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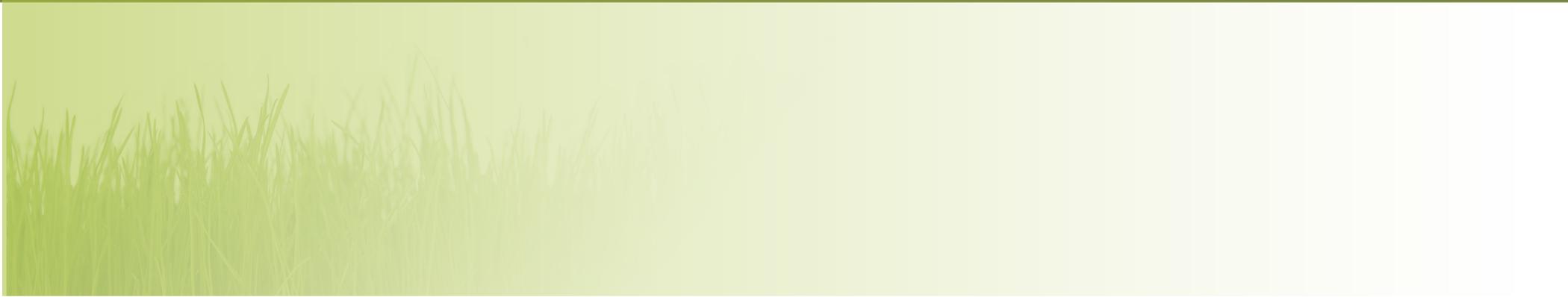
FOR TOMORROW  FREMONT, NEBRASKA



PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITY OF
FREMONT
NEBRASKA PATHFINDERS

ADOPTED MAY 29, 2012



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July 2, 2012

Mr. John Schmitz
Parks and Recreation Director
400 E. Military Avenue
Fremont, NE 68026

Dear John:

We are pleased to submit the final plan documents of “Greenprint for Tomorrow,” the City’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. City Council adopted this policy document on May 29, 2012, in conjunction with the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. The plan development process was completed in accordance with our agreement and scope of work.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is designed to guide future decision-making as the community expands and improves its system of parks and trails; strengthens and broadens the availability of recreational programs; and ultimately, enhances community livability for residents and visitors. For example, this guidance includes recommendations for the general placement of parks within the City and its planning area; the type and quality of new facilities; and the method by which enhancements and improvements may be funded. In addition to City staff discussions, the Plan reflects input from multiple small group interviews, a Community Symposium attended by nearly 300 residents, three work sessions with the Parks Board, and a public hearing. We also engaged representatives from the Fremont Family YMCA, Midland University, and Fremont Public Schools to ensure collaboration and continued coordination among community partners. As the City moves forward, implementation will require the commitment and leadership of elected and appointed officials, City staff, residents, and other stakeholders to champion the plan’s vision and project initiatives.

On behalf of my firm, it has been a pleasure working with the Parks and Recreation Department. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to lend our professional skills and experience to this process. I look forward to seeing the continued success and enhancement of Fremont’s parks and trails system in the years ahead.

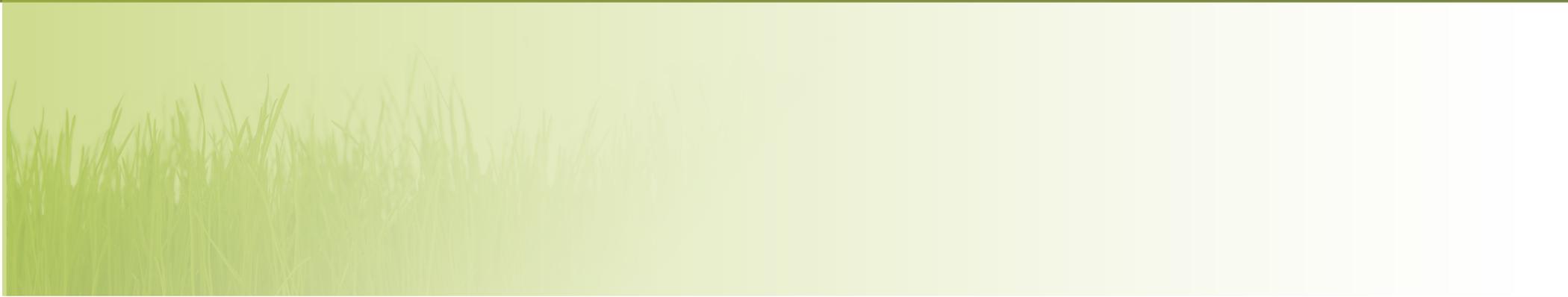
Respectfully submitted,

KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE



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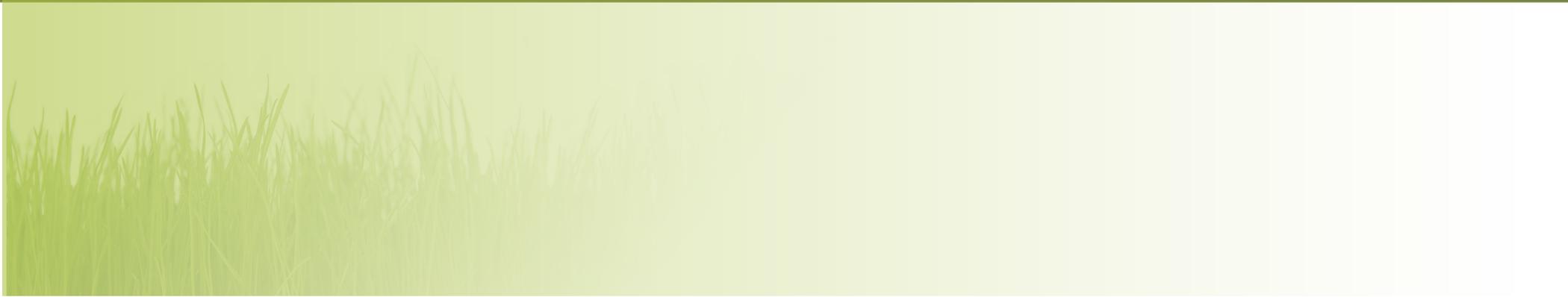
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Chapter

ADOPTED 05.29.12

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Fremont Plan, adopted in May 1999, contained a single chapter addressing the park system. Chapter Four, entitled “A Green Network,” analyzed and outlined goals for the park system, identified its needs, and provided a plan for park development. In observance of the City’s ongoing commitment to parks and recreation development and enhancement of community livability, the City initiated the development of this first-time comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The purpose of this master plan is to provide long-range planning guidance for realizing an inheritable system of parks, public spaces, and recreational facilities and programs for community residents. The plan is designed to bring the parks and recreation system in line with the community’s high expectations for quality facilities and livability.

This plan is a tool to aid in future decision-making as the community expands and improves its system of parks and trails, strengthens and broadens the availability of recreational programs, and ultimately, enhances community livability for residents and the attractiveness of Fremont for visitors and tourists. To do so, this plan provides the guidance to achieve the overall goal as follows:

Fremont is committed to maintaining and improving its existing parks while providing for a balanced and broader variety of facilities, programs, public spaces, and amenities, all of which contribute to the fabric of our highly livable neighborhoods and quality of life.



Hormel Park



Milliken Park



Moller Park

This plan is designed for realizing Fremont's vision for the parks and recreation system, including both its active and passive facilities, as well as its recreational programming.

We will seek to accomplish this goal by focusing on the following:

- Establishing a quality standard of care for maintaining our highly valued community parks and recreation assets.
- Expanding our park system to support future growth, embrace our economic development, and to broaden the range of facilities, programmatic offerings, and leisure activities available to our residents and visitors.
- Cooperating with partner institutions like Fremont Public Schools, Archbishop Bergan Catholic School, Midland University, and the Fremont Family YMCA, as well as other contributing organizations to improve our community health and well-being.
- Providing better connections and safe means of access to our park system by continuing to build a citywide network of on-street, shared bicycle-ways, off-street trails, sidewalks and other pedestrian pathways.
- Preserving open space and conserving natural resources as public amenities and opportunities for cultural expression and environmental education.
- Investing and/or reinvesting in our major capital facilities to accommodate the athletic and

recreational needs of the City, public and private schools, YMCA, and university sponsored programs, events, and tournaments.

- Leveraging the community's substantial investments in its facilities to boost tourism, attract regional and statewide athletic tournaments, and to grow the City's recognition as a place to recreate, live, and invest.
- Designing and building parks in recognition of their value in neighborhood building and as places for social gathering, recreation, and passive enjoyment.

VALUE AND BENEFIT

This plan will enable the City to plan in advance for needed land acquisitions, park design and development, and to program capital improvements over the short, intermediate, and long-terms. The plan addresses the physical improvements to the park system, as well as possible enhancements to the recreational programming of the City, in coordination with the Fremont Family YMCA and other recreation providers. Among the many benefits of this plan is the value and enjoyment it will create in the lives of community residents. Parks and recreational programs offer opportunities for social interaction, physical fitness and activity, nature observance, and relief from the urban environment. Moreover, parks

and recreation programs and facilities are key factors in 'connecting' the community as parks, trails, civic spaces, and recreation events and programs create physical and social links that bring the community together. This, in turn, enhances the value placed on "community," bolsters a sense of belonging, and contributes to livability.

While parks have traditionally been viewed only for their physical attributes, such as their beauty and provision of space for outdoor activity, there is an increasing awareness as to their spin-off values, which include:

- Enhanced social ties and connections within and between neighborhoods, schools, and both formal and informal social networks, such as athletic associations like the American Legion, Nighthawks/Lady Hawks, and the Tennis Association.
- Improved aesthetic value for the adjacent neighborhoods by way of public green space, mature vegetation, and park facilities and amenities.
- Increased environmental protection through the conservation of natural resources and open spaces, such as Luther Hormel Memorial Park and Johnson Lake.

Protection of natural resources is an added benefit of Johnson Park (top). Its central location makes Barnard Park a neighborhood gathering spot (bottom).

- Improved community identity offering value in attracting visitors and passers-by, like that of beautiful Johnson Lake Park and Splash Station along U.S. 275.
- Opportunities for better parks and recreation programs and facilities for persons of all ages (youth, adults, and seniors), interests, and abilities.
- Improved health and fitness of community residents made possible by the provision of facilities and programs that promote active living, and offering therapeutic benefit by way of parks, trails, and public spaces.
- Increased fiscal responsibility and efficiencies gained through coordinated programming (like that through the City Parks Department and the Fremont Family YMCA) and shared use of facilities (like the use of the City's ballfields, high school tennis courts, YMCA pool and basketball/tennis courts, and Memorial Stadium).
- Improved response to the needs of parks and recreation facility users, including the interests of recreation leagues (American Legion, Nighthawks/Lady Hawks, Tennis Association, etc.) and activity groups.
- Ongoing and increased opportunities for partnerships and valued relationships among all

providers – public, semi-public, and private - of recreation facilities and programs.

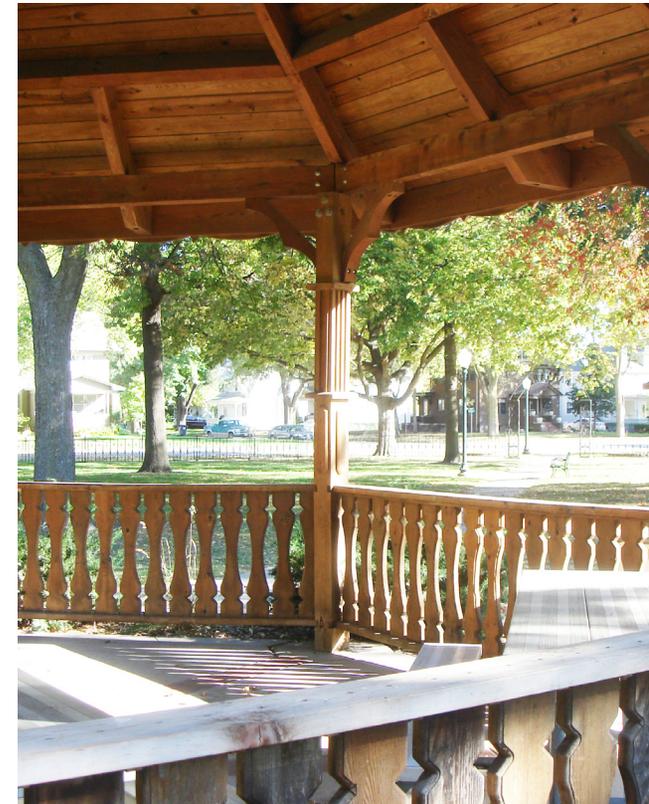
- Increased parks and recreation facility use.
- Improved quality of life.

Plan Considerations

Planning for the development and management of parks and recreation facilities and programs includes a diverse array of important considerations. Evaluation of these factors is an essential prerequisite for the master planning process. Among the factors that were considered and which influenced the policy directions and recommendations of this plan include the following:

- The City's growth in population resulting in a projected increase of approximately 3,397 persons by the Year 2030. Based on typical standards (see Chapter 3, Facility Standards) this equates to an additional demand for 6.37 acres of pocket parks and 15.60 acres of neighborhood parks, together with the requisite facilities and improvements.¹
- The impressive assets available for City and resident use through the Fremont Family YMCA, Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, and the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area (State Lakes).

¹ Refer to *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*, concerning the net demands on the City's park system.



VISION

To be a thriving and healthy City where members of the community are physically active, socially involved, and emotionally connected.



- The unveiling plan of private investors to build a new multi-use stadium and a baseball/softball complex to facilitate games and tournament play for the youth and adult leagues of the City and YMCA, American Legion, Nighthawks/Lady Hawks, Midland Warrior baseball and softball teams, Fremont High School Tigers baseball and softball teams, and the Bergan High School Knights baseball and softball teams.
- The warrant for replacing the YMCA's 25 meter lap pool and 25 yard instructional pool with a combined new on-campus aquatic center, which would be for the purpose of facilitating the practices and meets of the YMCA and Fremont High School swim teams, swim lessons, water aerobics, and open swim periods.
- Future plans for Memorial Stadium and its property once a new stadium is constructed.
- The opportunities for strengthening the standing partnerships and pooling resources with Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, Bergan Catholic Schools, and the YMCA to reinvest in existing and invest in new major capital facilities.
- The gridiron pattern of streets and traditional neighborhoods that is central to the character of Fremont, for which parks serve a prominent role in neighborhood gathering.

- The proximity of the State Lakes, Camp Rivercrest, YMCA Camp Christian, and the Calvin Crest Camp Conference and Retreat Center, each of which offer outdoor camps, facilities, and programs that may compliment and attract outside visitors to the City.
- The special use facilities that are nearby and readily available including the Whitetail Run and Valley View Golf Courses.
- The City's proximity to Omaha and its parks and trail resources, and potential future connections to other existing and planned regional trails, including the proposed Papio Natural Resources District (NRD) trail connecting to the Platte River Landing² west of Valley (12 miles southeast of Fremont), the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail from Norfolk to Valentine (75 miles northwest of Fremont), and eventually to the 50 miles of trails within the Lower Platte South NRD (including the MoPac East Trail, the Oak Creek Trail, and the Homestead Trail).
- The existing trails and both funded and planned future expansions to the citywide trail network

² Located near Highway 64 on the Platte River, Platte River Landing is a 2-acre site offering public access to the Platte River. This facility opened in 1992 and was constructed in conjunction with the Union Dike Flood Control Project. The Papio NRD manages the site.

that will provide opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle recreation and also provide linear connections to and between the community's parks and recreation facilities.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN

The principles that provide the foundation for this master plan include:

- The livability of Fremont is central to community well-being, economic competitiveness, and future social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Parks, recreational programming, and facility planning is integral for achieving livability.
- Parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational programs create physical and social links that connect the community, and in turn, further enhance its attractiveness for economic development.
- The preservation of natural areas provides opportunities for interpretation of environmental resources and community education as to the vital roles of these resources in the economy of Fremont and livelihood of its residents.
- Parks, greenways, and other public spaces provide environmental benefits including habitat conservation, wildlife protection, storm water management, and energy conservation.

- The preservation and management of natural areas such as the State Lakes and Luther Hormel Memorial Park provide opportunities for nature tourism. As such, parks and open spaces should be designed to reflect the value of the natural environment and the benefits that can be had by designing with nature.
- All residents and visitors are entitled to access public parks and recreation facilities, regardless of age, gender, ability, income, race, cultural background, or place of residence.
- The availability of financial resources will be considered in all phases of planning, acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.
- To encourage cooperation and efficient use of financial resources, the provision of park facilities and recreational programs will continue to be coordinated with other institutions, organizations, and providers including, but not limited to, Fremont Public Schools, Archbishop Bergan Catholic High School, Fremont Family YMCA, Midland University, Dodge County, and the Lower Platte North NRD, as well as local civic clubs; athletic organizations like the American Legion, Nighthawks/Lady Hawks and the Tennis Association; and semi-public and private entities.
- Public recreation will incorporate a range of public services, such as environmental and cultural education, nature observance (e.g. bird watching), expression of visual and performing arts, health and fitness, and personal leisure.
- The offering of parks and recreational programs will foster socialization, health and fitness, and

informal and continuing education by making the best use of facilities.

- Recreation facilities will be planned and coordinated to allow flexibility in adapting to accommodate future community recreation needs and requirements.
- The design of parks and recreation facilities will involve the input and opinions of likely users and other community stakeholders through an open design process.
- The planning process will continuously offer opportunities for incremental evaluation and review.

Our Mission

The Parks and Recreation Department abides by a mission statement that expresses its purpose, spells out its overall goal, and provides a sense of direction and decision-making guidance to the department staff, Parks and Recreation Board, and the City Council. The Fremont Parks and Recreation Department's mission is to:

Enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Fremont and their guests by providing and/or facilitating quality leisure service programs and facilities while protecting and improving our environment.

CITIZEN GUIDANCE

Citizens partake daily in both passive and active forms of recreation. This may involve direct use, such as organized athletics, or indirect use like overlooking the pleasant view of Barnard Park or the State Lakes. These experiences equip all residents to contribute to the community's vision for its parks and recreation

system. Their involvement may be to identify broad or individual needs, offer suggestions as to desirable enhancements, or respond to improvement plans and proposed initiatives. This input helped determine the goals and objectives for which the needs and corresponding implementation priorities outlined in this master plan are based.

Citizens were broadly engaged in this master planning process to:

- Ensure consideration of diverse, individual views in park planning and decision-making;
- Create a mutually accepted vision for the future of the parks and recreation system that balances a consideration of community interests; and
- Solicit direct resident input to form the plan's objectives, identify needs and desires, and establish implementation directions and priorities.

Above all, public involvement is intended to inspire people to take an active role for enriching the livability of their community. Doing so will help strengthen the ability to work together for a healthier and more vibrant community.

Four key stakeholder groups were involved in the development of this master plan, including the staff of the City's Parks and Recreation Department; representatives of the Fremont Public Schools, the YMCA, and Midland University; members of the Parks and Recreation Board and City Council; and those members of the public who attended and participated in the community symposium. These active participants underscore the emphasis on public involvement as part of the plan development process.

Fremont's goals guide the Parks and Recreation Department toward realizing the community's vision for the future.

Goals and Objectives

Goals state the desires of the community to express needs and priorities through broad statements of policy. Without goals, it may be difficult for Fremont, a community with a diversity of backgrounds and interests, to agree on a common direction to achieve its stated mission for the parks and recreation system. Goals also enhance awareness as to broad interests, and encourage communication and collaboration toward successful implementation.

Objectives are actionable strategies to attain the envisioned outcomes that are represented by the goals. These strategies are not action steps in and of themselves, but they provide direction as to "how" to achieve the stated ends.

The following goals and objectives represent the input from the above described participation, and provide guidance to the Parks and Recreation Board and City staff. They are intended to guide future decisions regarding the provision and improvement of parks and recreation areas and programs, public open spaces, and trails, and to identify the priorities for ongoing development of the parks and recreation system.



Goals and Objectives

Park Areas and Recreational Facilities

GOAL No. 1

Provide parks and recreation facilities that meet – or exceed – the established local standards and provide for both the present and future needs of the community.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Acquire an additional 8.80 acres of neighborhood parkland in the areas of deficiency to meet present-day needs for the current population. In already developed neighborhoods, this may include land acquisition, use of vacant lots as play lots or neighborhood gardens, or joint use of semi-public properties like churches.
2. Facilitate through private or semi-public development the creation of an additional 5.52 acres of pocket parks, which may include those built concurrent with new development or those constructed by churches, schools, or partner institutions, or those donated by private individuals or organizations (e.g., Rotary or Kiwanis Club).
3. Concurrent with anticipated population growth, acquire an additional 15.60 acres of neighborhood parkland prior to or simultaneous with new development. This accounts for present-day deficiencies and new demands over the next 20 years.
4. Form a partnership to develop a master plan, schedule, and financing strategy and arrangement for either rehabilitating Memorial Stadium (reconstructing the track, upgrading the grandstand, and improving access and parking) or building a new stadium.
5. Solicit funding by way of local general or bond financing, state or federal grants, in-kind or monetary contributions by partner institutions and other organizations, and through local fundraising to construct a tournament-ready baseball/softball complex. The purpose of and warrant for this new facility is to accommodate the existing demand for practice and game fields and to sponsor regional and statewide tournaments that will attract visitors and generate revenue for local businesses.
6. Partner with and participate in the YMCA's plan for a new aquatic facility that will replace its two aging and increasingly inadequate pools. A new facility will accommodate more programs and facilitate larger participation and attendance that will compliment and mutually benefit the City and its recreational programming.
7. Update the master plan for Johnson Park to acknowledge the new 5th and 6th grade campus. Subsequently, expand the park and build the subsequent phases of Splash Station including, but not limited to, a lazy river and water slides.
8. Develop a five year capital improvement program to replace or add new facilities, improvements, and equipment in existing and planned new parks, in accordance with the needs and priorities established by this plan (see *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*).

The total economic impact related to hosting athletic tournaments occurs on two levels: primary and induced. Primary impact refers to the initial, first-round expenditures associated with tournament activities. Induced impact, generally referred to as the “multiplier effect,” results from subsequent rounds of re-spending of the first-round primary impact expenditures in the community. Additionally, tournaments create a number of intangible positive impacts. Media coverage of tournaments provides regional and statewide exposure for the community. This “branding” enhances the City's image and identity, which helps in attracting tourists and businesses to the area.

9. Establish a practice of neighborhood design charrettes to gather resident input to the design of nearby parks and the types of facilities and equipment desired to serve its users.
10. Continue to improve the existing parks to make them more inclusive by replacing equipment and installing improvements that aid in handicap accessibility.
11. Develop a unique design theme for each park to broaden the types of facilities and activities that are available across the community and to better tie their identity to the property or neighborhood.

GOAL No. 2

Ensure that all park facilities are maintained in efficient and cost effective manners to promote safety and the highest quality appearance.

Goals and Objectives

Actionable Objectives:

1. Maintain the quality appearance and function of athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, parks, and buildings in accordance with industry standards and locally adopted maintenance protocols and criteria.
2. Develop a general maintenance and repair schedule to bring all parks to a quality standard of care (refer to *Table 2.8, Park Condition Assessment*). The priority maintenance tasks include:
 - a. Resurfacing, restriping, or re-grading unpaved surfaces or parking areas.
 - b. Resurfacing tennis courts and replacing fencing and nets.
 - c. Resurfacing basketball courts and replacing backboards, nets, and fencing (where applicable).
3. Provide training and outside educational opportunities for all members of the Parks and Recreation Department, particularly the superintendent(s), to keep them current with the latest standards and industry practices.
4. Consider organization of a program to solicit the participation of local clubs and groups to undertake park improvement projects under the guidance and oversight of the City.
5. Perform quarterly safety inspections to identify potentially harmful or dangerous conditions and create an itemized list of necessary repairs and improvements.
6. Establish a risk management program and inspection standards to routinely correct safety

violations and regularly service park facilities and equipment.

7. Establish an annual enhancement program focused on the natural park environments including:
 - a. Conducting an annual tree planting or transplanting program to replace and/or supplement existing tree cover.
 - b. Turf restoration and over-seeding.
 - c. Re-grading to address erosion and drainage problems.

GOAL No. 3

Build on the existing trails to develop a citywide network of off-street trails, on-street bikeways, and sidewalks.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Continue to acquire rights-of-way and/ or easements for construction of a citywide pedestrian and bicycle network. The network should seek to tie together each of the City's parks, schools, and public institutions and facilities.
2. To supplement the primary network, conduct a sidewalk inventory on all arterial, collector, and local streets and subsequently, produce a plan and capital program to replace or install new sidewalks to maximize accessibility to the developing citywide pedestrian and bicycle network.
3. Elaborate on the Trails Plan to include the following improvements:

- a. Widen to six to eight feet the existing sidewalks along the east side of Lincoln Street between the shared road trails on 1st Street and 19th Street, which will connect Clarmar Elementary, Fremont High School, the YMCA, and Memorial Field.
- b. An extension of the existing trail westward along Military Avenue from Luther Street to Somers Avenue and then north to its intersection with the planned shared road trail. The segment along Military Avenue may involve the widening of the existing sidewalk within the north right-of-way and/ or a shared road trail.
- c. Widen to six to eight feet the existing sidewalks along the east side of Clarkson Street from 1st Street to 19th Street, which will connect Bergan High School, Barnard Park and Midland University.
4. Seek funding to construct the concrete trail proposed adjacent to Ridge Road (which may also follow the levy alignment) to provide off-street trail access to the State Lakes.
5. Evaluate the feasibility of enclosing the existing drainage ditches and utilizing the easements for at-grade recreational trails, which would provide off-street trail opportunities across town and through many neighborhoods.

The Nebraska Department of Road's policy is to provide paved surface shoulders, typically eight feet wide, on highways designated on the Priority Commercial System.



Safe Routes Nebraska is the Nebraska Department of Roads' state-level implementation of the Federal Safe Routes to School program. The program was founded to help improve the health and well-being of children by giving them a safe way to walk and bike to school. Safe Routes Nebraska and the Department of Roads provide schools and communities across the state with access to almost \$1 million per year in funds to build safer routes to school and promote walking and biking. There are a number of programs available to aid in the following types of projects:

- Traffic calming and speed reduction devices
- Pedestrian and bike crossing improvements
- Sidewalk improvements
- Off-street biking and walking paths
- Secure bike parking
- Traffic diversions near schools

6. Coordinate with the Lower Platte North NRD and the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) to utilize the shoulders of Old Highway 275 between Fremont and Valley, which would eventually provide access to the planned Papio NRD trail connecting to the Platte River Landing west of Valley. Furthermore, continue to pursue a future connection to the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail in Norfolk.
7. Amend the subdivision regulations to require public access easements spaced every 400 feet to provide external connections to the periphery of the development.
8. Amend the street cross-section standards to increase the width of rights-of-way to accommodate an eight to 10' sidewalk on one side of all arterial and collector roadways.
9. Integrate bicycle and pedestrian design guidelines into all street improvement projects, such as minimum clearances, obstruction avoidance, signage, and maintenance.
10. Develop a safe-route-to-school program by prioritizing sidewalk improvements in proximity to each of the public and private schools.
11. Amend the zoning ordinance to require the placement of bike racks at all shopping centers, businesses with more than 10 employees, and public buildings, such as the library and post office, and semi-public places like churches and private schools.
12. Seek State and Federal funding assistance for trail development, such as Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA), Recreational Trails Program (originally authorized by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century), and transportation enhancements through Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient

Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) to connect to the Cowboy Trail and the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area. Require all new publicly dedicated parks to have access to a pathway system, which may include a sidewalk, bike lane, and/or path.

Recreational Programs

GOAL No. 4

Ensure that recreational programs meet the interests and needs of persons of all ages and abilities by providing programs independently and in cooperation with program partners.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Formalize through reciprocal agreements the coordination of programming and joint use of facilities by and between the City, Midland University, YMCA, Bergan Catholic Schools, and Fremont Public Schools.
2. Conduct a programmatic evaluation and assessment to compare the programs, services, and physical resource offerings of the City, YMCA, and other public and private providers (e.g. Anytime Fitness, Curves, Just Youth Fitness, and Jazzercise) to identify overlaps, gaps, and opportunities for better coordination and collaboration.
3. Collaborate with each of the recreational facility and program providers to jointly produce a community leisure guide and interactive website that announces all special events, community festivals, and activities, and provides access for online registration for any camps, lessons, workshops, or classes available through the City or its program partners.

Goals and Objectives

4. Join with the program partners to make application for outside funding to support and expand the City's recreational programming.
5. Seek memoranda of understanding or formalized partnership arrangements with the YMCA, Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, and others regarding their participation in and support of a possible new stadium and a planned baseball/softball complex, which may include funding and/or in-kind support, agreements for use and fees, maintenance arrangements, and other considerations.
6. Seek a mutual arrangement with the YMCA to provide "open to the public" or single use activities or special events for non-members, which may include scheduled use of the pools, gyms, and/or ice arena.
7. Continue to expand sponsorships and investigate opportunities to affiliate with special interest groups, service clubs, and the private sector in organizing and operating special events, programs, and leagues.

GOAL No. 5

Broaden the community's cultural infrastructure and its integration into the parks and recreation system and programs.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Partner with the Fremont Area Art Association to coordinate their classes, workshops, and special events with those of the City and other program partners, and to jointly publish them online.
2. Solicit funding through the Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) to sponsor special learning

- activities and events that promote arts projects and programs for artistic excellence and merit, creativity and innovation, artists and arts organizations, cultural and generational diversity, arts for underserved communities, and arts and cultural fairs and festivals.
3. Build historic and cultural value into parks and civic spaces through programs, festivals, and activities held within the parks.
 4. Incorporate museums, monuments, and markers as park amenities and destinations for tourists and visitors.
 5. Seek to develop green space and a public stage/amphitheatre in Downtown for showing films, facilitating displays and exhibits, and accommodating live performances.
 6. Provide a secure place in designated and highly visible parks for the display of public art, short-term art exhibitions, and outdoor performances.
 7. Create and publish a public art walking tour for viewing of pieces on display in parks, civic spaces, public buildings, and along the developing community trails.
 8. Coordinate with Midland University to establish an art incubator in Downtown that helps to develop and grow the creative class, with parks serving as a conduit for student display.

Planning & Administration

GOAL No. 6

Ensure the success of the department through the professional development and technical advancement of staff and other department or board members.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Encourage employees' membership and active participation in the Nebraska Recreation and Parks Association (NeRPA), as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), including the continuing education curriculum that is available for training and advanced education.
2. Pursue agency accreditation from The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).
3. Conduct an annual goal development session with the Parks and Recreation staff and members of the City Council.
4. Support staff to obtain professional certifications such as Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) program, and Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS).
5. Consider sending the Parks and Recreation Director to Indiana University's Executive Development Program to build and strengthen the fundamental skills needed to manage and lead a municipal parks and recreation department.

