Resolution Adopting the Five-Year Plan

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Kokomo Board of Parks Commissioners is aware of the parks and recreation needs of the residents of Kokomo, Indiana and

WHEREAS, the Board realizes the importance of a sound planning document in order to meet the needs of its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE KOKOMO BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS, by unanimous declaration, does adopt the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's Master Plan, as amended on January 7, 2009, as its official plan for the next five years, for the growth and development of parks and recreational opportunities in Kokomo.

Passed and signed this 13th day of January, 2009.

______________________________
President
Board of Parks Commissioners

ATTEST:
______________________________
John Martino, Board Secretary
Assurance of Compliance

Assurance of Compliance
Section 504
of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Kokomo Board of Park Commissioners has received and read the guidelines for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 issued by the United State Department of the Interior and will comply with these guidelines and the Act.

Signature
________________________
Applicant President

Santos G. Salinas, III
(President's printed name)

Signature
________________________
Applicant Secretary

John J. Martinez
(Secretary's printed name)
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Plan Purpose and Objectives

Comprehensive Plan Update: Purpose
The City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) is entering its fourth decade of formal comprehensive park planning. Recognizing that limited funds and staff are available to implement new programs and maintain and add recreation amenities, the department relies on the master planning process to assure that the greatest benefit is achieved from each dollar spent.

The improvements and programs recommended in this plan are the result of assessing the current facilities and programs; seeking input from the community at large, as well as special interest groups and community leaders; reviewing other community planning studies and documents; and evaluating both the challenges to be met and opportunities available. These recommendations are meant to guide the development of recreation resources and amenities for the next five years and prioritize improvements to park and recreation programs and amenities that would most benefit the community.

Specifically, this Master Plan Update will:

- Set achievable goals and objectives that reflect current issues, challenges and opportunities as they relate to the park system.
- Remove outdated goals/recommendations and those that have been achieved.
- Incorporate current policies, objectives and constraints.
- Incorporate feedback from stakeholders, Kokomo residents and Kokomo Parks and Recreation users.
- Evaluate the physical condition of existing parks and amenities.
- Evaluate existing parks and recreation programming.
- Provide a guide for the development of park and recreation amenities that reflect the interests and needs of the community.

Comprehensive Plan Update: Objectives
The primary objectives of this plan are to:

- Serve as a day-to-day planning document for guiding the operation of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department.
- Serve as a supporting document to secure funding for proposed projects.
- Challenge the KPRD and the community to improve its recreation opportunities.
- Provide the basis to make accurate budget decisions.
- Support the funding/planning needs of the KPRD.
- Elicit the input and support of the citizens of Kokomo.
- Serve as the principle guide for networking with other local planning authorities, including:
  - The Kokomo-Howard County Planning Commission
  - The Chamber of Commerce
  - The Howard County Visitors Bureau
  - The City of Kokomo Department of Urban Development and Design
Parks and Recreation Department Mission and Philosophy

The mission of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of life of the Kokomo community through well maintained parks, recreation facilities, programs and services, protecting our environment, personal and social benefits and economic opportunities.

The operating philosophy of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is contained within the following 5 areas of emphasis:

Communication
Communication is the cornerstone of effective management and the team concept that characterizes the operations of the Department.

- In house Communications between all staff members are utilized in the decision making process. This includes all department employees.

- Public Communications with the media, the general public, and various interest groups convey a community attitude and interest of parks and recreation.

- Political Communication provides a clear and purposeful avenue of information exchange between the KPRD, Administration, Park Board, and Common Council.

- Interdepartmental Communication is imperative to foster a good working relationship with other city departments and personnel to maximize service to the public for the dollars expended.

- Professional Communication with other park and recreation professionals on a State and National level will enable department personnel to learn and grow professionally, while at the same time share the successes and solutions developed in Kokomo.

Maintenance Orientation
The existing park system and its active programs deserve the primary focus of upkeep and improvement. Properly maintaining existing facilities and programs provides the basis for adding new parks, facilities, and activities to the system.

Part of a Larger Team
The Parks and Recreation Department is but one department within the City of Kokomo. Together with other departments, the entire range of municipal services is provided to the citizens of Kokomo. The KPRD works closely with other departments, including the Street Department and the Senior Citizen Center to provide these services in an efficient and timely manner.

Public dollars must be wisely expended and non-tax revenues must be increased together with the department's efficiency and effectiveness. Although it is important to provide services at free or reduced costs, it is also the department's responsibility to identify areas that can produce operational costs and offset several areas of expenses.

Parks and Recreation as a Public Service
The Parks and Recreation Department functions as an important public service to the citizens of Kokomo. It is a vital and active contributor to the health of the community and adds significantly to the quality of life.

Unified Departmental Operations
The KPRD is comprised of many divisions, including the Elwood Haynes Museum, Crown Point Cemetery, the Senior Citizens Center, recreation programs, park maintenance, Kokomo Beach, and by lease, the Wildcat Creek Reservoir Parks. All divisions are operated as a unified and diverse department.
Context

Location and Planning Area
The City of Kokomo serves as the county seat of Howard County and is located approximately 50 miles north of Indianapolis, the state capital and geographic center of Indiana. Kokomo covers an area of approximately 15.73 square miles with urbanized land accounting for better than 90% of the city’s development.

As the largest community in Howard County, and the County Seat, the Kokomo park system attracts users who live outside of the city. As a result, the Kokomo Parks and Recreation planning area includes not only those populations that fall within the Kokomo city limits, but also the rural areas and communities located within all of Howard County.

Kokomo residential land patterns make up 40% of this urbanized area. Residential densities vary within the city ranging from four to over twelve per acre with most dwelling units being single-family. Neighborhoods built since 1950 typically have densities under 6 units per acre while less dense residential areas are found outside the city within a 2-mile fringe area. Multi-family dwellings are dispersed throughout the city with no major areas of concentration. Suburban residential development of agricultural land has occurred on the city’s fringe. Gradual annexation of these residential areas has contributed to growth and expansion of the city.

Currently, the south side of the city sees the highest residential and commercial growth, although this has slowed due to current (2008) economic conditions. The addition of Jackson Morrow Park on the south side of the city provided a regional park amenity to serve the recreation needs of this growing area.

It is anticipated that a new U.S. 31 Bypass to be constructed on the east side of Kokomo will spur economic growth along that corridor. (Source, City of Kokomo Office of Development) Construction of the new bypass is slated to begin in 2009 with work to be completed in 2016. While additional park facilities are not currently needed to serve the east side, future growth patterns may at some point warrant new or improved park amenities. However, the new bypass, as well as a number of abandoned railroads in and about Kokomo offer opportunities for increasing the department’s trail system.

Economy
Kokomo’s original economy was strongly linked to the agricultural heritage of the Midwest. Although agriculture still plays an important part of the overall economy, the discovery of natural gas in 1886 transformed Kokomo from an agricultural center into a booming manufacturing city.

Industry is the major focus of the City of Kokomo’s current economic development program. At present, approximately 75 Kokomo industries manufacture automobile parts, electronic equipment, alloys and chemicals, plastics, glass, and other products. The surrounding countryside reflects the character and personality of the agricultural community typical of Central Indiana.

Kokomo’s economy has suffered a downturn linked in part to the struggles of U.S. automobile manufacturers and losses of jobs to overseas manufacturers. According to the Winter 2007 issue of the Indiana Business Review “This area remains heavily invested in industrial production and is very subject to economic disruptions with changes in industrial production...many of these job losses will be permanent due to increasing productivity, job losses to overseas, the troubles in the automobile industry, etc. This means that manufacturing production, while increasing somewhat, is unlikely to return to the glory days of the past.”
Current economic conditions hold several implications for the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department. First, a decreasing tax base will likely result in less funding to support park programs. Second, inexpensive recreation opportunities will become increasingly important to those facing economic hardships. Finally, park and recreation amenities are an important quality of life consideration and as such are seen as a positive influence on economic development.

**Education System**
There are five public school systems in Howard County:
- Kokomo-Center Township School Corporation
- Western School Corporation
- Eastern Howard County School Corporation
- Northwestern School Corporation
- Taylor School Corporation

As well, the city hosts a number of secondary education institutions including:
- Indiana/Purdue University - Kokomo
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Indiana Wesleyan University

The KPRD maintains a close, reciprocal relationship with area schools. Some KPRD programs are held at school facilities and, in turn, the department provides support for various school sport and recreational activities. The Kokomo School District is looking to divest itself of property, which may provide opportunities for the KPRD to add facilities or amenities to the park system, specifically amenities that fill a recreation need or service gap.

**Historical and Cultural Features**
In the early 19th century a trading post for Native Americans and European-American settlers was established along the Wildcat Creek on land owned by David Foster. Several years later, Foster donated forty acres of his land to create a county seat, and built a log courthouse. This land became the City of Kokomo, which was incorporated in 1865. The City was named after a legendary Miami Indian known as Ma-Ko-Ko-Mo.

The discovery of natural gas on October 6, 1886, was a key factor in Kokomo’s subsequent growth and development. Lured by the cheap and plentiful natural gas, a number of new industries made their home in Kokomo, including the Haynes-Apperson Automobile Company and the Delco Radio Division of General Motors (now Delphi). The community’s ties to the automotive industry remain strong.

During Kokomo’s boom years, many city leaders built new homes in what is now known as the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood. This area is the only Howard County neighborhood included in the National Register for Historic Places. It is located near downtown and is contained by Washington Street to the east, Philips Street to the west, Wildcat Creek to the south and Taylor Street to the North. The neighborhood is an eclectic mix of architectural styles including Victorian, Neo-Jacobean, Queen Anne, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Romanesque Revival.

The Howard County Museum is located within the neighborhood on West Sycamore Street in the Seiberling Mansion, and Elliott House. The museum is open during the week and showcases local history. During the winter the Society hosts ‘Christmas at the Seiberling’ a event with activities for all ages, Including Santa Claus, tours of buildings, and carriage rides through the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood.

The KPRD provides a steward of the community’s past, contributing to the preservation and celebration of its history. The department participates in community events, such as the Haynes Apperson Festival, that recognize Kokomo’s history. As well, the department maintains/operates several historical artifacts such as Highland Park’s covered bridge, “Old Ben” and the Haynes Museum. Highland Park itself is viewed by the community as an important historical asset and its preservation is frequently mentioned as a priority by community members.

**Arts & Entertainment**
The community has a diverse range performing arts and other cultural activities and events including:

**Eastern Howard Performing Arts Society**
This volunteer, non-profit organization promotes performing arts in Howard County. The Society offers adult and children’s performances and is located in Greentown, Indiana,

**Kokomo Children’s Choir**
The Kokomo Children’s Choir is open to children ages 8 to 18, and offers musical and performance training.

**Kokomo Civic Theater**
A community based theater offering several performances
Context (continued)

throughout the year including dramas, musicals, comedies and musical recitals.

Curtain Call: Theater for Children
CURTAIN CALL is the children’s wing of Kokomo Civic Theatre. It offers three stage productions a year, and periodic workshops.

Kokomo Community Concerts
Supported by the City of Kokomo Community Arts Commission and the Kokomo Center-Township School Corporation, the Kokomo Community Concerts Association hosts a diverse range of concerts each year. The association also provides outreach concerts at local schools.

Kokomo Park Band
Approximately 45 members make up this community band, which is more than a century old. The band’s very popular Wednesday night concerts are held at Highland Park during the summer and additional concerts are offered at other venues throughout the year.

Festivals and Special Events
- Strawberry Festival: spring, downtown Kokomo
- Kokomo Rib Fest: mid-June, downtown Kokomo
- City of Firsts Soapbox Derby: June
- Fourth of July Festival: Independence Day weekend
- Haynes Apperson Festival: July, various locations
- Taste of Kokomo Festival: mid-August, downtown Kokomo
- Koh-Koh-Mah & Foster Living History Encampment: mid-September, approximately 10 miles west of Kokomo
- Oktober Fest: October, downtown Kokomo
- New Years Ball Drop: December 31, downtown Kokomo

KPRD currently supports the community arts by hosting events and activities such as the Wednesday night concerts and Haynes Apperson Festival. These relationships will grow in importance as economic conditions tighten and funding limitations increase. Continued and expanded partnerships between the KPRD and other community organizations can maximize the types and number of cultural events offered, to the benefit of the community.
Population Distribution

As the largest city in Howard County, Indiana, the City of Kokomo represents 46% of the County’s population of 83,776. The City has a predominantly adult population, with a median age of 35.7 years. Seventy-five percent of the population is aged 18 years or older. The senior citizen (65 years or older) population accounts for slightly more than 14% of the total population.

![Kokomo Population Distribution by Age](image)

Overall, the population of Kokomo has decreased slightly (-2.16%) over the past seven years, and all indications are that it will continue this gradual decline. Of the 20 largest cities in Indiana, Kokomo is one of nine that have experienced a declining population rate. In addition, the US Census Bureau predicts that over the next five years and longer, there will be increasing numbers of citizens over the age of 65, while the population of adults aged 25-54 will decrease or remain steady over that same time period.

The population of Kokomo is primarily Caucasian (85%), with the African American, Native American, Asian, Latino, and Pacific Islander populations accounting for less than 15% of the total population.

![Kokomo Labor Force by Occupation](image)
Population Distribution (continued)

Approximately 63% of residents aged 16 years and older are currently employed. Of the 22,444 residents in the labor force, approximately 1,345 (3.8%) are unemployed. With an average commuting time of 16.4 minutes, Kokomo residents work close to home. A majority of residents (62%) work in the manufacturing, retail trade, and educational/social service industries.

The median household income in Kokomo is $36,258, 16.5% less than the median household income of Howard County and slightly less than the median income for the State of Indiana.

More than half (60%) of Kokomo residents live in family households, and almost 29% live with children under the age of 18. Approximately 9% of households with children are led by single parents. Nearly 13% of Kokomo residents live in poverty. Of these individuals, most are children living in single parent homes.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this data that might have an impact on planning for parks and recreation facilities and services. With no population growth predicted, adding new facilities and park lands should be considered carefully and based mostly on information about needed or desired services. There should be no need to increase park acreage for the purposes of serving a larger population. Also, programming and services for older citizens and low income residents, especially single parent households should be considered in planning for the future.

![Household Income Chart](image)

**FIGURE D.** Kokomo Household Income
Local Environment

General Characteristics of Area

Kokomo is located within the Tipton Till Plain, a flat topographic area created from debris deposited by retreating glaciers of the Wisconsin Age which covered the region some 15,000 years ago. Major stream valleys of the Wildcat and Kokomo Creeks offer some variation to the flat terrain. These creeks and their tributaries drain the area flowing west as part of the Wabash River Drainage Basin. The creeks are major recreational features providing the only water based opportunities within the Kokomo city limits. Wildcat Creek Reservoir; a man-made reservoir located just east of the city, is another major water feature for recreational uses.

Wooded areas within the community are primarily located along the major creeks or in scattered wood lots. Wooded natural areas are scarce and priority should be given to preservation and use as recreational areas wherever possible.

The soils formed throughout the area are characterized by their lack of permeability and the presence of a high water table. Three major land conditions related to soils are evident:

- **Well Drained** lands border streams, are moderately permeable and depending on slope, provide medium to rapid surface run off.

- **Poorly Drained** extensive flat plains between streams have a low permeability, run-off capabilities are slow, are subject to ponding, and typically require drainage facilities.

- **Flood Prone** lands located along streams, have a high water table with seasonal ponds and bogs.

A number of the KPRD system parks border Wildcat and Kokomo Creeks. These waterways provide both opportunities and challenges to the park system. Opportunities include the preservation of natural habitat, and wildlife corridors, buffering of waterways from urban development, recreation opportunities such as fishing or boating, and the added beauty of a natural water source. However, the waterways are prone to flooding and can necessitate significant park clean-up efforts. As well, the flooding can temporarily limit access to amenities. Finally, the existence of some water related wildlife, such as geese, can be seen as a nuisance.

Climate

Kokomo has a continental climate characterized by winter temperatures cold enough to support snow cover, with warm temperatures typical of tropical climates in the summer. Low pressure and high-pressure fronts pass through the city continuously. A high-pressure front generally brings lower temperatures, lower humidity and sunny weather. A low-pressure front brings higher temperatures and humidity, southerly winds, and rainy weather. Weather varies most in spring; least, late in summer and early in fall.

Precipitation is rather evenly distributed throughout the year. Generally, precipitation is greater in spring and early summer than in winter. Snowfall varies from year to year. The record snowfall was 19 inches in January, 1943, but in average years, only about 5 inches of snow falls in January and February and 3 inches in March. Little or no snow falls from the beginning of May to the end of October.

Temperatures are relatively mild throughout the year. The temperature may rise above 90 degrees Fahrenheit for a few days each summer and fall below 10 degrees Fahrenheit a few days in winter. Temperatures in spring and fall are mild, but spring has more rain and thunderstorms. In fall, air and soil temperatures are nearly the same.

Relative humidity is not regularly measured in the city, but estimates can be made. The highest humidity usually occurs at the daily minimum temperature, and the lowest humidity occurs at the daily maximum temperature. On sunny days in summer, humidity is as low as 45% early in the afternoon when the temperature is highest, and it is more than 90% at sunrise when temperature is lowest.

Prevailing winds blow from the southwest, but for about 1 or 2 months in winter, winds blow from the northwest. Thunderstorms occur about 46 days each year, mostly in spring and early summer.

Overall, the climatic patterns support a wide range of recreation activities, although winter snow falls are light and creation of outdoor ice without the use of refrigeration is difficult.
Kokomo/Howard County Planning Documents

The preparation of the KPRD Master Plan included the review of a number of planning documents that have been prepared for the City of Kokomo and/or Howard County. The intent of this review was to identify issues or needs that had been identified previously, to compare the findings of the inventory and analysis conducted in conjunction with this Master Plan and to determine if proposed KPRD Master Plan recommendations fit recommendations made in other planning studies.

The documents reviewed and pertinent findings include:

2003 Kokomo Parks and Recreation Master Plan and 2003 - 2007 Annual Reports

These documents were reviewed to assess the prior goals and objectives in light of current inventory data, and to evaluate progress since the last Master Plan was completed. Over the past five years, the KPRD has achieved many of the priority action items included in the 2003 Master Plan. These include the development of a Greenway (Walk of Excellence); the addition of a skate park, a dog park, and a disc golf course; the addition of a park department website; various parking, playground, court and building improvements; and the establishment of a Park Foundation.

A few action items were not realized, either because funds were not available, or because other opportunities/priorities took precedence. Some of these action items, such as the addition of an accessible fishing pier in Highland Park, have been added to the current master plan, others, such as a softball complex at Jackson Morrow Park have been dropped due to changing community needs and priorities.

Howard County Alternative Transportation & Greenways System Plan (Draft, January 2008) initiated by the Kokomo-Howard County Governmental Coordinating Council.

This document identified several key areas that pertain to the KPRD Master Plan, including:

- The perceived lack of cultural amenities and activities
- The need to protect natural areas such as the Wildcat Creek for use as public outdoor recreation. (Identified as one of the top five needs)
- The desire to strengthen the quality of life through infrastructure, economic vitality, land use and growth management, environment quality and recreation.
- The desire to protect and preserve the rural character of the county through preserving green space and the natural character of creeks, reservoirs, lakes, and forests.
- The need for additional recreation amenities in the county and the goal to work with municipalities to provide a variety of recreation opportunities.
- The goal to provide bicycle links between municipalities via a network of trails. Also to link Kokomo to the Reservoir Parks via a trail.

Long Range Transportation Plan for Kokomo and Howard County (2005-2030)

Needs/themes identified included an expanded urban trail system within Kokomo, as well as pedestrian and trail connections to points within Howard County.

Kokomo Downtown Strategic Plan (2005)

This document focused on recommendations to improve downtown, spur economic development and increase downtown activity.
Public Participation: Public Meeting

Public Meeting Results
An initial public meeting was held at the Rodgers Pavilion in Highland Park on the evening of June 17, 2008. The purpose of this meeting was to give Kokomo and Howard County residents the opportunity to identify and describe parks issues that are of concern to them.

There were 42 members of the public in attendance at the meeting, as well as the project teams from the Eppley Institute, Rundell Ernstberger and Associates, and the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department. Participants were given a brief introduction of the master planning process and why they had been invited to the meeting.

The meeting was structured in an open house format with no formal presentation other than the brief introduction. A poster was displayed in the meeting room for each Kokomo City park, and participants were asked to write comments on the posters to represent their issues of concern. Verbal comments were also recorded by the Eppley Institute and Rundell Ernstberger project teams.

All written and recorded verbal comments were then analyzed for common themes. The results revealed the following themes:

- Renovations and Capital Improvements
- Recreation and Programming Activities
- Access and Connectivity
- Nuisance Wildlife and Dogs
- Landscaping and Green Spaces
- Safety

In the Renovations and Capital Improvements category, the public expressed the need to improve the conditions of some parks. The most frequently reported items in this category were the need for improved and additional restrooms in some parks and the desire for additional disc golf course amenities. Also a concern is the regular flooding in low lying areas of some parks. Other common items were sidewalks, perimeter trails around some parks and bike racks.

