



**City of Evansville
Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan
2013-2018**



Adopted December 10, 2013





2013 Park and Recreation Board members

Back row, starting from left - Merrit, Mani, Courtier, Fuson
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City of Evansville

Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-2018

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Park land and open space serve many important functions in a community. Parks can serve a limited neighborhood area, a portion of the City, a whole community, or an entire region by providing space and facilities for active and passive outdoor recreation. Open space can take the form of parks, greenbelts, wetlands, and floodplains, and may be either privately or publicly owned. Open space can serve many functions for a community in addition to recreation, including:

- Preserving scenic and natural resources
- Mitigating flood issues
- Protecting the area's water resources
- Preserving prime agricultural land
- Limiting development that may create hazards
- Buffering incompatible land uses
- Structuring the urban environment

PURPOSE OF PLAN

This Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan for the City of Evansville is an expression of the community's goals and objectives, and current and future needs and demands for parks and recreational facilities. The intent of this document is to plan for the maintenance, improvement, and expansion of Evansville's recreational and open space resources. The Plan outlines strategies to manage existing resources wisely and to develop new resources to meet future needs and demands.

Evansville prepared and adopted its first Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan in 1994. The Plan was updated in 1999 and 2007. The specific purpose of this Plan is to guide the development and improvement of the City's parks and outdoor recreation facilities over the next five years (2013-2018) to meet the recreational needs and demands of the local residents. Adoption of this updated Plan allows Evansville to become eligible to participate in grant programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks Program. These programs, and a number of other potential funding sources, are described in Chapter 7 of this Plan.

The City of Evansville has the responsibility for implementing this Plan, including acquisition, improvement and development of outdoor recreation areas. Policy decisions made by the City's Park and Recreation Board (PRB), Plan Commission, and City Council for park programs and improvements shall be guided by the goals and recommendations of this adopted Plan. Actual public policy decisions or choices are contingent upon funding sources, new opportunities and ideas, changing growth patterns, budget priorities, and changing community needs and desires. For this reason, the Plan should be reviewed annually, and a detailed update such as this should be completed every five years.

The development and continual updating of a park and outdoor recreation plan such as this becomes a valuable asset to a community and contributes to its stability and attractiveness. As previously indicated, updating the Plan every five years is also a requirement of the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for a community to be eligible for matching government funds for park land acquisition and facility

improvements. But just as importantly, the City of Evansville needs to set a course of action for continued improvement of its parks and outdoor recreation system.

METHODOLOGY

It is the responsibility of the City of Evansville Park and Recreation Board to help develop, adopt, and recommend a Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan to the Plan Commission and City Council. Wisconsin State Statute § 27.08 provides that any “city may by ordinance create a board of park commissioners” and further describes the powers of such a board. Appendix A outlines this Statute.

The City of Evansville Park and Recreation Board (PRB) is established by City Ordinance. It has seven members, including one alderperson as presiding officer and six citizen members, all of whom are appointed by the mayor. The PRB supervises the parks, lakes, and streams in the City, in addition to the Veterans Memorial Pool, youth baseball programs, the park store, and the park maintenance department. See Appendix B for City ordinances governing the PRB and City parks.

This Plan was developed by the Community Development Director, with assistance from PRB members and additional staff. The following planning process was followed to develop the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan:

Step 1: Plan for Planning

City staff worked with the PRB to develop a planning timeline and process that would meet the community’s needs. The planning process began in February 2013, with the PRB reviewing the existing Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan and discussing the timeline for the planning process. The PRB hosted a kick-off event on April 8, 2013 to provide an opportunity for public input and to allow time for members of the public to speak with PRB members and staff about the planning process.

Step 2: Inventory Collection and Analysis

This stage of the planning process included reviewing existing planning documents related to parks and recreation in Evansville; analyzing current demographic data and population projections; gathering an inventory of the existing physical conditions of the City; conducting an inventory of existing park and recreational facilities; and utilizing this information and State park and recreation standards to predict needs for future park and recreational facilities. The results of this inventory collection and analysis are encompassed in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this plan.



Park Plan Kick-Off Open House.

Step 3: Public Input

Public engagement was emphasized throughout the planning process to ensure that the entire spectrum of community needs was addressed by Plan recommendations. Public input efforts included a public opinion survey, activities at public forums, meetings with stakeholder groups, and public informational meetings. These activities and their findings are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Step 4: Plan Development

Policy, program, and project recommendations were developed based on input from the public, PRB members, elected officials, and City staff combined with the results of the inventory and analysis. PRB members then undertook a prioritization exercise, whereby they rated each proposed recommendation based on a number of criteria. The results of that prioritization were used as the basis for PRB discussions on top priorities for recommendations. This step is explained more fully in Chapters 6 and 7.

Step 5: Public Hearing and Plan Adoption

The PRB recommended this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan for approval at its meeting on November 11, 2013. The Plan Commission held a public hearing for the adoption of the Plan on December 2, 2013 and recommended approval to the City Council. The City Council approved the Plan through resolution on December 10, 2013. The resolution adopting this Plan is shown in Chapter 8.

Step 6: Plan Implementation

Several methods and procedures were proposed by the PRB to assist in Plan implementation. Implementation techniques include a recommendation that the PRB refer to the adopted Plan during budget discussions each year, regulatory strategies to help preserve open space and natural areas, and exploration of funding sources to assist in land acquisition and/or park facilities development. It is critical that implementation of the Plan be monitored, and a number of Plan recommendations emphasize strategies for monitoring implementation. Implementation strategies are highlighted in Chapter 7.

The Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan is a “living” document for the future. Therefore, if situations change and decisions are made which are contrary to the adopted Plan, the Plan should be amended. Amendments to the Plan should be adopted by the City Council, based on recommendations by the PRB and the Plan Commission.

It should also be noted that this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan is just that - a plan. This Plan is based on the best judgment of the PRB, Plan Commission, Common Council, and City staff, based on the information that was available at the time of Plan development. Significant public input was gathered during the planning process and taken into account during Plan development. The Plan does not represent, however, a commitment by the City of Evansville to complete any particular project during the five-year planning period. As with any plan, implementation of the recommendations encompassed within this Plan is dependent upon adequate financial and staff resources made available by the City Council through taxation, user fees, grant funds, private donations, and resources that may be identified in the future. This Plan is intended to serve as a guide for decision-making related to maintenance, improvement, and expansion of park and recreation facilities in the City when such resources are available.

CHAPTER 2: SUMMARY OF RELATED PLANS

In updating the City's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, it is important for decision makers to be familiar with other related plans and their relationship to this planning effort. This Plan builds upon past iterations of the City's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, while taking into account inventory and recommendations encompassed in other plans that pertain to the City.

PAST CITY OF EVANSVILLE PARK AND OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS

The City of Evansville prepared and adopted its first Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan in 1994, which the City subsequently updated in 1999 and 2007. This Plan is an update to the 2007 iteration of the Plan. The specific purpose of this Plan is to guide the development and improvement of the City's parks and outdoor recreation facilities over the next five years (2013-2018) to meet local residents' needs.

The City of Evansville has the responsibility for implementing the Plan, including acquisition, improvement, and development of outdoor recreation areas. Policy decisions made by the City's Park and Recreation Board (PRB), Plan Commission, and Common Council for park and recreation programs and improvements shall be guided by the recommendations of this adopted Plan. Citizen input was a critical component of the planning process and guided the development of goals and recommendations. However, it is recognized that the City's decision makers have a more extensive understanding of the resources available for implementing policies and programs recommended by members of the public. Actual public policy decisions are contingent upon funding sources, budget priorities, and changing community demographics and needs.

The update to and adoption of the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan is also important in allowing the City to be eligible for various State and Federal park and recreation grants. Some of these grant funds include the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Knowles Nelson Stewardship Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP) program, the Urban Green Space (UGS) program, and the Urban River Grants program. Chapter 7 provides additional information on funding opportunities.

City of Evansville residents' long-standing legacy of community involvement and strong volunteer ethic has played a major role in the implementation of past park improvements and will continue to play an integral role in the future. The list of accomplishments and improvements since the last Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan shows a number of examples of community members and groups contributing to parks projects.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS SINCE THE 2007 PARK AND OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Leonard-Leota Park

Pool Area/Park Store

- Installed new windows.
- Installed new roof and shingles.
- Added more solar heating panels for pool.
- Painted pool.

- Added required safety drain and ADA-accessible chairlift.

Lower Park Area

- Moved and restored Antes Cabin.
- Completed restoration of Baker Office Building and landscaping at Park entry (Grove Society).
- Replaced flat roof of bathroom with new hip-style roof.
- Upgraded water lines.
- Replaced roof of warming house with cement roof.
- Installed new roof and shingles on lower shelter.
- Installed new wood on lower shelter windows.
- Installed new basketball backboards.
- Upgraded bleachers at both ball diamonds.
- Installed more dog-waste receptacles.
- Planted along railroad tracks.
- Commenced restoration of stonework throughout the Park.
- Installed new flagpole at upper ball diamond (Jays).
- Refurbished Women’s Relief Corps flagpole (Grove Society).
- Installed bat houses (Eagle Scout).
- Installed batting cage at upper ball diamond (Jays).
- Made improvements to concession stand (Evansville Community Partnership and Jays).
- Installed new roof on Boy Scout house.



Stone restoration work at Leonard-Leota Park.

Upper Park Area

- Re-shingled roof of bathroom.

Lake Leota and Allen Creek

- Removed 180,000 cubic yards of sediment from Lake Leota.
- Restored Lake Leota to 8-15’ depth.
- Commenced restoration of Allen Creek’s walls.
- Continued reforestation and planting efforts.
- Restored shoreland with native plantings.
- Implemented fish restocking in Lake Leota (Save Our Lake Environment).
- Installed ADA-accessible fishing pier (Eagle Scout).

General

- Leonard-Leota Park listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Constructed a disc golf course.

Countryside Park

- Constructed bathrooms.
- Upgraded playground equipment.

- Installed blacktop pad for basketball and funnel ball.
- Installed player benches for soccer field.
- Increased bleacher seating.

Franklin Park

- Implemented additional landscaping.

West Side Park

- Created two soccer fields.
- Constructed bathrooms (In conjunction with Evansville High School).
- Installed playground equipment.
- Constructed a parking lot.
- Installed Park identification sign.
- Purchased field mower.



*West Side Park bathrooms ribbon-cutting.
(Photo by Kelly Gildner, Evansville Review)*

Wind Prairie Park

- Installed benches and birdhouses (Eagle Scout).

CITY OF EVANSVILLE SMART GROWTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Evansville’s award-winning Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005. The City developed the Plan to have a more effective tool to address the City’s rapid growth rate while maintaining its small town charm. The Plan addresses the required plan elements, including issues and opportunities, housing, transportation, utilities and community facilities, economic development, land use, natural and cultural resources, intergovernmental cooperation, and implementation. As part of the planning process, the City created an overall vision for the community, which emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the government, private sector, citizens, and civic organizations. This vision also calls out the importance of the City’s natural resources. These themes continued to emerge throughout this park and recreation planning process.

Park and recreation issues are present throughout most elements of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. A few key areas in which park and recreation activities and facilities are addressed include:

- Recommendations in the Transportation Element that a multi-use trail be developed and that Evansville continue to improve its walkability.
- A recommendation in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element to locate parks and open spaces throughout the community to ensure all neighborhoods have access to these resources.
- A recommendation in the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element to preserve the most significant aspects of the natural resource base.

A major update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan will begin in 2013 and be adopted by mid-2015. Much of the inventory encompassed within this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, as well as the prioritized recommendations, will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan update.

ROCK COUNTY 2009-2014 PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

Rock County updated its Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space (POROS) Plan in 2009. Many of the recommendations contained within that Plan are relevant to Evansville's park and outdoor recreation planning process, as City residents are served by the Rock County Parks System.