GOAL No. 7

Ensure that the administration of the Parks and Recreation Department is effective, accessible, and customer-friendly.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Develop and expect from staff a strong sense of personal service in connection with all programs and services of the Department.

2. Initiate training programs that emphasize customer service.
3. Review/revise policies and procedures to reflect the importance of customer service.
4. Continue to upgrade computer systems for the operations and management of the Department.
5. Provide excellent customer service to both internal and external customers.
6. Offer competent, high quality leadership and direction in all programs and services.
7. Take all reasonable measures to promote the safety and effectiveness of all City sponsored activities.
8. Encourage volunteers to participate in the delivery of Department services.

GOAL No. 8

Maximize the efficient use of resources to develop and maintain a first-class system of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities and improvements.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Organize an adopt-a-park program to solicit the participation of local clubs and groups to undertake park improvement and maintenance projects under the guidance and oversight of the City.
2. Submit applications for State and Federal grants-in-aid programs, as well as private foundations, to maximize the leverage of the City's financial resources (refer to *Appendix __, Funding Sources*).
3. Strengthen the standing partnerships with the YMCA, Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, Bergan Catholic Schools, American

Legion, Tennis Association, Nighthawks/Lady Hawks, Fremont Area Art Association, and other agencies and organizations to maximize the efficiency in the acquisition, development, maintenance, and management of citywide facilities, services, and programs.

4. Continue supporting non-profit 501(c)(3) corporations like Friends of Fremont Area Parks, Inc. for the purpose of promoting and supporting public parks and recreation activities and to promote gifts and donations from individuals, organizations, and private industry.
5. Adopt a parkland dedication and fee in-lieu ordinance to require the dedication of land or provision of an equivalent fee concurrent with new development. The dedication or fee must be proportional to the demand generated by the new development.
6. Establish a comprehensive sponsorship program that allows individuals, groups, and businesses to offer support of the City's programs, events, and activities.
7. Create programs for lease/purchase, tax incentives, and public maintenance to solicit private sector participation in park system development.

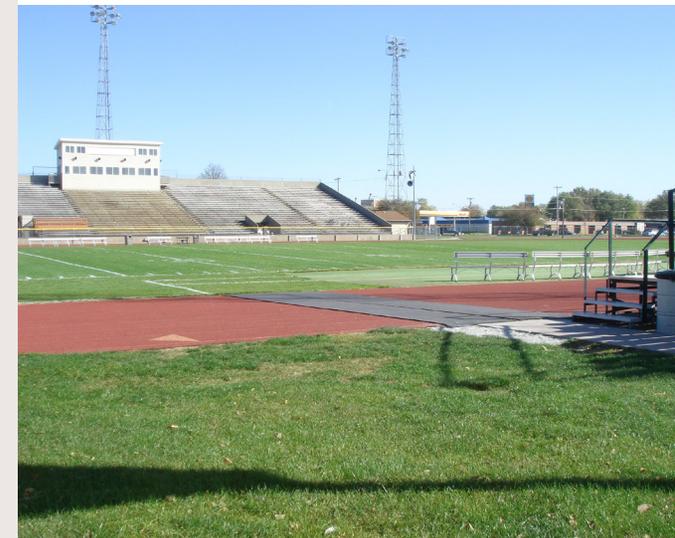
GOAL No. 9

Maintain strong communication with community residents and other public agencies and private sector organizations.



John C. Fremont City Park

The Keep Fremont Beautiful Committee has initiated beautification efforts through the "Trees for Fremont" and "Adopt-A-Spot" programs. The City should continue enlisting partners to assist in beautifying and maintaining public spaces. Local clubs and groups can organize to participate in seasonal work days for park maintenance or fundraising for park improvements.



Memorial Stadium

Goals and Objectives



Interpretive markers enliven the recreation experience of trails and provide an opportunity for environmental education.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Coordinate with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to expand the web presence of the Department to include online registration for programs and facility rentals, an interactive map of the parks and their amenities, event scheduling, and as a one-stop resource for community recreation and leisure information.
2. Conduct a bi-annual community survey to solicit input as to the satisfaction with the City's parks, facilities, and programs, and the desired improvements and priorities.
3. Conduct an annual meeting with the City's program partners and other community

organizations to discuss opportunities for improved coordination and provision of services.

4. Adopt a practice of neighborhood design charrettes to gather resident input to the design of nearby parks and the types of facilities and equipment desired to serve its users.
5. Continue to use and improve upon various media outlets to keep the community, public agencies, and other organizations informed.
6. Conduct an annual retreat for the Department staff and Parks and Recreation Board to set goals, outline programmatic and capital priorities, and establish an annual work plan.

Environment & Natural Resources

GOAL No. 10

Protect and sustain natural areas, resource features, and environmentally sensitive lands.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Provide for the preservation and conservation of open space to include wetlands, floodplains, riparian corridors along streams and around lakes and water bodies, woodlands, and other natural areas.
2. Establish a policy and practice of engaging in sustainable park design, which may include, among others, the use of green building techniques (such as solar power, rain water collection and reuse, and grey water irrigation),

best management practices to ensure healthy ecosystems, native, non-invasive plant choices, use of recycled materials, and public education about environmental stewardship.

3. Incorporate interpretive signage within parks and along trails to acknowledge natural features and to educate the public about the local ecosystems.
4. Adopt conscientious land management practices like the use of natural composting, environmentally safe fertilizers and pesticides, use of "no-mow" zones around resource features, and native xeriscaping.
5. Create a master gardener/master naturalist program and solicit their volunteer assistance in designing, creating, and managing eco-gardens and outdoor environmental classrooms.
6. Create expanded opportunities for environmental outings by offering facilities and programs to promote nature education, habitat observance, and ecotourism.
7. Utilize the parks to educate, promote, and participate in community-wide recycling efforts and programs.

Tourism

GOAL No. 11

Partner in contributing to the City's economic development by attracting tourists and businesses to the recreational attractions in and around Fremont.



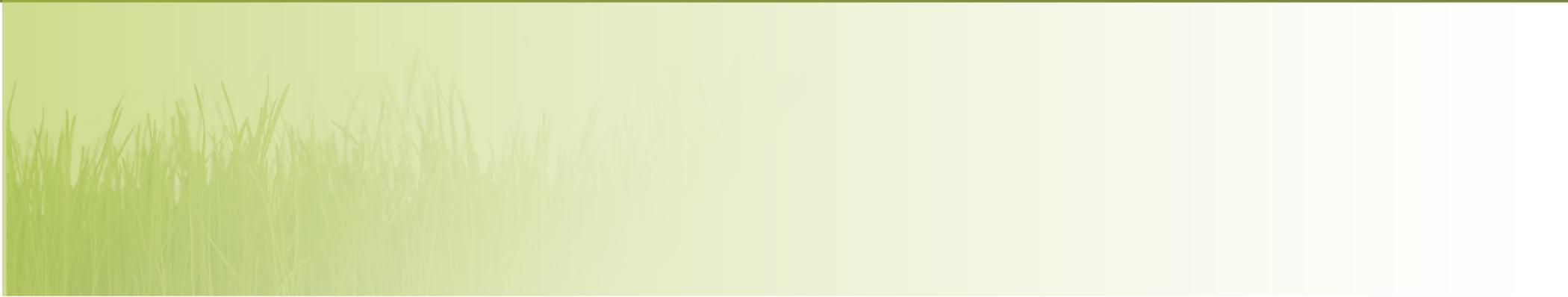
The Platte River (top) and State Lakes (bottom) attract regional visitors and provide Fremont with opportunities for ecotourism.



Ecotourism is defined as discretionary travel to nature areas that conserves the environmental, social, and cultural values while generating economic benefit to the local community.

Actionable Objectives:

1. Promote event based tourism through hosting regional and statewide sports tournaments including those initially using existing facilities and eventually using the planned baseball/softball complex.
2. Expand upon the camps currently sponsored by the City, YMCA, and Midland University to include a broader range of activities that include day camps, overnight camps, and mini-camps.
3. Develop an ecotourism development plan that identifies nature- and heritage-based tourism resources in the region, their potential for tourism, and associated services and needs to accommodate them.
4. Participate in conferences and programs concerned with providing ecotourism experiences, such as the International Ecotourism Society and organizations sponsoring ecotourism research like the National Park Service, and National Forest Service as well as advocacy groups like the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club.
5. Provide, promote, and encourage community and regional events and programs that provide access to a variety of cultural arts and heritage-based tourism opportunities.
6. Develop a partnership with the Greater Fremont Development Council to aid in their promotion of the City as a great place to live and work.
7. Develop distinctive directional signage and a coordinated way-finding system for key attractions and sites in and around the City.
8. Connect the park system to the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area by trails and routes for cyclists, particularly linking the state park to the City's cultural resources and hospitality venues.



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Chapter

ADOPTED 05.29.12

2

RECREATIONAL ASSETS

Integral to this master plan is a thorough evaluation of the existing parks and recreation system. Each park must be evaluated in terms of its proximity to its users, its safety and accessibility, the availability and condition of its equipment and facilities, and its overall utilization.

The 1999 Fremont Comprehensive Plan classified each park using a strict interpretation of the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) recommended standards. This chapter expounds upon these classifications, outlining the updates that have been made to each park, and also presents the facilities that are available to the community at public and private schools, through private facilities like the Fremont Family YMCA, and regional assets located in and near Fremont that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism.

Inventory of Parks and Recreation Areas and Facilities

The City offers a broad range of parks and recreational areas and facilities that allow both active and passive recreation. As identified in **Table 2.1, Public and Private Parks**, the total acreage of parkland is 440.77 acres. This includes six community parks, 12 neighborhood parks (one private), two pocket parks (one private), and three special use parks. From the Splash Station to the Fremont Family YMCA and the nearby Fremont Lakes State Recreational Area, Fremont has remarkable facilities and recreation opportunities available to its residents and visitors.



Basketball Courts at Rotary Park



Jungle Gym at Milliken Park

Table 2.1, Public and Private Parks

Park Name (class)	Size (acres)
Buckridge Park	0.80
Optimist Park ¹	0.28
Pocket Parks Subtotal	1.08
Barnard Park	1.80
Buch Park	4.10
Davenport Park	3.00
John C. Fremont City Park	4.10
Kiwanis Park ¹	1.79
Masonic Park	3.40
Milliken Park	9.00
Moller Park	6.10
Monnich Park	4.00
Rotary Park	1.80
Ruwe Park	3.00
Van Anda Park	1.90
Neighborhood Parks Subtotal	43.99
Clemmons Park	14.80
Christensen Field	55.00
Johnson Park	65.00
Memorial Park	32.10
Miller Park	9.00
Ronin Park	6.80
Community Parks Subtotal	182.70
Hormel Park	167.00
Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)	6.00
Wildwood Park	40.00
Special Use Parks Subtotal	213.00
TOTAL PARK ACREAGE	440.77

¹This is a private park.
Source: City of Fremont



Buckridge Park

Park Classification and Description

For the purposes of this plan, the parks and public spaces are classified as follows:

- Pocket parks
- Neighborhood parks
- Community parks
- Special use parks
- Semi-public park facilities/school campuses
- Private school campuses

Each of the developed public and private parks is displayed in **Map 2.1, Park Inventory**.

POCKET PARKS

The primary service area for a pocket park is one-eighth mile; generally two to four blocks. Pocket parks are intended to serve the needs of people living or working in the immediate area. Therefore, the number of persons that benefit from these public spaces may be relatively small, yet they provide value as public open space and for beautification. Fremont has one pocket park, Buckridge Park, and Optimist Park, which is a privately owned space at East 18th Street and North C Street.

Buckridge Park (Downing St. & Birchwood Dr.)

Buckridge Park is characterized by a small footprint and convenient access to nearby residents. Designed for a smaller user group, the park includes a picnic table, basketball hoop, volleyball court, and playground. While in need of some maintenance and improvements, its location and scale fit well within the surrounding neighborhood.

Optimist Park (E. 18th St. and N. C St.)

Fremont's only private pocket park is located on East 18th Street and North C Street and is 0.28 acres in size. The park is easily accessible from nearby residences and provides sidewalks, a swingset, a play structure, and a bench for park visitors.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and the intended use. Local standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of three acres, assuming an adequate and even distribution across the planning area. Although a 10-acre park may accommodate ball fields and larger recreation and open space areas, two parks that are five acres in size may equally - and perhaps better - serve the community needs while ensuring a good spatial

Map 2.1 Park Inventory

Map Features

- Public Park
- Private Park
- Golf Course
- State Park

POCKET PARKS

1. Buckridge Park
2. Optimist Park (private)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

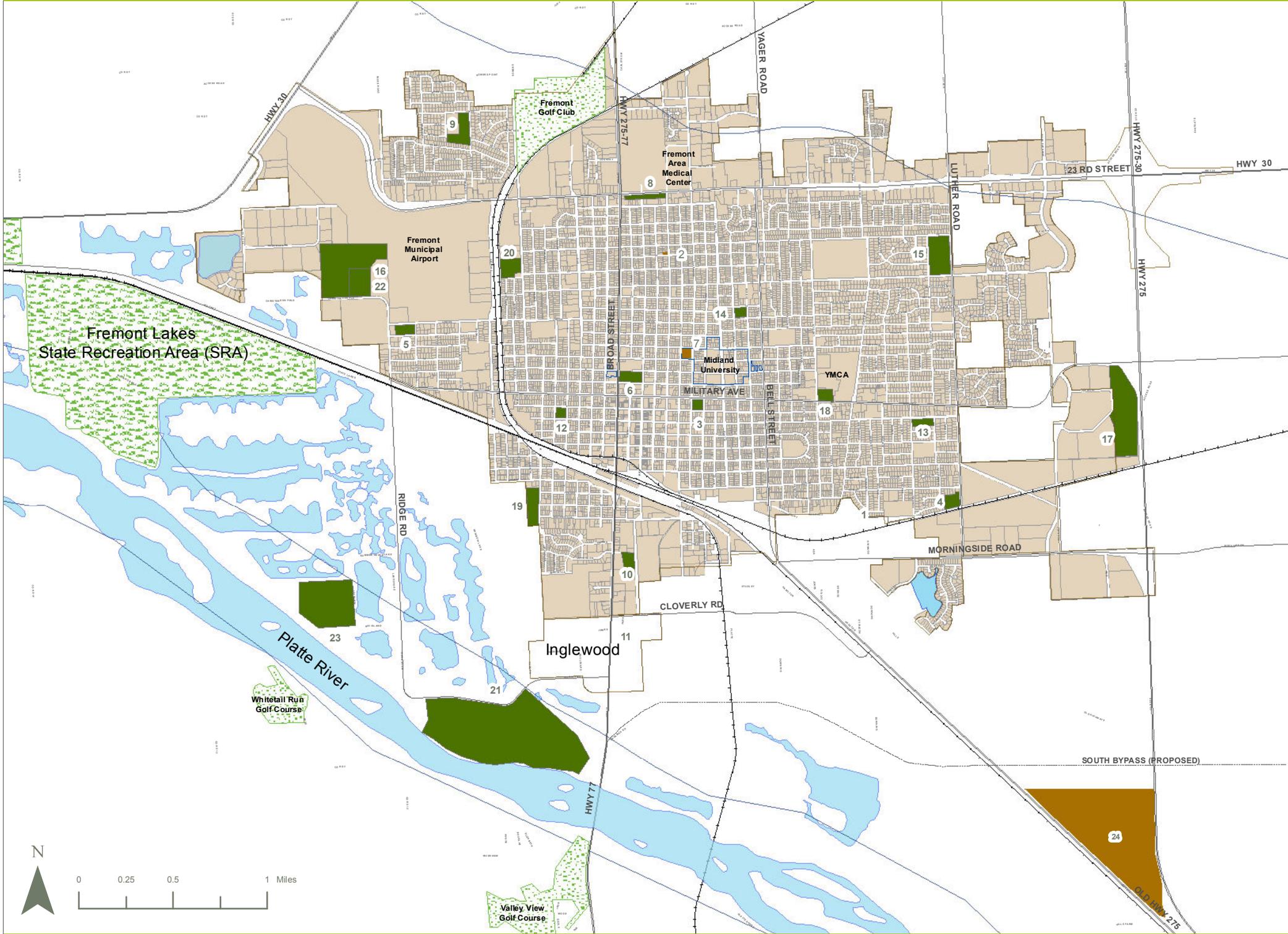
3. Barnard Park
4. Buch Park
5. Davenport Park
6. John C. Fremont (City) Park
7. Kiwanis Park (private)
8. Masonic Park
9. Milliken Park
10. Moller Park
11. Monnich Park
12. Rotary Park
13. Ruwe Park
14. Van Anda Park

COMMUNITY PARKS

15. Clemmons Park
16. Christensen Field
17. Johnson Park
18. Memorial Park
19. Miller Park
20. Ronin Park

SPECIAL USE PARKS

21. Hormel Park
22. Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)
23. Wildwood Park
24. Sports Complex (private)



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Davenport Park



Monnich Park

Fremont's neighborhood parks offer facilities for baseball and softball and also unique activities like the archery range at Monnich Park, located in south Fremont.

distribution. Presently, the City has 12 city-owned neighborhood parks that total 43.99 acres, including Kiwanis Park, which is a private space (owned by Midland University) located at E. 11th Street and N. Union Street.

Barnard Park (Clarkson St. & Military Ave.)

Located in the Barnard Park Historic District, this park is only four blocks from downtown. The park is covered by dense, mature trees and a traditional town square setup with only on-street parking. It is well connected to the surrounding neighborhood and serves as a landmark destination remarkable for its beauty, central location, and historic importance.

Buch Park (Luther Rd. & Donna St.)

Located in southeast Fremont, Buch Park serves the surrounding residential area with a youth baseball field, playground, open space, and two parking lots. Access to the park is limited as the south side of the park backs up to the railroad and the east boundary is residences. Scattered trees provide shade along the periphery, while a large, open field accommodates informal recreational activity. Although this older park lacks internal sidewalk circulation and parking lot lighting, it offers more amenities and adequate parking than many comparably sized parks.

John C. Fremont City Park (9th St. & Broad St.)

Located near downtown, John C. Fremont Park, also known as City Park, serves as a community-wide gathering space for City-sponsored events and programs. Mature trees and outdoor art installations decorate the perimeter of the largely unprogrammed open space. The internal sidewalks connect to adjacent land uses, offering convenient pedestrian access to Metropolitan Community College, downtown, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Davenport Park (Linden Ave. & Davenport Ave.)

The well-maintained softball facilities at Davenport Park are a great asset to the neighborhood they serve and also complement the baseball fields at Christensen Field, which is in close proximity. The covered pavilion is a larger facility than the other neighborhood parks, making it a good location for gatherings or events. This park also has mature trees that provide excellent shade.

Masonic Park (Hwy. 30 & Main St.)

Masonic Park abuts the 23rd Street commercial corridor and sits prominently across from the Masonic Eastern Star Home, complementing the extensive landscape. Access to the park is convenient for nearby businesses and residences, providing a scenic break

in the otherwise business-dominated area. The eastern corner of the park provides minimal playground facilities while the western half of the park features a Boy Scouts of America replica of the Statue of Liberty. This linear-shaped park primarily serves as open space allowing for perennial flower beds along the street that contribute to the beauty of this mostly natural space.

Milliken Park (Wyoming Ave. & Jones Dr.)

Centrally located in the neighborhood, Milliken Park, is a school-park joint venture located on the school campus with good lighting and internal sidewalk circulation. Milliken has diverse playground amenities geared toward elementary-aged children, including a sandbox, youth basketball hoops, and tether balls, in addition to three gravel and wood-chipped playground areas.

Moller Park (S. Broad St. & Jefferson Road)

Baseball and softball facilities serve as economic drivers for the community, attracting participation from local and out-of-town residents. As the premier baseball facility in Fremont, Moller Park offers a full-size baseball field with an announcer stand, bleachers, batting cages, Moller Community Center, and playground. The baseball teams of the American Legion, Midland University, and Bergen High School play on



John C. Fremont City Park



Van Anda Park



Rotary Park

this field. The site is equipped with stadium lighting for night games and a gravel parking lot with entrances from South Broad Street and Jefferson Road.

Monnich Park (S. Park Ave & Boulevard St.)

Located several miles south of the City, Monnich Park functions as an archery range. It features five archery pads and a sand pit. The rest of the park contains a large swath of open space lined by mature trees. The lack of park amenities, such as sidewalks, restroom facilities, and lighting, combined with its agricultural surroundings and remote location, give this park a rural character.

Rotary Park (5th St. & K St.)

Well-maintained and centrally located, Rotary Park contains a small-scale basketball court and one of the largest playscapes in Fremont. Occupying one city block, Rotary Park is accessible to the adjoining residential areas on all sides and has meandering sidewalks within the park.

Ruwe Park (5th St. & Howard St.)

Located directly on 5th Street and only a block from E. Military Ave., Ruwe Park is convenient for nearby residents to visit. The large quantity of unprogrammed open space makes Ruwe Park an excellent place for picnicking and informal sports activity.

Van Anda Park (Linden Ave. & Pebble St.)

Occupying a city block, Van Anda Park serves as a focal point for the surrounding neighborhood. It features two well-maintained tennis courts and offers an education tool through tree identification and dedications. Van Anda Park offers a nice balance of new and mature trees, with the larger trees lining the outer perimeter, providing shade for walkers.

Kiwanis Park (E. 11th St. and N. Union St.)

This fenced-in neighborhood park is 1.79 acres and features a play structure, tot-lot play structure, swings, spring animals, a gazebo, sidewalks, benches, and trees marked by memorial plaques.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Larger than neighborhood parks, community parks are able to accommodate a broader variety of facilities within each park. From ball fields to dog parks and lake activities, the community parks in Fremont draw residents from across the community, especially for organized activities such as soccer, baseball leagues, or unique activities like boating or fishing. Due to the size and types of facilities and improvements available, there are six parks that are classified as community parks. These properties account for 182.70 acres.

Christensen Park (16th St. & Ridge Rd.)

Christensen Park draws regional visitors by offering RV camping and programmed event space for baseball and soccer tournaments and leagues. The athletic facilities include four full-size softball fields and batting cages, eight full-size soccer fields, along with concession stands and ample seating.

Clemmons Park (16th St. & Luther Rd.)

By offering the largest diversity of amenities including a sled hill, soccer fields, dog park, volleyball courts, batting cages, baseball fields, and playground equipment, Clemmons Park attracts users from the entire community. The condition is well-maintained with good internal sidewalk circulation and lighting. The dense tree cover and unprogrammed open space allows for picnicking and lawn activity. Tree identification and dedications is an educational tool. A drainage swale, connected by a pedestrian bridge, divides the park into two halves with varying topography. Also featured in the park is the Dodge County Vietnam Veterans Memorial encased by a gazebo.

Johnson Park (Military Ave. & Johnson Rd.)

Located in southeast Fremont, Johnson Park is a gateway to the community. It is Fremont's newest park featuring a natural landscape and a concentration of recreation amenities including a boat ramp



Ronin Park



Miller Park



Riecken Nelson Horse Arena

and fishing lake. The park serves as the center of the adjoining attractions with the Fremont Middle School and new 5th and 6th grade school and Splash Station on either side. A pedestrian trail meanders along the lake's shoreline and is integrated with a nine-hole disc golf course. Soccer fields adjoin the 5th and 6th grade school campus. The convenient location along U.S. Hwy. 275, combined with the regional amenity of an aquatic facility, attracts out of town visitors. Splash Station has an average of 33,000 visitors per year, with 65 percent coming from out of town.¹ Currently, due to its recent construction, the park lacks adequate shade and permanent restroom facilities.

Memorial Park (Lincoln Ave. & Military Ave.)

This park is maintained and operated by the City. Fremont High School, Bergan High School, and Midland University use Memorial Stadium as their football and track complex, complete with concession stands and lockers, and also softball facilities with bleachers and dug outs. The park has multiple playground facilities on the southern half of the park, as well as a splash pad and picnic shelter.

¹ *Fremont TARGET Report*, Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, June 2010.

Miller Park (S. M St. & W. Jackson St.)

This nine acre park is located in southwest Fremont. Its linear orientation is divided and connected by a dirt parking lot. In the southern half, two well-maintained softball fields are equipped with bleachers, dug-outs, and field lighting. The northern half contains the City's skate park, several horseshoe pits, and several playgrounds. In addition to a sizeable covered pavilion, fairly dense and mature trees provide shade and give the park a pleasant, attractive appearance.

Ronin Park (17th St. & Somers Ave.)

Ronin Park is a community gathering space for water recreation, with the only traditional City-owned pool in Fremont. The pool offers two diving boards and one slide. The park provides a baseball field, sand volleyball, and two tennis courts. It's adjacent to the railroad museum. Ronin Park provides off-street parking and sidewalks that connect it to the surrounding neighborhoods.

SPECIAL USE PARKS

Special use parks and facilities serve the entire community and, depending on their nature and scale, sometimes appeal to the region or state. These facilities provide for specialized and multi-purpose recreation activities. They contribute unique additions to the parks and recreation system and supplement

the traditional indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities. Special use facilities commonly include civic centers, museums, conservancies or arboretums, nature centers and parks, water parks, gymnasiums, a sports stadium or coliseum, and other special features.

In Fremont, the special use parks provide 213 acres to the City's inventory, although their contributions to the park system and community are not measured by size but by the variety of activities provided and the attraction of residents and visitors.

Sports Complex (Proposed)

A new multi-use stadium and baseball complex is in the preliminary planning stages. This is a private initiative for which the city has no financial involvement.

Riecken-Nelson Horse Arena (16th St. & Ridge Rd.)

The Riecken-Nelson Horse Arena is adjacent to Christensen Field and hosts equestrian events. The facility provides stables and bleacher seating at the arena.

Hormel Park (Ridgeland Ave.; Southwest of City)

Fremont's largest park, Hormel Park, is a mostly natural space that offers primitive camping, trails, canoe-



Optimist Park



Kiwanis Park



Milliken Elementary

ing, fishing, an arboretum, and a picnic area. Proposed trails will link Hormel Park to the greater city-wide trail system.

Wildwood Park (Southwest of City)

Mostly a natural area, this park is located between the Platte River and the Fremont State Lakes, and provides trails for users. Because of its location near the State Recreation Area and Hormel Park, Wildwood Park has excellent potential to be linked to Fremont and the greater Nebraska state trail system.

SEMI-PUBLIC PARK FACILITIES/SCHOOL CAMPUSES

While the campuses of the Fremont Public Schools (FPS) are semi-public, their athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, and other recreational improvements offer opportunities for events and activities during and after-school hours. This is particularly true for residents who live in close proximity to these facilities. The school campuses are displayed in **Map 2.2, School Campuses**, and include:

1. Bell Field Elementary (1240 East 11th Street)
2. Clarmar Elementary (1865 East 19th Street)

3. Davenport Elementary (940 Michael Street)
4. Grant Elementary (226 N. Grant Street)
5. Howard Elementary (240 N. Howard Street)
6. Linden Elementary (1250 N. L Street)
7. Milliken Park Elementary (2950 Dale Street)
8. Platteville Elementary (1102 County Road West)
9. Washington Elementary (515 South Broad Street)
10. Fremont Middle School (540 Johnson Road)
11. Fremont 5th & 6th Grade Center (540 Johnson Road)
12. Fremont High School (1750 N. Lincoln Avenue)

Each of the school campuses offer a significant public value. Most schools offer approximately three acres of open space for unprogrammed play activities, and with the exception of certain facilities such as the athletic fields (football, softball, baseball, etc.), the grounds and equipment are generally available for use. Play equipment, tennis courts, baseball fields, and basketball goals are among the facilities offered through these semi-public properties.

PRIVATE SCHOOL CAMPUSES

Fremont has four private school campuses. The only private high school, Archbishop Bergan High School, coordinates with the YMCA and Fremont Public Schools for use of tennis courts and the football field and track at Memorial Stadium. The private schools and their locations are listed below:

1. Archbishop Bergan Elementary School (1515 N. Johnson Road)
2. Archbishop Bergan Middle/Jr. High/High School (545 East 4th Street)
3. Trinity Lutheran Elementary School (1546 N. Luther Road)
4. Heartland Christian School (1106 N. Main Street)

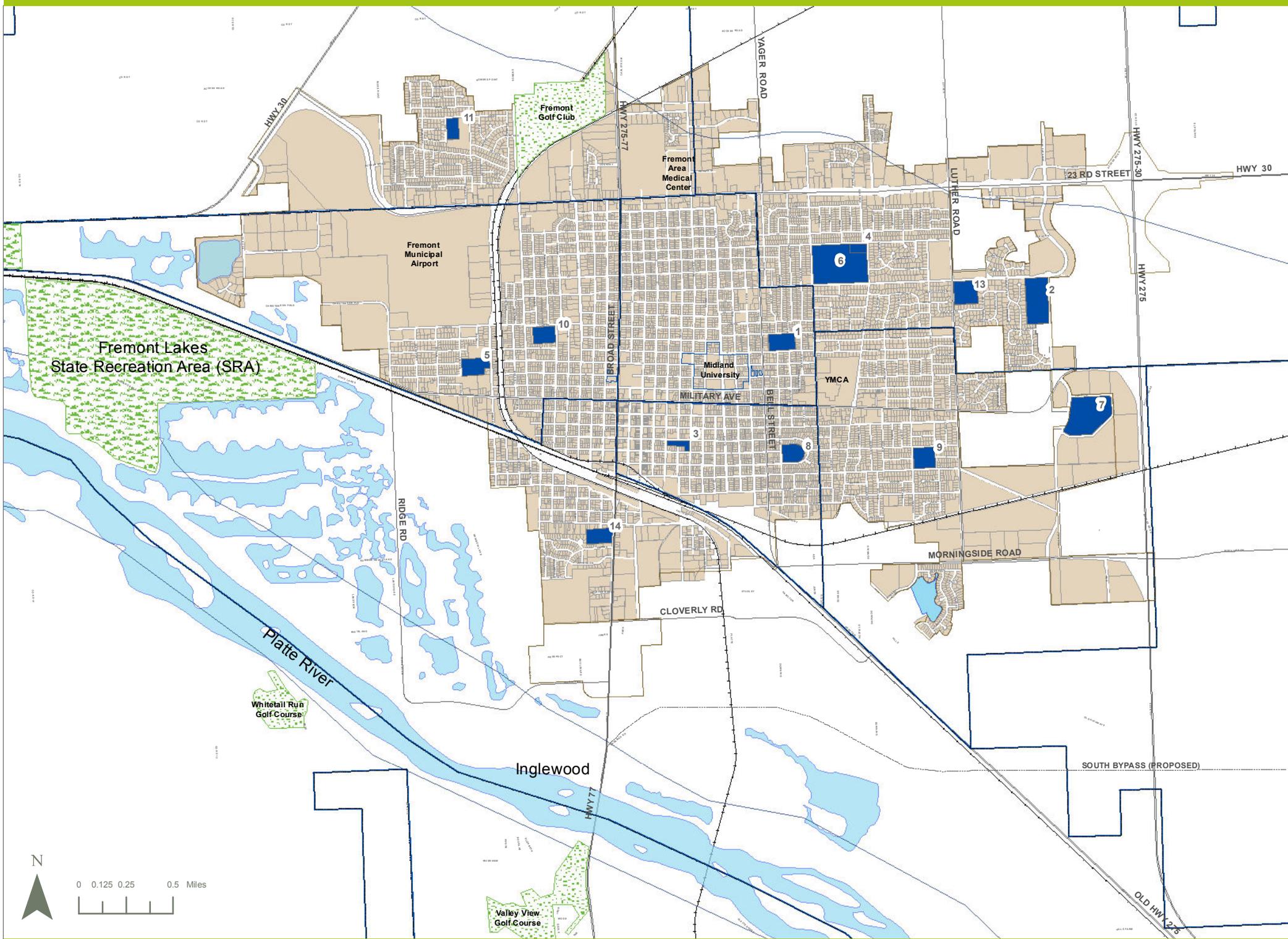
On the following pages are the detailed inventories of each City-owned park, as well as the Fremont Public Schools' facilities. These inventories are useful to maintain record of the equipment and improvements within each park and on each school property. For planning purposes, these inventories are compared to the facility and equipment standards outlined in *Chapter 3, Facility Standards*, to identify both current and future needs. These needs are documented in *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*.