Another common theme includes Recreation and Programming Activities, which identifies the types of activities the public would like to have offered. Within this category a disc golf course is again frequently mentioned. Other needs expressed by participants included skateboarding facilities, family activities such as Putt-putt golf, and nature education programs. A soapbox derby facility was also frequently noted in this category.

The next theme, Access and Connectivity, revealed the public’s desire to have a community wide trail system that connects schools, neighborhoods, and parks. Some road improvements and perimeter trails around some parks were also commonly mentioned as were canoe launch sites and a designated water trail.

Nuisance Wildlife and Dogs are grouped in a category together because neither was frequently mentioned enough to have its own category, but the issues and solutions are related. Also these two issues were linked together by the public indicated by comments such as “Geese and dog droppings are ruining our park experience.”

Park beautification and adding more natural habitats for butterflies and birds was a common reoccurrence throughout the public’s statements, falling under the Landscaping and Green Spaces theme. “Make parks more attractive and inviting”, said a relatively large number of participants, who were indicating a need for formal landscaping plans for parks.

A notable number of participants indicated there were Safety issues at Bon Air Park. Vandalism was noted as an issue there and contributes to the participant’s feelings of insecurity, saying they would not let their kids play in the park. Waterworks Park was also mentioned as a place where there are safety concerns.
Public Participation: Public Meeting Comments

The following comments were gathered at the June 17, 2008 Public Meeting. An “X#” prior to the comment indicates the total number of people who indicated (via a tally system) who had this comment.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent bathrooms at east end (Reservoir)</td>
<td>X10 Soapbox derby- Derby hill site (Cont. Steel, Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>X6 Walkway around park perimeters</td>
<td>X6 Geese and dog droppings</td>
<td>X3 Make Bicentennial Park more attractive and inviting</td>
<td>X4 Bon Air Park not a safe place for my children to play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X4 Consider adding a disc golf course.</td>
<td>X4 Add disc golf course (Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>X3 Trails to connect parks</td>
<td>X2 Reconsider wetlands for fear of geese and mosquitoes (Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>X2 Add a butterfly garden and natural bird nesting habitat</td>
<td>Will not let children play at Bon Air Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X3 Work on low spots that continually hold water (Highland)</td>
<td>X2 Add Skateboard stairs, railings and trick stuff (Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>X3 Public access site to Wildcat Creek at SW corner (Reservoir)</td>
<td>X2 No dogs allowed in the park; it’s for children (Highland)</td>
<td>Trees along the road are bad and need to be cut down (Highland)</td>
<td>Waterworks Park not a very safe park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X3 Need bike racks to lock bikes (Foster)</td>
<td>Parks participate in the “Garden Walk”</td>
<td>X3 Direct connection from Philips to Park Road (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td>Take care of the geese-big problem (Foster)</td>
<td>Keep wooded areas mowed so trails are clear (Reservoir)</td>
<td>Walking area would help with vandalism (Jack. Morrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X5 New restrooms (Highland)</td>
<td>Need environmental educational programming</td>
<td>X2 Canoe access to the Wildcat Creek (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td>Screen fencing is helping the goose problem</td>
<td>Park needs a formal landscape (Haynes)</td>
<td>Use boardwalks in areas that consistently flood-muddy and weedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X3 Needs sidewalks (Bon Air)</td>
<td>Miniature golf, family themed, family prices</td>
<td>Water Trail and public access connecting parks bordering water ways</td>
<td>Increase the trail length maybe the geese will disperse</td>
<td>Replace the grass with prairie grass or wildflowers to save on mowing (Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>Many invested improvements not a good idea due to vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis courts need resurfacing (Foster)</td>
<td>Add putt-putt or other family activity</td>
<td>Signage needed</td>
<td>Get rid of the ducks, they are a health hazard (Highland)</td>
<td>Immediate impact needed, ie. color</td>
<td>Needs more people to help with vandalism (Bon Air Park)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage building in bad shape (Mehlig)</td>
<td>X3 Connect to the Walk of Excellence (Mehlig)</td>
<td>No straight through between Washington and Dixon (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td>Flower gardens and gazebo (Bicentennial Park)</td>
<td>Cannot safely get to the neighborhood parks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish and save well houses (Highland)</td>
<td>Bring back Delco outdoor skating rink (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td>Connectivity to schools and parks</td>
<td>Add native host plants and nectar to Parks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North end needs places to walk</td>
<td>A permanent cross-country course, 1 mile loop and smaller (Jackson Morrow)</td>
<td>Extend Lindsey St. from Markland to the bridge on Deffenbaugh</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beautify Highland Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground is under water often, needs elevation or removal (Miller-Highland)</td>
<td>X3 Add disc golf course (Reservoir)</td>
<td>Kids need a bike and walk route from Laf. Park school to Northwest park</td>
<td></td>
<td>Make Haynes Museum more attractive, too dull.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X3 More shelters for picnics (Highland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Connect Maple Crest School with multi-use path (Highland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monuments to workers (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More funding in the parks on the north and east sides</td>
<td></td>
<td>Connect Foster, Continental Steel, Kokomo Beach and Highland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building an amphitheater will cause problems (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td>X2 Both Park and Phillips are 100 west need another road to connect (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike parking racks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Add a public access site at the dam (Cont. Steel)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigger pavilion (Highland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Add significant interconnecting bike/walk paths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Participation: Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder Meeting Results
A series of stakeholder meetings were held on June 17, 2008 at the Rodgers Pavilion in Highland Park. The project team worked closely with the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department Superintendent to identify key stakeholders to the department.

Stakeholders were interviewed in groups of 2 – 5 people with no particular order or process for assignment to a group. A total of 21 stakeholders participated, representing the Board of Park Commissioners, Kokomo City Council, youth sports leagues, adult sports leagues, schools, conservation organizations, park neighbors, and general park users.

An interview guide was created by the Eppley Institute and served as the agenda for all stakeholder meetings to ensure consistency of questioning. All responses were recorded and analyzed using standard qualitative data analysis techniques. The results indicated five core themes that occurred consistently among stakeholders:

- Renovations and Capital Projects
- Recreation and Programming Activities
- Access and Connectivity
- Limited Resources
- Partnerships

The most common stakeholder comments were related to Renovations and Capital Projects. The conditions of bathrooms were the biggest issue of concern. Other repetitive issues in this category concerned amenities and needed upgrades at baseball and softball fields and the need for a bigger pavilion to hold large community events and festivals.

A second common theme among stakeholders was Recreation and Programming Activities. Stakeholders felt there should be more programming offered in Kokomo parks to attract more people to the parks and serve a more diverse cross-section of the community. Stakeholders also think better marketing of the programs offered by the Parks Department is needed to reach more people in the community.

Access and Connectivity was a common theme among stakeholders. Improved access to parks was expressed as a need for ADA accessibility, more parking during large events, and better parking and traffic flow at Highland Park. Connecting schools, parks, and other public facilities through a trail system was also expressed as highly desirable for Kokomo residents.

Stakeholders expressed a notable amount of concern about Limited Resources. It must be noted that nearly every stakeholder that participated in the interviews commended Superintendent John Martino and his staff for doing an excellent job at maintaining Kokomo parks and managing programs with the limited resources available to them. The main concerns stakeholders have in this category are that both human and financial resources are being cut even further and that the Parks and Recreation Department needs to consider how they can maintain their current standards with fewer resources. One stakeholder said there is “not enough park staff to keep up with mowing”. A couple others thought that the department should “not keep smaller parks if they are not being used”. Finding ways to reduce unnecessary spending and consolidating facilities were common solutions suggested in this category.

An additional stakeholder meeting was held on November 5, 2008 with members of the Kokomo Advisory Council for Disability Issues. A summary of this meeting is included with the ADA accessibility audit on page 54 of this document.
Public Participation: Kokomo Community Survey

Methodology
The survey questionnaire was designed by the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands in conjunction with the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department. The questionnaire was published using an online survey design and implementation software.

The questionnaire was distributed using three separate non-random; non-scientific methods. First it was made available online via the Kokomo Parks and Recreation website with a predominant listing on the home page of that site. The online survey was announced in the public meeting that took place on June 17, 2008. The survey was available online until July 31, 2008. It was also announced in several newspaper articles discussing the department’s planning efforts. Duplicate online responses were prevented by the survey software, which only allows one response per IP address.

A large number of surveys were also distributed in hard copy during June and July, 2008. A portion were distributed at the Kokomo Beach facility. At this facility, survey questionnaires were displayed and available at the ticket counter. Participants who completed and returned the survey during their visit were offered a free fountain drink as an incentive. Other hard copies were distributed through the Playground Program held at various park locations. Those who completed the survey received a free craft activity for their child as an incentive.

Other surveys were distributed in hard copy by Kokomo Parks and Recreation staff. Staff members approached park visitors on a random basis and asked them to complete the survey. Finally, surveys were made available at the department office where residents register for parks and recreation programs.

Survey Responses
A total of 370 complete and valid responses were received and analyzed. All responses received in hard copy were entered into the online survey software by Eppley Institute staff. All responses were combined for a single overall analysis. The results of the survey follow:
Survey Question: How many persons counting yourself are in your household?

The average family size was slightly over 3.5 persons. Seventy-five percent of respondents indicated having adults aged 26 to 54 in their households. Thirty-five percent of respondents report having elementary aged children in their households. The least reported age group, pre-school aged children, were found in 12% of respondent households.

Survey Question: Which of the following best describes your education level?

Thirty three percent of the survey respondents indicated they had one to three years of college education. The next group at 22% stated that they had received a bachelor’s degree. Eighteen percent had a high school degree or equivalent and 17% had an advanced degree.
**Survey Question: What is your total household income?**

The largest respondent group, 30% has a total household income of $75,000 or higher. The next group, 24%, reported total household income between $50,000-$74,999 with the remaining 46% of respondents falling under the $50,000 level.

**Survey Question: Which of the following best describes your racial/ethnic background?**

The majority of respondents defined their ethnicity as white. Five percent defined their ethnicity as multi-racial and four percent as Black/African American.
Survey question: Where is your household located?

Just over half of the respondents 53% reside in the City of Kokomo. Living in other areas was cited by 26%. The remaining 21% stated that they live in Howard County.

Survey question: Gender

More than half of the respondent's, 63%, were women. Thirty-one percent were men and the remaining 6% completed the survey together.
Survey question: Please check the titles that best describe the job(s) of the adult members in your household.

Nearly half of the respondents described their profession as managerial or professional, 48%. Service jobs were listed next at 17% and other at 16%. Fifteen percent of the respondents were retirees.

![Description of Respondents Jobs Diagram](image)

Survey question: Do any members of your family have a disability as defined by The Americans with Disabilities Act?

Eleven percent of the respondents reported having a member in their household with a disability. The remaining 89% stated that they did not have a member in their household with a disability.

![Members of your household that have a disability diagram](image)
Survey question: If you answered “yes” to Q. 9, what type of accommodations are needed to serve people with disabilities in your family?

Forty-four percent of respondents reported needing “other” accommodations, and listed parking spaces near facilities and accessible ramps. An additional 32% of respondents stated that they need adaptive equipment. Others need sign language interpretation and Braille, 12% each.

Survey question: What are your TWO major sources of information about Parks and Recreation classes and activities?

Over half of the respondents 53% stated that their major source of information about the Parks and Recreation Classes and Activities is from the Newspaper. Another 43% stated that they hear information from their friends. Another 21% of respondents hear information on the radio.
Survey question: What public or private facilities do you use for family recreation activities?

For outdoor sport activities, the majority of respondents, 65%, cited the City of Kokomo. The City of Kokomo was also cited the most for use with regards to family activities at 58%, fitness and exercise use by 36% of respondents and for cultural arts at 26% of respondents. Private facilities were cited the most for indoor activities at 26%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Use for Family Recreation Activities (304 Responses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Kokomo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/Business (cinemas, GoCarts, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private facilities for a fee (YMCA, Sports Center, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey question: Approximately how many hours PER WEEK do you spend on recreation activities?

Thirty-four percent of respondents stated that they spend between 5 and 8 hours a week on recreation activities. The next group reported spending 3 to 4 hours a week, 22%. Sixteen percent stated they spend 9 to 12 hours a week on recreation activities.
Survey question: Approximately how much PER MONTH do you spend on recreation activities?

Forty-nine percent of respondents spend over $50 per month on recreation activities. Twenty-six percent of respondents stated that they spend between $21 and $50 per month on recreation activities. Another 26% stated that they spend between $51 and $100 per month on recreation activities. Additionally, 13% of respondents stated that they spend between $101 and $200 per month and another 13% of respondents stated that they spend between $11 and $20 per month.

Approximately how much PER MONTH do you spend on recreation activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Respondents Spend On Recreation Activities A Month</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $200</td>
<td>37 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$101 to $200</td>
<td>46 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$51 to $100</td>
<td>94 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21 to $50</td>
<td>96 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11 to $20</td>
<td>48 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10</td>
<td>30 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>17 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Question: What is the MOST important reason you and/or members of your household recreate?

Health benefits were cited by 37% of respondents as the most important reason for recreating. Family time was cited next by 27% of respondents. Followed by something fun to do which was cited by 24% of respondents.

Most Important Reason Respondents Recreate

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To be with friends: 3 (2%)
Spend family time: 7 (5%)
Something fun to do: 4 (3%)
Quiet reflection: 6 (4%)
Other reasons: 31 (22%)
Survey question: The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department manages a variety of parks, facilities, and programs. Did you know these were available in Kokomo?

The majority of respondents were most familiar with the Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center, with 86% of affirmative responses. Highland Park and Jackson Morrow Park were also very familiar to respondents with 79% and 74% respectively. Respondents were fairly familiar with the Kokomo Park Band Concerts, the Elwood Haynes Museum and the Kokomo Skate Park. Respondents were least familiar with the Super Explorer’s Camp, the Kokomo Sprint Triathlon and Showmobile with 8%, 12% and 13% respectively. Twenty-two of the programs offered had less than 50% recognition rate by respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Park</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Morrow Park</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Park Band Concerts (Highland Park)</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elwood Haynes Museum</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Skate Park</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Park Stadium</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodgers Pavilion</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont Covered Bridge</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Picnic Shelters</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Offices in Highland Park</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall and Summer Softball</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim “Moose” Carden Kids Fishing Clinic</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 other neighborhood parks</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkendall Interpretive Center</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon Air Building</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Club Hills Building</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Lessons</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunted Trail Walk</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftfest</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Winter Basketball</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Tournament</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 and over Men’s Basketball</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter’s Education</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Adventure Program</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showmobile</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Parks Sprint Triathlon</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Explorer’s Camp</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey question: OVERALL how would you rate the city of Kokomo Parks?

More than half of the respondents, 64% rated the City of Kokomo Parks overall as good to excellent. Thirty percent of respondents rated the City of Kokomo Parks as average to fair. Only 3% of respondents rated the parks as poor.
Survey question: How often do you or members of your household visit each of the Kokomo Parks?

Forty-two percent of respondents answered that their family members use Highland Park on a regular basis. Other popular parks included Jackson-Morrow Park, with 37% of respondents using the park regularly, and Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center, 31% of respondents using the park regularly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Often Respondents Visit Each of the Kokomo Parks (327 Responses)</th>
<th>Average (1=Daily 5=Never)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highland Park</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson-Morrow Park</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Beach Aquatic Center</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Park</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Park</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrough Chapel Park</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haynes Museum</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon Air Park</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservoir 213 Park</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservoir 500 Park</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huston Park</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller-Highland Park</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehlig Park</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Citizens Center</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohr Park</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Club Hills Park</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterworks Park</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicentennial Park</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somer Park</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutler Park</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkley Park</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway Park</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studebaker Park</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian Park</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins “A” Park</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins “B” Park</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westdale Park</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins “C” Park</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey question: Please rate each of the following types of facilities by their importance to you or your family.

Analysis of the results of this question was done by calculating the average score for each of the facility types. Natural areas, swimming pools, hiking trails, children’s playgrounds, and paved trails had the highest rankings. The table presents the results in ranked order as indicated by survey respondents, with most important items having the lowest scores and least important items having the highest scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Areas</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pools</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking Trails</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Playgrounds</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paved Trails</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Areas</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Courses</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Areas</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating Rinks</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic sites</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Shelters</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Features at Kokomo Beach</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate Parks</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc Golf Courses</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMX Bike Parks</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Park Stadium</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Park Stadium</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Little League Fields</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer Fields</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball Fields</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Basketball Courts</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Fields</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoe Pits</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey question: Please indicate which Kokomo trails you use on a regular basis?

Over half of the respondents reported using the Highland Park Trail. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents listed other trails such as the Jackson-Morrow trail. An additional 30% of respondents use Walk of Excellence.

Survey question: The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is considering adding a new feature at Kokomo Beach. Which age group do you think a new feature should serve?

Almost 25% of respondents stated that a new feature should target elementary school aged children. Thirty-four percent of respondents stated that a new feature should target high school or middle school aged children.
Survey question: What do you think are the biggest problems in Kokomo parks?

Half of the respondents stated that the biggest problem in Kokomo parks are poorly maintained restroom facilities. Vandalism was cited by 40% of respondents followed by discourteous users cited by 33% of respondents. Respondents also mentioned poorly maintained equipment and a concern for personal safety as identified problems in the park system.

### Respondent's Identified Problems In Kokomo Parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poorly maintained restroom facilities</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourteous Users</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough contiguous trails</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please describe):</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly maintained equipment</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-leash dogs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Safety</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly maintained picnic facilities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Crowded</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey question: OVERALL how would you rate the City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department’s programs?

Over half of the respondents, 58% rated the City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation programs overall as good to excellent. Twenty-nine percent of respondents rated the programs as average to fair. Only 7 respondents, 2% rated the programs as poor.
Survey question: Have you or members of your household participated in any Kokomo Parks and Recreation Programs in the past year?

Nearly half of the respondents 48% attend the Kokomo Band Concerts. Swimming lessons were cited by 23% of respondents. The Craftfest and Summer softball were cited next by 19% of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Park Band Concerts</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Lessons</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftfest</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Softball</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Softball</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Fishing Clinic</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Adventure Program</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunted Trail Walk</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Lessons</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Winter Basketball</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 and Over Men’s Basketball</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter’s Education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokomo Parks Sprint Triathlon</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Tournament</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Explorer’s Camp</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey question: What prevents you from participating in Kokomo Parks and Recreation Programs?

Over 50% of respondents cited not being aware of what is being offered as preventing them from participating in Kokomo Parks and Recreation Programs. Thirty percent of respondents listed other reasons for being unable to participate, such as lack of quality programs. Fees being too high were cited by another 20% of respondents. Inconvenient times were cited by an additional 17% of respondents.
Survey question: What percentage of operating costs should users pay for the following types of programs (the City would subsidize other costs):

Nearly 50% of respondents were in support of paying one-third of the operating costs associated with preschool and senior citizen programs. Approximately 30% to 39% of respondents were supportive of paying one-third of the operating costs for other programs, such as youth sport / youth class and recreational swimming programs.

The results to this question were also analyzed by calculating the average score for each program type, and are presented in a ranked order with the highest score being the programs respondents indicated should have the highest cost recovery and the lowest score indicating programs that should have the lowest cost recovery.

### Percentage of Operating Costs Users Should Pay For Programs
(296 Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>About 1/3</th>
<th>About 1/2</th>
<th>About 2/3</th>
<th>About All</th>
<th>Average score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult sports</td>
<td>27.16%</td>
<td>28.75%</td>
<td>19.81%</td>
<td>15.34%</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult class activities</td>
<td>27.16%</td>
<td>28.75%</td>
<td>20.77%</td>
<td>13.74%</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness programs</td>
<td>30.35%</td>
<td>29.39%</td>
<td>19.81%</td>
<td>12.14%</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational swimming</td>
<td>36.42%</td>
<td>32.27%</td>
<td>11.82%</td>
<td>12.78%</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth sports</td>
<td>40.58%</td>
<td>32.91%</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
<td>9.58%</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth class activities</td>
<td>38.98%</td>
<td>32.59%</td>
<td>12.14%</td>
<td>7.99%</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior citizen programs</td>
<td>47.92%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
<td>7.67%</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool programs</td>
<td>49.52%</td>
<td>23.96%</td>
<td>9.90%</td>
<td>8.31%</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey question: What is your opinion about requiring developers to give the city a portion of a new development for a park or open space use (mandatory dedication ordinance)?

Mandatory dedication ordinance was supported by 34% of the respondents. An additional 23% of respondents supported the idea somewhat. Another 35% of respondents needed more information before they would decide. Only 7% of respondents were against the idea of mandatory dedication.

