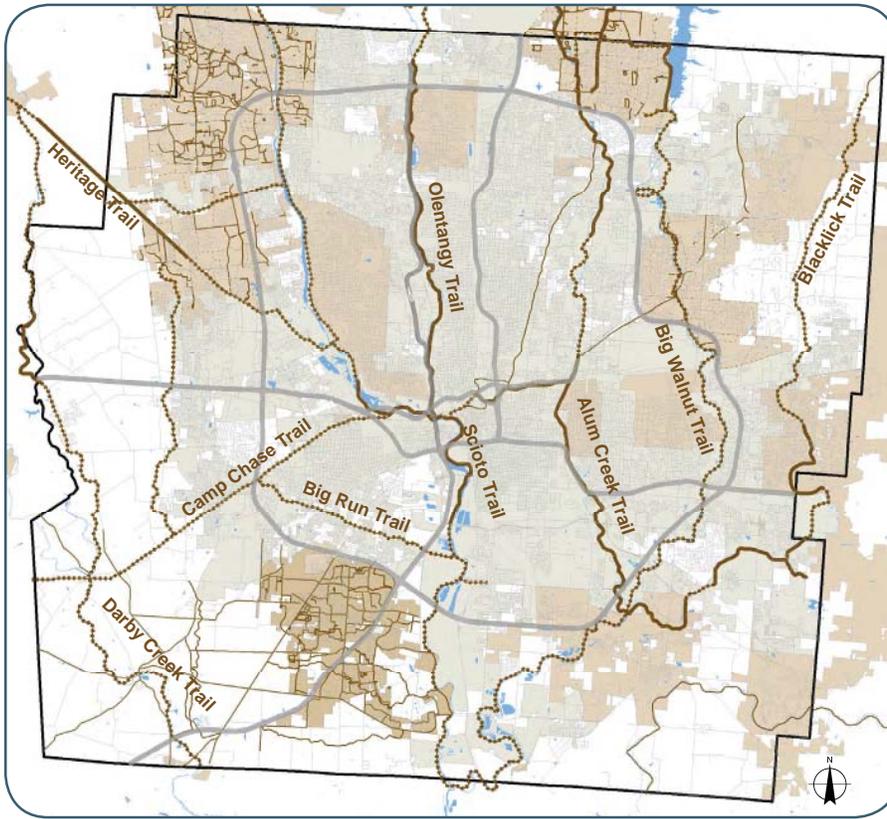
Grant Run Recreational Trail

The construction of the Grant Run Recreational Trail would connect residents to the greater trail network with few remaining constraints to limit the city's ability to complete this effort. Much of the land needed to create the proposed recreational trail between Meadow Grove Park and Indian Trails Park is already held by the city in the form of public greenways. Furthermore, the Buckeye Parkway bridge over Grant Run was installed with a separate bikeway underpass from the stream.

The Grant Run Recreational Trail can be easily divided into multiple phases for further expansion to connect from Indian Trails Park east to the future Metro Park between SR 104 and the Scioto River (former Talbott Park), extending the trail to the west over I-71 toward Fryer Park.



trails and connectivity



REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

A successful trail network should also connect to the regional system. Grove City is fortunate to be located within close proximity to the growing network of trails in Columbus and Franklin County, many of which are within a few short miles of Grove City's boundaries. By tying into these trails, residents will have greater transportation and recreational opportunities. However, this connectivity will require careful coordination with other jurisdictions such as Jackson and Pleasant Townships and the City of Columbus, and regional agencies such as the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Franklin County Metro Parks, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Transportation and the Central Ohio Greenways Committee.

Camp Chase Trail

Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail, the Camp Chase Trail is a trail created from an abandoned railroad right-of-way. The trail starts in Madison County, west of the Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park and extends to the northeast ending slightly north of Hellbranch Run. The next proposed phase of the trail will continue it northeast to Sullivant Avenue. This portion of railway is currently still in use. There are multiple opportunities for Grove City to tie into this trail, including extending the Grove City Road sidepath to the west. Tying into this trail would provide cyclists the opportunity to travel on the Ohio to Erie trail that connects Cleveland to Cincinnati in a network of bikeways.

“

I would like to see Grove City connected to the big bike trail from downtown Columbus to campus and on to Worthington.

- Planning Area C Resident

”



I think our trail system is too small and disconnected compared to other communities. As we try to get people to exercise more, live [a] healthier lifestyle and be more green environmentally, it's important that we have a strong trail system. If I want to go on a 20-25 mile bike ride without worrying about traffic dangers, I should be able to. We must also connect to regional trails or... fewer people will be interested in living here.

Planning Area C Resident



trails and connectivity

Scioto River Trail

Much of the land has been committed for the creation of the Scioto River Trail, to be located on the western banks of the Scioto River. This trail will continue through the new Franklin County Metro Park, the former Talbott Park. The Scioto River Trail will provide direct access for cyclists to downtown Columbus and connectivity to other Columbus trails such as the Olentangy Trail.

Big Run Trail

The Big Run Trail is proposed to connect the Scioto Trail to the Camp Chase Trail, north of I-270. Extending a trail north along Demorest Road could provide connectivity to this trail.

Darby Creek Trail

The Darby Creek Trail follows the stream and extends through the Darby Creek Metro Park. Points of connectivity to this trail could be taken in a number of forms, potentially southwest along Broadway, west along the county line, or from London Groveport Road.

TOWNSHIP BIKEWAYS

Pleasant Township

The Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan targets a network of proposed bikeways, including shared use paths, bicycle lanes or paved shoulders, and signed shared roadways. A shared use path is proposed along Hellbranch Run, with a separate shared use path along London Groveport Road feeding into it. Pleasant Township identifies Grove City Road as a candidate for a bicycle lane, while Beatty Road is targeted as a signed shared roadway. Harrisburg Pike has also been identified as an appropriate signed shared roadway.

Jackson Township

In the Jackson Township Comprehensive Plan, a trail is planned along Plum Run from Zuber Road to London Groveport Road. Many of the sidepaths and recreational trails proposed within this chapter are supported by the Jackson Township Comprehensive Plan.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF REGIONAL BIKEWAYS

Regional bikeways provide important economic benefits. According to MORPC, visitors to the Little Miami Scenic Trail spend \$13.54 per person per visit, or \$2.4 million on trip-related expenses.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

In addition to the recreational benefits regional connectivity would provide, this potential network of trails that connects Grove City to the region would also provide many economic benefits. As the Metro Park develops along the Scioto River (the former Talbott Park), Grove City has an opportunity to create a connection between this park and the Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park. This connection would no doubt be an attractive feature for cyclists and could bring an impressive economic benefit to Grove City, as cyclists will likely stop to enjoy amenities along their journey between the two Metro Parks. A connection to the Camp Chase Trail would provide the same benefits, by tying into the Ohio to Erie Trail. Providing convenient access for trail users from the potential regional

trails and connectivity

connection points to Grove City's historic Town Center would encourage cyclists to stop and enjoy the restaurants and shops offered.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

TRAIL SAFETY

Effective safety measures for both on-street and off-street bikeways that include natural surveillance and signage will need to be incorporated into the design of the bikeway system to ensure a safe experience for all types of trail users and residents.

Natural Surveillance

Ensuring public visibility will create around-the-clock surveillance for trails. When users understand they are under watch, they tend to restrain from unsafe behavior. Thick brush or solid fences restrict natural surveillance while providing potential criminals with someplace to hide. It is important that nearby residents can see onto a path, which allows them to intervene, act as witnesses, or call for help at the sight of unwanted or suspicious activity. Trail design and lighting are two elements that create natural and consistent surveillance to enhance trail safety. Lighting along trails should illuminate the area on each side of the path, and should be shielded so that light goes where it is needed. If path users feel safer, they will be more inclined to visit and the more people that are using the path, the safer it becomes.

Territoriality

Much like other public amenities, trails can be designed to attract different users and ultimately promote a desired activity. For example, a trail with benches and barbecue grills will likely attract groups who will stop along the trails and spend time in the area. Trails with little to no amenities along the way will be used as connections between destinations, with little to no lingering along the way. A strong functional design incorporated into a trail system generates a sense of ownership by trail users, encouraging positive behavior and stewardship related to the trail network.

Informational and Directional Signage

All path users, including the elderly, children, tourists, and non-residents should be able to easily understand where they are on the path. For more complex trails, signage should be installed along the trail clearly showing where the viewer is on the trail. Intersections should be marked with arrows pointing toward rest rooms, emergency telephones, emergency assistance, cross streets, and other useful services along or near the path.

Vandal Deterrent Signage

Signage must be clearly identifiable, include specific vandal-resistant language to deter unwanted behavior, provide critical information for preventing problems, and aid in rescuing the lost or injured. Signage that suggests video will deter potential vandals. Emergency call stations are another measure to ensure safety.

trails and connectivity

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

G1. **A network of trails providing residents with connectivity to important elements throughout the community and surrounding region.**

Residents appreciate the small town atmosphere of Grove City and the variety of entertainment and recreational opportunities available in the city and in the greater Columbus region. Expanding the inter-city trail network and connecting Grove City's network to the regional network will allow residents to safely travel to destinations both in Grove City as well as the central Ohio area.

O1. **Create a dynamic system that integrates easily into the surrounding regional systems.**

Central Ohio is home to a great variety of regional parks and trails. Making connections to the regional trail network will give residents more opportunities to travel to these destinations in a non-motorized manner and experience the recreational opportunities offered through a regional trail network.

A1. Connect to the Scioto River Trail

A2. Connect to the Darby Creek Trail System

A3. Maintain dialogue between other local trail agencies such as MORPC, City of Columbus Recreation and Parks, Franklin County Metro Parks, ODNR, ODOT and the Central Ohio Greenways Committee

O2. **Strengthen inter-neighborhood connectivity and connect parks through the city's trail network.**

The Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide safe access to parks for all residents. The city's trail network is steadily growing and many of Grove City's parks contain trails or are currently connected to the trail network; however there is still room to grow. The variety of parks and neighborhoods developed in the city over time will require a unique blend of trails to provide non-motorized transportation options to all residents.

A4. Adopt a complete streets policy and standards

A5. Adopt Code revisions for bikeway definitions

A6. Connect all parks with the trail network

A7. Create a Grant Run Recreational Trail connecting Meadow Grove Park to the future Scioto River Metro Park (former Talbott Park)

A8. Create a Brown Run Recreational Trail utilizing the city's existing public greenways

trails and connectivity

G2. **A community knowledgeable of the city's trail network.**

As the city's trail network expands, it will be important to keep the community informed of where the trails currently exist, where they are growing, and how they can help in future trail planning. It is also important that the trails are used properly to ensure that the community feels safe using the expanded network.

O3. **Keep the public informed and involved in the trail planning process.**

Keeping the public involved in the trail planning process will be key to the success of the trail network's expansion. Allowing the public to give input will give them a feeling of ownership in the network and will likely improve the utilization of the trails.

A9. Keep the trails portion of the city website and other electronic and social media updated with news and public input options

A10. Have the Grove City Trails Map available for distribution at City Hall and in select parks

A11. Involve the Park Board and Planning Commission in the review of trails

A12. Initiate an "Adopt a Trail" program allowing citizens or organizations to get involved in the trail network

O4. **Provide bicycle and trail safety education opportunities.**

As the trail network expands, it will be important to provide educational opportunities for residents utilizing the trails. Safe riding habits will help the community feel more confident in the trails and will ensure that the trails are used properly.

A13. Offer classes for bicycle safety

A14. Install signage along trails with safety tips



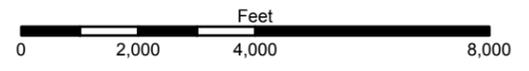
Bikeway Planning Map

Grove City, Ohio



Legend

- Recreation Trail, Existing
- Recreation Trail, Proposed
- Sidepath, Existing
- Sidepath, Proposed
- Bicycle Lane, Existing
- Bicycle Lane, Proposed
- Bicycle Boulevard, Existing
- Bicycle Boulevard, Proposed
- Signed Shared Roadway, Existing
- Signed Shared Roadway, Proposed
- Sharrow, Proposed
- Public Park
- Private Park
- Public Open Space



Disclaimer

The information on this map was derived from Grove City's Geographic Information System (GIS). Extensive detail and attention was given to the creation of this map to maximize its accuracy but is provided "as is". Grove City cannot accept responsibility for any errors, omissions, or positional inaccuracies that may have occurred before, during, or after production. Therefore, no warranties accompany this product. Although information from landfield surveys may have been utilized during the creation of this product, in no way does this product represent or constitute a Land Survey. Users are cautioned to field verify information on this product prior to making any decisions.



CHAPTER 5 OUTLINE

1. **History of Recreation**
2. **Recreational Programs**
3. **Key Partnerships and Collaboration**
 - a. Public Communication
4. **Facilities**
 - a. Potential Recreation Space
5. **Administration**
 - a. Continuous Improvement
6. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

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INTRODUCTION

The current economic climate, coupled with the predicted growth rate for Grove City presents the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department with a challenge to provide ample facility space and valuable programs for all Grove City residents.

OVERVIEW

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department has set forth goals that will not only maintain the level of recreational service currently provided, but also guide the development of recreational programs based on residents' needs and desires. The following three goals are identified in this chapter:

1. **A Parks and Recreation Department engaged in partnerships with agencies throughout the community to ensure a variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are available for residents**

The procurement of current partnerships and the development of new local and regional partnerships includes encouraging local business to donate their time and service, while coordinating efforts with partners to ensure recreational demands while avoiding overlap.
2. **A community with a wide variety of recreational opportunities available**

The Parks and Recreation Department currently provides services to all ages, incomes and physical abilities. The department aims to continue providing this range of service, but also offer the desired amount and variety of these programs.

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3. Facilities available for a variety of formal and informal recreational opportunities

In order to provide and grow these programs— the proper amount of recreational space needs to be found. The department is prepared to analyze existing facility space to determine how to best utilize such space as well as generate creative solutions to create new facilities that are designed with the capacity to serve the unique maturation of Grove City.

HISTORY OF RECREATION

Since 1973, the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department has been devoted to making Grove City a better place to live and raise a family. During its early years, the Parks and Recreation Department provided programs and activities that included softball and baseball leagues, tennis tournaments, hayrides, trips, fireworks, an arts and crafts exhibition, balloon launch, road race and dog show. Within its first couple of years of operation, the department served approximately 6,000 participants annually with the intention to provide recreational activities, opportunities and facilities for the community. Though updated to meet the needs and desires of today's residents, the department's primary objective remains to provide a variety of parks and recreation services and opportunities to the community. Today's department is committed to providing safe and enjoyable environments for its parks and open spaces, plus innovative and cost-effective programs that plan for the growth and diversity of current and future generations of Grove City.

The department currently maintains 18 parks and one retention area to be developed as a park for a total of 260 acres of public parkland. In addition to the acres of parkland located throughout the city, the department also manages a variety of recreational facilities including: an outdoor water park, herb garden, a senior center, renovated barn used for programming and a skate park.

The Parks and Recreation Department operates effectively with community partners and residents to ensure the best recreational experience is provided. The success of the department is reflected in its 2006 accreditation by The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department was just the fifth department in Ohio to earn this status.

“Public park and playground use has increased 30 percent by families with children during the current period of economic difficulty”
- National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA)

More than half of all of Grove City and Jackson Township residents participated in a recreation service hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department in the year 2010.

Recreation Participation in 2010

Program	Participants
Preschool	1,250
P.A.R.K.	1,773
Youth Sports	2,121
Adult Sports	1,992
Evans Center Memberships	1,249

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PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Through the public input process, residents voiced their desire to continue to expand the programs offered including more educational opportunities within the parks, making more sport leagues available for children and adults of all ages, and various other program ideas.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department provides recreation services to residents and non-residents for reasonable fees. The department offers more than 700 activities and programs, taught by more than 65 skilled instructors each year. In fact, more than half of all of Grove City and Jackson Township residents participated in a recreation service hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department in 2010. The combination of a dedicated department and a parks system with many amenities allows residents to participate in a variety of active and passive recreation.

The department offers a variety of programs year round and strives to maintain or increase the variety and amount of opportunities in the future. The following analysis categorizes recreation programs by age and examines the different types of classes offered, with a detailed look at some of the most popular programs offered to specific age groups.

YOUTH

Grove City offers many programs to children ages two to 12 such as gymnastics, dance, arts and holiday parties. The city is progressive in many of its program and facility offerings such as the Skate Park and classes on gardening and living green.

Preschool

Toddlers to six-year-olds may participate in variety of programs that include arts and crafts and structured play groups. The most popular programs for the preschool-age children are currently gymnastics and other early childhood development activities. Preschool activities teach young children numerous skills in art, music, science and physical and social situations to prepare them for grade-school activities. These programs also offer a launching point to prepare children for the more developed activities that are offered to the older children who fall under the youth category. Several of the programs are:

Gymnastics

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a Tumble Bear series of gymnastics skills for a variety of ages and abilities: Bear Cubs (age 2), Pandas (ages 3-4), Grizzlies (ages 5-7) and Koalas (ages 8-10). These gymnastic classes teach the major components of physical fitness in a high-energy atmosphere by developing skills in climbing, jumping and flipping in order to eventually use the vault, trampoline and beams for the more advanced students.

RecSchool

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a child-centered early childhood program for pre-kindergarten children ages three years and older. RecSchool is committed to fostering each child's competence, early social skills, independence, creativity and love of learning by offering numerous art, literacy, music, science, physical and social experiences.



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JumpBunch

The Parks and Recreation Department partners with JumpBunch to offer a series of fitness classes for young children to develop agility, coordination, self-confidence and a healthy lifestyle. Children have a chance to experience a different sport during each season.

Explorer's Club

A variety of open-ended materials and art activities are explored by two-year-olds and their parents in a classroom designed just for young children. Each class ends with circle time, singing and a book.

Youth

Children in kindergarten to fourth grade may participate in the before- and after-school Programmed After-School Recreation for Kids (P.A.R.K.) childcare programs as well as Summer P.A.R.K. These programs provide children with a structured but flexible learning and recreational environment by offering planned cooperative games, fitness, indoor and outdoor activities, free art, special interest activities and free-choice activities. Several day camps are also offered during the summer.

A wide range of programs are offered for children, including Skateboarding Camp (ages 6-11), Young Artist Art Camp (ages 8-12) and Kids in the Kitchen (ages 6-9). The most popular programs for the grade school aged youth are baseball, basketball and volleyball, but unique programs such as youth fencing, golf lessons and kite making and flying are also available. Below is a more detailed look at some popular youth programs:

Young Artist Camp

This program nurtures a love of art and encourages individual expression by exploring a variety of mediums and techniques including drawing, painting, sculpting, print making and creating artwork from recycled and natural resources.

Youth Volleyball

This volleyball league for youth in grades four to 12 is available for the following age divisions: junior (grades 4-5), intermediate (grade 6), middle (grades 7-8) and senior (grades 9-12).

Youth Fencing

This sword fighting class combines a great mental workout with physical fitness. All fencing equipment is provided by the instructor.

Youth Baseball Program

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department offers a recreational baseball program for children ages five to 18. This program teaches basic skills, sportsmanship and teamwork.



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Like anywhere, Grove City youth have unique recreational preferences. However, a popular trend is community programs that capture the creativity of young minds and structure it with “real life” applicability. Other central Ohio communities do this through programs such as Lego building clubs, digital art, website and video game design, robotic science, garden and pond science, nature tours and adventures, foreign language classes, cartooning and field trips. Grove City does not currently offer these exact programs, but should explore the possibility of offering more educational-based programs that fit the needs and desires of residents of Grove City.

Teenagers

Teens are often the hardest population to serve since they are usually involved in recreational opportunities through school. However, Grove City offers several programs for teens. For example, the Volunteer Involvement Program (V.I.P.) is available to teens in grades seven to 12 who want to volunteer their time while gaining service hours and helping others. Participants in the V.I.P. program often assist at City functions, but are also involved with service opportunities throughout the community.

Comparable cities offer classes on manners to prepare young adults for interaction with peers and professionals.

While the city currently offers many programs for teenagers, it will be important to remain cognizant of current trends in recreation. The Parks and Recreation Department intends to continually communicate with area teens to identify the types of opportunities they would utilize.

Recently, the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department cooperated with community groups such as South-Western City Schools, the Grove City Rotary Interact Club, Grove City Family Dentistry, Crosslink Church and the YMCA to establish the Young Adult Action Committee (Y.A.A.C.). The group is committed to helping identify activities and events for all teens and pre-teens in the area. One of the group’s initiatives is to identify and provide a central place for teenagers, especially those who are not involved in traditional school activities like band or athletics. The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to creating a parks system that attracts teens to participate in recreational opportunities that are tailored to their needs and desires.



Adults

Grove City currently offers more than 100 classes each season for adults, including a balanced mix of informal and formal activities in the areas of sports and fitness, gardening, arts, cooking, book discussions and more. Some of the most popular programs offered to adults are the yoga, euchre and a rain barrel classes.

Adult Cornhole

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department partners with Tristano’s Pizza to offer summer and fall adult cornhole leagues. The league includes playoffs, and provides a competitive atmosphere for adults, in a passive and informal setting.

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Yoga Program

Grove City offers a variety of yoga classes including hatha, ashtanga and deep relaxation. Several new classes were even offered outdoors in Gantz and Fryer parks. These yoga classes relax the body, calm the mind and ease away tension and stress. Some of the classes are also designed to serve as strength and fitness training. The classes are led by certified instructors in yoga therapy.

Zumba

Zumba is a latin-inspired, dance-fitness class that incorporates international music and dance. This workout aims to strengthen and tone a variety of muscle areas through cardio-based dance movements.

Through the public input process of this plan, requests for additional adult programs were submitted for a variety of activities ranging from photography to horseback riding. Many other central Ohio communities offer a variety of personal and professional development courses such as teaching basic skills in social networking, Photoshop, and using digital cameras. Other offerings range from professional/career workshops, public speaking, grammar and vocabulary enhancement, GRE courses and effective writing/research classes.

Though the Parks and Recreation Department does not offer these courses, similar programs are offered at the South-Western Career Academy. Through a partnership with the Career Academy, professional development courses could be offered through the city.

Other central Ohio cities offer adult classes in the areas of home and garden, and health and wellness. Some of these programs include: home improvement series, backyard bird watching clinics (also expressed in the public input), prenatal yoga, therapeutic recreation, self defense for women and adult dating classes. Also, many cities partner with local universities and institutions to offer lectures on topics such as: contemporary world issues and lifelong learning programs, star gazing, dog obedience, antique collecting and retirement planning.

During the public input portion of the plan, many residents voiced a desire to have an adult aquatic facility. While the Big Splash offers a six-lane lap pool, residents stated they wanted a separate swimming facility. Having an additional swimming facility would not only provide an additional opportunity for recreation, it would allow the city to offer additional programs and classes related to swimming and water safety.

Seniors (55+)

The Parks and Recreation Department currently offers Grove City seniors a wide variety of recreational opportunities and other services. Residents who are at least 55 years old are able to join the Evans Center for \$5 a year. The Evans Center is a centrally located facility in Windsor Park that provides easy access to a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Members may participate in an array of arts and crafts activities, card games, support groups and health check-ups. A variety of physical activities such as chair volleyball, senior golf leagues and bowling are also made available through the

“

A photography class would be nice, especially for photographing the outdoors.

- Planning Area E Resident

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Center. The most popular senior activities are Supper Club, Lunch Bunch, euchre and local trips that involve traveling by mini-bus. Below are brief descriptions of these popular programs:

Card Games

Various card games are held at the Evans Center on a daily or weekly basis. There are also special events such as the Summertime Fun Daytime Progressive Euchre Party where seniors get together for food, prizes and cards.

Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch offers seniors the opportunity to travel to local restaurants without the hassle of driving. The city provides transportation to and from the restaurant, but participants pay for their own meals.

Supper Club

The Supper Club heads to different local restaurants twice a month for a variety of dining experiences. Door-to-door mini-bus transportation is provided and departs from the Evans Center, but individuals pay for their own meals.

Local Trips

The city offers seniors trips to local and regional destinations such as the Ohio State Fair Senior Day, and various shows at LaComedia Dinner Theater, in southwest Ohio. Also, mini-bus shopping trips are offered on a monthly basis to popular shopping destinations.

The Grove City Senior Transportation Services are accessible and efficient when compared to surrounding central Ohio communities in terms of costs and range of service. Evans Center members are eligible for van/mini-bus transportation to grocery stores, banks or medical appointments for the cost of \$2 per round trip. The buses, including two equipped with wheelchair lifts, provide non-driving members with transportation to and from the Evans Center for activities. These services are extended to residents of Grove City and Jackson Township for Grove City-area destinations.

The senior population is growing quickly and will require different types of recreational activities. The median age of Grove City residents is estimated to have increased by almost three years between the years 2000 and 2010. In 2010, approximately a quarter of all Grove City residents were 55 years old or older. This number is expected to increase in coming years.

Considering the projected increase in the senior population and the inherently different habits of future seniors of the baby boomer generation, the Parks and Recreation Department is conscientious of the need to provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities. In fact, many other central Ohio communities have begun to prepare for this change by offering a more expansive physical programs for their seniors. Some of these types of programs that the growing senior population of Grove City might enjoy are: fishing clubs, more expansive fitness classes, billiards clubs, table

ACCOMMODATING A GROWING SENIOR POPULATION

According to National Recreation and Parks Association, the number of Americans older than 65 is expected to reach 71.5 million by 2030. This projection represents double the number of senior citizens recorded in 2000.

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging states that only 46 percent of American communities have begun to address the needs of the rapidly increasing aging population.

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tennis, bocce, shuffleboard, backyard bird watching workshops, a book of the month club, woodcarving classes, cookouts, aquatic classes and walking clubs.

Families

While Grove City offers programs for young children in which parents can participate, the Parks and Recreation Department plans to provide a greater variety of recreational and educational opportunities for families to attend together in the future. For example, Grove City residents would likely enjoy community book swaps, movie exchange nights and classes on child safety when left home alone.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Grove City has a rich history in providing community events enjoyed by residents young and old. Some of these events include the Amazing “Grove City” Race, Blast at Beulah Independence Day Celebration, Mud Volleyball Tournament, Homecoming Celebration, Community Environmental Day, Family Fishing Day and the Summer Sizzle Concert Series. These events are carefully planned and organized through the Parks and Recreation Department and Community Relations Office. Through strong partnerships with other city departments, non-profit organizations and businesses, residents of Grove City are able to enjoy these events at little or no cost. As the city’s population continues to grow, the Parks and Recreation Department will strive to offer more community events on a city-wide level.