Map 2.2 School Campuses

Map Features

- School Campus
- School Attendance Zones

1. Bell Field Elementary School
2. Bergan Grade School
3. Bergan High School
4. Clarmar Elementary School
5. Davenport Elementary School
6. Fremont High School
7. Fremont Middle School
(5th and 6th Grade Center)
8. Grant Elementary School
9. Howard Elementary School
10. Linden Elementary School
11. Milliken Park Elementary School
12. Platteville Elementary School
13. Trinity School
14. Washington Elementary School



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Table 2.3, Fremont Public Schools' Facilities

Park/Recreation Facility	Bell Field Elem. School	Clamar Elem. School	Davenport Elem. School	Grant Elem. School	Howard Elem. School	Linden Elem. School	Milliken Park Elem. School	Platteville Elem. School	Washington Elem. School	Fremont Middle School	Fremont 5th and 6th grade Center	Fremont High School	Archbishop Bergan Elem.	Archbishop Bergan Middle/Jr.	Trinity Lutheran Elem. School	Heartland Christian School
Basketball Court	1	3 Goals		1.5	1.5	2 Goals	1		1				1		2 Goals	
Bleachers										4		1				
Bench	2				4	2	2						3		2	
Frisbee Golf																
Bicycle Racks							9									
Community Center																
Covered Pavilion/Gazebo																
Football									1	1		1			1	
Drinking Fountain							1									
Gazebo																
Exercise Circuit																
Flag Pole																
Grills/Barbeque Pit																
Monument																
Parking																
- Onstreet only																
- Lots																
- Striping																
- Handicap Spaces																
- Lighting																
Merry Go Round															1	
Picnic Tables							3									
Picnic Shelter																
Playground/Playscape	2	1	1	1	1	1		N/A	1		N/A		1	N/A	1	N/A
Restrooms			1				1									
Volleyball																
- Sand/Grass court																
Slide																
Senior Center																
Swings	6	14	8	8	16	12	10		13				6		10	
Skate Park																
Sled Hill																
Splash Pad																
Soccer Field	2			1	1	1	2			1					1	
- Informal																
Spring Animal																
Softball Field						1	1									
- Concessions																
- Lighting																
- Hitting Cage																
- Dugout benches																
- Informal																
- Bleachers																
Swimming Pool																
Trails																
Trash Cans							5						2		2	
Tennis												12				
- Lights												Yes				



Fremont has extensive interagency coordination. For example, the track at Memorial Stadium (right) is used by Midland University and both High Schools, Sidner Ice Arena (middle) is used by UNL Hockey Club, and the Fremont High School and Midland University Golf Teams play at Fremont Golf Club (left).

An inventory of the facilities and improvements in each city park and school property is displayed in **Table 2.2, Inventory of Public Parks and Recreation Facilities** and **Table 2.3, Fremont Public Schools' Facilities**. The tables denote the presence or absence of a particular type of amenity and the quantity of the amenity present. The amenities listed for each property include such things as the number of benches, drinking fountains, picnic tables and shelters, playgrounds, trash cans, etc. The types of activities for each property can also be determined by looking at the availability of athletic fields or courts, areas for picnicking, playgrounds, as well as for some special activities including trail walking or running, skating, or sledding. The geographic distribution of athletic fields and courts is illustrated in **Map 2.3, Athletic Facilities**.

Local Coordination

The City has a remarkable history of partnerships and working with the Fremont Public Schools (FPS), Fremont Family YMCA, Midland University, as well as the Nighthawks/Lady Hawks, American Legion, and the Tennis Association. This cooperation and these partnerships provide the best possible facilities and services to community residents. Continued involvement and expanded cooperative adventures are strongly advocated by this plan.

CITY FACILITIES

As described earlier in this chapter, the City offers a number of park facilities, fields, and courts that are used by each of its partner organizations (YMCA, Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, Berigan Catholic High School, American Legion, Nighthawks/Ladyhawks, and Tennis Association), as well as outside clubs, teams, and organizations and the general public. Displayed in **Table 2.4, Use of City Facilities**, is the utilization of the City-owned parks where there is baseball/softball fields, soccer and football fields, tennis courts, and open areas used for practices and little league or club games.

FREMONT FAMILY YMCA

The YMCA is a significant and highly valued asset to the greater Fremont community. Its facilities are used by many outside organizations, groups, and clubs as shown in **Table 2.5, Use of YMCA Facilities**. Its indoor basketball and tennis courts are used for practises, leagues and tournaments; the pools provide for high school practices, exercise classes, and the Special Olympics; the fitness studio is used for dance and cheerleading by Midland University and others; and the indoor ice arena is used by regional hockey teams and the UNL Hockey Club, as well as free use on out-of-school days and party rentals. Students and faculty of Midland University and Metropolitan Community College and the staff of the Fremont Area Medical Center are members of

the YMCA. Over 300 programs are offered annually, which together with the available facilities, attracts around 25,000 card scans each month.

OTHERS

More examples of local coordination are found at the educational institutions as shown in **Table 2.6, Use of Midland University Facilities** and **Table 2.7, Use of Fremont Public Schools' Facilities**.

RECIPROCITY

Given the amount of coordination and shared use of facilities it is advised that reciprocal agreements be prepared and adopted by and for each provider. These agreements would document the arrangements, responsibilities, and obligations of each party and may be used to identify the mutually beneficial services. Most importantly, these agreements would formalize the relationships and ensure transparency and fairness. Lastly, an agreement may be used as a basis for determining utilization and cost-sharing for joint acquisition, development, and operations, particularly for costly investments and improvements to major facilities.

Table 2.4, Use of City Facilities

Public Facilities	Public	YMCA	Midland University	Fremont Public Schools	Bergan Catholic HS	American Legion	Nighthawks/Ladyhawks	Tennis Association
Davenport Park	X	Baseball					Baseball	
Milliken Park	X			X				
Moller Field Park	X		Baseball	X	Baseball	Baseball		
Monnich Park	X							
Van Anda Park	X	Tennis						Tennis Courts
Clemmons Park	X						Baseball	
Memorial Park/Stadium	X	Summer Fun Club Childcare, Baseball, Softball	Football, Track	Football	Football, Track		Softball	
Miller Park	X	Baseball, Softball					Softball	
Ronin Park	X	Tennis					Baseball	Tennis Courts
Johnson Park	X		Lacrosse	X				
Christensen Field	X	Youth Soccer, Baseball	Baseball, Softball, Soccer	Baseball, Softball, Soccer			Baseball	
Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)	X							
Fremont Golf Club (Private)	X		Golf	High School Golf				

Table 2.5, Use of YMCA Facilities

YMCA Facilities	City	YMCA Members	Metro	Midland University	Fremont Public Schools	Bergan Catholic HS	Hospital	Nighthawks/Ladyhawks	Tennis Association
Full-sized gymnasiums (four)		X		Volleyball, intramural	Practice	Basketball			
Aquatics center	Lifeguarding Classes/ Instruction	X	X	Practices, Training classes	P.E. Meets, HS Swim practice, Sp. Needs Classes		Rehabilitation		Youth instruction
Indoor tennis courts (five)		X	X (General)	Warrior Tennis, Duals Practices	Duals Tournaments	P.E.		Practice	Lessons and fall/ winter leagues, Indoor tournaments
Olympic-sized ice arena	Out of school free skate	X	X (Strength)		Fremont Skate, Learn to Skate P.E.	P.E.			
Wellness center		X	X (Faculty)	General Use					
Fitness studio		X	X	Students are members, dance & cheerleading credits			Wellness Center		
Racquetball courts (three)		X	X	Classes		P.E.			
Gymnastics center		X							
1/10th mile walk/jog track		X	X	Training/Practice		Classes/Practice			

Table 2.6, Use of Midland University Facilities

Midland University Facilities	City	Midland University	Metro	YMCA
YMCA Wellness Center		X	X	Staff Operated
Indoor Athletics (track)		X	X	
Heedum Practice Field		X		
Watchorn Football Complex		X		
Schneider Weight Room		X		
Basketball/Volleyball Court		X	X	
Hopkins Event Center				
Meeting rooms				

Table 2.7, Use of Fremont Public Schools' Facilities

Fremont Public Schools' (FPS) Facilities	City	FPS	Bergan Catholic HS	Midland University	Tennis Association
Tennis Courts (14)	X	X		Lessons tournament	X
After school programs		X	X		
Shared playground space	X	X		All but Grant, Washington	
Clarmar				Track Flag Football,	
Basketball at High School/Middle School				Basketball tournament	

Map 2.3 Athletic Facilities

Map Features

-  Public and Private Parks
-  School Facilities
-  Number and Type of Athletic Facility

POCKET PARKS

1. Buckridge Park
2. E. 18th St. and N. C St. (private)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

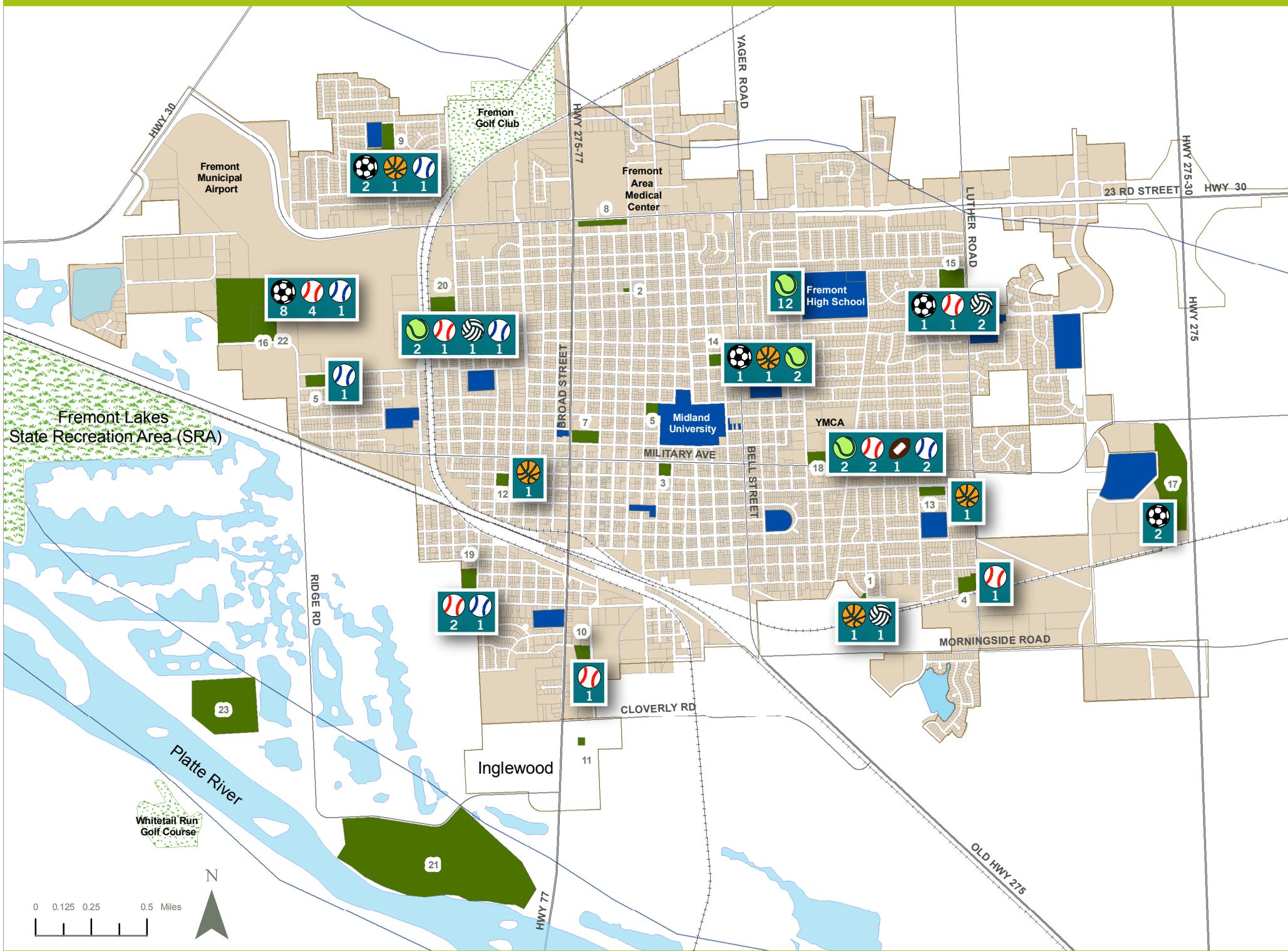
3. Barnard Park
4. Buch Park
5. Davenport Park
6. E. 11th St. and N. Union St. (private)
7. John C. Fremont (City) Park
8. Masonic Park
9. Milliken Park
10. Moller Park
11. Monnich Park
12. Rotary Park
13. Ruwe Park
14. Van Anda Park

COMMUNITY PARKS

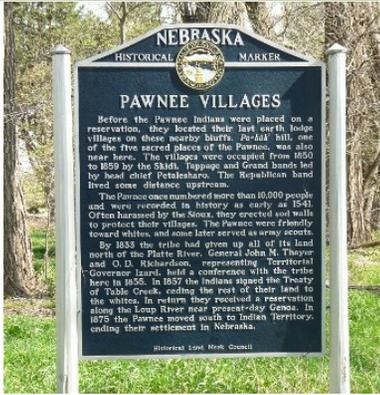
15. Clemmons Park
16. Christensen Field
17. Johnson Park
18. Memorial Park
19. Miller Park
20. Ronin Park

SPECIAL USE PARKS

21. Hormel Park
22. Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)
23. Wildwood Park



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Pawnee Villages
Nebraska Historical Marker
located south of Fremont

RECREATIONAL TOURISM ASSETS

Fremont hosts two Nebraska Historical Markers: The Great Platte River Route West marker located at the Fremont State Lakes four miles west of the City, and the Pawnee Villages marker, located south of the Platte River on Hwy. 77. The City can promote these historical assets to tourists interested in learning about Nebraska’s rich cultural history.

Additionally, Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area was ranked in the top 10 tourism attractions in Nebraska in 2009 by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development’s Travel and Tourism Division. Located in the Lower Platte River Corridor (See Figure 2.1, Lower Platte River Corridor), the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance identifies the State Lakes as one of the state’s leading tourist draws.

The City has created its own attraction with the development of Splash Station. This water recreation facility is a significant attraction for residents and visitors alike. The park features six different elements including:

- A large yellow body slide that empties into a section of the main pool vessel, and a blue speed slide that empties into its own trough;
- A water tower that dumps 500 gallons of water every two minutes in the zero-depth area;

- A train engine slide and play feature that has three small water slides, manual water cannons, and water spray from all angles;
- A splashground area for younger children; and,
- A wave action pool that doubles as a lap pool.¹

Assessment of Park Conditions

The condition of the existing parks, recreation facilities, public open spaces and buildings, equipment, and improvements is important relative to the perceived quality of the community’s parks and recreation system. The quality appearance and maintenance of the park system contributes to the image of the community and the perception of its livability. It is therefore, essential for the City to maintain its facilities in quality repair and provide diligent care of its grounds and improvements.

An assessment of park conditions was conducted in October 2010. The scoring categories were as follows:

- Turf, Plantings, and Trees;
- Parking;
- Sidewalks, Trails, and Pathways;
- Basketball Courts and Equipment;

¹ <http://www.fremontsplashstation.com/>

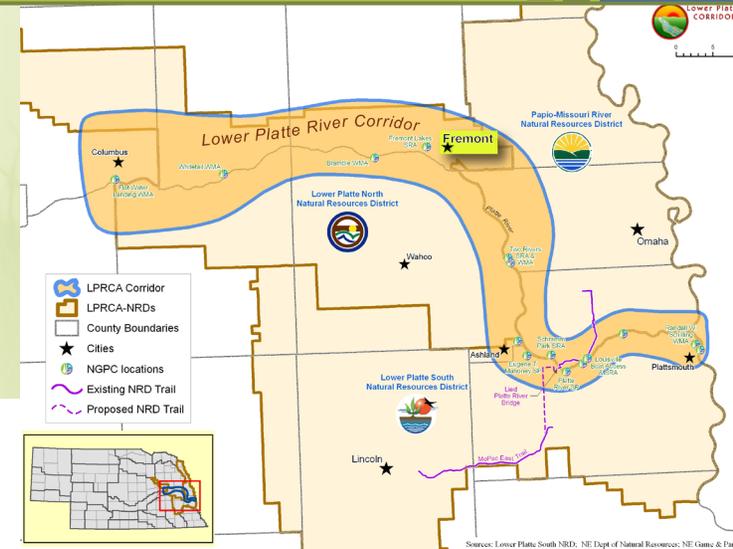


Figure 2.1, Lower Platte River Corridor
(Source: Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance)



The train feature at Splash Station has three slides, manually powered water cannons, and water that sprays from all angles.

Table 2.8, Park Condition Assessment

Condition Criteria	Buckridge Park	Barnard Park	Buch Park	John C. Fremont Park	Davenport Park	Masonic Park	Milliken Park	Moller Park	Monnich Park	Rotary Park	Ruwe Park	Van Anda Park	Clemmons Park	Memorial Park	Miller Park	Ronin Park	Johnson Park	Christensen Field
Turf	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1
Plantings and Trees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Parking			3		1			2	4				0	1	3	1	2	2
Park Sidewalks and Trails		1		0	2		1			0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	
Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces	1						0			0	2	3				1		
Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets												1		1		2		
Park Accessibility	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	1
Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions		0			1			1		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
Playing Fields and Equipment			2		1		1	0				0	0	1	1	2	1	0
Signage	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
Fencing					0			0			1		1		1	1		1
Lighting		1	2	0	2	1	0	0		0	0	2	1	0	1	1	2	1
Total Composite Score	1.17	0.50	1.63	0.17	1.00	0.40	0.44	0.40	1.40	0.00	0.50	0.55	0.64	0.50	1.09	1.00	0.70	0.90

- Tennis Courts, Fencing, and Nets;
- Park Accessibility;
- Park Amenities;
- Buildings, Shelters, and Pavilions;
- Playing Fields and Equipment;
- Signage;
- Fencing; and
- Lighting.

The scores for each facility or improvement range

from zero to four, with zero representing the improvements that are in the best condition. A ranking of four is for those buildings, facilities, or improvements that are in very poor condition and therefore, warrant replacement, rehabilitation, or reconstruction. The scores of one, two, and three represent varying levels of condition. Where applicable, there is also an indication of improvements that do not exist in some parks. For each park there was a tabulation of the scores, divided by the total number scored to derive an overall composite value. The composite score indicates the overall condition of the park and, in turn, provides a means to com-

pare the condition of each park relative to others in the parks and recreation system. This information is valuable to determine city-wide priorities and more specifically, to determine what improvements are warranted at each park. In general, the park system is in good condition with an overall average condition of 0.72.

The averaged scores are displayed in **Table 2.8, Park Condition Assessment**. A brief overview of the condition assessment findings is as follows:

- The turf in the City’s parks is generally in good to excellent condition.
- The plantings and trees are generally in excellent condition. Most parks have mature trees with great shade cover. Some additional landscaping is warranted for shade, buffering, and beautification.
- Parking is the number one improvement need, according to this assessment. On-site parking is provided at only a few of the parks. An especially great need for added parking exists at Buch Park

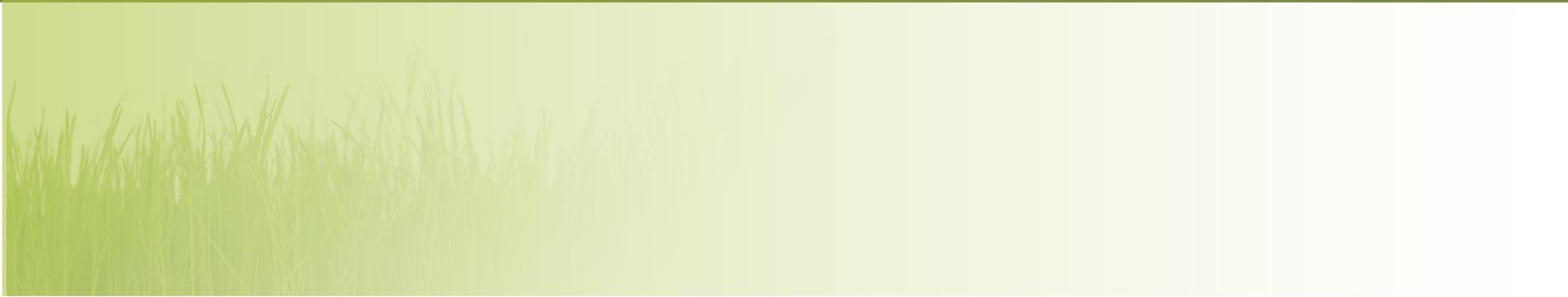


The trees, plantings, and signage at Barnard Park are in excellent condition (top), as is the soccer field turf at Christensen Field (bottom).



and Monnich Park. The dirt surface in Miller Park warrants surfacing, striping, and signage.

- While the conditions of sidewalks, trails, and pathways are good where they exist, in many parks they do not exist. The presence of sidewalks or trails directly correlates with poor accessibility.
 - Basketball nets and playing surfaces are present in six parks. While four of the parks are indicated to be in good to excellent condition, this category is ranked third in improvement needs, as the facilities at Ruwe and Van Anda Park are in moderate to poor condition.
 - Memorial Park, Van Anda Park, and Ronin Park are the only public parks with tennis courts with conditions ranked as moderate to good. This category represents the second highest improvement need. A majority of the tennis facilities are located at Fremont High School.
 - Accessibility is among the highest priorities to ensure patrons can access the City's parks safely and conveniently. The priority must extend beyond the design of individual parks to the design of streets and neighborhoods, which warrant amendments to the subdivision regulations.
 - The amenities within the parks are mostly in good condition, although the assessment indi-
- cated needs for new or improved amenities. Each of the City's parks tend to include the same types of amenities. Variation among the parks and their amenities would create a broader offering of activities for community residents and visitors, which would also help brand a unique identity for the City's park system.
 - Where buildings and shelters exist they are noted to be in relatively good repair. Ongoing maintenance and repair is warranted.
 - The playing fields and equipment are in good condition; however, the turf is noted as worn and bare in some locations. Improved drainage and turf fertilization and irrigation is warranted in high foot-traffic locations.
 - Signage is ranked relatively well. There is a need for additional external directional and safety signage and internal way-finding in the larger community parks.
 - Where fencing is present it is in good condition. There are several locations cited where fencing would be beneficial, which is primarily to contain small children and balls from rolling into adjacent streets, but also for screening of abutting properties.
 - Lighting is ranked as excellent at several parks, but in moderate condition at four parks indicating maintenance will be needed.



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Chapter

ADOPTED 05.29.12

3

Facility Standards

Standards provide a measure for determining the amount of park acres and number of recreation facilities required to meet the needs of Fremont residents and visitors. Standards for parks and recreation facilities are typically determined by using a population ratio method that is based on a unit of population, e.g. (x) acres per 1,000 persons. The standards defined in this chapter are used in *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*, to determine the current and future needs for Fremont based on a projected 2030 population of 29,794.

National Standards

National standards are useful to ensure a minimum standard is achieved in the provision of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines (formerly the Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines). The standards outlined in this publication are based on a national survey of American municipalities of all sizes and geographic regions. These standards provide a measure for determining the amount of parkland and types and quantities of recreation facilities required to meet the needs and desires of community residents.

While a standards-based approach is effective to determine the needed acreage of parks and the numbers of certain recreation facilities, each community has unique factors that must be considered in determining the appropriate numbers and types of parks and recreation facilities. Factors that must be considered for a community-based approach include the usage of individual facilities; participation in both public and private recreation programs and organizations, such as those of the YMCA; demographic characteristics (see *Blueprint for Tomorrow Chapter 1, Plan Introduction*); local climatic conditions such as average temperature and rainfall;

Pocket Parks

- Site Characteristics: Close proximity to high density development
- Service Area: One-eighth mile
- Desirable Size: 0.25 to 0.50 acre
- Facility Types: Small-scale facilities, suited to nearby development

Neighborhood Parks

- Site Characteristics: Evenly distributed across the City with easy and safe access for nearby residents
- Service Area: Primarily serves neighborhood residents within a one-quarter mile radius
- Desirable Size: Minimum 3.0 to 5.0 acres
- Facility Types: Active and passive facilities suitable to the adjacent neighborhood

Community Parks

- Site Characteristics: Located to provide full access to the City
- Service Area: Primarily for residents within a one mile radius, but available to persons throughout the City
- Desirable Size: Minimum 7.5 to 25.0 acres or larger
- Facility types: Large-scale field and court complexes, recreation facilities, and active/passive outdoor spaces

natural resources such as the State Lakes, Platte River, and wetlands and woodlands; and the availability of nearby state parks, as well as those in nearby municipalities like Omaha.

Local issues and challenges necessitating development of parks and recreation facilities that are unique to Fremont include:

- A projected future population of 29,794 persons in the Year 2030.
- A significant proportion (26.3 percent) of the City's population is 19 years or younger, which suggests a continuing need for active recreation facilities, such as courts and playing fields, and recreation programs.
- A significantly higher proportion of retired and mature adults (17.8 percent) than the national average (12.6 percent) indicating a need to provide both active and passive programs and facilities.
- A community expressed desire to expand the trail system particularly including a connection to the State Lakes, as well as to each of the parks, schools, and public institutions.

Keeping in mind the value of both approaches, a combined standards- and community-based approach is used in this plan to determine the amount of parks and recreation space required in Fremont.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

A variety of sizes and types of parks and recreation facilities and amenities are recommended to satisfy the diverse interests of the population, to ensure adequate and equal opportunity for all persons, and ultimately, to encourage use by all population groups. To achieve these objectives, the City's parks are classified as follows:

Pocket Parks are typically developed within apartment complexes, retirement communities, in neighborhoods and other small pockets of land. They are intended to meet the passive recreational needs of these residents and the limited recreational activity of the immediate neighbors. Buckridge is an example of a pocket park.

Neighborhood parks provide a variety of activity areas and facilities. These parks are designed to accommodate the needs of neighborhoods, typically within a distance of six to eight blocks. Neighborhood parks include Barnard, Buch, Davenport, John C. Fremont, Kiwanis (private), Masonic, Milliken, Moeller, Monnich, Rotary, Ruwe, and Van Anda.

Community parks provide for the needs of the broad community. There are a large variety of facilities and intended uses for community parks, including

both passive and active recreation, such as walking and jogging paths, athletic courts, ball fields, lakes or other natural features, picnic areas, activity centers, swimming pools, and other facilities that draw residents within a reach of one mile, and in many cases from across the community. The community parks include Clemmons, Christensen, Johnson, Memorial, Miller and Ronin Parks.

Linear parks or greenways may be for passive or active recreational use, often serving as a linkage or connection between two or more parks and recreation areas, neighborhoods, schools, and other community activity areas. An example of a linear park might be the land along the river corridor and adjacent to the State Lakes, but also may include a riparian or other nature trails.

Special use facilities contribute unique additions to the parks and recreation system. Examples include the Riecken-Nelson Horse Arena, Hormel and Wildwood Parks, Splash Station, and Memorial Stadium.

Park Facilities and Improvements

As land is evaluated for acquisition and development, it is important to identify park facility and equipment requirements. Identifying these requirements allows the types and numbers of required facilities

Park Acreage Standards

Pocket = .25 acre/1000 persons
 Neighborhood = 2 acres/1000 persons
 Community = 5 acres/1000 persons
 Total = 7.25 acres/1000 persons

and equipment to be included in each proposed park, while also allowing for effective improvements to be made to existing parks to ensure that they are viable and attractive for their users. The information provided in **Table 3.1, Facility Standards**, details the recommended size and dimensions, facility ratios, orientation, service area, and location of the more significant recreation facilities. These are based on standards published by the National Recreation and Park Association. This information serves as a guideline for parks and recreation area development and improvements.

Displayed in **Table 3.2, Equipment Standards**, is the recommended minimum facility and equipment improvements for the City’s neighborhood and community parks. Use of these standards will ensure comparable development standards across the City, and in turn, a quality parks and recreation system.