Evansville residents are fortunate to have two unique Rock County parks located in close proximity to the City. Magnolia Bluff Park, located about 6.5 miles southwest of Evansville, is a roughly 112 acre park with facilities supporting various uses. Magnolia Bluff Park's amenities include hiking trails, equestrian trails, restrooms, grills, and fire pits. According to the Rock County Plan, "Magnolia Bluff Park is nearly the highest point in Rock County... A scenic overlook from the bluff and other open areas of the park are the dominant features of the park." The Rock County POROS Plan's primary recommendations for this park include control of invasive species and implementation of further erosion control measures along the bluff.

Gibbs Lake Park, located roughly 7 miles east of Evansville, is the largest Rock County Park at 287 acres. Park amenities include a picnic area, water dock, park grills, shelter, bridle path, and hiking trails. According to the Rock County POROS Plan, Gibbs Lake is the largest lake that lies entirely within Rock County's borders. Similar to Magnolia Bluff Park, most of the recommendations for Gibbs Lake Park involve management and control of invasive species.

The Rock County POROS Plan's focus on invasive species management is important for Evansville officials to keep in mind during the development of Evansville's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan. Although eradication of invasive species is, for all practical purposes, not an attainable goal, efforts to mitigate the effects of invasive species are most effectual when addressed broadly and through partnerships. As Rock County continues its efforts to manage invasive species, the City of Evansville can complement those efforts through invasive species management strategies within its boundaries.

2011-2016 WISCONSIN STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

The State of Wisconsin, much like units of government within the State, updates its Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years. The recommendations of the SCORP can be useful for local governments to understand while developing their respective park and outdoor recreation plans. The most recent iteration of the SCORP covers the years 2011-2016.

A key fact highlighted by the 2011-2016 SCORP is that 87% of Wisconsinites participate in some form of outdoor recreation. This means that a vast majority of Wisconsinites are using park and recreational resources. The SCORP provides a great deal of information on trends in outdoor recreation and highlights the percentages of residents participating in a variety of recreational activities. The SCORP also provides information on trends in recreation, including the activities with the highest percentage increase in participation rates over the past 15 years. The top growth Wisconsin recreation activities by percentage from 1994-2009 were handball or racquetball outdoors, soccer outdoors, kayaking, surfing, football, horseback riding, mountain/rock climbing, use of personal watercraft, golf, and snowboarding. This information can be useful to City of Evansville decision-makers when developing recommendations for the City Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Two key themes of note found throughout the 2011-2016 SCORP include public health and wellness and public-private partnerships. These concepts are consistent with and complementary to the City of Evansville's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan. As the relationship between public health and land use planning continues to grow, planning documents will increasingly emphasize the importance of the built environment in promoting public health. The City's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan incorporates information and recommendations relating to a variety of active recreational facilities and opportunities, which will have the possibility of positively impacting the health and wellness of City residents.

The City of Evansville has a very strong volunteer ethic, as evidenced by the myriad volunteer groups and strong civic participation in the community. As both this chapter and subsequent chapters of this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan demonstrate, many of the desired improvements to the City's Park System are proposed to be achieved through public-private partnerships. Much like many of the recommendations encompassed in the SCORP, certain goals and improvements recommended by Evansville's Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan will only be attainable with volunteer involvement and private support.

CHAPTER 3: DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

In developing a Parks and Outdoor Recreation Plan, it is critical to evaluate the existing natural, physical, and social environment of the community. Physical features, land use patterns, transportation systems, and natural resources of an area can represent opportunities. Other social factors such as population demographics and growth projections also influence the type, location, and intensity of land uses. This Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan will take into consideration the following inventory of the natural, physical, and social environment of Evansville when developing the Plan's goals, policies, programs, and infrastructure recommendations for parks and recreation issues.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Location

The City of Evansville is located in the southern portion of the Town of Union in northwestern Rock County, four miles south of the Rock and Dane County line. Evansville is located midway between three urban centers: Madison (23 miles to the north), Janesville (20 miles to the southeast), and Beloit (26 miles to the south). Distances to other metropolitan areas include 50 miles to Rockford, IL, 90 miles to Milwaukee, and 130 miles to Chicago, IL. Consequently, Evansville's geographic location provides convenient access to the markets, suppliers, services, and opportunities of larger urban areas.

Four major vehicular transportation routes serve the City of Evansville: US Highway 14, State Highway 59, State Highway 213, and County Trunk Highway C. Additionally, the Union Pacific Railroad provides freight rail service to the City.

Climate

The climate of Rock County and the Evansville planning area is continental, characterized by warm, humid summers and relatively long winters. The variable weather is a result of the alternating high and low pressure systems accompanied by prevailing westerly winds. The frequent interaction of cold, dry northern air masses and warm, moist southern air masses contributes to the changing weather conditions resulting in four distinct seasons. Spring and fall are characterized by cool temperatures with short, scattered showers. The summer months are characterized by warm, humid conditions with periodic thunderstorms. The winter months are characterized by cold temperatures with numerous snowfall events. Warm weather recreational activities in the area include swimming, boating, fishing, and hiking. Cold weather activities include cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and ice skating. The four seasons afford residents of and visitors to the planning area a diversity of outdoor recreation options.

Topography

Past glacial activity in the Evansville planning area formed three distinct glacial features. The terminal moraine, the outwash plain, and the morainal drift area are responsible for the varying topography and drainage patterns in the area.

The Johnstown Moraine, a NW-SE belt of hummocky topography, lies north of the City of Evansville. This kettle hole topography is represented by two relief forms: depressions and hills with local relief of 920 to

1,000 feet. Many depressions occur throughout the Moraine, some of which may be filled with water to form small kettles.

South of the Johnstown Moraine is an apron of flat outwash plains, which extends southeasterly across the City. Relief in this extensive outwash plain is minute, varying from 870 to 920 feet. The topography in the remainder of the Evansville planning area, approximately the west and southwest borders of the area, is a result of differential erosion of the bedrock. The terrain in this area is characterized by deep valleys cut into sandstone and ridges underlain by dolomite.

Soils

Soil is the most influential physical feature for agricultural and urban development. The soils' physical properties such as texture, structure, and moisture content determine suitability for various land use activities.

Four general soil associations exist in the Evansville planning area. The soils upon which much of the City is built are deep and moderately deep, well drained and moderately well drained, nearly level to sloping soils that have a silty clay loam to sandy clay loam subsoil. These soils have been formed over glacial outwash deposits, consisting of stratified sand and gravel at a depth of three to six feet. Agriculturally, the soils for this association are very productive for a wide variety of farm products. The substratum is a good source of sand and gravel extraction. However, because of the porous substratum, a danger exists of groundwater pollution by effluent from sewerage systems and of nitrate pollution from fertilizer applications.

The soils found in the central and southern parts of the City limits are moderately deep, poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained, nearly level and gently sloping soils that have a mainly clay loam to loam subsoil. These soils have been formed over glacial outwash deposits, consisting of stratified sand and gravel. A high groundwater table, zero to three feet from the soil surface, necessitates proper drainage in agricultural production, building construction, and sewage disposal. Wet soils that have not been drained are in pasture or wildlife habitat.

To the north of the City the soils are deep, well drained and moderately well drained, nearly level to steep soils that have a sandy clay loam to silty clay loam subsoil over sandy loam glacial till. These soils are prevalent on the till plains of the hill and kettle topography with gravelly, sandy loam glacial till 30 to 65 inches below the surface. Soils on level slopes are very productive for agriculture, whereas steeper slopes are usually wooded. There are few limitations for sewerage systems on level soils; however, lateral seepage of effluent to the surface occurs on steeper slopes. Additionally, steeper slopes are subject to erosion.

The soils in the western and northwestern sections of the planning area are shallow and moderately deep, well drained, nearly level to very steep soils that have a mainly clay and clay loam subsoil over dolomite bedrock. These soils have been formed on ridgetops and side slopes of natural drainageways with dolomite rock 20 to 40 inches below the surface. Soils on level slopes are productive for agriculture, whereas steeper slopes are usually wooded. Major soils in this association are not suitable for sewage systems because of the underlying bedrock. Natural fissures and crevasses in the dolomite increase the danger of groundwater contamination by unfiltered effluent moving through the bedrock.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) rates soils according to their potential agricultural productivity based on a wide variety of soil characteristics. There are eight categories in this classification system with Unit I soils being the most productive and Unit VIII soils the least productive. Units I, II, and III soils are typically considered prime agricultural soils, as they have exceptional capabilities for agricultural production and require minimal special management practices. Over 95 percent of the soils in the planning area are considered prime agricultural lands.

Water Resources

Water resources in the Evansville planning area include both groundwater and surface water. The groundwater provides public and private water supplies, while the surface waters provide wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and storage for drainage water.

All significant amounts of water that are used in the Evansville planning area for residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial consumption originate from groundwater sources. Groundwater is tapped from glacial deposits and bedrock formations underlying the area. The groundwater moves from areas of recharge, such as topographic high areas or uplands, to areas of discharge, usually located in lowlands such as streams, lakes, and drainage ditches. Recharge areas are located east and west of the City. From these areas, groundwater moves toward its point of discharge at Allen Creek and surrounding wetlands. Other discharges occur from spring flow, seepage, evaporation, and water supply wells.

The Evansville planning area is located in the Sugar-Pecatonica Basin and the Allen Creek and Middle Sugar River Watershed. The Allen Creek and Middle Sugar River Watershed straddles the northeast corner of Green County, northwest Rock County, and south central Dane County. Lake Leota, located in the City of Evansville, is one of two impoundments within the Sugar-Pecatonica Basin.

Surface waters in the Evansville planning area include Allen Creek and an impoundment of the creek, Lake Leota. Allen Creek enters the northwest corner of the planning area and flows southeasterly into Lake Leota. The creek drains over 120 square miles and collects runoff waters from the surrounding agricultural and urban areas. It transports the collected water, sediment, and dissolved material to the Sugar River in Green County and eventually flows into the Rock and Mississippi Rivers. The section of Allen Creek within the City of Evansville is considered a Class II Trout Stream.

Lake Leota is used primarily for recreation by local residents and regional visitors. In the past, the Lake had suffered from a variety of use-limiting problems including weeds, rough fish, and sediment filling, so much so that the depth of the Lake had diminished to an average of about 18 inches. Approximately 80 years ago, the Lake's depth was about 10 feet. In September 2005, Lake Leota was drained by opening the sluice gate at the dam. Most of the fish remaining in the Lake were carp, and these were removed. In November 2006, a V-notch was cut into the coffer-dam above the sluice gate to increase the draining rate of the lakebed.



Restored Lake Leota in fall 2013.

In November 2008, an advisory referendum posed the question “Shall the Evansville Common Council approve spending an amount not to exceed \$2 million in order to restore Lake Leota?” Evansville residents showed their overwhelming favor for the dredging project by a vote of 1742 in favor, 749 against, and 87 non votes.

In late 2008 and early 2009, sediment was removed from the lakebed and deposited in farm fields west of the Lake. Roughly 180,000 cubic yards of sediment were removed, which resulted in the creation of an 8-foot deep recreation area and a 15-foot deep fishing

area. During the sediment removal process, rock rip-rap was added along the easterly shoreline along the dam’s earthen embankment to help control erosion.

Lake Leota was officially re-dedicated with a ceremonial ribbon cutting, canoe parade, and fireworks at the start of the 2009 Fourth of July celebration. Work continues to ensure the Lake’s long-term success. Save our Lake Environment (SOLE) has engaged in a fish stocking program, and the park has undergone significant shoreline beautification, including general cleanup, weed eradication, landscaping, and native planting improvements.