Survey question: Kokomo tax revenues are decreasing due to property tax caps invoked by the State, which affects all City departments including Parks and Recreation. How willing would you be to pay increased fees to participate in Kokomo Parks and Recreation programs and use their facilities as a way to make up for this budget shortfall?

Very willing to pay increased fees was cited by 10% of respondents. An additional 32% of respondents stated that they were somewhat willing to pay more. Another 40% of respondents were not sure if they were willing to pay increased fees. Not willing to pay increased fees was cited by 18% of the respondents.
Survey question: Season passes for county residents at a higher rate are being considered for some recreation programs. What is your opinion about this policy?

Higher rates for season passes was supported by 25% of the respondents. An additional 28% of respondents somewhat support higher rates. Twenty-nine percent of respondents are against the idea of higher rates and 18% were unsure.

![Survey Response Chart]

Survey question: Have you ever volunteered your time to the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department? If yes, about how many hours of your time did you volunteer in the past year?

Eighty-two percent of respondents stated that they did not volunteer their time to the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department. One to twenty-five hours were cited by 13% of respondents. Two percent cited 26 to 50 hours. One individual cited volunteering over 100 hours.

![Number of Hours Volunteered Chart]
Survey question: Are you interested in volunteering your time to the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department in the future?

Interest in volunteering their time to the Kokomo parks was cited by 32% of the respondents. Sixty-eight percent cited they were not interested.

![Number of Respondents Interested in Volunteering](image)

Survey question: Several capital improvement projects are being considered by the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department over the next five years. Please indicate the priority level you would assign to each project

Nearly 49% of respondents ranked new playground equipment at Highland Park, the development of a new attraction at Kokomo Beach, and the development of a new park at the Continental Steel site as high priorities. The results are presented in ranked order with the highest priority projects as indicated by respondents listed first.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects Respondents Are Interested In (319 Responses)</th>
<th>1=Lowest Priority</th>
<th>5=Highest Priority</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New playground equipment at Highland Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New attraction at Kokomo Beach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a new park at the Continental Steel site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New lighting at Highland Park Stadium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New lighting at Foster Park tennis complex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire the Northside Little League ball diamond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey question: If an additional $100 were available for Kokomo parks, trails, sports, and recreation facilities, how would you spend the funds among the categories of funding listed below?

Almost half of the respondents cited giving an additional $100 to improvements and maintenance of existing parks, pools and recreation facilities. Respondents next cited acquisition and development of walking and biking trails. Followed by development of indoor facilities.
How Respondent’s Would Spend An Additional $100 (370 Responses)

| Improvements and maintenance of existing parks, pools, and recreation facilities | 43.65 |
| Acquisition and development of walking and biking trails | 26.70 |
| Development of indoor facilities (fitness centers, pool, gyms, etc) | 21.19 |
| Construction of new sports fields (softball, soccer, baseball, etc) | 16.22 |
| Acquisition of new park land and open space | 15.22 |

Survey question: What could Kokomo Parks and Recreation do to better serve you and your family?

Respondent’s comments and ideas were grouped by themes. Three ideas/concerns were consistently cited in the open comment section. Develop more biking/hiking trails throughout the city, improve cleaning especially of bathrooms, and maintenance of facilities, buildings, fixtures, walkways, etc. Many respondents mentioned the need to better market or share information about parks and activities. There does not appear to be a known reliable method for obtaining information about classes, fees, hours, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a contiguous trail system throughout the city/more trails</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning and maintenance especially the bathrooms</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better market activities, parks, fees and hours (Internet, mailings)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update playground equipment and add access for the disabled</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety concerns/need more patrols</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update facilities</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class and Beach fees are too high</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Season and/or Family pass</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversify classes offered for kids, adults, senior citizens and disabled. Increase winter offerings.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add more disc golf courses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add more toddler playground equipment</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add another pool</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create new programs that are fun</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add more seating in the playground areas, beach and concert areas</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the North End parks with playground equipment and maintenance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Tennis Courts at Jackson Morrow Park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove geese and/or droppings</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add more lighting for safety</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add another dog park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enclose/improve the beach/add more tables</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow food and/or coolers on the beach</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Little League complex</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More flowers, water, lakes and plants</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Comment Period

The public comment period began November 4th, 2008 and ended on December 8, 2008. Several methods were used to ensure that the public had ample opportunity to review the draft Master Plan and make comments before it was presented to the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Board of Directors on December 9, 2008.

- The Master Plan draft was available on the City of Kokomo website, at www.cityofkokomo.org from November 4th through December 8th, 2008.

- A hard copy of the Master Plan was available for review at the City of Kokomo Park Department office from November 4th through December 8th, 2008.

- The Master Plan was presented to the public at a public meeting held on November 5, 2008.

November 5, 2008 Public Meeting Results
A second public meeting was held at the Rodgers Pavilion in Highland Park at 6:00 p.m. on November 5, 2008. In attendance were ten members of the public as well as representatives of the Kokomo Park Board, the Parks and Recreation Department, Rundell Ernstberger Associates and the Eppley Institute.

The meeting began with a brief presentation on the purpose and process of the Master Plan; a discussion of the public and stakeholder participation findings; and the goals and objectives that have been included in the master plan. Participants each received a list of the 82 recommendations that will be included in the master plan, and asked to indicate which they viewed as those with the highest priority. As well, the draft Master Plan was available for review. The floor was opened for questions and comments and an open discussion about the recommendations and other priorities ensued.

Of the 82 recommendations, a total of 43 were given top priority by at least one member of the public meeting audience. Five of these were rated as a top priority by four or more members of the audience. These include:

- Establish a volunteer coordinator and Friends of KPRD volunteer network.
- Continue stream bank restoration and native plantings for erosion and goose control.
- Expand/refurbish the restroom facilities at Highland Park.
- Continue the connectivity of the Walk of Excellence.
- Continue to develop sponsorship opportunities for programs and events.

(A full summary of the November 5, 2008 Public Meeting comments follows. The press release, sign in sheet and newspaper coverage from this meeting are included in Appendix A)

No additional public comments were received during the review period.
Public Comment Period: Public Meeting Priority Summary

Following is a summary of the comments from the November 5, 2008 Public Meeting. Recommendations in green were given priority by those attending the public meeting. A number behind the recommendation indicates how many people total indicated the recommendation was a priority. Items in blue indicate additional comments or recommendations made.

Priority Action Plan Recommendations
The following recommendations are arranged by type or park site and represent the proposed system improvements and developments for the next five years. In some cases the improvements apply to more than one park location. Please provide your feedback by circling those recommendations that are your highest priority, as well as providing additional comments you may have.

System Wide Improvements and Maintenance
1. Establish tiered maintenance and landscape program. (2)
2. Continue tree planting and replacement program (4)
3. Add native, no-mow planting areas and buffers (3)
4. Establish Volunteer Coordinator and Friends of KPRD volunteer network (4)
5. Continue revolving playground equipment program (3)
6. Add accessible picnic tables and grills to all parks with picnic amenities
7. Continue stream bank restoration and native plantings for erosion and goose control (6)
8. Add ADA accessible routes to park amenities (2)
9. Develop Community Event Facility

Berkley Park:
10. Add playground equipment

Bicentennial Park:
11. Install interpretive signage to identify trees
12. Renovate current seating to be accessible
13. Add (accessible) drinking fountain

Bon Air Park:
14. Convert tennis courts
15. Replace or renovate existing picnic shelter
16. Establish neighborhood watch group

Country Club Park:
17. Add practice soccer field

Darrough Chapel Park:
18. Install accessible playground surface

Foster Park:
19. Repave tennis court (2)
20. Add accessible playground component

Gateway Park:
21. Resurface Basketball Court
22. Add picnic shelter

Haynes Museum:
23. Add historically accurate garden, shelter and benches
24. Develop “Friends of the Haynes Museum” group

Highland Park:
25. Main playground redesign and new equipment
26. Replace stadium lighting system
27. Renovation of stage and amphitheater
28. Improve accessibility of amphitheater seating
29. Add accessible fishing pier
30. Renovate historic shelters (2)
31. Add Interpretive and wayfinding signage (2)
32. Expand/refurbish restroom facilities (4)
33. Renovation of horseshoe courts
34. Renovation of stone retaining wall (3)
35. Add paved pedestrian paths (3)
36. Landscape beautification (2)
Add shallow pond for ice skating in the winter and toy sailboats in the summer.
Add programming, events and activities at Highland Park Stadium, such as concerts or marching band contests to increase use and revenues.

Huston Park:
37. Add ramps at shelters
38. Renovate playground surface

Jackson Morrow Park:
39. Add interpretive signage
Add one mile natural trail for coyote kids
Add large pavilion

Kautz Field:
40. Add Walk of Excellence trailhead (2)
41. Add (accessible) benches and bike racks
42. Add (accessible) picnic shelter
43. Add (accessible) drinking fountain

Kokomo Beach:
44. Replace sand attraction with new attraction
**Public Comment Period: Public Meeting Priority Summary**

**Mehlig Park:**
45. Add dog park playground components
46. Add parking

**Miller-Highland Park:**
47. Add canoe launch
48. Pave parking lot
49. Expand/replace playground

**Mohr Park:**
50. Add sidewalk along street

**Northwest Park:**
51. Add accessible playground components

**Reservoir Park 500:**
52. Add Disc Golf course
53. Add interpretive signage
54. Improve nature trail surface (3)
Add canoe launch at spillway
Add restroom facility
Add benches, trees and tables

**Studebaker Park:**
55. Establish neighborhood watch group
Add bike racks

**Waterworks Park:**
56. Renovate/replace shelters (2)
57. Add accessible drinking fountain (2)
Add restroom facility
Add fence, gardens and boardwalk along the creek

**Westdale Park:**
58. Add parking
59. Add looped walk path

**Park and Trail Development:**
60. Assess feasibility and need of developing amenities at Continental Steel site. (3)

**Communications and Marketing:**
67. Add on-line registration for select programs
68. Add payment options
69. Include Recreation Guide on website
70. Develop map of existing and planned trails (3)
71. Update KPRD map and amenity brochure
72. Make regular updates to KPRD website
Rails to trails study and opportunities

**Funding:**
73. Continue to develop sponsorship opportunities for programs and events (4)
74. Levy a Food and Beverage Tax
75. Establish a Cost Recovery Policy (2)
76. Evaluate fee structure and update
77. Expand tiered fee program
78. Expand reduced fee program for low income users

**Programming**
79. Add Women’s Winter Basketball League
80. Expand Kokomo Beach Riverwalk program
81. Extend Kokomo Beach hours for special events
82. Add programs geared towards single parents and families.

**Additional Comments**
A larger indoor facility for rental use or allow a non-profit to build a facility for their personal use with the condition to allow public access.
A place for ice skating in the winter
Other indoor facility - Rodgers Pavilion is great, we just need others, because this building fill up so quickly
Clean up East Wildcat Creek with help from Wildcat Creek Guardians
Benchmarks

Introduction
As part of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands conducted a benchmarking study. The purpose of benchmarking is to assist the planning team, in setting standards for Kokomo’s parks and recreation facilities.

Defining Level of Service (LOS) standards for facilities in Kokomo is the primary purpose of the benchmarking study. Benchmarking is used along with national recreation trends, local trends and public involvement to establish a desired LOS for the community.

The benchmarking study provides an exploration of the park and recreation facilities, programs and administration of five communities determined to be comparable to Kokomo. Armed with this information, Kokomo can decide how they wish to compare with these other cities. Goals can be set, standards re-defined, and priorities established.

The five cities that were selected include:

- Westerville, OH
- Bloomington, IN
- Valparaiso, IN
- West Lafayette, IN
- Fishers, IN

The benchmark process is not intended to find cities that match Kokomo exactly. The main purpose is to assist the community in finding comparisons for measurement and setting standards. By delineating the parks and recreation system of any one of these cities, Kokomo can compare, contrast and emulate its future programs, facilities and administration in a measurable context.

Methodology
The Eppley Institute in conjunction with the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Superintendent and management staff, as well as Park Board Members and the Mayor’s office, listed 11 cities as potential benchmarks for Kokomo. The Eppley Institute did some preliminary research on those 11 cities and reported back to the group. Based on the results of this preliminary research, the group selected the five cities listed above for the benchmarking study.

The Eppley Institute then worked closely with the Kokomo Parks and Recreation team to decide on the variables that were to be included in the study. Those variables included such things as population, total park acreage, number of ball fields, operating budget, etc. (the complete list can be seen in the results table). The data was collected using information from the benchmark cities’ websites and through phone and email communications with the departments.

The complete results of this effort can be seen in the benchmarks results table. These results have been used to develop the level of service standards for the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department. Two other conclusions can be drawn from the benchmarking study that are not addressed in the level of service standards section of this document:

- The average spending per person for parks and recreation in Kokomo $67.11, which is notably lower than the same measure in the three benchmark cities most comparable to Kokomo. Remedies for this inequity could include increased budget from the City’s general fund or increased revenue from donations or outside funding sources.
- The percentage of revenue from fees and charges is much lower in Kokomo than in the benchmark cities. The national average for this measure is around 30% and Kokomo is at 15.2%, indicating that the Kokomo Parks and Recreation department either needs to raise fees for its current programming, or collect fees for more of its program offerings.
### Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Kokomo, IN</th>
<th>Westerville, OH</th>
<th>Bloomington, IN</th>
<th>Valparaiso, IN</th>
<th>West Lafayette, IN</th>
<th>Fishers, IN</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>46,027</td>
<td>34,971</td>
<td>68,247</td>
<td>29,516</td>
<td>28,997</td>
<td>65,382</td>
<td>45,690</td>
<td>40,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Area (Square Miles)</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Paved Trail Miles</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Miles per 10,000 Population</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Park Acreage</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Acreage per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Acreage as percentage of City Land Area</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Recreation/Fitness Centers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation/Community Centers per 10,000 population</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Skate Parks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate Parks per 10,000 Population</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Dog Parks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Parks/ 10,000 Population</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of soccer fields</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer Fields / 10,000</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tennis courts</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.33</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts / 10,000</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of baseball/softball fields</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields / 10,000</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parks &amp; Recreation Operating Budget</td>
<td>$3,089,088</td>
<td>$5,326,277</td>
<td>$6,943,891</td>
<td>$2,827,995</td>
<td>$1,163,430</td>
<td>$2,391,674</td>
<td>$3,730,653.40</td>
<td>$2,827,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parks and Recreation Operating Budget as Percent of City's Total Operating Budget</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parks Maintenance Budget</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$2,477,432</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$130,000</td>
<td>$1,545,384</td>
<td>$1,384,272</td>
<td>$1,545,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parks Maintenance Budget as Percentage of Department Operating Budget</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>35.68%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11.17%</td>
<td>64.62%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Expenditure per person for parks and recreation</td>
<td>$67.11</td>
<td>$152.31</td>
<td>$100.28</td>
<td>$95.81</td>
<td>$40.12</td>
<td>$36.58</td>
<td>$82.04</td>
<td>$95.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenues from Fees and Charges</td>
<td>$470,905</td>
<td>$3,072,893</td>
<td>$2,477,534</td>
<td>$557,027</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
<td>$1,509,491</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Parks &amp; Recreation Operating Budget from Fees and Charges</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level of Service Standards

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to identify Level of Service (LOS) standards for parks and facilities in Kokomo by synthesizing information and research conducted throughout the planning process. The Kokomo LOS standards provide recommendations for a minimum LOS standard for park acreage and certain facility types. The standards provide guidelines for the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) to plan and build parks and recreation facilities needed to adequately serve the community. LOS standards are intended to ensure that a balance of facilities and services are provided uniformly across Kokomo.

Application of the LOS standards does not carry city regulatory status; rather the standards should be considered guidelines that express the desires of the community to provide a balanced and equitable distribution of facilities. Establishing unrealistic LOS standards can have the impact of creating a system that cannot be achieved without substantial investment in land and new facilities.

Because the application of these LOS standards is directly impacted by the Kokomo's land supply, tax base, willingness to fund, and recreational demand, minimum standards are recommended. The goal of KPRD should be to maintain these minimum standards as a first priority. When budgets and resources allow, or if community recreation preferences change, KPRD should strive to exceed the minimum standards to match community needs.

The following table provides a summary of the recommended LOS standards for Kokomo. The use of LOS standards for park and recreation facilities is based on national trends in the profession and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 1995 publication Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. It is important to remember that standards are based on a variety of methodologies that are subjective in nature. Ultimately, communities must reach a consensus about the amount of parkland, open space, and recreation facilities required to maintain the quality of life that is desired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Kokomo Current LOS</th>
<th>Recommended Kokomo LOS Standard</th>
<th>Per Residents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Acreage</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paved, Multi-Use Trails (miles)</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation and Fitness Centers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer Fields</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of Service Model

To determine the recommended level of service (LOS) standards for Kokomo parks and facilities, the planning team used a basic model to synthesize the various research findings and develop an LOS standard. This model consisted of four basic components, which were applied to each park or facility type to develop the recommended LOS standard. Those four components included:

- Kokomo current level of service
- Benchmark cities average level of service
- Kokomo public involvement results
- Kokomo population projections, demand, and trends

This model provided a standardized method for analyzing the information gathered throughout the planning process. Use of this model allowed the planning team to systematically determine minimum LOS standards.

To complete the needs assessment using these standards, they will be applied to determine deficits and surpluses in the parks and recreation system.

Park Acreage Level of Service

The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) manages 442 acres of parkland for a current level of service of 9.6 acres per 1000 residents. The existing LOS standard is 10 acres per 1000 residents, which means that the city has nearly met the standard it set about seven years ago.

The average current level of service for the benchmark cities is 16 acres per 1000 residents, which is quite a bit higher than the Kokomo LOS. Survey responses and public
Level of Service Standards (continued)

meeting results indicate that many of the smaller parks are not used very frequently, but that the larger parks are very popular.

The Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan recommends that Howard County maintain a standard of 20 acres per 1000 residents. Approximately one half of the residents of Howard County live in Kokomo.

Recent budget cuts due to the implications HB10-01, which restricts property tax levels, are affecting KPRD as well as all other city departments in Kokomo.

These various factors lead to a conclusion that Kokomo is well served by the existing park acreage and that its current LOS standard for parkland acreage should remain unchanged.

Kokomo Park Acreage LOS Standard: 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Paved, Multi-Purpose Trails
KPRD currently manages 7.56 miles of paved trails representing an LOS of 1.64 miles per 10,000 population. Most of these trails are within large parks and are not connected to other parks or facilities.

The benchmark cities’ average LOS for paved, multi-use trails is 4 miles per 10,000 population. Survey respondents, stakeholders, and public meeting participants indicated a strong desire for a contiguous trail system in Kokomo. National trends also show continuing demand for such facilities.

Due to the relatively high cost of constructing paved trails, and the budget constraints of KPRD, it is unrealistic to strive for the level of service represented by the benchmark cities’ average. However, it is important to the community that a standard be set that will lead to an increased number of paved trails.

Paved, Multi-use Trails LOS Standard: 2 miles per 10,000 residents

Recreation and Fitness Centers Level of Service
The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department currently does not own or operate an indoor recreation and fitness center. Each of the benchmark cities has at least one recreation center, providing an average LOS to their communities of about one recreation and fitness center for every 25,000 residents.

Survey respondents, stakeholders, and public meeting participants all expressed a desire for more programming opportunities. A recreation and fitness center would create an opportunity for KPRD to offer more programming opportunities to residents.

Recent announcements by the Kokomo-Center Township Consolidated School Corporation indicate that several school buildings may soon be abandoned and sold creating an opportunity to convert one of these buildings to a recreation and fitness center. All this information indicates that setting an LOS standard for recreation and fitness centers to match the benchmark cities’ average would enhance programming opportunities and meet the needs of Kokomo residents.

Recreation Centers LOS Standard: 0.39 recreation centers per 10,000 residents (one recreation center for every 25,000 residents)

Baseball/Softball Fields
The Kokomo Department of Parks and Recreation manages 17 baseball fields and 8 softball fields. These numbers represent a current LOS of 5.43 baseball/softball fields per 10,000 population.

An analysis of participation trends for baseball/softball based on responses to the survey indicates fairly steady participation in softball and baseball programs. However, the respondents appear to be at odds when it comes to ranking the importance of ball fields, with about 40% indicating they are very important or important and an approximately equal number indicating they are not important or that they don’t care.

National trends show no increase or decrease in baseball and softball participation over the past seven years; and no indication that this will change. The benchmark cities average LOS is 3.77 baseball/softball fields per 10,000. In fact, Kokomo provides the second highest level of service in this category among the benchmark cities. This data leads to a conclusion that the current level of service is serving the Kokomo community well and the standard for the next five years should remain equal to or below the existing level.
Level of Service Standards (continued)

Baseball/Softball Fields LOS Standard: 5.0 per 10,000 population

Soccer Fields
National team sports participation trends indicate that growth in soccer participation has reached a plateau in the past several years. Slightly over 50% of Kokomo residents indicated that soccer fields were somewhat important, important, or very important, indicating a notable demand for these facilities.