Since each existing site and proposed new park is unique in terms of its size, parcel shape, orientation, ingress and egress, abutting and nearby land uses, and current/anticipated use, it is prudent to make adjustments to the types of facilities and equipment that are provided. Moreover, since user characteristics tend to fluctuate by season and by type of user, the ratios may require adjustment to meet the needs at each individual park. Guidelines must also be

Table 3.1, Facility Standards

Recreation Facility	Recommended Space Requirements	Recommended Size and Dimensions	Recommended Orientation	Units per Population	Service Area Radius	Location
Basketball			Long axis	1/5,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks
- Youth	2,400–3,036 s.f.	46'- 50' X 84'	North/South			
- High School	5,040–7,280 s.f.	50' X 84'				
Tennis	7,200 s.f./court 2 ac./complex	36' X 78'	North/South	1/2,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Best in complexes of 2 – 4 courts
Volleyball	4,000 s.f.	30' X 60'	North/South	1/5,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	School or recreation facility
Baseball	1.20 ac.–3.85 ac.	Bases – 60'- 90' Mound – 46'-60' Foul – 200'- 320' Field radius – 250' – 400'	Home plate to mound – East/Northeast	1/5,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Community park (with lights)
Soccer	1.7 ac.–2.1 ac.	195'- 22' X 330'- 360'	Northwest/Southeast	1/3,000 persons	1 - 2 miles	Adjacent to schools or in community park
Golf driving range	13.5 ac. for a min. of 25 tees	900' X 690' wide (add 12' to width for each additional tee)	Long axis Southwest/Northeast with golfer driving to Northeast	1/25,000 persons	30 minute travel time	Part of golf course complex or private range
¼ mile track	4.3 ac.	Overall width - 276', length - 600.02' Track width – 32'	Long axis Northwest/Southeast with finish line at North end	1/3,000 persons	15 - 30 minute travel time	Part of high school or in community park in combination with an athletic field
Softball	1.5 ac. – 2.0 ac.	Bases – 60' Mound – 46' Field radius – 225'- 275'	Home plate to mound – East/Northeast	1/5,000 persons (if also used for youth baseball)	¼ - ½ mile	Community park (with lights)
Swimming Pool	1.0 ac. – 2.0 ac.	Teaching – 25 yds. X 45' Competition – 25m X 16m Deck ratio – 2:1	Lifeguard stations face east, South or North	1/10,000 persons Room for 3-5 percent of population at one time	15 – 30 minute travel time	Community park or school site

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association

Table 3.2, Equipment Standards

Equipment	Pocket Park	Neighborhood/ Linear Park	Community Park
Basketball Court	0.00	0.13	0.15
Bicycle Rack	0.50	0.50	0.10
Drinking Fountain	0.50	0.50	0.25
Exercise Circuit ¹	0.00	0.00	1.00
Irrigation System	No	Yes	Yes
Grills/BBQ Pits	0.50	0.50	0.50
Park Bench	2.00	2.00	0.50
Parking Spaces	0.00	4.00	6.00
Parking Lot Landscape Island ²	0.00	0.07	0.07
Pavilion, Covered	0.00	0.50	0.10
Picnic Table	2.00	2.00	1.00
Playground Equipment ³	5.0-10.0	15.0-20.0	60.0-65.0
Restrooms	0.00	0.00	0.05
Sidewalk	--	Along street frontage and within park	Along street frontage and within park
Security lights	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trash Cans/ Enclosures	0.50	0.50	0.50

All values are per acre unless otherwise indicated.

¹Per trail course

²Per parking space

³Number of children

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



Typical neighborhood park (left) and community Park (right) site plans.

considered for playground design, equipment maintenance, safety, and injury prevention. (See *Appendix B, Design Guidelines*)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACILITIES AND DESIGN

The Parks and Recreation Board reviewed a list of facilities for each type of park. The following recommendations reflect the outcomes of this review and the desires of the community. However, it is important to consider the park location and the demographics of its users in its design. It is a recommendation of this plan for a design workshop to be facilitated with residents to tailor the design of parks to their needs and preferences. Essentially, each park should be unique in its own way. Therefore, the following facilities are considerations of park elements in the design process.

Pocket Parks

A pocket park is the smallest park classification. This type of park should be used to address the needs of a concentrated population, such as residents of a multi-family building or a retirement complex. There are no specific criteria to guide the development of pocket parks, although the facilities and improvements should be tailored to meet the needs of the immediate users, which may be influenced by factors such as

age. User input should be a primary determinant for developing pocket parks so that the needs and desires of future users are reflected in design and development. User participation in the development process can be achieved through surveys, focus group discussions, and design workshops.

Recommended facilities and improvements for pocket parks include:

- ADA accessible curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks;
- Benches;
- Bicycle rack(s);
- Drinking fountain;
- Garbage bins;
- Irrigation system;
- Landscaping and/or natural vegetation;
- Lighting;
- On-street or shared, off-street parking;
- Park identification sign viewable from all public rights-of-way;
- Perimeter screening and fencing, as necessary for neighborhood buffering;
- Picnic table with a small shelter and grill;



Miller Park, a community park in west Fremont, offers a skate park and horseshoe facilities that draw visitors from across the City.

- Playground equipment for 5 to 10 children;
- Sidewalks around the park perimeter;
- Street signs for “Children at Play”; and
- Trees to provide shade.

Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park serves the residents generally within a one-half mile walking distance. These parks should be designed to have facilities and improvements to accommodate use by more than one neighborhood. Ease of access from surrounding neighborhoods, a central location, and pedestrian linkages are key factors in developing neighborhood parks. The site should accommodate both semi-active and passive recreation uses and accommodate the needs of all ages. It is recommended to include park users in the design process to ensure the park is compatible with the neighborhood and accounts for the needs and desires of its users.

Facilities and improvements to be considered in the design of neighborhood parks include:

- ADA accessible curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks;
- Benches;
- Drinking fountains;
- Garbage bins;

- Irrigation system;
- Landscaping and/or natural vegetation;
- Lighting;
- Multi-purpose open play area;
- Off-site directional signage;
- On- or off-street parking;
- Park identification sign viewable from all public right-of-ways;
- Perimeter screening and fencing, as necessary for neighborhood buffering;
- Picnic shelter with tables, lighting, and electricity for 25 to 40 persons;
- Picnic tables with small shelters and grills;
- Playground equipment for 15 to 20 children;
- Restrooms;
- Sidewalks or walking trails around the park perimeter;
- Street signs for “Children at Play”;
- Tot lot separate from playground equipment; and
- Trees to provide shade.

Community Parks

Community parks are intended for residents generally within one mile, but they are also available to

persons throughout the community. As such, the facilities and improvements in community parks must be planned and designed for heavy use by persons of all ages and from all areas of the community. Community parks are intended for both active and passive recreational uses. These parks should have suitable areas to accommodate ball fields and a variety of natural vegetation. Where feasible, they should be located adjacent to a greenway or linear connection so that residents in nearby neighborhoods may safely access the park by way of walking, jogging, or bicycling. While user participation is always preferred during the park design process, it is particularly critical in the case of a community park given the large area that it serves. As such, neighborhood and community input should be a primary determinant of the development program.

Facilities and improvements to be considered in the design of community parks include:

- ADA accessible curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks;
- Basketball/ multi-purpose courts;
- Benches;
- Concrete surface for general play area;
- Covered pavilion(s) (50' x 90');



Fremont offers a variety of linear pathways from inner-park sidewalks at Barnard Park, to bikeways at Johnson Park and natural trails in Hormel Park.

- Demonstration/interpretive gardens;
- Dog park;
- Drinking fountains;
- Fencing for ball fields, athletic courts, and secured areas;
- Garbage bins;
- Irrigation system for picnic areas, athletic fields, and other public use areas;
- Landscaping and/or natural vegetation;
- Off-site directional signage;
- Off-street parking;
- Park identification sign within view of all public rights-of-way;
- Perimeter screening/fencing, as necessary for neighborhood buffering;
- Picnic shelter(s) with tables, lighting, and electricity for 60 to 75 persons;
- Picnic tables with small shelters;
- Playground equipment for 60 to 65 children;
- Recreation or multi-use center, such as a teen center;
- Restrooms;
- Sand volleyball court;
- Security lighting;
- Sidewalks around the park perimeter;
- Skateboard park (optional);
- Soccer/football fields;
- Softball and little league fields with a field house and concession stand;
- Splash park;
- Street signs for “Children at Play”;
- Tennis courts;
- Tot lot separate from playground;
- Trees to provide shade; and
- Walking/jogging paths with mileage markers.

Linear Parks and Greenways

Linear parks are usually developed along a natural resource such as the Platte River or along levees. The benefits of linear parks include the preservation of valuable open spaces and natural habitats; an environment for walking, jogging, and bicycling; a corridor linking neighborhoods to parks, schools, and public institutions; and passive recreational opportunities. Linear parks may also be a buffer between land uses. Design standards for linear parks are relatively loose to allow maximum use of the natural environment in the design. The existing topography, severity of flooding, and unique natural features are often de-

termining design factors. Linear parks of less than 15 usable feet should be kept to a minimum. Corridor widths of 25 feet and wider give flexibility in design and are thus, encouraged.

Recommended facilities and improvements for linear parks include:

- ADA accessible curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks;
- Benches;
- Drinking fountains;
- Garbage bins;
- Interpretive signage;
- Landscaping and natural vegetation;
- Native areas;
- Off-site directional signage;
- Off-street parking at trailhead locations;
- Park identification sign every 1,320 feet along public rights-of-way;
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing signs at street intersections;
- Perimeter screening/fencing for property buffering;
- Picnic tables with small shelters;
- Restrooms at the trailhead;

The site chosen for Johnson Park serves a storm water management function while also offering a recreational amenity for the community.



- Security lighting;
- Trees and shade structures; and
- Walking/jogging paths with mileage markers (a combination of hard and soft surfaces is desirable).

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

Various factors influence the siting of parks and recreation areas. Among the criteria for site selection is the surrounding land use characteristics (e.g. type and scale of development, lot size), the size and anticipated use of the proposed area, and the potential physical development constraints and barriers (e.g. arterial roadways and other streets, waterways, and drainage ditches).

General site selection criteria and principal considerations for park and recreation facilities include the following factors:

Topography

- The park should have a land surface configuration (relief) to accommodate its intended uses such as ball fields and open play areas.
- Some topography, even if created through cut and fill, is desirable to create visual interest and to offer additional opportunities for park uses, such as mountain biking and hiking.

- The site should have a sufficient slope to allow for adequate storm water runoff from ball fields and other developed areas.
- Desirable views into and away from the site should be preserved and protected.

Soils

- The topsoil should be suitable for turf grasses and trees.
- The area should be protected from soil erosion during construction and designed to avoid erosion upon completion (e.g. through mulches, retaining walls).

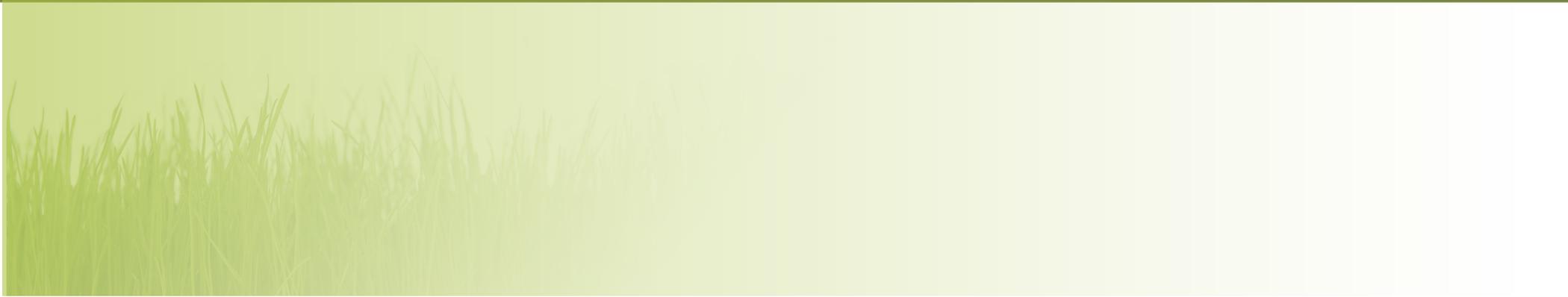
Vegetation

- Natural or landscaped vegetation should include grass areas and trees with hardy, low maintenance species preferred for planted vegetation.
- Xeriscaping is preferred to minimize required irrigation and maintenance given the local climate.
- Irrigation systems should be provided for intensively used areas, such as playing fields and landscaped areas.
- Significant individual specimens or unique wildlife habitats are desirable.

- Interpretive signage should be provided to identify species and varieties of natural vegetation and to educate the public.
- Ample shade should be provided throughout the site and in proximity to activity areas, such as ball fields and courts, picnic areas, along walking paths, etc. In heavily developed parks where the vegetation is not yet mature, other forms of shade should be provided.

Access and Location

- All parks should be readily accessible to their users and convenient for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
- Parks should be accessible from local or collector (secondary) streets rather than arterial (primary) roadways.
- Parks should be located adjacent to trails and greenways to provide linkage to neighborhoods and other areas of the community.
- Joint use of sites for public parks and school use is highly desirable to maximize the public benefit and to be efficient in the expenditure of public resources.
- Land of historic or cultural significance may be attractive for park areas as a conservation tool.



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Sand Volleyball Courts at Clemmons Park



Picnic Pavilion at Memorial Park

Chapter 4

ADOPTED 05.29.12

Needs Assessment

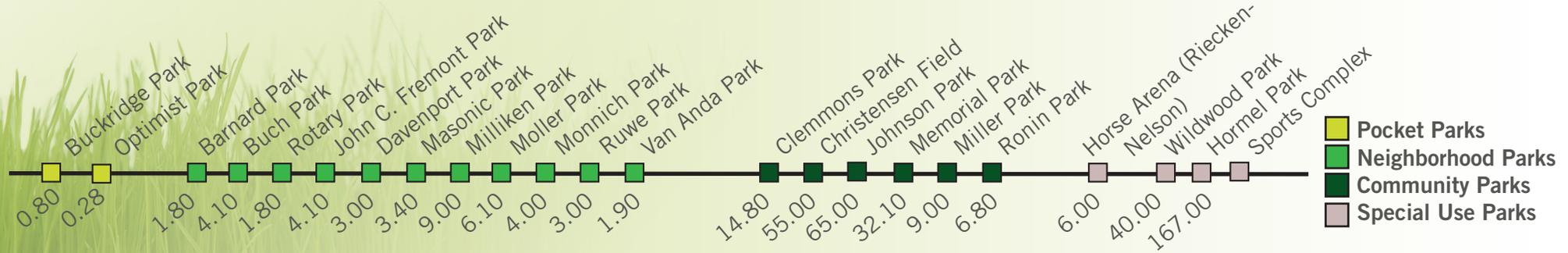
This needs assessment was conducted with the objective of determining whether the City's parks are in sufficient supply and appropriately located to meet the community's current and long-range recreation needs. By applying the standards outlined in *Chapter 3, Facility Standards*, to the current and projected populations, the acreage of parks, numbers of facilities and improvements available, and the degree of sufficiency/deficiency have been determined. The result of this analysis is the total required acreage and the numbers of facilities, equipment items, amenities, and improvements needed to fulfill the current and future needs of community residents.

The existing parks and recreation inventory is documented in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets* (see *Table 2.1, Public Parks*). To recap, the system includes two pocket parks (totaling 1.08 acres), 12 neighborhood parks (totaling 43.99 acres), and six community parks (totaling 182.70 acres). The system also includes special use facilities like the Riecken-Nelson Horse Arena, Hormel Park, Wildwood Park, and a new sports complex in the early stages of planning. Standards have been developed for each of the parks and recreation facilities, as outlined in *Chapter 3, Facility Standards*, which are based on the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards, but customized for Fremont to account for park usage patterns and the preferences of the community.

Determining Need

The most common approach for assessing needs is the use of a two-pronged assessment involving both community-based and standard-based methods. Application of these methods results in a determination of the service level of the existing parks and recreation system. The

Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities



degree of sufficiency or deficiency is determined by applying standards (standard-based) and soliciting community input (community-based) to identify the existing needs and future priorities of the community.

The standards-based approach is based on the standards outlined in *Chapter 3, Facility Standards*. The community-based approach gathered citizen input during public meetings; tours of City-owned facilities and those located at the YMCA, Fremont Public Schools, and Midland University; interviews with their respective representatives; and active engagement of the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) and others through meetings and discussions. The combination of approaches was applied to the current and future populations, with consideration of existing parkland, to assess the current and long-range needs of Fremont.

Current and Future Park Needs

The NRPA sets forth standards for recommended acreage of parks per 1,000 persons. The standards include 0.25 to 0.50 acre per 1,000 persons for pocket parks, 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 persons for neighborhood parks, and 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 persons for community parks. In concert

with the estimated current and projected future populations, the current and future parks and recreation needs were determined using the following locally determined standards:

- Pocket Park: 0.25 acres per 1,000 persons
- Neighborhood Park: 2.0 acres per 1,000 persons
- Community Park: 5.0 acres per 1,000 persons

Current Parks and Recreation Needs

Given that the planning period for this plan is 2010 to 2030, the Year 2010 population of 26,367¹ persons was used to determine current need.

As indicated in **Table 4.1, Park Supply versus Demand, 2010** (see page 4.3), the total recommended acreage of parks and recreation areas for a Year 2010 population of 26,367 persons is 191.38 acres. This need is calculated to include 6.60 acres of pocket parks, 52.79 acres of neighborhood parks, and 131.99 acres of community parks. These recommended acreages are based on the above standards.

A comparison of existing acreage of developed parks to the recommended acreage of parks and recreation areas reveals that, overall, the City is currently meeting 119.01 percent of the recommended acres of

¹ Population: Place. U.S. Census Bureau 2010.

parkland.² This is because there is a surplus of 50.71 acres of community parks, however, there is a deficiency of 5.52 acres of pocket parks and 8.80 acres of neighborhood parks.

While there is no regional park in the community, Dodge County is home to the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area, located three miles west of Fremont. This state park includes two campgrounds, Pathfinder and Victory Lakes, with both electrical hookups and primitive camping available, modern restroom and shower facilities, boat ramps and docks, a handicap accessible fishing pier, three swimming beaches, and a personal water craft area.³ Additionally, concessions are available at Lakeside Country Store & Grill, located on the North side of the park near U.S. 30. These facilities help to meet the recreation needs of citizens.

PROJECTED YEAR 2030 PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS

As noted in Chapter 1 of *Blueprint for Tomorrow* (the City's comprehensive plan), Fremont is projected to reach a population of 29,794 persons by the Year 2030. With this increase will come an increase in

² This reflects the inclusion of Optimist Park and Kiwanis Park in the total park acreage.

³ "Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area." Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2011.

Table 4.1, Park Supply versus Demand, 2010

Table 4.2, Park Supply versus Demand, 2030

**City of Fremont
Park Acreage Standards**

- Pocket = 0.25 ac./1000 persons
- Neighborhood = 2.00 ac./1000 persons
- Community = 5.00 ac./1000 persons
- Total = 7.25 ac./1000 persons

Park Classification	Existing Acreage	Recommended Acreage	Acres Needed	Percent of Current Need
Pocket Park*	1.08	6.60	5.52	16.36%
Neighborhood Park*	43.99	52.79	8.80	83.33%
Community Park	182.70	131.99	---	138.42%
Total	227.77	191.38	---	119.01%

Park Classification	Existing Acreage	Recommended Acreage	Acres Needed	Percent of Current Need
Pocket Park*	1.08	7.45	6.37	14.50%
Neighborhood Park*	43.99	59.59	15.60	73.82%
Community Park	182.70	148.97	---	122.64%
Total	227.77	216.01	---	105.44%

*Private parks are included in these totals, which includes one pocket park (0.28 ac.) and one neighborhood park (1.79 ac.).

demand for parks and recreation facilities. Displayed in **Table 4.2, Park Supply versus Demand, 2030**, is the amount of park acreage required to meet the projected future demand. The assessment bases the need calculations on the established standards. The existing acreage is shown for the current parkland. The results reveal a total recommended acreage of 216.01 acres. Of this total, an additional 6.37 acres of pocket parks and 15.60 acres of neighborhood parks is recommended for acquisition and development to meet the needs of the projected future population. Currently, the existing community park acreage exceeds the recommended acreage meaning that, overall, the City meets 105.44 percent of the total projected park demand for 2030.

EVALUATION OF PARK SERVICE AREAS

Beyond an evaluation of total acreage needs, it is important to determine whether parks are adequately located and distributed across the community to reflect patterns of current and planned development. By evaluating park service areas, it is possible to identify geographic areas that have sufficient parks available, and conversely, those that are in need of additional parks and recreation facilities. The following describes the service areas for each park classification.

Pocket Parks

There are two pocket parks each with a service area of one-eighth mile. These small public spaces are intended to serve those in the immediate area. Their purpose is to provide open space and small activity areas for dense developments, such as apartment complexes or employment and other activity centers. Provisions for the dedication of pocket parks should be incorporated into the City’s development ordinances.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide more variety in the types and quantities of activity areas and facilities. These parks are designed to accommodate the passive and semi-active recreation needs of neighborhoods, typically within a distance of six to eight blocks. This proximity encourages use through convenience and ease of access, while also promoting safety for children and healthy living through alternative transportation options (i.e. walking, biking, etc.). In many communities, convenience is a major factor influencing park and facility use. Therefore, it is essential to have a broad and evenly distributed system of parks, including both publicly and privately provided facilities.

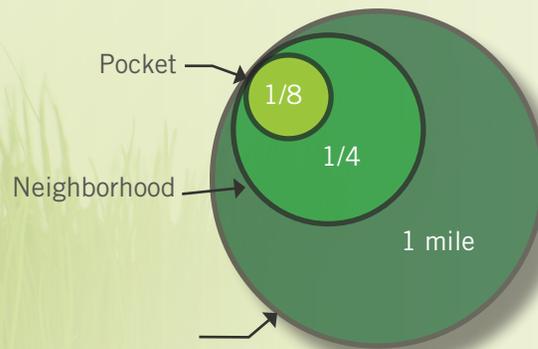
The service area for neighborhood parks is one-quarter mile. The service areas of the City’s neighborhood parks, including Barnard, Buch, John C. Fremont, Davenport, Rotary, Masonic, Milliken, Moller, Monnich, Ruwe, and Van Anda Parks, are illustrated in **Map 4.1, Neighborhood Park Service Areas**.

The illustration reflects that the 11 neighborhood parks are relatively well distributed throughout the community, providing coverage for most residential areas, but leaving six residential areas without either a neighborhood or school park.

It is important that neighborhood parks are evenly spaced with little or no overlap to maximize their coverage. Consideration must be given to any future private parks since they too, help to provide coverage of adequate neighborhood park facilities. Through the subdivision development and review process, a coverage analysis must be conducted to ensure broad coverage of proposed new parks, which minimize the overlap of other existing or proposed public or private parks.

As shown in **Map 4.2, System Plan**, there remain several pockets of the community without sufficient neighborhood or school park coverage. These are areas that are currently developed for which either a public or private neighborhood park, or school park,

Park Service Areas



is needed to provide equitable availability and access to nearby residents.

The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use. The locally determined standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of three acres, assuming an adequate and even distribution across the planning area. Although a 10 acre park may accommodate ball fields and larger recreation and open space areas, two parks that are five acres each may equally, and perhaps better, serve neighborhood needs while ensuring a good spatial distribution of parks.

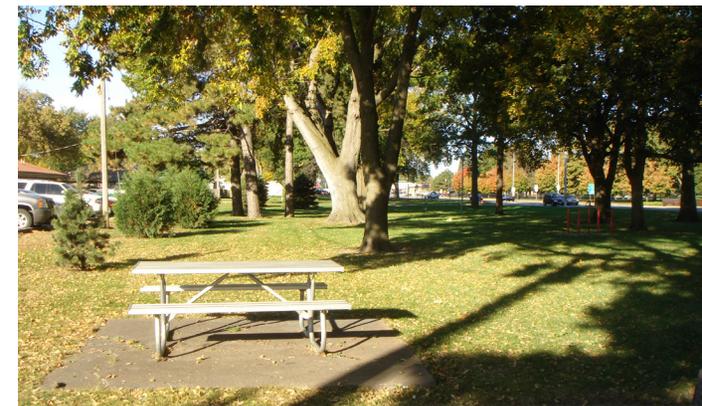
The neighborhood parks that are owned by the City tend to be relatively small, ranging in size from one to as large as nine acres, with an average size of 3.84 acres. A future consideration is whether the City will acquire and develop the needed acreage of parks or whether land will be dedicated concurrent with private development by way of parkland dedication or fee-in-lieu requirements. If parkland is to be dedicated, it is important to establish standards as to the minimum land area that will be accepted as dedicated land. In other words, the land must be of an adequate shape and arrangement that is suitable for park use. The minimum park size preferred by

the City is three acres. Land to be dedicated through the parkland dedication requirements that is less than three acres should instead, be provided as a fee-in-lieu of dedication.

Community Parks

As described in *Chapter 3, Facility Standards*, community parks provide for the needs of the community at-large and therefore, are the largest parks within the municipal system. There is a large variety of facilities and intended uses, including both passive and active recreation, such as walking and jogging paths, athletic courts, ball fields, lakes or other natural features, picnic areas, activity centers, swimming pools, and other facilities that draw residents typically within a one mile reach, and in many cases much farther. A secondary service area extends two miles from the park to account for user patterns that are associated with activities and facilities like little league athletic fields that attract users from across the community.

In planning for community parks, it is important to have complete service area coverage across the community. In other words, the one-mile service area radii should nearly – and preferably entirely – encompass all areas that are residentially developed or planned for future residential development, as shown on the adopted Future Land Use Plan. Areas that are beyond



Tennis courts at Van Anda Park (top) and picnic areas at Masonic Park (middle) serve their surrounding neighborhoods while the large soccer complex at Christensen Field (bottom) accommodates users from across the community.

Map 4.1 Neighborhood Park Service Areas

Map Features

- Nbrhd. Park Service Area (1/4 mile)
- Private Park Service Area (1/4 mile)
- School Service Area (1/4 mile)
- Pocket Park Service Area (1/8 mile)
- Public Parks
- Private Parks



School Locations



Golf Course
State Park

POCKET PARKS

1. Buckridge Park
2. Optimist Park (private)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

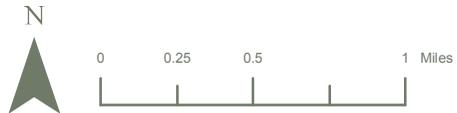
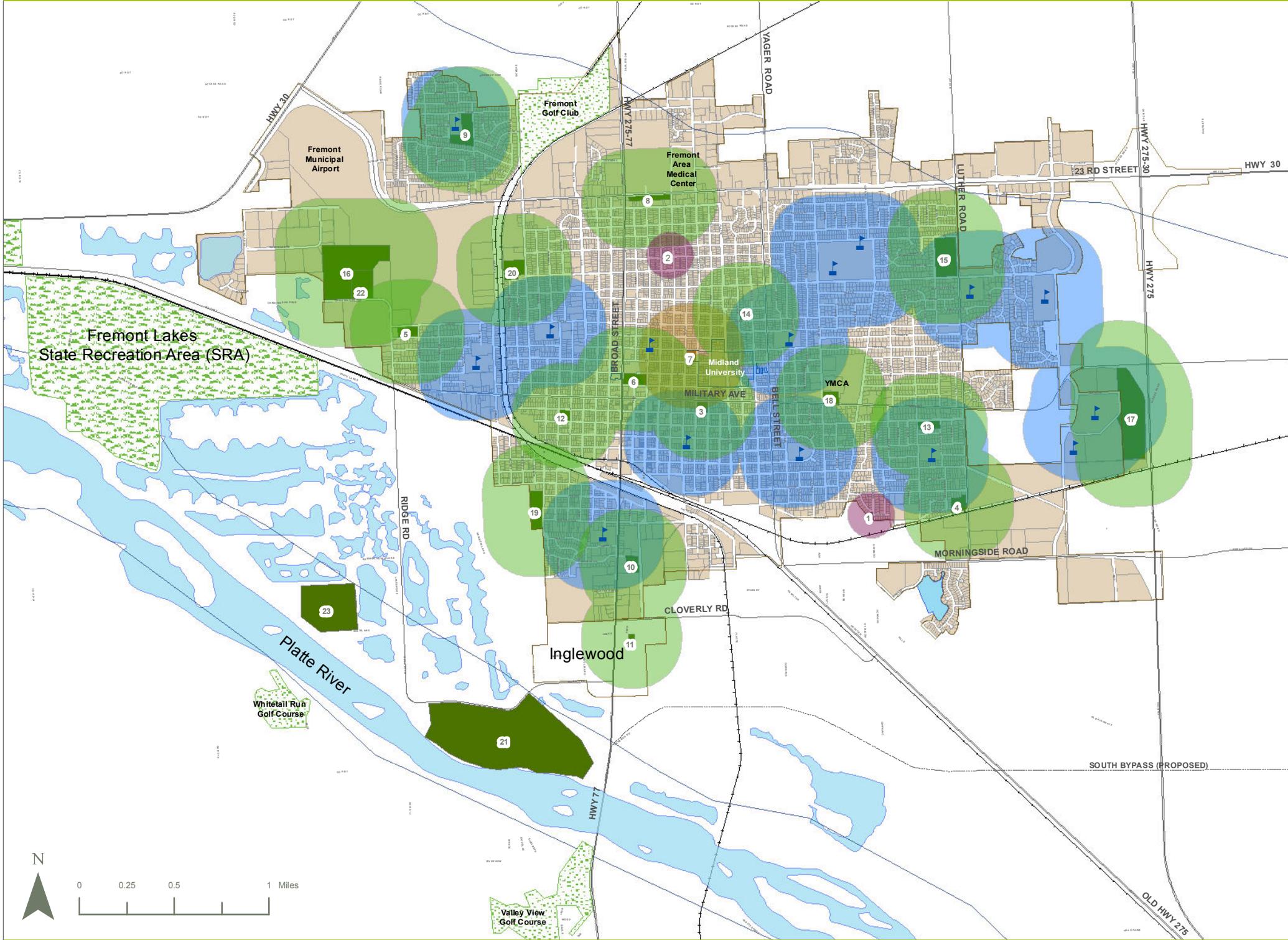
3. Barnard Park
4. Buch Park
5. Davenport Park
6. John C. Fremont (City) Park
7. Kiwanis Park (private)
8. Masonic Park
9. Milliken Park
10. Moller Park
11. Monnich Park
12. Rotary Park
13. Ruwe Park
14. Van Anda Park

SPECIAL USE PARKS

21. Hormel Park
22. Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)
23. Wildwood Park
24. Sports Complex

COMMUNITY PARKS

15. Clemmons Park
16. Christensen Field
17. Johnson Park
18. Memorial Park
19. Miller Park
20. Ronin Park

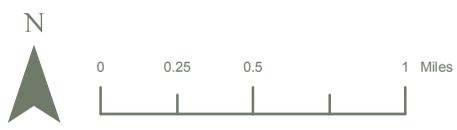
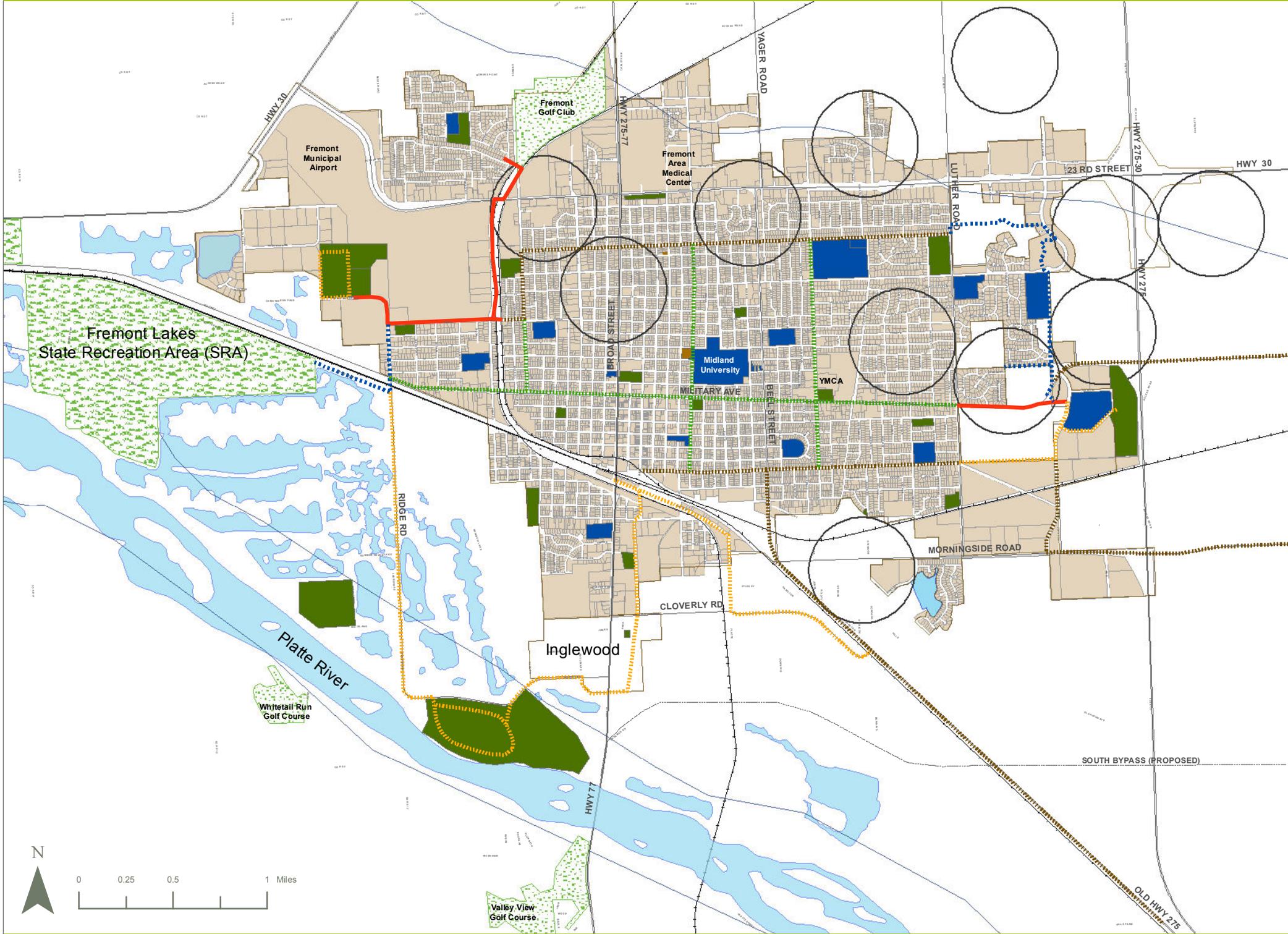


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Map 4.2 System Plan

Map Features

-  Park Need Area
-  Existing Trail
-  Funded Trail (to be constructed)
-  Proposed Concrete Trail
-  Proposed Shared Road Trail
-  Proposed Sidewalk/Trail Connections
-  Public Parks
-  Private Parks
-  School Campus
-  Golf Course
-  State Park



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The YMCA provides fitness facilities for members. The City should investigate opportunities for an expanded partnership for recreational and seasonal programming, such as sports camps and fitness classes.



the service area coverage are not within reasonable proximity to a community park and hence, are not well served. Close proximity to a neighborhood park may help fill this void, yet there remains a need for the availability of a community park.