Descriptions of some of the community events currently provided by the Parks and Recreation Department are as follows:

The Encampment

History comes to life each April at Grove City’s Encampment. Children and history buffs alike enjoy speaking with re-enactors who represent life between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Participants immerse themselves in historical experiences such as throwing a tomahawk, creating period crafts, watching soldiers shoot a canon and more. Additionally, the Ohio Village Muffins baseball team plays in period uniforms. A live outdoor concert kicks off the event, and an outdoor church service concludes it. This educational event is presented by the City of Grove City and the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society.

This three-day event attracts more than 100 participants and roughly 1,000 to 2,000 residents (weather dependent). Many participants will even camp at Century Village through the weekend.

Mayor’s Cup Golf Outing

The city works with many community sponsors and donors for Grove City’s annual Mayor’s Cup Golf Outing. The outing is held at Oakhurst Country Club in May, and all proceeds benefit the local non-profit LifeCare Alliance. Golfers can sign up by team or individually to be assigned a team. This event typically raises \$6,000 to \$10,000 for LifeCare Alliance’s Meals-on-Wheels program.



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Summer Sizzle Concert Series

The Summer Sizzle Concert Series takes place Friday and Saturday evenings June through August. Concerts are free of charge and are held at the Town Center Plaza in historic downtown Grove City. In addition to great music, attendees enjoy free children's games on Family Fridays and up-close encounters with local and regional artists during Saturdays in the Grove. The city works with Grove City Tomorrow to host these 20 well-attended concerts.



Family Fishing Day

The city cooperates with Walmart to offer the opportunity to fish at Rotary Lake in Fryer Park the first weekend in June. Participants receive free worms and may borrow fishing poles at this family-friendly event. All ages and skill levels are welcome. A fishing license is not required, but there is a limit of one pole per person at this catch-and-release event.

K-9 Carnival

The city works with a variety of local rescue groups, veterinary offices and pet retailers to host this annual event for residents and their dogs at Fryer Park. Two temporary off-leash areas are created, one with access to swim in Rotary Lake. Pet care groups and rescue organizations set up tents to sell pet-themed merchandise as well as share health and adoption information.

Blast at Beulah

Grove City's annual Independence Day celebration at Beulah Park features one of central Ohio's finest fireworks displays, live music and plenty of activities for kids. Children's activities, including free bounce houses, are available. A special ceremony is held to honor active military personnel and veterans. This event typically attracts a crowd ranging from 6,000 to 15,000, depending on weather.



The Amazing Grove City Race

Teams of two to four people travel around the city, following clues and completing challenges at various city locales, similar to the popular television show. Tasks vary, providing opportunities for the brainy and brawny to shine.

Homecoming Celebration

The city hosts a celebration for Grove City High School alumni and their families in historic Town Center to kick off the annual alumni softball tournament. In addition to live entertainment, Grove City Tomorrow hosts a cornhole tournament and the local Rotary Club organizes a car exhibition. Homecoming Celebration has a large impact on the local economy thanks to crowds that range anywhere from 4,000 to 8,000 participants who travel from all over the country.

Mud Volleyball Tournament

The annual Mud Volleyball Tournament is held in August at Beulah Park and serves as a fundraiser for LifeCare Alliance's Meals-on-Wheels program. The Parks and Recreation Department typically raises between \$3,000 and 6,000 annually for the charity with this event.

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Grove City's Balloons & Tunes

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department partners with Beulah Park for this unique hot air ballooning event in August. In addition to multiple lift-offs and glows, live entertainment, children's activities and vendors provide plenty to do for the 5,000 to 20,000+ guests it attracts annually.

Old-Time Harvest Day

Old-Time Harvest Day gives today's generation a look into the past. Demonstrations such as leather tooling, soap making, blacksmithing, butter churning and two-man sawing are presented throughout the day along with period-appropriate harp and dulcimer performances. Most activities are hands-on and appropriate for all ages. This event is presented by the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society City and the City of Grove City. Old-Time Harvest Day brings anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 participants into town for this five- to six-hour event.

Winter Lights Christmas Celebration

This celebration kicks off the start of winter with a Christmas lights parade and the lighting of the official Grove City tree. Select roads in Town Center are closed during the event, allowing attendees to safely enjoy decorated store fronts and other decorations. Attendees have the opportunity to interact with live reindeer, view ice sculptures, take a horse-drawn carriage ride, listen to carolers and even meet Santa Claus. The city works with T.W.I.G. 184 to raise money for Nationwide Children's Hospital as well as the Grove City Food Pantry and Jackson Township Fire Department to collect nonperishable food, toy and monetary donations. This event typically attracts between 2,000 and 6,000 participants.

Fryer Flicks on the Hill

Select Thursdays in June through August, the Parks and Recreation department presents a free, family-friendly movie shown outside at Fryer Park. Patrons are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chair to enjoy the movie from the park's sledding hill.

Soggy Dog Swim

The weekend after the Big Splash closes for the season, the pool opens for a supervised afternoon of swimming strictly for dogs. Humans are admitted for free, and one pet is permitted per person. All breeds and sizes are welcome as long as the animal is spayed or neutered and sociable with people and other dogs. Proceeds benefit a local rescue shelter.



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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department is committed to serving the whole community. All persons regardless of age, sex, race, color, national origin or religion are encouraged to participate. The goal of the department is to include individuals with special needs in existing programs based on their need and ability. Groups or individuals serving special populations are welcome to contact the department to make program arrangements.

The Parks and Recreation Department is also committed to designing and building new park facilities to be fully ADA compliant to ensure the best possible service to all individuals with disabilities.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION IN THE PARKS

The Parks and Recreation Department currently oversees the operations of 19 parks, consisting of approximately 260 acres, providing residents a chance to experience a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. Some of these recreational opportunities stem from the 11 baseball diamonds at Windsor Park, the basketball courts in neighborhood parks and the many playgrounds found throughout the city. A few of the most popular active recreation venues in the city are the Big Splash as well as Discovery Frontier playground, the sledding hill and Rotary Lake, all located in Fryer Park. Many opportunities for passive recreation can also be found in city parks, such as the wooded trails through Fryer and Henceroth parks and the Gardens at Gantz.

The maintenance and expansion of the city's parks system is vital to the success of recreational opportunities in Grove City. Facilities such as a dog park, disc golf course and ice skating rink were all requested from the public during the public input phase of the plan.

Certain amenities such as running water for permanent restroom facilities and drinking fountains would make parks more comfortable to residents when visiting the parks. Many parks are equipped with amenities for outdoor picnics such as grills, water fountains and pavilions with electrical outlets. Additional amenities that would enhance a park and engage residents are public art and water features, both of which were commonly suggested from the public during the planning process. While Gantz Park does offer public art in the Gardens at Gantz, the city should continue to explore creative ways to market its parks, highlight its unique history and engage residents. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of this plan, where recommendations for installation of potential amenities for each park are discussed.

Another popular request from the public was a performance or concert stage. Grove City currently has a small stage at the Town Center Plaza that hosts the Summer Sizzle Concert Series. The space is somewhat small and fills quickly during public events. The installation of a larger performing space would serve more residents.

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KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Grove City relies on effective partnerships to provide a quality parks system. Due to limited facility space, the city currently has formal and informal agreements with a variety of service providers within the community, including: South-Western City Schools (SWCS), Jackson Township, LifeCare Alliance, the Grove City Kids Association (GCKA), YMCA, Southwest Franklin County Historical Society, Southwest Ministerial Association/Grove City Food Pantry and Grove City Rotary.

These partnerships create collaborative opportunities for recreational programs, facility space and instructors, which enables Grove City to maximize existing resources, expand the offerings scope and eliminate service duplications. While the search for more facility space designated for recreation continues, the network of current partnerships must be sustained and expanded in order to provide the most enjoyable recreational experience for residents. This will be achieved by engaging in partnerships with agencies throughout the community to ensure the desired variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are available for residents.

A number of private and public organizations offer similar programs, but the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department strives to alleviate competing programs when possible. In most cases when similar classes are offered, the Parks and Recreation Department is not competing but rather offering recreational opportunities to the entire community. For example, several churches in the area offer Upward Sports basketball programs for youth. While the Parks and Recreation Department also offers basketball, both programs can easily co-exist because of the high volume of interested participants in the community. Without either program the community would not be completely served. Other organizations that offer recreational opportunities to residents include the Grove City Kids Association, the Grove City YMCA, Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center and the Franklin County Metro Parks.

The absence of a central community center puts more value on these local public and private partnerships to offer the adequate programming for the community.

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PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Residents are currently kept informed of recreational opportunities through the city website, press releases to local newspapers and news stations, direct mail postcards, e-newsletters, social media outlets, the Source and traditional newsletters. Events and other local news are publicized on large entry signs at the entrances to the city from both I-270 (Broadway and Home Road) and I-71 (Stringtown Road and Marlane Drive). Grove City has recently started to utilize Twitter and Facebook. These outlets have allowed the city to reach a different demographic than more traditional communication methods. Additionally, these sites allow for a more conversational delivery of information. Word of mouth is a very important aspect of keeping the community informed. Many residents attend classes or events because they know someone who has participated in the past and was pleased with the experience.

FACILITIES

The Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide suitable indoor and outdoor space for a variety of recreational activities. Program facilities are located throughout the city, primarily in parks and in and around the Town Center.

The Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to providing facilities and classroom spaces that are able to accommodate a variety of programs to meet the needs and desires of the community. In order to determine the possibility of providing additional courses in existing facilities, an analysis of the capacity and utilization of these facilities is necessary.

Facility Name	Square Footage	Location	Use
Fryer House	1,132	Fryer Park 3899 Orders Road	Program space for many youth programs
Gantz Farmhouse	862	Gantz Park 2255 Home Road	Home to the Gardens at Gantz volunteers and workshops for adults and children.
Gantz Barn	3,709	Gantz Park 2255 Home Road	Hosts a variety of youth programs including RecSchool and enrichment classes.
Evans Center	12,649	Windsor Park 4330 Dudley Ave.	Program space for 55+ classes and events
Park Annex	2,021	4034 1/2 Broadway	Karate instruction, tap dance and other programs
Total	20,373		

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Space limitation can limit growth both in the amount and variety of recreational programs offered. Families are faced with an inconvenience when attempting to transport their children to and from recreational activities when it is not centrally located. Families are frequently forced to travel to two or three different locations, on two to three different nights, in order to satisfy the separate recreational needs for the children and parents. Instructors are also inconvenienced when required to transport their materials and equipment several times per week.

The Parks and Recreation Department is determined to provide more recreational opportunities for families to not only participate in together, but also to participate in opportunities at the same location or on the same nights. This effort to achieve coordinated growth requires the proper partnerships and a thorough analysis of existing and potential facility space.

Perhaps no partnership is more important than the one shared between the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department and the Grove City YMCA in Fryer Park. The YMCA helps alleviate some of the demand for more recreation space in the community.

Also serving area residents is the Vaughn E. Hairston Southwest Community Center YMCA located on First Avenue in Urbancrest. This YMCA offers an outdoor walking track, basketball courts, volleyball courts, strength and cardiovascular equipment, baseball and softball diamonds and special facilities such as a childcare/preschool room, art room, kiln room, kitchen and a library. This community center is also home to a community garden that is used by local residents. Similar to the Grove City YMCA located in Fryer Park, the Urbancrest YMCA provides important recreational opportunities for area residents.

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department does not aim to compete with the YMCA, but as the population and size of Grove City continue to grow, more space may be needed to offer recreational opportunities to all residents of Grove City, regardless of age or income level.

Considering Grove City's current population, the amount of park space and recreational facilities is lower than comparable cities throughout central Ohio. With roughly 260 acres of park space, and approximately 22,000 total square feet of facilities—there is chance to identify and utilize existing space, as well as, discover ways to create new space for recreation use.

Community pools, both indoor and outdoor, are essential to host community events and community recreation. The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department currently operates one public swimming facility, the Big Splash. While the Big Splash offers a great recreational opportunity for families with young children, it does not offer facilities attractive for teenagers and young adults. Not only could an additional aquatics facility create recreational opportunities for a currently underserved population, it could also serve as an additional revenue source for the department.

FACILITY SPACE

"The problem of our department not possessing its own facilities is a situation that we hope to correct in the near future with the addition of a Community Recreation Center."

– 1974 Parks and Recreation Annual Report

Michael W. Buckingham,
Parks and Recreation Director

Even though the vision of a community recreation center has not been realized, the department has been successful in creating a variety of facility space to accommodate the growing recreational needs of the community.

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POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL SPACE

The Parks and Recreation Department intends to provide facilities and classroom space that accommodate a variety of programs to meet the recreational needs and desires of the community. The current programs are efficiently operated considering the amount of existing facility space that is available. However, more space will be required in the future to meet the demands of a growing community. Through a thorough analysis of existing space and a focused search for new space, the department intends to ensure an effective amount of facility space is provided in order to offer the appropriate number and variety of recreational programs and activities. To accomplish this goal, the Parks and Recreation Department aims to create a public community recreation center that can house multiple social, cultural, educational and recreational activities.

COMPARABLE FACILITY SPACE IN CENTRAL OHIO

The City of Groveport, which has a considerably smaller population, has a recreation center with 67,000 total square feet—substantially larger than all of Grove City's facilities combined.

Existing Space

Creating a new recreation center in the city does not necessarily mean that a new facility must be constructed. A variety of existing facilities exist that could provide either temporary or permanent recreational facility space.

The Kingston School, located on Kingston Avenue behind Park Street Intermediate, is one example of an existing facility that could be utilized as a facility for the Parks and Recreation Department. The facility offers more than 14,000 square feet of potential recreational space and could provide ample space for a variety of recreational or educational programs.

Another existing space being considered is the Grove City Recreational Center located behind Grove City High School on Hoover Road. This site currently offers residents who live within the South-Western City School District limits access to the site's gym, walking track, basketball court and sauna. Residents who live within SWCS district limits are not required to have children attending one of the district's schools.

Grove City is home to many large warehouses. A potential solution to a lack of facility space is to utilize a portion of these warehouses to provide a temporary facility for programs and recreational opportunities until a permanent facility is created.

New Space

During the public input process of this plan, 75 percent of those residents surveyed would likely use a community recreation center. While the approach to identify existing space needs to be aggressively pursued for budgetary and efficiency reasons, there are distinct advantages that come with building a new community recreation center that can serve multiple activities. With more than 60 unique comments generated about this topic during the public input process of this plan, the public voiced their strong desire to have a public recreation center to house the growing recreational demands of the community.

A public recreation center facility would provide the entire community a variety of services by housing the Parks and Recreation Department programs in one central location. This would not only improve the organizational efficiency of the Parks and Recreation Department, which will in turn improve services and expand the capacity

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for the department and its program to grow, but would also be more convenient for Grove City families.

Former Grovebrook Golf Course

The former Grovebrook Golf Course, located between Hoover Road and Interstate 71, was mentioned by many residents participating in the public input portion of the plan as an ideal location for a large park and potential location for a public recreation center. The property is more than 100 acres in size and offers scenic ponds, hills and an abundance of green space. The presence of two large ponds, streams and the fact that much of the property lies in the floodplain make much of this property undevelopable. Should the property be purchased for development, it is likely that much of it would remain as open space, likely dedicated to the city for parkland. Residents voiced a variety of desires for the park, aside from the potential location for the recreational center, including an off-leash dog area, fishing, playgrounds, shelter houses and natural green space with trails and the opportunity for hiking and passive play. Its location makes it accessible to many residents in the Meadow Grove and Quail Creek subdivisions, with the potential to service many more residents by tying into the city's trail network on the Holton Road Trail and the proposed Grant Run Trail.

ADMINISTRATION

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department employs 18 full-time, 40 part-time and more than 100 seasonal staff members in order to provide residents with the recreational opportunities described in this chapter. The Source, the department's program and activity guide, is published both electronically and in hard copy form three times per year: April (spring/summer), August (fall) and December (winter). The current season's publication is made available electronically on the city's website. Each season, 14,000 copies of the Source are printed and distributed. More than 11,000 are mailed through the US postal service and the rest are available for pick-up at City Hall, the Jackson Township Administrative offices, Evans Center, Grove City Public Library, Grove City YMCA, Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce and Grove City Welcome Center and Museum, as well as a number of small businesses.

Continuous Improvement

The city is constantly monitoring its programs and looking for ways to grow and improve recreational offerings for residents. At the end of all programs, participants are asked to complete an evaluation of the program, describing their experiences. Public input is also always welcome and encouraged at Park Board meetings, which are held bimonthly. Additional public input is sought through hearings and focus groups on special projects or when new facilities are being considered. In order to improve public knowledge of parks and recreation, news and current events, the department should consider making the minutes and agendas of the Park Board meetings available online and in the newspaper to ensure that residents understand the issues and ideas being considered for the parks.

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POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR RECREATION

G1. **A Parks and Recreation department engaged in partnerships with agencies throughout the community to ensure a variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are available for residents.**

There are a number of local and regional agencies that have been involved in programs for the Parks and Recreation Department and provide their own unique recreational opportunities utilized by Grove City citizens. Keeping these agencies and their impact on the parks and recreation system in mind will help the city ensure that it is meeting the desires of the community.

O1. **Encourage local businesses to donate services and/or provide sponsorships.**

Getting businesses involved in recreational programs will not only help the city provide more recreational opportunities to residents, but will also help the businesses establish themselves in the community and potentially attract new customers.

A1. Prepare brochures or explanatory handouts for distribution to local businesses explaining the opportunities to donate services or provide sponsorships

O2. **Remain aware of other recreational offerings provided by other agencies and continue to partner with other associations to provide a greater variety of recreational opportunities to residents.**

Many agencies in the central Ohio area provide recreational opportunities in which Grove City residents participate. Going forward, it will be important to coordinate our actions with these agencies to ensure that the community's recreational demands are met.

A2. Partner with associations including the YMCA, Southwest Franklin County Historical Society, and South-Western City School District to provide programming for residents

A3. Keep in contact with agencies providing additional recreational opportunities, including Grove City Kids Association, Upward, Franklin County Metro Parks, and other recreation-based businesses to ensure that programs do not overlap and that the community's recreational desires are met

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G2. **A community with a wide variety of recreational opportunities available**

As the city grows, it will be very important to provide the greatest variety of recreational opportunities possible. Recreational offerings should be available for all residents in the city, regardless of age, income, or physical ability.

O3. **Continue to provide recreation and educational opportunities for an aging population.**

The median age of Grove City residents is expected to increase in the coming years. In preparation for this, the city should be prepared with a variety of recreational and educational opportunities for an older population.

A4. Continue to offer a variety of courses for seniors

O4. **Provide a greater variety of classes for adults.**

The city currently offers a variety of programs and recreational opportunities for adults; however the public stated during the public input phase of the plan that they wanted to see a greater variety of courses for adults.

A5. Provide nature-based programs, such as outdoor photography, gardening, and bird watching

A6. Create more adult recreational programs, such as general fitness programs and adult sports

A7. Expand outdoor recreation offerings in all seasons, particularly winter sports

A8. Develop a variety of professional development courses for adults (writing, public speaking, etc)

O5. **Provide more recreational opportunities for teens.**

While the city currently offers many programs for teenagers, it will be important for the city to remain aware of current trends in recreation in which teenagers may wish to be involved. The city should also explore the possibility of offering more educational courses useful for teens.

A9. Continue to actively participate in the Grove City Teen Initiative to create a Parks and Recreation system attractive to teen residents

O6. **Provide more opportunities for families to participate in programs together.**

The city currently offers programs for young children in which parents also participate, but structured opportunities for families to participate together are limited.

A10. Provide a variety of opportunities for families to participate in programs together such as "Family Fun Nights" and book or movie swaps

A11. Provide educational courses for families to attend together such as safety classes (children at home alone, etc) and classes on assisting aging parents

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G3. **Facilities available for a variety of formal and informal recreational opportunities.**

O7. **Provide facilities and classroom spaces that are able to accommodate a variety of programs to meet the needs and desires of the community.**

Lack of space limits recreational opportunities the city is able to provide. Although the community has expressed a desire to have more programs available to them, it is often difficult to provide the opportunity due to lack of space. Furthermore, some of the facilities currently housing city programs are not ADA compliant, creating barriers for some to participate in programs.

A12. Analyze existing facilities and their utilization to determine the possibility of additional course offerings in existing facilities.

A13. Design new park facilities to be fully ADA compliant

A14. Create a public recreation center in Grove City



CHAPTER 6 OUTLINE

1. **Economic Benefits from Property Tax Revenue**
 - a. Principles
 - a. Demonstrations

2. **Economic Benefits from Attractions and Quality of Life**
 - a. Attracting Businesses and Residents
 - b. Attracting Tourists
 - c. Attracting and Retaining Retirees

3. **Financial Tools**
 - a. Current Tools
 - b. Future Tools

4. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

impact of parks and open space on economic development

INTRODUCTION

Of the many benefits that parks, open space and recreation amenities bring to a community, one of the most overlooked is the impact that such assets have on economic development and fiscal wellbeing. It is often believed that these amenities are discretionary expenses, useful to support a high quality of life, but that they have little value or benefit on a community's economic health. For that reason, investment in parks, open space, trails and other recreational amenities may be viewed as less important than other types of investment (such as infrastructure improvements or business incentives), particularly when economic development is a primary objective.

On the contrary, as this chapter will show, there is not a trade-off between park development and economic development, but rather that parks are an essential component of a community's economic vitality in the 21st century. Specifically, it explains and demonstrates how the costs of park development are justified by substantial economic benefits. It will also suggest policies that help the City maximize the economic benefit of park investments.

impact of parks and open space on economic development

OVERVIEW

Parks, open space and recreational amenities such as trails contribute positively to a community's economy by:

- Increasing the value of nearby properties, and thereby raising the amount of property tax collected. The benefit is most direct for those entities that are funded by property taxes such as Ohio's local school districts.
- Improve a community's capacity to attract and retain sought-after companies and people. A community's amenities attracts desirable jobs, residents and tourism. This benefit is particularly valuable to communities in Ohio which receive most of their revenue from income taxes.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

One of the most tangible economic benefits of parks and open space is the result of increasing the value of nearby properties, which is passed on to a city through higher tax revenue generated by those properties. The principles below explain various factors that determine this benefit and the assumptions required to measure it. Following the principles are a series of demonstrations which examine several parks in Grove City and the fiscal benefit, in terms of property tax revenue, that can be attributed to each.

The Proximate Effect

Proximity to parks or open space raises property values, an effect that is known as the proximate effect, or proximate principle. More than 30 studies conducted throughout the United States have supported the principle that parks increase nearby property values, particularly those of residential properties. Even in areas with significant nuisance effects from parks or open space (such as noise or traffic), nearby properties tend to show higher values. Numerous studies have also shown that proximity to parks often significantly increases the value of commercial properties, particularly in urban areas and town centers. Increasing value of commercial properties tends to spur additional development and improvement of nearby properties. In this way, parks can be a catalyst for redevelopment or revitalization.

While the proximate effect is mostly positive (meaning property values are increased) in certain cases parks can have a negative effect on nearby property values. A positive impact on property values is least likely in cases where:

- A park is not well maintained;
- A park is not easily visible from nearby streets and could provide opportunities for deviant behavior; and
- The privacy of properties backing onto a park or trail was compromised by park users.

Park Proximity Impact on Property Value

The strength of a park's effect on nearby property values is highly variable. There is no definitive guide to the magnitude of the proximate effect due to the high number of variables that determine property values and various park characteristics. These

REDEVELOPMENT BENEFITS

By increasing the value of nearby commercial properties, parks can be a catalyst for redevelopment or revitalization.

impact of parks and open space on economic development

variables include land use, building types, size and age, as well as park design, park size and types of amenities. However, a review of multiple studies indicates that on average, a 20 percent premium may apply to properties abutting a passive park. This proximate effect diminishes as the distance from the park increases. Some average considerations for determining the proximate effect include:

- Large parks (over 25 acres) that are attractive, well-maintained and passive may result in a higher proximate property values.
- Small parks and those with more active uses are likely to have a smaller proximate effect.
- If the park is heavily used, such as a recreation center or swimming pool, the value increase on abutting properties may be minimal, but may reach 10 percent two or three blocks away.

The distance over which parks and open space affect nearby property values is also highly variable. Studies show that the greatest impact on property values typically occurs within 500 feet of a park. Yet, for community-size parks (more than 40 acres) the area affected is generally larger, affecting properties up to 2,000 feet away.

The Effect of Rising Property Value on Tax Revenue

Costs for park development can be partially or completely offset by rising values of nearby property in cases where a municipality receives property taxes. However, in Ohio, property taxes mainly benefit local school districts, while municipalities receive only a small portion of the revenue. The following example uses relevant tax information from Grove City to demonstrate the effect of rising property value on tax revenue:

- A 33.3 acre park that costs \$1,000,000 to acquire and develop (\$30,000 per acre). The annual debt cost on a 20-year bond is approximately \$90,000 (at 5 percent interest).
- The average market value of properties within the park service area is \$200,000 and annual property taxes are two percent. Thus, the annual tax collected is \$4,000 per property.
- If values increase by an average of 10 percent after the park is constructed, then the average property value would be \$220,000. In that case, annual tax collected would be \$4,400 per property, an increase of \$400.
- Grove City receives about 3 percent of the tax revenue generated by each property. Grove City Schools receives about 63 percent and the other tax revenue goes to Franklin County (16 percent), Jackson Township (18 percent) and the Library (about 1 percent). Of the extra \$400 of tax generated per property, Grove City would receive \$12.
- Collecting an extra \$12 in tax annually on 400 properties amounts to a total of \$4,800, which does not offset the \$90,000 annual debt obligation. Grove City Schools, on the other hand, would gain over \$100,000 in additional tax revenue annually as a result of the park investment.
- In a municipality that receives most of the tax collected on a property (cities in other states) this scenario would yield an additional \$160,000, which would more than offset the annual debt obligations for the investment.

Impact of Parks and Open Space on Economic Development

- This example assumes that no federal or state grants or development fees are used to aid the park's acquisition or development.
- While the additional revenue from increased property values generally would not offset the cost of the initial investment, the increased revenue continues to benefit the municipality long after the costs of developing the park are paid.