The current level of service for soccer fields in Kokomo is 0.43 fields per 10,000 residents, which is below the benchmark cities average of 2.09 soccer fields per 10,000 residents. With national demand holding steady, local demand fairly high, and what appears to be a deficiency compared to other cities, Kokomo should consider increasing the number of soccer fields in its system. Therefore, a LOS standard that is somewhat higher than the current level of service is appropriate.

Soccer Fields LOS Standard: 1.0 per 10,000 population

Tennis Courts
The current KPRD level of service for tennis courts is 4.35 per 10,000 residents, which is notably higher than the average of the benchmark cities. Based on results of the resident survey, about 56% of respondents indicated that tennis courts are somewhat important, important, or very important. This level of importance combined with slightly increasing national trends in tennis participation indicate that Kokomo's higher level of service is probably serving its residents well. However, the fact that Kokomo's level of service is almost twice as high as the benchmark cities average of 2.26 tennis courts per 10,000 population suggests that the level of service standard should be somewhat lower than its current level.

Tennis Courts LOS Standard: 3.5 per 10,000 population

Dog Parks and Skate Parks
The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department operates one dog park and one skate park translating to a level of service of 0.22. National trends for dog parks show a continuing popularity for these facilities with no indication of decline in the near future. National trends in skateboarding showed steady increases from 1997 to 2005, at which time it was at its highest level. However in 2006 and 2007, participation in skateboarding has shown a notable decline.

No specific data on dog parks were collected in the Kokomo community recreation survey and they were not brought up in the public meeting or stakeholder interviews. However, it must be noted that department staff get regular requests for another dog park in Kokomo. Because a dog park facility has so many considerations to account for in its design and location it was decided not to set an LOS standard for dog parks in this five-year plan document. The KPRD superintendent is aware of the community's desire for another dog park facility, and the KPRD will take this into account should an appropriate site and or funding opportunity present itself.

Nearly 50% of respondents to the survey indicated that skate parks were at least somewhat important. Similar to the dog park situation, this type of specialized recreation facility requires many circumstances to be right in order for it to come to fruition. In addition, skate parks can be quite expensive to build. Therefore it was decided not to set an LOS standard for skate parks at this time. Kokomo currently has a very unique and very adequate skate park that appears to serve the community well. Should an appropriate site, funding, and evident community support present themselves, KPRD will respond appropriately.
Recreation and Programming Trends

Recreation and Programming Activities
According to the 2006 Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), Hoosiers enjoy outdoor activities that are close to home. Additionally, outdoor activities that were inexpensive and did not require a great deal of skill were more popular than their expensive, skillful counterparts. This coincides with national recreation trends.

In the past ten years, both walking and cycling have seen dramatic participation increases across all age groups. Similarly, running and jogging participation rates have also increased. These activities were particularly popular because they can be done with a partner or alone. The residents of Kokomo reported that an improved trail system is something they desire, and these trends further support this idea.

Traditional sports, such as soccer and tennis, have remained steady in their participation rates. Team sports are very popular among school-aged children, with 55% of students participating every year. However, participation declines during and after high school, with only 26% of the 16 and older population participating every year. This trend suggests there is no need for additional sports fields unless a community is at a deficit in this area.

Family oriented activities are also popular among Hoosiers. Activities such as picnicking and disc-golf have seen a rise in popularity over the past years. These activities are inexpensive and require little skill, thus even the non-athlete can participate. This fits the needs of citizens that desire an inexpensive family activity as well as aesthetically pleasing landscaping, and is congruent with the expressed desires of Kokomo residents.

Accessibility
By the year 2015, it is estimated that 15 to 20% of Hoosiers will be aged 65 or older. With an aging population, many Indiana municipalities are taking greater measures to make trails and facilities accessible to all populations. In many cases, municipalities are restructuring current maintenance projects to include making facilities accessible for all populations. The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department has acknowledged this trend in recent years and has included accessibility in all new projects. This policy will continue over the next five years and longer as the current planning effort is implemented.

Nuisance Wildlife and Dogs
Animal droppings are a common complaint from park users throughout the country, not just in Kokomo. In addition to being unsightly, droppings can cause damage to facilities and playground equipment. Furthermore, they pose health hazards to humans. Park departments have taken a variety of actions to decrease animal annoyance, specifically that of pigeons and geese. A common solution is modifying the habitat to give birds little reason to return. This comes in the form of taller grasses around shorelines and by humans not feeding the birds. If there is no food, there is little reason for the birds to return.

Landscaping and Green Spaces
Americans enjoy recreation activities that can double as social experiences, and Hoosiers are no exception. Additionally, this population desires that the venues be clean and aesthetically pleasing. Many choose to picnic in gardens or include a nature trail walk into their family gatherings. The 2006 Indiana SCORP noted that some of the most popular activities are not necessarily traditional parks and recreation department activities. Rather, these activities incorporated a natural aspect. Examples include nature observation/photography, sightseeing and picnicking. These activities have become increasingly popular on a national level with an estimated 60% of the population engaging in natural sightseeing and 55% in picnicking. The residents of Kokomo, along with their fellow Hoosiers, shared strong feelings towards park beautification and natural habitats for wildlife.

Safety
Some Kokomo residents expressed a concern about safety and vandalism in a couple parks. Crime is not a new occurrence in parks. To counteract theft, vandalism, and other mischievous behavior, a number of municipalities...
Recreation and Programming Trends (continued)

Throughout the United States have developed Park Police/Ranger units that patrol various facilities and lands. This is usually done through a partnership with local or county law enforcement. In conjunction with law enforcement measures, local entities have also employed on-site security officers and installed surveillance cameras. Regardless of the extent of these measures, all municipalities have called upon community members to take an active role in keeping their parks safe and clean. This could be in the form of neighborhood watches or by establishing grassroots organizations.
The Park and Recreation System

Overview
The Kokomo Parks and Recreation system includes park sites ranging in size from .5 acres to 100 acres, and including such amenities as playgrounds, hiking and pedestrian trails, picnic areas, boat launches, a variety of sports fields and courts, a disc golf course, a skate park, an aquatic center, a museum, a nature center, and a dog park.

The system also includes the Walk of Excellence, a 3.4 mile bike and pedestrian trail. In addition to these physical amenities, a wide range of programs provide additional recreational opportunities. The Park Superintendent also oversees Crown Point Cemetery, and the KPRD maintains five landscaped areas known as the Triangles as well as a multitude of planted medians and islands throughout the City of Kokomo.

Park Classification
The majority of the KPRD parks and facilities have been grouped into four categories based upon size and amenities. These are: Block Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks and Regional Parks.

Block Park
A block park typically provides limited recreation opportunities for a sub-neighborhood area. These parks are less than 3-acres in size and may include limited play apparatus, a shelter, and/or small court areas. Development of additional block size parks is not desirable as they require a proportionally large outlay of maintenance resources for the very limited number of persons served.

Neighborhood Park
A neighborhood park has a general service area of 1/2 mile and can vary in size from a minimum of 3 acres to 25 acres. Primarily an active park, facilities may include: play apparatus, play fields, tennis courts, recreational ball fields, restrooms (only to support a special recreation area within an individual park), picnic areas, shelters and support facilities, such as parking.

Community Park
These parks are city-wide in scope and may include amenities that require significant acreage or those that relate to unique natural features. These parks typically range in size from 25 acres to fifty acres. Facilities that are found in a community park include: major picnic areas, multipurpose community buildings, swimming pools, restrooms, hiking trails, lighted ball fields, tennis courts, pavilions, lakes or streams for boating and fishing, internal vehicular road systems and adequate off-street parking.

Regional Park
A regional park serves the entire community and often draws people from outside of the service area due to its size and/or recreation opportunities. Although typically large in size, beginning at 50-acres, a smaller, specialized park may also fall into this category. These types of facilities might include natural areas, educational sites, single purpose facilities, historical or cultural sites, and specialized sports facilities. Demand must be high and well-documented to construct a facility of this type as they are expensive to construct, operate and maintain.

Park/School Partnerships
The joint development of both indoor and outdoor recreational/educational facilities by a park and school board can increase the recreational opportunities for the entire community while minimizing duplication of services and facilities. Schools can benefit by using adjacent or nearby park facilities for field trips, nature study, sporting events and outdoor play. In turn, school amenities can be used to host indoor sports leagues, provide additional playground amenities in a neighborhood and offsite parking for large events. The KPRD maintains a close and reciprocal relationship with the local school district to the benefit of the local community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Regional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Acreage</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>3-25 Acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicentennial</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>Berkley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gateway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bon Air</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Country Club Hills</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Cutler</td>
<td>9.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins &quot;A&quot;</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Huston</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins &quot;B&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbins &quot;C&quot;</td>
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<td>Miller-Highland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studebaker</td>
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<td>Waterworks</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Westdale</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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</table>

Other KPRD Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amenity</th>
<th>Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crown Point Cemetery</td>
<td>65 Ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk of Excellence</td>
<td>3.4 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangles</td>
<td>43 Acres</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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Administrative Structure

City of Kokomo
The Kokomo City Government is a Mayor-Council structure with nine Common Council members, a Clerk-Treasurer and a City Attorney. The Mayor administers the department with his jurisdictions, and the Council approves budgets and enacts ordinances.

The Board of Park Commissioners for the City of Kokomo oversees the operations of the City Parks & Recreation Department. The board is made up of six appointed members who set policy for the department. Four members are appointed by the Mayor; one member is appointed by the Kokomo Center School Board, and one by the Howard County Library Board. The city administration interacts with the Superintendent of the Park and Recreation Department while the Park Board has a policy relationship. The Parks and Recreation Department includes a full time staff with considerable use of part-time and seasonal employees.

Parks and Recreation Department Organization Chart
KPRD Organization Structure and Budget Review

Organization Structure Review
The Superintendent of Parks and Recreation in Kokomo is also responsible for the cemetery operations. The cemetery operations are separated from parks and recreation operations in that there is a foreman, secretary, maintenance staff, and seasonal laborers dedicated to cemetery operations. However, there is regular overlap in which the cemetery staff assists park operations when needed and vice versa.

There is a position opening for assistant superintendent. This position has been approved by the Board of Park Commissioners and the City Council and is currently funded. The position has been left unfilled in 2008 and 2009 to make up for budget shortfalls in other areas.

The recreation manager, both foremen and the office manager report directly to the Superintendent and directly supervise the programs and maintenance staff. The office manager and recreation manager share the supervision duties for the program staff and building caretaker, while the recreation manager and the foremen, with assistance from the Superintendent, are responsible for all the maintenance staff.

The maintenance staff of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for all grounds and building maintenance for all parks and facilities owned and operated by the department. According to the Superintendent, there exists an excellent relationship between the parks and recreation department and other city departments. Exchanges of equipment and labor hours between the departments is not uncommon and they all work together cooperatively when there are needs that cannot be fulfilled by a department’s regular staff.

The Superintendent is mostly satisfied with the current organization structure and feels that it meets the needs of the department. Operating without the assistant superintendent position being filled is putting a strain on the Superintendent and the other two management positions requiring them to work together to accomplish the duties that someone in this position would accomplish; however it is felt that this was the optimal solution for meeting the budgetary constraints put on the department because it allowed the department to avoid cutting maintenance and operations staff and compromising services to the public.

Howard County Revenue
While property tax is the most common type of tax levied by municipalities, local governments also have the authority to impose an income tax. In Indiana, there are three types of income tax that a county can levy:

1. County Adjusted Gross Income Tax (CAGIT)
2. County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT)
3. County Option Income Tax (COIT).

Each county decides individually which and in what combination it will levy income taxes. The rate and distribution of the taxes are set at the state level and are a part of the Indiana State Code.

Revenue raised by the CAGIT is primarily used for local property tax replacement credits, but certain counties also designate a percentage of the CAGIT to go toward specific projects associated with the construction or operation of jails, juvenile detention centers or justice centers. The amount of CAGIT revenue used for property tax replacement is determined by the CAGIT rate in each county. As of 2007, fifty-six counties in Indiana use a CAGIT as a source of local revenue. CAGIT rates range from 0.5% to 1.0% in most cases, with a few counties having a rate as high as 1.25% with the additional revenue going toward specific projects in those counties. Howard County does not levy a CAGIT.

CEDIT may only be used by municipalities that have a capital improvement plan in place. Rates can range from 0.10% to 0.50% in most cases, although there are a few cases where the CEDIT rate is higher, with the additional percentage going towards specific projects outlined in the legislation. Revenue from CEDITs may go towards economic development, capital projects, private developer loan interest, and any other lawful purpose under which any other fund may be used. Seventy-four counties in Indiana have a CEDIT. Howard County’s CEDIT rate is currently 0.20%.

COIT rates range from 0.20% to 0.60% and can go as high as 1.0% at the discretion of the county’s income tax council. COIT revenue can be used for one of the following purposes: (1) to replace property tax revenue lost by taxing units and school corporations due to the allowance of an increased homestead credit; (2) to fund the operation of public communication systems and computer facilities districts; (3) to fund the operation of public transportation corporations; (4) to finance certain
KPRD Organization Structure and Budget Review (continued)

Indiana law states that local authorities may not impose general sales taxes. Currently, they have the authority to impose a Food and Beverage Tax and an Innkeeper’s Tax. The Food and Beverage Tax is a sales tax on the price of restaurant meals, including food and beverages sold in a heated state or heated by the seller. The tax also includes dishes in which two or more food ingredients are combined by the seller and sold as a single item (with certain exceptions) and food sold with eating utensils provided by the seller. The rate of the Food and Beverage Tax, which is set by the Indiana Legislature, is currently 1.0%. Twenty-four municipalities currently levy the Food and Beverage Tax. A list of counties that levy the Food and Beverage Tax and what the revenue is used for in each county is available in Appendix A. Howard County does not levy the Food and Beverage Tax.

An Innkeeper’s Tax, also known as a Bed Tax, is a sales tax on the price of hotel/motel rooms, and its rate varies by county. The rate is set by each county and cannot exceed 5.0% unless specified in the Indiana Code. The revenue associated with the Bed Tax is also specifically stated in the Indiana Code for each municipality that levies the tax. Currently, sixty-five counties have an Innkeeper’s Tax. Howard County’s Innkeeper’s Tax rate is 5%.

Budget Review

In 2006, the Indiana General Assembly passed a property tax circuit breaker bill, with the intent to give property tax relief to Hoosiers. Initially the bill called for capping the property tax in each Indiana County at two percent of a property’s assessed value. Any property tax paid which is greater than two percent of the assessed value will in turn be credited back to the tax payer. Indiana Code chapter 20.6 describes the property tax circuit breaker bill as the “Credit for Excessive Residential Property Taxes.” On the last day of the 2007 legislative session, the General Assembly passed a second circuit breaker bill, stating that the maximum amount of property tax that can be collected on all property (other than residential property) is three percent of the property’s assessed value. This phase of the bill will go into effect in 2009.

Howard County currently has two primary sources of funding: (1) a property tax, and (2) a local option income tax. Two smaller sources of funding are the County Economic Development Income Tax, and the Innkeeper Tax, which taxes hotel and motel sales in the County. The property tax rate in the City of Kokomo is one of the highest in the state, with the 2005 average net homestead economic development project bonds; (5) to fund certain redevelopment initiatives in Howard County; and (6) to make allocations of distributive shares to civil taxing units. Twenty-eight counties levy a COIT. Howard County’s COIT rate is 0.70%.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Supplies</th>
<th>Other Charges and Services</th>
<th>Capital Outlays</th>
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property tax rate being 2.314 percent. As a result, Kokomo will lose a notable amount of tax revenue and the city administration ordered a 10% reduction in the budget for all city departments beginning with the 2008 budget.

The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department responded to this request by not filling the funded position of Assistant Superintendent and by submitting a 2008 budget with no increases from 2007, despite rising fuel prices and other costs of operations. The same strategy is being used for the 2009 budget, which will essentially be the same as the 2008 budget. The Kokomo City Council agreed to accept this budget proposal in response to its 10% reduction directive because the parks and recreation department has a reputation for fiscal responsibility.

In reviewing data from the benchmark study done as part of the current planning effort, KPRD compares favorably to the average budget measures tracked as part of this study. The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department budget for 2007 was just over $3 million and was approximately 7% of the city's total operating budget, which is slightly above the benchmark cities' average. However, upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that the Kokomo budget may be insufficient for its operations. When looking at the percentage of the budget that is generated from fees and charges, Kokomo falls way below the average of 41.7%. Based on the 2007 figures, Kokomo only collects 15.2% of its budget from fees and charges. Clearly this is an area for improvement. Respondents to the community survey indicated they were willing to pay fees to cover about one third of the cost of a program. If a policy were put in place to reflect this willingness by the public, it could have a notable positive effect on the department's budget.

It is important to note that given the range of household incomes of Kokomo residents, a policy of increased fees should also be accompanied by a policy of reduced fee opportunities for families in lower income brackets. Many departments use guidelines like the federal school lunch program and create an application process so that qualified families can participate in programs for a reduced fee.

One area of concern for the parks and recreation department is the need for contingency funds to cover the costs of emergencies, natural disasters and mechanical failures. Some past examples of these occurrences include pumps failing at Kokomo Beach, lightning strikes and flooding. In all cases, the department had to bear the costs of those items by readjusting the existing budget and taking funding away from other areas of their operations. It would be helpful to the department if it had contingency funding built into its budget in a non-reverting fund, or if the city created a non-reverting contingency fund in its budget that could benefit all city departments through a formal request process.

Another area of concern for the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department budget is the need for capital funding. There are several capital improvement projects the department needs to complete in the next few years and there appears to be no formal process for requesting capital funds outside of the regular operations budget request process. Capital funding for the construction of Kokomo Beach was obtained through a city bond issue; and the city is in its final year of repayment of this bond in 2008.

Many municipalities maintain a five-year capital improvement plan (CIP), in which all departments submit their capital projects for a five-year period and go through a city-wide process of prioritization to keep the CIP updated on an annual basis, and then issue bonds on a regular basis to fund the CIP projects. The City of Kokomo should consider adding a CIP to their budget process.

The budget cycle for the City of Kokomo includes budget formulation for the upcoming fiscal year in July, followed by City Council finance committee meetings and public hearings in August and adoption in September.

**Alternative Funding Opportunities**
To account for the loss of revenue caused by the property tax cap, alternative funding opportunities were identified and are presented in this section. These options are to:

- Levy a food and beverage tax,
- Partner with Community Organizations

**Levy a Food and Beverage Tax**
As mentioned earlier, local governments are able to levy a one percent Food and Beverage Tax in Indiana counties, with the approval of the state legislature. Neither Howard County nor the City of Kokomo currently has a Food and Beverage Tax. Implementing one may enable the County and the City to bring in additional revenue, specifically for the parks and recreation departments. The tax burden
from a Food and Beverage Tax falls partially on visitors to the county, because when they visit, they eat and drink at retail food and beverage establishments.

According to the County Business Patterns Data from the U.S. Census, there were 177 food service and drinking establishments in Howard County in 2006. Similarly, in Delaware County, there were approximately 196 food service and drinking establishments in 2006. Delaware County levies a one percent Food and Beverage Tax, and in 2006 this tax brought in over $1.7 million in revenue. Revenue from a Food and Beverage Tax in Howard County should be similar to the amount raised in Delaware County, since the number of food and beverage retail establishments is similar.

In order for Howard County to implement a Food and Beverage Tax, there must be legislation introduced to the Indiana Legislature which amends the Food and Beverage Tax section of the Indiana Code to include Howard County as a county that is eligible to collect the tax. The legislation must state where the revenue generated by the tax will go. Ideally, the revenue would go directly to a County Parks and Recreation Fund for the purpose of funding parks and recreation operations in Kokomo and the county at a rate based on the population distribution. A selling point for this type of tax to fund parks and recreation is the link between community health and parks and recreation. Healthy eating and physical activity are frequently purported to be keys to a healthy lifestyle. The fact that consumers of foods and beverages in Howard County will contribute to the infrastructure that makes it possible for them to be physically active is a positive and healthy combination.

Amending existing state legislation is a lengthy process that involves many players at the state level, not to mention the support of the citizens of Howard County. Implementing a new Food and Beverage Tax could be controversial, because citizens of the county may feel that they are bearing the burden of the tax. However, with a successful marketing campaign and lobbying strategy, this may be the most feasible option for generating more revenue for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Partner with Community Organizations
The Howard County Park Foundation was started several years ago prior to the current city administration. The foundation has a county-wide set of priorities including interest in an extension of the Nickel Plate trail, which mostly traverses Howard County areas, rather than areas in the City of Kokomo, although a portion of the trail would run through the city. Nonetheless, partnerships on specific projects between the park foundation and the parks and recreation department could assist the department in accomplishing some capital projects or enhancing programs.