Depicted in **Map 4.3, Community Park Service Areas**, is the primary service areas of the City's community parks, including Clemmons, Christensen, Johnson, Memorial, Miller, and Ronin Parks. The map highlights the fact that the one-mile service areas for these parks overlap in many places, indicating that the parks and recreation needs of residents are well served for nearly all of the City. Only two small areas, one on the north and one to the south-east, are without sufficient community park coverage.

SCHOOL DISTRICT / YMCA / MIDLAND UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

As mentioned in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets*, and illustrated in *Tables 2.4 through 2.7*, the City has a remarkable history of working with Fremont Public Schools (FPS), the YMCA, and Midland University; relationships that continue to improve. Accounting for the multiple properties and facilities among FPS, Fremont YMCA, and Midland University and within the City, schools make a substantial difference meeting the community's parks and recreation

needs. As depicted in *Map 4.1, Neighborhood Park Service Areas*, school sites and their associated open spaces and facilities serve an area equal to that of a neighborhood park (one quarter mile service area). Taking into account each of the school sites enhances the ability of the existing parks to meet the neighborhood park needs. This is particularly relevant where schools present parks and recreation opportunities in areas that are not otherwise well served, such as the areas around Fremont High School, Grant Elementary School, and Linden Elementary School.

Currently, Fremont Family YMCA uses Memorial Park for day camps and both Fremont High School and Bergan High School hold football practice there. In addition, the Fremont Tennis Association uses the high school tennis courts and the courts at Ronin Park and Van Anda Park for practice and tournaments. These are relevant examples of interagency coordination, which offers increased cost efficiency and improved service offerings.

It is recommended that, where applicable, the City, FPS, Midland University, and YMCA plan to acquire land jointly for the purpose of school, park, or major facility construction. This approach will require advanced planning to determine shared priorities for siting, allocation of appropriate funds, and ulti-

mately, land acquisition, co-development, and maintenance.

Facility Needs

Further to parks and open spaces, the City has recreation facilities including those at Christensen Field and Memorial Park. Facilities should also be equitably distributed throughout the City, providing convenient access to residents.

Based on the locally adopted facility standards (see *Table 3.1, Facility Standards*), the current and future recreation facility needs for the community are determined. Presented in **Table 4.3, Current Facility Needs, 2010**, is the facilities currently needed. The "existing units" include those provided within City parks and school facilities. The analysis reveals that the need for recreation facilities is varied. Notably, the greatest deficiencies, and hence, needs, are for basketball and volleyball courts; softball and baseball fields; and a one quarter-mile track.

Incorporated into the capital improvement plan in *Chapter 5, Implementation*, is a sufficient number of courts and fields to meet the facility needs. These facilities are proposed for inclusion within currently developed parks but may also be designed as part of new parks like the new sports complex.

Standards alone cannot be used to identify needs. Private recreation facilities in the community must also be considered. The community is home to the Fremont Family YMCA, the second largest YMCA in the nation, which offers recreation facilities to member residents. The YMCA offers an aquatic center with two pools, fitness center, four full-sized gymnasiums, two outdoor and five indoor tennis courts, climbing wall, one-tenth mile track, and full-time child-care. Since the facilities are for the primary use of members, these recreation facilities supplement the needs outlined in *Table 4.3, Current Facility Needs, 2010*.

Presented in *Table 4.4, Future Facility Needs, 2030*, is the facility needs for the forecasted Year 2030 population of 29,794 persons. Significant needs exist for many facility types, with the greatest deficiencies being for basketball and volleyball courts, and baseball, softball, and soccer fields. While National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards indicate that a total of six swimming pools would be needed by the Year 2030, this is neither practical nor warranted for the City to provide since

Table 4.3, Current Facility Needs, 2010

Recreation Facility	Standard Units per Population	Recommended Units	Existing Units	Deficit	Percent of Need Met
Basketball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	4 units	2 units	66.67%
Tennis	1/1,500 persons	18 units	20 units	(2) units	111.11%
Volleyball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	4 units	2 units	66.67%
Baseball	1/1,800 persons	15 units	12 units	3 units	80.00%
Soccer	1/1,800 persons	15 units	15 units	0 units	100.00%
Golf driving range	1/25,000 persons	2 units	2 units	0 units	100.00%
1/4 mile track	1/20,000 persons	2 units	1 unit	1 unit	50.00%
Softball	1/3,000 persons	9 units	6 units	3 units	66.67%
Swimming pool	1/20,000 persons	2 units	2 units	0 units	100.00%

Table 4.4, Future Facility Needs, 2030

Recreation Facility	Standard Units per Population	Recommended Units	Existing Units	Deficit	Percent of Need Met
Basketball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	4 units	2 units	66.67%
Tennis	1/1,500 persons	20 units	20 units	0 units	100.00%
Volleyball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	4 units	2 units	66.67%
Baseball	1/1,800 persons	17 units	12 units	5 units	70.59%
Soccer	1/1,800 persons	17 units	15 units	2 units	88.24%
Golf driving range	1/25,000 persons	2 units	2 units	0 units	100.00%
1/4 mile track	1/20,000 persons	2 units	1 unit	1 unit	50.00%
Softball	1/3,000 persons	10 units	6 units	4 units	60.00%
Swimming pool	1/20,000 persons	2 units	2 units	0 units	100.00%

Map 4.3 Community Park Service Areas

Map Features

 Community Park Service Area (1 mile)

 Public Parks

 Private Parks

 School Locations

 Golf Course

 State Park

POCKET PARKS

1. Buckridge Park
2. Optimist Park (private)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

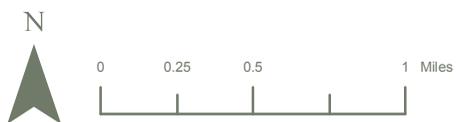
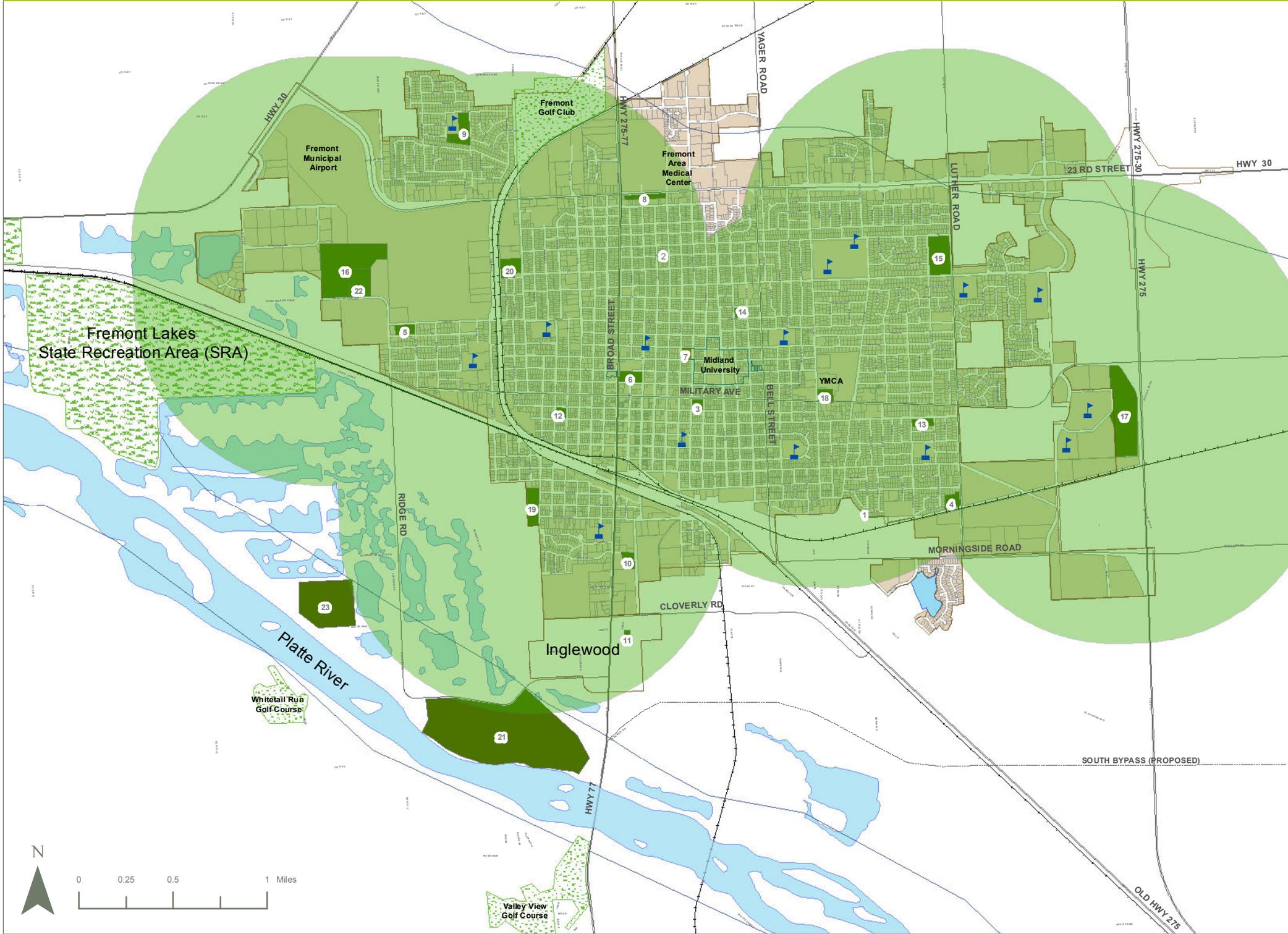
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4. Buch Park
5. Davenport Park
6. John C. Fremont (City) Park
7. Kiwanis Park (private)
8. Masonic Park
9. Milliken Park
10. Moller Park
11. Monnich Park
12. Rotary Park
13. Ruwe Park
14. Van Anda Park

SPECIAL USE PARKS

21. Homel Park
22. Horse Arena (Riecken-Nelson)
23. Wildwood Park
24. Sports Complex

COMMUNITY PARKS

15. Clemmons Park
16. Christensen Field
17. Johnson Park
18. Memorial Park
19. Miller Park
20. Ronin Park



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Table 4.5, Total Equipment Requirements

Equipment Item	Standards			Pocket Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	Buckridge Park	Barnard Park	Buch Park	John C. Fremont Park	Davenport Park	Masonic Park	Milliken Park	Moller Park	Monnich Park	Rotary Park	Ruwe Park	Van Anda Park	Christensen Field	Clemmons Park	Johnson Park	Memorial Park	Miller Park	Ronin Park
		0.8	1.8	4.1	4.1	3.0	3.4	9.0	6.1	4.0	1.8	3.0	1.9	55.0	14.8	65.0	32.1	9.0	6.8					
Basketball Court	0	0	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	1
Bench	2	1	0.25	2	2	4	4	3	3	9	6	4	2	3	2	14	4	17	8	3	2			
Bicycle Rack	0.5	0.5	0.1	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	0	1	2	1	6	1	7	3	1	1			
Drinking Fountain	0.5	0.5	.25	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	14	4	16	8	2	2			
Exercise Circuit	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grills/Barbeque Pits	1	0.5	0.5	1	1	2	2	2	3	5	3	2	1	2	1	28	7	33	16	5	3			
Parking Spaces	0	4	6	0	7	16	16	12	14	54	24	24	7	12	8	330	89	390	193	54	41			
Pavilion, Covered	0	0.5	0.1	0	1	2	2	2	4	1	3	0	1	2	1	6	1	7	3	1	1			
Picnic Table	2	1	0.5	2	2	4	4	3	3	9	6	4	2	3	2	28	8	33	16	5	3			
Playground Equipment	5-10	15-20	60-65	5-10	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	15-20	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65	60-65
Restrooms	0	0	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	3	2	0	0			
Trash Cans/Enclosures	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	1	2	2	2	7	5	3	2	1	2	1	28	7	33	16	5	3			
Volleyball Court	0	0	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	1			

there is not the requisite demand for this number of pools. Instead, this standard has been adjusted to one pool per 20,000 persons, meaning no additional public pools will be needed by 2030.

Equipment Needs

In addition to facility needs, there are also major equipment needs within each park. Provided in **Table 4.5, Equipment Requirements**, is the total number of equipment items in each park that is required

to meet the established standards. These standards may be applied to quantify future equipment needs as well.

Provided in **Table 4.6, Equipment Needs, 2010** (see page 4.8), is the current need of each public park. The identified needs reflect what is required to meet the above standards less the equipment that already exists within each park. In some cases, there is already sufficient equipment. The most significant equip-

ment needs are for benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, grills, picnic tables, and trash cans/enclosures. Bicycle racks and drinking fountains provide convenience for park users who would like to use alternative transportation or not carry water for exercise. Runners and bicyclists alike, make use of water stops at parks for routes that might incorporate several parks. Due to their large acreage, Johnson Park and Christensen Field have the most individual

Table 4.6, Equipment Needs, 2010

Recreation Facility	Buckridge Park	Barnard Park	Buch Park	John C. Fremont Park	Davenport Park	Masonic Park	Milliken Park	Moller Park	Monnich Park	Rotary Park	Ruwe Park	Van Anda Park	Christensen Field	Clemmons Park	Johnson Park	Memorial Park	Miller Park	Ronin Park	
Equipment Item	0.8	1.8	4.1	4.1	3.0	3.4	9.0	6.1	4.0	1.8	3.0	1.9	55.0	14.8	65.0	32.1	9.0	6.8	
Basketball Court														1	1				
Bench	1		4	4	3	3	7	6	3		3	2	14		17	5	1		
Bicycle Rack		1	2	2	2	2		3		1	2	1	6	1	2	3	1		
Drinking Fountain		1	2	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	14	1	5	8	2	2	
Exercise Circuit															1				
Grills/Barbeque Pits															3				
Parking Spaces		7	*	16	12	14	54	*	*	7			*	89	*		*		41
Pavilion, Covered		1	2	2	1	4	1	3		1	2	1	5		2	2	1	1	
Picnic Table	1		2			1	6	3					28		29	9			
Playground Equipment				15-20											60-65				
Restrooms													2						
Trash Cans/Enclosures			1			1			1	1			28		28				3
Volleyball Court															2				

* Existing number of spaces must be counted to determine need.

park needs, which include such things as parking⁴, playground equipment, and restrooms. For future use, if the inventories provided in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets*, are kept current, the needed equipment may be easily managed in a database.

MAJOR FACILITY INVESTMENTS

Fremont Sports Complex

As exhibited by *Table 4.3 Current Facility Needs, 2010*, and *Table 4.4, Future Facility Needs, 2030*,

⁴Subject to an accurate count of spaces in the gravel surfaced lots.

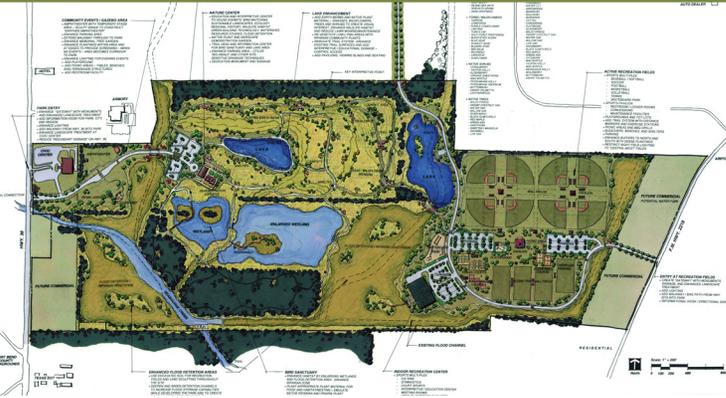
the City is currently deficient by two fields and will be short by three fields in the coming years. In addition, as experienced by Fremont, there is a shortage of practice fields. Given the use of fields by the City, Fremont and Bergan Catholic High Schools, Midland University, the YMCA, the American Legion Youth Program, and the Nighthawks and Lady Hawks, there is great demand for both practice and game fields. Additionally, since Christensen Field is the only facility with more than two fields, the City is unable to host larger regional or statewide base-

ball or softball tournaments. Requirements to host a multi-team, multi-day tournament include regulation fields with adequate lights, restrooms, concessions, seating, parking, public address system, scoreboards, and a hospitality area. The community must also have a sufficient supply of nearby hotel rooms.

Due to these needs and warrants for additional fields, a private development group is in the planning stages for a new stadium and sports complex. The site is located at the convergence of Old Highway 275 and U.S. 275. This new sports complex would fulfill the City's current and long-range needs for baseball fields. It is also planned to include a new, multi-purpose stadium to improve the costly shortcomings of Memorial Stadium. Since this project is being handled by a private group, and since it is in the early planning stages, more detailed information is not available at the time of this master plan.

Memorial Stadium

Memorial Stadium is a City-owned and operated facility that is used by Midland University, Fremont High School (FHS), and Bergan Catholic High School, as well as for a wide variety of other special events, e.g. FHS gradu-



Source: KKC

ation, Relay For Life, concerts, etc. The field turf is well-maintained and noted for being in outstanding condition, an asset that is well recognized as “second to none” by those who play on it both within Fremont and across their respective conferences. To protect field conditions though, the stadium is locked outside of events thereby preventing public use. There is much discussion across the community and among its users of replacing the natural turf with artificial turf like many other stadiums, such as that for Seward High School/Concordia University, Crete High School/Doane College, Hastings High School/Hastings College (Lloyd Wilson Field), Columbus’ Pawnee Park, as well as for the high schools in Norfolk and Beatrice.

The athletic track at Memorial Stadium, at one time envied, is now in very poor and near unusable condition. In fact, in years past it was host to conference track meets, which now occurs elsewhere due to the degraded conditions. This is due to poor subsurface and substandard structural conditions. The track surface has been patched and repaired many times. A structural assessment performed on the track indicated that complete reconstruction is necessary. This would involve a soils investigation followed by regarding and stabilization; installation of a drainage system; paving and surface preparation with designed tolerance, slope, and grade; and application of strip-

ing and custom graphics. An estimate of cost to replace the track was between \$350,000 and \$500,000.

In addition to the poor track conditions, the grandstand also warrants significant and costly upgrades and improvements. This would include new seating, fencing, and lighting; and improved pressbox; and provision of an enclosed concessions facility. Furthermore, the bathhouse that is owned by the YMCA is undersized, has poor ventilation and air circulation, has limited dressing and shower facilities, and lacks sufficient soundproofing between home and visitor locker rooms. It too, warrants substantial improvements. No cost estimates have been prepared for these improvements.

Given the tired state of Memorial Stadium and the significant improvement needs, in concert with Midland University, Fremont Public Schools, and Bergan Catholic High School. A private development group is exploring options for supplementing or possibly replacing Memorial Stadium with a new state-of-the-art, multi-use facility. This is in the early planning stages. A new stadium could be designed to accommodate multiple sport venues, e.g. football, track, soccer, lacrosse, and also school/university activities, community events, and conference tournaments. The discovery in Beatrice was that they could replace rather than reconstruct their 1913 stadium for about

a third of the cost. This may be a relevant comparison for Fremont.

Should Memorial Stadium be replaced with a new multi-purpose stadium and athletic complex, the existing property and facilities could be reused in a number of useful ways. It could be used for youth athletics like the old stadium in Downtown Beatrice, or it could potentially be razed and reused to better accommodate the parking and other future needs of the YMCA as well as the Memorial Fields.

YMCA Aquatics Center

The Fremont Family YMCA was opened in 1969 and has undergone several expansions. Part of the expansive campus includes two separate swimming pools including a 25 meter lap pool (with a hot tub) and a 25 yard instructional pool. These pools are used for high school swim practice, the YMCA swim team, for water aerobics, swim lessons, as well as for the Special Olympics. Both pools have reached (or exceeded) their useful lives with each now having significant and costly maintenance requirements. These include replacement of underground pipes and filters, installing dehumidification systems, and substantial repairs and/or replacement of the roof. These repairs and improvements are estimated to cost upwards of \$1.5 million, or more. Given their size, orientation, and



Proposed Cowboy Trail extension from Norfolk to Omaha through Fremont.

(Source: A Network of Discovery, 2004)

limited deck and observation space, together with the scale and costliness of improvement needs, this expenditure is not viewed as prudent or serving the best long-term interests of the YMCA or its members and partners.

The YMCA established a committee to investigate its options and the feasibility of replacing the two pools with a new, consolidated indoor aquatics facility. For preliminary planning purposes, the investigation has established overall space needs in the range of 15,000 to 18,000 square feet, which would be sufficient to accommodate a 50 meter competitive pool with 25 meter cross pool lanes, adequate deck, seat, and view space that would accommodate multi-team swim meets and other water-oriented events, zero depth entry, controlled access, and possibly splash grounds and a lazy river for fun and resistance training.

Major Facility Investment Considerations and Strategy

For a community of its size, Fremont has a long history and an enviable spirit of cooperation that has manifested itself in the strong partnerships between and among the City, Fremont and Bergan Catholic High Schools, Midland University, as well as several local clubs, organizations, and associations. This sharing of community resources is exemplary and to be

credited to those who have, for years, fostered a strong sense of community. Fremont has a history of recognition by its peers as having quality facilities. Over time though, while these facilities have served their users well, the community has now reached a point where it must consider and decide its next steps to invest (or reinvest) in its major facilities to once again, return to the forefront among its peer communities and institutions.

Each of these facilities is a significant community need. However, given the economic climate and the state of financial affairs of each partner organization, decisions must be fiscally responsible. In this light, it is advisable for the City of Fremont to determine and decide on a strategy that yields benefits that are of mutual interest and, at the same time, prudent. In making this determination, considerations may include:

- The warrant for the facility given its deficiencies, state of repair, safety conditions, the likely length of remaining useful life, and the feasibility and cost of making repairs in lieu of replacement or reconstruction.
- Whether current and/or expected future deficiencies in the availability of facilities would be satisfied (refer to *Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.6* in this chapter).
- The extent to which a new facility may be programmed for multiple users and events, and available for open public access to Fremont residents.
- The forecasted utilization and economic benefit to be derived by a new facility.
- The non-fiscal benefits to be derived by a new facility, e.g. ability to provide new or expanded courses/programs, increase in program use and attendance, increased access to the underprivileged, access to an area of the community that is otherwise not well served, ability to attract events and/or tournaments, etc.
- The ratio of costs and benefits including consideration of the revenue generated from ticket sales, user and rental fees, and indirect multipliers such as hotel/motel, restaurant, and retail sales tax receipts.
- The readiness of the project including partnership arrangements, site availability and ownership, design, and identified sources of funds.
- The extent to which there is buy-in and ownership among the partner institutions and the percent of project costs that may be funded by private foundations, investors, or contributors.

Handicap accessible playground at Ruwe Park.



BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, AND TRAILS

Since the City has close to sufficient park acreage for the population, a major focus of future planning should be on continuing to expand the bicycle, pedestrian, and trail networks.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are an important component of the City's quality of life, particularly as a growing university community with many students living near or off-campus. Pathways contribute to the community's recreation needs by providing connections between parks, schools, and other public facilities, and better and safer opportunities for biking, walking, and even nature viewing. Additionally, bicycle and pedestrian facilities serve as an alternative mode of travel, particularly for those traveling to the University campus, as well as for those who may walk or bicycle to school or work.

Trails were identified as a major facility need in the 1999 Fremont Comprehensive Plan. Further, residents at a 2011 Community Symposium expressed a strong desire to expand and enhance the trail system and suggested converting abandoned railroads or covering drainage ditches for use as trails. In recent years, a trail has been built from Milliken Park to the Reicken-Nelson Horse Arena, and there are trails cur-

rently in the works along Diers Parkway and Johnson Road from 20th Street to Military Avenue, as well as along Ridge Road from Christensen Field to the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area. As displayed in *Map 4.2, System Plan*, a large network of proposed trails, bikeways, and sidewalk connectors is planned to greatly enhance connectivity in Fremont. The proposed network utilizes a variety of trail sections along streams, road shoulders, and abandoned railroad corridors to connect parks, schools, and recreation facilities. Pedestrian amenities, such as wide sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, benches, and drinking fountains, must continue to be considered and developed in conjunction with the pedestrian system.

For further connectivity, the City should look to link the Fremont trail system to the emerging Nebraska trail system. The Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail, extending 109 miles across Northern Nebraska, is America's longest rail-trail. The Comprehensive Trails Plan found in the *State Trail Development Plan* illustrates a potential extension of the Cowboy Trail from Norfolk through Fremont to Omaha, funded by the U.S. 275 upgrade, a joint-use (trail with expressway) project.

Recreational Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism is very popular in the United States, with 118.3 million adult Americans

visiting a museum or historic site or attending a cultural presentation while traveling: that's 78 percent of the 151.7 million trips taken over 50 miles away from home. Additionally, cultural heritage tourists spend more per trip than other travelers (\$994 per trip vs. \$611 per trip).⁵ These statistics highlight an important opportunity for the City in its parks and recreation and athletics development and long-range system planning. Since Fremont hosts two Nebraska state historical markers (see *Chapter 2, Recreation Assets*), the City can promote these assets to tourists interested in visiting and learning about Nebraska's rich cultural history.

⁵ Cultural & Heritage Traveler Study, Mandela Research, LLC., 2009. <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/resources/research.htm>

Cultural Heritage Tourism is...

traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.

- National Trust for Historic Preservation

Additionally, given the ecodiversity and tourism opportunity available at the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area, the City should make efforts to better link the area to the park system through hike and bike trails.

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The 1999 Fremont Comprehensive Plan identified bringing all parks into compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards as a system-wide priority. Currently, five of the 11 neighborhood parks and three of the six community parks have handicap accessible playgrounds. Congress enacted the ADA of 1992 that provides for equal access to all users of public (and private) facilities and programs. As such, municipalities are responsible for providing accessibility to parks and programs for individuals with disabilities.

While there are no requirements within the law mandating any spatial requirements relative to the size of any particular type of park and recreation facility, the ADA mandates that park areas and facilities must be reasonably accessible and usable to all persons. Compliance with the Act will not likely impact the size or configuration of a particular facility, but it may dictate some changes to specific design guidelines. It is

recommended that the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Recreational Facilities⁶ be incorporated, along with subsequent guidelines and legal standards, in the final determination of spatial and facility design guidelines for all units of the parks and recreation system.⁷

According to the ADA, minimum requirements that must be complied with include, but are not limited to, the following:

- One accessible route from the site access point (e.g., parking lot) to the primary accessible entrance. A ramp with a slope of no greater than 1:6 for a length of no greater than two feet may be used as part of this route. Otherwise, a maximum slope of 1:12 is permitted.
- One accessible entrance must be provided.
- One accessible unisex toilet facility must be provided along an accessible route if toilets are provided at the building or facility.
- Only the publicly used spaces on the level of the accessible entrance must be made accessible.
- Displays and written information should be situated where they can be seen by an individual who

⁶ U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, Recreation Access Advisory Committee, 2002.