Environmental Corridors

The topography, soils, and water resources of the Evansville area form a unique set of physical features. A number of areas in and around Evansville have limitations for development and/or agriculture because of wet soils, steep slopes, or wooded areas. According to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), environmental corridors are defined as linear areas in the landscape containing concentrations of lakes, streams, and associated shorelands and floodlands; wetlands; woodlands; wildlife habitat areas; areas of rugged terrain and high-relief topography; wet, poorly drained, and organic soils; and remnant prairies. Environmental corridors provide open space, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge, and recreational opportunities. These corridors warrant special consideration when planning for the community and should be targeted for preservation.

Map 1 shows the environmental corridors within the Evansville planning area. Most of the corridor areas are associated with floodplains and drainageways. One major area is the Allen Creek floodplain and surrounding wetlands. Another major area is a drainageway west of the City. Other corridors include a drainageway to the northeast and steep slopes to the northeast and northwest of the City. A large portion of the environmental corridor south of the City is included in the Evansville Wildlife Area. The Evansville Wildlife Area is a 5,500 acre property, which contains 704 acres of State-owned marsh immediately south of the City of Evansville, 240 acres of State-owned stream bank protection land, and 4,600 acres of private land leased for public hunting in Union, Porter, Magnolia, and Center townships.

Land Use

In 2004, the City conducted an inventory of existing land uses as part of the process of preparing and adopting its Smart Growth Plan. The total land within the incorporated limits of Evansville at that time was 2,012.17 acres. This land can be classified as either developed or undeveloped. Approximately 60 percent of the total land area in 2004 was considered developed. Residential land uses made up the greatest portion of the developed land, at 45 percent of the developed land area. The land use most prevalent in the undeveloped portion of the City was agricultural, which comprised 58 percent of the total undeveloped land. Natural areas represented 20 percent of the undeveloped land area. Table 1 and Map 2 show the existing land uses in the City of Evansville in 2004. Map 3 shows the desired future land uses as outlined in the 2011 update to the City's Smart Growth plan.

Land Use Type	Amount (in acres)	% of Planning Area (City Limits)
Single-Family Residential	606.21	30.13%
Two-Family Residential	21.82	1.08%
Multiple-Family	38.29	1.90%
Commercial	78	3.88%
Heavy Industrial	93.9	4.67%
Light Industrial	46.39	2.31%
Government/Institutional	287.9	14.31%
Agriculture/Undeveloped	467.6	23.24%
Wetlands	333.7	16.58%
Water	38.36	1.90%
Total	2,012.17	100%

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PROJECTIONS

Population Trends and Projections

The City has experienced dramatic population gains over the last two decades, as shown by Table 2. A comparison of growth rates in adjacent communities helps demonstrate that Evansville has been the fastest growing community in Rock County over the past 30 years. As shown by Table 2, the City's share of the total Rock County population is steadily increasing.

Location	1980	1990	2000	2010	2012*	Actual Chg. 1980-2012	% Change 1980-2012
City of Evansville	2,835	3,174	4,039	5,012	5,051	2,216	78.2%
Town of Center	908	861	1,005	1,066	1,063	155	17.1%
Town of Magnolia	746	717	854	767	763	17	2.3%
Town of Porter	940	953	925	945	956	16	1.7%
Town of Union	1,329	1,537	1,860	2,099	2,101	772	58.1%
Evansville % of Rock County Population	2.0%	2.3%	2.7%	3.1%	3.2%	N/A	N/A
Rock County	139,420	139,510	152,307	160,331	160,129	20,709	14.9%
Dane County	323,545	367,085	426,526	488,073	491,555	168,010	51.9%

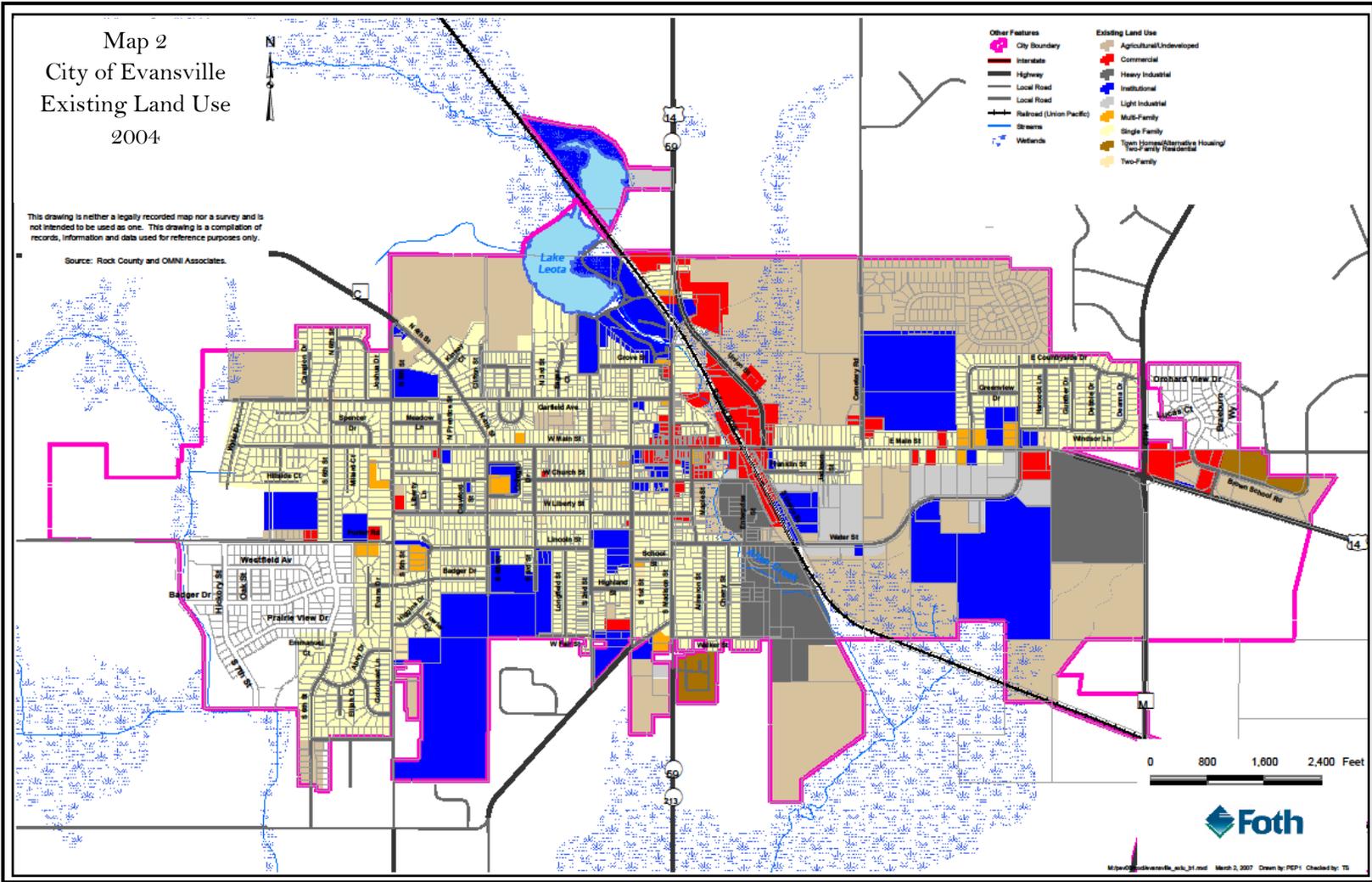
Source: WI Department of Administration - Demographic Service Center, January 2012

* Estimated 2012 population

Map 2
City of Evansville
Existing Land Use
2004

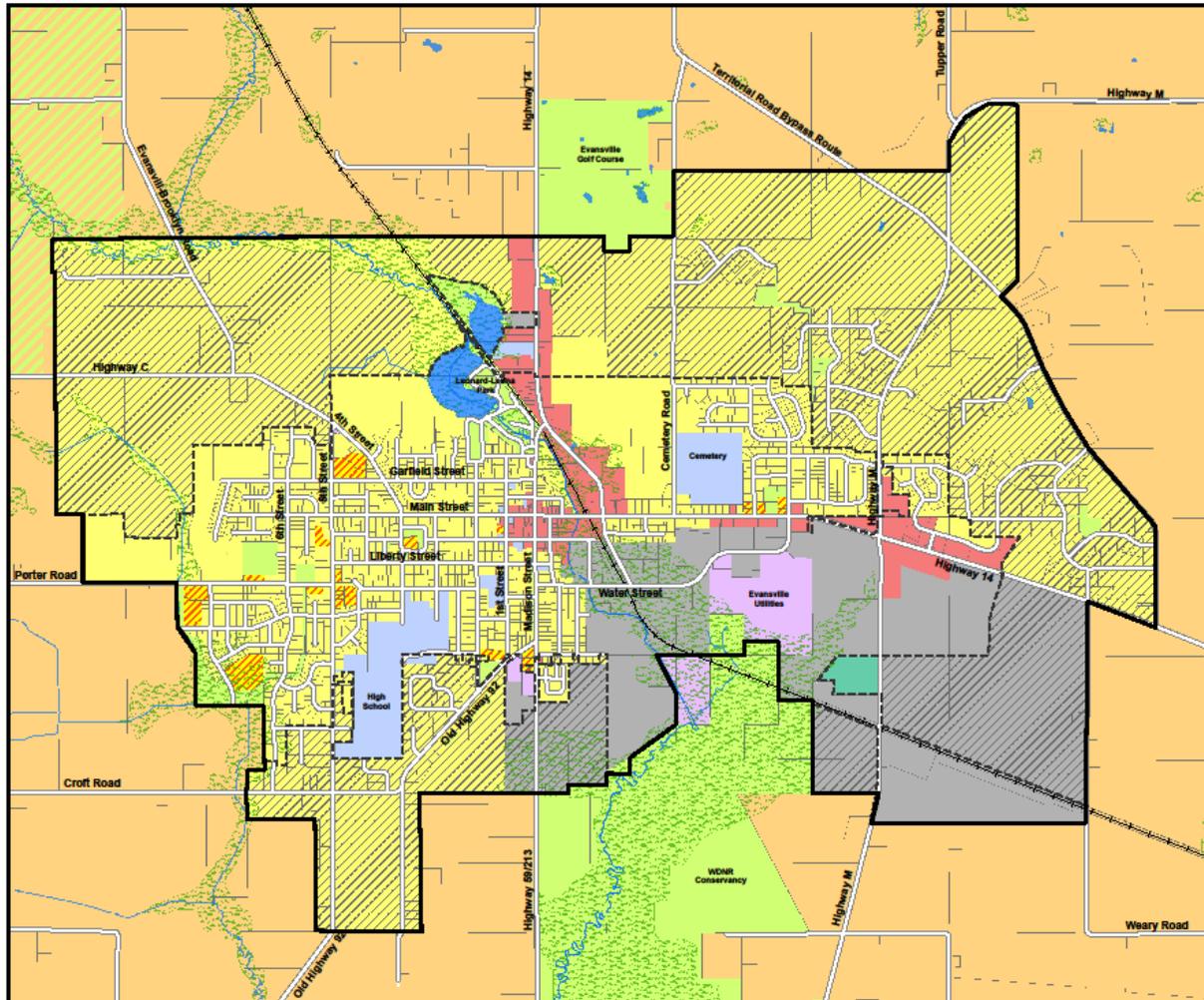
This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only.

Source: Rock County and OMNI Associates.