The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department has forged successful partnerships in the past with other community organizations such as the Urban Enterprise Association, Chrysler Foundation, the School Corporation, and Kiwanas. The most recent success involved the Chrysler Foundation and a national non-profit organization called Kaboom. Together with a host of volunteers, this partnership resulted in an entirely new playground being constructed in Waterworks Park in a single day. Since the playground's installation, the park has seen a significant increase in use. The playground was designed using a community involvement process and contains ADA accessible features.

A partnership opportunity that has good potential given the current administration's priorities and could benefit some of the parks and recreation department's projects is the Kokomo Downtown Association. Revitalizing the downtown is a high priority for the Mayor of Kokomo, and there are several parks and recreation facilities within the downtown area. This and other partnerships may prove to be crucial to accomplishing some of the capital improvement projects that the parks and recreation department needs to get done; to getting more paved trails on the ground; and to enhancing programming opportunities.
1. Berkley Park
2. Bicentennial Park
3. Bon Air Park
4. Crown Point Cemetery
5. Country Club Hills Park
6. Cutler Park
7. Darrough Chapel Park
8. Foster Park
9. Gateway Park
10. Haynes Museum
11. Highland Park
12. Huston Park
13. Jackson Morrow Park
14. Kautz Field
15. Kokomo Beach
16. Mehlig Park
17. Meridian Park
18. Miller-Highland Park
19. Mohr Park
20. Northwest Park
21. Reservoir Park Complex
22. Reservoir 213
23. Riley Park
24. Robbín’s Estate Park “A”
25. Robbín’s Estate Park “B”
26. Robbín’s Estate Park “C”
27. Senior Citizen’s Center
28. Somers Park
29. Studebaker Park
30. Triangle Parks
31. Walk of Excellence
32. Waterworks Park
33. Westdale Park
Recreation Programming

The Park and Recreation Department provides programs and facilities aimed at a variety of ages and user groups. These include Parks and Recreation Department sponsored activities held at multiple community parks and facilities. In addition, the Recreation division works with several agencies such as Kokomo Center Schools, Carver Center, P.A.L., Special Olympics, Church Groups, and the Kokomo Police Department to offer additional programming. These partnerships have resulted in a variety of additional program opportunities.

New, revised and additional programs and recreational activities, are offered every year in response to changing community needs and interests. Yearly program evaluations are used to allow the KPRD to better provide, budget, and place programs for maximum use.

Programming is concentrated in the summer months, although some winter sports leagues are offered at off-site facilities, such as schools. A recreation center would permit the department to add more winter programming opportunities as well as after-school programming for children. Additional programming for a wider audience, as well as single parent families is desirable, given the community’s demographics.

Current programming includes:

Concessions
The Kokomo Park and Recreation Department operates seasonal concession facilities located in five (5) parks, typically in conjunction with other programs (as noted).

- **Northwest Park** (Softball)
- **Foster Park** (Softball, Special Events)
- **Highland Park** (Main Playground, Special Events)
- **Aquatic Center** (Throughout the season)
- **Highland Stadium** (Baseball)

Concessions have traditionally been managed and operated by the KPRD. However, the department has recently used an outside vendor on a contract basis to operate some concession facilities. The department will evaluate this practice on a yearly basis and select the most efficient management and operation practice.

In the past few years, concession sales have produced more than $75,000 in revenues per season. However, this revenue can vary significantly. Weather has a significant impact on concession sales, with cool, damp conditions adversely impacting revenue. For example, Kokomo Beach 2007 concession revenues were $16,000 higher than those collected in 2008.

Fun Runs/Walks
The KPRD co-sponsors several Fun Runs/Walks each season in conjunction with other organizations such as I.U. Kokomo, the Kokomo Symphony, and Club Kokomo. Race programs are offered throughout the year, are typically 5K in distance and are family oriented. The run/walks take place at Highland, Foster and Jackson Morrow Parks. Although registration fees are charged for each event, the KPRD does not receive revenue from them. The non-profit group heading the event collects and retains all fees.

Stroller Strut
Participants and their children in strollers may participate in this free, one-hour exercise session held at Jackson Morrow park on a weekly basis. This program was added in 2008.

Kokomo Sprint Triathlon
The first Kokomo Sprint Triathlon was held in July, 2008 with 102 participants. The event included a 400-yard swim, a 10.5-mile bike, and a 3.4 mile run segment. The event is sponsored by the Parks and Recreation department and a registration fee is associated with the activity.

Baseball (Highland Park Baseball Stadium)
The Highland Park Stadium is a heavily used facility. Recreation activities include:

- (all) Kokomo High School home games
- (some) Kokomo High School Reserves games
- Post 6 American Legion
- Kokomo Bulls (14 and under)

In addition to these games, the Stadium is also used for the I.H.S.A.A. High School Sectionals and Regionals, and the American Legion Post 6 Sectional, Regional, State and Invitational Tournaments.

Men’s Winter Basketball League
Each season over 375 individuals participate in 160+ ball games in the KPRD City Basketball League, including Men’s 40 and Over teams. League play is held at Washington and McKinley schools. A registration fee, which includes a tournament, is associated with League play. The limited availability of gym facilities has capped the league at no more than 32 teams per season.
Recreation Programming (continued)

**Summer Softball Leagues**
The Kokomo Park and Recreation Department Summer Softball season averages (50) Men’s Slow Pitch teams, (25) Women’s Slow Pitch teams, (15) Co-ed teams for a total of 80+ league teams per season. In addition, outside leagues and tournaments are held at various park facilities. Combined, the League sponsored play and play by others, has put a large demand on every KPRD softball facility. Park use includes:

- **Northwest Park**
  - City League: Men’s Slow Pitch
  - City League: Women’s Slow Pitch
  - Men’s Church League(s)
  - City League: Co-ed Slow Pitch
  - 16 Invitational Tournaments

- **Foster Park**
  - Youth Tri County Fast Pitch League
  - City League: Men’s Fast Pitch
  - Men’s Modified Fast Pitch League
  - Kokomo High School
  - 4 Invitational Tournaments

**Additional tournaments:**
- A.S.A. State
- N.S.A. State
- Haynes Apperson (N.West / Foster)
- Men’s Church League

**Fall Softball Leagues**
An average of 40 Men’s Slow Pitch and 15 Women’s teams register for league play annually. Over 550 individuals participate in over 225 games using the five (5) lighted fields at Northwest Park. League play begins prior to Labor Day weekend and concludes the second week of October. League fees are charged.

**Tennis Programs**
Tennis Program activities are held at the Foster Park Tennis Complex and include:
- Tennis lessons (avg. 150+ participants)
- Tennis tournament (avg. 70 to 80 participants)
- Fees apply

**Recreation Adventure Program**
The Recreation Adventure Program is an important summer recreational program for Kokomo youth. More than 6,000 children participate each summer. The program operates daily for 6 weeks during the months of June and July.

Activities including crafts, sports, games, and special events are offered. The program is free, with the exception of a $1.00 charge per (optional) craft.

From year to year, facilities, activities, and locations are adjusted to best meet the needs of the participants. Currently the program is held at eight park locations, including Mohr Park which provides accessible activities. Each location has two full time supervisors.

**Jim “Moose” Carden Kid’s Fishing Clinic**
The Jim “Moose” Carden Kid’s Fishing Clinic is sponsored by the Kokomo Park Department, Kokomo Tribune and ZEBCO. This popular program typically fills on the first day of registrations and is limited to 130 participants.

The program is a five-session fishing clinic and tournament held each summer. Activities include informative classes, guest speakers, and presentations. The culmination of the two week program is the graduation tournament held at the Kokomo Reservoir Park complex. All clinic participants compete in a 3 hour tournament in fully equipped bass boats operated by competent captains. As well, each participant receives a fishing rod and reel as part of their $20.00 registration fee.

More than 200 volunteers work together to make the clinic one of the best outdoor oriented programs in the state. These volunteers set the standard in community involvement. As well, community sponsors offset a portion of the fishing clinic costs.

The program earned a 2008 Community Achievement Award from the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, and has been inducted into the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame.

**Kokomo Beach Aquatic Center**
The Aquatic Center offers several recreational and programming opportunities. A fee is associated with each activity.
- Swim lessons (infant through adult)
- Adult water walking
- Adult lap swimming
- Private park rental
- Birthday parties
Recreation Programming (continued)

Kirkendall Interpretive Center
Located in Jackson Morrow Park, the Kirkendall Interpretive Center is home to a number of programs including:
- Super Explorer’s Camp
  - Week-long nature oriented day camp
  - Children 5-7 and 8-12
  - Camp registration fee
- Hunter’s Education
- Haunted Trail Walk (free)

In addition, several seasonal, single day workshops and activities are held throughout the year, including: stargazing, pumpkin painting, bat habitat and campfire, and native Indiana owls and campfire. The building is open to the public during regular summer and winter hours.

Elwood Haynes Museum
The Elwood Haynes Museum is located on the edge of Highland Park. It is the former residence of Elwood Haynes, an inventor and important Kokomo historical figure. This facility now houses several vehicles which represents the beginning of the Automobile era. This facility contains personal items from the Haynes family to experimental pieces from the Haynes laboratory. Many pictures and a wide variety of items on display also explore the history of Kokomo, Indiana. The Museum is open to the public at no charge year round and has a meeting room available for community groups.

The Museum also plays host to several special events during the season such as car displays/shows, both antique and newer, and a Craftfest. The Elwood Haynes Museum is staffed by one full time Curator and one part time.

The KPRD Showmobile
The Showmobile stage is available for rental by community organizations and private groups for events located throughout Kokomo and Howard County. A wide variety of groups use the Showmobile, including: the United Way, Bona Vista, youth groups, businesses, community groups, unions and churches.

In the past, the Showmobile has been used at a variety of events such as the Haynes Apperson Festival, the Carver All Sports Festival, UAW picnics, and the National Day of Prayer.
ADA Accessibility Audit

According to a 2006 report by the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 50 million Americans report some level of disability. The report defines a person as having a disability if they have difficulty performing a specific activity such as seeing, hearing, bathing or doing light housework, or had a specified condition, such as Alzheimer’s disease or autism. Other report findings include:

- Four million children ages 6 to 14, or 11 percent, had a disability.
- The chances of disability rise with age: 72 percent of those age 80 and older had disabilities.
- About 7.9 million people age 15 and older had difficulty seeing the words and letters in ordinary newspaper print, including 1.8 million who were unable to see.
- Of those ages 15 to 64, 36 percent with a severe disability used a computer and 29 percent used the internet.

KPRD Accessibility Audit

During the preparation of this plan, an accessibility review of the KPRD operations and facilities was conducted. It is the goal of the department to offer barrier free facilities, programs and services that are inclusive of all users. These efforts currently include:

- A brochure listing the various park facilities and outlining accessible amenities, available as a hard copy or on the park website.
- Mainstreaming of individuals with disabilities in Park Department programs such as basketball leagues, the Nature Center, Kids Clinic, and the Haunted Trail.
- Summer playground programs that include children with mentally or physical disabilities.
- Accessible park amenities located throughout the system.
- Ongoing upgrades and changes to the park system to improve accessibility to current and new park amenities.
- Hiring practices in compliance with federal equal opportunity and non-discrimination guidelines and apply to all personnel. Contracts with sub-recipients include non-discrimination requirements for both employment and for the recreation services they offer.

Overall, the KPRD’s system offers a broad range of accessible facilities, although not every amenity in every park is fully accessible. (A full audit of each park is included in the individual park inventories). In some cases, accessible amenities have been provided, but accessible routes to the amenities could be improved. As well, throughout the park system, some accessible amenities, such as picnic tables and grills, are scarce.

In addition to reviewing the accessibility of physical amenities, the KPRD’s administrative and communication practices were reviewed.

- Currently, the park office processes registrations and payments for park department programs and rentals. Although the office is physically accessible, additional registration and payment options, such as registration via the internet, would be beneficial to those with certain disabilities.
- Information about accessible facilities is currently included on the park website. However, regular updates to this information as accessibility improvements are made would be helpful.
- Additional communication methods within the parks, such as signage in braille or audible signage is not currently available.

Recent Improvements

The park department dedicates a portion of its operating budget each year to improving accessibility of its amenities. In the past five years, improvements have included:

Darrough Chapel Park
- Added accessible swings

Foster Park
- Added accessible drinking fountain

Highland Park
- Installed new ADA compliant play area and adjacent accessible parking
- Added accessible drinking fountain and benches
- Added accessible shelter

Huston Park
- Installed new ADA compliant path
- Added accessible parking
ADA Accessibility Audit

Jackson Morrow Park
- Constructed multi-level accessible play equipment.
- Installed 1.3 mile asphalt path
- Added accessible drinking fountain at skatepark
- Added accessible parking

Meridian Park
- Installed new ADA compliant drinking fountain
- Added accessible swing

Public Input and Stakeholder Comments
Of those who completed the customer survey, 11% indicated that a member of their family had a disability. When asked what types of improvements were needed to serve people with disabilities in their family, responses included accessible parking and walkways, adaptive equipment and communication techniques such as sign language and braille.

Following the customer survey, a stakeholder meeting was conducted in order to gather more information and foster a better understanding of the concerns and needs of those with disabilities. This meeting was held on November 5, 2008 and was attended by eight members of the Kokomo Advisory Council for Disability Issues. The group offered the following comments and suggestions regarding the park system:

- Wood chips are not friendly for those in wheelchairs or those with mobility issues. Smooth surface paths, such as paved paths or recycled tire squares (for playgrounds) are preferred.
- People need to be able to easily get around. The Jackson Morrow paths are good because they provide plenty of room to pass people.
- Accessibility into the Jackson Morrow playground is difficult due to the raised lip around the edge. Add openings, perhaps at points where rivers would naturally occur. (The playground edge is the shape of the State of Indiana)
- Add signage for wayfinding.
- Include signage for those with vision loss including signs in braille, audio signs, and signs people can read at close proximity.
- Consider electric wheelchair rental at some of the parks as not everyone can afford their own electric wheelchair.

The meeting closed with a discussion as to how the KPRD would prioritize accessibility improvements to the park system, given that improvements to the system are an ongoing process. The preference of the group is that the department initially work to make larger regional and community parks fully accessible, and then improve accessibility at other park locations.

Accessibility Feedback Practices
For those with accessibility questions or needs, the KPRD and the City of Kokomo offer several avenues of communication.

- Citizen input is encouraged at the monthly Park Board public meetings which are held in an accessible facility.
- The City of Kokomo Director of Human Resources, Kathy Horton, serves as the designated ADA Coordinator for the City of Kokomo.
- The Mayor’s Advisory Council for Disability Issues is an advisory group for citizens with physical and/or mental disabilities. This group sets accessibility guidelines and makes recommendations for city programs.
- Individuals may take claims of discrimination to the Kokomo Human Relations Commission, located in City Hall.

Recommendations
The KPRD will continue its efforts to improve the accessibility of facilities and programs so that all users may enjoy the recreation opportunities offered. Although it is the department’s goal that all amenities meet ADA guidelines, the achievement of this goal is an ongoing process.

Based upon the goals and funding capabilities of the KPRD and public feedback, it is recommended that improvements continue to be planned throughout the park system, with priority given first to those in regional and community parks. Improving accessible routes to current amenities, as well as adding/ MODIFYING benches, picnic tables and grills to meet accessibility requirements are priorities, as is providing additional communication options for those with disabilities.

Specific recommendations are included in the Action Plan, with recommended time lines and cost estimates.
Other Community Recreation Facilities

In addition to the programs and amenities offered by the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department, there are a number of other recreational opportunities available to the community.

Private Recreation Facilities

YMCA
- Adult basketball, volleyball and soccer
- Aquatics and swim lessons
- Aerobics
- Senior programs
- Youth Programs
- Youth sports: Basketball, t-ball, volleyball, soccer

Kokomo Country Club
- 18 hole golf course, pool, private

Bowling
- Cedar Crest Lanes
- Don Lowry Lanes
- Eagles

Golf
- American Legion Golf Course
- Chippendale Golf Course
- Green Acres Golf Course
- Rice’s Golf Center
- Wildcat Creek Golf Course

Camps
- Camp Tycony
  YMCA sponsored summer day camp for children
- Izaak Walton League
  Summer camp for boy and girl scouts

Other
- IBN Saud Grotto Park
  - Rentable banquet and dining room
- Kokomo Putt Putt
  - (2) 18 hole courses
- UAW Local 292
  - Union members
- Kokomo Raceway Funpark
  - Go-carts
  - Putt-putt
  - Arcades

Church Recreation Facilities

Bible Baptist
- Kokomo Christian School

Chapel Hill Christian Church
- Basketball

Christian Heritage Church of God
- School
- Basketball

Corner Stone Christian Church
- Basketball

First Assembly of God
- Sports Ministry
- Basketball
- Golf League
- Bowling League

First Baptist
- Basketball

First Church of God
- Basketball

First Church of the Nazarene
- Basketball

First Congregational Christian Church
- Basketball

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer
- School
- Basketball

Macedonia Christian Church
- Basketball

Morningstar Church
- Basketball

New Life Assembly of God
- Gymnasium
- Rec Center

St. Joan of Arc Church and St. Patrick Church
- School
- Basketball

St. Luke’s United Methodist Church
- Basketball
Berkley Park

Location: 1203 N. Berkley Rd.
Size: 5.15 Acres
Type: Neighborhood
Condition: Fair - buildings and parking lot; Poor - baseball diamonds
Accessibility: Fair

General Description:
This 5.15 acre facility is located in the northwest edge of the City in a mixed residential and agricultural area. The park includes two regulation baseball diamonds with a combination concession stand and press box, and bleachers. Recently the home of the West Side Youth Baseball League, the ball diamonds and buildings were left in poor condition and the bleachers are showing signs of wear. However, no league currently uses this facility.

The parking, although ample, consists primarily of a gravel lot and would prove difficult for those with mobility impairments. Park neighbors have indicated that playground equipment would be a desirable addition to this park. Landscaping is minimal and no shelter from weather conditions is provided.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Concession Stand and Press Box
- Restrooms
- Parking (paved accessible parking, remainder is gravel)
- (2) Baseball Diamonds (lighted)
- Wooden Bleachers
- Bike Racks

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Renovate building
- Pave parking lot
- Add playground
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities.
  - Add paved pedestrian access to amenities
  - Add accessible seating options
- Add planting buffer along south and west edges
Bicentennial Arboretum

**Location:** 1904 South Webster Street  
**Size:** .72 Acres  
**Type:** Block  
**Condition:** Good  
**Accessibility:** Poor due to limited entry access and lack of parking

**General Description:**
Located directly across from the Elwood Haynes Museum and Highland Park, the Arboretum includes paved walking paths that wind through mature canopy trees low shrubbery and lawn areas. Groupings of wooden benches provide seating along the walk paths.

The west side of the park serves as the main entrance, and is accessed by stairs as the park sits several feet above street grade on its west and south sides. An alleyway borders the east side of the park, and is at the same elevation as the park, providing an opportunity for ADA accessibility. Available parking is on the street or at the adjacent Highland Park. Several mature trees have either died or are in poor condition.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Arboretum  
- Paved Walk Paths  
- Benches

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Replace failing trees and plant additional trees to maintain tree canopy and arboretum status  
- Add interpretive signage to identify trees  
- Add (accessible) drinking fountain  
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities.
  - Add ADA parking on east side of park (at alley)  
  - Add accessible seating options
**Bon Air Park**

**Location:** 2500 N. Purdum St.

**Size:** 3.21 Acres

**Type:** Neighborhood

**Condition:** Good - Grounds/playground
              Excellent - Rental Building

**Accessibility:** Excellent - Rental building
                  Fair - Other amenities

**General Description:**
This park, located in the north area of the community, is nestled in a residential neighborhood with homes that front the park on all sides. Bon Air School lies to the north.

Mature trees provide shade and are well-balanced by open play areas. The rental facility is frequently used and is in excellent condition. Vandalism is an on-going concern at this park. The tennis court has been a frequent target and is no longer in use. In addition the wood park shelter is showing signs of wear.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Rental Building (accessible) with restrooms and kitchen
- Parking (accessible)
- Basketball Court (lighted)
- Horseshoe Court
- Tennis Court (not in use)
- Grill
- Picnic Tables
- Picnic Shelter
- Playground with mulch surface
  - Multi-platform climbing structure with (2) slides
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Slide
  - Climber
- Drinking Fountain
- Recreation Adventure Program Site
- Benches

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Convert tennis court to skate park or other amenity
- Establish Neighborhood Watch Group
- Repair or replace picnic shelter
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities.
- Add accessible picnic tables and grill
County Club Hills Park

**Location:** 1805 St. Charles Court  
**Size:** 7 Acres  
**Type:** Neighborhood  
**Condition:** Good  
**Accessibility:** Rental facility/parking - excellent  
Other amenities - fair

**General Description:**  
Located in the southwest area of the city, this park was acquired by the Parks and Recreation Department in 1992. The well-maintained park is open in character and sits at the end of a cul-de-sac in a residential area. Amenities, including a rental building are clustered towards the east edge of the park with an easement for high-voltage power lines runs along the north edge. The basketball court surface is beginning to show wear.