⁷ Mertes, James D. and James R. Hall. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. National Recreation and Park Association, 1996, p. 125.

is seated and should provide information accessible to the blind.⁸

For a municipality that includes park facilities and programs, the ADA requires that all newly constructed buildings and facilities must be readily accessible. New facilities are those that were built for first occupancy after January 26, 1993. Design and construction is considered to have occurred after this time if a completed application for a building permit was filed after January 26, 1992. The ADA also requires that all renovations or alterations of existing buildings and facilities must be readily accessible if the buildings and facilities have been altered after January 26, 1992.⁹ Lastly, all barriers to accessibility in existing buildings and facilities must be removed when it is “readily accessible.”¹⁰

The ADA requires that architectural and communication barriers of all programs and facilities of local governments must be removed. An architectural barrier is a physical barrier to access (e.g., steps, sidewalks, placement of signs and furniture) whereas a

⁸ Mertes, James D. and James R. Hall. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. National Recreation and Park Association, 1996, p. 127.

⁹ An “alteration” is a change to a building or facility that affects its usability. Alterations include remodeling, renovation, rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction, and changes or arrangements in structural elements or in any reconfiguration of walls or partitions.

¹⁰ A structure is “readily accessible” if it meets the [ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities](#).

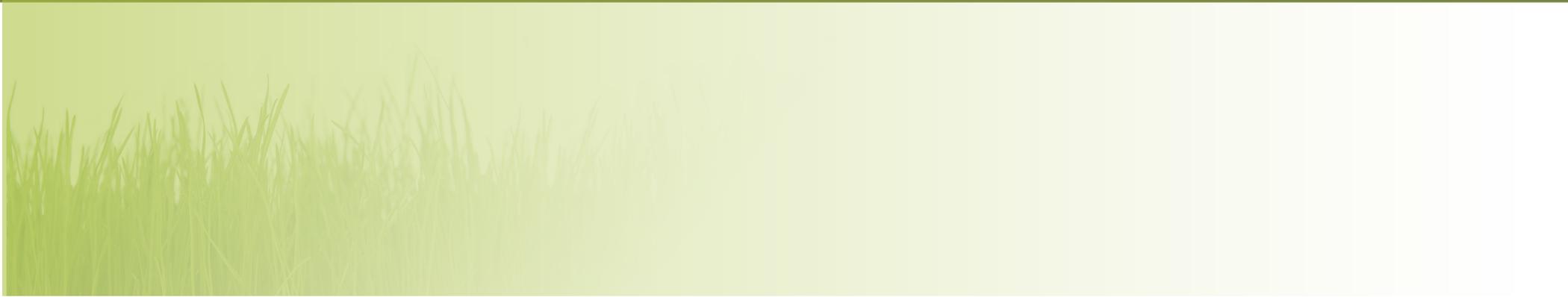
communication barrier is one that is integral to the physical structure of the facility (e.g., telephones mounted too high, elevators and signage without Braille markings). Creating an overall plan for the removal of accessibility barriers can give priority and associated timelines to removal activities. In keeping with the principle of public participation, persons with disabilities should be given the opportunity to register their comments and preferences for prioritization as part of the barrier removal process.

One of the foundation principles for this plan states that all residents and visitors are entitled to full access to public parks and recreation facilities, regardless of age, gender, ability, income, race, cultural background, and place of residence. It follows that the City must be committed to creating and maintaining a parks and recreation system that is accessible for all persons, including persons with disabilities. The aforementioned information from the *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* provides some guidance to actualize this principle of the plan. Another resource to consult includes, *Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation*, which was prepared by the United States Forest Service and the Special Programs and Populations Branch of the National Park Service.

Summary of Needs

The following summarizes the identified parks and recreation facility needs:

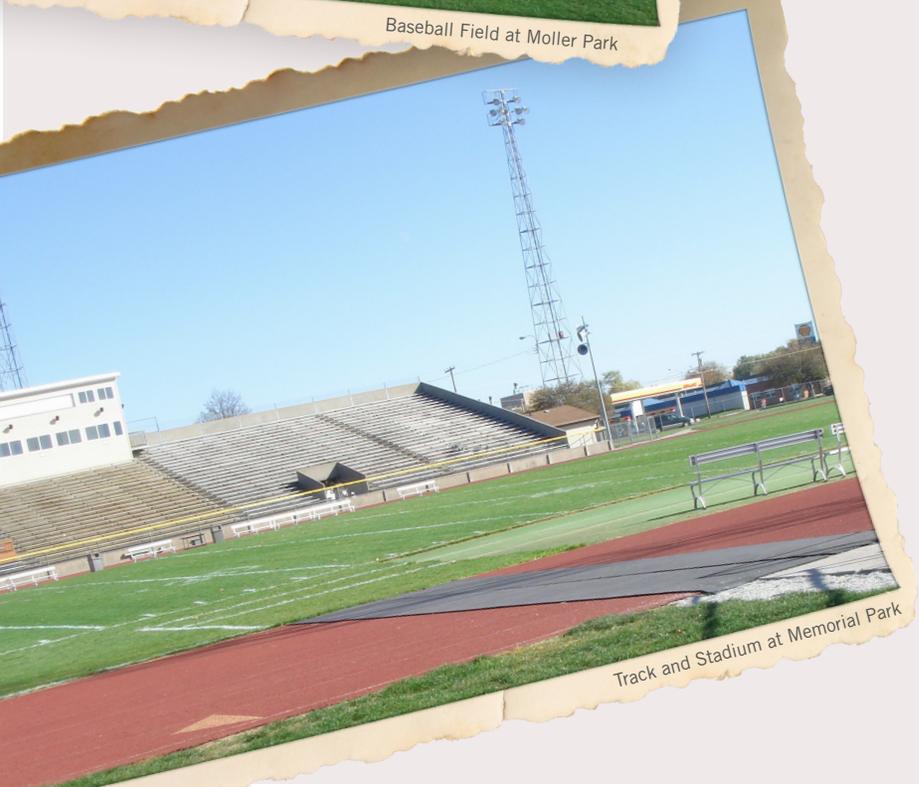
- Based on a current year (2010) population of 26,367 persons, there is a need for an additional 5.52 acres of pocket parks and 8.80 acres of neighborhood parks, for a total of 14.32 additional acres.
- By the Year 2030, based upon a projected population of 29,794 persons, the City will need an additional 6.37 acres of pocket parks and 15.60 acres of neighborhood parks, for a total of 21.97 additional acres.
- Because of the adequate amount of community park acreage, focus should be on pocket and neighborhood park development in the deficient areas illustrated in *Map 4.3, System Plan*.
- A secondary emphasis should be on improving quality and diversity of existing park properties and the range of facilities available at each.
- Formalizing agreements with Fremont Public Schools, as well as the Fremont Family YMCA and Midland University, present significant opportunities to achieve improved park accessibility and coverage across the community.
- According to locally defined standards, there are significant needs for facilities including volleyball and basketball courts; baseball and softball fields; and a quarter mile track. Considering the rate of growth and the projected future population, these needs will increase by the Year 2030.
- Since the City has close to sufficient park acreage and facilities, focus of future planning should be to continue the expansion of the bicycle, pedestrian, and trail networks. Significant barriers such as U.S. 275, U.S. 77 and U.S. 30; other collector and arterial streets (e.g. 23rd Street, Military Avenue, Morningside, Broad Street, Bell Street and Luther Road); railroads; and creeks and drainage ways present access and safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists. Improvements such as signage, crosswalks, street walk-overs, pavement markings, traffic signals, and foot bridges are among the alternatives that should be explored to enhance access, improve safety, and ultimately, work toward increased use of parks and recreation areas.
- There is a legal and moral responsibility to provide a reasonable level of accessibility to parks and programs for individuals with disabilities. The City must be committed to create and maintain a parks and recreation system that is accessible for all persons, including those with disabilities.



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Baseball Field at Moller Park



Track and Stadium at Memorial Park

Chapter 5

ADOPTED 05.29.12

IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of the implementation program is to provide an aggressive, yet realistic and achievable plan for implementing the recommendations of this master plan. The implementation program identifies the City's park improvement and recreation priorities, together with other recommended initiatives and actions. It also underscores factors that will contribute to successful implementation, and lists strategic partners with whom the City may - and should - continue to collaborate with to offer diversity in its program offerings and to expand and enhance the availability and range of parks and recreation facilities.

The implementation program reflects the outcomes of the analysis outlined in *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*. The assessment quantifies the additional parkland, facilities, equipment, and improvements needed to keep pace with the anticipated community growth and hence, increasing demands.

A principle of this plan is to involve the public in planning for the City's parks and recreation needs and preferences. This was accomplished through discussions with the Fremont Family YMCA, Fremont Public Schools, Midland University, a community symposium, and meetings with the Parks and Recreation Board. The success of this plan ultimately, relies on its ability to meet the needs of a growing and maturing community. Ongoing outreach efforts and opportunities for community engagement will keep the plan focused on this objective.

Importance of this Master Plan

This master plan is an important step for the community to keep pace with its growth and to continue providing quality parks and recreational facilities, programs, and community events. There are many factors that influence this plan and its directions for implementation. The more significant include:

- A shortage of 14.32 acres to meet the current needs for pocket and neighborhood parks.
- A need to acquire and develop an additional 21.97 acres of parkland by the Year 2030, which amounts to an average of approximately two acres per year.
- Current and increasing deficiencies in the numbers of basketball and volleyball courts; and baseball, softball, and soccer fields; with a goal of hosting local, regional, and statewide tournaments.
- New or replaced equipment items in each of the parks, including grills, picnic tables, trash cans, and parking, with the most significant needs in Johnson Park, the community's largest and newest park, John C. Fremont (City) Park, and Christensen Field.
- Continued priority among residents for the continued construction and extension of trails, bikeways, and sidewalk connectors for increased connectivity throughout the community.
- Continued exemplary coordination between the City, Fremont Public Schools, Bergan Catholic High School, the Fremont Family YMCA, Midland University, Nighthawks and Ladyhawks, Fremont Tennis Association, and others.
- Community needs for major facilities including an athletic complex, multi-purpose stadium, and an aquatics center.

Success Factors

Several key factors will be integral to the success of implementing this plan, including, first and foremost, the dedication of the City's leadership, as well as continued public involvement, acceptance and commitment by all City departments, reference and integration into other development and capital projects, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation, as described below.

DEDICATION OF THE CITY'S LEADERSHIP

The City Council exhibited their high level of commitment in 2006-2007 when it issued an approximate five million dollar bond for Splash Station at Johnson Park. Given the needs outlined above, a similar commitment may be warranted in the future. Additionally, members of City staff, the Parks and Recreation Board, and the community must assume ownership of the plan in order for it to be successfully implemented over the short- and long-term. Of particular importance will be an annual review process to update and amend the plan, as warranted, and to keep the capital plan current. The capital plan should be regularly updated to reflect new improvements and needs.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City solicited the input and guidance of the community during the preparation of this plan to

guide the prioritization of projects and initiatives. This input should continue by way of regular focus groups; an annual summit of partner organizations; and periodic community surveys focused solely on parks and recreation topics. Furthermore, residents should be engaged in design charrettes to aid in the process of park design and to weigh in on new or proposed changes to existing facilities and programs.

DEDICATION, ACCEPTANCE, AND COMMITMENT

Many of the City's departments have roles in implementing this master plan. This may include, among others, the consideration of land proposed for parkland dedication as part of subdivision plat review by the Planning Department, the provision by the Public Works Department of street and utility improvements serving parks, and coordination with those responsible for promoting and hosting community events and activities. For this reason, each of these and other departments may support, through various avenues, the realization of this plan. It will be important to maintain communication and coordination between these departments and the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure ongoing success.

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The collaboration with local and regional partners will remain and become increasingly important giv-



Buckridge Park is the only City pocket park. The City will encourage future pocket parks to be provided by private owners as small areas for neighborhood activity, such as community gardens.

en fiscal constraints and considering the oftentimes common missions and objectives of each. While Fremont is exemplary in its agency coordination, this plan advises to continue to actively promote strong partnerships through intergovernmental and/or cooperative agreements for the provision of public/semi-public open space, major facilities, and recreation programs.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Private parks compliment the parks and recreation areas within the City's system. As the community continues to grow, this partnership must be reinforced and strengthened. The Parks and Recreation Board has suggested all future pocket parks be privately owned and maintained. In addition, the City should adopt a parkland dedication and fee-in-lieu ordinance to accept private contributions to parks and open space.

EVALUATION

As with any plan it must be kept up-to-date on a regular basis. It is recommended the plan be updated every five years, but in the interim, the plan will need to be reviewed annually and amended as needed to reflect changes in the mission and goals of the Department, and changing needs and attitudes of the community. Annual reviews will ensure that the recommended actions are viable and realistic,

and reconciled with the capital and operating budgets. These reviews will also help the City gauge its progress in meeting the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan.

Role of the City and Future Partnerships

The City's role will be to increase its commitment of financial and human resources concurrent with the growth and development of the parks and recreation system. In other words, as more acreage and new facilities are acquired and developed there will be additional staff, equipment, and operating budgets warranted to effectively manage and efficiently maintain them. Similarly, recreational programs will warrant expansion to accommodate more activities and persons. Both will require added personnel and an increased budget to enable a comparable – and preferably higher - level of service.

There will certainly be challenges in implementing this plan, including escalating land acquisition and development costs, possible land assembly requirements, necessary ordinances, increased fees commensurate with increasing costs, and many others. One of the ways to lessen these challenges will be to formalize the partnerships with other providers, agencies, and governments.

Higher orders of government, such as the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, will likely continue to be a source of funding (e.g., trail and wildlife grants) and technical assistance through their competitive grant programs. It is advisable to make maximum use of these financial assistance programs to leverage funding thereby allowing more significant projects and sizeable areas. A listing of funding sources and programs is discussed in *Appendix A, Funding Sources*.

Further to accessing funds from the Federal government, it is recommended that the City partner with other agencies and jurisdictions. Working with partners will enable the City to build on past successes and lessons learned through working with others that are involved in parks and recreation, leverage opportunities and achieve efficiencies, and ultimately, bolster its first-class parks and recreation system. Specific opportunities for partnerships include:

- **Private and non-profit organization-** There are opportunities to facilitate increased cooperation with private and non-profit organizations. This may be in the form of providing or sharing facilities, helping in promotions and advertising, or partnering to provide common facilities, services, or activities to Fremont residents. Among those now participating include the Fremont Area

Medical Center (FAMC), Nighthawks, Lady Hawks, and the Tennis Association.

- **Dodge County** - Located in Southeast Dodge County, Fremont accounts for a majority of the population, but a relatively small land area of the County. As previously indicated, higher orders of government may offer sources of funding and other assistance. The City should partner with the County to leverage assistance toward developing a regional trail network and creating a system of bike lanes that link destinations throughout the region, and then to the state system. For instance, linkages may be made up U.S. 77 and U.S. 275 to north Dodge County as part of the future linkages to the Cowboy Trail.
- **Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (NRD)** - The NRD evolved from its origin as a soil and water conservation district to a multi-purpose district with oversight and authority over a number of program areas, among them including outdoor recreation. The NRD is responsible for the Platte River Boat Ramp in Hormel Park. Like other NRD's they may be a partner for a trail along Old Hwy. 275, which could connect to the Papio NRD's Platte River Landing west of Valley.
- **Fremont Public Schools** - The City has a history of partnering with FPS as demonstrated

by the extensive coordination outlined in *Table 2.7, Use of Fremont Public Schools Facilities*. As displayed in *Map 4.1, Neighborhood Park Service Areas*, the school properties help to close the gaps where there is insufficient coverage by public parks. An opportunity is for the City to join FPS to re-purpose the school grounds for use as public parks and recreation space.

- **Midland University** – The City should continue to examine opportunities to partner with Midland University. This educational institution places student interns in temporary positions, and could potentially work with the City to fulfill the need for their students to complete internships. Furthermore, there are other opportunities to better coordinate league schedules, having complimentary rather than competing programs, and sharing both City and YMCA facilities.
- **Archbishop Bergan Catholic High School** - Like Midland University and Fremont Public Schools, Archbishop Bergan High School coordinates with the City to share track and football stadium facilities at Memorial Park and baseball facilities at Moller Park. Students might participate in park improvement projects as part of special service days.
- **Chamber of Commerce** – The City and Chamber share an interest in the success of community events and activities, particularly in the attraction

of visitors to the community. The City should continue to work closely with the Chamber to promote these events and also help coordinate and attract tournaments once facilities are available to accommodate them. In addition, the Chamber may help by creating user-friendly, up-to-date printed and web-enabled maps of the City and its parks, along with additional information regarding user fees and rental procedures so that Chamber staff can broadly disseminate this information to the public. The City should also work with the Chamber to ensure that there is a direct web link from their site to the Fremont Parks and Recreation web site.

- **Keep Fremont Beautiful (KFB)** – This citizens group can partner with the City for park enhancement projects, such as the placement of gardens, monuments, and public art in the City parks. In addition, they may offer benefits of parkland beautification. Currently, KFB has a litter cleanup and prevention program.
- **Private sector entities** - A parkland dedication and fee in-lieu ordinance would require at the time of land subdivision the dedication of land that is equivalent to the demand placed on the park system by the new development and population. It is a policy of this master plan that parcels no less than three acres should be dedicated to and accepted by the City, in most cases.

It is at the discretion of the City whether or not to accept dedicated land. Therefore, a fee in-lieu of land dedication is warranted to accept a fee that is equivalent to the parkland dedication and improvement. Monies deposited into this account must be directed to park improvements within a park zone that is designed to ensure direct benefit to the contributor. The monies in these individual accounts may then be used by the City to acquire land and develop new parks or to expand or improve existing parks within the respective park zone. In this way, new development pays its way in the provision of parks and open space.

The character-based land use system outlined in the Blueprint for Tomorrow Plan includes minimum open space requirements for each land use/zoning district, with density bonuses to offset any loss of yield and reward the preservation of natural resources and set-aside of open space. This open space may be used to meet the parkland dedication requirements without compromising development yield or neighborhood character.

The City is not limited to partnering with the aforementioned entities. The opportunity to build partnerships should be an ongoing process that continues throughout the duration of plan implementation.

Implementation Priorities

This section details the improvement priorities that have been identified for the community's parks and recreation system. These improvements were determined, in part, by the condition assessment presented in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets*; the recommended improvements based on the current and projected needs for parks and recreation facilities presented in *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*, public input through consultation and stakeholder interviews, and the guidance of the City Council.

CAPITAL PLAN

Displayed in **Table 5.1, Capital Plan**, is the scheduled improvements for each of the parks. The plan has been divided into line-item improvements and organizes park needs into the following categories:

- Courts and fields;
- Rehabilitation and maintenance;
- Furniture, lighting, and equipment;
- Signage; and
- Facilities.

The organization of the capital plan allows park needs to be evaluated for each park or by improvement type on a city-wide basis. The costs reflect order of magnitude plans and preliminary estimates of individual park improvements. In addition to the preliminary



Handicap access to playgrounds (top), parking improvements (middle), and equipment repairs and rehabilitation (bottom) are top plan implementation priorities.



As the largest park, Johnson Park should utilize its space to continue providing unique amenities, like disc golf, to serve residents from across Fremont (top). Moller Community Center, one of two centers in Fremont, should be evaluated for necessary improvements (bottom).



project estimates, there are line-item unit costs for each of the improvements identified for each park.

PLAN PRIORITIES

The overall priorities for implementing this plan are outlined below. As this plan matures, each of these projects or initiatives must be further divided into individual projects with their requisite priorities. City Council ranked each priority in the following order with the highest priority identified first.¹

1. Fremont Sports Complex

Depending on the nature, location, and timing of these facilities, much planning will be required.

2. Johnson Park

As the most recent addition, Johnson Park warrants continued development to include more picnic tables, benches, trash cans, parking, as well as subsequent phase improvements to Splash Station.

2. Memorial Park

Depending on decisions made concerning the renovation or replacement of Memorial Stadium, improvements to this property must be considered. These include the earlier identified renovation should the stadium remain, and a

plan for reuse of the stadium or property should it be replaced by a new stadium at a different location.

3. Continue trail development/connectivity

As displayed in *Map 4.3, System Plan*, a large network of proposed trails is planned to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. Some funds have been awarded, but construction has not yet begun. The Department should prioritize completion of these projects. These projects should include ancillary improvements, such as curb cuts and ramps, crosswalks, crossing signage or warning lights, and others to improve the safety and experience of bicyclists and pedestrians.

4. Splash Station Addition

A lazy river and an additional slide are planned for Splash Station. A bond issue in 2006-2007 paid for the existing facility. The City should seek similar or other funding sources to finance the additional improvements.

5. Tournament facilities

Because Christensen Field is the only facility with more than two fields, the City is unable to host larger regional or statewide baseball or softball tournaments. In the early stages is a plan by a private group to provide three new fields, which may be expanded to accommodate

¹ Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Amendments also ranked number one. Details are identified under Key Recommended Actions.

The perimeter sidewalk at Van Anda Park is an example of good park accessibility for residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.



multi-team, multi-day tournaments, including regulation fields with adequate lights, restrooms, concessions, seating, parking, a public address system, scoreboards, and a hospitality area.

6. Renovated or New Multi-Purpose Stadium

For years, Midland University, Fremont High School, and Bergan Catholic High School have shared Memorial Stadium, sometimes all on the same weekend. The facility is aged and in need of significant repair or replacement. A new or improved facility should be designed for heavy use and to accommodate multiple athletic events (football, soccer, lacrosse, track) and venues for a broad variety of other community activities.

7. Repair/Rehabilitation of Existing Parks

Improvements and maintenance of existing parks is a priority for the City to optimize resources and serve current users. Equipment and facilities need attention after years of use and should be continually evaluated for needed improvements. The individual improvement needs are provided in *Table 2.8, Park Condition Assessment*, *Table 4.3, Current Facility Needs, 2010*; *Table 4.4, Future Facility Needs, 2030*; and *Table 4.6, Equipment Needs*. Improvements of individual parks are outlined in *Table 5.1, Capital Plan*. Priorities should be based on level of need and park utilization. It is advisable for

the Department to conduct a utilization survey to evaluate which parks and facilities are being most used on a daily basis.

8. ADA Compliance

As described in *Chapter 4, Needs Assessment*, the City is responsible for providing accessibility to parks for individuals with disabilities. Over half of the neighborhood and community parks are in need of handicap accessible accommodations. Fremont should seek available funding and organize an ongoing improvement and funding program to bring all park buildings and facilities into full compliance.

IMPROVEMENT OF OUTDOOR FACILITIES

While an overview of all priorities gives the City an idea of the scope and magnitude of the overall needs, an evaluation of the needs of each park will be helpful for the distribution of limited resources. An inventory of all parks and their facilities is available in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets*, which informs the improvements listed in *Table 5.1, Capital Plan*.

IMPROVEMENT OF INDOOR FACILITIES

As referred to in *Table 2.2, Inventory of Public Parks and Recreation Facilities*, community centers are located at Christensen Field and Moller Park. Christensen Field also has a multi-purpose building and a Senior Adult Center that can be rented by resi-

dents for special events. The City Auditorium and its Community Room are located at 9th and Broad Streets and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. For the purpose of maintaining the integrity and value of these facilities, the plan identifies opportunities in *Table 5.1, Capital Plan*. Further study is warranted to determine necessary upgrades and improvements.

Key Recommended Actions

In addition to capital projects and improvements, there are other important implementation actions that should be taken to develop a successful parks and recreation system over the long-term. These include:

1. Adopt a Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinance to acquire open space and parkland to meet the current and future needs as development continues. The fee-in-lieu value must equal the value of dedicated property plus the cost of improvements. To protect the interests of developers and the City, park zones must be created to ensure deposit of funds and improvements that benefit the contributor. Park zones should be identified for neighborhood parks since they are in greatest demand. Other provisions of the ordinance include: 1) allow the City discretionary authority to accept land or fees in-lieu of land on a case-by-case



Milliken Park provides a softball field and basketball courts to the elementary school and the public.

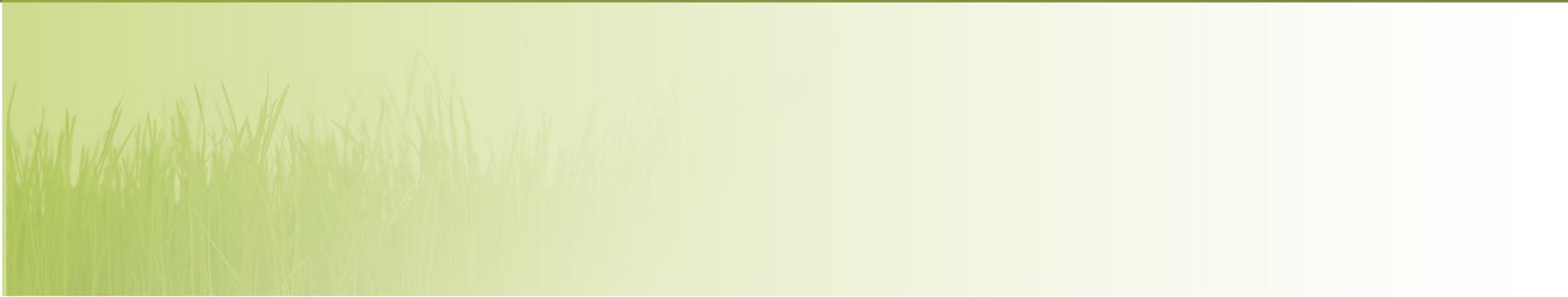
- basis; 2) establish that land dedication or construction of parks are proportionally concurrent with each phase of development; 3) specify the standards and required equipment and improvements for privately constructed parks; 4) allow credit toward the dedication requirements for golf courses, lakes and ponds, trails, detention basins, etc.; and, 5) consider an excise tax on a square footage basis for non-residential development. The fee in-lieu amount should be reconsidered annually.
2. Enhance the website of the Parks and Recreation Department to include a resident interface allowing descriptive information and graphic display of the City's parks and programmatic services in a user-friendly manner. This could include, for instance, an interactive map that is linked to helpful information about individual park sites, such as parks and recreation facilities and programs available, their locations and hours, any program events or activities held at the park, descriptive data about specific facilities (including those for rent), and information about planned improvements.
 3. Develop an Internet-based asset management toolset that may serve as a repository of both inventory and detailed attribute data of each park property and its equipment, facilities, and improvements. The toolset and database could be designed to allow the City to maintain up-to-date records as a means for better managing its parks and recreation assets and resources. The database could be initially populated with the inventory data collected for the master plan. It could also be designed to allow expansion and further customization for ongoing use by City staff.
 4. Improve park accessibility, including off-site sidewalks extending from parks in each direction a minimum of one-quarter mile (1,320 feet), acquisition of public access easements (where practicable) to provide more direct access routes from neighborhoods to parks and schools, installation of gates in perimeter fences (where applicable), and construction of ADA accessible bridges. Furthermore, accessibility improvements apply to increased accessibility for persons with disabilities, including accessible surfaces, curb cuts and ramps, and accessible facilities and improvements, particularly for the parks constructed prior to the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). The condition assessment in *Chapter 2, Recreational Assets*, underscores the nature of the park accessibility problem since every park received a condition assessment score of two, three, or four. Accessibility requirements are needed at many parks, and should include cross-walks, pavement striping, perimeter sidewalks, and "children at play" signs.
 5. Continuously pursue partnerships with other parks and recreation providers as identified earlier in this chapter. Such partnerships may include ongoing involvement through park enhancement and maintenance, as well as one-time projects, both of which are essential to the overall system. The City should establish ongoing lines of communication with their partners, including regularly scheduled meetings, workshops, and an annual summit.
 6. Amend the zoning ordinance to establish incentives for the provision of open space. Incentives may be established by allowing a reduction in lot size or use of different housing types in exchange for the provision of open space. The ordinance would need to be structured such that land owners are able to maintain an equivalent or higher development yield while dedicating open space. The incentive is formed by factoring the lot size such that there is a net increase in overall development yield, thereby making it an attractive alternative. Such standards may also encourage more creative subdivision layouts and designs, including development clustering and conservation development. It is important to note that such open spaces are not necessarily intended for improvement as

active recreational space. Rather, the intent is for more open space throughout the community, which allows preservation of native views, greater distances and enhanced buffering between adjacent uses, and an overall improved community character. This open space may be dedicated to a public land trust or as a permanent conservation easement and may, but does not have to, be dedicated to the City.

7. Amend the subdivision regulations requiring dedication of public access easements to provide public ways from neighborhoods to existing or planned future parks. Such requirement should be shown on the preliminary plat along with the locations of sidewalks to ensure continuity of the pedestrian system. Upon completion of a Trails Master Plan, amendments of the regulations will be necessary to require dedication of rights-of-way and/or easements for trail segments identified on the master plan map.
8. Update and elaborate on the Trails Master Plan to include design standards for planned projects, re-visit trail opportunities, and coordinate with other City plans.
9. Undergo an aggressive park enhancement program to rapidly improve the condition and appearance of the parks that received a score higher than 1.0 in the park condition

assessment (refer to *Table 2.8, Park Condition Assessment*). These parks include, in order of importance, Buch Park, Monnich Park, Buckridge Park and Miller Park.

10. Establish an “adopt-a-park” program to solicit the involvement of neighborhoods and local organizations to create shared stewardship through maintenance and patrolling of public parks and recreation areas. The program will need to have formalized standards as to the requirements for park maintenance and improvement activities. It is also advisable that the program be initiated on a one-year (or six month) trial basis with each adopting organization, with an evaluation before extending the program for a longer duration. Such programs may be instituted for whole parks or individual sections of parks, such as a monument or garden.
11. Repurpose schoolyards to become places of value to the broader community. The partnership between the City and Fremont Public Schools at Milliken Elementary is an excellent example of cooperation to provide joint use facilities. This approach is more cost effective for both parties.
12. Submit quarterly briefings and annual progress reports to the City Council to inform them of the plan implementation status.
13. Assess and update this master plan on an annual basis to determine revised areas of need based on recent developments, and modify the capital plan according to changing circumstances and priorities.



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Appendix

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A

FUNDING SOURCES

Department of the Interior - National Park Service

FEDERAL LANDS TO PARKS

The Federal Lands-to-Parks (FLP) enables states and local governments to establish park and recreation areas and adapt historic buildings for public uses. Through FLP, state and local agencies may acquire land and facilities once used for federal purposes at no cost to meet park and recreation needs. Information about the program is available at www.ncrc.nps.gov/programs/flp/.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund was enacted in 1964 (Public Law 88-578) to “create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities.” LWCF provides funding for: (1) land acquisition for federal land managing agencies; and (2) matching grants to state and local governments for planning (states only), acquisition and development of park and recreation areas and resource based facilities. Specifics for

federal land acquisition projects are determined each fiscal year by Congress and the Administration. Of the amounts appropriated in any given fiscal year for the state grants program, 40 percent is divided equally between states and 60 percent is allocated to the states by a population/need-based formula. A list of state contacts is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/contact_list.html.