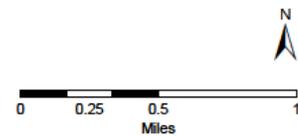


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Map 3
 Future Land Use Map
 Evansville Smart Growth Plan
 2011



- Long-Range City Growth Boundary
- City Limits
- Roads
- Railroad
- Water Bodies
- Environmental Corridor
- Land Uses**
- Low to Moderate Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Manufactured Homes
- Residential Expansion
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Economic Development Expansion
- Public and Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Utilities and Transportation
- Rural Preservation
- Rock County PACE Program Target Acquisition Area



StockhamConsulting
 Urban Planning & Development Services

The City’s population gradually increased from 1900 to 1970. The largest population growth occurred during the 1950s, commonly referred to as the “baby boom” years. Population growth continued to increase in the 1960s; however, the rate of growth was substantially lower than previous years. The 1970s marked the first time in Evansville’s history that the City’s population decreased. A portion of the significant population decrease in the 1970s can be attributed to the high unemployment in Evansville during that period.

The population growth in the City in the 1980s can be attributed to more favorable economic conditions and a shift in population from large cities in the area to smaller cities such as Evansville. Economic fluctuations, by attracting or not attracting people to a community, ultimately will influence the

Year	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2010-2030
City of Evansville	5,012	5,763	6,295	6,804	7,281	45.3%
Town of Center	1,066	1,130	1,173	1,213	1,247	17.0%
Town of Magnolia	767	900	923	943	959	25.0%
Town of Porter	945	1,007	1,026	1,042	1,053	11.4%
Town of Union	2,099	2,267	2,403	2,530	2,645	26.0%
Evansville % of Rock County Pop.	3.1%	3.5%	3.7%	3.9%	4.0%	N/A
Rock County	160,331	167,277	172,310	176,727	180,379	12.5%
Dane County	488,073	523,818	559,005	592,917	624,500	28.0%

Source: WI Department of Administration - Demographic Service Center, May 2008

population growth of the community. The 78 percent increase in population the City experienced from 1980 to 2010 was greater than any other municipality in Rock County during that period of time.

Table 3 demonstrates that the City of Evansville’s population is projected to continue to grow at a more rapid pace than surrounding communities and will increasingly make up a larger share of Rock County’s overall population.

Population Characteristics

In developing a community plan, it is essential to understand the characteristics of the population. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, age and sex. Age and sex distribution can indicate trends and conditions of fertility, labor force potential, and migration patterns. Population figures

	City of Evansville	Rock County	Dane County	Green County
Under 5	8.6%	6.5%	6.2%	6.4%
5 to 14	16.3%	14.0%	12.0%	13.6%
15 to 19	6.6%	7.2%	6.7%	6.4%
20 to 34	18.8%	18.5%	25.9%	15.5%
35 to 49	22.9%	21.0%	20.5%	21.5%
50 to 64	15.4%	19.3%	18.5%	21.6%
65 and Over	11.3%	13.6%	10.4%	15.0%
Median Age	34.7	38.0	34.4	41.1

Source: 2010 Census

do not provide any insight about the characteristics of the people. To learn more about residents, information about the age and sex of the population must be examined.

In 2010, the population of the City of Evansville was 5,012 people, with 2,453 male residents and 2,559 female residents. As shown by Table 4, the median age of an Evansville resident in 2010 was 34.7, which was notably lower than the median age in nearby Rock (38.0) and Green (41.1) Counties and only slightly higher than Dane County (34.4).

Table 5 tracks the population of City residents, by age group, over a 20 year period. As demonstrated by the table, the percentage of the City’s population made up by children 14 years of age and younger grew from 1990 to 2010. Conversely, the share of the City’s population made up of residents aged 65 and over shrunk during the same period.

Table 5. City of Evansville Population by Age Group						
	1990		2000		2010	
Age	Number	% of Total Population	Number	% of Total Population	Number	% of Total Population
Under 5	227	7.2%	327	8.1%	430	8.6%
5 to 14	497	15.7%	667	16.5%	816	16.3%
15 to 19	197	6.2%	269	6.7%	331	6.6%
20 to 64	1,703	53.7%	2,229	55.1%	2,870	57.1%
65 and Over	550	17.3%	547	13.5%	565	11.3%
All Ages	3,174	100%	4,039	100%	5,012	100%

Source: 1990, 2000, and 2010 Census

Several interesting trends in Table 5 may have an impact on the future of Evansville. Because the population as a whole grew from 1990 to 2010, the number of people in each age group grew during the same time period. However, certain age groups grew more rapidly than others. The data reveals:

- The number of children has been steadily increasing. To accommodate growth, the school district built a new high school facility in 2002. The increasing number of school-aged children will influence the types of recreational programs and parks facilities the City provides.
- Inversely, the percentage of Evansville residents aged 65 and over decreased significantly from 1990 to 2010. This bucks the national trend of the “graying” or aging of the population. Although the population in Evansville is not aging as rapidly as the surrounding area and nation as a whole, the City will still want to consider the potential impacts the aging of the largest generation, the baby boomers, will have on the City over the next few decades.
- The greatest percentage increase of residents was between the ages of 20 and 64. It is necessary to look more closely at the breakdown within this large age group that comprises the majority of the labor force in the City:
 - Census data reveals that the largest portion of this age group is between the ages of 35 to 49 (22.9% of the population in 2010). Most individuals in this category are nearing the end of their childbearing years. By far, most individuals in this age group are living in families, as opposed to alone or in group homes.
 - The population between the ages of 20 and 34 is the next largest segment, with 18.8% of residents falling in this age group in 2010. People in this age group are of childbearing age and include many young families looking for affordable housing choices, good schools, and quality of life amenities such as parks and recreation opportunities.

CHAPTER 4: OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY INVENTORY AND NEEDS

The City of Evansville has an excellent, well-maintained public park system that is complemented by other public recreation spaces, school facilities, and private enterprises in the area. The following recreation areas are normally available for use by the general public, regardless of ownership, at a cost that is not considered prohibitive.

OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY INVENTORY

Parks in the City range from small, neighborhood parks to larger parks that draw regional interest with their natural beauty and variety of recreational opportunities. Table 6 on page 23 highlights each City park and its amenities, as well as the Evansville Community School District's park and recreational facilities. Map 4 shows the location of parks within the City of Evansville. A few particularly unique park and recreational facilities in the City of Evansville warrant additional mention in this chapter and are highlighted below.

Leonard-Leota Park

Leonard-Leota Park is one of south-central Wisconsin's most complete and attractive recreation areas. Lake Leota, Allen Creek, and tree cover are principal complements to the area's natural beauty. The grounds and facilities are well-maintained despite heavy use and, in some instances, advancing age. Some mature trees have come down in recent years; however, the City has undertaken efforts to plant new trees in the Park. The rock walls bordering Allen Creek, installed in a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project during the 1930's, need restoration. Some restoration work has begun, with additional restoration anticipated in the future as budget allows.



Historic stonework in Leonard-Leota Park.



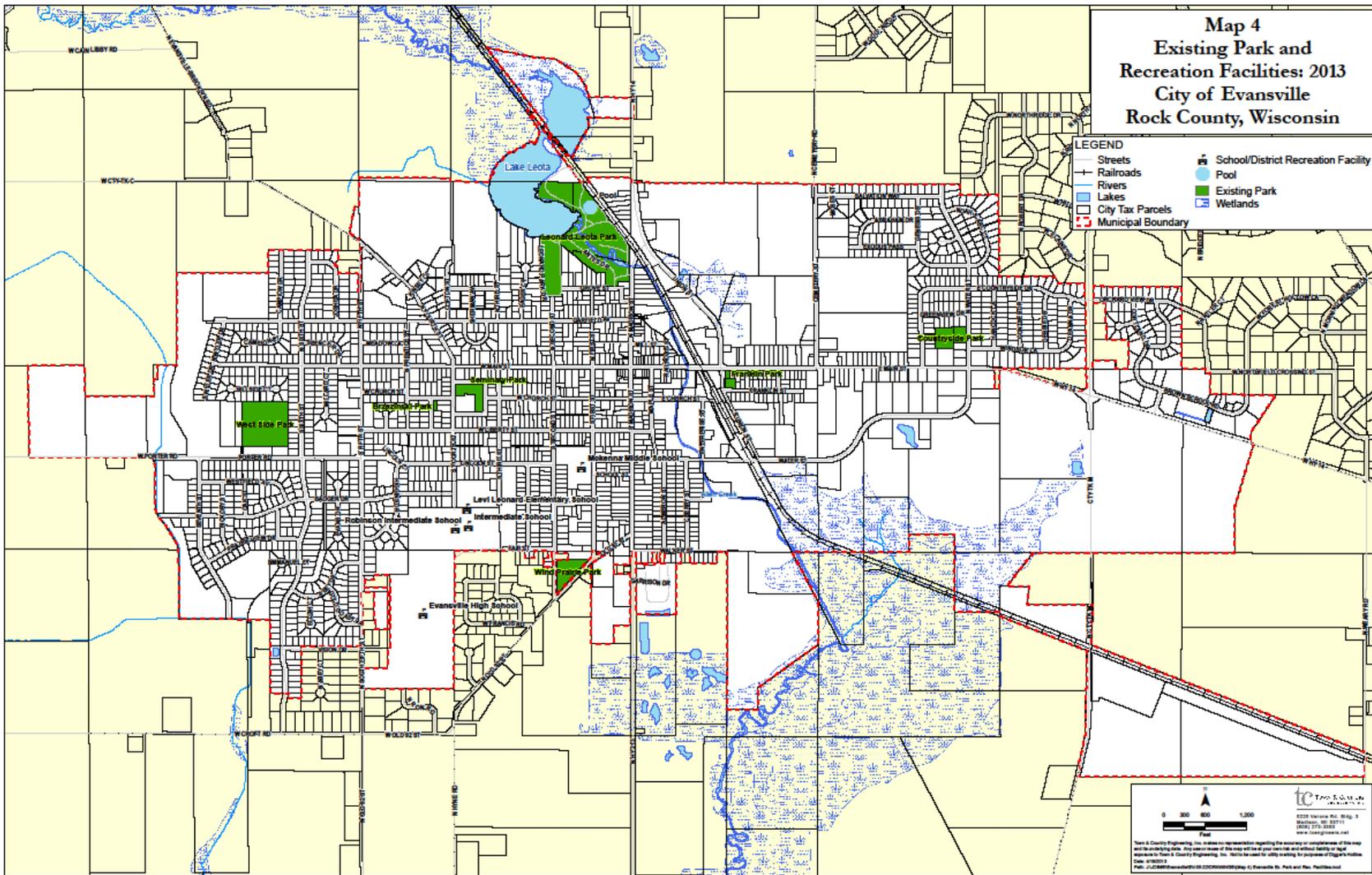
Wind Prairie Park.

Wind Prairie Park

Wind Prairie Park is a specialized recreation area consisting of an open space prairie conservation area in the southern part of the City. The area contains a variety of prairie plant species and a few trees that have been planted along the property's boundaries for screening and beautification. It also contains a windmill manufactured by one of the City's oldest businesses, the Baker Manufacturing Company.

West Side Park

Approximately 15 acres of land for a new West Side Park was acquired just prior to the City's last Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan update in 2007. Located just north of Porter Road and west of South Sixth Street, this former farm field has undergone significant park and recreation improvements since the last Plan. The last Plan included a recommended development plan for West Side Park, and about half of that recommended plan has been carried out. Soccer fields, restrooms, playground equipment, benches, and a parking lot have all been installed.



Grove Community School Forest

The Evansville Community School District started development of a unique open space amenity for the community in 2008, the Grove Community School Forest. This “outdoor classroom,” which is part of the Wisconsin School Forest program, includes two prairies and trails that wind throughout the School District’s campus. Over the past five years, volunteers in the community worked together to plant over 2,300 seedlings that were provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The planting effort is anticipated to continue into the future. Additionally, Eagle Scouts, the Lion’s Club, and other members of the community have donated and installed benches, teaching tables, and a footbridge. This special community asset is open to the public.