The Fiscal Benefits of Park Versus Residential Development

On a given piece of land, park development is often more fiscally beneficial to a community compared to residential development. Developers often argue that a property's "highest and best use" is the most fiscally beneficial scenario. They most often propose residential development as the alternate use for potential park and open space land. Yet, studies have shown that over a wide range of types and densities, the public costs associated with residential development exceed the revenue that it generates. In one study of 58 communities, the median cost for providing public services to residential development per dollar of revenue that development raised was \$1.15—indicating a net loss of 15 percent associated with that development. Single family residential development typically has the worst fiscal impact due to the higher number of people per household and vehicle trips generated.

Since the amount of revenue from park land is likely to be small, the fiscal analysis question involves comparing costs – whether annual operating expenses for the park are less than the annual cost of providing public services to a comparable amount of residential development. A park is likely to be less of a financial burden to the community compared with residential development in this example:

- Assuming the same 33.3 acre site mentioned above is developed as single-family residential at a density of 3 units per acre, the annual revenue per unit (primarily from income taxes) is \$1,200 and the annual cost to provide public services is \$1,500 per unit (25 percent higher).
- The cost would be \$150,000 and the net loss to the community would be \$30,000.
- If the annual cost of operation and maintenance of this park is lower than \$30,000, then this park is a less expensive option for the city relative to the residential development.

impact of parks and open space on economic development

ROLE OF PARKS IN ATTRACTING BUSINESSES

Since property taxes make up a small portion of Grove City's revenue, the economic development emphasis should be on the impact that parks have on income taxes, namely their capacity to help attract businesses and high-wage jobs.

DEMONSTRATIONS

This section demonstrates the impact that specific parks in Grove City have on property values and tax revenues. In many communities, parks boost surrounding land values and, in turn, raise property tax revenues enough to offset the costs of park development and maintenance. However, as explained above, Ohio's system of local government taxation means that most of city revenues come from income taxes rather than property taxes. Grove City only receives about 3 percent of the total property tax collected annually. The largest recipients of property tax revenue are local school districts, with South-Western City Schools receiving about 63 percent of property taxes collected in Grove City. Given this system of taxation, Grove City does not receive enough revenue from park-generated property taxes to offset park expenditures. This section illustrates the property tax revenues attributable to five parks of various size, context and amenities, and the amount of tax received by Grove City and South-Western City Schools. These parks are Gantz, Windsor, Concord Lakes, Westgrove and Creed Lawless.

Assumptions and Methodology

The demonstration employs conservative assumptions about the effect of park amenities on nearby property values in Grove City. The assumptions are conservative compared to trends exhibited in studies of numerous communities, but are weighted to the characteristics of Grove City (see Principles). Suburban communities, particularly those with ample amounts of public and private open space such as Grove City, tend to show smaller local effect on property values from nearby parks and open space. In contrast, urban areas tend to place a premium on proximity to open space because such space is often limited. With that general context, the assumptions include:

- The proximity effect ranges from 350 to 1,000 feet. Studies have shown that the strongest effect is generally on properties within 500 feet of a park. For large parks primarily with passive uses, the effect may extend properties within 1000 to 2,000 feet. In Grove City, 350 feet was used for mini parks, 500 to 800 feet for neighborhood parks and 1,000 feet for community parks.
- The portion of a proximate property's value attributable to a park ranges from 5 to 8 percent. For large, primarily passive parks such as Gantz Park, a multiplier of 8 percent was applied to all proximate properties. For active recreation areas and smaller neighborhood-scale parks, a slightly smaller multiplier of 5 percent was used.
- Only residential properties are considered.

For each park, the nearby properties were identified using mapping software (GIS). The data for appraised value and annual taxes for each property was obtained from the Franklin County, February 2011 parcel data. The ratio of tax received by Grove City and South-Western City Schools was also obtained from Franklin County.

impact of parks and open space on economic development

Gantz Park Economic Analysis

Gantz is a 27-acre community park that most recognized for its scenic qualities and passive recreational amenities. The park features rolling natural terrain, trails, shelters, a popular herb garden, and arboretum. The park also includes active recreational amenities such as tennis and basketball courts. The park is surrounded by single-family residential development and several significant condominium developments.

Due to its overall size, somewhat linear shape and surrounding development density, Gantz affects a large number of residential properties. Given mainly passive amenities, the impact on neighboring property values is estimated to be at the high end of the range, at 8 percent. Given these assumptions, the table below shows that over \$4,400 of the annual property tax revenue Grove City receives can be attributed to the positive effect Gantz Park has on surrounding property values. The school district, on the other hand, benefits more significantly with over \$91,000 of its annual revenue attributable to Gantz Park.

Affected Properties

Proximity effect radius	1,000 feet
Number of single-family residential properties within radius	367
Number of multi-family residential properties within radius	232
Total appraised value of single-family residential properties	\$56,238,100.00
Total Appraised Value of Multi-Family Residential Properties (Approx.)	\$33,245,600.00
<hr/>	
Total Appraised Value of Residential Properties (Approx.)	\$89,282,700.00

Affected Value and Property Tax Revenue

Portion of property value attributable to park	8 percent
Total property value attributable to park	\$4,499,048.00
<hr/>	
Total annual tax collected on residential properties	\$1,812,757.56
Portion of total annual tax received by Grove City	\$55,017.79
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$4,401.42
Portion of total annual tax received by SWCS	\$1,140,440.17
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$91,235.21

impact of parks and open space on economic development

Windsor Park Economic Analysis

Windsor is 38 acres and is the city's oldest community-scale park. The park is heavily used for youth sports and features active recreational amenities such as ball diamonds, tennis courts and batting cages. It also houses a recreation facility for senior citizens. The park is surrounded by single-family residential properties that are more densely developed than the neighborhoods surrounding Gantz Park. Due to the active character of Windsor Park, it is likely that its effect on property values is slightly less than that of Gantz Park, but the distance of the effect should be similar.

The table shows that more than \$2,300 of annual property tax revenue Grove City receives can be attributed to the positive effect Windsor Park has on surrounding property values. The school district, on the other hand, can attribute more than \$48,000 of its annual revenue to Windsor Park.

Affected Properties

Proximity effect radius	1,000 feet
Number of single-family residential properties within radius	430
<hr/>	
Total appraised value of residential properties (approximate)	\$45,951,100.00

Affected Value and Property Tax Revenue

Portion of property value attributable to park	5 percent
Total property value attributable to park	\$3,676,088.00
<hr/>	
Total annual tax collected on residential properties	\$963,337.20
Portion of total annual tax received by Grove City	\$29,237.60
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$2,339.01
Portion of total annual tax received by South-Western City Schools:	\$606,053.71
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$48,484.30

Concord Lakes Economic Analysis

Concord Lakes Park is a 10-acre neighborhood park that consists of three separate sites. The park features are primarily passive amenities including walking paths, open space, a gazebo and ponds. One of the three sites has play equipment and a basketball court.

As a neighborhood park, the proximate effect primarily involves nearby properties within 500 feet. For its size, Concord Lakes provides a significant property tax contribution. The value is only slightly less than that of Windsor Park, which is because the properties surrounding Concord Lakes are generally more valuable than those near Windsor Park. That difference is not due to the differences between these two parks, but rather in other factors that affect real estate such as lot size, building age, square footage and other amenities. Concord Lakes Park is assumed to contribute a modest 5 percent to the value of nearby properties.

The data on the next page illustrates that, given the above assumptions, over \$1,900 of annual property tax revenue Grove City receives can be attributed to the positive effect

impact of parks and open space on economic development

Concord Lakes Park has on surrounding property values while the school district can attribute over \$39,000 of its annual revenue to the park.

Affected Properties

Proximity effect radius	500 feet
Number of single-family residential properties within radius	317
<hr/>	
Total appraised value of residential properties (approximate)	\$57,565,400.00

Affected Value and Property Tax Revenue

Portion of property value attributable to park	5 percent
Total property value attributable to park	\$2,878,270.00
<hr/>	
Total annual tax collected on residential properties	\$1,257,377.44
Portion of total annual tax received by Grove City	\$38,161.82
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$1,908.09
Portion of total annual tax received by SWCS	\$791,040.00
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$39,552.00

Westgrove Park Economic Analysis

Westgrove Park is a 6-acre neighborhood park not far from Concord Lakes Park. The park features open fields, play equipment and a basketball court. The park primarily serves the Westgrove neighborhood, which is bordered by Walmart's regional distribution center and Beulah Park to the east. The neighborhood park amenity most likely helps to offset the negative effects of these nearby land uses. For that reason, the park's effect on surrounding property values is assumed to be slightly greater than that of Concord Lakes Park.

The table on the next page demonstrates that about \$1,700 of annual property tax revenue Grove City receives can be attributed to the positive effect Westgrove Park has on surrounding property values and the school district can attribute over \$35,000 of its annual revenue to the park.

The benefit to local schools that parks create are even more apparent if you consider the fiscal impact of alternative development. Suppose Westgrove Park had instead been completely developed with residential lots. If the value of homes in the Westgrove neighborhood is 8 percent less without Westgrove Park, the school district would lose over \$35,000 in tax revenue. However, the homes that replace the park would pay taxes. Would the property tax collected on these additional homes make up for the loss?

The table illustrates that the revenue from property taxes on these new homes would be around \$32,000, which is less than the revenue created by the park's effect on the remaining neighborhood. Furthermore, the new homes would likely contain students,

impact of parks and open space on economic development

which would incur additional costs on the school district. The net cost to the school district of those additional homes in place of a park could be as much as \$100,000 annually.

Affected Properties

Proximity effect radius	800 feet
Number of single-family residential properties within radius	228
Total appraised value of residential properties (approximate)	\$32,248,800.00

Affected Value and Property Tax Revenue

Portion of property value attributable to park	8 percent
Total property value attributable to park	2,579,904.00
Total annual tax collected on residential properties	\$700,145.32
Portion of total annual tax received by Grove City	\$21,249.64
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$1,699.97
Portion of total annual tax received by SWCS	\$440,474.70
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$35,237.98

Creed Lawless Park Economic Analysis

Creed Lawless is a quarter-acre mini park near the historic center of Grove City. Due to its small size, it likely impacts only very nearby properties, up to 350 feet away.

The data below shows that \$217 of annual property tax revenue Grove City receives can be attributed to Creed Lawless Park while the school district can attribute over \$4,500 of its annual revenue.

Affected Properties

Proximity effect radius	350 feet
Number of single-family residential properties within radius	65
Total appraised value of residential properties (approximate)	\$6,751,400.00

Affected Value and Property Tax Revenue

Portion of property value attributable to park	5 percent
Total property value attributable to park	\$337,570.00
Total annual tax collected on residential properties	\$143,138.34
Portion of total annual tax received by Grove City	\$4,344.30
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$217.21
Portion of total annual tax received by SWCS	\$90,051.05
Portion of tax attributable to park	\$4,502.55

impact of parks and open space on economic development

Conclusions

Taken together, these parks contribute approximately \$10,000 annually to Grove City through their impact on property tax revenue. The school district benefits substantially more, with over \$219,000 in revenue attributable to these parks.

Since property taxes make up a small portion of Grove City's revenue, the economic development emphasis should be on the impact that parks have on income taxes, namely their capacity to help attract businesses and high-wage jobs. The next section explores these other economic impacts.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM ATTRACTIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Aside from increasing property values, parks and open space contribute a number of other economic benefits to a community. In Ohio where cities rely on income taxes for most of their revenue, the fiscal impact of parks and recreation amenities are directly related to the extent to which parks and recreation amenities can promote business growth and attract high-wage jobs. These benefits arise from the positive impact that parks and recreation amenities have on local quality of life. They include:

- Attracting businesses and residents
- Attracting tourists
- Attracting and retaining retirees

Attracting Businesses and Residents

Companies that make up today's growing knowledge economy, which is dominated by the technology and service sectors, are generally able to choose where they locate. This fact has created a highly competitive environment among communities nationwide to attract and retain businesses. Among the top factors that influence where these types companies locate are perceptions about the ability to attract and retain talented and highly skilled workers.

A number of recent studies of business leaders reveal that quality of life is the third most important factor when choosing where to locate, following access to domestic markets and availability of a skilled workforce. Evidence also suggests that small companies may place even more importance on quality of life, specifically recreational opportunities, rather than on the absolute bottom line. For these companies whose greatest assets are the ingenuity and skills of their workers, emphasizing quality of life has been shown to improve employee retention, satisfaction and productivity. These studies do not indicate that financial incentives are irrelevant, but rather that they have become secondary. In an increasingly competitive environment where similar financial incentives may be offered by multiple communities, decisions often hinge on perceived differences in quality of life.

The primary factors businesses cite in quality of life specifically involve education, housing and parks/open space and recreation. A 1995 Quinnipiac College poll of citizens nationwide found that the elements of quality of life most frequently cited were low crime with safe streets and access to greenery and open space. Businesses know that a high quality of life is not just an amenity, but is becoming increasingly

impact of parks and open space on economic development

important in attracting and retaining the type of workers that are critical to the country's leading industries. A spokesperson for the company Intel sums up this trend: "Companies that can locate anywhere will go where they can attract good people in good places."

Grove City attracts business by promoting its convenient location, business-friendly environment, past growth trends and high quality of life with a low cost of living. The Grove City Development Department works with the local business community to promote retention and expansion of existing commerce within the city. The city offers a number of incentives including:

Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)

The Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) is an economic development tool that provides real property tax exemptions to land owners making investments in their property. Grove City has four Community Reinvestment Areas including one in the Town Center that has recently been expanded. Properties within a CRA are eligible to receive real property tax abatement for real property improvements.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

A TIF is an economic development tool available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. There are five Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts within Grove City. A TIF aids in financing public infrastructure improvements and secures the taxable worth of real property at the property's value when the TIF area is created. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement are directed towards a separate fund to finance the construction of the public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation.

Enterprise Zones (EZ)

Enterprise Zones (EZ) is an economic development tool administered by local governments that provides real and personal property tax exemptions to businesses making investments in Ohio. In early 2004, Grove City passed Ordinance C-123-03 designating itself as an EZ.

Useful as these incentives are, they are not unique to Grove City. A company's decision about where to locate often will be influenced by other factors. Within the regional context, Grove City is competitive in important quality of life indicators including housing, education and recreation amenities. In terms of housing, the city benefits from the lowest median home cost of comparable Columbus suburbs including Gahanna, Hilliard, Dublin and Westerville. The city's schools are highly regarded, receiving an excellent rating in the most recent statewide evaluation. However, the schools may not be perceived as superior to the other suburbs mentioned.

Impact of Parks and Open Space on Economic Development

Attracting Tourists

Parks and recreation amenities can help attract visitors to a community. These visitors spend money in the community that helps to support jobs in the local economy. Out-of-town visitors may come for special parks and recreation programs such as cultural events and festivals, as well as competitive athletic events like races, golf tournaments and regional sports competitions.

A wide variety of events are held throughout the year that appeal to various audiences and utilize the city's parks. These events include: a historical reenactment at the Encampment, an impressive Independence Day fireworks show at Blast at Beulah, hot air balloon launches at Balloons & Tunes, and various youth sports competitions.

Sports competitions occur nearly every weekend during the summer and fall seasons. They utilize fields at Windsor, Fryer, Buckeye Woods and Evans Park. The facilities are currently programmed near capacity. Expansion of these programs may require additional staff, improved restrooms and lighting.

While, the economic impact that these events and programs have on the city has not been measured, such an analysis could be conducted. Utilizing existing staff resources and expertise, an economic impact study could be conducted that measures the impact from out-of-town visitors that is directly attributable to parks and recreation events or amenities. The economic impact study would identify the number of visitors for a given event, the average spending per visitor, and a multiplier amount. The multiplier represents the ripple effect of new money brought into the local economy. In simple terms, the impact equals the number of visitors times the average spending per visitor times the multiplier. A detailed guide to conducting an economic impact study is contained in the NRPA's paper entitled "Measuring the Economic Impact of Park and Recreation Services."

Attracting and Retaining Retirees

Active and relatively affluent retirees are a group that can have a significant impact on a community's economic health. Those retirees at high socioeconomic levels are most likely to choose where they live. That choice is determined partially by climate, local cost of living, and proximity to relatives, but also the richness of amenities available. Communities must offer competitive levels of parks and recreation amenities to both attract and retain these individuals.

In some regards, focusing on attracting retirees can be more beneficial than focusing on attracting businesses alone. Retirees do not require direct economic incentives or infrastructure improvements. Capital improvements done to attract retirees also benefit other members of a community. Furthermore, retirement income often comes from pensions or social security, sources outside of a community, yet the income is spent locally, which helps the local economy. Lastly, retirees generally use fewer services than they pay for in taxes.

ANNUAL GROVE CITY COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Amazing Grove City Race
Blast at Beulah

Boo on Broadway

The Encampment

Family Fishing Day

Fryer Flicks on the Hill

Grove City's Balloons & Tunes

Homecoming Celebration

K-9 Carnival

Mayor's Cup Golf Outing

Mud Volleyball Tournament

Old-Time Harvest Day

Soggy Dog Swim

Summer Sizzle Concert Series

Winter Lights Christmas Celebration

impact of parks and open space on economic development

In addition to the city's parks and recreational trails, Grove City offers recreational amenities aimed specifically at the senior population. The Evans Center organizes senior exercise classes and entertainment programs and coordinates excursions to shopping and attractions locally and regionally. The center also serves as a hot-meal site for LifeCare Alliance's Meals-on Wheels program.

Recreation Development Fund

Year	Revenue	Expenditures
2010	\$112,065	\$153,627
2009	\$208,591	\$48,175
2008	\$87,721	\$225,088
2007	\$172,001	\$462,806
2006	\$189,212	\$116,794
2005	\$310,488	\$222,493

Development fees are collected to enhance parks, open space areas and green space

FINANCIAL TOOLS

Current Tools

The following are tools that Grove City currently employs to finance park land acquisition and development.

Recreation Development Fees

The City of Grove City currently imposes development fees to support parks and recreational facilities. These fees are imposed on all new development and on expansion of commercial office or industrial uses. The current fees are:

- \$550 per new residential unit
- \$200 per acre plus \$.02 per square-foot of all buildings for new non-residential development. The per square-foot fees also apply to any additional floor area added during a building alteration.

The fees are deposited in a Recreation Development Fund which is designated for constructing, purchasing or otherwise upgrading parks and recreational facilities. Historically, these funds have mostly been used for maintenance rather than land acquisition or new park development.

Open Space Requirement

The city's goal is to provide 20 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. To meet that goal, the city requires that open space be dedicated upon the submission of all proposed new residential developments. The dedication requirement is equal to the future projected population of the development when complete, multiplied by 20 acres. For example, in a development with 100 housing units, the dedication requirement would be:

- 100 units multiplied by the average household size in Grove City as determined by the most recent US Census (2.29 persons) for a population estimate of 229.
- Multiplying 229 (people) by 0.02 (acres per person) yields 4.58 acres of open space that must be dedicated.

In cases where sufficient desirable land is not available to fulfill the requirement, a fee-in-lieu may be paid at a rate of \$30,000 per acre. In the case above, the developer could pay \$137,400 in-lieu of dedicating the 4.58 acres. Alternatively a combination of land dedication and fee-in-lieu can fulfill the requirement at the discretion of City Council and the Planning Commission.

Urban Forestry Fee

In addition to the above, fees are also collected on development for the purpose of purchasing, planting, replacement and maintenance of trees under the Urban

Impact of parks and open space on economic development

Forestry Program. A fee of \$6 per linear foot of curb/street pavement frontage is imposed for newly platted public street.

Potential Tools

The following are financial vehicles commonly used by communities to capture increases in property values to pay for park and open space land acquisition and development. These tools are mentioned as possibilities for consideration. This section should not be construed as a recommendation that Grove City pursue each tool.

Special Assessment Districts

Levies the cost of park development directly on the properties that benefit. The municipality would levy an additional tax on properties in proximity to the park. The amount of the additional tax may vary depending on distance, with the properties nearest the park paying more.

- Special assessments do not work well in areas with high land values and high rates of poverty.
- May contribute to creating a tiered system of park amenities that reinforces inequalities among different communities.
- Special assessment districts initiated by business leaders are called business improvement districts (BIDs)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

A city or development authority issues bonds and uses the proceeds to finance capital improvements in a defined area (TIF district). The tax increment bonds are secured by the projected increase in revenues from existing and new development in the TIF district. TIF financing is currently used for certain capital improvements in Grove City.

Exactions

Frequently cities will accept a fee in lieu of parkland dedication for developments that are too small to meet an open space dedication requirement. However, by the time enough fees are collected to purchase park land, it is often the case that all suitable land has already been developed. To combat this problem, some cities will purchase significant acreage for park dedication five to seven years in advance of development. The city will then repay the cost through collecting fees in lieu from developers and from increases in tax collected from nearby properties.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

More information about park development, including an assessment of potential park land and tools for land acquisition are discussed in Chapter 7.

impact of parks and open space on economic development

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS IT RELATES TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

G1. Grove City benefits economically from parks, recreation, and open space amenities.

O1. Demonstrate the economic impact of major park investment.

- A1. Prepare a report (annually or every three years) that assesses the short-term and long-term fiscal returns on park investment through local changes in rents and property values
- A2. Use community opinion surveys to assess the value Grove City residents attribute to various park and recreation amenities. Could involve surveys of real estate professionals and property owners to determine their perceptions about the impact specific parks or types of amenities have on property values

O2. Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population.

- A3. Create a separate Parkland Acquisition Fund, for the sole purpose of acquiring land for parks
- A4. Create a new Trail Development Fund, delineating funds exclusively for trails

O3. Identify and secure land for park creation, before adjacent land is developed in order to maximize the value of park investment.

- A5. Purchase park land in advance of development and use development fees collected in the future to pay for that park land

O4. Demonstrate a positive economic impact from parks and recreation-related tourism.

- A6. Conduct an economic impact study on a major event, such as a state-level sport tournament, which attracts significant numbers visitors to the community



CHAPTER 7 OUTLINE

1. **Land Acquisitions**
 - a. Existing Conditions
 - b. Key Land Acquisitions
 - c. Methods of Land Acquisitions
2. **Parkland Development**
 - a. Review Process
 - b. Sustainable Principles
 - c. Branding
3. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

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INTRODUCTION

The acquisition and development of Grove City's parkland is important to the economic health of the community as well as quality of life for the residents. More than 30 studies conducted throughout the United States have concluded that parks increase local property values, signifying the value residents place on parks. From an economic perspective, increased property values boosts revenue levels utilized by schools and local governments to provide services back to the community. In addition to the economic benefits, parks can also serve as a tool to preserve critical resources such as tree stands, woods and streams. Together these factors make a compelling reason why the city should be sensitive and proactive in how parks and open spaces are acquired and developed.

LAND ACQUISITIONS

In 2004, the city established a goal with the approval of Ordinance C-94-04 to provide "20 acres of appropriate open space/public land or other recreational areas for every 1,000 residents," which, based on the current population, would total 711.5 acres. For the purpose of this plan, land that is public or lawfully accessible to the public was counted toward the goal acreage. To date, the city has acquired 263 acres of parkland with an additional 135 acres of open space totaling 398 acres or 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents.

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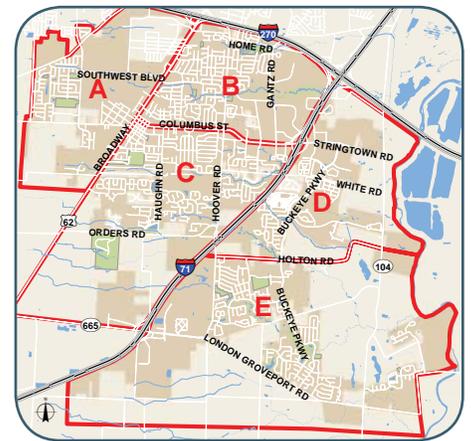
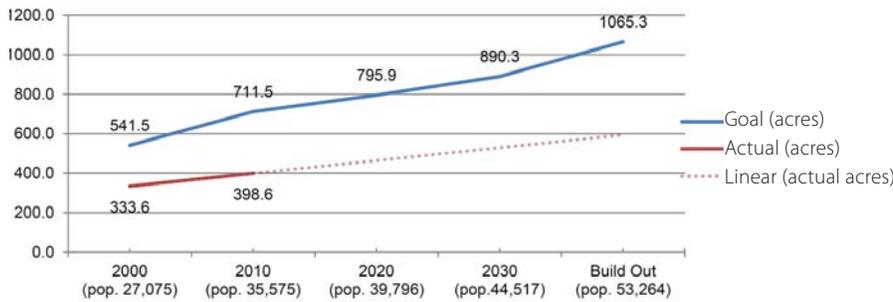
Existing Conditions

Between 2000 (333.6 acres) and 2010 (398.6 acres) the city has seen a net increase of 65 acres of park land from 2000 to 2010 excluding parks, playgrounds or open spaces under the control of the township, school district, private organizations or other park authorities. In addition to illustrating existing park land acres, the chart below also shows the city’s “goal” acreage based on population figures from 2000 through the city’s projected “build-out” as projected by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission.

When comparing the city’s parks and open space acquisition trends with its population projections, there is a noticeable gap between the two. That gap will likely continue to widen as the city develops. Couple this with today’s development trend of platting larger lot subdivisions, and the result will likely be lower density developments. Based on current city regulations, this may lead to fewer park land dedications and an increased rate of developable land. Based on these factors, at the current rate of park and open space land acquisition, the city will provide less acreage per thousand residents in the future than today (11.2 acres/1,000 residents). Should the trend continue, it will be difficult for the city to provide the desired quantity of parkland, which will effect residents’ quality of life and property tax revenues without changing its land acquisition policies, priorities and practices with respect to parks. Therefore, it is vital the city’s policies are reformulated, and practices are followed that enable the city’s goal to keep pace with its expected growth.

OBJECTIVE 1
 Establish land acquisition policies to promote the growth of the park system at a comparable rate to serve the growing population.