A privately-owned wooded area with informal trails is accessible from the northeast corner of the park. The wooded area is significant in size and provides a nice complement to the existing park amenities. The wide expanse of grass offers opportunities for additional practice fields, and a looped path.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Enclosed Rental Building (accessible)  
  - Restrooms  
  - Tables and Chairs  
  - Mini Kitchen  
- Parking (accessible)  
- Baseball Diamond (back stop and grass field)  
- Basketball Court (full court)  
- Picnic Table  
- Playground with mulch surface  
  - Multi-platform climbing structure with (3) slides  
  - Tire swing

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities  
- Add paved, approximately 1-mile long, looped walk path around park perimeter with connections to adjacent neighborhoods  
- Acquire adjacent wooded area  
- Add native/no-mow areas to reduce mowing and buffer wooded area  
- Add practice soccer fields  
- Add accessible picnic table
Crown Point Cemetery
Location: 1101 E. Sycamore Street
Size: 65 Acres
Type: Cemetery
Condition: Excellent
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
Crown Point Cemetery is located on sixty-five acres on the near northside of the city. Crown Point Cemetery includes three cemeteries: Crown Point Cemetery, Pioneer Cemetery and Coleman Cemetery.

Once every two years, the Howard County Historical Society conducts a historic tour of the cemetery. As well, The Walk of Excellence Trail is routed through the site.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Historic site/tours
- Public Art
- Mausoleum
- Walk of Excellence Route

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Interpretive signage
- ADA accessible benches
- Arboretum
- Display plantings
**Cutler Park**

**Location:** 1600 E. Vaile Ave.

**Size:** 9.56 Acres

**Type:** Neighborhood

**Condition:** Good

**Accessibility:** Fair - accessible routes to amenities

**General Description:**
This neighborhood park located on the city’s east side, is primarily used for baseball league activities. During the baseball season, the park draws players from throughout the community and is heavily used. Playground equipment and picnic areas are popular amenities, particularly when the ball diamonds are in play. While the park has a number of mature trees, overall the landscape treatment is sparse.

The park sits in a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood and serves as a buffer between the two uses.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Restrooms
- Parking (accessible)
- (3) Baseball Diamonds (lighted)
- Concession Stand (accessible)
- Press Box
- Basketball Court (full court)
- Tennis Court
- Drinking fountain (design accessible, but not access)
- Picnic Tables
- Grills
- Playground with mulch surface
  - Multi-platform climbing structure with (3) slides
  - (2) Climbers
  - Swings (full size)
- Recreation Adventure Program Site

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Add shade and evergreen trees to provide additional shade and buffering
- Add looped walking path with neighborhood pedestrian connections
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities.
  - Add paved access to ball diamonds, concession stand and drinking fountain
  - Add accessible picnic tables and grill
Darrough Chapel Park
Location: 600 South Goyer Road
Size: 24.9 Acres
Type: Community
Condition: Excellent
Accessibility: Very Good

General Description:
Located on the east edge of the city, adjacent to an elementary school, this park provides a wide range of recreational opportunities including: softball, tennis, basketball, soccer, picnicking, a playground and open play areas. Through a lease agreement with the School Corporation, this facility also utilizes adjacent vacant school property. Paved walk paths provide ready access to the various park amenities.

The Veterans Memorial is located at the Northwest corner of the park and is a highly landscaped park amenity with ample seating opportunities. A wooded buffer along the park’s north and east perimeters provide enclosure and an attractive backdrop to the park facilities. Large open areas provide the opportunity for additional amenities or landscape treatments.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Parking (accessible)
- Restrooms (accessible)
- (2) Softball Diamonds
- Concession Stand
- Picnic Shelter
- Basketball Court (full court)
- (2) Tennis Courts
- Soccer Fields with Bleachers
- Youth Soccer League (through YMCA)
- Picnic Tables
- Grills
- Paved Walk Path
- Playground with sand surface
  - Multi-platform climbing structure with (2) slides (accessible)
  - Swings (full size)
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial (accessible)
- Storage Barn

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add accessible surface under play equipment
- Add natural, no mow prairie area
- Add paved walk path around park perimeter
- Add accessible picnic tables, grill and drinking fountain
Foster Park

Location: 721 W. Superior Street  
Size: 30 Acres  
Type: Community  
Condition: Fair - Sport facilities  
Poor - Stream bank;  
Good - All other  
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
This park is located just south of downtown along the Wildcat Creek and its floodplain. The seasonal flooding that occurs requires a large recovery effort on a regular basis and geese are a nuisance at this park.

The park sees extensive athletic recreation use including ball leagues, tennis and basketball. The park is also home to a senior citizen’s center. Paved walk paths with accessible benches wind through the wooded park setting. However, there are limited picnic opportunities and the play equipment is sparse for a park of this size and use patterns. The park is an important point of connectivity to other Park and Recreation amenities: a foot bridge connects it to the adjacent Kokomo Beach Aquatic center, and the park sits along the Walk of Excellence Trail. An events facility would provide opportunities for expanded community events.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Senior Citizen Center (accessible)
- Parking (accessible)
- Restrooms (2 facilities, one accessible)
- (2) Softball Diamonds (one lighted) and Leagues
- Concession Stand
- Gazebo (accessible)
- Fishing
- Paved Walk Paths with Accessible Benches
- Historic Site (army tank)
- Playground
  - Slide
  - Climber
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Rocker
- Basketball (2 full courts, lighted)
- (8) Tennis Courts (lighted) and Lessons
- (2) Water Fountains (one accessible)
- Recreation Adventure Program Site

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add Walk of Excellence trailhead amenities and signage
- Provide bike racks
- Add Community Events Facility
- Provide bank erosion control
- Replace/refurbish worn athletic facilities
- Maintain sustained goose control efforts
- Add accessible playground equipment
Gateway Park

Location: 601 East Ricketts Street
Size: 2 Acres
Type: Block
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Poor

General Description:
This 2 acre park located in the south central area of the community in a mixed residential and industrial area. The Kokomo Street Department facility is located along the east side of the park with an inactive train rail beyond. The park is primarily an open play field edged with trees and includes a basketball court and playground. The playground equipment has been recently refurbished and is in good condition. The basketball court surface is showing wear.

The park offers an opportunity as a trailhead should the inactive trail line be developed into a rails to trails project and would provide pedestrian/bike access from the adjacent neighborhoods to Foster Park and the Walk of Excellence.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Basketball Court (lighted, full court)
- Picnic Table
- Playground with mulch surface
  - Slide
  - Swings (full size)
  - Small Climber

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
- Refurbish basketball court surface
- Plant buffer along east boundary of park
- Add (accessible) picnic shelter, tables and grill
- Add pedestrian connection to neighborhoods to the south and west.
- Add trailhead to connect to potential future trail.
Haynes Museum
Location: 1915 S. Webster Street
Size: 3 Acres
Type: Museum
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
Located at the southeast corner of Highland Park, directly across from the Bicentennial Arboretum, the Haynes Museum is a tribute to Elwood Haynes and his motor inventions. Once his home, the museum now explores Haynes’ inventions and his contributions to Kokomo’s development and history. Many of Haynes’ possessions and inventions are housed within the museum.

The museum offers regular hours, as well as group tours that may be arranged upon request. Admission to the museum is free, although donations are accepted. The facility is under-utilized but expansion could boost its role as a Kokomo tourist attraction. The grounds are lightly wooded and could be used for picnics. The grounds offer ample room for a historically accurate garden, picnic shelter and benches. These could provide opportunities for special events and rentals.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Historic Site - Museum Building (accessible)
- Restrooms (accessible)
- Parking (accessible)
- Picnic Area
- Elwood Haynes Birthday Celebration
- Gingerbread Program

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add picnic shelter and benches (historically appropriate)
- Develop “Friends of Elwood Haynes Museum”
- Provide pedestrian connection from Highland Park to the museum
Highland Park

**Location:** 900 West Deffenbaugh Street  
**Size:** 83 Acres  
**Type:** Regional  
**Condition:**  
- Poor - Stream bank and foot bridges;  
- Fair - Shelters and sport facilities  
- Good - all other  
**Accessibility:** Good

**General Description:**
Located along Kokomo Creek southwest of the central city, this park is the city’s largest and most significant natural legacy. The quality, location and history of the park draws a wide cross section of visitors. This park is much loved by residents who value both its amenities and its history. There is concern that some of the older amenities, such as the well house and original shelters be refurbished and maintained. These distinctive, historic shelters offer an opportunity for creating a Highland Park identity, should elements of their design be used in future amenity construction.

Dominated by woodland, the upper and lower reaches of the park support both passive and active recreation activities. Sport facilities and play areas are located in the central areas of the park with woodland buffers at the perimeter. The Kokomo Creek winds through the park, providing both an important natural amenity and a recurring maintenance concern.

The park requires a high level of maintenance due to its natural amenities and aging structures. Seasonal flooding requires recovery maintenance in the low lying areas adjacent to Kokomo Creek with periodic major flooding requiring significant recovery efforts. Erosion is prevalent along the western edge of the park. This steep, wooded hillside supports a network of footpaths known as “The Indian Trail”, which adds to the erosion problem. Kokomo Creek has accumulated a build-up of silt, particularly at the southern reaches of the park. Dredging and cleaning is an ongoing process, as is stream erosion control. As well, the geese that are attracted by the creek are an annoyance.

The park includes historical artifacts (the Sycamore Stump, Old Ben and the Vermont Covered Bridge) which attract visitors. The administrative offices of the KPRD, a major pavilion, the Kokomo Visitors Center and a major baseball stadium are also part of the park. Structures within the park are well maintained, although showing signs of gradual deterioration. The existing major trees are also aging and require maintenance to maintain an acceptable level of safety for park users. New tree stock must be added if the park is to remain densely wooded. The current roadway system (Continued next page)
Highland Park - Continued

poses a serious traffic problem during times of peak demand, such as between ball games or during outdoor concerts. As well, there is some conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Existing Amenities/Programs:

- Administration Building/Offices (accessible)
- Rental Building (accessible)
- (3) Restrooms (accessible)
- Elwood Haynes Museum (see page 21)
- Performance Stage (accessible)
- Parking (accessible)
- (3) Baseball Diamond (lighted) and Associated Leagues
- Basketball Court (lighted)
- Horseshoe Courts (lighted) and League
- (4) Tennis Courts (lighted)
- Fishing
- Grills (one accessible)
- Hiking Trail
- Paved Walk Paths
- Historic Artifacts
- Natural Area
- Picnic Areas/Tables
- (5) Picnic Shelters (three accessible)
- (5) Playgrounds (one accessible)
  - Swings (full size, toddler and accessible)
  - Slides
  - Multi-platform climbers
  - Rockers
  - Climbers
- Summer Concerts
- Sledding
- Disc Golf Course
- Drinking Fountains (one accessible)
- Recreation Adventure Program Site

Potential Improvements/Programs:

- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - Improvements to shelters
  - Accessible picnic tables
  - Accessible trail route and paths
- Connection to City trail system
- Main playground redesign and new equipment
- Enhance east park entry
- Stadium lighting system
- Stream bank restoration (erosion and geese control)
- Renovation of stage and amphitheater
- New/renovated footbridges
- Add accessible fishing pier

- Renovate historic shelters
- Interpretive and wayfinding signage
- Tree planting program
- Add native plantings and naturalized areas
- Add drinking fountains
- Renovation of horseshoe courts
- Renovation of stone retaining wall
- Establish “Friends Group”
**Huston Park**

**Location:** 2800 North Webster Street  
**Size:** 15 Acres  
**Type:** Neighborhood  
**Condition:** Fair  
**Accessibility:** Fair - picnic and playground amenities  
Good - other facilities

**General Description:**
This neighborhood park is located at the extreme northern edge of the city and actually falls outside the city limits. Residential development is present to the south and east of the park, with agriculture activity to the north and west. The grounds include a significant number of mature shade trees. Picnicking and Babe Ruth League baseball are the most used attractions at this park. A picnic shelter is available for rental with additional open-air picnic areas also available. Paved walk paths provide accessibility to the shelter and other amenities, although accessibility to the shelter would be improved with the addition of ramps. New features have been recently added to the playground, however the surface material is sparse.

Due to its remote location, vandalism can be a concern at this park. As well, some facilities are showing the wear of heavy use. Vehicular circulation within the park is difficult during heavy use and additional parking is needed.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Restrooms (accessible)
- Parking (accessible)
- Baseball diamond (lighted)
- Concession stand
- Basketball court (full court)
- Paved walk paths (accessible)
- Natural area
- Picnic tables
- Picnic shelter
- Grills
- Playground
  - Climber
  - Slide
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - (3) Twizzlers

** Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
- Add ramps to shelters
- Accessible picnic tables and grill
- Renovate playground surface
- Add parking and improve traffic flow
- Woodland natural area
Jackson Morrow Park
Location: 4200 South Park Road
Size: 100 Acres      Type: Regional
Condition: Excellent
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
This 100 acre park includes roughly 30 acres of scenic woodland and 70 acres of open area and is the Community's newest park. Located at the south edge of the City, the Park provides park amenities in a growing area of the community. The size of the park facility, and the availability of parking lends itself to larger community events, or those that may require a large open area.

The Kirkendall Nature Center, a 5,280 square foot rustic lodge style outdoor interpretive center promotes outdoor education and is regularly used by the Parks Department, the Kokomo Center School Corporation, and other organizations. Nature trails traversing roughly one mile of wooded area and a paved walk path offer accessible pedestrian opportunities. An award-winning skate park, the City's first, is a popular park amenity.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Enclosed Nature Center (accessible)
  - Restrooms
  - Tables and Chairs
  - Mini Kitchen
  - Dioramas
  - Nature resources and activities
- Parking (accessible)
- Exterior Restrooms (accessible)
- (2) Picnic Shelters and Additional Picnic Tables
- Skate Park
- Paved 1+ Mile Walk Path (accessible)
- Nature Area (woods and designated wetland)
- Hiking Trails (some paved, some earth)
- Playground with mulch surface (accessible equipment)
  - Multi-platform Climbing Structure with (4)
    - Slides (accessible)
  - Swings (toddler and full size)
- Basketball Court
- Sled Hill
- Historic Site (graveyard and tombstones)
- Sand Volleyball Courts and League
- Super Explorers Camp (elementary children)
- Haunted Trail Walk (1-night event)
- Nature Scavenger Hunt (1-day event)
- Star Gazing
- Running Club events
- Drinking Fountain (accessible)
Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - Add accessible path to picnic shelters and playground
  - Add accessible picnic tables
- Add disc golf course
- Add outdoor concert/stage area
- Add prairie/native planting areas
- Add interpretive/educational graphics
- Add fitness circuit to path
- Tree planting program
- Add permanent running course
- Establish “Friends Group”
- Add lighting along the walk path
Kautz Field
Location: Corner of South Apperson Way and Vaile Ave.
Size: 10 Acres
Type: Neighborhood
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Fair

General Description:
This recently acquired park includes an open grass field and five tennis courts adjacent to the Wildcat Creek and Memorial Gym.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- (5) Tennis courts
- Open playing field
- Softball Diamond
- Connection to Walk of Excellence
- Natural Area

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Provide access to creek
- Add picnic shelter
- Add Walk of Excellence trailhead and amenities
- Add accessible benches
Kokomo Beach

Location: 802 West Park Avenue
Size: 10 Acres  Type: Regional
Condition: Excellent  Accessibility: Excellent

General Description:
In the summer of 2002, the Kokomo Beach Aquatic Center opened and became an instant community success. Located just south of downtown Kokomo, the park is adjacent to Foster Park, and connected to it by a footbridge. The nearby Walk of Excellence, offers pedestrian access to the park, which will become potentially more important as the trail is further developed.

Kokomo Beach offers visitors a wide and exciting variety of activities and recreational opportunities focused primarily around swimming and water play. A sand play area offers another play activity within the park. However, tracking of sand into the water features has been a concern.

Since its opening this well-maintained facility has seen heavy use during the summer months and attracts city, county and regional visitors. Typical waterpark trends call for a new attraction to be added approximately every five years to maintain excitement and use. To date no new attractions have been added to Kokomo Beach.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Locker and Restrooms
- Concessions
- Parking
- Swimming Pool (accessible)
- Water slides
- River float
- Spray activities
- (2) Picnic shelters (one outside perimeter)
- Picnic Area
- Swim Lessons

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Remove sand area
- Add new attraction
- Renovate plantings with natives
- Add programming
  - Movie night
  - Concert in the pool
  - Scuba lessons
Mehlig Park

Location: 1701 West Carter Street
Size: 3.13 Acres
Type: Neighborhood
Condition: Good - park amenities
           Poor - storage building
Accessibility: Poor

General Description:
This neighborhood park of 3.13 acres is located in the west area of the community. The park includes an open play field, playground equipment and the City’s first Dog Park. This amenity has proved to be hugely popular and has greatly increased the use of this park. A building located along the park’s east perimeter is currently used as a storage facility. It is in need of repair and could be utilized as a new maintenance facility if properly remodeled.

An abandoned rail corridor to the south of the park may offer trail connection possibilities in the future. The park could provide a trailhead for this trail as well as a future connection point to the Walk of Excellence.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Storage building
- Playground
  - (2) Slides
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Climber
- Dog Park
- Benches
- Basketball Court (full court)
- Picnic tables
- Grill
- (2) Drinking fountains (one accessible)
- Recreation Adventure Program Site

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add Dog Park amenities (dog playground)
- Add parking
- Add picnic shelter
- Add paved accessible route to Dog Park
- Add accessible picnic tables and grill
- Add accessible playground equipment
- Trailhead and connection to Walk of Excellence
- Potential Rails to Trails trailhead
- Tree plantings and buffer
- Building renovation
Meridian Park

Location: 500 E. Harrison Street
Size: 1.6 Acres
Type: Block
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
This park is located in a residential area in the central part of the city. The well-maintained park includes a picnic shelter, an ADA accessible playground, and a basketball court. Paved walk paths connect the amenities at the south end of the park. An open lawn area in the center of the park provides an unstructured play area and offers ample room for additional park amenities. The park was funded with Community Development Block Grant funds in 1987.

Although small in size, this park is one of the more accessible smaller parks and with a few additions could serve as the department’s model for accessibility for smaller parks.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Basketball Court (full court)
- Grill
- Picnic Shelter (accessible) and tables (not accessible)
- Playground (accessible)
  - Swings (full size, toddler and accessible)
  - Multi-platform climber with (2) slides
- Paved walk path with benches
- Drinking fountain (accessible)
- Baseball diamond (backstop only)
- Bike racks
- Recreation Adventure Program site

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Remove dead/failing trees
- Replace/add tree plantings
- Add accessible picnic tables and grill
Miller-Highland Park
Location: 1325 Kingston Rd.
Size: 6.13 Acres
Type: Community
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Fair

General Description:
This 6.13 acre park is located along the northern edge of Wildcat Creek in the west-central area of the city. The current focus of this park is Little League baseball activity, although the park's connection to the Walk of Excellence may change use patterns and spur the need for additional amenities. A good portion of the site is given to the two ball diamonds and associated parking. The site also includes woodlands, the creek, and a hillside.

This park requires a significant maintenance effort due to the heavy ball field use and to recover from periodic flooding problems. As well, maintenance issues resulting from an active goose population is also a concern. The park includes playground equipment which shows wear. There is the potential for water-oriented development in the park, given its proximity to the Wildcat Creek.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Restrooms
- Parking (asphalt - accessible, and gravel)
- (2) Baseball Diamond (lighted)
- Fishing
- Grill
- Paved walk path (accessible)
- Hiking trail
- Natural area
- Picnic area/tables
- Playground
  - Multi-platform climber with (4) slides
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Slide

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Tree and native plantings
  - No mow areas
  - Stream erosion control
- Ongoing goose prevention
- Replace/expand playground with (accessible) equipment
- Add (accessible) picnic shelter
- Expand paved parking lot
- Canoe launch
- Walk of Excellence trailhead and signage
- Repair access road
- Add accessible picnic tables and grills
Mohr Park

**Location:** 2302 Saratoga Avenue  
**Size:** 3 Acres  
**Type:** Neighborhood  
**Condition:** Good  
**Accessibility:** Poor

**General Description:**
This neighborhood park located in the southeast area of the community is primarily open land with amenities concentrated towards the front of the 8-acre site. The park sits in a mixed commercial and commercial use area.