Bridge at the Grove Community School Forest.

Evansville Golf Club

Evansville Golf Club is a privately-owned 18-hole golf course located a short distance north of the City. It is a specialized recreation area which serves as an important source of recreation for both young and old residents of Evansville and nearby rural areas. The user fee charged by course operators is not considered to be prohibitive to those persons desiring to play golf. The Evansville High School cross-country course is also located there.

Table 6. Existing City and School District Recreation Facilities Available for Public Use in 2013

City Park Facilities	Type	Acres	Activities	Facilities
Brzezinski Park	Sub-Neighborhood	0.3	Picnicking, playground, general open-space play, and grilling	Picnic table, trash receptacle, playground apparatus, and grill
Countryside Park	Neighborhood	3.3	General open-space play, picnicking, playground, soccer, and baseball	Shelter, restrooms, picnic table, trash receptacle, playground apparatus, baseball backstop, bleachers, and soccer fields
Franklin Street Park	Sub-Neighborhood	0.6	Baseball, playground, basketball, picnicking, and general open-space play	Ball field, picnic tables, sandbox, basketball hoop on a paved playing surface, playground apparatus, trash receptacle, and grill
Leonard-Leota Park	Community	40	Nature study, softball, baseball, football, picnicking, passive recreation, tennis, horseshoes, shuffleboard, playground, basketball, biking, soccer, boating, kayaking/canoeing, skateboarding, walking, running, swimming, ice skating, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, general open-space play, and grilling	Lake Leota, swimming pool with zero-depth accessibility, picnic tables, picnic shelters, lighted ball fields, various playground apparatus, skate park, shuffleboard courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, grills, ice-skating warming house, bleachers, piers, boat launch, trash receptacle, disc golf, and electric score board
West Side Park	Community	15	Soccer, picnicking, playground, and general open-space play	Soccer fields, restrooms, picnic tables, restrooms, and trash receptacle
Seminary Park	Sub-Neighborhood	2	General open-space play and picnicking	None
Wind Prairie Park	Specialized	5.4	Passive recreation. nature study, and walking	Mowed walking path, picnic tables, and trash receptacle
City Total		66.6 acres		
School District Facilities				
School District Facilities	Type	Acres	Activities	Facilities
Levi Leonard Elementary School	Community	~3	Walking, volleyball, basketball, playground equipment, and general open-space play	Indoor multi-use facility
Theodore Robinson Intermediate School	Community	~3	Baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, tennis, and track and field activities	2 tennis courts, 2 basketball standards, 2 ball fields, playground equipment, trash receptacle, and a track and field area
J.C. McKenna Middle School	Sub-Neighborhood	2.8	Basketball, general open-space play, baseball, roller-blading, four square, and kickball	Basketball court, paved and unpaved open play space, and baseball backstop
Evansville High School	Community	~15	Soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, running, walking, and working out	Running track, football field, 2 soccer fields, three baseball fields, softball field, weight/exercise room, basketball court, and walking area
Grove Community School Forest	Community	>10 acres	Hiking, walking, and nature study	Paths, benches, and teaching tables
School Total		>24 acres	** the tilde (~) signifies an estimate rather than a measurement.	
Grand Total		>90 acres		

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City recognizes the need to assess and upgrade existing public facilities to ensure accessibility to all segments of the population. The City has gone beyond minimum Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to provide accessibility to people with disabilities; however, the following section outlines recommendations for improving access to park and recreational facilities for people with disabilities.

Brzezinski Park

There is no off-street parking and there are no sidewalks on the site. Given the small size of the site (0.3 acres), off-street parking is not feasible. A curb cut to Brzezinski Park from the street has been added. No additional improvements are recommended at this time.

Countryside Park

The Park currently has sidewalks along its western boundary. There is no off-street parking and, given the size of Countryside Park (3.3 acres), off-street parking is not feasible. A paved ramp connects the street surface with the sidewalk on the western boundary. A paved walkway connects the sidewalk with the shelter area. A parking space for persons with disabilities should be designated in front of the Park.

Franklin Park

The Park currently has sidewalks along its southern, northern, and western boundaries. There is no off-street parking and, given the size of Franklin Park (0.6 acres), off-street parking is not feasible. A curb cut to the Park from Franklin Street has been added and the play structures are adjacent to the existing sidewalk. No additional improvements are recommended at this time.

Leonard-Leota Park

Much work has been done to increase the accessibility in Leonard-Leota Park. All bathrooms in the Park and the pool are ADA accessible. The two fishing piers on Lake Leota are ADA accessible. The swimming pool has a zero-depth accessibility area and an ADA accessible lift to assist with entry into and exit from the pool. An accessible water fountain is recommended to be installed in the swimming pool area. It has been noted that the lack of curbs and steps throughout the Park and the minimal elevation changes in the lower park make the Park easier to navigate and access for people with limited mobility.



*Accessible fishing pier at
Lake Leota.*

Seminary Park

There are currently no improvements in Seminary Park, aside from mowed grass and widely spaced large trees. No active play facilities are planned. There is no off-street parking. If the proposed Evansville Peace Park is developed on this site, consideration should be made to ensure the labyrinth/walking paths are accessible for people with disabilities.

West Side Park

The newly-installed restrooms at West Side Park are ADA accessible and a sidewalk connects the restrooms to the parking lot. Two parking spaces for persons with disabilities have been dedicated in the parking lot. There is no curb dividing the parking lot and the Park facilities, and the play structure is directly next to the parking lot. If walking/bicycling paths are developed in the future, consideration should be made to ensure the paths are ADA accessible.



Parking spaces for persons with disabilities at West Side Park.

Wind Prairie Park

There are currently no improvements in this park. The park is intended to be a nature preserve and therefore active play facilities are not planned. There is no off street parking. It is recommended that discussions with the School District and officials from the senior housing units adjacent to the Park take place before any additional improvements are considered at this Park. Possible improvements to increase accessibility could include: providing a hard surfaced path throughout the Park, providing a hard surfaced path from the adjacent multiple family development to the path system, and ensuring new facilities such as benches and tables are accessible.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section uses a variety of methods to assess the community's needs and demands for additional park areas, facilities, and programs. Needs and demands were determined by comparing standards for park space, service area, and major facilities with the City's current park area, service area, and major facility inventory. Public input in many forms from the Evansville community was also used to identify more specific park facilities, improvements and programs needed and desired. The results of the public input efforts are detailed in Chapter 5.

Needs Standards

There are many kinds of parks and outdoor recreation facilities. Each specific park type, from play lots to a community park, has its own unique function. These functions are related to park size and site requirements, the mix of active and passive recreational opportunities, the age groups served, and administration.

The City's parks generally fall into several different park classifications or types, which represent the basic elements of a municipal park and outdoor recreation system.

Community parks are intended to satisfy the recreational needs of an entire City or community. Facilities provided for active recreation often include: open areas for competitive team sports, tennis courts, swimming pool, ice skating rink, and playground equipment. Passive recreation activities may be satisfied by the provision of open areas in natural vegetation, wooded areas, scenic look-outs, hiking trails, picnic areas, and park benches. Although a service area of one to three miles is indicated, there are often cases in which a major barrier such as highway, railroad tracks, or watercourse can restrict the ability to safely gain access to the facility. This barrier factor, along with site size and the provision of facilities to serve all age groups of the community, are the most important criteria to consider in providing community-wide park facilities.

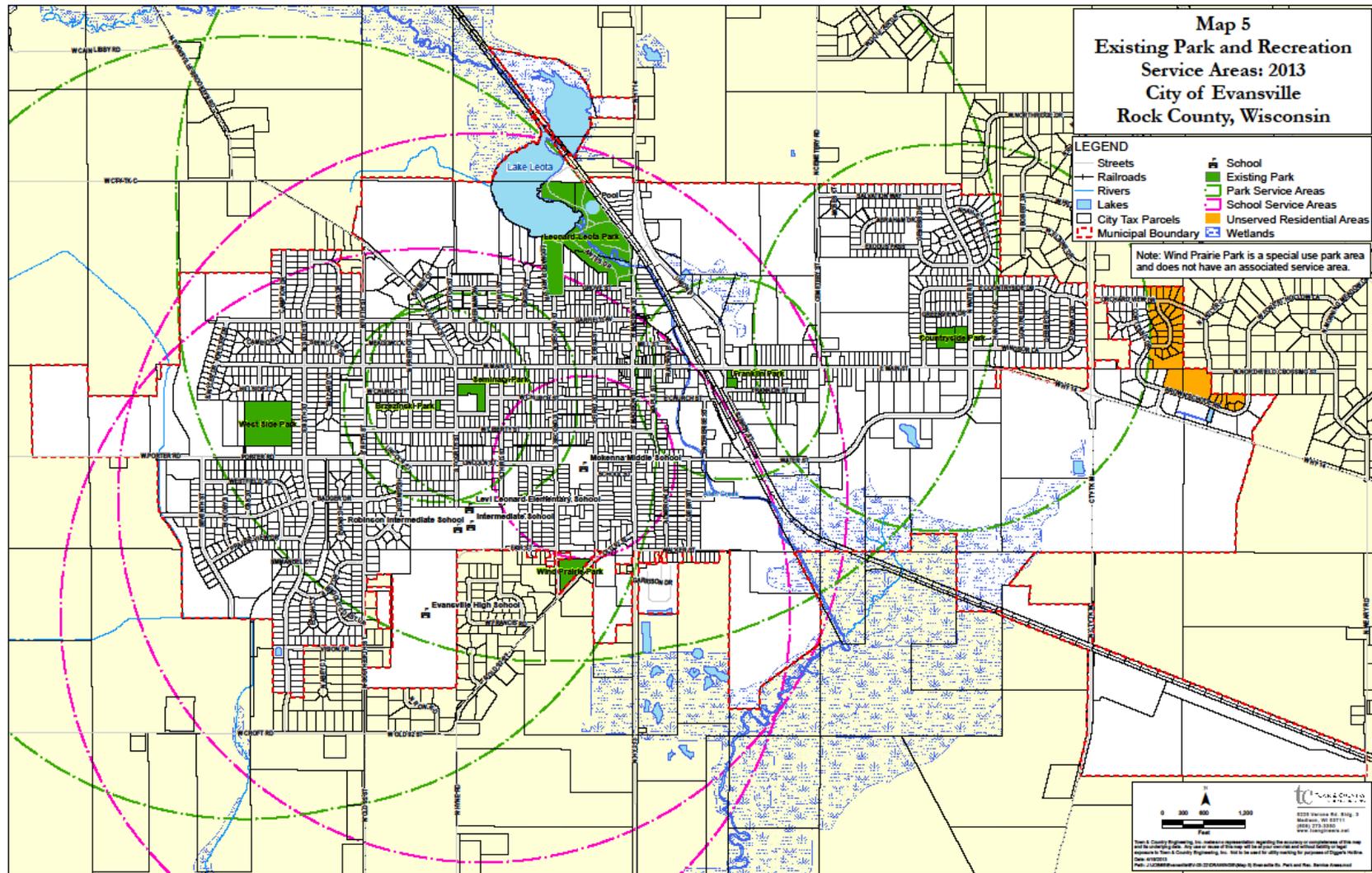
Neighborhood parks primarily serve the active recreational needs of children aged 5 to 15, although some provision should be made for adults and senior citizens in the form of passive recreation facilities such as picnic areas and park benches. Active recreational facilities provided can include: open space for field games, and fields or courts for football, softball, basketball, and tennis. An ice skating rink is one example of the kind of facilities that could be provided during the winter months. Shelter, restroom, and water facilities should also be provided. Generally, this park type is neatly manicured and landscaped, although the opportunity to acquire a parcel which includes small areas of land in a natural state should not be ignored. The service area of a neighborhood park should not exceed 5,000 people. Again, close attention should be given to the location of barriers which may limit the service area of the park. If the population exceeds the maximum limit or the presence of several barriers limits the ability of the intended population to safely gain access to the park, it may be necessary to serve the recreation needs of the area with a combination of two or more smaller sub-neighborhood parks.