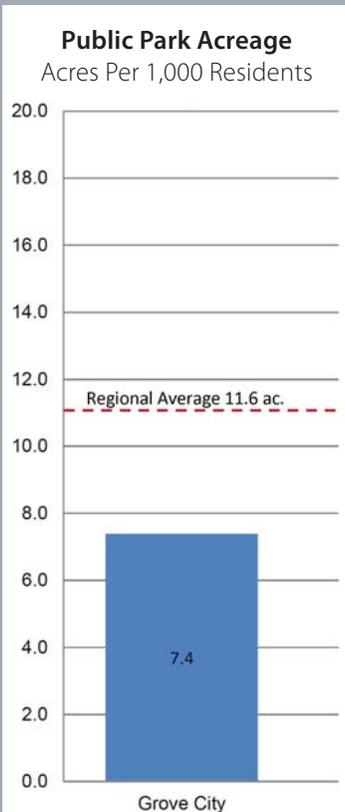
Park and Open Space Goals and Acquisitions
 (Based on Population Projections Within Grove City Limits)



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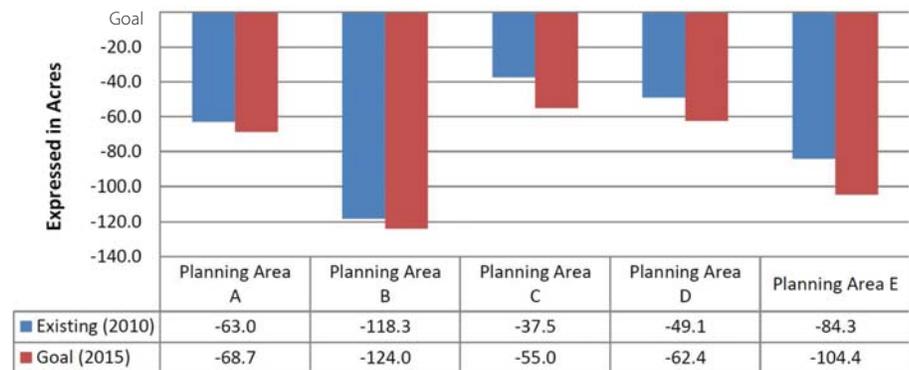
PUBLIC PARKS: A REGIONAL COMPARISON

In order to compare Grove City to the surrounding region and analysis was conducted comparing the amount public parkland under the city's jurisdiction with surrounding outer belt communities (Dublin, Gahanna, Hilliard, Reynoldsburg, and Westerville). A regional average of 11.6 acres per 1,000 residents was established for the region with Grove City providing 7.4 acres of public parks for every 1,000 residents.



When applying the city's open space goal with the existing and projected populations within the various planning areas, a couple of issues begin to emerge. The most basic observation is the chart's data points down, illustrating none of the planning areas meet goal acreages. Ideally, data would meet or exceed the goal. However, as shown, the deficiencies are expected to widen over the next five years unless policies are revised and implemented to address this negative trend. Below are some specific discussions surrounding the pressures facing the various planning areas.

Difference Between Existing and Goal Acreages for Parks and Open Spaces
By Planning Area



While Planning Area A has developable land and is expected to have residential growth with the development of the Autumn Grove subdivision and available land west, Area B is considered well established and no significant population growth is expected because of limited availability of developable land. Therefore, any population growth within these areas would primarily be attributed to growing household sizes as well as limited development and redevelopment activity. The chart above highlights these planning areas, in relation to Planning Areas C and E, illustrating the deficiencies between existing park and open space acreages and the 2015 goal acreages. Planning Areas A and B contain some of the city's older subdivisions with some of the highest densities and populations, and, as shown on the chart, are severely underserved by public parks and open spaces. Combined, these two planning areas are approximately 181 acres below the City's goal, and more than areas C, D and E combined. Several playgrounds and open spaces located on elementary and middle school sites are available to supplement this deficit and serve the needs of area residents.

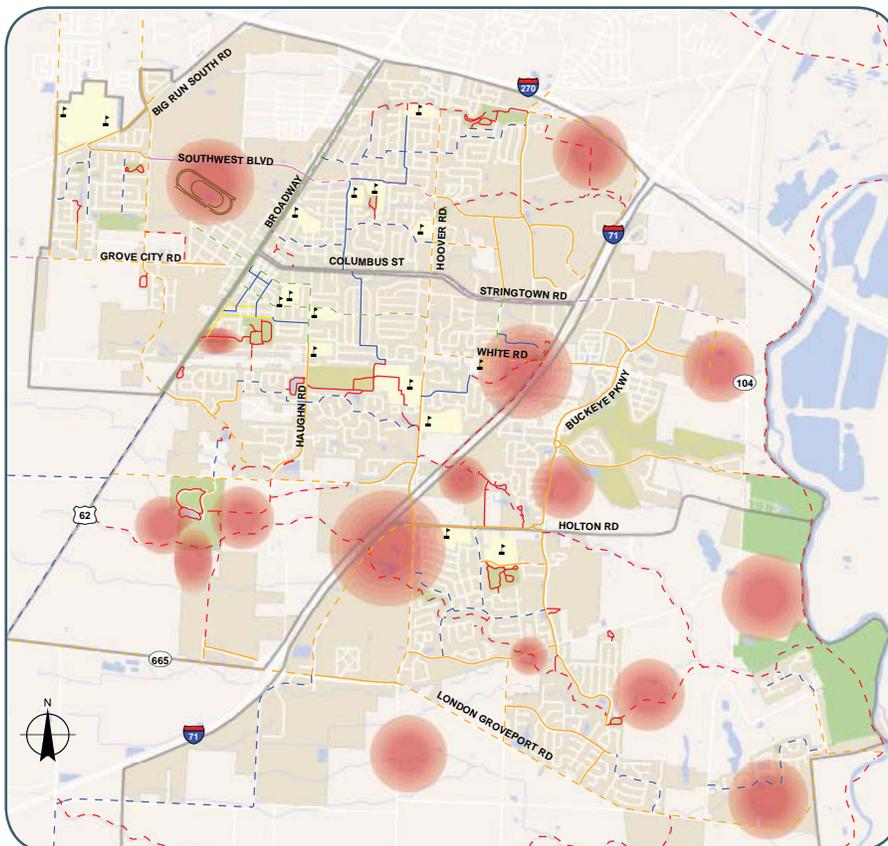
Pressures facing these areas are not only the lack of parkland but also the lack of developed parks and open spaces. As noted in Chapter 2, Planning Area A has a total of 46 acres of parks and open space areas, but half remain undeveloped (Demorest Road Retention Area). Additionally, there are 81.8 acres of parks and open space areas within Planning Area B, but more than half is contained in an inaccessible greenway along Brown Run. During the public participation period, a significant number of responses were received from these planning areas identifying a need for trails and connectivity to existing parks as well as a desire to develop large-scale community parks. While a deficit would remain, the development of these areas would add approximately 67.5 acres of usable park and open space land.

land acquisition and parkland development

Planning Areas C, D and E are also below the city's open space goal, but unlike Planning Areas A and B, these planning areas are expected to experience moderate growth. The chart on the previous page shows the need to make land acquisition a priority not only to close the gap between existing and goal parkland acreages, but to maintain pace with projected population growth and be proactive in acquiring desired park and open space sites prior to being consumed by other development. Based on population projections, the city will need to acquire 51 acres of park and open space land to keep pace with anticipated growth. Any additional land acquisitions would also help reduce the 171-acre deficit that currently exists in these planning areas.

KEY LAND ACQUISITIONS

With noted deficiencies within all of the planning areas, the city should begin to identify key pieces of land for future development as parks and open space, including trails. Once the land components have been identified and prioritized, the city should establish acquisition funds (see Potential Tools discussed in Chapter 6) so when land becomes available the Parks and Recreation Department may secure the purchase. The map below identifies several locations within the city where potential community-sized park facilities could be established as well as strategic pieces of land needed for greenway and trail connectivity. Additionally, the city should be aware of strategic pieces of land located in unincorporated areas with the intent of securing needed park and open space through the established dedication requirements.



RECREATION DEVELOPMENT FUND: HOW IT WORKS AND WHERE IT COMES FROM

The Recreation Development Fund is the Parks and Recreation Department's funding source used to construct, erect, purchase or upgrade park and recreational facilities.

This revenue source is a one-time fee collected for all new development, paid for by the developer and collected on the following basis.

Residential Fees: \$550 per single family or multifamily dwelling unit.

Nonresidential Fees: \$200 per acre of development plus \$0.02 per square foot of building space.

Fees in Lieu of Dedication: \$30,000 per acre of required land that is not dedicated to the city as a park, paid by the developer.

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METHODS FOR LAND ACQUISITION

1. Purchase
2. Dedication
3. Donation

METHODS FOR LAND ACQUISITION

Targeted park and open space acquisition ensures residents have adequate parkland and amenities located within a reasonable distance of their homes. It also serves to preserve environmentally significant areas such as woodlands and wetlands, and naturalized open space. Diversity in the types of parks and open spaces provided throughout the city is supported by comments gathered during the public participation process for the plan. The acquisition process provides an opportunity for the city to expand parks and open space to provide the unique amenities desired by residents. The city generally uses three broad methods to acquire land for new parks and open spaces.

1. Purchase

The funding method used by Grove City for buying parkland depends on the cost of land. Smaller purchases are made through the utilization of the Recreational Development Fund, while larger land acquisitions typically come from the General Fund or a combination of the two sources. Both methods have been used for parks and open space acquisitions, but these methods may not enable the city to realize the goal of providing 20 acres of parks and open space per 1,000 residents based on anticipated population growth and existing deficits. Therefore it is recommended the city review the potential land acquisition tools detailed in Chapter 6. This section will focus on the existing methods employed for land acquisitions.

The Recreation Development Fund fee applied to both residential and commercial projects should be examined to ensure comparable fee revenues to the surrounding municipalities. Additionally, the fund should be amended to establish fixed proportions for the expenditure of collected funds. Proportions could be established for the purchase of land (for parks/open space/trails) or for reimbursement of expended land acquisition funds, maintenance or for the physical development of parks and trail construction. Monies for each purpose should be clearly defined and allocated in fixed proportions with funding controls placed to prohibit the use of funds for activities not expressly permitted within the policy.

OBJECTIVE 3

Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population.

Recreation Development Fund

Year	Revenue	Expenditures
2010	\$112,065	\$153,627
2009	\$208,591	\$48,175
2008	\$87,721	\$225,088
2007	\$172,001	\$462,806
2006	\$189,212	\$116,794
2005	\$310,488	\$222,493

Development fees are collected to enhance parks, open space areas and green space

Seventy-two percent of the respondents who participated in the public input process stated they would rather have the city develop larger community-sized parks than small neighborhood parks. However, it is important to be mindful that these large parks, if not donated or sold at a reduced price, typically require more funding for acquisition and initial costs for parkland development. Therefore purchases of this kind tend to occur less frequently and may be a contributing factor in understanding why the City does not meet the Open Space Goals. Another factor maybe the City's practice of utilizing Recreation Development Funds to undertake facility improvement and maintenance projects thereby diminishing available funds for land acquisition activities.

land acquisition and parkland development

2. Dedication

Dedication of parkland refers to the proportion of land residential development projects are required to deed to the city for public purposes or reserved for park, playground, educational or open space. The current requirement is based on the city's goal of providing 20 acres per 1,000 residents. The policy of requiring a certain number of acres of park per 1,000 residents is similar to other cities in the central Ohio region.

Review Process for Dedicated Land

During the development review process, land proposed to be dedicated or reserved must be reviewed by City Administration and Planning Commission prior to being approved by City Council. As part of the review process the appropriateness of land proposed to be set aside for parks and open space must meet the goals and objectives of the city. The Code currently regulates the quantity of land dedication/reservation required with development and does not address appropriate locations, orientation or the incorporation of the park and open space into the overall design of the residential development. The result is that developers can meet the acreage requirement by dedicating or reserving land, but it is not practical for public use.

Since 2004, out of the 56 acres of land required as a result of the existing regulations, 53 acres were made as private reserves. Only 3 acres were reserved as public open space within Concord Park Section 1 in 2004. Additionally, within the existing Code is phrasing that allows developers to reserve land for a period of two years instead of dedicating it to the City. If land is not purchased or secured by the city within that time frame, the developer is permitted to dispose of or use the reserve land. The city is required to purchase or secure the ground in order to provide the parks and open spaces to the residents of the subdivision.

Improving the review process is an important step to ensure appropriate land dedications occurs with developments. As such it will be important to involve those groups into the review process that are directly responsible for the administration of the parks and open space system, namely the Park Board and Parks and Recreation Department staff. Additionally, it will be necessary to amend and supplement the existing regulations with a set of clear requirements in order to ensure land is designed and conveyed as appropriate within the development and can't be release and developed for other purposes.

OBJECTIVE 2

Provide more opportunities for review and collaboration regarding land acquisition and development.

DEDICATED LAND MAINTENANCE

Other central Ohio communities require parkland dedicated to the city as part of a residential subdivision to be maintained by the homeowners association of that development. This ensures that the land is held by the city for public use, but does not put a further strain on city resources to maintain it.

land acquisition and parkland development

OBJECTIVE 4

Preserve natural resources on land to be developed.

WHY PRESERVE TREES?

Aesthetic benefits aside, trees are an invaluable tool in mitigating the effects of storm water. For every 5 percent of tree cover added to a community, storm water runoff is reduced by approximately 2 percent. This is achieved as the trees intercept rainfall and direct rainwater down the tree trunk to the earth. The rain bypasses the asphalt and is stored in the trees' root systems and soil allowing water to slowly penetrate into the earth, reducing the amount of runoff that quickly makes its way to streams.

The environment benefits as tree grows bigger over time. A mature tree with a 16-inch diameter trunk will have a root system that can hold almost 1,500 gallons of rain water. Benefits provided by these trees become readily apparent when trees are preserved in wooded areas within development sites.

Unfortunately, large trees are often removed during the development process. The fact that larger trees provide a greater environmental benefit creates a compelling argument why existing mature trees are preferable to planting a new sapling to replace it.

Design Considerations

Design considerations should be given to how parks and open spaces are integrated into the subdivision's design and how it fits within the natural environment. Additionally, design considerations should be given at the time of plan review for the siting of the area within the overall context of the subdivision as well as utility access. In order to aid in identifying appropriate areas for parks and open spaces and incorporating the various design considerations into a subdivision's layout, the following should be considered:

- **Natural Resources (Parks)**
Streams, tree stands, wetlands and steep slopes should be taken into consideration when identifying appropriate parks areas. Nine comments were received during the public input process from residents who expressed a desire to see more mature trees, wetlands and natural areas in parks. Additional regulations could be developed to preserve or minimize the impacts of development activities on areas containing significant natural resources.
- **Nature Reserves (Open Spaces)**
Environmentally significant areas cannot always be included in new parks. However, when these areas are identified Grove City should promote the preservation of these natural resources by placing them in a nature reserve. Nature reserves preserve environmental features by ensuring the land remains in a natural state which consequently provides protection of the area's natural inhabitants. In addition to providing refuge to wildlife, these features would serve as an amenity to the residents of the subdivision with limited public use. It would be appropriate to require the dedication of nature reserves to the city while requiring the homeowners association to retain maintenance responsibilities. By requiring the residential developers to dedicate and preserve these natural features the city will ensure their protection for future generations.
- **Tree Preservation**
The most observable benefit trees provide is their ability to improve the character of the community and enhance the general appearance of development. Trees and woodlands have a positive impact on property values and enhance the desirability of a location, whether integrated into the site's landscaping, or located in a park or nature preserve. The preservation of existing trees during the development of a site is a critical element of natural resource protection.

By designing new developments around existing tree stands and mature trees, greater environmental benefits will be enjoyed than if the city allowed large trees to be removed and replaced. To encourage the preservation of mature trees and tree stands on developing land the city will need to amend existing landscape codes to create strict standards for tree preservation and penalties for removal.

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- **Stream Protection**
As discussed in the chapter on natural resources (Chapter 3), a natural riparian corridor is important for mitigating flooding hazards. Healthy, natural streams also provide a habitat for plants and animals that can survive nowhere else as well as provide exposure and educational opportunities for residents. In order to realize these benefits, the city should revisit the storm water regulations and specifically, its Natural Stream Corridor Protection Policy to ensure setbacks are adequate to protect the stream corridors as this is one of the principles found in the Central Ohio Green Pact that calls for preserving greenspace and creating greenways.

Additionally, the City should promote the preservation of these riparian corridors not only as an environmental benefit but as a method to build recreational trails along streams, exposing residents to their natural surroundings while expanding and providing new linkages to the bikeway network. By establishing trails within stream corridors the City will meet a second principle found in the Green Pact to make bicycling and walking viable transportation alternatives and will respond to several public comments for bike trails in natural areas.

- **Orientation and Accessibility**
While it is not feasible or appropriate for all parks and open spaces to be featured in a subdivision's design, considerations should be given to ensure they are in a highly visible, safe location that is easily accessible and tied into the City's bikeway network. Design criteria should require land to be located in accessible locations with adequate frontage, visibility and a centrally located comprehensive park and open space area in lieu of multiple smaller sites, when appropriate for larger developments. For larger park/open space areas the edges should be bound by streets with houses oriented toward the common green space.
- **Compatibility**
Often when parks back up to adjacent residential uses it creates an indistinguishable area where the park or a resident's backyard starts and ends. Likewise, when a residential lot backs up to a park and is separated by a marker or short fence the space feels uncomfortable due to the proximity of the park user to someone's personal property. In order to avoid this land use conflict, parks should be sized appropriately with defined edges and incorporate adequate landscaping to maximize the usable area, ensure compatibility with surrounding properties and discourage parkland infringement.
- **Utility Access**
The importance and desire for adequate water, sewer and accessibility to electric services within parks and open spaces were noted within a number of comments received during the public comment process.

“

The park off Orders by the YMCA would be used more by my family if there were larger trees. It is too hot to go out there in the summer when there is no shade. I love all the trees we have at other parks, we wish this one was more useful to us.

- Planning Area C Resident

”

“

I live in Hennigans Grove . . . We feel isolated back here as far as recreation for our children. Being boxed in by 104 and 665 the kids back here have nowhere to ride their bikes to go play.

- Planning Area E Resident

”

OBJECTIVE 6

Provide adequate amenities in parks to serve the community. Setting new standards for the development of parks will allow the city to provide more amenities sought by park-goers in new parks

land acquisition and parkland development

HOW FEE IN LIEU IS CALCULATED

To determine the amount of the fee in lieu, Grove City requires the fee equal the average value of parkland that would otherwise be required. The average value of parkland Grove City was determined to be \$30,000 per acre. For example, if a developer is required to dedicate five acres of parkland and they are granted a “fee in lieu” of dedication, the developer would pay \$150,000 (5 acres x \$30,000).

EXAMPLE OF LAND DONATION: TALBOTT PARK

Talbott Park was created in 1999 upon the donation of 193 acres of land to Grove City by the Scioto Holding Company. The Scioto Holding Company received a tax benefit in exchange for gifting the land to the city for use by residents. Talbott Park is an exceptionally large park, with much of the 193 acres in a natural state. These two characteristics led Grove City to deed the land to the Columbus and the Franklin County Metro Parks.

As a Metro Park, Grove City is not responsible for the maintenance or other services for Talbott Park, but has created a collaborative effort between the city and the Metro Park System and provided seamless integration of the existing nature and bike trails. These connections advance the plan’s goals of connecting Grove City’s trails to regional trail networks.

OBJECTIVE 5

Encourage residents to donate property for open space uses throughout the community.

Public surveys revealed the lack of water and electricity in several parks concerned a number of residents, specifically at Fryer Park. Better lighting was an identified need at Gantz Park. In all, 43 comments were made regarding the need for installation of new or expanded restrooms and lighting in parks from all planning areas in the city. The inclusion of these utilities within a park provides the additional amenities and services to users and can also improve public safety and deter vandalism after hours.

Providing these services after the initial park development can be prohibitively expensive for the city to install the necessary infrastructure at a later time. The feasibility of providing utilities to parks is greatly enhanced if such infrastructure is readily accessible to the site. Provisions of necessary utilities is an important design consideration and should be included as part of the development review process, which would provide the city with the flexibility of installing utilities at a later time if necessary.

Fee in Lieu of Parkland Dedication

Like most cities, Grove City’s policy recognizes that parkland cannot always be easily dedicated due to size or lack of accessibility or usability. In these situations, Planning Commission and City Council have the authority to determine that parkland dedication is unacceptable and apply a fee in lieu of dedication. This fee in lieu allows a developer to pay a fee to the Recreation Development Fund instead of dedicating the required parkland, which provides the opportunity for the city to purchase parkland elsewhere as outlined in the section “Purchase.”

Grove City Code indicates this option is only intended for situations where the Planning Commission or City Council determines park dedication is not appropriate or is otherwise not feasible. It is recommended this policy be updated to establish criteria to help developers identify appropriate park and open space areas and outline criteria Planning Commission and City Council could use to review and evaluate a proposal.

3. Donations

Grove City has an opportunity to work with existing landowners and encourage park and open space donations to the city. Brochures or explanatory handouts could be provided to the public explaining the benefits of donating property, such as tax relief. Land donations could be pursued by the city as a means of acquiring land for parks and open space in undeveloped areas.

The most notable example of land donated in Grove City would be the 193-acre Talbott Park in 1999 by a company that wished to see the land used as a recreational area and nature preserve.

land acquisition and parkland development

PARKLAND DEVELOPMENT

Parkland development refers to how acquired land is programmed for public use. This process establishes the use of the parks including what types of facilities are constructed and the quantity and location of park amenities (e.g. playground equipment, trails, water fountain and restrooms, etc.). The city holds public meetings when new land is acquired to ensure the future park will meet the needs and desires of the community.

In addition to gathering input from public meetings, the Parks and Recreation Department uses other materials and information to ensure the needs of the neighborhood, community and its residents will be met.

It is important to involve the public throughout the entire parkland development process. Once community input has been gathered, plans are submitted for plan review to the Planning Commission and City Council for formal consideration. There are no provisions in the Zoning Code that exempt the city from rules and regulations contained therein. If this process were to be circumvented, the residents' opportunity to voice their opinion would also be eliminated. Public opinion should be collected to help determine the use of the park as well as its proposed design, configuration and other considerations. Similar to parkland acquired through dedication, public parkland development should be designed and evaluated with the same considerations discussed in the "Design Considerations" section earlier in this chapter. In addition, the utilization of sustainable materials and practices as well as the need to brand public parks were identified during the public participation as desirable characteristics of public parkland and therefore should be given the same priority and consideration when being designed and evaluated during the review process.

Sustainability Principles

As part of Chapter 3 - Natural Resources Grove City was identified as a member of the Central Ohio Green Pact, an intergovernmental pledge to adhere to sustainable practices. Among the principles found in the Green Pact are pledges to "Build Green Facilities and Reduce Energy Use" and "Reduce Waste" by using recycled building materials.

Park improvements provide opportunities to fulfill several of these pledges. For example, picnic tables, benches and shelters made of partially recycled materials should be utilized whenever possible. Other sustainable principles that could be used for park and trail development include the use of permeable pavement, water conserving facilities, solar powered and/or LED lights to reduce energy consumption. Newly constructed facilities and structures constructed within existing parks or parks planned for dedication should use these sustainable technologies to minimize environmental impacts.

The city should also promote the installation of sustainable storm water management tools such as bioretention areas, the use of rain barrels and permeable pavement within its parks. Storm water management tools such as

PROGRAMMING OF PUBLIC PARKLAND

The determinants of programming of public parks should be twofold. First, public parks should be programmed appropriately for their size. For example, neighborhood parks should be furnished with amenities that are designed to serve the nearby residents, whereas a community park should feature more extensive programming for a broader population. Second, the park should be reflective of public comments collected during the public input period, as public desires varied according to location in the community.

“

Grove City is a nice place to live... but as I age I find it less friendly to seniors and their needs.

- Planning Area B Resident

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OBJECTIVE 7

Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.

land acquisition and parkland development

these have a common purpose: to slow the progress of rainwater making its way to small streams. With these features, the city has the opportunity to reclaim resources. For example, rain barrels could be used to harvest rainwater from park buildings and used to water landscaping around those same structures.

Bioretention areas (or rain gardens) could be installed as functional park amenities, holding rainwater on site and providing storm water a chance to percolate into the soil. Grove City has installed rain gardens in Henceroth Park and Gantz Park, and this practice should be continued to other parks.

Permeable pavement could be used within park lots, allowing water to soak through the pavement and into the groundwater supply. It may either be a poured concrete material or be made of individual pavers.

Branding Park Space

Branding Grove City’s park space requires little change in policy but can have a profound effect on the way residents identify with their parks and community.

- **Signage**
Creating attractive and standardized sign designs is an inexpensive, effective way to improve the parks’ image. Different sign designs can be used for different purposes. For example: way finding, informational purposes or to identify park features. Standard signage as an important park feature that contributes to a visitor’s impression of the parks.
- **Additional Site Furnishings**
Other considerations for park branding include lighting fixtures, park benches and trash receptacles. Currently, the parks have a wide variety of furnishings that are not consistent in design. Multiple residents commented that they wish to see “inviting” and aesthetically attractive park features. Other residents independently expressed a desire to see more tables, benches, trash receptacles and play equipment. Given that park furnishings will need to be replaced over time, the city should install new park furnishings that are of a uniform and high quality. Places to sit, eat and dispose of waste should be easily available where park visitors frequently gather.

A good example of site furnishings already used in Grove City are those in historic Town Center. Town Center benefits from site furnishings such as gazebos, high-quality trash and recycling receptacles, gas street lamps and high-quality paving materials, including brick. These furnishings help create a unique and memorable identity in downtown Grove City. They also make a visitor’s stay more pleasant. Though the site furnishings for parks will be different in character, Grove City can achieve a similar effect by branding the parks with standardized, high-quality park furnishings.

“

I like the Parks and Rec. Department here and there’s lots of great things to do. But an awful lot of it (most of it) seems tilted toward senior citizens. What about more programs and things for younger people with families?

- Planning Area B Resident

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land acquisition and parkland development

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR LAND ACQUISITION AND PARKLAND DEVELOPMENT

G1. **Parkland is acquired and developed to meet the needs and desires of the growing community.**

As the city grows, it will be important for the city to be proactive in parkland acquisition and development to serve the growing needs of the community.

O1. **Establish land acquisition policies to promote the growth of the park system at a comparable rate to serve the growing population.**

A1. Identify key pieces of land for future park and trail development

A2. Draft and adopt land acquisition policy for trail and parkland development

O2. **Provide more opportunities for review and collaboration regarding land acquisition and development.**

Many of the parks in Grove City's parks system are on land that was essentially unusable by developers and were donated to the city for parkland. Because of this, many of our parks are located in areas not easily accessible by many residents in the neighborhood the park serves. Creating a stricter review process and review standards will ensure that parks are developed where and how the city feels most appropriate for residents.