Parking is available on the street, and a sidewalk is located along the front of the park. A tree row at the back (south boundary) of the park provides a buffer to the commercial development beyond. Little additional landscaping or shade is provided. The park is a site for the Recreation Adventure summer program, but is not heavily used. Vandalism can be a concern at this site. The large open area would easily accommodate another park amenity.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Picnic Shelter with 5 Picnic Tables
- Restroom and Drinking Fountain
- Storage Barn
- Basketball Court with Bleachers
- Playground with mulch surface
  - Multi-platform Climbing Structure with (2) Slides
  - Swings (toddler and full size)
  - (2) Climbers
  - (2) Slides
- Recreation Adventure Program Site

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - Provide accessible route to amenities
- Add shade trees within park and conifer buffer along east and west boundaries
- Add dog park
- Add sidewalk along street
Northwest Park
Location: 1600 W. Judson Rd.
Size: 32 Acres
Type: Community
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Fair to Good

General Description:
Located in the northwest area of the city, the park serves primarily as an athletic complex. Five softball diamonds and the ample parking needed for league and tournament play dominate the majority of this park. During heavy summer use periods, the KPRD staff finds it challenging to keep the in-field turf in good condition. Picnic and playground amenities can be found in the wooded area located at the northwest corner. A shade tree planting program to replace and supplement failing trees is needed to maintain the wooded feel and provide additional shade. Paved walk paths link some amenities, but additional paths would provide greater accessibility and add walking opportunities. Ice skating has been attempted by flooding a low spot in the park without success. Vandalism can be a concern within the park. The park shelters and benches are in need of refurbishing and/or replacement.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- (2) Restrooms (accessible)
- Concessions (accessible)
- Parking (accessible)
- Basketball Court (full court, lighted)
- (5) Softball diamonds (lighted)
- (1) Tennis court (lighted)
- Grills
- Paved walk (limited)
- Picnic area/tables
- (2) Picnic Shelters (accessible)
- Pole Barn
- Playground
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Multi-activity climber
  - Tot lot
  - Slides
  - Rockers
- Recreation Adventure Program site

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add accessible playground amenities
- Add accessible tables and grill
- Add ball diamond irrigation
- Tree planting program
- Walking/fitness circuit path around park (accessible)
- Replace benches
Reservoir 213 Park
Location: Indiana-American Water Co. Reservoir
Size: 30 Acres
Type: Regional
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Good

General Description:
The City of Kokomo leases this park site from Indiana American Water Company which owns and operates the reservoir. The site provides fishing access, picnic amenities, a nature study and a canoe launch.

Due to its distance from Kokomo, the KPRD has subcontracted with the Liberty Township Trustee to maintain the park and the City of Greentown to maintain the nature study.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Fishing
- Natural Area
- Canoe Launch
- Shelter and tables

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Fishing Pier
- Native/no mow areas
Reservoir 500 Park Complex

Location: Indiana-American Water Co. Reservoir
Size: 40 Acres
Type: Regional
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Fair - overall

Existing Shelter

General Description:
The City of Kokomo leases this park site from Indiana American Water Company which owns and operates the reservoir. The complex is pleasantly situated along the bank of the reservoir and provides picnic spots, hiking trails, a playground and fishing access. Un-mowed planting areas enhance the natural setting and provide wildlife observation opportunities. Paved walk paths are minimal and provide limited connection between and to amenities. An existing nature trail offers hiking opportunities. However, the trail is sometimes muddy and is in need of surface improvements.

In response to a community led effort to create a memorial park at the main reservoir park, a conceptual design for the Celebration of Life Park has been prepared to assist with private fundraising efforts for the proposed improvements.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Restrooms (portable)
- Parking (accessible)
- Fishing (accessible)
- Grill
- Hiking Trail
- Natural Area
- Picnic Area
- (2) Picnic Shelters
- Playground
- Multi-activity climber with slide
- Swings (full size and toddler)
- Fishing clinic tournament

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - Provide paths to amenities
- Add additional fishing piers
- Add wetland boardwalk
- Improve nature trail surface
- Interpretive signage
- Add disc golf course
- Add boat ramp
- Tree plantings
- Celebration of Life Memorial Park
Riley Park
Location: 700 East Spraker
Size: 1.6 Acres
Type: Block
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Fair

General Description:
Riley Park is a 1.6 acre neighborhood park located on the north side of the city. The park has a newer playground system, large swing set, full size basketball court, large lawn area, gazebo, baseball back stop for pickup games and ample parking.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Gazebo
- Playground
  - Multi-activity climber with slide
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
- Parking (accessible)
- Baseball Backstop
- Basketball Court

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - ADA accessible walk to gazebo
- Renovate infield/backstop
- Add tree plantings
- Add native/no mow areas
Robbin’s “A”

Location: Corner of Columbus & Wildwood
Size: 1.4 Acres
Type: Block
Condition: Fair
Accessibility: Poor

General Description:
Three separate pocket parks located in a residential area on the northeast side of Kokomo are part of the Robbin’s Park group. The parks range in size from 1.4 to .25 acres and consist of open lawn areas with basic playground amenities. Each park is surrounded by residential back yards, and are accessed via a pedestrian walk that branches off of the neighborhoods main sidewalk.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Basketball Court
- Playground
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Slide

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Replace/repair bench
- Repair playground
- Add shade trees
Robbin’s “B”
Location: Corner of Berkley & Madison
Size: .5 Acres
Type: Block
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Poor

General Description:
Three separate pocket parks located in a residential area on the northeast side of Kokomo are part of the Robbin’s Park group. The parks range in size from 1.4 to .25 acres and consist of open lawn areas with basic playground amenities. Each park is surrounded by residential back yards, and are accessed via a pedestrian walk that branches off of the neighborhoods main sidewalk.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Basketball Court
- Playground
  - Swings (full size and toddler)

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Add shade trees
Robbin’s “C”
**Location:** Corner of Lynwood & Witherspoon
**Size:** 2 Acres
**Type:** Block
**Condition:** Fair
**Accessibility:** Poor

**General Description:**
Three separate pocket parks located in a residential area on the northeast side of Kokomo are part of the Robbin’s Park group. The parks range in size from 1.4 to .25 acres and consist of open lawn areas with basic playground amenities. Each park is surrounded by residential back yards, and are accessed via a pedestrian walk that branches off of the neighborhoods main sidewalk.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Playground
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Monkey Bars

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Refurbish playground equipment
- Add shade trees
Somers Park
Location: 1000 E. Jefferson St.
Size: 4.23 Acres
Type: Neighborhood
Condition: Good
Accessibility: Poor

General Description:
This park is located in the northeast area of the city in a residential area. The park site is depressed from the street grade, providing a sled hill and wooded ridge areas for picnicking. However, the site grade and lack of parking or walk paths currently prevent any ADA accessibility to the site.

Open flat areas in the central portion of the park provide ample room for playgrounds, picnic shelters and non-structured play activities. Vandalism can be a concern at this park.

Existing Amenities/Programs:
- Parking
- Basketball Court
- Softball diamond (backstop only)
- Picnic shelter
- Playground
  - (2) Multi-activity climbers with slides
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
- Sledding
- Grill

Potential Improvements/Programs:
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility to amenities
  - Add accessible route
**Studebaker Park**

**Location:** 1030 N. Purdum St.

**Size:** 10 Acres

**Type:** Neighborhood

**Condition:** Fair - shelter and playground  
Good - all other

**Accessibility:** Poor

**General Description:**
This neighborhood park is located in a residential area on the northeast side of the city. The Carver Community Center is adjacent to the park's east edge.

Park amenities are primarily sports oriented, although picnic and playground opportunities are also available. The park is sparsely landscaped with small tree groves at the south and north edges. Vandalism and littering are concerns and the park requires a high level of maintenance and replacement of damaged facilities. A rail line to the south of the park may offer future opportunities for a trail connection.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Restrooms (not in use due to vandalism)
- Parking (accessible)
- Basketball Court (full court)
- Tennis Court (lighted, not in use to vandalism)
- Softball diamond
- Grill
- Paved sidewalk along portion of park perimeter
- Picnic area
- Playground
  - Multi-activity climber with slide
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - (2) Rockers
  - (3) Independent climbers
  - (2) Slides

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Establish “Friends Group”
- Repair/replace playground with vandal resistant system
- Add sports oriented amenities
  - Additional basketball court
- Tree plantings
Walk of Excellence

**Location:** Through the downtown core  
**Length:** 3.4 Miles  
**Type:** Trail  
**Condition:** Good  
**Accessibility:** Good

**General Description:**
Dedicated on October 27, 2008, The Walk of Excellence is a 3.4 mile paved urban trail that crosses through downtown Kokomo, connecting four parks, the Kokomo Beach Aquatic Center, as well as other governmental, school, historical and cultural amenities.

The general character of the greenway is envisioned to be a natural recreation and interpretive experience within an urban setting. New masses of tree plantings and a remediated creek bank, well-defined connections to parks and other points of interest along the way, and ADA accessibility were planned in conjunction with the trail.

The trail lacks an identification system, wayfinding and other signage and amenities such as bike racks, that would enhance its use.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Biking
- Walking
- Rollerblading
- Cross Country Skiing

**Potential Improvements:**
- Establish “Friends Group”
- Add trailhead amenities at key connection points
- Implement trail identity and wayfinding signage
- Add interpretive/educational signage
- Develop additional trail length and connections to other amenities and/or trails.
Waterworks Park

**Location:** 1227 E. Carter St.
**Size:** 5 Acres
**Type:** Neighborhood
**Condition:** Good
**Accessibility:** Good

**General Description:**
Located in the east central part of the city, adjacent to Wildcat Creek, this park provides recreation activities for the adjacent neighborhood, as well as access to the Wildcat Creek, which attracts broader community use. The park also serves as a trailhead for the Walk of Excellence.

A paved walk path meanders through the site, connecting the park amenities, including a new playground that was added in Fall 2008. The playground was constructed in a one day community event with the assistance of more than 250 volunteers. Since that time the park has seen a tremendous increase in use.

The two accessible picnic shelters are showing signs of wear. The Wildcat Creek and associated woodlands run along the south perimeter of the park. The remainder of the park consists of open areas with scattered shade trees. Seasonal flooding from the creek is also a maintenance concern.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Parking (accessible)
- (2) Basketball courts
- Fishing
- Boat launch
- Grill
- Drinking fountain
- Natural area
- Picnic area/tables
- (2) Picnic shelters (accessible)
- Playground
  - Multi-activity climbers with slides
  - Swings
  - Tether ball

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Renovate/replace shelters
- Comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility
  - ADA compliant drinking fountain
  - Accessible picnic tables
- Replace invasive understory plantings with native plants
- Add Interpretive signage
- Incorporate trail head amenities for Walk of Excellence
- Add bike racks
- Add portable restrooms
**Westdale Park**

**Location:** 2000 Westdale Court  
**Size:** 3.8 Acres  
**Type:** Neighborhood  
**Condition:** Excellent  
**Accessibility:** Poor

**General Description:**
Westdale Park is tucked away at the end of a cul-de-sac in the west central area of the city. The park site is leased from the county. A combination of woodland and open areas provides an ideal park setting, however the park is not frequently used and offers limited built amenities. The park has some drainage issues.

**Existing Amenities/Programs:**
- Natural area
- Hiking trail
- Picnic area
- Playground
  - Multi-activity climber with (3) slides
  - Swings (full size and toddler)
  - Small climber
  - Slide

**Potential Improvements/Programs:**
- Native woodland plantings
- Native raingarden
- Interpretive/educational signage
- Grill
- Accessible walking path
Summary Findings of Inventory and Public Input

Emerging Trends
In reviewing and comparing the findings from the inventory and public input stages, a set of common themes emerged. The following are the most prevalent themes and the components that fall under each (please note that some components fall under more than one theme):

Renovation and Capital Improvements
- Beautification
- Trails and Walks (improved and additional)
- Bathroom (improved and additional)
- Playground Equipment (improved and additional)
- Large Pavilion
- Kokomo Beach Attraction
- Continental Steel Site

Recreation and Programming Activities
- Greater variety of programs
- Fee Structure and Cost
- Communication of Program Opportunities

Access and Connectivity
- Trails and Walks (improved and additional)
- Contiguous Trail System
- Connectivity to Other Amenities/Neighborhoods
- Connection of Park Entrances to Roads (improved)
- Highland Park Road Configuration
- ADA Accessibility of Facilities and Programs

Maintenance and Safety
- Landscape and Mowing
- Playground Equipment
- Bathrooms
- Animal Droppings
- Undesirable Activities
- Vandalism (clean-up)

Limited Resources
- Identify Other Revenue Sources
- Create Partnerships
- Volunteers

Communication/Marketing
- Communication of Program Opportunities
- Perception of Parks, Programs and Fees
2008 Master Plan Goals and Objectives

The following Goals and Objectives for Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department provide a framework for the recommended improvements to the park system contained in the Action Plan. As well, they serve as the Goals and Objectives of the Park Board of Directors for the next five years.

These Goals and Objectives:
- Reflect the department’s mission and philosophy.
- Respond to the expressed needs and desires of the community.
- Respond to the anticipated constraints and opportunities of the next five years.

**Goal #1**
Provide a park system with facilities and activities serving all age groups, ability levels and interests.

Objective 1-1
Establish new level of service standards to better reflect current recreation trends and needs.

Objective 1-2
Develop programs to serve a broader range of age groups.

Objective 1-3
Provide new or additional amenities to meet demand for specific recreation opportunities.

Objective 1-4
Provide universally accessible facilities, programs and communications.

Objective 1-5
Provide inexpensive recreation opportunities for families and individuals.

**Goal #2**
Revitalize and maintain existing park facilities while minimizing maintenance costs.

Objective 2-1
Establish tiered landscape and maintenance hierarchy for each park amenity.

Objective 2-2
Update and refurbish playground equipment, picnic shelters, pavilions, and other assets as needed.

Objective 2-3
Update existing restrooms and add additional temporary and/or permanent facilities to accommodate high-use patterns.

Objective 2-4
Add naturally landscaped park areas, and landscape features that are low maintenance and reduce mowing needs.

Objective 2-5
Provide sustained goose control measures.

**Goal #3**
Secure public involvement and volunteer efforts.

Objective 3-1
Establish “Friends of Kokomo Parks” group, and/or “Friends” groups for individual parks.

Objective 3-2
Establish a volunteer coordinator and develop volunteer opportunities.

Objective 3-3
Establish neighborhood watch groups in partnership with the Kokomo Police Department.

**Goal #4**
Provide additional long-term and consistent funding for KPRD amenities and programs.

Objective 4-1
Continue to develop a tiered rate structure for Kokomo residents and non-residents, and low-income users.

Objective 4-2
Continue to develop sponsorship opportunities for KPRD programs and events.

Objective 4-3
Establish a cost-recovery policy to be used for setting program fees and charges.

Objective 4-4
Systematically re-evaluate all program fees and charges and update them based on market rates and cost recovery policies.
Goal #5
Provide an interconnected park system, with safe access to and within parks.

Objective 5-1
Link parks, neighborhoods and schools with linear green space or access routes for cyclist and pedestrian use.

Objective 5-2
Establish water trails with access points

Objective 5-3
Separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic within parks

Objective 5-4
Improve connection, visibility and access of park entrances

Goal #6
Effectively market and communicate park amenities and programs

Objective 6-1
Increase web-based communication and content.

Objective 6-2
Provide additional payment and registration options.

Objective 6-3
Establish park and trail identity standards.

Objective 6-4
Provide communication methods to reach those with disabilities.

Goal #7
Develop new park facilities to meet levels of service standards and/or specific recreation needs within the community.

Objective 7-1
Continue to assess the opportunities and feasibility of developing the Continental Steel Site.

Objective 7-2
Establish trail corridor, opportunities and priorities and continue to develop the current trail system.

Objective 7-3
Pursue acquisition of a Recreation Center in conjunction with the Kokomo School District restructuring, grants and other opportunities.
Priority Action Plan Recommendations

The following recommendations are arranged by type or park site and represent the proposed system improvements and developments for the next five years. In some cases, such as those recommendations found under the heading “System Wide Improvements and Maintenance” the improvements apply to more than one park location. The following Priority Action Plan Matrix, which is sorted by year, assigns priority levels, estimated costs and potential funding sources to each recommendation.

System Wide Improvements and Maintenance
1. Establish tiered maintenance and landscape program
2. Continue tree planting and replacement program
3. Add native, no-mow planting areas and buffers
4. Establish Volunteer Coordinator and Friends of KPRD volunteer network
5. Continue revolving playground equipment program
6. Add accessible picnic tables and grills to all parks with picnic amenities
7. Continue stream bank restoration and native plantings for erosion and goose control
8. Add ADA accessible routes to park amenities
9. Develop Community Event Facility
10. Add playground equipment

Haynes Museum:
23. Add historically accurate garden, shelter and benches
24. Develop “Friends of the Haynes Museum” group

Highland Park:
25. Main playground redesign and new equipment
26. Replace stadium lighting system
27. Renovation of stage and amphitheater
28. Improve accessibility of amphitheater seating
29. Add accessible fishing pier
30. Renovate historic shelters
31. Add Interpretive and wayfinding signage
32. Expand/refurbish restroom facilities
33. Renovation of horseshoe courts
34. Renovation of stone retaining wall
35. Add paved pedestrian paths
36. Landscape beautification

Huston Park:
37. Add ramps at shelters
38. Renovate playground surface

Jackson Morrow Park:
39. Add interpretive signage

Kautz Field:
40. Add Walk of Excellence trailhead
41. Add (accessible) benches and bike racks
42. Add (accessible) picnic shelter
43. Add (accessible) drinking fountain

Kokomo Beach:
44. Replace sand attraction with new attraction

Mehlig Park:
45. Add dog park playground components
46. Add parking

Miller-Highland Park:
47. Add canoe launch
48. Pave parking lot
49. Expand/replace playground

Mohr Park:
50. Add sidewalk along street

Northwest Park:
51. Add accessible playground components
Reservoir Park 500:
52. Add Disc Golf course
53. Add interpretive signage
54. Improve nature trail surface

Studebaker Park:
55. Establish neighborhood watch group

Waterworks Park:
56. Renovate/replace shelters
57. Add accessible drinking fountain

Westdale Park:
58. Add parking
59. Add looped walk path

Park and Trail Development:
60. Assess feasibility and need of developing amenities at Continental Steel site.
61. Pursue development of a Recreation Center
62. Continue connectivity of Walk of Excellence
63. Add Walk of Excellence trailhead identity, signage and amenities, including bike racks, at Foster; Waterworks, and Miller-Highland Parks
64. Develop trail from Gateway Park to Foster Park
65. Develop trail connection from Mehlig Park to Walk of Excellence
66. Develop Greenway with trailhead at Kautz Park.

Communications and Marketing:
67. Add on-line registration for select programs
68. Add payment options
69. Include Recreation Guide on website
70. Develop map of existing and planned trails
71. Update KPRD map and amenity brochure
72. Make regular updates to KPRD website

Funding:
73. Continue to develop sponsorship opportunities for programs and events
74. Levy a Food and Beverage Tax
75. Establish a Cost Recovery Policy
76. Evaluate fee structure and update
77. Expand tiered fee program
78. Expand reduced fee program for low income users

Programming
79. Add Women’s Winter Basketball League
80. Expand Kokomo Beach Riverwalk program
81. Extend Kokomo Beach hours for special events
82. Add programs geared towards single parents and families
## Priority Action Plan Matrix: 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Site/Facility Department</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Estimate Cost</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Action Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Establish Tiered Maintenance and Landscape Program</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<td>Continue Tree Planting and Replacement Program</td>
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<td>Establish Volunteer Coordinator and Network Administration</td>
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<td>Operating Budget</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Continue Revolving Playground Equipment Program Various Park Sites</td>
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<td>Operating Budget</td>
<td>2009 - 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Add Accessible Picnic Tables and Grills Various Park Sites</td>
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<td>2009 - 2013</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Add ADA Accessible Routes to Amenities Various Park Sites</td>
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<td>Grants Operating Budget</td>
<td>2009 - 2013</td>
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<td>Renovate Current Seating to be Accessible Bicentennial Park</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Replace/Renovate Picnic Shelter Bon Air Park</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Improve Accessibility of Amphitheater Seating Highland Park</td>
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<td>Add ramps at shelters Huston Park</td>
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<td>Renovate Playground Surface Huston Park</td>
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<td>Add Interpretive Signage Jackson Morrow Park</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Replace Sand Attraction with New Attraction Kokomo Beach</td>
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<td>Add Accessible Drinking Fountain Waterworks Park</td>
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<td>Add Walk of Excellence Trailhead Signage and Amenities Including Bike Racks Foster, Waterworks, and Miller-Highland Parks</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Continue Connectivity of Walk of Excellence Trail</td>
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<td>Develop Trail Connection from Mehlig Park to Walk of Excellence Trail</td>
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<td>Add Payment Options Administration</td>
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<td>Include Recreation Guide on Website Administration</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Update KPRD Map and Amenity Brochure Administration</td>
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<td>Continue to Develop Sponsorship Opportunities for Programs and Events Administration</td>
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<td>Add Women's Winter Basketball League Administration</td>
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<td>Expand Kokomo Beach Riverwalk Program Administration</td>
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<td>Extend Kokomo Beach Hours for Special Events Administration</td>
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<td>Priority</td>
<td>Estimate Cost</td>
<td>Funding Source</td>
<td>Action Year</td>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Continue Tree Planting and Replacement Program</td>
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<td>Continue Revolving Playground Equipment Program</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Add Stream Bank Erosion and Plantings to Control Erosion and Geese</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Establish Neighborhood Watch Group</td>
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<td>Install Accessible Playground Surface</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Develop &quot;Friends of the Haynes Museum&quot;</td>
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<td>Add Interpretive and Wayfinding Signage</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Improve Nature Trail Surface</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Establish Neighborhood Watch Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Continue Connectivity of Walk of Excellence</td>
<td>Trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Develop Trail Connection from Mehlig Park to Walk of Excellence</td>
<td>Trail</td>
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<td>Grants Operating Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Add On-Line Registration for Select Programs</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Develop Map of Existing and Planned Trails</td>
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<td>Operating Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Make Regular Updates to KPRD Website</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Continue to Develop Sponsorship Opportunities for Programs and Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Levy a Food and Beverage Tax</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Expand Tiered Fee Program</td>
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<td>Operating Budget</td>
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## Priority Action Plan Matrix: 2013

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<td>5. Add ADA Accessible Routes to Amenities</td>
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<td>6. Install Interpretive Signage</td>
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<td>Trail</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>20. Develop WSRY Greenway with Trailhead at Kautz Park</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</table>
Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

June 17, 2008 Public Meeting: Press Release

Media Announcement

Master Plan Public Meeting

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Person releasing information: John Martino
Follow up contact person: John Martino, Parks & Recreation Superintendent
Follow up contact phone: (765) 456-7275
Date of release: June 12, 2008

The City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is currently in the process of updating its five-year Master Plan. This history of long range planning has been instrumental in the growth of programs, facilities and services that have been provided to all citizens of Kokomo and surrounding communities.