All state and local grants require at least a 50 percent match by the non-federal partner. The grantee assumes all operation and maintenance costs in perpetuity. Information about the program is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed_state.html.

RIVERS, TRAILS AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

The RTCA program offers local groups staff assistance and consultations for locally led conservation projects. Projects may include developing trails and greenways or protecting rivers and open space. Regional

RTCA offices provide application information and assistance. A list of regional office contacts is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_offices.html. Information about the program is available at: www.ncrc.nps.gov/programs/rtca.

URBAN PARK & RECREATION RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program was authorized in November 1978 by Public Law 95-625, providing direct federal matching assistance to cities and urban counties for rehabilitation of existing recreation facilities. The law encourages systematic local planning and commitment to continuing operation and maintenance of recreation programs, sites, and facilities. Project proposals are submitted to the appropriate National Park Service Regional Office by eligible local units of government (selected cities and urban counties). Grants are awarded on a nationally

competitive basis with regional offices having the primary responsibility for monitoring progress and post-completion requirements.

****A revised and updated Handbook will be available for this program when funding is restored in future appropriations.*

Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration

CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ) is to realign the focus of transportation planning toward a more inclusive, environmentally sensitive, and multi-modal approach. The CMAQ program provides funding for programs and projects in air quality non-attainment and maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and small particulate matter (PM-10), which reduces transportation related emissions. Grants are provided through a reimbursement process that varies state by state. In general, however, a sponsor would submit expenses to the state department of transportation, which would then reimburse at 80 percent of the project cost. Applications and information about CMAQ grants are available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program, also authorized by TEA-21, provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users. Eligible project categories as defined in the act are: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails (with

restrictions on new trails on Federal land); acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; state administrative costs related to program administration (up to 7 percent of a state's funds); and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as these objectives relate to the use of recreational trails (up to 5 percent of a state's funds). Each state has its own procedures and timelines to solicit, select, and fund Recreational Trails projects. For more information about project funding contact your State Trail Administrator. For a list of administrators go to <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm>.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS

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 be 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. The federal government provides funding for TE projects through our nation's surface transportation legislation. Applications and information about Transportation Enhancement grants are available at www.enhancements.org.

Department of Transportation – Coast Guard

RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY

The RBS grant program provides funding to assist states with program administration, law enforcement and search and rescue capability, boater education, vessel

numbering and titling systems, aids to navigation, and public boating access sites. Allowable uses of the RBS Program funds include a wide spectrum of activities that fall into six broad categories – program administration, law enforcement and search and rescue capability, boater education, vessel numbering and titling systems, aids to navigation, and public boating access sites. States with approved boating safety programs that meet the participation requirements are eligible. Information about the program is available at <http://www.uscgboating.org/grants/default.aspx>.

Corporation for National Service

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps seeks to strengthen communities through projects that address education, public safety, the environment, and other unmet human needs. Learn more about how to apply for a grant at http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/apply/national.asp.

Department of Agriculture – Food Nutrition Service

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers funds for meals and snacks for children in low-income areas during after-school and summer hours. Through the Child and Adult Care Food Program, USDA administers Afterschool Snacks, a program that offers reimbursement for snacks to after-school care program providers. For eligibility, the after-school programs must offer educational or enrichment activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment after school, on weekends or holidays during the school year. The organization will be reimbursed at the highest level, currently 55 cents a snack per child per day. For more information, go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>. State agencies

responsible for this program are at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service administers a Summer Food Service Program that provides free meals to children throughout the summer months when school is not in session. Approved sponsors, including school districts, park agencies, nonprofit organizations, and camps, organize the program and provide the meals to a group of children (18 or under) at a central site(s). Children can receive either one or two reimbursable meals each day. To apply for either program, contact the state education agency at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>.

For more information on the program, go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/Default.htm> or contact USDA Food and Nutrition Service Public Information Staff.

Department of Agriculture – Forest Service

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

The Urban and Community Forestry program assists state forestry agencies, local and tribal governments, and private sector entities improve natural resource management of trees and forests in urban areas and community settings. The program encourages and facilitates the active involvement of volunteers in the management and protection of their community's natural resources. The program also analyzes, develops, disseminates, and demonstrates scientific information about protecting, managing, and maintaining community forest resources. States are encouraged to offer competitive grants that involve partnerships with local governments, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector for the

purpose of establishing effective community forestry programs. Information about the program is available at <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/>.

Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service

CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The purpose of the program is to assist land-users, communities, units of state and local government, and other federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems. The purpose of the conservation systems are to reduce erosion, improve soil and water quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range condition, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands. The program is also used as a means to collect, analyze, interpret, display, and disseminate information about the condition and trends of the Nation's soil and other natural resources so that people can make good decisions about resource use and about public policies for resource conservation. Information collected through the program is used to develop effective science-based technologies for natural resource assessment, management, and conservation. For more information about the Conservation Technical Assistance program go to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cta/>.

Technical assistance is provided at the state level by State Conservationists. Contact information for each State Conservationist is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/organization/regions.html>.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve economic activity, and

enhance the environment and standard of living in authorized RC&D areas. The program assists state, tribal and local units of government and local nonprofit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation and development. Current program objectives focus on improved quality of life, achieved through natural resources conservation and community development; sustainable communities; practical use and the management and conservation of natural resources. The program also establishes or improves coordination systems in rural areas by assisting RC&D coordinators, who assist local area councils. These coordinators help the area councils develop plans and proposals to compete for financial assistance from other federal, state and private sources. A list of local Resource Development Conservation Councils is available at www.rcdnet.org.

Authorized RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for RC&D technical and financial assistance program funds. The Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide grants for land conservation, water management, community development, and environmental needs in authorized RC&D areas. Information about the Resource Conservation and Development Program is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/>.

Department of Commerce

TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

As part of the department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) awards matching grants to nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and colleges and universities to administer projects that demonstrate innovative uses of network technology. TOP projects demonstrate how telecommunications

and information technologies can be used to extend services to all populations, particularly those in low-income or rural environments. An application kit along with other materials and information needed to apply can be found on the Department of Commerce's website after the program is announced in the Federal Register at www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/top/grants/application.htm.

Department of Education

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program was first authorized by Congress [Part I, Title X (20 USC 8241) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act] "to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to plan, implement, or expand projects that address the education, health, social services, cultural and recreational needs of the community." The No Child Left Behind Act has changed the aims of this program (see Grant Info under Public Policy of www.nrp.org). Public recreation and parks are now able to apply directly for 21st CCLC funds in 2002 pending passage of education legislation. To apply for 21st CCLC funds, you must contact your state educational agency for information on applications and deadlines. For a list of state contacts, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/contacts.html>.

More information on the program, including application materials, helpful resources, and examples of successful applications, can be found on the 21st Century Community Learning Centers website at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>.

GOVERNOR'S GRANTS FOR DRUG AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

This program provides support to governors for a variety of drug and violence prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youths. Governors use their program funds to provide support to parent groups, community-based organizations, and other public and private nonprofit entities for drug and violence prevention activities. For more information, contact your governor's office or the U.S. Department of Education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR PROGRESS GRANTS

Grants are awarded to local educational agencies and community-based organizations to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs (including after-school programs) for kindergarten through 12th grade students by providing equipment and support to enable students to participate actively in physical education activities, and by providing funds for staff and teacher training and education. For more information, go to <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/pep.html>.

Department of Education – Rehabilitation Services Administration

SPECIAL RECREATION PROGRAM

This program assists development of recreation and related services for individuals with disabilities to aid their employment, mobility, independence, socialization, and community integration. Projects must provide recreational activities for individuals with disabilities in settings with peers without disabilities when possible and appropriate. The program awards discretionary grants on a competitive basis to states, public agencies, and nonprofit private

organizations, including institutions of higher education. For more information, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/programs.html>.

Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

Grants for child care programs that serve children under the age 13 (or, at the option of the grantee, up to age 19, if disabled or under court supervision) who reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size, and who reside with a parent (or parents) who is working or attending job training or educational program; or are in need of, or are receiving protective services. This grant is coordinated by a designated "lead agency" in each state that submits a two-year plan to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). Agencies seeking CCDBG funds are encouraged to communicate with the Regional Administrators. For more information, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/ccdf/index.htm>.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

This grant is intended to provide assistance to states and local communities, working through a network of community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations, for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient. Each fiscal year, each state is required to submit an application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Chief Executive Officer of each state is also required to designate a lead agency to prepare and submit a plan to the Secretary of HHS. Public entities, including recreation and

parks, can be partners in this block grant program. For more information, go to www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbg/index.htm.

HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START

Early Head Start (EHS) has a triple mission. It aims to promote healthy prenatal outcomes, enhance the development of infants and toddlers, and promote healthy family functioning. Head Start is designed to foster healthy development in low-income children. Grants for the operation of Head Start and Early Head Start programs may be awarded to either public or private, for profit or nonprofit organizations, or public school systems. For more information, contact the Head Start Information and Publication Center (HSIPC) by e-mail at askus@headsartinfo.org. Grant announcements can be found at www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/grant/fundingopportunities/fundopport.htm.

Department of Health and Human Services – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

EXEMPLARY STATE PROGRAMS TO PREVENT CHRONIC DISEASE AND PROMOTE HEALTH

CDC supports a variety of programs to improve the nation's health by preventing chronic diseases and their risk factors. The CDC gives states guidelines, recommendations, and resources, helping state health and education agencies promote healthy behaviors. Park and recreation agencies can contract with public health and education agencies to provide these services. For more information on this program, go to www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/programs.htm.

To contact your state chronic disease director, go to www.chronicdisease.org/members.html.

PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

The PHHS Block Grant is the primary source of flexible funding that provides states the latitude to fund any of 265 national health objectives available in the nation's Healthy People 2010 health improvement plan. States invest their PHHS block grant dollars in a variety of public health areas. For a listing of Healthy People 2010 health improvement plans in your state, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/blockgrant/stateselection.htm>.

Department of Health and Human Services – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program provides Federal funds through grants to States, communities, and Native American tribes to develop and implement systems of care programs. The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) administers 6-year Federal grants to implement, enhance, and evaluate local systems of care. Grantees are required to match Federal dollars with local and State monies. These grants to States, communities, and Native American tribes support a broad array of services designed to meet the multiple and changing needs of children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and their families. They coordinate systems of care by developing partnerships with mental health, child welfare, education, juvenile justice, and other local, public and private agencies, including park and recreation agencies. Public park and recreation agencies can contract with grantees

for services. Find out if there is a grantee in your community, search at <http://www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/childrencampaign/grantcomm.asp>.

TARGETED CAPACITY EXPANSION – PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The purpose of the initiative is to increase the capacity of cities, counties, and tribal governments to provide prevention and early intervention treatment services to meet emerging and urgent mental health needs of communities. Projects funded through this program must target services to children and adolescents and their families. For more information, go to <http://samhsa.gov/grants/grants.html>.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

BROWNFIELDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) is designed to help cities redevelop abandoned, idled, or underutilized areas often on industrial or commercial property, known as brownfields. The program provides funding to local governments to be used in conjunction with Section 108 loan guarantees to finance redevelopment of brownfield sites. This program is not limited to industrial and/or commercial property. Approximately \$25 million is available annually for eligible local communities. Information about the program is available at www.hud.gov/bedifact.cfm.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program awards grants to entitlement community grantees to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and

services. HUD awards CDBG funds directly to metropolitan cities and urban counties (entitlement communities), or to states for distribution to non-entitlement communities. Any activity undertaken using CDBG funds must benefit low and moderate-income persons, prevent or eliminate slums or blight or address conditions that present a serious and immediate threat to the health and safety of the community. Brownfields redevelopment and public recreation activities (especially for children) are eligible, but must be incorporated into local government priorities through the community's Consolidated Plan and annual action plan. Eligible entities include cities or urban counties. There are field offices in most states, cities or urban counties that accept these applications. There is also a state program that handles smaller communities. Each urban area is allocated a formula-derived amount of funds and must submit a consolidated plan to the field office. For more information about the program and eligibility requirements go to www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/cdbg.cfm.

To find about program opportunities in metro areas (entitlement zones) contact Sue Miller at <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/statefct.html#contact>. Also, for local government information, go to: www.hud.gov/fundsavl/html.

HUD E-MAPS

The Department of Housing and Urban Development developed an application on HUD's website intended to help people learn about environmental matters that affect their communities throughout the U.S. HUD E-MAPS is a Web-enabled version of Community 2020™ software which, combines HUD data with EPA environmental databases. The Community 2020 CD-ROM software can be purchased by community groups and individuals at a cost of \$250.00 for a

region or \$300.00 for the whole country. The software provides detailed, site-specific financial, managerial, demographic and program information for virtually every entitlement or competitive grant awarded by HUD since 1992. Over 1,000 communities are required to submit a five-year Consolidation Plan for the expenditure of over \$7.0 billion federal funds for an array of community development activities. Copies of the Community 2020 software are provided to the Consolidation Plan communities to streamline the application and reporting procedures for HUD's major community development programs and to facilitate citizens having access to information on how funds are being spent in their community. The E-Maps software springs from HUD's strong conviction that every American has the right to know about the quality of the environment where they live, work, play and raise their families. Information about the E-Maps program is available at www.hud.gov/emaps.

HOPE VI REVITALIZATION GRANTS

The specific elements of public housing transformation that have proven key to HOPE VI include: Changing the physical shape of public housing; establishing positive incentives for resident self-sufficiency and comprehensive services that empower residents; lessening concentrations of poverty by placing public housing in non-poverty neighborhoods and promoting mixed-income communities; and forging partnerships with other agencies, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses to leverage support and resources. Only public housing authorities are eligible to apply for these funds, but park and recreation agencies can contract to develop recreation facilities at public housing sites and to provide community and supportive service programs for residents, including those relocated as a result of revitalization efforts. For more information, go to

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/grants/revitalization/>.

Department of the Interior – Fish and Wildlife Service

AQUATIC RESOURCE EDUCATION

The Aquatic Resource Education Program helps people understand, enjoy and conserve the aquatic natural resources of the nation. States have the option of using up to 15 percent of their annual Sport Fish Restoration apportionment for aquatic resource education programs and outreach and communications projects. The Sport Fish Restoration Program, created in 1950, provides funding for fish management, conservation, restoration, aquatic education, and boating access. The program is funded by a 10 percent Federal excise tax on fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies and artificial baits and a 3 percent tax on electronic fishing motors and sonar fish finders; duties on imported fishing tackle, pleasure boats and yachts; and a portion of the Federal fuel tax receipts from motorboats and small gasoline engines. The funds are apportioned annually to the states and territories by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of fishing license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. To view FY 2002 state apportionments go to <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/apport/sfrprelimapporttable2002.pdf> or look at the Federal Aid State Apportionments category under Natural Resources on the NRPA website. Information about the Aquatic Resource Education program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>.

BOATING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS PROGRAM

The BIG program provides state grants to construct, renovate, or maintain tie-up facilities for recreational boats 26 feet or more in length. The federal program provides states with \$32 million for FY 2000 to 2003. Each state has a contact located in the Department of Natural Resources. To find your state contact go to www.boatus.com/gov/big_contacts.htm. Information about the BIG program is available at: www.boatus.com/gov/big.htm.

CLEAN VESSEL ACT PUMP-OUT GRANT PROGRAM

The Clean Vessel Act Pump-out Grant program provides pump-out and dump stations for boaters to dispose of human waste in an environmentally safe manner. Pump-out stations are used to pump waste out of recreational boat holding tanks. Dump stations are used to empty portable toilets. Pump-out and dump stations can be located using the 1-800-ASK-FISH toll free number established by the Sport Fishing Promotion Council. Appropriate state agencies are eligible to receive grant funds. Each state has a contact located in the Department of Fish and Wildlife. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to: www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Clean Vessel program is available at fa.r9.fws.gov/cva/cva.html.

HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act was amended in 1970 to include funding for hunter training programs and the development, operation and maintenance of public target ranges. Funds are derived from an 11 percent Federal excise tax on handguns. Funds are also collected from a 12.4 percent tax on archery equipment. A certain amount of funds (section 4) must be used on hunter

education before additional funds (section 10) can be accessed. Once identified section 4 funds are utilized for hunter education, the section 10 funds can be used for additional hunter education programs or for wildlife restoration. These funds are apportioned each year to the states and territories (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of hunting license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Hunter Education Program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>.

NATIONAL COASTAL WETLANDS CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants Program is authorized by the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to grant funds to coastal states to carry out coastal wetlands conservation projects. Participants in the program include state, county, and municipal governments as well as non-government partners. Project review and selection are conducted by the Federal Aid Office and other Divisions in each Region and by a cross-program review in the Washington Office, led by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance and Habitat Restoration. All Coastal States (except Louisiana) and the Trust Territories are eligible to submit project proposals to the appropriate Service Regional Office annually. Funds are made available by allocating 18 percent of the Sport Fish Restoration Account or 100 percent of the excise tax on small engine fuels - whichever is greater. Up to \$15 million is available annually. Information about the program is available at fa.r9.fws.gov/cw/cw_jul97.html.

SPORT FISH RESTORATION ACT

The Act, approved by Congress on August 9, 1950, provides funding for fish management, conservation, and restoration. The program is funded by a 10 percent Federal excise tax on fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies and artificial baits and a 3 percent tax on electronic fishing motors and sonar fish finders. The funds are apportioned annually to the states and territories (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of fishing license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM

The Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program provides funding for wildlife conservation projects, wildlife conservation education, and wildlife-associated recreation activities. The program benefits the diverse array of wildlife and associated habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished, to fulfill the unmet needs of wildlife. State Fish and Wildlife Departments with a comprehensive plan approved by the Secretary of the Interior can participate in the program. Local and state agencies are encouraged to partner with their state Fish and Wildlife Departments. Contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department for more information on project eligibility. To contact the Fish and Wildlife Department in your state go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF.

WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT

Approved by Congress on September 2, 1937, the Act provides funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management research and the distribution of information produced by the projects. Congress amended the Act on October 23, 1970, to include funding for hunter training programs and the development, operation and maintenance of public target ranges. Funds are derived from an 11 percent Federal excise tax on handguns. Funds are also collected from a 12.4 percent tax on archery equipment. A certain amount of funds (section 4) must be used on hunter education before additional funds (section 10) can be attained. The section 10 funds can be used for additional hunter education programs or for wildlife restoration. These funds are apportioned each year to the states and territories (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of hunting license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to: www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>.

Department of Justice

INCENTIVE GRANTS FOR LOCAL DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS (TITLE V)

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) requests applications for programs to address the problems of delinquency prevention, within communities that experience high crime rates. Each state receives block grants to distribute to local delinquency prevention programs; public recreation agencies are eligible to apply. Each

state has either a designated Title V Coordinator or Juvenile Justice Specialist who oversees the Title V grant program in that state. To access contact information for your state coordinator or specialist, please go to <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/titlev/grant.html>.

GANG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) annually requests applications for programs to address the youth gang problem and one new evaluation program under its Gang-Free Schools and Communities Initiative. Once the program is announced each year, an application kit can be found on the website of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants/html. Additional information may also be found at ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm.

SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

The Drug-Free Communities Program is designed to strengthen community-based coalition efforts to reduce youth substance abuse. Currently, there are 307 Drug-Free Communities Support Program awards. The grants enable coalitions to design substance abuse initiatives that target the illegal use or abuse of a range of drugs, such as narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, cannabis, inhalants, alcohol, tobacco, or other related products that are prohibited by Federal, State, or local law. Go to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention website for more information at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html>.

WEED AND SEED

Operation Weed and Seed aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in targeted high-crime neighborhoods across the country. Law enforcement agencies and

prosecutors cooperate in “weeding out” criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse. “Seeding” brings social and community services to the area, including Safe Havens for young people and economic development. Park and recreation departments that provide neighborhood restoration services, or prevention, intervention, or treatment for offenders may be eligible for funding. Potential sites must first gain “official recognition” from the EOWS. To do this they must develop a local strategy and plan for addressing crime consistent with Weed and Seed goals. The Office of Justice Programs suggests that each program have a coordinator. Go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm.

Department of Labor

YOUNG OFFENDER INITIATIVE

This program is designed to enhance community safety by successfully reintegrating young offenders into the community by helping them become productive, responsible, and law-abiding citizens, obtain and retain long-term employment, maintain a stable residence; and successfully address their substance abuse issues and mental health needs. Eligible applicants must be state or local agencies or units of government, tribal governments, public or private nonprofit entities designated as 501(c)(3) or local Workforce Investment Boards that have formed partnerships with state and local agencies. For more information go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/apply.html>.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

The Youth Opportunity Grants authorized in the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (www.usworkforce.org) offer a chance to make a significant impact on concentrated poverty and unemployment in this country. As a complement to Job Corps, School-to-Work, and formula-funded youth programs, Youth Opportunity Grants provide the Department

of Labor with a means to saturate targeted high-poverty urban and rural communities with sufficient resources to cause a significant drop in youth unemployment and idleness in these communities. For more information, go to http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/yog.asp.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT STATE AND LOCAL FORMULA YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) authorizes funds to state and local communities to support workforce training and related activities for youth who are 14-21, low income, basic skills deficient, a school dropout, homeless, a parent or parenting, offender, or individuals including disabled youth that require additional assistance to complete educational program or hold employment. Local workforce investment boards (WIBs) must provide the following services to eligible youth: tutoring, study skills training, dropout prevention strategies, alternative secondary school services, summer employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experiences, and occupational skill training. Under WIA, each local WIB must establish a Youth Council to develop, implement, and oversee strategic plans for providing these programs and enhancing youth connections to One-Stops. State contacts can be found at <http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/asp/statecon.asp>.

Environmental Protection Agency

BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT DEMONSTRATION PILOTS

The Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots (BADP) are designed to empower states, local governments and communities in economic and environmental redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely cleanup brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. The brownfields assessment pilots fund up

to \$200,000 over a two-year period. These funds bring together community groups, investors, lenders, developers, and other affected parties to address site assessment and cleanup planning issues, such as green space. Acceptable green space redevelopment includes: parks, playgrounds, trails, gardens, habitat restoration, open space, and/or green space preservation. BADP are administered on a competitive basis and selected by evaluation panels consisting of EPA Regional and Headquarters staff and other federal agency representatives. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact and meet with their EPA Regional Brownfields Representative (RBR) early in the process of preparing a proposal. A list of RBR's and contact information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/regcntct.htm>. Information about the program is available at <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc>.

BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP REVOLVING LOAN FUND PILOTS

The Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) program allows states, local governments and Indian tribes to receive loan funds for environmental cleanup of brownfields. The BCRLF can provide up to \$1,000,000 over five years for each pilot. The purpose of the program is to enable states, local governments, and Indian tribes to make low interest loans to facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields properties. To contact your EPA Regional Brownfields Representative (RBR) go to: www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/regcntct.htm. Information about the program and eligible sites is available at [ww.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/rflfst.htm](http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/rflfst.htm).

CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROTECTION

The EPA offers this grant program to enhance public outreach and communication; assist families in evaluating risks to children and in making informed consumer choices; build partnerships

that increase a community's long-term capacity to advance protection of children's environmental health and safety; leverage private and public investments to enhance environmental quality by enabling community efforts to continue past EPA's ability to provide assistance to communities; and to promote protection of children from environmental threats. Eligible applicants include community groups, public nonprofit institutions/ organizations, tribal governments, specialized groups, profit organizations, private nonprofit institutions/ organizations, municipal and local governments. For more information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The EPA Environmental grant program supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality. The program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques. The EPA awards over 200 grants each year worth between \$2-3 million. Grants of \$25,000 or less are awarded in EPA's ten regional offices, and grants of more than \$25,000 are awarded at EPA Headquarters. Each year, EPA's Office of Environmental Education releases a solicitation notice in the Federal Register that provides instructions for obtaining a grant. Educational agencies at the state, local and tribal level, state environmental agencies, college and universities, not-for-profit organizations, and noncommercial educational broadcasting entities are eligible to apply. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Although government agencies cannot apply directly, they are encouraged to work with other entities on developing and implementing environmental

education programs. For more information about the program and the application process go to www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES

With these grants, the EPA aims to provide financial assistance to grassroots community-based groups to support projects to design, demonstrate or disseminate practices, methods or techniques related to environmental justice. Specifically, EPA will grant funding assistance to be used for: environmental justice education and awareness programs; environmental Justice Programs (for example, river monitoring and pollution prevention programs); technical assistance in gathering and interpreting existing environmental justice data; and technical assistance to access available public information. Community-based grassroots organizations, other incorporated nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Tribal Governments are eligible. Applications are usually due at the beginning of March each year. Awardees are notified in August of each year. For more information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS PROGRAM

This EPA program seeks to provide financial assistance to States, Local agencies, and Indian Tribes for chemical accident prevention activities that relate to the Risk Management Program under the Clean Air Act Section 112(r). Additionally, through this program the EPA provides financial assistance to Tribes for chemical emergency planning, and community right-to-know programs, which are established to prevent or eliminate unreasonable risk to the health and environment of communities within the State. Eligible applicants include States, Local agencies in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Island, Northern Mariana Islands, and Federally Recognized Indian Tribes. Recipients must match 25 percent of the grant funds (including in-kind services). For more

information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

Foundation Grants

GENERAL MILLS CHAMPIONS: YOUTH NUTRITION AND FITNESS GRANTS

The American Dietetic Association Foundation, the President's Challenge, and the General Mills Foundation have partnered to improve youth nutrition and fitness in the United States. The new initiative, entitled "General Mills Champions," will provide grants to community-based groups. The initiative will also include sponsorship of the President's Active Lifestyle Awards, development of nutrition and fitness mentoring models, and sharing best practices. Through its funding component, the program will award fifty grants of up to \$10,000 each to encourage communities in the United States to improve the eating and physical activity patterns of young people, ages 2-20. Grants will be awarded to 501(c)(3) or 509(a) status not-for-profit organizations and agencies working with communities that demonstrate the greatest need and likelihood of sustainable impact on young people's nutrition and activity levels through innovative programs. Grants will be awarded to programs for demonstrating significant potential impact on youth groups with special needs or for having an impact on large populations of youth. (NRPA is checking to see if the foundation will accept proposals from local units of government.) For more information, go to http://www.generalmills.com/Responsibility/Community_Engagement/Grants.aspx.

TONY HAWK FOUNDATION FUNDING FOR SKATEBOARD PARKS

Through its grant program, the foundation seeks to fund the construction of skateparks that are designed and built by qualified and experienced skatepark contractors; include local skaters in the design process; are in low-income areas, or areas with a

high population of "at-risk" youth; can demonstrate grassroots commitment to the project; have a creative mix of street obstacles and transition/vert terrain; do not require skaters or their parents to sign waivers; encourage skaters to look after their own safety and the safety of others; are open during daylight hours throughout the year; are free of charge; and are in areas that currently have no skateboarding facilities. Grant amounts range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. To be eligible, applicants must be a 501(c)(3) public charity or a state or local agency (including public school systems or public projects). The foundation also will consider assisting start-up organizations. The foundation expects to approve grant requests quarterly. See the foundation website for complete application procedures and to download an application form. For more information, go to www.tonyhawkfoundation.org.

AETNA AND THE AETNA FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

These grants are for improving the quality of life in communities in which the company works by addressing critical social issues aligned with the foundation's philanthropic focus areas. The foundation will consider applications for sponsorship of fundraising events such as galas and walks; outreach activities (e.g., health fairs); and other community-based health and wellness initiatives that are aligned with our priorities.

Additional information regarding the Regional Community Grants Program in each of Aetna's business regions can be found at the foundation's website at www.aetna-foundation.org/foundation/apply-for-a-grant/grantseeker-information/.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL: FREE SEEDS FOR PLANTING "FREEDOM GARDENS"

The America the Beautiful Fund is a national nonprofit organization started in 1965 to encourage volunteer citizen efforts to protect the natural and historic beauty

of America. In response to the events of September 11th, ABF is providing \$1 million worth of flower, vegetable, and herb seeds to plant “Freedom Gardens” across America. Anyone who wants to sponsor or start a Freedom Garden in their community can receive a grant of 100 to 1,000 free seed packets.

For further information and an application form, visit the program’s website at http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/free_seeds/index.php.

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION: FACILITIES CAPITAL CHALLENGE GRANT

The Kresge Foundation awards grants for facility construction and renovation, capital equipment purchases and real estate acquisition. Grants range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 and are awarded to organizations that cater specifically to disadvantaged and disenfranchised in six program areas: health, environment, arts and culture, education, human services and community development. For further information, visit the program’s website at www.kresge.org.

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION: GRANTS FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is dedicated to promoting conservation and sustainable use of natural resources through environmental education, natural resource management, habitat protection, ecosystem restoration, and public policy development. NFWF funds a variety of wildlife and habitat preservation projects: Bring Back the Natives, FMC Corporation Bird and Habitat Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge Support Group Grant Program, Native Plant Conservation Initiative, The Pathways to Nature Conservation Fund, Pulling Together Initiative, Restore Our Southern Rivers. For further information, visit the organization’s website at <http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=GrantPrograms>.

PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS GRANTS

The Trusts make grants in the following program areas:

- The Culture program aims to assure that our nation’s cultural resources are properly sustained and contribute to the health of our democratic society.
- The Education program seeks to raise the performance of students at all levels of education, especially the capabilities of students to learn for understanding and to acquire the literacies needed for productive employment and effective citizenship in our increasingly complex society.
- The Environment program aims to promote policies and practices that protect the global atmosphere and preserve healthy forest and marine ecosystems.
- The Health and Human Services program is designed to promote the health and well being of the American people and to strengthen disadvantaged communities.
- The Public Policy program advances and helps sustain improvements in America’s democratic life by strengthening the foundations of civic engagement and rebuilding Americans’ confidence in government and the basic democratic process, primarily elections.

You should first review the information about the program whose interests most closely match those of your organization. The guidelines lay out concisely each program’s goals and objectives and the kinds of activities it will and will not consider. The Trusts will respond to all specific letters of inquiry but not to general solicitations for funds. For more information, go to at www.pewtrusts.com/grants.

PUBLIC WELFARE FOUNDATION

This foundation is dedicated to supporting organizations that serve severely disadvantaged populations - including children and youth of all ages. This private foundation primarily funds general operating expenses, and looks for organizations that combine service with youth empowerment and advocacy for systemic change. First time grants can range between \$25,000 and \$50,000. For more information, visit the website at www.publicwelfare.org.

THREE GUINEAS: PROJECTS TO BENEFIT WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Three Guineas Fund welcomes proposals from tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, or a fiscal agent with that status, for start-up projects as well as general operating support for established programs. The fund does not generally support direct service projects unless they are of strategic interest as models. For more information, go to at www.3gf.org.