A3. Develop a review process between Development and Parks and Recreation staff to evaluate developer-granted land

A4. Involve Park Board and Planning Commission in review of dedicated land

A5. Adopt Code revisions to require/create stricter standards and implement review criteria for land dedication

O3. **Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population.**

A6. Create a separate Parkland Acquisition Fund, for the sole purpose of acquiring land for parks

A7. Create a new Trail Development Fund, delineating funds exclusively for trails

O4. **Preserve natural resources on land to be developed.**

Natural resources can be found throughout the city, not just in city-owned parkland. By reviewing our existing policies aimed to protect natural resources and comparing them to that of other cities, we can ensure that our policies are as effective as possible in protecting our natural resources.

A8. Stream protection policy review findings/revisions

land acquisition and parkland development

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

A9. Adopt Code revisions requiring the dedication of significant natural resource areas with maintenance performed by the homeowners association

A10. Tree preservation policy review findings/revisions

O5. **Encourage residents to donate property for open space uses throughout the community.**

In addition to property deeded to the city through the development process, the city must also be aware of the possibility of land being gifted to the city for the creation or expansion of a park.

A11. Prepare brochures or explanatory handouts for distribution to property owners explaining the benefits of donating property for parks

O6. **Provide adequate amenities in parks to serve the community.**

Setting new standards for the development of parks will allow the city to provide more amenities sought by park-goers in new parks

A12. "Brand the parks" by creating standards for signage, lighting and site furnishings

A13. Draft and adopt policy for utility extension to parks (when deemed necessary/appropriate)

O7. **Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.**

The Central Ohio Green Pact is a document signed by local governments (including Grove City) and organizations pledging to follow 10 principles to set an example for their jurisdictions on how to grow greener. Many of the city's long-term environmental goals can be founded in the principles outlined in the Pact, including creating walkable/bikeable communities, protecting our natural resources, and using environmentally-friendly products.

A14. Use sustainable materials and practices in park development when feasible to do so

A15. Encourage recycling by placing recycling containers in convenient locations in all parks and along public trails



CHAPTER 8 OUTLINE

1. **History of Parks and Recreation in Grove City**
2. **Organizational Structure**
3. **Roles and Responsibilities**
4. **Community Events and Staff Involvement**
5. **Staff Levels and Training**
6. **Park Foundation**
7. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

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INTRODUCTION

Grove City residents strongly desire beautiful parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs. This chapter will analyze the organizational approach used by the city to deliver parks and recreation services.

OVERVIEW

A departmental-wide knowledge of the organizational structure of the Parks and Recreation Department allows:

- The supervision, coordination and task allocation to be conducted efficiently in order to achieve departmental goals.
- Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each staff member in order to serve the community in a most effective manner.

HISTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN GROVE CITY

The concept of Parks and Recreation is deeply rooted in the history of Grove City government. Recreation and leisure services have been an important part of our city's history dating back to 1955, when the first official park in Grove City was created and became a place for children to go to play baseball. This park, built on ground formerly housing the city's water treatment systems, was named Windsor Park after Mr. Harold Windsor, a City Council member who strongly supported the park's development. In 1982, the city received state and federal grants that led to building of the Evans Center for seniors in Windsor Park. The Evans Center has

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undergone two building renovations in recent years to accommodate the growing need for recreational services for the 55+ population.

In 1974, Grove City officially established the Parks and Recreation Department by hiring the first department director. Shortly after, Gantz Farm was purchased by the city, and Gantz Park was built. The farm had a barn and farmhouse on site. Instead of demolishing the farmhouse, the city chose to renovate it to create recreational spaces for the community. Gantz Barn, which was rebuilt, houses many programs including RecSchool.

During the next few years, through partnerships with developers, the city acquired many neighborhood parks including Westgrove, Indian Trails, Keller Farms, Meadow Grove and Blodwen. Other parks in the system at this time included Evans Park and mini-parks Swearingen and Creed Lawless.

In 1995, Grove City bought the Fryer farm on the south end of Grove City. This 110-acre park opened in 1998 as the largest park in the Grove City parks system. The park is home to many amenities including an eight-diamond softball complex, sledding hill, Discovery Frontier and the Grove City YMCA.

The Grove City Parks System continues to be a pinnacle in the community for recreation and leisure services. Currently the parks system includes 18 parks (more than 260 acres) and more than 700 recreation programs each year.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Parks and Recreation Department operates under the direction of the City Administrator and Mayor of Grove City. In order to operate effectively, the department works in cooperation with several other city departments including, but not limited to: the Service Department, the Community Relations Office and the Development Department. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the oversight and evaluation of all recreation services in Grove City, including the operation of the Big Splash Aquatic Center, Evans Center and Gardens at Gantz Farm; the administration of all youth and adult sport leagues; the coordination of the P.A.R.K before- and after-school childcare programs and RecSchool preschool program; and the planning of community events.

The Park Board consists of five citizen members who are appointed by the Mayor to serve four-year terms. The Parks and Recreation Department Director and Recreation Superintendent serve as the day-to-day contacts for the Park Board. Both the Director and Superintendent sit on the board as ex-officio members. The Park Board elects a chair, vice chair and secretary each year. The Park Board acts as the eyes and the ears of the community and make recommendations that impact the Parks and Recreation Department.

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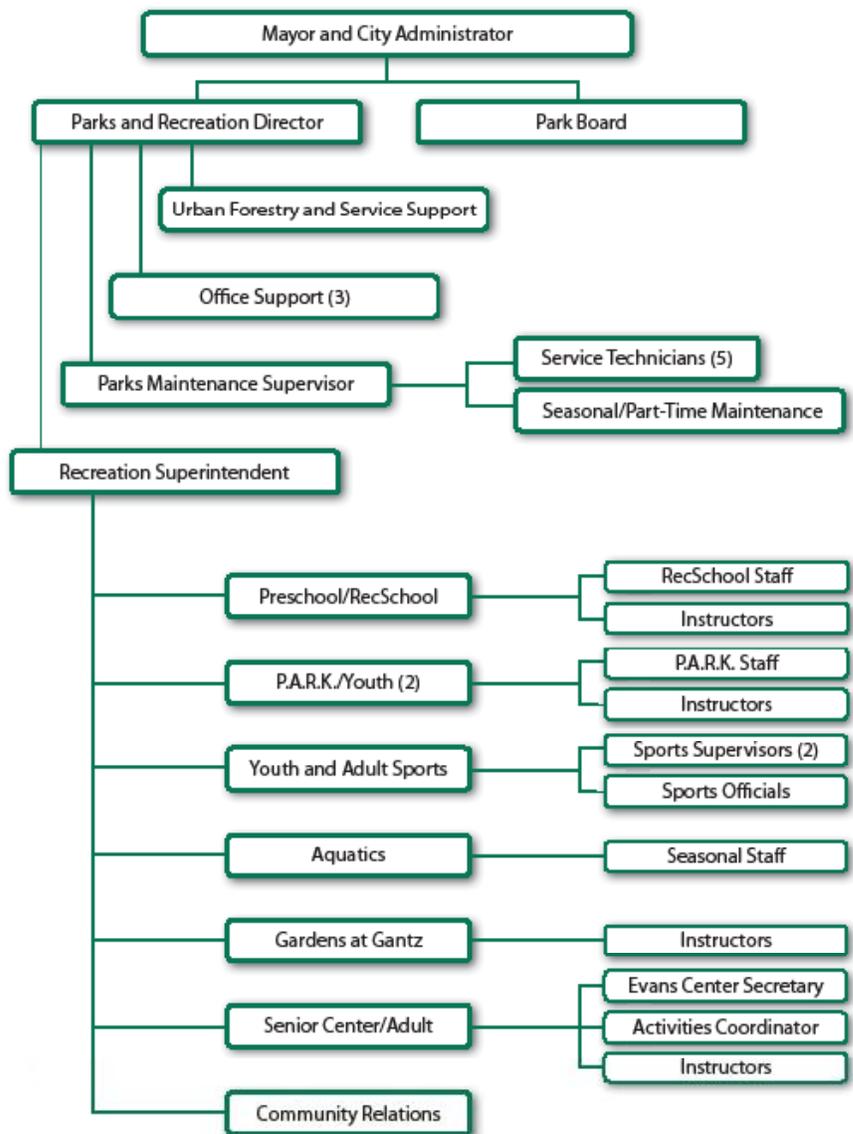
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Surveys conducted by an independent public opinion research firm show that Grove City residents feel they are treated well by staff when they call the Parks and Recreation Department.

The same survey also shows that residents rank all programs offered by the city – for seniors, adults and children – as above average.

Evaluation of the programs and services offered through the Parks and Recreation Department are vital for development and growth. It is the Parks and Recreation Department staff's belief that the programs, activities and services offered should be outcome-based for the participants. Program participants should have a clear understanding of what they will take away from the activity once completed. In order to measure this standard, staff developed a set of evaluation tools that are utilized at the completion of each class. These patron surveys include questions that measure the customer experience, the park visitor experience and the program experience. Evaluations are collected and logged to guide the staff through changes and upgrades to services.

Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defined roles and responsibilities for staff members are critical to the development and growth of the department and its programs. Through constant communication and collaboration, the department is able to ensure the most efficient programs and services for the community.

City Administrator

The City Administrator is appointed by and works under the supervision and direction of the Mayor. The City Administrator serves as the full-time administrative head of the city's operations. The incumbent coordinates, supervises and directs all administrative activities of the city subject to authority of the Mayor and in conformity of the Charter.

The City Administrator prepares and submits annual public reports for all city departments, boards and committees. The Administrator identifies and recommends continuous improvement opportunities for the Finance Department and may perform other duties as required to promote and enhance the quality of life for Grove City residents.

Parks and Recreation Director

The Parks and Recreation Director is appointed by the Mayor in consultation with the City Administrator and works under the direction of the City Administrator. The Director is responsible for strategically positioning, organizing, directing, supervising and accepting accountability for the department. The incumbent is the executive official in charge of the department and applies all policies adopted by City Council and confers with the City Administrator in developing the strategic direction of the department.

The incumbent plans both short- and long-term goals and objectives for the department and oversees the strategic planning and delivery of services to citizens and staff. The Director manages all administrative policy and fiscal activities of the Parks and Recreation Department by preparing capital and operating budgets, evaluating current functions and operations, and makes the appropriate adjustments. The incumbent also prepares recommendations for the Mayor and City Council and assures compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and professional standards that govern the parks and recreation field.

The Director is responsible for the supervision of 18 full-time employees, 40 part-time employees and approximately 100 seasonal employees in both parks and recreation services. Additionally, he/she is accountable for the effectiveness of the public services of the department, and for the fiscal and ethical integrity reflected in the conduct of its personnel.

“

Thank you for all the hard work you do to provide a place for the children to have fun and enjoy sports.

- Planning Area A Resident

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Recreation Superintendent

The Recreation Superintendent is appointed by the City Administrator in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Department and works under the executive supervision of the Director. He/she is responsible for the management of major recreation programs and the general supervision of the department, making all management and financial decisions when the Director is out.

This position is responsible for fielding and responding to any public questions, ideas or issues in an appropriate manner. He/she serves as a liaison for all city department on behalf of all community events, and is in charge of the development of new programs and activities for the department. The Recreation Superintendent monitors inventory of supplies and oversees the daily operations and organization of staff, volunteers, and resources. The employee plans, directs and coordinates the work of professional or non-professional employees through lower supervisors. Performance criteria is formulated for activities to assess their effectiveness. The Recreation Superintendent prepares, submits and administers the annual budget that includes facilities and equipment as well as operational needs. He/she oversees the hiring, training and evaluation of staff. The Recreation Superintendent is responsible for providing a written annual report to the director and periodic reports as required by regulatory, credentialing or other control bodies.

Recreation Coordinators

Recreation Coordinators are appointed by the City Administrator in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Director and supervised by the Recreation Superintendent. Coordinators directly report to the Recreation Superintendent. There are currently seven coordinators for the following program areas: RecSchool/Preschool, P.A.R.K./Youth, Sports, Aquatics, Adults/Seniors, the Gardens at Gantz and Community Relations.

Incumbent coordinators are required to supervise and evaluate the specific recreation program for which they are responsible. Coordinators oversee the daily operations of programs and organize staff, volunteers and resources needed. They must schedule and coordinate programs, practices, leagues, special events, field trips, classes, competitions, tournaments, lessons and facilities as appropriate. Coordinators are responsible for maintaining inventory of supplies and equipment. They also may teach within their area of specialty as needed. Coordinators assist the Recreation Superintendent in the preparation and administration of the annual budget and supervise in the hiring, training and evaluation of staff in their area of recreation. Coordinators are also responsible for evaluating programs to identify needs for improvement.

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Parks Maintenance Supervisor

The Parks Maintenance Supervisor is a classified employee under Grove City Civil Service, and works under the managerial direction of the Parks and Recreation Director. He/she assists the Director in preparing the annual maintenance budget, capital improvement budget and helps formulate short and long-range maintenance goals. The Supervisor monitors vehicles and facilities to determine needed maintenance and repairs; schedules such repairs; and plans, coordinates and assigns the work of maintenance personnel. The Maintenance Supervisor is responsible for coordinating maintenance projects undertaken by contract personnel, and organizing or providing assistance to special events. Appropriate safety precautions must be adhered to when performing duties. This position is responsible for identifying and recommending continuous improvement opportunities for the Service Department.

The Parks Maintenance Supervisor oversees the maintenance and operations of all Grove City parks. Maintenance duties in the parks include, but are not limited to: mowing grass, litter removal, weeding, cleaning, safety evaluations and repairs of play equipment, snow removal, painting and other duties necessary to maintain the parks. The Parks Maintenance Supervisor oversees the duties of five service technicians and all seasonal and part-time maintenance.

The Maintenance Supervisor is responsible for prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance. Through collaboration with the Director, a policy on trail and park maintenance should be put into place. The existing maintenance tasks and goals are explained in detail in the Parks Maintenance and Operations Manual.

Park Board

The Park Board consists of five citizens, assigned by the Mayor, who serve four-year terms. Members review and make recommendations regarding parks, recreation, open/green space and cultural arts.

The Grove City Park Board meets on a bi-monthly basis and discusses citizen requests and suggestions, upcoming capital projects and recreation programs. While the Grove City Park Board is not a policy-making board, staff often takes policy initiatives to the Park Board for their verification and validation before moving forward. The Grove City Park Board also serves as the oversight group for special projects in the Parks and Recreation Department.

The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation could be headed by the Park Board in order to encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing such a group. Park foundations are organizations that support a local parks and recreation department. Through fund raisers and donations, park foundations are able to offer additional support for city parks and programs.

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Urban Forestry and Service Support

The Urban Forester is appointed by the City Administrator under the administrative supervision of the Service Director. The incumbent is responsible for the management of the forestry program by managing field work, counseling City and other government officials and recruiting and coordinating the efforts of citizen volunteers.

The Urban Forester directs the installation and maintenance of public trees in the city's right-of-ways, bike paths, parks and public green spaces as necessary to implement the Urban Forestry Master Plan. The Urban Forester directly oversees the Urban Forestry Specialists, who assist in the management of forestry field work and landscape maintenance performed by seasonal employees and volunteers.

The Urban Forester provides guidance and direction to crews of seasonal employees, part-time and full-time employees, volunteers and contracted companies involved in planting and maintenance operations. The incumbent is also responsible for implementing the city's Landscape and Street Tree Program, and supervising or performing any planting, removal, pruning, fertilizing, watering or general maintenance of street trees. He/she maintains computerized inventories and status reports of all such duties.

Other essential functions of the Urban Forester include providing advice to Administration, Planning Commission and City Council on city landscape code issues arising from development proposals. This position also handles the inspection of development projects under construction to ensure development projects are pursuant to the Code. The Urban Forester is responsible for developing annual budget requests based on the city's urban landscape forestry program needs. The person in this position may initiate and execute bid processes for contracts on special projects or capital improvements.

The Urban Forester must investigate complaints and respond to requests for information from the public, and is charged with identifying and recommending continuous improvement opportunities for the Service Department. The Urban Forester is to interact with the public through forestry education in the public schools, volunteer involvement and among residents regarding the planting and care of trees and landscape.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS AND STAFF INVOLVEMENT

Through strong partnerships with other city departments, non-profit organizations, businesses and groups, the residents of Grove City enjoy a wide variety of low-cost or no-cost events. The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department plays a major role in most community special events. The Recreation Superintendent, Director and Recreation Coordinator - Community Relations are responsible for much of the preparation and organization for community events with assistance from other staff members and volunteers.

The events are described in detail in Chapter 5 of this plan and can also be found each season in the community guide, the Source.

STAFF LEVELS AND TRAINING

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department encourages employees to be involved with professional organizations. Some of the professional organizations the staff are affiliated with include: National Recreation and Parks Association, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children, Ohio Association of Senior Centers, National Alliance for Youth Sports, USSSA, Ohio School Age Child Care Alliance, Environmental Education Council of Ohio and the Great Lakes Herb Society.

The City Administrator and Director work with staff members to ensure each component of the department is equipped with proper staffing to guarantee effective programming. This process relies on the evaluations and recommendations from different programs and services.

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department's in-service training is generally described in the city's employee handbook. Specifically, each area of the department has an outlined training program for all new employees. On-the-job training prepares an employee to effectively perform the responsibilities required of his/her position. It allows the employee to learn job duties, correct procedures and expected performance levels under the guidance of an experienced worker. Training also improves job performance, reduces mistakes and reduces work-related injuries and accidents.

Departmental training includes a variety of opportunities for seasonal, part-time and full-time employees, including professional certifications such as: NRPA Certified Park and Recreation Professional, Aquatic Facility Operator, Certified Pool Operator and National Playground Safety Inspector. Employees may attend state and national professional conferences and seminars. Additionally, the city offers a tuition reimbursement and travel and training budget to each department that is reviewed and budgeted on an annual basis.

organizational analysis

Descriptions of training requirements for the Parks and Recreation Department are as follows:

RecSchool Training

All staff is required to attend orientation and monthly staff meetings. A number of training opportunities are offered throughout the year, and employees are notified in advance of these opportunities. With prior approval by the Recreation Coordinator, staff is paid for all training hours. During the first three years of employment, staff members are required to attend 15 hours of training per year, until a total of 45 hours have been completed, as prescribed by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. Training in Communicable Disease Recognition and Prevention, First Aid, and Child Abuse Recognition and Prevention must be completed during the first year of employment. Staff members who have a degree in Early Childhood Education or sufficient documented Early Childhood college courses are exempt from these training requirements, but are encouraged to further their education with RecSchool's support. In the event that a staff person is unable to attend a scheduled training, he/she is responsible for finding a replacement or reimbursing RecSchool for training fees.

P.A.R.K Training

All staff is required to attend an orientation prior to their start date. P.A.R.K Coordinators schedule a two-hour review to explain the policies and procedures as outlined in the P.A.R.K. Staff Handbook. Coordinators also require each staff person to attend monthly in-service trainings on various topics (based on program and staff needs) throughout the year. In addition, each staff person must be certified in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Disease and Recognition, and Prevention of Child Abuse.

Big Splash Training

Employees are evaluated on a seasonal basis and measured on dependability, attendance, job performance, cooperation with supervisors, quality of work, initiative/responsibility, job knowledge, decision making, flexibility and teamwork. Employees at the Big Splash are required to go through a rigorous training process that includes supervisor training, orientation, admissions training, park services, lifeguard certification and rehire classes for returning employees. Advanced or more experienced employees also are given the opportunity to attend a test-out training session, a four-hour long session that determines if the individual is required to attend the other training levels or not.

Senior Center Training

New employees at the Evans Center receive on-the-job training that includes shadowing and reviewing the staff manual with a supervisor. Full- and part-time staff members attend professional development trainings on an as-needed basis. Evans Center staff members attend Parks and Recreation Department staff meetings and hold monthly Center meetings as well. A City of Grove City Policy and Procedures Handbook is available on site for review. All Evans Center bus drivers must have a CDL passenger endorsed driver's license, Motor Vehicle License checks, and must be certified in CPR and First Aid. Driver's are required to complete the DRIVE program (transporting older and disabled passengers training) through the Central Ohio Area

organizational analysis

Agency and Defensive Driving conducted by the National Safety Council every three years. All Evans Center employees are asked to attend monthly staff meetings and in-service trainings (based on program and staff needs) throughout the year.

Gardens at Gantz Training

All volunteers are required to attend a five-day training session generally held in the fall of each year. The Garden Education Coordinator assembles knowledgeable volunteers to provide training in the following areas: history of the farmhouse and the Gantz family, garden development in Grove City, tours of the Gardens, history of herbs and herbalism, herbs in landscaping, culinary herbs, dye herbs, knot gardens, everlastings, medicinal herbs, fragrant plants, library policies and volunteer responsibilities.

The Garden Education Coordinator continually seeks education on gardening trends and methods by attending various educational workshops and conferences such as: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Educational Conference, Central Ohio Organic Gardeners, Inniswood, Franklin County Master Gardeners, Ohio Garden Clubs and short courses offered through the Ohio State University.

Youth and Adult Sports

Employees and volunteers are required to be certified in First Aid and CPR. The training is completed through the city, and individuals are required get re-certified every two years. Volunteer coaches are required to complete an online training through the National Youth Sports Coaches Association.

Safety Training

No matter how well a safety program is developed and administered, the results depend upon the conduct of the individual employee. Individual staff members influence the habits and attitudes of employees. These habits and attitudes start forming the day an employee begins work. Educating employees and safety officers through policies, procedures and training is an essential part of the department's risk management policy. The goal of the department's training is to develop safety awareness in all employees. This awareness will enable them to recognize hazards they may be subjected to through their positions, and to take adequate precautions. This training cannot be effective unless it is a continuous program.

Staff Responsibilities for Training

The department's full-time professional staff is responsible for implementing training for each of their respective staff groups. Specific responsibilities for all staff, regardless of program area, are listed below:

- The Director shall ensure supervisory staff are informed and updated ongoing regarding City safety information and expectations.
- The Recreation Superintendent and Park Maintenance Supervisor shall make certain that safety training is integrated into all staff training programs and is developed as a continuing effort in daily operations. Each supervisor shall make

organizational analysis

certain that his/her program area documents all safety training.

- Recreation Coordinators shall include safety as an integral part of new employees' orientation and in recurring training programs.
- The Director and Superintendents shall monitor all departmental training and assist in obtaining specialized training beyond the capabilities of the department's resources, if needed.

Training Updates

- All employees receive periodic training sessions on topics related to specific functions of their position responsibilities.
- Periodic mock drills are to be scheduled at all sites. Examples of these include: fire drill, tornado drill, etc.
- Specific program area safety training will be scheduled as deemed appropriate by the assigned supervisors.

PARKS FOUNDATION

Parks and recreation services are essential to enhance the quality of life for residents of Grove City. These services benefit the city every day by encouraging businesses and new residents to settle in the area, providing memories for current residents and improving and preserving the community's natural areas. The city funds these services, but the parks have other needs that extend beyond regular maintenance. If a Grove City Parks Foundation was established, it would assist the Parks and Recreation Department in funding these needs. The primary mission of the parks foundation would be to obtain, receive, manage and administer funds and properties for the benefit of the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department's programs and facilities.

A Grove City Parks Foundation would be a 501(c)(iii) non-profit organization whose mandate would be to secure additional funds and resources exclusively for enhancing park and recreation services. This non-profit organization would consist of a group of citizen leaders who would volunteer their time and talent to help residents acquire, protect and nurture the parkland and recreation services that the community needs and desires.

Typically, a parks foundation consist of a minimum of seven members with various professional and personal backgrounds. However, it is common for members of such philanthropic foundations to have experience in accounting, law, marketing and especially fund raising. Part of the plan to establish the parks foundation will include the submission of the Grove City Parks Foundation articles and bylaws to the IRS. Then, an official foundation could be formally approved at a date to be determined.

In order to organize a Grove City Parks Foundation, a collaborative effort between current members of the Park Board, the Parks and Recreation Director, the Recreation

organizational analysis

Superintendent and the Maintenance Supervisor should seek to work with park foundations that have been successfully established in central Ohio. This will ensure the proper steps are taken to develop the bylaws and initiatives of this foundation.

Once an official foundation is formally approved, the parks foundation will be charged with developing a list of initiatives to be conquered quarterly or annually. Some possible initiatives that could be discussed include:

- Provide an opportunity for fund raising in which citizens or businesses are encouraged to make a tax-deductible contribution to a specific project or program.
- Meet increasing fund raising needs for specific program areas, such as swim teams, facility space, etc.
- Promote and distribute funds for a scholarship program.
- Develop a memorial program for the parks that includes benches, trees or other amenities.

organizational analysis

POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

G1. **A Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the community.**

A growing community will require a growing park system. In order to properly serve the community, it will be important to have a Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the parks system.

O1. **Adequate staffing levels should be maintained for all departmental functions including administrative staff, program instructors, and parkland maintenance staff.**

- A1. Pursue additional volunteering opportunities for youth and elderly programs
- A2. Develop a plan for future staffing needs

G2. **A Parks and Recreation Department that strives to provide the best possible service to the public.**

Keeping informed of trends in parks and recreation will be important to ensure that the city is offering the best services possible to its residents.

O2. **Necessary training should be provided for department staff.**

- A3. Provide all levels of staff with necessary training to complete their jobs to the best of their ability

O3. **A schedule of park maintenance should be outlined, prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance.**

- A4. Adopt policy on trail and park maintenance (plowing, clearing of debris, painting, equipment replacement, etc)

G2. **The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation.**

Park foundations are organizations created to support the area's Parks and Recreation Department. Through fund raisers and donations, park foundations are able to offer additional support for city parks and programs.

O4. **Encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing a Grove City parks foundation.**

- A5. Create a park foundation portion of the website, explaining the benefits of a parks foundation



CHAPTER 9 OUTLINE

1. **Overview**
2. **Plan Management**
3. **How to Use the Plan**
4. **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

implementation

OVERVIEW

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a working document that results in the enhancement of recreational opportunities and facilities available to the residents of Grove City. The plan is a guide to provide direction and assist decision makers with short- and long-range choices for the continued improvement of the parks, recreation and open space system. Implementation of this plan will involve the cooperation of the Parks and Recreation Department and a variety of other city departments, boards and commissions including the Park Board and City Council.

PLAN MANAGEMENT

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan should be monitored on a regular basis and, when necessary, it should be updated. This section outlines the guidance for monitoring the plan's effectiveness and maintaining its relevancy.