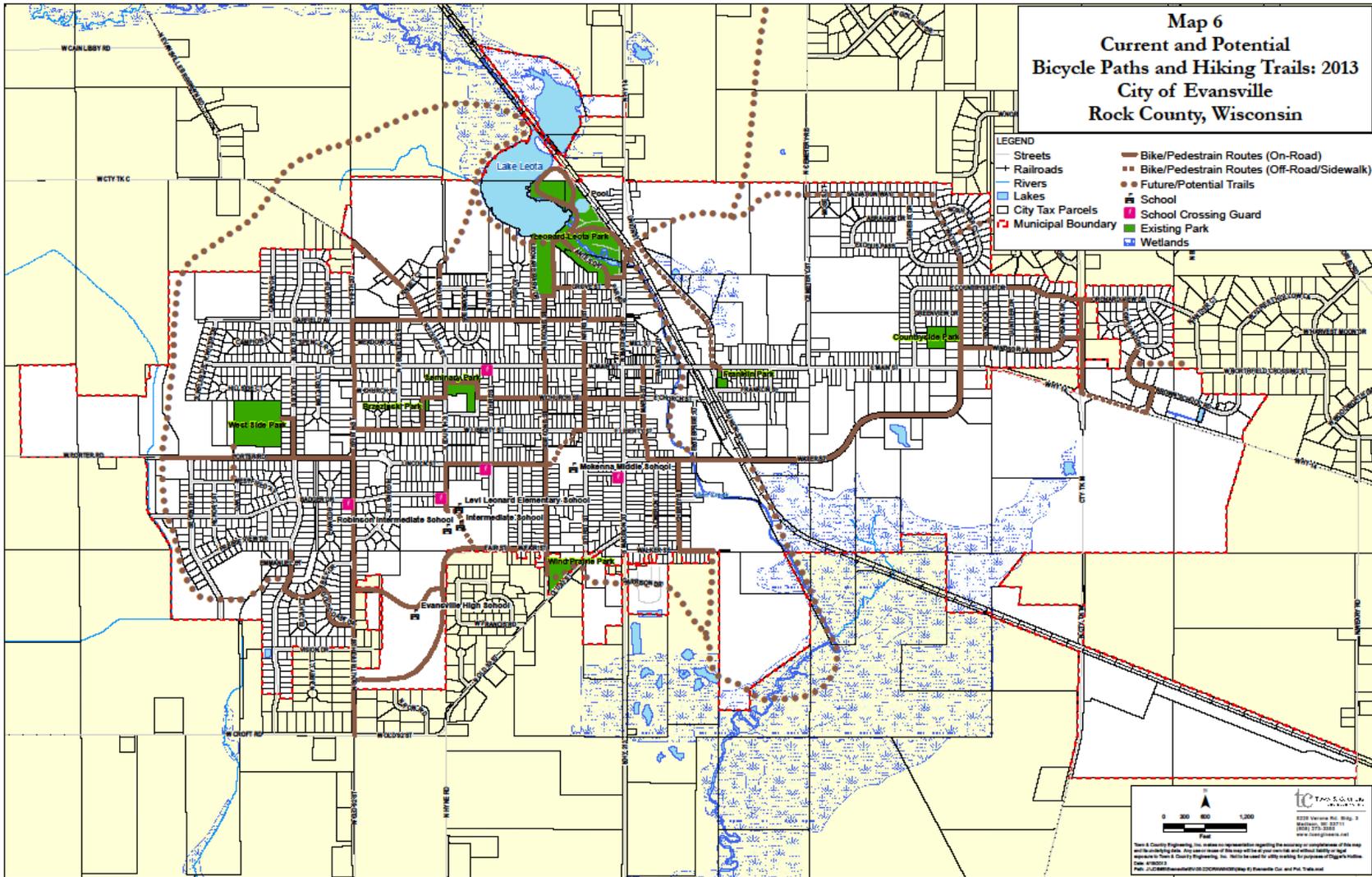
Sub-neighborhood parks represent a scaled-down version of the neighborhood park. This park type also serves the active recreational needs of the 5 to 15 age group with some provision of passive recreation facilities for the adult and senior citizen age groups. The population served and service area required generally represent half of that which is required of a neighborhood park. Sub-neighborhood parks are most often seen in urban areas where population density dictates a nearby park or where numerous barriers necessitate the decentralization of neighborhood parks into two or more sub-neighborhood units.

In addition to the multi-use parks described above, **specialized recreational areas** may be provided depending on the activities or environment of an area. For example, a city may have a nature preserve because a local parcel having unique natural features was available. Some specialized areas include golf courses, historic sites, conservancy areas, bathing beaches, or boat marinas. Most of these have limited use or are not always available to the public. Still, it must be realized that these specialized areas are important adjuncts to a community and its parks program.

Trails and paths are another type of recreational area. Roadways serve as the backbone of the bike path system. Most local streets are suitable for bicycling without special accommodations for bicyclists. Sidewalks along streets provide the backbone for the pedestrian system for the same reason that roadways serve the bicyclists. Most destinations that pedestrians want to reach are located along sidewalks. Multi-use trails for bicyclists and pedestrians can supplement the roadway/sidewalk system to improve connections within and between neighborhoods, as well as along environmental corridors. Connections to regional paths and trails invite longer-distance bicycle and pedestrian recreation.

Map 5, following this page, shows the service area for each of the City's parks as well as recreational facilities maintained by the Evansville Community School District. Approximately 25 acres of residential land to the east of County Highway M lie outside a park service area. Map 6 shows current and potential bicycle paths and hiking trails in the City of Evansville.





Improvement Standards

Detailed standards for community, neighborhood, and sub-neighborhood parks have been developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Table 7 summarizes the park space needs for a community the size of Evansville and recommends standards for population served, park size, service area, and facilities.

Table 7. Park Standards

Park Type	Population Served	Recommended Size (acres)	Service Area (miles)	Recommended Facilities
Community	All Community residents, including those from the surrounding area	10 to 100	1-3	Water-related activities, competitive sports fields, picnic areas, park benches, playground, tennis court, nature-related activities, ice skating, cross country skiing, shelter, toilet, drinking water
Neighborhood	2,000 to 5,000	5 to 10	0.5	Picnic areas, park benches, playground, areas for field, softball diamond, football field, basketball court, tennis court, ice skating, cross country skiing, shelter, toilet, drinking water
Sub-Neighborhood	500 to 2,500	Up to 5	0.25	Park benches, playground, areas for field, softball diamond, basketball court, drinking water

Evansville’s parks meet most of the State recommended standards for parks of their size. The only notable exception is the lack of cross-country ski trails in the City. However, cross-country skiing is available at the Evansville Country Club and nearby Magnolia Bluff and Gibbs Lake County parks. Additionally, although formal cross-country skiing facilities do not exist there, cross-country skiing is viable at Leonard-Leota Park. Leonard-Leota Park, the City’s premier community park, has almost all of the recommended facilities. West Side Park, sized as a community park, has many of the recreational amenities recommended for a community park, such as picnic areas, a playground, benches, and a restroom. Countryside Park, the City’s only neighborhood park, currently lacks some facilities of a neighborhood park, such as a tennis court and a football field. Given its relatively small area, it is unlikely that a football field is feasible, though a tennis court might be. Brzezinski and Franklin, as sub-neighborhood parks, both lack drinking water, and Brzezinski lacks a basketball court. Seminary Park currently has no amenities. Wind Prairie Park, a specialized recreation area, is a conservation area in which active play activities are not planned.

Activity Standards

An activity standard provides a way of relating the size of a recreational facility to the number of people who can use that facility without over or under-utilizing the facility.

The standard is thus a “quality” as well as “quantity” measure. Activity standards are more appropriately applied to large urban areas. In the case of smaller communities the question is not how many facilities to

have but whether to have one at all. These standards address both intensive non-resource-oriented and resource-oriented recreation activities.

Participation in intensive non-resource-oriented outdoor recreation activities including basketball, ice-skating, playfield and playground activities, softball, pool swimming, and tennis provides an individual with both the opportunity for physical exercise and an opportunity to test and expand their physical capability. Such activities also provide an outlet for mental tension and anxiety, as well as a diversion from other activities. Competition in the various intensive non-resource-related activities also provides an opportunity to share recreational experiences, participate in team play, and gain an understanding of others.

Participation in intensive resource-oriented outdoor recreation activities including camping, golf, picnicking, cross-country skiing and stream and lake swimming provides an opportunity for individuals to experience the exhilaration of recreational activity in natural surroundings as well as an opportunity for physical exercise. In addition, the family can participate as a unit in certain intensive resource-oriented activities such as camping, picnicking, and beach swimming.

Through the use of these activity standards a reasonable determination of facility needs can be made.

Land Area Needs Standards

Table 8 summarizes the current and projected gross park and open space needs for the City of Evansville. The calculations are based on the population projections shown in Chapter 2 and the gross space standard of 12 acres per 1,000 population.

Table 8. Gross Space Needs: 2015 – 2030

	2015	2020	2025	2030
Projected Population	5,763	6,295	6,804	7,281
Gross Space Standard*	69.16	75.54	81.65	87.37
Gross Space Developed	90	90	90	90
Gross Addt'l Space Needed	0	0	0	0

**Gross space standard is based on 12 acres per 1,000 people*

The amount of developed space is subtracted from the calculated standard to identify gross space needs for 2015 to the year 2030. Table 8 reveals that the City of Evansville currently has and will continue to have adequate park land area to meet gross space standards for its projected population through 2030.

As discussed earlier, park standards refer to acreage distribution, population served, and size and service area for community, neighborhood and sub-neighborhood parks. Table 9 illustrates the area needs in Evansville for the specific types of parks.

Table 9. Space Needs by Park Type: 2015 – 2030

	<i>Total Acreage (2013)</i>	Acreage Required by Projected Population			
		2015	2020	2025	2030
<i>Projected Population</i>	--	5,763	6,295	6,804	7,281
<i>Community Parks</i> , including Leota Park, Elementary, Intermediate, & High Schools, West Side Park (8 acres per 1,000 people)	76	46.10	50.36	54.43	58.2
<i>Neighborhood Parks</i> , including Countryside, & <i>Sub-Neighborhood Parks</i> , including Brzezinski Park, Countryside Park, Franklin Park, McKenna School, & Seminary Park (1.5 acres per 1,000 people)	9	8.65	9.44 (-0.44)	10.21 (-1.21)	10.92 (-1.92)

An overview of Table 9 indicates a surplus of parkland dedicated to community parks at least until 2030, with a deficit in neighborhood and sub-neighborhood parks appearing sometime around 2020. In general, the parks are distributed well throughout the residential neighborhoods. Continuing to develop the West Side Park is a project of very high priority. Franklin Park is also an important sub-neighborhood park, since it is the only open space for the residents living in the area south of East Main Street and east of South Madison Street. Both of these streets act as barriers for small children. Countryside Park and Brzezinski Park were also identified as important amenities for families with children in the neighborhoods surrounding the parks. Though not an urgent need for this five-year Plan, acquiring more land for smaller neighborhood parks should be considered as opportunities arise, in order to meet long-term needs. Additionally, if land becomes available adjacent to any City parks, City officials should consider acquisition of land to ensure existing parks can meet the needs of future residents. Once land has been developed adjacent to existing parks, park expansion becomes significantly less feasible and more costly.

CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Strategies for engaging the public in the planning process were intended to provide myriad opportunities to provide input through a variety of different forums and tools. This chapter outlines each strategy and provides an overview of the results and common themes.

PUBLIC FORUMS

The Park and Recreation Board (PRB) and City staff hosted a City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan kick-off meeting on Monday, April 8, 2013. The meeting was held at City Hall in the two hours preceding the monthly PRB meeting. Roughly 20 people attended the meeting, with a number of attendees remaining after the kick-off event to listen in on the PRB meeting. Kick-off attendees received information on the planning process, were encouraged to complete the public input survey, and had the opportunity to chat about park and recreation issues with PRB members, City elected officials, and City staff.

The City Community Development Director provided information on the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan and collected input from citizens during a number of public forums. These included the annual Earth Day Energy Fair (April 19) and the Week of the Young Child Family Night Event (April 26), both of which were held on Friday evenings at the Evansville Community School District Field House. The two primary foci of having booths at these events were to gather input from parents while engaging youth in the planning process. Children were encouraged to draw a picture of their idea for the “best park ever.” While children participated in this activity, staff spoke with parents and guardians about the planning process and recorded their input. Over 40 children drew a park-related picture, while over 25 parents provided their input through completing the survey and/or providing individual comments related to parks and recreation in the City.

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

Methodology

The primary means of gathering public input for the City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan was a 15 question survey. The survey was created using SurveyMonkey. Staff developed the survey with input from Park and Recreation Board (PRB) members. The survey was open for roughly 9.5 weeks, from Tuesday, March 12, 2013 through Friday, May 17, 2013. Originally, staff and PRB members intended for the window for survey responses to be a month; however, persistent inclement weather conditions throughout the spring resulted in a decision to extend the survey response period to better coincide with when residents were actually using City parks and thinking about park and recreation issues.

Getting the word out about the survey was critical in soliciting responses. The survey was publicized in the following locations:

- City website
- Local non-profits’ social media sites
- Emails from local park user groups, such as baseball, soccer, and swim teams
- Emails from the Evansville Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

- Public forums, including the Park Plan kick-off open house, the Earth Day Energy Fair, Week of the Young Child Family Night Event, Evansville Farmers Market, and the Ice Age Trail open house
- Eager Free Library
- City Hall
- Inserts in Evansville Water and Light utility bills
- Flyers posted at businesses and municipal facilities throughout the City
- Articles in the Evansville Review and Janesville Gazette newspapers



Youth park drawings at the Energy Fair.

While the majority of respondents completed the survey online, a number of opportunities were available for residents to complete a hard copy of the survey. Hard copies of the survey were available at City Hall, Eager Free Library, all public forums, and by request from City staff. Of the 321 people who responded to the survey, 47 respondents, or 15%, filled out a hard copy of the survey. The remaining 274 people, or 85%, completed the survey online.

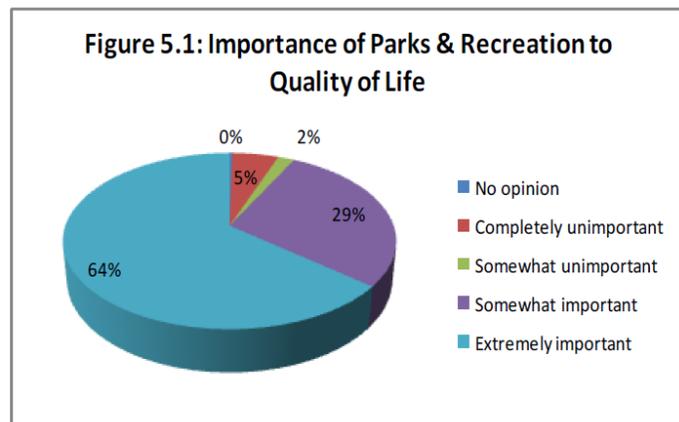
High public participation in the survey was a goal in order to achieve the best information gathering for development of the Plan. However, it is important to note that survey respondents were not a random sample, therefore the survey results cannot be considered statistically significant. All interested citizens were encouraged to complete the survey. Some participants were likely not City taxpayers. Other respondents had special interests in a specific park or sport.

Results

The following section outlines the highlights and common themes for each of the survey questions. The complete results of the survey are available by request at Evansville City Hall.

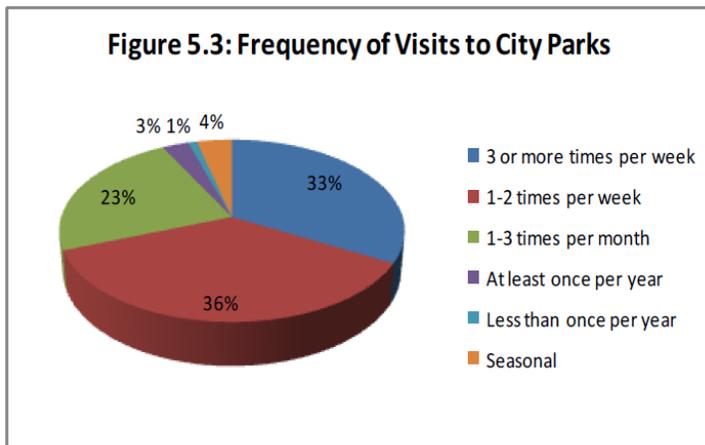
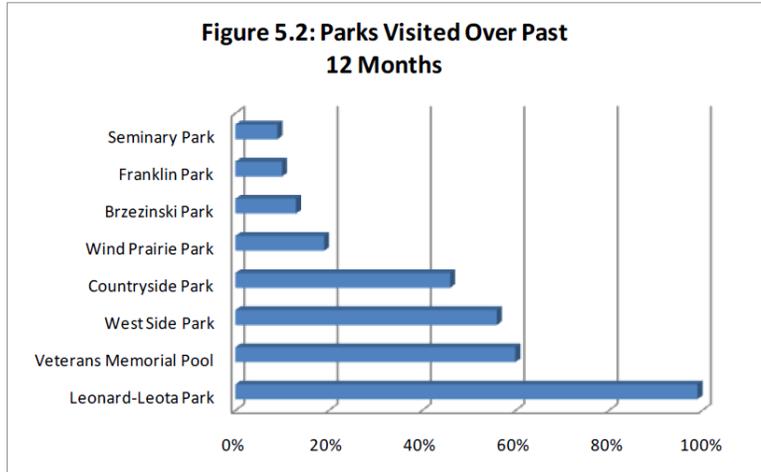
Importance and Use of Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs

Respondents to the 2013 City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan Survey overwhelmingly indicated that parks and recreation facilities are important to their quality of life. As shown in Figure 5.1, about 64% of respondents noted parks and recreation facilities are extremely important, while another 29% of respondents indicated these resources were somewhat important to them. Only 7% of respondents believed parks and recreation facilities were somewhat or completely unimportant to them and their families.



Survey results demonstrate that Leonard-Leota Park is by far the most visited of Evansville’s parks. As shown by Figure 5.2, the vast majority, about 99%, of respondents indicated they had visited Leonard-Leota Park in the past 12 months. About 60% of respondents noted they had visited Veteran’s Memorial Pool, located at

Leonard-Leota Park, in that timeframe. Roughly 56% of respondents had visited West Side Park in the past year, while about 46% had visited Countryside Park. The rest of the parks had significantly fewer respondents indicating they had visited in the past 12 months. About 19% of respondents had visited Wind Prairie Park, 13% visited Brzezinski Park, 10% visited Franklin Park, and 9% visited Seminary Park during the last year.



As demonstrated by Figure 5.3, survey respondents visit Evansville parks on a fairly regular basis. About 33% of respondents indicated that they and/or a family member visit an Evansville park 3 or more times per week. Another 36% of respondents visit a park in the City at least 1-2 times per week. Roughly 23% visit an Evansville park 1-3 times per month, while 3% of respondents make a trip to a City park at least once per year. Only 1% of respondents indicated that they and/or a family member visit an

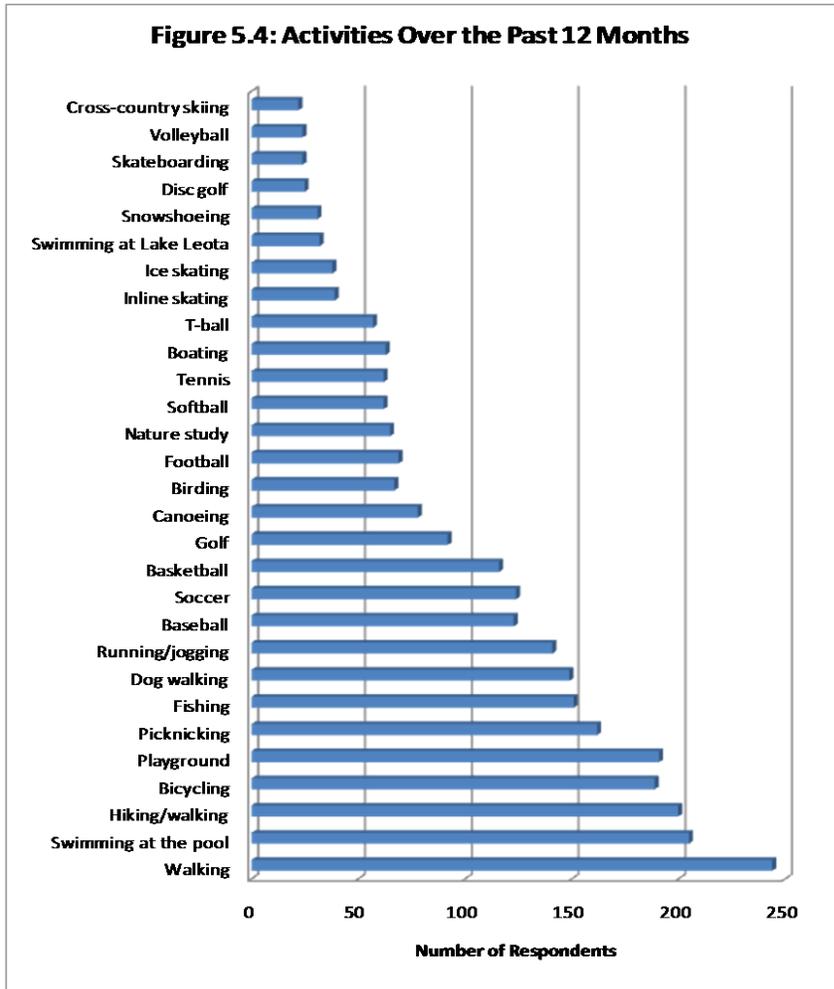
Evansville park less than once per year. Comments in the “other” section indicate that seasonality impacts the frequency of respondents’ visits to local parks, with more frequent visits during warmer months.

Survey respondents enjoy a variety of passive and active recreational activities in Evansville’s parks, as shown by Figure 5.4. Key points from the responses to the survey question asking which activities respondents and/or their families had participated in over the past 12 months were as follows:

- The most popular activity amongst survey respondents was walking, with 79% indicating they and/or a family member had participated in that activity in the past 12 months.
- Swimming at the pool was the second most popular activity, with 66% of respondents participating in that activity over the past year.
- Hiking (64%), bicycling (61%), using playground equipment (61%), and picnicking (52%) were the other activities that at least half of the survey respondents indicated that they and/or a family member had participated in over the past year.
- Fishing (49%), dog walking (48%), and running/jogging (45%) were common activities for survey respondents.
- Baseball and soccer were equally popular amongst survey respondents, with 40% indicating that they and/or a family member had participated in at least one of those activities over the past year.