TOSHIBA AMERICA FOUNDATION

The Toshiba America Foundation provides cash grants to classroom teachers to assist them in making improvements in the teaching of science and mathematics. Grants are available for teachers in grades K-6 and for grades 7-12. For more information, go to at <http://www.toshiba.com/taf/about.jsp>.

UPS FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Community Investment Grant Program allocates dollars directly to UPS region offices in an effort to offer flexibility by UPS regions to invest monies in local causes they know well and support. For more information, go to at <http://responsibility.ups.com/community>.

RESOURCES FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY FUNDING

There are many unsafe, old and outdated playgrounds that our children are playing on. However, the replacement of playground equipment can be a costly enterprise for your organization.

Suggestions for possible contributors to your project include: local civic foundations (they may also have a list of businesses that contribute to community projects), the Junior League, Jaycees, Kiwanis, Lions and local business and industry foundations.

Many fundraising sources are listed at your local library. The best way to electronically identify state-related information is to consider looking at the home pages of your senators and representatives.

Listings of government funding and grants are available through various sources such as the Federal Register, the Annual Register of Grant Support and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

Another terrific playground funding source comes from private funds. Over 43,000 private foundations are currently in the United States. Annually, their combined awards total more than \$10 million dollars. Community, corporate and family foundations are the best places to go for strictly local support. Private funding sources by state may be obtained through the Foundation Grants Index and other publications published by The Foundation Center, as well as other foundation sources such as Taft. Reference Collections operated by the Foundation Center are maintained in several locations in each state. You may contact the Foundation Center at (202) 331-1400 to find the location closest to you.

Besides networking with individuals in the community, a great way to find these foundations are to log onto the web. Websites available to disseminate

grant-related information are www.fdncenter.org (Foundation Center) and www.cof.org (Council on Foundations).

The following are foundations that may be potential sources for playground equipment and playground safety based on passed giving as recorded in the 1994/95 Grants for Recreation, Sports and Athletics catalog by The Foundation Center.

- Abell-Hanger Foundation (especially within the Permian Basin)
- Amon G. Carter Foundation (Fort Worth, Tarrant County)
- Houston Endowment, Inc.
- Meadows Foundation, Inc.
- The Moody Foundation
- Rockwell Fund, Inc. (especially Houston)
- Shell Oil Co. Foundation (areas of company operations)
- The Wortham Foundation (Houston and Harris County)

Grants for Seniors' Programs

NATIONAL BLUEPRINT: INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG ADULTS AGE 50 AND OLDER

The goal of this program is to provide small grants in support of local community efforts designed to advance the goals of the National Blueprint: Increasing Physical Activity Among Adults Age 50 and Older. The National Blueprint: Increasing Physical Activity Among Adults Age 50 and Older was developed by 46 national organizations with a shared interest in promoting physical activity in the population over 50 years of age. The Blueprint, which was released in May 2001, is intended to serve as a guide for multiple organizations, associations and agencies to inform and support their planning work related to increasing physical activity among America's aging population.

The Blueprint identifies barriers to physical activity in the older adult population and proposes a number of potential strategies that could be used to address these barriers. Nineteen grants of up to \$25,000 will be provided to organizations and/or coalitions in support of local community projects designed to advance the goals of the Blueprint. Applications are invited from local agencies wanting to improve the health, function and quality of life of adults aged 50 and older. Universities and research institutes can apply but only as part of a broader coalition of local agencies and organizations. For more information, go to <http://www.icaa.cc/>.

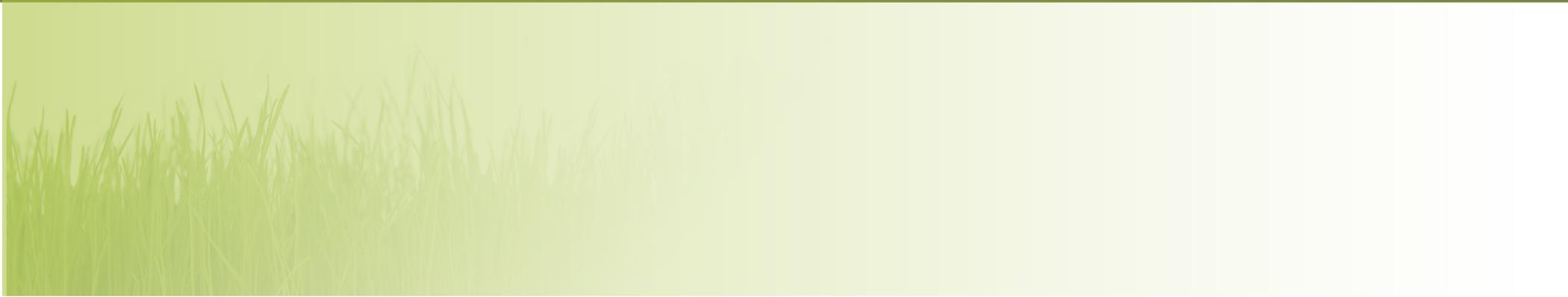
SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Department of Labor, Division of Older Worker Programs of the Employment Training Community Service Employment Program announces funds to promote part-time employment opportunities in community service activities for unemployed, low-income individuals who are age 55 and over, that will foster increased prospect for their economic self-sufficiency. Eligible applicants include public and private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and community-based organizations. Approximately \$342 million will be available for 10-20 awards. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/seniors/>.

Grants Links for Arts Programs

- American Arts Alliance: www.americanartsalliance.org
- American Association of Museums: <http://www.aam-us.org/>
- Americans for the Arts: <http://www.artsusa.org>
- Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin for Arts and Culture: http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/rfp/cat_arts.jhtml

- Fundsnet Arts Links: <http://www.fundsnet services.com/arts2.htm>
- Institute of Museum and Library Services: <http://www.ims.gov>
- National Assembly of State Arts Agencies: <http://www.nasaa-arts.org>
- National Endowment for the Arts: <http://www.arts.endow.gov>
- National Endowment for the Humanities: <http://www.neh.gov>
- Wallace Reader's Digest Fund for Arts: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org>



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Appendix

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B

Design Standards

Age Appropriate Design Guidelines for Playgrounds

Since the 1930s, thousands of playgrounds have been built to provide safe, secure areas of play for children to develop and just “have fun.” But how safe are our children? According to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) statistics, nearly 205,860 playground-related injuries requiring emergency room visits occur each year. Approximately 156,040 of those injuries occur on public playgrounds.

A key to many of those injuries is the fact that numerous children are playing on equipment not designed for their age. Thus, the steps or railings may be too far apart or require additional strength and coordination causing children to fall or trip. According to CPSC statistics regarding playground injuries to preschool-age children (under 5 years), approximately 40 percent of all injuries involved climbers.

Most injuries related to age inappropriateness involve children ages 0 to 4 playing on equipment designed for children ages 5 to 12. However, older children

should not play on equipment designed for younger children. Equipment that is too small may not be developmentally challenging and may create hazards by having small steps or narrow spaces.

The National Program for Playground Safety recommends that parents be proactive in selecting age appropriate equipment and requesting separate play areas for different age groups -- ages 2 to 5 and 5 to 12. These areas should be marked by signage indicating the age-appropriate areas. Parents and other interested adults are not expected to become trained playground equipment inspectors, but they can review equipment to be sure that it is appropriately designed for the age levels and needs of the children using the equipment.

Please consider the following factors when selecting age-appropriate equipment in order to help make playgrounds safer.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SHOULD FOSTER APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND BE SCALED ACCORDINGLY

Children are developmentally different in size and ability. Most children ages 2 to 5 are smaller, weaker, less coordinated and have a higher center of gravity than 5 to 12 year olds. Thus, they need smaller steps and crawl spaces. Hands require smaller grips and bodies require appropriately placed railings on platforms. On the whole, playground equipment for 2 to 5 year olds should be designed lower to the ground.

Keep in mind playgrounds should physically challenge all children. Older children should be encouraged to use overhead and horizontal bars because they have greater arm development and strength. However, the same pieces are not appropriate for 2 to 5 year olds.

Remember for all children on all equipment, there should be no spaces 3-1/2 to 9 inches where heads or bodies could become trapped.

Playgrounds also can facilitate other areas of physical development. They can stimulate senses with different textures and contrasts in color. They can help develop dynamic balance by providing smaller children with small ramps or steps and school-aged children with rope and chain ladders, bridges and balance beams.

Appropriate play areas for children ages 2 to 5 could include:

- areas to crawl;
- low platforms with multiple access such as ramps and ladders;
- ramps with pieces attached for grasping;
- low tables for sand, water and manipulation of materials;
- tricycle paths with various textures;
- flexible spring rockers;
- sand areas with covers; and,
- shorter slides (usually no taller than 4 feet).
- Developmentally appropriate play areas for children ages 5 to 12 could include:
- rope or chain climbers on angles;
- climbing pieces;
- horizontal bars;
- cooperative pieces such as tire swings, merry-go-rounds, see-saws;
- slides and sliding poles;
- open spaces to run and play ball; and,
- semi-enclosed structures to promote fantasy play and socializing.

PLAYGROUNDS SHOULD HELP ENSURE POSITIVE EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Under good supervision, well-designed and appropriately used playgrounds can help create

positive emotional development for children. Equipment such as appropriately sized slides and swings encourage children to experiment and stretch their bodies and emotions to new limits. Playgrounds that are appropriately designed allow younger children to explore new methods of playing and to take qualified risks. Parents can help nurture positive emotional development by observing, supervising, facilitating and complimenting, but not directly interfering unless there is a safety problem.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SHOULD HELP PROVIDE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Playgrounds may be one of the first social experiences for some children. Good play areas offer children opportunities to play alone or with other children. The playground should allow younger children to easily manipulate items, explore spaces and begin to interact with others. Suggested equipment for play areas for children ages 2 to 5 should offer both single and multi-child use. Appropriate equipment may be single-use equipment such as spring rocking animals or tot swings and more social pieces such as multi-user spring rockers, sand boxes or age-appropriate slides.

Playgrounds for school-aged children should continue to encourage social growth with equipment for single and multi-users such as swings, slides and climbers. Some equipment for 5 to 12 year olds should encourage cooperation. Examples could include tire swings, merry-go-rounds, seesaws and special manipulative equipment that requires more than one user.

Individual pieces of equipment (with the exception of swings that need to be located away from high traffic areas) often can be placed adjacent to one another or attached to other pieces. Close proximity encourages children to move from piece to piece and gives them opportunities to interact.

Children of all ages can develop social skills by working together to maintain their play areas. Tricycles and other loose equipment should be used and placed in designated areas. Children can help pick up trash and push into place loose-fill surfaces such as sand, pea gravel and wood chips that have been displaced by use.

PLAY AREAS SHOULD PROVIDE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Playgrounds are a fun way for children to develop intellectually. Playgrounds offer opportunities to learn problem-solving skills, to explore, to manipulate items and to discover new ways to get off and on equipment. Exploration areas include nature trails, large composite structures and play houses. Manipulative equipment includes sand boxes, sand diggers, water wheels, merry-go-rounds, construction materials and special items that turn. Age-appropriate areas offer younger children smaller, safer and more secure methods of getting off and on the equipment like slides, steps or slight ramps. School-age children should have more advanced methods of getting off equipment like poles, horizontal ladders or flexible bridges to challenge their problem solving abilities.

PLAY AREAS SHOULD PROVIDE ACCESSIBILITY AND PLAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL CHILDREN

With the 1991 passage of the American with Disabilities Act, many play areas are being planned or modified to give children with disabilities an opportunity to play on play equipment with other children. The Recreation Advisory Committee of the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board has guidelines on accessibility and playground equipment.

The guidelines specify the minimum level of accessibility required in the construction and alteration of play areas covered by the law. For further

information, contact the Access Board at www.access-board.gov.

Play areas should offer some stable paths paved with engineered wood fiber, rubber mats or other accessible material to provide access for wheelchairs. Transfer stations on equipment will aid physically challenged children to get off and on equipment. Five-foot wide paths, wheelchair parking spaces adjacent to the play structures, wider platforms and walkways will help children using wheelchairs. Using different textures and colors for paths and handrails can help visually impaired children.

EXAMPLES OF AGE-APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT

This chart is for consideration only - it is not an extensive list.

Ages 2 - 5	Ages 5 - 12
Activity panels	Swings
Swings	Tire swings
Tot swings	Spiral slides
Small slides	Horizontal ladders
Lower platforms	Chain and net climbers
Spring rocking equipment	Free standing arch climbers
Sand/water tables	Sliding poles
Crawl tunnels	Merry-go-rounds
Playhouses	Seesaws
	Track gliders

Fall Surfacing Guidelines for Playgrounds

Most of us want challenges and memories for our children. However, parents and educators need to

remember that pushing the body to limits also can create falls and injuries.

Statistics indicate that nearly 70 percent of all playground injuries are related to falls to the surface. Recent studies also have found that about 80 percent of playgrounds have unsuitable surfaces.

Thus, an important aspect of reducing playground injuries is to provide cushioned surfaces beneath and around equipment at depths appropriate to equipment height. Surfaces such as asphalt, cement, dirt, grass and rocks are not acceptable surfaces.

The National Program for Playground Safety strongly recommends that parents and other adults become proactive regarding the provision of appropriate surfaces at adequate depths. Parents and other adults can visually inspect the surfaces for any safety problems and be sure that children do not play on unsafe surfaces.

WHY IS CUSHIONED SURFACING NEEDED ON PLAYGROUNDS?

Falls to the surface are the leading cause of injuries on playgrounds. Approximately 106,000 of all public playground injuries and several deaths each year are related to falls to surfaces. However, shock-absorbing surfaces can help disperse the momentum of a falling body or head, thus, reducing the risk of life threatening injuries.

The National Program for Playground Safety, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and other organizations highly recommend the use of various loose-fill materials such as pea gravel and wood fiber as well as synthetic surfaces that tend to be shock absorbing. Surfaces such as asphalt, cement, dirt, grass and rocks should not be used unless they are being utilized as the base for other appropriate shock absorbing surfaces.

CPSC has established recommendations for appropriate surfacing based on their own testing. One of CPSC’s main points states, the more shock absorbing a surface can be made, the more likely it is to reduce injuries. “However, it should be recognized that all injuries due to falls cannot be prevented regardless of the playground surfacing material.”

WHAT ARE APPROPRIATE SURFACES FOR PLAYGROUNDS?

There are no perfect playground surfaces. Playground safety experts highly recommend the use of various loose-fill or synthetic surface materials. The selection of cushioned surfacing varies from playground to playground. Purchasers need to ask the following questions. Does it meet American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM) standards and CPSC guidelines? Does it have a proven track record in similar climates? Is it readily available? What are initial and maintenance costs? Will it meet the playground’s needs as far as durability, drainage and accessibility?

Acceptable loose-fill materials include hardwood fiber chips or mulch, pea gravel, sand and shredded rubber. Recommended synthetic surfaces include rubber tiles, rubber mats or synthetic poured surfaces.

Loose-fill surfaces should be maintained to a depth proportionate to the height of the equipment. However, a 12-inch depth is a good guideline for equipment up to 8 feet in height.

Manufacturers should provide testing results to indicate appropriate depth of synthetic materials. Be sure to check CPSC guidelines and ASTM standard F1292-95 to make sure the manufacturers testing information is in complete compliance with recommendations.

Surfaces and surface depths are recommended based on critical height of surfacing materials. CPSC and ASTM testing indicates that consumers should look for surfacing that has a critical height with “peak deceleration of no more than 200 G’s (acceleration due to gravity) and a HIC (head injury criteria) of no more than 1,000 when tested in accordance with the procedure described in ASTM F1292.” Thus, keep in mind to try to prevent concussions and more severe injuries, surfacing should have no more than 200 G’s and a HIC of no more than 1,000.

WHERE SHOULD CUSHIONED SURFACING BE PLACED?

Cushioned surfaces should be placed in all playground fall zones. Fall zones are defined as the area under and around playground equipment where children may fall. The total surfacing space is dependent on the type of equipment at the playground. In general, the surface should extend a minimum of 6 feet in all directions from the edge of stationary playground equipment. Because of the momentum of children playing on slides and swings, different calculations for those fall zones need to be made.

The fall zone for slides higher than 4 feet can be determined by adding 4 feet to the height of the slide. For example, a 6 feet slide should have 10’ of surfacing extending beyond the exit of the slide. The maximum amount of surfacing for the end of any slide is 14 feet.

Fall zones for swings are twice the height of the pivot or swing hanger in front and in back of the swing seats. For example, if the hanger pivot height is 10 feet, the fall zone must be 20 feet in front and 20 feet in back of the stationary swing seat. Surfacing should also extend 6 feet to each side of the support structures.

WHAT MAINTENANCE NEEDS DO SURFACING MATERIALS HAVE?

Maintenance costs and needs of surfacing materials vary. Loose-fill surfacing materials such as wood chips, sand, pea gravel and shredded rubber have a lower initial cost, but tend to have higher maintenance needs.

In high-use areas, loose materials may need to be raked daily or tilled periodically to loosen compaction and replace materials that have been pushed away. Loads of loose material may need to be trucked in on an annual or semi-annual basis to keep the surface at an appropriate depth.

Loose-fill materials also need to be inspected for protruding and sharp objects such as glass, can tops, sharp rocks or metal objects.

Synthetic materials such as rubber mats, tiles and pour-in-place surfaces also have maintenance needs. Repairs may need to be made to gouges, burns and loose areas. Synthetic materials also may need to be swept frequently to prevent sand, dirt, rocks or other loose materials from becoming a slipping hazard.

All surfacing material should provide good drainage. Drainage problems can cause inaccessibility and slipping hazards.

WHAT ARE ACCEPTABLE SURFACES FOR PLAYGROUND ACCESS?

New surface materials are being developed daily to help meet accessibility needs for disabled persons. Currently, the most generally accepted surfaces for wheelchair accessibility are uniform wood chips, and synthetic products such as rubber mats or tiles and poured-in-place surfaces. Playground planners should note that the whole play area may not need accessible surfacing. However, an accessible path

should be provided to the equipment and accessibility should be made so that play opportunities are given to all children.

Accessible paths should be 60 inches wide, slip resistant and have a slope no greater than 1:12. Transfer stations on playground equipment and parking areas for wheelchairs are good ideas to improve accessibility.

HOW TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH LOOSE-FILL SURFACING IS NEEDED.

This information is based on CPSC critical height testing. The National Program for Playground Safety recommends that, in general, 12 inches of uncompressed loose-fill material be used for equipment up to 8 feet in height.

Nine inches of compressed material will adequately provide safety for equipment with critical heights up to:

- Wood mulch – 10 feet
- Double shredded bark – 7 feet
- Uniform wood chips – 6 feet
- Fine sand – 5 feet
- Coarse sand – 4 feet
- Fine (pea) gravel – 6 feet
- Medium gravel – 5 feet

In other words, if you have equipment that has an 8-foot high slide, wood mulch would be the only loose fill material considered safe at a depth of 9 inches compressed. Although testing has been done on both compressed and uncompressed materials, please remember that all loose materials compact, especially in high-usage areas and in cold and wet weather. Thus, when installing loose-fill materials allow for compression.

Equipment Maintenance Guidelines for Playgrounds

The National Program for Playground Safety highly recommends that parents become proactive in helping maintain public playgrounds. Although all adults and parents are not expected to be trained playground inspectors, they can visually inspect the playground for safety problems and make sure that children do not play on any unsafe equipment.

WHAT SHOULD A SAFE PLAYGROUND LOOK LIKE?

Your first visual impression of a playground is important. Does it look safe and well maintained? Ask yourself these questions:

- Do fences, hedges or open spaces prevent children from running into traffic or parking areas?
- Are there any broken pieces of equipment such as broken swing seats or teeter-totters?
- Does the playground have adequate cushioned surfacing such as wood chips, pea gravel, sand or commercially made products such as rubber tiles or mats? Remember, asphalt, cement, dirt and grass are not adequate surfaces and should not be used in the fall zone under or around equipment.
- Is there trash such as broken bottles or can-tops lying around that could cause injuries?

If you spot problems that you can remedy yourself, like picking up trash, go ahead and correct the problem. If you observe other safety problems like broken equipment, you need to contact the person or department in charge of the area and ask that it be fixed. Don't try to fix equipment yourself. A judgment call may need to be made -- could the broken equipment cause a life-threatening situation? If so, you may need to ask to have that piece of

equipment taken down or barricaded until it can be fixed.

To report a product hazard or a product-related injury, call the department in charge of the area and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) at 800-638-2772.

WHAT TYPES OF ROUTINE MAINTENANCE SHOULD BE TAKING PLACE?

Maintenance routines should be determined for each specific playground. Public agencies should establish maintenance plans based on the recommendations of manufacturers and CPSC guidelines. Inspections and maintenance routines generally are based on the types of equipment, surfacing and usage.

In general, park and recreation departments, community groups and schools maintain and inspect their playgrounds on a regular basis. You may want to ask for an inspection update on your favorite playground to get a better idea of how and what the maintenance personnel assess.

Some items need to be checked regularly, maybe even weekly. These items include:

- The depth of loose-fill cushioned surfacing such as wood chips or pea gravel that may have been displaced because of use. A good guideline is 12 inches of loose-fill surfacing should be placed under and around the playground equipment where children could fall. Accessibility paths such as rubber mats or poured-in-place surfaces need to be swept to remove debris such as sand, dirt or any loose-fill surfaces that may have been displaced from adjacent areas.
- Trash that has been tossed in and around the playground. Look for protruding glass, can lids, sharp rocks, metal and other items.

- Damage to equipment. Vandalism and high usage can cause hazards like broken or missing handrails, guardrails, steps or signs.

Other items need to be checked on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. These items include:

- Compaction or deterioration of loose-fill surfacing materials such as wood chips, pea gravel or sand. Loads of additional materials may be needed to provide adequate cushioned surfacing. A good guideline is that 12 inches of loose-fill materials should be used for equipment up to 8 feet in height.
- Equipment that is broken or has loose, worn or missing parts. All parts, even plastic, can break. Check for sharp points, corners or edges. An up-close inspection of bolts, welding points and moving parts should be made. On swings, be sure to look for severe wear and openings on S-hooks and wear of bearing hangers. On merry-go-rounds, check wear of gearboxes and that governor speed. Protective caps or plugs on equipment such as ladders and climbers should be checked and replaced if needed.
- Trip hazards that have been created by settling of equipment, usage or vandalism. A general walk-through may reveal exposed concrete footings or anchoring devices, rocks, roots or uneven surfacing materials.
- Wooden equipment that has splinters, large cracks or deterioration. A wood preservative, applied once a year, will help protect from deterioration. Preservatives should meet both CPSC guidelines and American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM) standards.
- Metal equipment and pieces that may have rust or deterioration. Metal equipment may need to be repainted periodically. All paints and other similar finishes should have no more than 0.06 percent

lead by dry weight. Playground equipment that was purchased prior to 1978 may need testing for lead paint unless the manufacturer documents that non-lead paint was used.

- Proper drainage in the playground area. Water should not collect under or near equipment, especially under slide and swing areas, where ice could form and cause falls.

WHAT OTHER SAFETY MEASURES SHOULD BE CHECKED ON A REGULAR BASIS?

Most maintenance of equipment involves making sure the equipment's surfaces and mechanical workings are safe. However, other aspects need to be considered.

The National Program for Playground Safety recommends compliance with CPSC playground safety guidelines in its Handbook for Public Playground Safety. Playgrounds, whether they are old, recently installed or a just a few years old, need to be inspected. Manufacturer's recalls, warnings or updates should be observed. CPSC warnings should be taken into consideration.

Other general safety points include:

- No openings on playground equipment should be more than 3-1/2 inches or less than 9 inches where children's heads or bodies could be trapped.
- There should be no v-shaped openings or open areas close to the top of slides where strings or ropes could get caught and cause strangulation.
- Cushioned surfaces should be placed in the fall zone for play equipment. Asphalt, cement, dirt, grass and large rocks are not appropriate surfaces. Nearly 70 percent of all playground injuries are related to falls to the surface.
- There should be no more than two swings in a bay or support structure. Those swings should be

at least 24 inches apart at the seat base and be 30 inches from the side supports.

- All S-hooks should be closed. Mechanisms on teeter-totters and other equipment where fingers could get pinched should be closed.
- All hard animal swings that could ram into a child should be removed.

Planning a Play Area for Children

The development of an appropriate play area for children takes careful planning. It is important to listen to various points of view, to consider professional expertise, to observe children's needs, to evaluate the current site and to work with playground equipment manufacturers or custom designers of play areas. Planning may take a year or two. Preliminary research and preparation helps pay dividends later.

The following steps have been created to help administrators and/or volunteers for schools, childcare centers, or community recreation areas create a logical and comprehensive plan. It is recommended to follow the steps in the order given.

24 STEPS TO A SAFE PLAYGROUND

1. FORM A PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE OF 6 TO 10 PEOPLE WHO REPRESENT VARIOUS POINTS OF VIEW.

For child care centers, include: several teachers, the director, a custodian, board members, parents and playground supervisors. For schools, include: representatives from upper and lower elementary grades; special education and physical education teachers; administrators; support staff such as the nurse, custodian and playground supervisors; parents including a PTA representative, a fundraising chair and/or project chair. For parks and recreation settings, include: the recreation director, park supervisors,

maintenance specialists, park board members, city council representatives and parents.

2. CONTACT A NEUTRAL CONSULTANT KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT PLAYGROUNDS.

Company representatives or custom designers often have vested interests so it is suggested to work with a neutral consultant. You may obtain consultant names from the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD); National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS); or National Recreation Park Association (NRPA). The consultant should attend the initial or second meeting of the planning group. It may be appropriate to pay a fee and/or cover expenses for the consultant. The information the consultant gives should save money over the length of the project.

3. OBTAIN WRITTEN MATERIALS ON PLAYGROUND SAFETY IN ORDER TO KNOW WHAT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS SHOULD BE MET.

Playground Safety & Injury Prevention Resources

- Guidelines: United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.
- American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM) Standards: F-1487 for Public Use Playground Equipment and F-1292 for surfacing.
- Books about playground safety (optional)

4. DETERMINE THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN FOR THE SITE.

There are three age-appropriate areas, 0 to 2, 2 to 5 and 5 to 12, that need to be considered. Decide how the play area will be used: in free

play, in physical education, with school classes, during recess or lunch periods, during and after school, in conjunction with sporting events at parks, on weekends, during play supervised by professional staff or aides or by parents, etc. Usage will help determine needs and choices.

5. REMEMBER TO PLAN FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

- Remember, all children, disabled and non-disabled, should have access to some playground structures.
- Plan to meet future ADA guidelines and current interpretations recommended in ASTM 1487.
- Cooperate with schools who may be using the area to identify their needs.

6. EVALUATE THE CURRENT PLAY AREA WITH AN ASSESSMENT FORM.

Use a neutral consultant or a trained or knowledgeable person in the community to perform this duty. As a result of the evaluation, determine:

- What to retain and remove.
- What to fix.
- What to purchase.

7. RESEARCH AND DECIDE HOW TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

- Hazard analysis: Think about accident-causing situations that cannot be seen or perceived by the user and how they can be handled.
- Legal issues: Check insurance company requirements on equipment; check on insurance when using volunteers to install equipment or supervise children.
- Risk management system: Determine who will create and file maintenance inspection sheets

on a regular basis and where information will be kept.

- Supervision: Decide training requirements for playground supervisors.

8. GET SUGGESTIONS FROM THE CHILDREN ON THE SITE REGARDING WHAT KINDS OF THINGS THEY WOULD LIKE TO DO IN THE AREA.

Those activities can include building, cooperating, planning, running, climbing, socializing, exploring, manipulating and jumping. Then, ask them what equipment they think would help them be able to do those tasks. Do not ask what equipment they would like to have first. That could prevent good ideas from being generated.

9. GET SUGGESTIONS FROM TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS AND YOUTH LEADERS.

10. SEND FOR AT LEAST TEN CATALOGS FROM PLAYGROUND SURFACE COMPANIES ASKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SHOCK ABSORBENT SURFACES TO BE PLACED UNDER PERMANENT EQUIPMENT.

All companies should provide evidence that their materials meet the CPSC Guidelines and the ASTM standards, where applicable. Refer to the end of this Appendix for a list of playground surface manufacturers and distributors.

11. SEND FOR CATALOGS FROM AT LEAST TEN PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT COMPANIES.

- Indicate for which age levels equipment is intended; ask for information about equipment for children who are disabled; and use only equipment that meets CPSC Guidelines and ASTM standards. Refer to the end of this Appendix for a list of playground equipment manufacturers and distributors

12. FORM A BUDGET AFTER THE SITE HAS BEEN EVALUATED, CHILDREN'S NEEDS HAVE BEEN ASSESSED AND CATALOGS HAVE BEEN CONSULTED.

A fund raising chair should be included in this discussion. The budget should include the cost of the shock absorbent surface, as well as the equipment, installation and maintenance and fencing costs.

13. MAKE 3 TO 6 GOALS YOU HOPE THE PLAY AREA WILL MEET.

For example:

- The play area must have separate areas to accommodate different age groups served.
- The younger children must have opportunities to manipulate various textures and have space for wheel toys.
- Older children must have opportunities to cooperate, climb, explore and build arm strength.

Compile information on your goals, the dimensions of the area, equipment that you already have and intend to retain, pieces from other companies that you want to use. (You do not have to buy all equipment from one company, but you may not attach one company's equipment to another's or it voids the warrantee.)

14. SEND THE INFORMATION TO THREE COMPANIES FOR PLANS AND QUOTES.

Have the companies send back to you a plan, costs and rationale regarding ways that their plan meets your goals. Request the vitae of the designer for the company. If there is no evidence of knowledge of children noted, consider using another company.

15. DEVELOP A FUND RAISING PLAN AND SCHEDULE.
16. OBTAIN AND VERIFY INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE FROM EQUIPMENT AND SURFACING COMPANIES.
17. WORK OUT A PAYMENT METHOD.
18. IMPLEMENT A FILE SYSTEM TO DOCUMENT DECISIONS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE, MAINTENANCE WORK AND ASSESSMENT REPORTS.

This may be incorporated with other risk management documents.
19. INSTALL THE EQUIPMENT, USING COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES OR VOLUNTEERS.
20. TRAIN APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL TO MAINTAIN AND INSPECT THE EQUIPMENT ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS.
21. INSTRUCT SUPERVISORS ON PROPER USE OF EQUIPMENT AND OTHER SUPERVISION TIPS.
22. TEACH CHILDREN PROPER USE OF NEW EQUIPMENT AND REVIEW AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR.
23. PLAN A CELEBRATION FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE AND THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE WHEN THE PROJECT IS COMPLETED.
24. LET THE CHILDREN PLAY!