Monitoring the Plan

An annual review of the plan should be conducted, in which the goals, objectives and actions are monitored for implementation, effectiveness and relevancy. The formal review should be conducted by staff and the Park Board.

Updating the Plan

An update of the plan should be considered at least every five years. In the interim, key milestones may be reached that may necessitate an update sooner than a five-year cycle.

implementation

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvement and other matters affecting the Parks and Recreation Department. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should align with the goals and objectives of the plan.

Annual Work Programs and Budgets

The Parks and Recreation Department should be cognizant of the recommendations of the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets.

Development Approvals

Administrative and legislative approval should be sought for a number of development proposals related to parks and open space, including the design of open space to be dedicated to the city and the development of public parkland, as outlined in the plan.

Capital Improvement Plan

Projects identified for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be selected based on the recommended policies outlined in the plan.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The following tables outline the Goals, Objectives and recommended Actions of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan, including the time frame in which the action should be implemented. Outlined below are the specific timeframes recommended in the summary table.

Immediate:	2011-2012
Short-Term:	2012-2016
Mid-Term:	2015-2020
Long-Term:	2020-2030
Ongoing:	Currently in progress and/or to be continued once initiated

implementation

CHAPTER 2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. A community knowledgeable of the city's parks and open space system.

O1. Promote public open space within the community and make the community aware of current parks, their sizes and components.

A1. Continue to publish seasonal newsletters about the parks system

Ongoing

A2. Keep the website updated with park information

Ongoing

A3. Provide the community with up-to-date maps and descriptions of parks

Ongoing

A4. Adopt Code revisions for park definitions, such as Greenway, Community Park, Neighborhood Park, and Pocket Park

Immediate (2011-12)

A5. Update the rules and regulations for public parks, outlined in Chapter 903 of the Grove City Code of Ordinances

Immediate (2011-12)

A6. Brand the parks by creating standards for signage, lighting and site furnishings

Ongoing

G2. A park system offering the community a variety of park and open space options.

O2. Make all parks welcoming and accessible for all levels of users.

A7. Provide clean restroom facilities in the parks when feasible

Ongoing

A8. Provide park features usable for citizens of all abilities in every park

Ongoing

implementation

CHAPTER 2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

O3. Pursue and encourage joint uses with schools.

A9. Maintain a working relationship with schools for the use of select ball fields

Ongoing

A10. Draft a formal agreement for the utilization of the currently rented South-Western City School facilities/building use

Immediate (2011-12)

A11. Explore the possibility of using school facilities for a wider variety of recreation and educational offerings

Ongoing

O4. Facilities should be able to support multiple activities.

A12. Create a public recreation center in Grove City

Long-Term (2020-2030)

O5. Create areas in the parks system for peaceful, passive, non active recreation.

A13. Create areas in all new parks with no designated programming, for passive, non-active recreation

Ongoing

A14. Target areas for passive recreation in existing parks and city-owned property

Ongoing

O6. Create parks appropriate for the population they serve, while keeping in mind the greater parks system.

A15. Determine an appropriate location for a Memorial Park

Immediate (2011-12)

A16. Amend subdivision requirements to require reserves to be given to the city to be developed into public parkland

Immediate (2011-12)

implementation

CHAPTER 2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

The Big Splash

A17. Install a sprayground/baby pool play area

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A18. Install a shelter area

Short-Term (2012-2016)

Blowden Park

A19. Install a charcoal grill

Immediate (2011-12)

A20. Install fencing at the northwest corner of the park to delineate a park boundary

Immediate (2011-12)

Concord Lakes Park

A21. Install entry sign

Immediate (2011-12)

A22. Install recycling containers at the shelter

Immediate (2011-12)

A23. Connect the park to the trail network

Short-Term (2012-2016)

Creed Lawless Park

A24. Install recycling container near shelter

Immediate (2011-12)

Demorest Road Park

A25. Develop Demorest Road Park as a community park with a variety of recreational features

Short-Term (2012-2016)

implementation

CHAPTER 2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

Meadow Grove Park

A51. Install a large shelter with more picnic tables and a grill and recycling containers

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A52. Install a bridge across Grant Run, connecting the southern portion of the park to the northern portion

Long-Term (2020-2030)

A53. Install a trail to and along Grant Run

Long-Term (2020-2030)

A54. Preserve the southern portion of the park as a passive recreation area, with benches and a walking path

Immediate (2011-12)

Open Space (Planning Area D)

A55. Amend subdivision requirements to require reserves to be given to the city to be developed into public parkland

Immediate (2011-12)

Scioto Meadows Park

A56. Install trees along the western park boundary

Immediate (2011-12)

A57. Install lighting near the playground area

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A58. Install park signage

Immediate (2011-12)

Sesquicentennial Park

A59. Maintain the existing passive character

Ongoing

Swearingen Park

A60. Reclaim the city's property fronting Queensway Drive connecting to the park

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A61. Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the park from the south

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A62. Install public art within the park

Mid-Term (2015-2020)

implementation

CHAPTER 2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

Walden Bluff Park

A63. Install a trail through the south and southwest portion of the park connected to the trail network

Long-Term (2020-2030)

A64. Install a shelter and picnic tables

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A65. Install new playground equipment

Short-Term (2012-2016)

Westgrove Park

A66. Install recycling containers at the shelter

Immediate (2011-12)

A67. Install entrance sign at the parking area off Red Oak Street

Immediate (2011-12)

A68. Install a drinking fountain

Immediate (2011-12)

A69. Extend the walking trail around the perimeter of the park

Short-Term (2012-2016)

Windsor Park

A70. Keep the public informed of development on park addition off of Broadway

Ongoing

A71. Redevelop parking areas

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A72. Install a Miracle Field/all-access field

Long-Term (2020-2030)

A73. Install a three-season pavilion

Long-Term (2020-2030)

A74. Continue to acquire property on Ventura Avenue to expand the park as it becomes available

Ongoing

implementation

CHAPTER 3 - NATURAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. The protection of the city's natural resources.

O1. Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.

A1. Use sustainable materials and practices in park development when feasible to do so

Ongoing

A2. Encourage recycling by placing recycling containers in convenient locations in all parks and along public trails

Immediate (2011-12)

O2. Preserve natural resources on land to be developed.

A3. Adopt Code revisions that require developers to design sites around the existing natural resources and replace any trees removed or damaged during the development process

Immediate based on area

A4. Adopt Code revisions that require stream protection corridors and conservation easements by dedicated to the city

Immediate based on area

A5. Review findings and make revisions on the Tree Preservation Policy

Immediate based on area

A6. Adopt Code revisions for natural resource definitions, such as wetlands and bioretention area

Immediate based on area

implementation

CHAPTER 3 - NATURAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME	COMPLETED
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G2. A community aware of the natural resources found in and around the city.

O3. Provide the community with natural resource education opportunities.

A7. Provide educational links/facts on the city's website

Ongoing

A8. Provide naturalists in parks, where applicable

Mid-Term (2015-2020)

A9. Create handouts and signage to place in parks explaining educational opportunities

Ongoing

A10. Install and promote community gardens as educational opportunities

Short-Term (2012-2016)

implementation

CHAPTER 4 - TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. A network of trails providing residents with connectivity to important elements throughout the community and surrounding region.

O1. Create a dynamic system that integrates easily into the surrounding regional systems.

A1. Connect to the Scioto River Trail

Mid-Term (2015-2020)



A2. Connect to the Darby Creek Trail System

Long-Term (2020-2030)



A3. Maintain dialogue between other local trail agencies such as MORPC, City of Columbus Recreation and Parks, Franklin County Metro Parks, ODNR, ODOT and the Central Ohio Greenways Committee

Ongoing



O2. Strengthen inter-neighborhood connectivity and connect parks through the city's trail network.

A4. Adopt a complete streets policy and standards

Immediate (2011-12)



A5. Adopt Code revisions for bikeway definitions

Immediate (2011-12)



A6. Connect all parks with the trail network

Mid-Term (2015-2020)



A7. Create a Grant Run Recreational Trail connecting Meadow Grove Park to the future Scioto River Metro Park (former Talbott Park)

Long-Term (2020-2030)



A8. Create a Brown Run Recreational Trail utilizing the city's existing public greenways

Long-Term (2020-2030)



implementation

CHAPTER 4 - TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G2. A community knowledgeable of the city's trail network.

O3. Keep the public informed and involved in the trail planning process.

A9. Keep the trails portion of the city website and other electronic and social media updated with news and public input options

Ongoing

A10. Have the Grove City trails map available for distribution at City Hall and in select parks

Ongoing

A11. Involve the Park Board and Planning Commission in the review of trails

Ongoing

A12. Initiate an "Adopt a Trail" program allowing citizens or organizations to get involved in the trail network

Immediate (2011-12)

O4. Provide bicycle and trail safety education opportunities.

A13. Offer classes for bicycle safety

Immediate (2011-12)

A14. Install signage along trails with safety tips

Immediate (2011-12)

implementation

CHAPTER 5 - RECREATION

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. A Parks and Recreation department engaged in partnerships with agencies throughout the community to ensure a variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are available for residents.

O1. Encourage local businesses to donate services and/or provide sponsorships.

A1. Prepare brochures or explanatory handouts for distribution to local businesses explaining the opportunities to donate services or provide sponsorships

Short-Term (2012-2016)



O2. Remain aware of other recreational offerings provided by other agencies and continue to partner with other associations to provide a greater variety of recreational opportunities to residents.

A2. Partner with associations including the YMCA, Southwest Franklin County Historical Society, and South-Western City School District to provide programming for residents.

Ongoing



A3. Keep in contact with agencies providing additional recreational opportunities, including Grove City Kids Association, Upward, Franklin County Metro Parks, and other recreation-based businesses to ensure that programs do not overlap and that the community's recreational desires are met

Ongoing



implementation

CHAPTER 5 - RECREATION

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G2. A community with a wide variety of recreational opportunities available.

O3. Continue to provide recreation and educational opportunities for an aging population.

A4. Continue to offer a variety of courses for seniors

Ongoing

O4. Provide a greater variety of classes for adults.

A5. Provide nature based programs, such as outdoor photography, gardening, and bird watching

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A6. Create more adult recreational programs, such as general fitness programs and adult sports

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A7. Expand outdoor recreation offerings in all seasons, particularly winter sports

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A8. Develop a variety of professional development courses for adults (writing, public speaking, etc)

*Short-Term (2012-2016)
Partner with other groups*

O5. Provide more recreational opportunities for teens.

A9. Continue to actively participate in the Grove City Teen Initiative to create a Parks and Recreation system attractive to teen residents

Ongoing

implementation

CHAPTER 5 - RECREATION

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

O6. Provide more opportunities for families to participate in programs together.

A10. Provide a variety of opportunities for families to participate in programs together such as "Family Fun Nights" and book or movie swaps.

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A11. Provide educational courses for families to attend together such as safety classes (children at home alone, etc) and classes on assisting aging parents

Short-Term (2012-2016)

G3. Facilities available for a variety of formal and informal recreational opportunities.

O7. Provide facilities and classroom spaces that are able to accommodate a variety of programs to meet the needs and desires of the community.

A12. Analyze existing facilities and their utilization to determine the possibility of additional course offerings in existing facilities

Immediate (2011-12)

A13. Design new park facilities to be fully ADA compliant

Ongoing

A14. Create a public recreation center in Grove City

Long-Term (2020-2030)

implementation

CHAPTER 6 - IMPACT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. Grove City benefits economically from parks, recreation, and open space amenities.

O1. Demonstrate the economic impact of major park investment.

A1. Prepare a report (annually or every three years) that assesses the short-term and long-term fiscal returns on park investment through local changes in rents and property values

Short-Term (2012-2016)

A2. Use community opinion surveys to assess the value Grove City residents attribute to various park and recreation amenities. Could involve surveys of real estate professionals and property owners to determine their perceptions about the impact specific parks or types of amenities have on property values

Immediate (2011-2012)

O2. Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population.

A3. Create a separate Parkland Acquisition fund, for the sole purpose of acquiring land for parks

Immediate (2011-12)

A4. Create a new Trail Development fund, delineating funds exclusively for trails

Immediate (2011-12)

O3. Identify and secure land for park creation, before adjacent land is developed in order to maximize the value of park investment.

A5. Purchase park land in advance of development and use development fees collected in the future to pay for that park land

Short-Term (2012-2016)

implementation

CHAPTER 6 - IMPACT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

O4. Demonstrate a positive economic impact from parks and recreation-related tourism.

A6. Conduct an economic impact study on a major event, such as a state-level sport tournament, which attracts significant numbers visitors to the community

Short-Term (2012-2016)



implementation

CHAPTER 7 - LAND ACQUISITION AND PARKLAND DEVELOPMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. Parkland is acquired and developed to meet the needs and desires of the growing community.

O1. Establish land acquisition policies to promote the growth of the park system at a comparable rate to serve the growing population.

A1. Identify key pieces of land for future park and trail development

Immediate (2011-2012)

A2. Draft and adopt land acquisition policy for trail and parkland development

Short-Term (2012-2016)

O2. Provide more opportunities for review and collaboration regarding land acquisition and development.

A3. Develop a review process between Development and Parks and Recreation staff to evaluate developer-granted land

Immediate (2011-2012)

A4. Involve Park Board and Planning Commission in review of dedicated land

Immediate (2011-12)

A5. Adopt Code revisions to require/create stricter standards and implement review criteria for land dedication

Short-Term (2012-2016)

O3. Review existing recreation development fees to determine if rates are appropriate and make necessary changes as needed to ensure that the park system will properly serve the growing population.

A6. Create a separate Parkland Acquisition fund, for the sole purpose of acquiring land for parks

Immediate (2011-12)

A7. Create a new Trail Development fund, delineating funds exclusively for trails

Immediate (2011-12)

implementation

CHAPTER 7 - LAND ACQUISITION AND PARKLAND DEVELOPMENT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME	COMPLETED
A8. Stream protection policy review findings/revisions	<i>Immediate (2011-2012)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A9. Adopt Code revisions requiring the dedication of significant natural resource areas with maintenance performed by the homeowners association	<i>Immediate (2011-2012)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A10. Review findings and make revisions on the Tree Preservation Policy	<i>Immediate (2011-2012)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O5. Encourage residents to donate property for open space uses throughout the community.		
A11. Prepare brochures or explanatory handouts for distribution to property owners explaining the benefits of donating property for parks	<i>Short-Term (2012-2016)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O6. Provide adequate amenities in parks to serve the community.		
A12. "Brand the parks" by creating standards for signage, lighting and site furnishings	<i>Immediate (2011-2012)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A13. Draft and adopt policy for utility extension to parks (when deemed necessary/appropriate)	<i>Immediate (2011-2012)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O7. Follow the principles outlined in the Central Ohio Green Pact through the sustainable development of parks.		
A14. Use sustainable materials and practices in park development when feasible to do so	<i>Ongoing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A15. Encourage recycling by placing recycling containers in convenient locations in all parks and along public trails	<i>Ongoing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

implementation

CHAPTER 8 - ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

COMPLETED

G1. A Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the community.

O1. Adequate staffing levels should be maintained for all departmental functions including administrative staff, program instructors, and parkland maintenance staff.

A1. Pursue additional volunteering opportunities for youth and elderly programs

Immediate (2011-2012)

A2. Develop a plan for future staffing needs

Short-Term (2012-2016)

G2. A Parks and Recreation Department that strives to provide the best possible service to the public.

O2. Necessary training should be provided for department staff.

A3. Provide all levels of staff with necessary training to complete their jobs to the best of their ability

Ongoing

O3. A schedule of park maintenance should be outlined, prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance.

A4. Adopt policy on trail and park maintenance (plowing, clearing of debris, painting, equipment replacement, etc)

Immediate (2011-2012)

G2. The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation.

O4. Encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing a Grove City Parks Foundation.

A5. Create a park foundation portion of the website, explaining the benefits of a parks foundation

Short-Term (2012-2016)

Appendices

Chapter 2

Parks and Open Space



The Big Splash at Evans Park (3.4 acres)

2831 Southwest Blvd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Recreational trails between Brookpark Middle School and Dennis Lane

Amenities

- 4 Bike Racks
- 1 Drinking Fountain
- 1 Entry Sign
- 7 Lighting Fixtures
- 20 Picnic Tables
- 5 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- Restroom Facilities
- Volleyball Court

The Big Splash at Evans Park (3.4 acres)

2831 Southwest Blvd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a sprayground / baby pool area
- Install a shelter area



Blodwen Park (0.6 acres)

Off Blodwen Cir.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Recreational trail connects to Gantz Park

Amenities

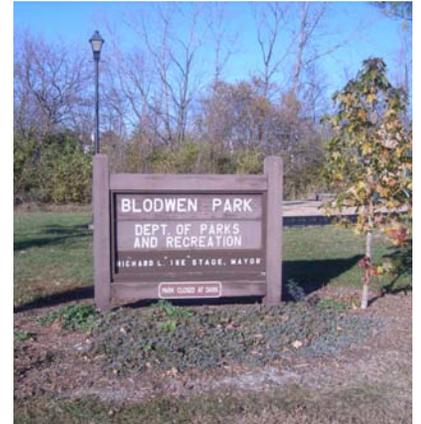
- 5 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Lighting Fixture
- 2 Picnic Tables
- 1 Piece of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter
- 1 Trash Receptacle

Blodwen Park (0.6 acres)

Off Blodwen Cir.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a charcoal grill
- Install a fence at the northwest corner of the park to delineate the park boundary



Concord Lakes Park (1.9 acres)

Off Carlotta Dr.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 1 Basketball Goal
- 1 Bench
- 2 Picnic Tables
- 3 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter
- 1 Trash Receptacle

Concord Lakes Park (1.9 acres)

Off Carlotta Dr.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install entry sign
- Install recycling containers at shelter
- Connect park to trail network (see Chapter 4)



Creed Lawless Park (0.3 acres)

Off Kingston Av.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Located on the Arbutus Avenue Bike Route between Town Center and Windsor Park

Amenities

- 4 Benches
- 1 Charcoal Grill
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Piece of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter / Gazebo
- 1 Significant Tree
- 1 Trash Receptacle

Creed Lawless Park (0.3 acres)

Off Kingston Av.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install recycling container near gazebo



Fryer Park (111.5 acres)

3899 Orders Rd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- About 1 mile of recreational trails within Park, around Rotary Lake, Discovery Frontier, and the Grove City YMCA
- Not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 8 Ball Diamonds
- 41 Benches
- 3 Bike Racks
- 1 Blue Light (Safety)
- Corn Hole
- 4 Drinking Fountains
- 2 Entry Signs
- 3 Charcoal Grills
- 3 Informational Kiosks
- 8 Lighting Fixtures
- 21 Picnic Tables
- Discovery Frontier Playground and a Small, Traditional Playground (19 pieces)
- Smaller, traditional playground
- 5 Recycling Containers
- 3 Restroom Facilities
- 2 Shelters
- 27 Significant Trees
- 38 Trash Receptacles

Fryer Park (111.5 acres)

3899 Orders Rd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install lights at the softball diamonds
- Install restrooms with running water
- Promote the wooded trails
- Create a scenic natural garden area to between the mud volleyball courts and wooded area
- Install a sprayground at Discovery Frontier
- Install a three season pavilion
- Expand acreage to the south and west
- Continue to develop Century Village
- Install an amphitheater
- Install multi-sport fields



Gantz Park (27.5 acres)

2255 Home Rd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Almost 1 mile of recreational trails within the park
- Connects to the Gantz Road sidepath and the Southpark Trails

Amenities

- 1 Basketball Goal
- 10 Benches
- 1 Bike Rack
- 12 Birdhouses
- 1 Blue Light (Safety)
- 3 Charcoal Grills
- 3 Entry Signs
- 9 Lighting Fixtures
- 2 Informational Kiosks
- 26 Picnic Tables
- 6 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Rain Garden
- 4 Recycling Containers
- 1 Restroom Facility
- 3 Shelters / Gazebos
- 69 Significant Trees
- 2 Tennis Courts
- 8 Trash Receptacles
- 1 Volleyball Net

Gantz Park (27.5 acres)

2255 Home Rd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install entrance sign at Park Ridge Drive entrance
- Repair damaged tree markings in Arboretum
- Implement the adopted Arboretum Plan



Henceroth Park (21.3 acres)

2075 Mallow Ln.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Almost 2 miles of recreational trails within the park, including wooded trails
- Connects to the Mallow Lane sidepath, leading to the Buckeye Parkway Trail

Amenities

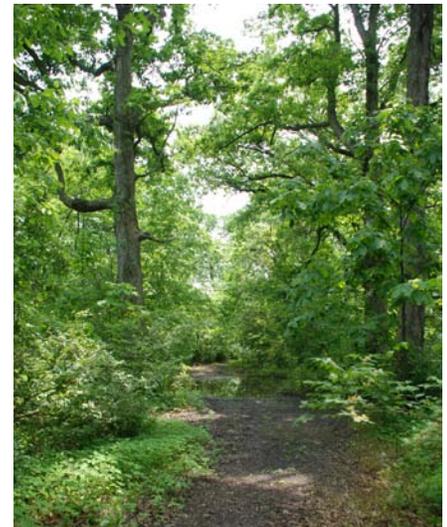
- 5 Benches
- 1 Bike Rack
- 6 Birdhouses
- 1 Butterfly Garden
- 1 Entry Sign
- 8 Pieces of Exercise Equipment
- 7 Lighting Fixtures
- 5 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Rain Garden

Henceroth Park (21.3 acres)

2075 Mallow Ln.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote the “green” features of the park
- Install a shelter with picnic tables and a grill
- Install recycling containers



Hoover Park (6.0 acres)

Off Haughn Rd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Almost 1/2 mile of recreational trails around scenic pond
- Connects to the Haughn Road sidepath

Amenities

- 3 Benches
- 2 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 2 Trash Receptacles

Hoover Park (6.0 acres)

Off Haughn Rd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install entry signs at both the entrance off Haughn Road and Windrow Drive
- Acquire property on Haughn Road to expand the park and improve visibility



Indian Trails Park (3.8 acres)

Off Buckeye Pkwy.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- More than ¼ mile of recreational trails within the park
- Located along the Buckeye Parkway sidepath

Amenities

- 2 Basketball Goals
- 2 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Charcoal Grill
- 1 Picnic Table
- 3 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter
- 2 Trash Receptacle

Indian Trails Park (3.8 acres)

Off Buckeye Pkwy.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a path to Grant Run, with educational signage about the natural area and benches for resting



Keller Farms (5.5 acres)

Off White Road



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Located along the White Road sidepath

Amenities

- 1 Basketball Goal
- 3 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 2 Picnic Tables
- 2 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter

Keller Farms (5.5 acres)

Off White Road

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the natural corridor in the park
- Clean the existing informal trails through the natural areas
- Install signage at the Michelle Court entrance



Meadow Grove (9.5 acres)

Off Springhill Dr.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 2 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Picnic Table
- 3 Pieces of Playground
- 1 Shelter
- 1 Trash Receptacle

Meadow Grove (9.5 acres)

Off Springhill Dr.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a larger shelter with more picnic tables and a grill and recycling containers
- Install a bridge across Grant Run, connecting the southern portion of the park to the northern portion
- Install a trail to and along Grant Run
- Preserve the southern portion of the park as a passive recreation area, with benches and a walking path



Scioto Meadows (1.5 acres)

Off Scioto Meadows Blvd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 1 Basketball Goal
- 2 Benches
- 1 Drinking Fountain
- 2 Picnic Tables
- 1 Piece of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter
- 1 Trash Receptacle

Scioto Meadows (1.5 acres)

Off Scioto Meadows Blvd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install trees along the western park boundary
- Install lighting near the playground area
- Install park signage



Sesquicentennial Park (1.0 ACRES)

Off Park St.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 2 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Lighting Fixture

Sesquicentennial Park (1.0 acres)

Off Park St.