These master plans have been a blueprint for success as well as a viable tool in attaining specific goals set forth by the department and the community.

The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is seeking your input as we prepare to complete this long range planning tool. A public meeting will be held Tuesday, June 17 beginning at 6 PM. The meeting will take place at Rogers Pavilion located in Highland Park.

For additional details, feel free to contact the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department at (765) 456-PARK.
Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

June 17, 2008 Public Meeting

Public gets say on parks’ future

By SCOTT SMITH
Tribune staff writer

June 10, 2008 11:06 pm

— What a difference five years can make in the life of a city parks system.
A little over five years ago, Jackson Morrow Park was a lovely place to go for someone seeking solitude, a 140-acre meadow with two picnic shelters.
Then the city built a walk path, basketball courts, a roadway, parking lots, volleyball courts and a skate park. Now the park has visitors from sunup to sundown.
The transformation of Jackson Morrow began with a plan, laid out long before most of the amenities were added.
Now the Kokomo Parks Department is ready to embark on the next round of long-term planning, beginning with a public meeting 6 p.m. Tuesday at Rodgers Pavilion in Highland Park.
It will be the first opportunity for the public to weigh in on the parks’ next master plan, the document which will guide park development for at least the next five years.
“The more community input we have, the more accurate and the more ‘in tune’ with the community that master plan will be,” Parks Superintendent John Martino said Tuesday.
Some of the ideas sure to be discussed as the master planning process starts will be:
• Walk paths through Kokomo
• The redevelopment of the Continental Steel Main Plant Site
• Further amenities at the Kokomo Beach aquatic center
• Lighting and other possibilities for Jackson Morrow Park
• Plans for maintenance and upgrades at each city park
• The future of the Highland Park renovation plan laid out in 2007
In addition to a series of public meetings, the Kokomo Board of Parks Commissioners will also seek input through a public survey, mailed to city residents within the next two or three weeks.
Once the surveys go out to the public, the city will also have an online survey set up through the city Web site, www.cityofkokomo.org.
Parks board president Ron Gilman said he’s excited about creating a “dream wish list” of possible parks improvements, but also wants the planning process to serve a practical purpose.
“I hate to say the word ‘frugal’ here, but we have to look at the money situation. We have to look at what we currently have … can we maintain it?” Gilman said. “Over the next few years, our tax situation is going to get even tougher.”
The master plan will be compiled by Rundell Ernstberger & Associates, a Muncie consulting firm, in conjunction with experts from the Parks Management program at Indiana University. City officials have capped the cost of the plan, the first done since former Mayor Jim Trobaugh’s administration, at $20,000.
It will serve as a guide to future parks development, and establish priorities.
Gilman said he will take an especially close look at parks usage.
“What areas get the biggest usage? For instance, how big of an attraction is Kokomo Beach? Would adding something like a body flume draw more people? And on the other side, some of our parks may be so underutilized we’ll have to look at scaling them back.”
Scott Smith may be reached at (765) 454-8569 or via e-mail at scott.smith@kokomotribune.com

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Meeting on parks tonight

From STAFF REPORTS

June 16, 2008 10:43 pm

— The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is ready to embark on the next round of long-term planning, beginning with a public meeting 6 p.m. tonight at Rodgers Pavilion in Highland Park.

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“The more community input we have, the more accurate and the more ‘in tune’ with the community that master plan will be,” Parks Superintendent John Martino said.

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• Walk paths through Kokomo
• The redevelopment of the Continental Steel Main Plant site.
• Further amenities at the Kokomo Beach aquatic center.
• Lighting and other possibilities for Jackson Morrow Park.
• Plans for maintenance and upgrades at each city park.
• The future of the Highland Park renovation plan laid out in 2007.

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Residents have say on parks

By KEN de la BASTIDE
Tribune staff writer

June 17, 2008 11:29 pm

— Even if you have never used a city park, the Kokomo Parks & Recreation Department wants to hear from you. It’s in the process of updating the five-year master plan and is looking for public input on how the parks can be improved.

Tuesday, the first of two public meetings was held to garner that input. More than 50 turned out at the meeting at Highland Park.

Residents are being asked to fill out a survey — by July 31 — at www.cityofkokomo.org. Surveys will also be distributed at several parks.

The parks department is working with Rundell Ernstberger Associates and the Eppley Institute for Parks to develop the new master plan.

“Time is a rare commodity, and you made the time to be here,” parks director John Martino told those who attended the meeting. “You will have a voice in the direction of the parks department.”

The master plan will serve as a blueprint for future developments and improvements. Martino said, adding it will also help obtain grant funding.

“This is your opportunity to voice your hopes and dreams for the parks,” said Cheryl Chalfont, with Rundell. “There is nothing too big or too little to talk about.”

Residents were asked to write comments about each of the city’s 30 existing parks. They were also asked to comment on the proposed park at the Continental Steel site.

“We know it is of community interest,” Chalfont said of the site.

Concerns were voiced about the amount of dog and geese droppings in the parks.

“It is not just a Kokomo problem,” Martino said. “We are working on it.”

 Wes Evans, director of the City of Firsts Soap Box Derby, said the group would like to see a permanent facility for the annual event constructed at either the Continental Steel site or the Jackson Morrow Park.

“Right now, we use Main Street,” Evans said. “We can only use it once a year and have to deal with the residents. If we had a permanent site, we could host rallies which would bring people to Kokomo from all over the United States.”

Bridgette Yeakel wants to see a Memorial Park included at Reservoir Park. Plans have already been developed to build a park, but have not moved forward.

She said the park would allow people to memorialize loved ones with a brick in a walkway, park bench or planting of a tree.

Tom Peters, who regularly plays disc golf at Highland Park, would like to see two more courses constructed at Reservoir Park and Jackson Morrow Park.

“It’s nice to have an 18-hole course now,” he said. “With three courses, each would be different and would provide something for everyone.”

Robin Tetraul wants to see the city parks connected by a running trail.

“The Walk of Excellence is coming along nicely,” she said. “We need to generate interest in the parks and make people aware of what the city has.”

Ken de la Bastide can be reached at (765) 454-8580 or via e-mail at ken.delabastide@kokomotribune.com

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Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

June 17, 2008 Public Meeting

Parks department gets an earful
Dozens participate in master plan meeting to guide future of park services; surveys available for input until July 31

By Patrick Munsey
Perspective staff writer

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Nearly 50 residents descended upon Highland Park last week to make their voices heard. The Kokomo Parks & Recreation Department asked the public to give its input on the future direction of the parks system, and park officials were more than pleased with the response.

The meeting was the first of two designed to set the course for the department's five-year master plan. With the help of consultants, this plan will map out the priorities to be pursued and eventually will aid the city of Kokomo in capturing state and federal funding to enhance the quality of life for city residents.

"The purpose of the meeting is to give citizens a voice in the direction of the parks department and to help our department recognize the interests of the community in our parks system," said parks superintendent John Martino. "It gives everyone an opportunity to be heard. It gives us an opportunity to listen."

Those who turned out wasted no time in providing direction. Poster boards were displayed around the room in Rodgers Pavilion -- each representing one of the dozens of parks in the city system. And the residents were asked to write their suggestions on them. Attendee Phil Kelly requested new disc golf courses in Jackson-Morrow Park. Another suggested landscaping upgrades for Bicentennial Park, and a walkway similar to the popular Wildcat Walk of Excellence was proposed for Bon Air Park.

Others chose to simply compliment the parks department on the maintenance and services it provide. But there were a few criticisms included in the comments which Martino and his staff took to heart. Not surprisingly, the primary complaint centered around geese.

"The walk of excellence might as well be called the walk of excretion between the dogs and geese," said one resident. "You can't walk through children's play areas between the droppings. It's almost to point of a health issue. Something's got to be done."

Martino acknowledged this continuing challenge, and said that it will be listed as a priority in the five-year master plan. The need for new restroom facilities at Highland Park's baseball stadium also was identified, but he wants even more input.

To that end, the parks department currently has a survey available for any resident to share their vision of the parks. Hard copies of the survey can be obtained at the parks office in Highland Park and at Kokomo Beach, but Martino encouraged people to access the survey electronically on the city of Kokomo's Web site.

The survey can be found at www.cityofkokomo.org. Once on the site, visitors should use the "jump to" option on the left-hand side of the page to find the parks department homepage. And at the bottom of that homepage is a link to the survey. Martino said the survey should take about 12 minutes to complete.

"The master plan is very important, and the input is very important," said Martino. "This keeps us in tune with the people we serve. Everyone who fills out a survey I assume has an interest in the parks. I'd like to see 10,000 responses. The more responses we get, the more accurate our master plan is."

The parks superintendent also encouraged those who don't use the parks to fill out a survey and tell the city why they don't and what could be done to change that.
Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

June 17, 2008 Public Meeting

Kokomo Perspective | Parks department gets an earful
Recreation director Torrey Roe couldn't help feeling pride for the community when he counted the number of people who participated last week.

"The turnout was larger than we expected; a very great turnout," said Roe. "I overheard the consultants say that the city of Bloomington only had 30 people turn out for their master plan meeting. I counted 48 here. That says a lot for our community."

Parks board member Ron Gilman also attended the meeting and expressed his pleasure with the level of participation.

"I'm encouraged," said Gilman. "It's exciting to see people wanted to take ownership of their parks. Community involvement is what I want to see. I don't have a pet project, so this is so helpful; to have the community tell you what they want."

The deadline for completing and submitting the surveys is July 31. For additional information, call the parks office at 456-7275.
## Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

**Public Meeting, Sign In, June 17, 2008**

**Page 1 of 2**

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### KOKOMO PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

**Please Sign-In**

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Kokomo Parks and Recreation 2008-2013 Master Plan

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# Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

**Public Meeting, Sign In, June 17, 2008**

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Media Announcement

Master Plan Public Meeting

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Person releasing information: John Martino
Follow up contact person: John Martino, Parks & Recreation Superintendent
Follow up contact phone: (765) 456-7275
Date of release: October 28, 2008

The City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is currently in the process of updating its five-year Master Plan. This history of long range planning is instrumental in the growth of our programs, facilities and services that are provided to all citizens of Kokomo and surrounding communities.

This Master Plan is the blueprint for success as well as a viable tool in attaining specific goals set forth by the department and the community. This Master Plan is also an important tool in obtaining specific State and Federal grants.

The Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is planning to review the draft with the public for the first time. This draft will include comments from the first public meeting and completed surveys. A second public meeting will be held Wednesday; November 5, 2008 beginning at 6 PM. The meeting will take place at Rodgers Pavilion located in Highland Park.

For additional details, feel free to contact the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department at (765) 456-PARK
Appendix A: Public Meeting Documentation

Public Meeting, Sign In, November 5, 2008

Please Sign In 11/5/2008

Jim McClain
Tom Anderson
Jim Callane
Dick Kadlec
Tony Christakis
Fred Conrad
Ray Tetrauld
Robin Tetrauld
Charlie Stroeg
Ron Gilman
Jim Dye
Isabelle Sugge
Parks: What’s next?

By SCOTT SMITH
Tribune staff writer

November 09, 2008 10:51 pm

— When Kokomo residents listed a “new attraction” at Kokomo Beach as their top parks priority for the next five years, Kokomo parks superintendent John Martino had an instant idea. Unfortunately, Martino’s first impulse — adding a Flow Rider surfing pool — will probably remain a dream. “That’s super cool,” Martino said. “I really wanted one. But I researched it, and the cheapest I could probably get one purchased and installed was about $1 million.”

So it goes with the dream of bringing the real Kokomo closer to the imaginary tropical paradise in the Beach Boys’ song. That doesn’t mean, however, that Kokomo might not see some significant new additions to the parks fairly soon.

This week, the city unveiled the first draft of a five-year master plan for the city parks, formed from the input of more than 400 area residents.

The 107-page document, which includes analyses of the possibilities of each of the city’s 31 park spaces, is available online at the city’s Web site.

Put together in conjunction with Rundell Ernstberger & Associates, a Muncie consulting firm, and experts from Indiana University’s Parks Management program, the plan, when complete, will be a comprehensive blueprint for the city parks’ future.

“It’s amazing that three-quarters of people in our community use the park facilities or programs at least once a year,” Martino said. “People in Kokomo view parks and recreation as a very important city department, and a very important service.”

Perhaps not surprisingly, the residents who submitted surveys or came to the first master planning session this summer, saw the parks with the most amenities as the most important facilities. Martino said he didn’t observe too many surprises in the findings.

For instance, parks professionals know that water park attractions must typically be updated every few years to maintain the same attendance level.

And the Kokomo Board of Parks Commissioners has already had informal discussions of what might be next for the city’s 7-year-old Kokomo Beach.

This year, concession prices were increased and passes made available to county residents in an attempt to increase attendance, but the weather didn’t cooperate. The cool summer depressed attendance even further. But the draft master plan doesn’t shy away from the fact the city is in the midst of a serious cost-cutting period.

With the city’s population having dropped more than 2 percent since the last census, and property tax reform a reality, Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight has already embarked on a number of austerity measures.

So forget a $1 million surfing wave pool. Martino is still trying to come up with $50,000 to light up the Jackson-Morrow Park walk path.

The future could demand the city pursue more ventures like the most recent phase of the Wildcat Walk of Excellence.

Although the past three parks superintendents, including Martino, spent close to five years to get the “downtown-to-Waterworks Park” stretch built, the amenity came courtesy of a state grant.

“Make no mistake, the amount of funding for the next two or three years is an issue. Things are not like they were,” Martino said.

One distinct possibility is that the city could divest itself of some of its current parks, in order to focus...
resources on the most popular parks.

One of the study’s findings was that the city has “no need” to increase its park acreage. That finding doesn’t bode well for advocates of turning the former Continental Steel property into a park, as was proposed during former Mayor Matt McKillip’s tenure.

“First of all, we don’t even own the property,” Martino said.

“We have limited resources. There’s some support for cutting some of the smaller parks to do better things with the ‘more used’ parks,” he said.

In the survey, the pool, Jackson-Morrow and Highland Park had the most reported use. Robbins Park, Westdale Park and Meridian Park came in at the bottom of the parks users’ rankings.

Parks users were also asked what features they liked best at the parks.

“Natural areas,” the pool, hiking/biking trails and playgrounds were the most popular attractions; baseball diamonds, football fields and horseshoe pits ranked lowest.

Most of those surveyed also indicated that given a choice, they felt the bulk of new amenities should be geared toward elementary-age children. The finding was interesting in part due to Kokomo’s rapidly aging population.

Improving current park facilities and adding walking trails were ranked highest among more than a dozen choices offered for bettering the parks.

Adding more “flowers, water, lakes and plants” ranked dead last among those surveyed.

Poor restrooms, vandalism, discourteous park users and a lack of contiguous trails ranked as the biggest pet peeves among those surveyed.

“All of this just gives us a baseline on what we can actually accomplish through realistic funding levels,” Martino said.

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Photos

TIME FOR A WALK: Carl Babb walks along the path in Jackson Morrow Park as his dog Sydney runs ahead of him Saturday. KT photo by Erik Markov

Parks: What’s next? Page 2 of 2

http://
Parks foundation moves on with plan

By SCOTT SMITH
Tribune staff writer

November 12, 2008 11:40 pm

— It’s taken months of behind-the-scenes work, but the Parks and Recreational Foundation of Howard County is up and running, ready to raise money to improve the city’s parks system.

Foundation president Tom Miklik officially offered the foundation’s services to the Kokomo Board of Parks Commissioners Tuesday, saying the new non-profit foundation is ready to begin taking donations from the public.

“I’m tickled to death,” Miklik told the parks board. “It was a long time in the making, but we’ve got it to the point where we’ve got a plan.”

The foundation’s mission, to “support and enhance the quality of life through recreational opportunities,” is in keeping with a goal of continuing the development of the city’s parks system.

Tuesday’s announcement comes just before parks board members sit down to finalize a new five-year master plan for the city’s parks, a plan which should help prioritize future parks improvements.

Parks superintendent John Martino said last week those priorities are certain to be limited in the face of declining city revenues and the local economy.

Given those circumstances, the parks foundation is expected to be an essential aid to future parks development.

The foundation will also continue the benefits of public/private partnerships which have poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into parks development this year alone.

The city partnered with the Chrysler Foundation, the Community Foundation of Howard County, the local McGonigal and Button auto dealerships, and more than 200 volunteers to build a new playground at Waterworks Park this year.

A $750,000 state grant, combined with a $30,000 gift from local Rotarians, allowed the city to extend the Wildcat Walk of Excellence. And the Urban Enterprise Association board worked to build gazebos at Kokomo Beach and Foster Park, and will be using some of its remaining funds to renovate bathrooms at Foster Park.

Tuesday, Martino received more local assistance, when the East Side Little League offered to renovate the bathrooms at Cutler Park.

“We’ve had a good year this year, given the economic climate,” Martino said. “We’ve had catastrophic things happen in the past to this department, but by God, it’s been a good year.”

The foundation has a Web site, www.parksandrecreationfoundation.blogspot.com, and will be supervised by a seven-member board.

Including Miklik, who is a past parks board president, foundation board members are:

• Dwight Singer, vice president, a member of the Howard County Sports Hall of Fame board and former county council member
• Jolene Rule, past president of Wildcat Guardians and member of the parks’ Citizen’s Advisory Board
• Daro Johnson, local basketball coach
• Dan Smith, former city parks superintendent
• Bill Eldridge, a former park board member and local baseball and basketball coach
• Derek Sublette, city attorney and outdoor sports enthusiast

Scott Smith may be reached at (765) 454-8569 or via e-mail at scott.smith@kokomotribune.com
Appendix B: KPRD Board Contact and Terms

All Park Board members may be reached through the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department at 1402 W. Deffenbaugh Street, Kokomo, IN 46902.

2008 Park Board
Ron Gilman – President
Appointment from the Library Board, 1/1/2008-12/31/2008

Rev. Robert Lee – Vice President
Mayoral Appointment, 1/1/06-12/31/2009

John Wiles – Member & appointment to the Art Association Board from the Park Board
Mayoral appointment, 1/1/07-12/31/2010

Santos Salinas – Member and appointment to the Planning Commission Board from the Park
Mayoral appointment, 1/1/2008-12/31/2011

Heather McKillip – Member
Mayoral appointment, 7/17/06-12/31/2008 – resigned position 10/2008

Jim Callane – Member,
Appointment from the School Board, 8/1/2008-7/31/2009

2009 Park Board
Santos Salinas – President and appointment to the Planning Commission Board from the Park
Mayoral appointment, 1/1/2008-12/31/2011

Jim Callane – Vice President
Appointment from the School Board, 8/1/2008-7/31/2009

Shirley Dubois, Member
Mayoral Appointment, 1/1/2009 – 12/31/2012

Gil Hendrickson, Member
Appointment from the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library Board, 1/1/2009-12/31/2009

Rev. Robert Lee – Member
Mayoral Appointment, 1/1/06-12/31/2009

John Wiles – Member & appointment to the Art Association Board from the Park Board
Mayoral appointment, 1/1/07-12/31/2010