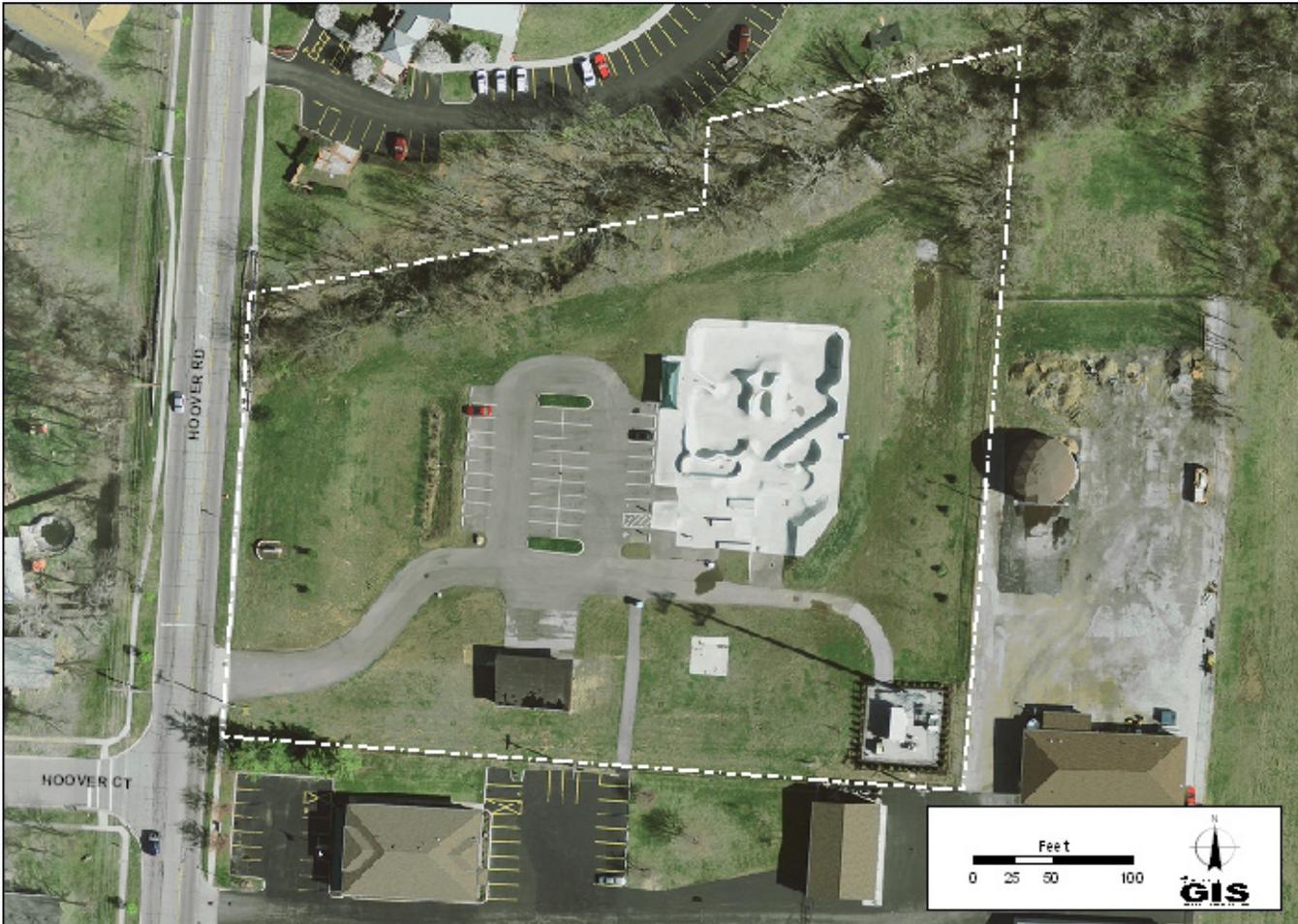
PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain the existing passive character of the park



The Skate Park (4.0 acres)

3728 Hoover Rd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

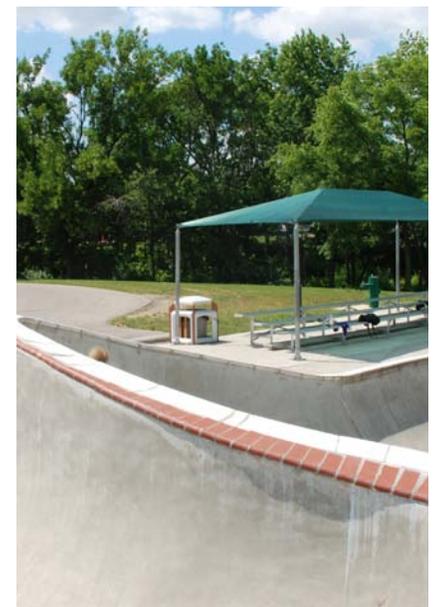
- 1 Bench
- 2 Bike Racks
- 1 Blue Light (Safety)
- 1 Drinking Fountain
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Informational Kiosk
- 2 Recycling Containers
- 1 Restroom Facility (Portable)
- 3 Trash Receptacles

The Skate Park (4.0 acres)

3728 Hoover Rd.

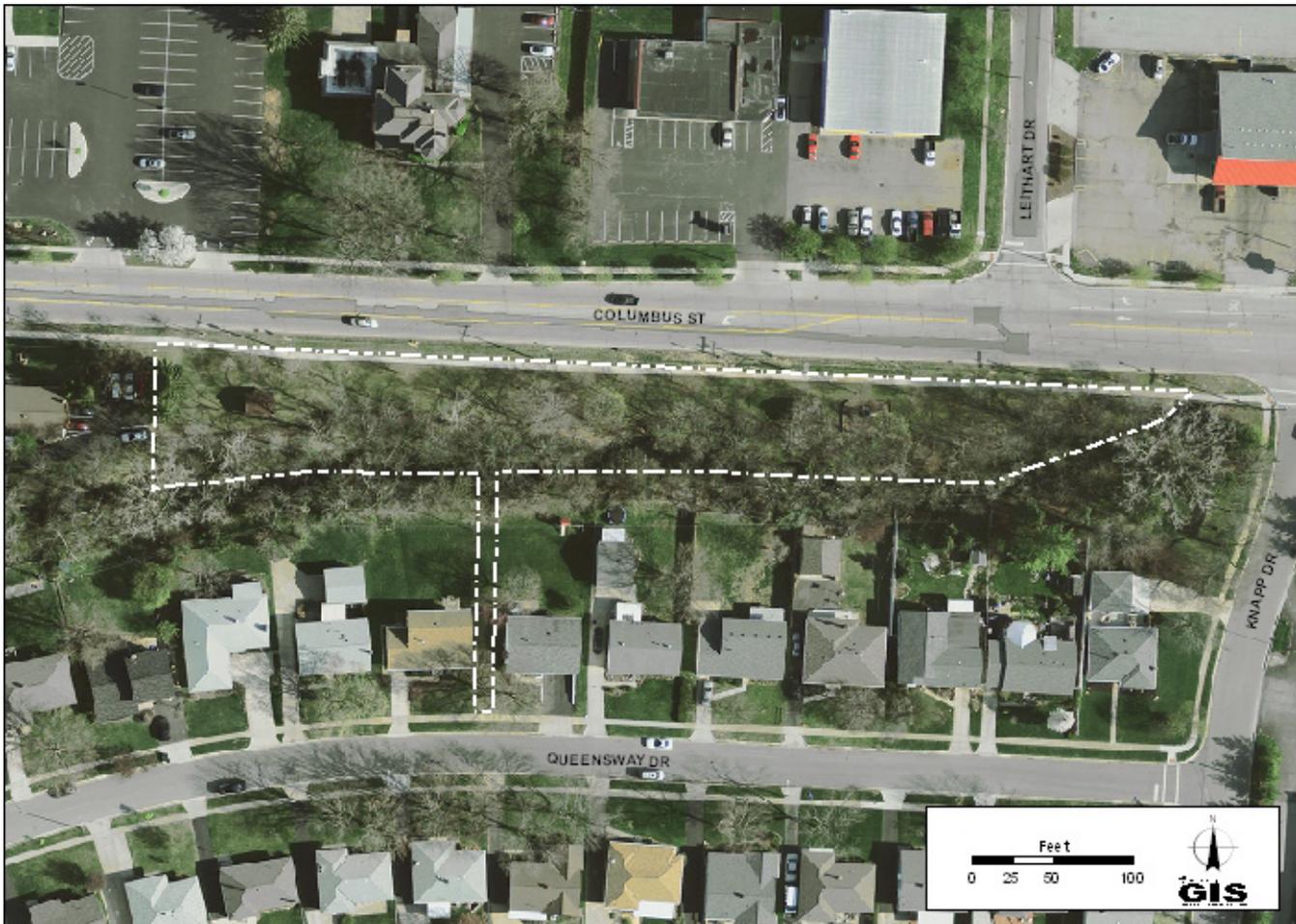
PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install permanent restroom facilities
- Install a shelter area



Swearingen Park (1.0 acres)

Off Columbus St.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

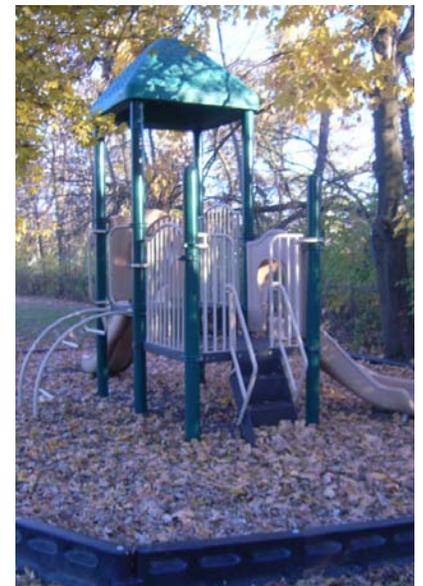
- 1 Entry Sign
- 2 Charcoal Grills
- 4 Picnic Tables
- 1 Piece of Playground Equipment
- 2 Shelters
- 2 Trash Receptacles

Swearingen Park (1.0 acres)

Off Columbus St.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reclaim the city's property fronting Queensway Drive connecting to the park
- Install a bridge over Republican Run to access the park from the south
- Install public art within the park



Walden Bluff Park (1.8 acres)

Off Walden Bluff Ct.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 1 Basketball Goal
- 1 Entry Sign
- 2 Lighting Fixtures
- 2 Pieces of Playground Equipment

Walden Bluff Park (1.8 acres)

Off Walden Bluff Ct.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install a trail through the south and southwest portion of the park connected to the trail network
- Install a shelter and picnic tables
- Install new playground equipment



Westgrove Park (5.7 acres)

Off Southwest Blvd.



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- About 1/3 mile of recreational trails within the park
- Currently not connected to the bikeway network

Amenities

- 2 Basketball Goals
- 4 Benches
- 1 Entry Sign
- 1 Charcoal Grill
- 2 Lighting Fixtures
- 4 Picnic Tables
- 3 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 1 Shelter
- 4 Trash Receptacles

Westgrove Park (5.7 acres)

Off Southwest Blvd.

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Install recycling containers at the shelter
- Install an entrance sign at the parking area off Red Oak Street
- Install drinking fountain
- Extend the walking trail around the perimeter of the park



Windsor Park (34.0 acres)

4414 Broadway



EXISTING SITE INVENTORY

Bikeway / Trail Connectivity

- More than 1 mile of recreational trails within the park
- Connects to the Town Center Trail through a series of bike routes and bicycle boulevards

Amenities

- 11 Ball Diamonds
- 1 Basketball Goal
- 6 Benches
- 2 Bike Racks
- 1 Blue Light (Safety)
- 3 Drinking Fountains
- 1 Entry Sign
- 3 Charcoal Grills
- 1 Informational Kiosk
- 31 Lighting Fixtures
- 20 Picnic Tables
- 4 Pieces of Playground Equipment
- 4 Recycling Containers
- 2 Shelters
- 6 Significant Trees
- 4 Tennis Courts
- 36 Trash Receptacles

Windsor Park (34.0 acres)

4414 Broadway

PRELIMINARY SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep the public informed of development on park addition off of Broadway
 - Redevelop parking areas
 - Install a miracle field / all access field
 - Install a three season pavilion
 - Continue to acquire property on Ventura Blvd. as it becomes available
-
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Appendices
Chapter 4
Trails & Connectivity



Funding & Grant Opportunities

The Parks and Recreation Department aims to deliver the most cost-effective trail system for Grove City without compromising the quality of the network. It is anticipated that the development of a complete trail system for Grove City will be funded through several mechanisms, including local funding sources and federal funding programs.

The following table shows the costs associated with typical trail construction costs per mile for projects awarded from 2003-2006, according to the Ohio Department of Transportation's Division of Transportation Systems Development.

Trail Type	Cost per Mile
Shared Use/Multi-Use Paths	\$470,958 / mile
Paved Shoulders (Bike Lanes)	\$181,730 / mile both sides of road
Bridges (tend to be 0.3 miles or less)	\$1,080,786 / quarter mile

Local Funding Sources

Partnerships: Partnerships with other public authorities, educational institutions, or private entities could include joint fundraising efforts, joint construction, or joint facility usage and maintenance.

Adopt A Trail Program: This donation seeking program can be used for construction improvements to trails or maintenance of a different portions of a trail. This program can be attractive to businesses, individuals, or organization that are located near or along a trail.

Business Sponsorships/Donations: Similar to "Adopt a Trail"; individual businesses or groups or local businesses may sponsor improvements and/or programs or maintenance through donations to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Establishment of a Parks & Recreation Foundation: Establishing a Parks & Recreation Foundation for supporters of the department and its efforts will likely facilitate donations and community involvement for years to come.

Funding & Grant Opportunities

Federal & State Allocated Funds

Current federal surface transportation law provides flexibility to states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) to fund projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation and the majority of transportation funding programs can be used to benefit bicycle and pedestrian related projects. Grove City should strive to work closely with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to find the appropriate funding sources for the development of its trail system, even if it not a transportation specific fund. Developing a complete trail system for Grove City is a project that could meet the goals and be eligible for the following funds:

Clean Ohio Fund

The Clean Ohio Trails Fund is intended to improve outdoor recreational opportunities for Ohioans by funding trails. Up to 75% matching state funds are reimbursed under Clean Ohio Trails Fund. All projects must be completed within 15 months from the date that they are signed into contract. Eligible projects include land acquisition for a trail, trail development, trailhead facilities, engineering and design.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

CMAQ projects must demonstrate reductions in emissions of transportation related pollutants.

Nature Work Grant (ODNR)

These grants can provide 75% reimbursement grants (state funded) for acquisition, development, or rehabilitation of public park and recreation areas. The agency must have proper control through a title or at least a 15 year non-revocable lease to be eligible for a development of rehabilitation grant

Recreational Trails Program (ODNR)

This matching federal fund can provide up to 80% reimbursement for projects that include development of urban trail linkages, trail head and trailside facilities, maintenance of existing trails, restoration of trail areas damaged by usage, improving access for people with disabilities, acquisition of easements and property, development and construction of new trails, purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment, environment and safety education programs related to trails.

Safe Routes to School Program

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state and local effort to enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school - and to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing. Local and regional governments, schools and community non-profit organizations ready, willing and able to implement SRTS initiatives are eligible to apply for funding. Funding is reimbursable and may be awarded at 100%. Ohio requires communities to develop a School Travel Plan.

Funding & Grant Opportunities

Federal & State Allocated Funds

State and Local Capital Improvements Program

State Capital Improvements Program funds or Local Transportation Improvements Program funds can be applied for through the communities District Public Works Integrating Committee (DPWIC). After evaluating and scoring the projects, the DPWIC creates a list of high priority projects that is submitted to the Ohio Public Works Commission. The Commission reviews the project selection and evaluation methodology used by the DPWIC to ensure fair and objective decision-making. Then, each application is reviewed for completeness and project eligibility. After all requirements are met on the district level and the application is approved, a formal agreement is issued by the Ohio Public Works Commission to the individual subdivision. The Commission's staff maintains ongoing contact with local communities, providing technical assistance through the project's completion.

Transportation Enhancements (TE)

Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities are federally funded community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure. TE projects must meet one of 12 eligible activities and must relate to surface transportation. For example, projects can include creation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscape improvements, refurbishment of historic transportation facilities, and other investments that enhance communities and access

Most funding programs require a local dollar match and it is encouraged that the city provide above the minimum 20% required amount and pair other funding sources in order for a local government to be competitive.

Funding programs are administered by several agencies including the Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Public Works Commission, Ohio Department of Development, regional MPOs, regional transit authorities, and Housing and Urban Development entitlement Cities & Counties.

Design Standards

General design guidelines for trails and other bikeways have been set forth by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTC), and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), and utilized by existing networks throughout central Ohio.

Design standards vary greatly based on the type of bikeway proposed and the road on or next to which the trail will be designed. The anticipated user and purpose must also be considered when designing a bikeway either on road or off road. Transportation based bikeways will have very different design standards than recreational bikeways. Below, design standards have been categorized based on being on-road (shared roadway) or off-road (multi-use path) facilities.

Shared Roadways

Bike Lane:

The minimum bike lane width is 4 feet on open shoulders and 5 feet from the face of a curb, guardrail, or parked cars. Bike lanes should be 4'–6' wide when adjacent to a curb edge, and 5'–6' when adjacent to on-street parking. Bike Lanes are generally constructed next to two-lane roadways with 20-22-foot-wide pavement without existing paved shoulders. Typically, traffic volumes and speeds are high and the road is frequently used by bicyclists, or is a needed corridor for area bicyclists. Bike lanes work best where intersections and turning traffic is infrequent.



High Volume Roadways

On roads where there is a high volume of traffic, bicycle lanes should be marked and signed. The width of the bicycle lane should appropriately reflect the volume and speed of the vehicles using the roadway.

Moderate Volume Roadway

On roadway with moderate traffic volume, such as neighborhood collectors, bicycle lanes are located between the curb and the travel lane with a planting strip that separates the bicycle lane and the sidewalk. The illustration to the right shows a typical bicycle accommodation in urbanized areas with a 60-foot Right-Of-Way and a 44-foot travel area for traffic. Bicycle lanes are usually five or six feet wide with 11 or 12 foot travel lanes.

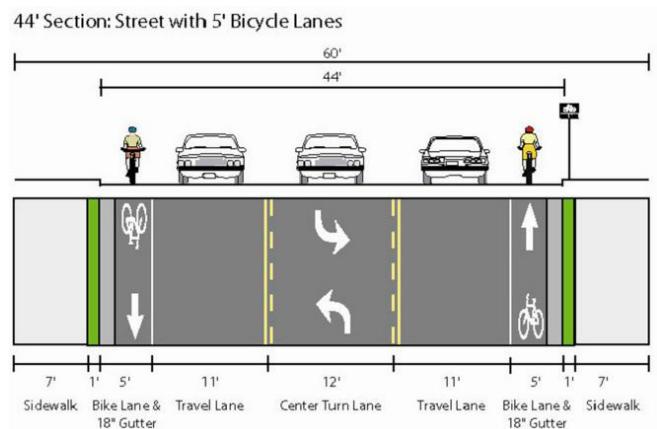


Image from the Columbus Bicentennial Bike Plan

Design Standards

Shared Roadways

Signed, Shared Roadway (Bicycle Route):

On roadways with low traffic volume, such as neighborhood residential streets within subdivisions, bicyclists can usually be accommodated on these roadways through bicycle route signage, occasional traffic calming to slow traffic, and intersection improvements where low-volume roadways intersect high-volume roadways.

In terms of placement, route signs should consistently be located at every turn, after every major signalized intersection, or every quarter-mile. Signage along straight portions of routes should use a single panel, simply showing a bicycle symbol and destination. Signage where routes intersect should include panel signs that provide cyclists with destination, direction and distance. This signage system offers less sign clutter, lower costs, and greater clarity at locations with multiple bike routes.

Bicycle Boulevard:

Bicycle Boulevards tend to be residential streets with lower traffic volumes, typically between 3000 to 5000 average daily vehicles, but can include secondary commercial streets. They typically lack a center line, and have designated speed limits of 25 mph. Signage should be colored with commonly used bikeway signage such as purple or green and should be retroreflective. Supplemental arrows may be used to indicate approaching turns, and the installation of markings just after each intersection in intervals of approximately 200 feet is recommended. Size of marking can range from 12-24 inches to 30 feet by 6 feet.

Shared Lane (Sharrow):

The primary purpose of the Shared Lane Marking (sharrows) is to provide guidance to bicyclists on roadways that are too narrow to be striped for bicycle lane designation, as well as, to alert motorists of the amount of lane space a cyclist will potentially occupy.

“Sharrows” should be 9’ in length and 4’ from any on-street parking. Sharrows should be spaced approximately 250’ center to center, with the first marking on each block or roadway segment placed immediately after the nearest intersection. On long blocks, supplemental markings may be necessary.

Shared Lane Markings are designed to reduce the likelihood of a cyclist colliding with an open car door of a vehicle parked on-street. Shared Lane Markings are appropriate on streets that are too narrow for striped bicycle lanes, areas that experience a high level of “wrong-way” riding, and streets that have moderate to high parking turnover, typically commercial areas.

Shared Roadways on Rural Roads

Paved shoulders are required to be a minimum of 4’ wide, and are built as part of the roadway rather than a place for cyclists to ride, though they may serve the same purpose as a bike lane.

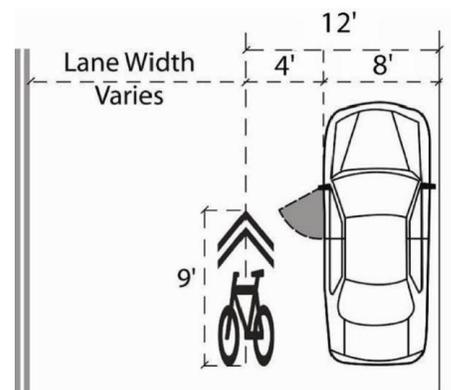


Image from the Columbus Bicentennial Bike Plan

Design Standards

Multi-Use Paths

Recreational Trail:

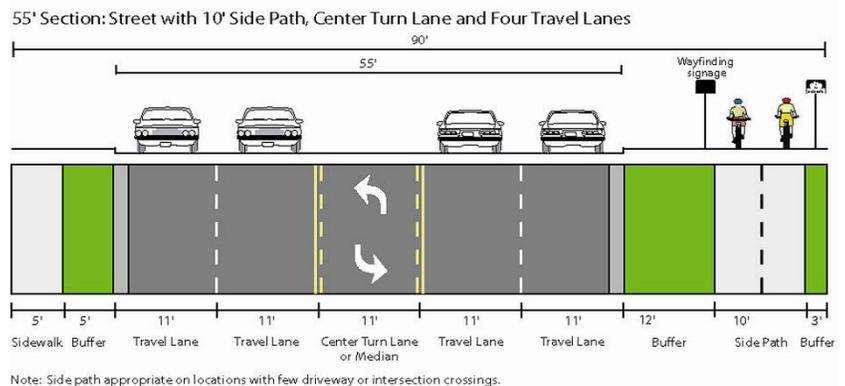
Recreational Trails are 10-12 feet wide paved trails typically located along a natural waterway or wooded region, independent from the road network. Recreational trails are intended for multiple travel methods such as bicycle traffic, walkers, joggers, skaters, and other recreational users. The path is usually divided with a marked center line to encourage two-way traffic flow. These trails allow those who wish to travel at higher speeds over long distances to do so, primarily for recreational purposes. A buffer of at least three (3) feet should be provided on either side of the trail, to be clear of structures and vegetation for the comfort and maneuvering of users on the path. A vertical clearance of at least eight (8) feet should be provided.



The Central Ohio Greenways Signage Program presents thoroughly detailed design guidelines for greenway signage. Facilities connecting to these regional greenways and trails should feature a hybridized system combining on-street route signs with the Central Ohio Greenways Signage Program. This system should encourage safe use of trails for recreational as well as functional bicycling trip-purposes, with amenities like informational kiosks.

Sidepath:

Sidepaths are built roughly parallel to roadways in the usual location for sidewalks and are designed for shared use. Sidepaths should be a minimum of 8 feet wide with a landscape buffer of at least five feet from the roadway. The width of the buffer should increase as the width of the roadway and speed of traffic increases. The sidepath should be installed at wider widths if the right-of-way permits.



Complete Streets

Complete streets are roadways designed to accommodate all users, not just motorists. Complete streets are safe for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit vehicles. They are also designed to be safe for users of all ages and abilities and do not favor one mode of transportation over the other. In April 2010 the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) adopted a regional Complete Streets Policy to ensure that every roadway user can travel safely and comfortably and that sustainable transportation options are available to everyone. Additional requirements include working with nearby jurisdictions, tying in nearby destinations with access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and providing the opportunity for infrastructure to accommodate future growth. Any proposed roadway project that will use federal funds allocated through MORPC must adhere to the Complete Streets policy.

While all new roads in Grove City will not need to meet these standards, it is important to keep them in mind when designing new roads. For example, all roadways are not necessarily appropriate for a bike lane and would instead utilize another form of bikeway such as a sidepath, sharrow, or a wider outside lane. Also, roadways that will not likely be the future route for public transit would not need to be designed to accommodate transit traffic.

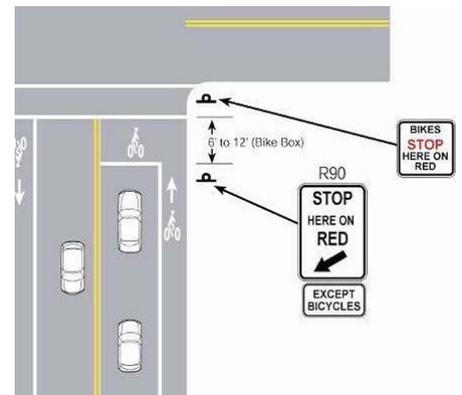
Design Standards

Intersections & Crossings

Intersection treatments can help bicyclists and pedestrians travel through intersections and alert motorists of their presence. Good intersection design will alert motorists to bicyclists, indicates to motorists and bicyclists where bicyclists may ride, and guides bicyclists through intersections.

Bike Box:

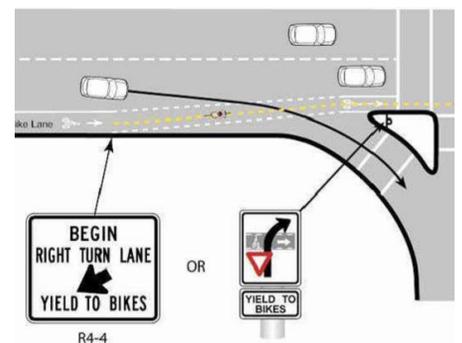
Bike Boxes are relatively simple solutions to improve turning movements for bicyclists without requiring cyclists to merge into traffic to reach the turn lane or for pedestrians to access a crosswalk. They are created by pulling the stop line for vehicles back from the intersection, and adding a stop line for bicyclists immediately behind the crosswalk. When a traffic signal is red, bicyclists can move into this “box” ahead of the cars to become more visible to cars. The most appropriate use for a Bike Box are at intersections with a high volume of both bicycle and motor vehicle traffic, intersections with a number of turning movements by cyclists and motorists, and instances where right turns are prohibited at red lights.



Images from the Columbus Bicentennial Bike Plan

Free Right Turns with Porkchop Islands:

Many arterial intersections are designed with free right-turn lanes at each corner, separated from the through lanes by triangular cement “pork chop” islands. While this “pork chop” configuration can provide an area for safe pedestrian refuge, they present difficulties for bicyclists. Bike lane striping is typically dropped approaching the right-turn lane; creating difficulty for bicyclists traveling straight who need to merge left across the right-turn lane in order to position themselves along the right side of the through lane. Bicyclists may wait until too late to merge, which can cause conflicts because of the wider turn radius and relatively higher turning speeds afforded by the free right configuration. Also, the pork chop island provides no space for bicyclists waiting to precede straight, as the concrete island, if not well designed, cuts off the normally available shoulder width. The following illustration shows how a dashed bike channel through the merge zone and along the right side of the through lane can help guide bicyclists and alert motorists. In order to provide a reasonable width for such a bike channel, it is likely that the right through lane will need to be narrowed.



Freeway on/off Ramps:

Freeway on and off-ramps present a point of conflict for bicyclists. Since bike lanes are dropped—cyclists must merge across travel lanes where vehicles are accelerating or decelerating from their freeway speeds. A marked bike channel as the one prescribed for ‘porkchop’ islands will guide cyclists and alert motorists in order to allow cyclists the proper chance to gain positioning in the through lane well before the mouth of the ramp.

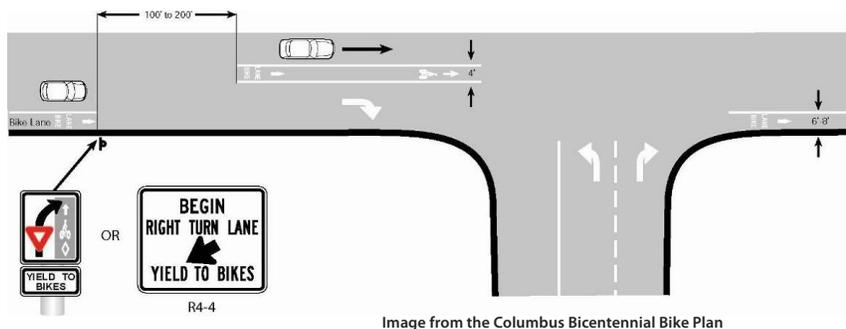
I-71/SR 665 Interchange

The reconfiguration of the I-71 / SR 665 interchange into a Single Point Urban Interchange will include the construction of a sidepath on the south side of the overpass “deck.”

Intersections & Crossings

Right-Turn Only Lanes:

Right-turn only lanes present challenges for bicyclists traveling through an intersection. It is often the case that bike lanes are striped on the right side of the right-turn only lanes, creating a direct conflict with a right turning vehicle. The correct treatment for right-turn only lanes is to drop the bike lane entirely as it approaches the right-turn only lane, or to offer a bike lane pocket between the right-turn only lane and the right-most through lane.



Signaling:

Another potential solution to create friendly intersections is the use of signaling. Signaling could be improved by customizing signal timing for a designated crossing, calibrating loop detectors for bicycles rather than automobiles, and camera detection. These methods make it easier are all achievable and offer a more customized treatment to a roadway or trail by operating according to the level of traffic and use. While camera detection and signal timing is self explanatory, the use of calibrated loop detectors is the simple manipulation of existing motor vehicle detectors. These can be installed within the roadway to identify the metal of a motor vehicle or calibrated in order to detect bicycles instead of cars. When using loop detectors as an intersection treatment, OMUTCD standards recommend that signaling be combined with markings and signage to indicate the location where cyclists should position themselves in order to activate a signal.

Design Standards

Additional Design Guidelines

Bicycle Stairs:

Bicycle stairs are appropriate where slopes are too steep for a cyclist to ascend comfortably. Bicycle stairs allow the user to walk up the stairs, while rolling their bike next to them on the adjacent ramp.

Curbing:

Trails should incorporate good curb design to ensure quality trails. Drop curb cuts are used to provide a smooth transition between bike paths and roadway. Straight curbs are preferred to a combined curb and gutter since the combined option will often experience uneven settlement of pavement, which leads to uneven trail surfaces.

Markings:

Common marking types for trails include pavement markings, curb markings, object markers, colored pavements, and barricades. Markings are often used to supplement other traffic control devices such as signs, signals and other markings, although markings can be used independently to convey regulations, guidance, or warnings.

Pavement markings can enhance roadway delineation with the addition of audible and tactile features such as differential surface profiles, raised pavement markers, or other devices intended to alert the road user of the changes in the trail or roadway. Standards set forth by OMUTCD require any markings that must be visible at night must be retroreflective to ensure the markings are visible.

When relying on markings to guide trail or roadway traffic, proper maintenance is a vital component to maintain their effectiveness, especially in the case of painted markings. Proper and consistent debris (snow, leaves, water, dirt, etc) removal is necessary to ensure visibility of markings. Marking durability is also subject to inevitable 'wear and tear' due to traffic volumes, weather, and location. Therefore, markings should be maintained to reduce the lack of visibility due to fading.

Parking (Short term):

Short term bicycle parking facilities, bike racks, are best used to accommodate those cyclists that are expected to depart within two hours after parking their bicycle. Bicycle racks should be located in highly visible areas near the entrance to the destination to increase awareness and provide convenient access for cyclists. It is most common for bicycle racks to be located at schools, commercial locations, and activity centers such as parks, libraries, and retail locations; however as the popularity and cycling grows, bicycle racks are becoming more prevalent at work locations throughout the community. There are currently no standards for bicycle parking in Grove City; however development plans are recommended to include the location and design of all proposed bicycle parking facilities.

Bike racks need adequate room for cyclists to maneuver in and out of the bike parking area without disturbing bicycles already parked. If multiple bicycle racks are located together with an aisle between them, the aisle should be between 48" and 72" apart, depending on the amount of traffic the racks are expected to generate. The amount of space dedicated to the bike rack will vary based on the dimensions of the bike rack, but generally, 24 square feet of paved area should be devoted for every bike stall. All racks should not impede the movement of pedestrians or traffic and should be at least 2.5 feet from any adjacent walkways.



Design Standards

Additional Design Guidelines

Parking (Long term):

Long Term bicycle parking facilities, bike lockers, accommodate cyclists expected to park their bicycles for more than two hours. Bike lockers offer cyclists the option to store their bikes in an enclosed area for increased security and protection against the elements. Lockers can be controlled with traditional key systems or through a subscription system, in instances where a particular cyclist will consistently travel to that destination and use the locker.

Grove City currently has bike lockers at the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) "Parks and Ride" station at Stringtown Road and Parkmead Drive. Bike lockers are approximately three feet wide, 6.6 feet wide and four feet tall and are able to accommodate most types of bicycles.



Storm Water Grates:

Development of a complete trail system must consider adequate spacing and design for safe storm water grates. Bicycle-safe drainage grates should have slats with only 1 inch widths and should be transverse to the direction of traffic or set at a 45 degree angle to the direction of the traffic on that road.

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Grove City is home to a variety of bikeways; however the system lacks connectivity in some areas. In order to ensure that all residents have a number of safe transportation options, a number of roads have been examined as the site of future bikeways. For the analysis, roads have been categorized into three levels based on the level of recommended rider.

Roads ranked “A” are only recommended for advanced riders. These roads have heavier traffic, high speeds, and other factors that make the road unsafe for riders with less experience.

Roads ranked “B” are safe for beginner or novice riders. These roads would be comfortable and safe for casual cyclists who are not as comfortable riding with a lot of vehicular traffic.

Roads ranked “C” are safe for children. Only roads with low vehicular traffic and slow speeds are given this ranking

Andover Strait.



Children and beginners should feel safe in this residential environment with low traffic and not much, if any— on street parking. This street would benefit from the installation of bicycle route signage considering the frequency of children playing in the neighborhood. Also, this street could potentially be the target for a multi-purpose (recreational trail) or (sidepath) that cuts through Casa Blvd to the north and connect the Windsor Park existing trails, while also connecting the Haughn Road Trail.

Rating: C

Carlotta St.



Carlotta Street is a residential street that provides neighborhood connectivity to residents of the Concord Lakes and Elginfield subdivisions. It is a typical residential street with two travel lanes, slim shoulders, and a speed limit of 25 mph, which makes it a relatively safe street for cyclists of all skill levels. This road feeds into Lake Mead Drive, which connects to the Southwest Boulevard & Big Run South Road intersection. A simple and effective way to enhance Carlotta Street is to take advantage of its connection with Lake Mead Drive, and install bicycle route signage to alert motorists and enhance safety for cyclists all skill levels.

Rating: C

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Demorest Rd.

Demorest Road connects Grove City Road to the south and Southwest Boulevard to the north. The subdivisions of Concord Lakes, West Grove, and Elginfield are accessible by Demorest Road. The traffic volume is relatively high with a speed limit of 35 mph. There is no paved shoulder on this road, which suggests that only advanced cyclists should travel on Demorest Rd. However, there is significant space to seek an easement on the western side of Demorest Rd, in order to widen the existing sidewalk which currently separates the residential lots from their mailboxes and form it into a multi-use side path. There is also room to widen the road in order to add a bike lane that could connect to Southwest Boulevard's current bike lane, or be used to add a signed sharrow. This road can enhance connectivity for residents living near Tanglebrook Park, Concord Lakes Park, Westgrove Park, and the Central Crossing High School.

Rating: A



Demorest Rd. at Tanglebrook Park

This portion of Demorest Road near Tanglebrook Park is a typical residential street that contains a landscaped median with street lights that provide a well lit environment for cyclists. The existing park provides increased pedestrian traffic, especially children. The entrance/exit onto Grove City Road presents a point of conflict with an increased traffic volume and higher traveling speeds. Therefore, the installation of a stop sign, with increased bicycle route signage and a marked crosswalk would regulate automobile traffic and alert motorists of bicycle traffic.

Rating: B



Dennis Ln.

Dennis Lane experiences cut through traffic for those residents traveling to Richard Avenue Elementary School and Brookpark Middle School. Dennis Lane also connects to La Rosa Drive to the south and Sonora Drive to the east. Dennis Lane does not have much on-street parking, nor does it have any curbside mailboxes. This combination creates potential for the widening of a sidewalk into a sidepath. However, installation of bicycle route signage and street markings could adequately serve the duty of alerting motorists and cyclists to share the road.

Rating: A



Potential Bikeway Expansion

Dunmann Way

Many young walkers, joggers, dog walkers, and cyclists use this road. The installation of bicycle route signage would connect the southernmost point of Longridge Way to the existing Hoover Rd Trail and Haughn Road Trails. This improvement would equip this residential area with an effective trail system for cyclists and pedestrians to enhance the existing bikeway network.

Rating: B

Gunderman Ave.

Gunderman Avenue is unique since there are no sidewalks or on-street mailboxes, yet many students use this road to travel home from school. Therefore, adding a multi-use sidepath could serve as an off-street secluded path for central Grove City. However, buildings/homes setbacks seem rather short, therefore—the installation of bicycle route signs to alert motorists and offer direction for cyclists would benefit this streets cycling capacity. The low traffic volume makes this street a nice path for children and beginners to travel.

Rating: C



Hoover Crossing Way

Since many high school students use this road to travel to and from school and there is a lack of space to add an off-street path, increased bicycle route signage would provide connection for Hoover Crossing Way into both Longridge Way and Dunmann Way in order to create a complete bicycle route for students of the nearby high schools and neighborhood residents.

Rating: C



Kingston Ave.

Kingston Avenue experiences a moderate to high volume of traffic. Even though the speed limit is 35 mph, automobiles frequently travel over this limit. Marking a sharrow on this road would alert motorists to the presence of cyclists in the roadway and of the existing bike routes in this area stemming north from Windsor Park. Aside from the possibility of a sharrow, the installation of additional signage will be necessary to make cyclists and motorists aware of the preferred routes for bicycles.

Rating: A

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Kingston Ave (East).

The eastern portion of Kingston Avenue has two through lanes, with one left hand turning lane which connects to Haughn Rd. This portion of Kingston Ave. experiences heavy to moderate traffic levels. Children or beginners should not travel this road, however many students are known to walk along this road after school. Given the high volume of students who use this road and that Kingston Avenue creates a vital connection between Hoover Road and Haughn Road, this road is a good target for increased bicycle safety by installing bicycle route signage, and color marking existing cross walks. Due to the heavier traffic, a marked sharrow or widening of the existing sidewalk to create a sidepath would provide congestion free traffic to path users.

Rating: A

La Rosa Dr.

La Rosa Drive has a curvy design that impairs visibility, which suggests that young children should refrain from using this road. Increased signage would help here, along with street markings. While the lack of space makes a signed shared roadway the optimal choice, there may be enough room to widen the existing sidewalk to create a multi-use sidepath. Heavy bicycle route signage that would improve safety for cyclists and awareness for motorists.

Rating: A



Lake Mead Dr.

Lake Mead Drive is a residential street that provides neighborhood connectivity as well as access to Holt Road. Lake Mead Drive provides two through lanes for traffic with a speed limit of 25 mph. The southern portion of this road is a typical residential street that serves as a safe street for cyclists of all skill levels. However, Lake Mead Drive feeds into the Southwest Boulevard and Big Run South Road intersection, where a high volume of traffic traveling at higher speeds is present. This increase in traffic flow, coupled with the lack of shoulder width decreases the level of safety for cyclists. This road is vital for students attending Central Crossing High School or Holt Crossing Intermediate, as well as, residents attending the South Western Career Academy.

This streets safety and connectivity could be enhanced by installing bicycle route signage, as well as, a marked crosswalk for riders to safely cross Southwest Boulevard to access the Southwest Boulevard sidepath located across the street.

Rating: B



Potential Bikeway Expansion

Larchemere Dr



Larchemere Drive is a typical residential street that provides neighborhood connectivity to residents of Elginfield and Concord Lakes. This street runs through well lit subdivisions, Concord Lakes and Elginfield with two travel lanes consisting of slim shoulders and a speed limit of 25 mph. While the greater portion of Larchemere Drive is safe for all levels of cyclists, the access point from Grove City Road is less safe due to an increased level of traffic and higher speed limits on this road. Given that Larchemere Drive connects this subdivision from east to west and north to south, installing signage indicating a bicycle route would enhance alertness and safety for both cyclists and motorists. While Grove City Road would require much more attention and alterations to widen and designate as a road for shared use, it could serve to connect the subdivisions to the west and north with the southern portion of Grove City.

Rating: B

Longridge Way

Longridge Way is a typical residential street that intersects with Haughn Road and is used heavily by students traveling to and from school. Children should feel safe in this residential neighborhood, but also should be accompanied by adults or those with experience when approaching Haughn Rd. Longridge Way can better serve cyclists and motorists with the installation of bicycle route signage. Also, there is potential to connect to the existing Hoover Road Trail, as well as to Lori's Way near Orders Road by building a multi-use (off-street) sidepath.

Rating: C

Lotz Dr



There are no sidewalks or on-street mailboxes on Lotz Drive, which is located to the east of Broadway Avenue near the Town Center (easement), yet many students use this street to walk home from school. Therefore a multi-use sidepath (off-street) that utilizes the area where the mailbox is traditionally placed could connect existing bike routes that stem from Windsor Park area to the bike route that travels south near Richard Ave. This road is also lightly traveled enough by motorists to make it a safe designated bike route.

Rating: C

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Magnolia St.

Magnolia Street is a typical residential street that serves residents of the West Grove subdivision. Magnolia Street is safe for all levels of cyclist until the street meets Southwest Boulevard. Increased bicycle route signage should be installed to connect Carlotta Street, Larchemere Drive, Sequoia, and Lake Mead Drive. Also, Magnolia Street could enhance the greater trail system by connecting via marked/colored crosswalk to the existing Southwest Boulevard sidepath. This could potentially connect to Tamarack Avenue, and eventually lead to the extension of sidepath from Southwest Boulevard to expand the existing sidewalk on Demorest Road by seeking easements from the residents of Demorest Road who have excess sidewalk buffers.

Rating: C



Meadow Grove Dr.

This road could be improved for cyclists with the addition of bicycle route signage. It would serve as a connecting route to the trails at Henceroth Park, and Holton Road Trail—and as a point along a future connection from Hoover Rd Trail and Buckeye Parkway Trail by using Springhill Rd and Stargrass Avenue.

Rating: C



Park St

Park Street has an ample amount of lined, on-street parking approaching the intersection at Broadway from the east and west. Due to the presence of rear alley ways, heading west on Park St, there are spans of land that lack sidewalks and driveway curb cuts. Since Park Street is located in Town Center, where there are existing signed bicycle routes, the installation of additional signage for bicycle routes would enhance this street. Park Street, both west and east of Broadway could be marked with a sharrow due to the high frequency of on-street parking and limited right-of-way.

Rating: B



Quail Run Dr.

Quail Run Drive is a typical residential street that could benefit from the installation of bicycle route signage that indicates sharing of the roadway to motorists and cyclists to deter cyclists from riding on the pedestrian sidewalks. This increased signage would also serve to identify a bicycle route that could connect the Holton Road Trail, Henceroth Park trails, Meadow Grove Park, and Buckeye Parkway Trail.

Rating: C

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Richard Ave.



Richard Avenue is a typical residential street that is located near an elementary school. Even though this road is in a school zone, it is also an important connection between Columbus Street or Southwest Blvd, making it more of a target road to enhance connectivity and safety for cyclists. The high level of automobile traffic and inevitable pedestrian traffic traveling to and from the school would be better served if more bicycle route signage is installed, along with colored or heavily marked crosswalks.

Rating: A



Rising Sun Dr.

Rising Sun Drive is a typical residential street that could benefit from the installation of bicycle route signage that indicates sharing of the roadway to motorists and cyclists in order to deter cyclists from riding on the pedestrian sidewalks. This increased signage would also serve to identify an alternate bicycle route that could connect London Groveport Road and the Buckeye Parkway Trail.

Rating: C



River Trail Drive

River Trail Drive is lightly traveled to be designated as a safe signed shared roadway, and could connect residents in the Indian Trails subdivision east of Buckeye Parkway to the Buckeye Parkway trail and the various parks along this trail.

Rating: C

Potential Bikeway Expansion

Scott Court.

There is heavy usage of on street parking, but it is not lined or designated on Scott Ct, and the surrounding collector streets such as Helen Place, Brunswick Drive, and McDonald Court. Scott Court is located between two main roads, Hoover Rd, and Southwest Blvd—which makes it a cut through for motorists to access these roads. Therefore, it is generally safe for all cyclists, but children should be supervised or avoid traveling near Hoover Road and Southwest Boulevard. Because Scott Court is located so close to Southwest Boulevard and Hoover Road, heavy bicycle route signage that offers a preferred safe route for cyclists and pedestrians to avoid Southwest Boulevard and Hoover Road should be strategically installed.

Rating: B



Sequoia Ave.

Sequoia Avenue runs through the well lit neighborhood of West Grove which provides residents of this subdivision with street access. The two travel lanes, low traffic volume, low speed limit, and minimal on street parking creates a friendly environment for all levels of cyclists. Even with the slim shoulders, children and beginners should feel comfortable riding this street. Sequoia Avenue could be enhanced in terms of connectivity and safety for cyclists by installing increased bike route signage that would connect West Grove with both the Concord Lakes and Elginfield subdivisions. This would enhance the cycling experience for residents of this neighborhood, and hopefully serve as a catalyst to enhance the busier arterial streets such as Demorest Rd, Grove City Rd, Southwest Boulevard, and Big Run South Rd.

Rating: C



Spring Hill Rd.

Spring Hill Road is a typical residential street that could benefit from the installation of bicycle route signage that indicates sharing of the roadway to motorists and cyclists to deter cyclists from riding on the pedestrian sidewalks. Designating this road as a bikeway would provide connectivity to Meadow Grove Park, as well as provide connectivity to other existing and proposed bikeways connecting to numerous other parks.

Rating: C



Potential Bikeway Expansion



Tamarack Ave.

Tamarack Avenue is another typical residential street located in the West Grove (North) subdivision. Tamarack Road is safe for cyclists to travel, but children should be accompanied or ride with caution as approaching Demorest Rd. This road is already connected to Southwest Boulevard Trail, but could benefit from the installation of increased bicycle route signage throughout the subdivision and onto Demorest Road in order to safely connect to the existing trail on the west side of Demorest Road.

Rating: C



Grove City Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Public Input Comments Summary

Planning Area	Trails/Access/ Connectivity	Facility Utilities / Maintenance	Sports	Dog Park	Rec Center	Natural Areas	Park Development	Water Features	Picnic / Shelter / Benches
A	20	4	7	15	8	5	1	6	7
B	21	15	10	12	15	5	2	5	4
C	34	45	30	8	19	13	7	5	8
D	10	2	7	8	2	4	7	2	0
E	35	25	28	22	16	12	14	13	11
Unmarked	4	5	5	2	3	7	6	4	2
TOTAL	124	96	87	67	63	46	37	35	32
	16.0%	12.4%	11.2%	8.6%	8.1%	5.9%	4.8%	4.5%	4.1%

Planning Area	Adult Swimming	General Class Comments	Grovebrook	Play Equip.	Adult Programs	Variety	Young Child Facilities	Park Info	Seniors
A	4	1	0	2	4	1	6	3	0
B	3	7	0	0	4	3	0	0	0
C	10	4	6	6	4	4	4	3	3
D	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
E	8	8	11	7	3	4	1	3	2
Unmarked	1	0	1	3	1	3	1	0	4
TOTAL	26	21	19	18	17	16	12	9	9
	3.4%	2.7%	2.5%	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%	1.5%	1.2%	1.2%

Planning Area	Theater / Performing Area	Partnerships	Education	Century Village	Safety	Teens	Funding	Training
A	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
B	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
C	3	3	3	4	4	3	0	0
D	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	4	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Unmarked	0	2	2	1	1	0	1	1
TOTAL	9	8	7	6	6	5	1	1
	1.2%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%

Top 10 Comment Categories

Category	% of Comments
1 Trails / Access/ Connectivity	16.0
2 Facility Utilities / Maintenance	12.4
3 Sports	11.2
4 Dog Park	8.6
5 Rec Center	8.1
6 Natural Areas	5.9
7 Park Development	4.8
8 Water Features	4.5
9 Picnic / Shelter / Benches	4.1
10 Adult Swimming	3.4

Comments from Public Meetings	190
Comments from Online Survey	587
TOTAL Comments	777

Public input gathered in three public meetings (September 28, October 6, October 10) and an online survey (open from October 27 through November 19).



Grove City Parks and Recreation Master Plan Online Survey and Public Meeting Exit Questionnaire Summary



Would you prefer to see the City develop smaller, neighborhood-sized parks or larger, community-sized parks?

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
Small Parks	14	14	18	8	36	0	90	26%
Large Parks	23	41	83	17	79	3	246	72%
Both	0	3	2	1	0	0	6	2%

Would you like to see more invested in maintaining and upgrading existing parks and trails or develop new parks and trails?

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
Maintain Existing	20	30	47	7	37	0	141	41%
Develop New	19	29	53	17	76	2	196	58%
Both	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	1%

How well do you feel the the city is served by and accessible to parks? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	3	4	4	0	5	0	16	5%
2	2	1	11	5	11	0	30	8%
3	8	14	25	10	41	1	99	28%
4	13	27	34	6	41	2	123	35%
5	13	18	33	5	18	0	87	25%

How well do you feel the your neighborhood is served by and accessible to parks? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	8	9	8	6	32	0	63	18%
2	2	0	13	7	16	1	39	11%
3	9	20	23	7	26	1	86	25%
4	12	14	33	2	22	0	83	24%
5	8	20	29	4	17	1	79	23%

*UM = Unmarked (Planning Area not indicated on survey)

How well do you feel the the city is served by and accessible to trails? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	8	7	16	4	17	0	52	15%
2	6	10	25	9	29	3	82	23%
3	11	23	35	8	35	0	112	32%
4	9	17	22	3	20	0	71	20%
5	4	5	8	2	13	0	32	9%

How well do you feel the your neighborhood is served by and accessible to trails? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	13	15	16	7	39	0	90	26%
2	5	10	27	2	24	2	70	20%
3	11	16	30	5	24	1	87	25%
4	6	16	24	5	16	0	67	19%
5	3	4	10	6	13	0	36	10%

How important is it to you for trails to connect to parks? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	2	1	7	1	3	0	14	4%
2	0	1	2	0	4	0	7	2%
3	5	11	9	5	17	0	47	14%
4	9	13	27	2	36	1	88	26%
5	20	33	59	17	55	2	186	54%

How important is it to you for trails to connect to schools? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	9	8	16	4	19	0	56	17%
2	1	4	6	2	10	0	23	7%
3	10	14	16	4	27	1	72	21%
4	8	20	25	5	25	1	84	25%
5	9	11	39	10	32	1	102	30%

*UM = Unmarked (Planning Area not indicated on survey)

How important is it to you for trails to connect to shopping and restaurants? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	7	13	28	3	32	0	83	25%
2	7	10	16	1	14	1	49	14%
3	10	13	25	9	32	2	91	27%
4	6	14	15	8	19	0	62	18%
5	7	8	18	4	16	0	53	16%

How important is it to you for trails to connect to your place of employment? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	11	25	45	11	57	1	150	44%
2	7	7	17	1	19	1	52	15%
3	8	16	15	5	24	1	69	20%
4	4	4	13	2	8	0	31	9%
5	7	6	13	5	5	0	36	11%

How important is it to you for trails to connect to the regional trail network? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	2	6	13	3	13	0	37	11%
2	1	3	4	1	8	1	18	5%
3	13	10	16	2	19	0	60	18%
4	4	22	22	4	39	1	92	27%
5	16	19	49	14	36	1	135	39%

How likely would you be to use a public recreation center? (On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being highest)

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
1	1	5	7	1	4	0	18	5%
2	2	3	9	0	3	0	17	5%
3	6	5	24	4	14	1	54	15%
4	12	23	22	4	38	2	101	29%
5	18	27	45	16	57	0	163	46%

*UM = Unmarked (Planning Area not indicated on survey)

Where should a memorial park be located?

	Planning Area						TOTAL	
	A	B	C	D	E	UM		
Existing park	14	28	48	10	40	1	141	49%
New park	20	23	34	7	58	1	143	50%
Other	1	0	0	1	1	0	3	1%

*UM = Unmarked (Planning Area not indicated on survey)



Goals and Objectives Online Feedback
 Survey Summary
 Survey conducted March 9 - April 2



1. How well do you feel the Parks and Open Space goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.4

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	1	4%
2	2	7%
Meets - 3	13	46%
4	10	36%
Exceeds - 5	2	7%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100%

2. How well do you feel the Natural Resources and Management goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.3

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	0	0%
2	4	14%
Meets - 3	14	50%
4	8	29%
Exceeds - 5	2	7%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100%

3. How well do you feel the Trails and Connectivity goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 2.9

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	1	3.7%
2	8	29.6%
Meets - 3	12	44.4%
4	4	14.8%
Exceeds - 5	2	7.4%
<i>TOTAL</i>	27	100%

4. How well do you feel the Recreation goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.2

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	0	0.0%
2	7	25.0%
Meets - 3	10	35.7%
4	10	35.7%
Exceeds - 5	1	3.6%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100.0%

5. How well do you feel the Impacts of Parks and Open Space on Economic Development goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.1

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	0	0.0%
2	7	25.0%
Meets - 3	12	42.9%
4	7	25.0%
Exceeds - 5	2	7.1%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100.0%

6. How well do you feel the Land Acquisition and Parkland Development goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.0

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	1	3.6%
2	7	25.0%
Meets - 3	13	46.4%
4	5	17.9%
Exceeds - 5	2	7.1%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100.0%

7. How well do you feel the Organizational Analysis goals and objectives meet your expectations?

Average Score: 3.0

	Count	%
Does not meet - 1	0	0.0%
2	7	25.0%
Meets - 3	14	50.0%
4	6	21.4%
Exceeds - 5	1	3.6%
<i>TOTAL</i>	28	100.0%