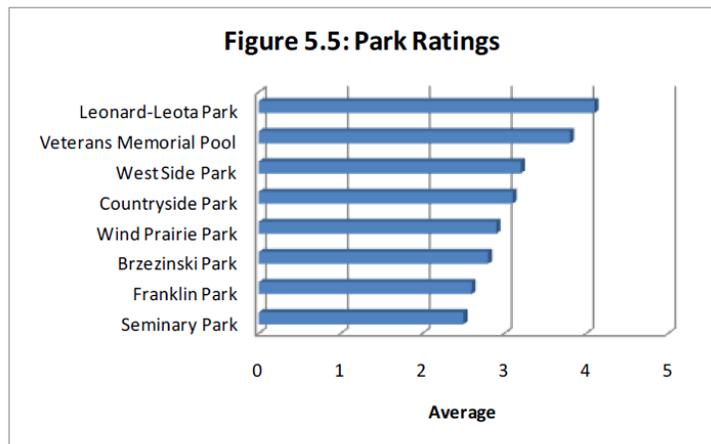
- Fewer than 40% of survey respondents and/or their family members participated in the remainder of the activities listed. The lowest levels of participation over the past year were in disc golf (8%), skateboarding (8%), volleyball (8%), and cross-country skiing (7%).

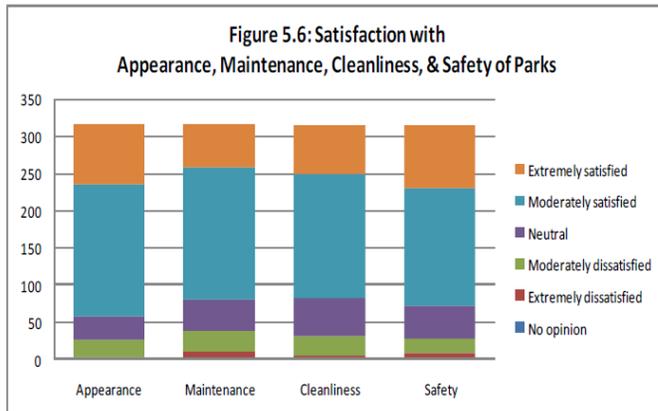
Respondents noted a number of “other” activities they had participated in, including fireworks, kayaking, attending baseball games, hunting, kite flying, driving RC cars, play dates, holidays, meditating, sledding, walking a labyrinth, sand play, horseshoes, kickball, and family reunions.



Opinions on Existing Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs

Survey respondents were asked to rate each park in the City of Evansville on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. As shown in Figure 5.5, Leonard-Leota Park received the highest marks, with an average of 4.1. Veterans Memorial Pool, located in Leonard-Leota Park, received an average score of 3.8. Respondents rated West Side Park 3.2 and Countryside Park 3.1. Wind Prairie Park scored an average of 2.9, while Brzezinski Park averaged 2.8. The lowest scores went to Franklin Park, which was rated 2.6, and Seminary Park, which scored an average of 2.5.





Overall, survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the appearance, maintenance, cleanliness, and safety of Evansville’s parks. As shown by Figure 5.6, about 81% of survey respondents were moderately or extremely satisfied with the *appearance* of Evansville’s parks. About 10% were neutral, while about 8% were either moderately or extremely dissatisfied with the *appearance* of Evansville’s parks.

Figure 5.6 demonstrates that about 74% of survey respondents were extremely or moderately satisfied with the *maintenance* of Evansville’s parks. About 13% were neutral, while about 12% were either moderately or extremely dissatisfied with the *maintenance* of Evansville’s parks.

Survey respondents were generally satisfied with the *cleanliness* of Evansville’s parks, with about 74% indicating they were extremely or moderately satisfied with the parks’ *cleanliness*. As indicated by Figure 5.6, about 16% of respondents were neutral, while another 10% were either moderately or extremely dissatisfied with the *cleanliness* of City parks.

Regarding the issue of *safety* in Evansville parks, about 77% of respondents were extremely or moderately satisfied. Another 14% were neutral, while about 9% were either moderately or extremely dissatisfied with the *safety* of Evansville’s parks.

Respondents had a number of comments pertaining to appearance, maintenance, cleanliness, and safety issues in the City of Evansville’s parks. A summary of common themes/comments, in no particular order, is as follows:

General Themes

- Maintenance and cleanliness in bathrooms needs to be improved.
- Off-leash dogs are a concern, and a leash law would be helpful.
- Goose feces are a problem in all parks, and Leonard-Leota Park in particular.
- Tree maintenance and care should be improved.
- Would like additional flowers and landscaping.
- Volunteers could be used for parks landscaping and assistance with maintenance.
- Graffiti is an issue in all parks, and Leonard-Leota Park in particular.
- Littering is an issue.
- Woodchips need to be chips, not chopped up sticks.
- Playground equipment needs to be updated.



Graffiti in Leonard-Leota Park.

- Disrespectful youth/teenagers are a problem, particularly at the skate park.
- Recycling barrels should be added next to garbage cans.
- Staff and budget for parks maintenance should be increased.
- Capital Improvement Budget needs to be increased for park equipment replacement.
- Parks should be promoted in local/regional newspapers.
- More benches desired.
- Basketball and tennis courts need to be resurfaced.
- More grill areas desired.
- City makes a great effort to keep parks clean and safe.
- Signage should be improved.
- Accessibility for people with disabilities and the elderly should be increased.
- More baseball/softball fields are needed, and maintenance of existing fields needs to be improved.



Cracks in the tennis and basketball courts.



Countryside Park

- A new play structure, targeted for younger children, is desired.
- Park is highly-valued and used by families with young children.
- Slide, dinosaur, swings, and bathrooms/shelter are greatly appreciated.
- Existing play structure has splinters and is dangerous for small children.
- More trees are desired.



Play structure at Countryside Park.

Franklin Park

- Maintenance should be increased.
- Weeds are an issue.

Leonard-Leota Park

- Update duck houses.
- Install skylights in the bathrooms.
- Tennis courts need to be resurfaced/ improved.
- Police patrols need to be increased, particularly on-foot.
- Allen Creek's walls need to be repaired – conversely, some respondents would like to see the Creek walls be removed.
- Allowing cars to drive through the entire Park is a safety issue – many would like to see car access restricted, particularly for the 4th of July.
- Baseball diamond should have a grass infield and a fence.
- Landscaping efforts should be increased.
- Recent upgrades are great and make the park look very nice.
- Signage should be replaced with signs that better fit the historical nature of park.



Duck house at Leonard-Leota Park.

- A master plan for the Park should be developed.
- Donations should be monetary, not for additional monuments in the Park.

Veterans Memorial Pool

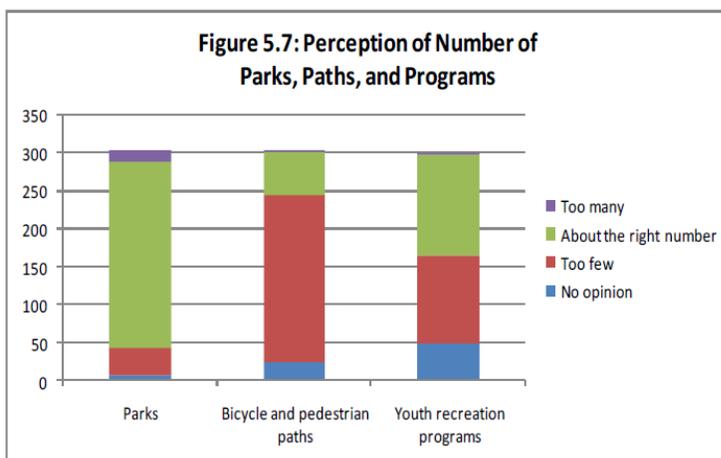
- Extend pool hours.
- Pool is very clean, well-maintained.
- Reduce prices.
- Offer a family pass, instead of just individual passes.

West Side Park

- A basketball court/hoop should be added.
- Disappointment that plans for the Park have not been fully implemented.
- Snow should not be stored in parking lot.
- A shelter is needed.
- Park needs a new name.

Appendix C provides an overview of the maintenance and operations procedures for the parks system and for Veterans Memorial Pool and the Park Store to assist in addressing these appearance, maintenance, cleanliness, and safety concerns.

Survey respondents generally seemed satisfied with the number of parks in the City. As demonstrated in Figure 5.7, about 81% of respondents believed the City had about the right number of parks. Only 5% thought there were too many parks, while 12% thought the City had too few parks. Only 2% of respondents did not have an opinion on the number of parks in Evansville.



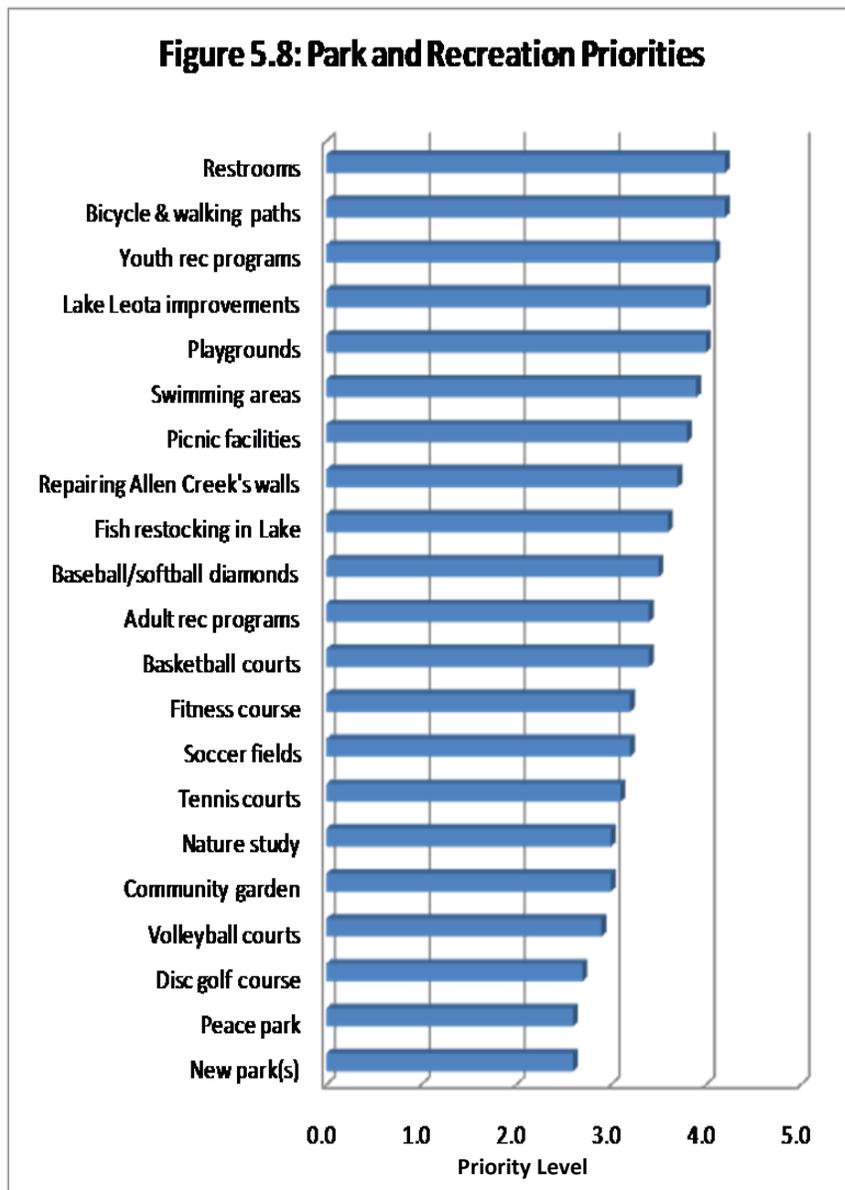
Respondents did perceive a lack of bicycle and pedestrian paths in the City, with 73% indicating that the City had too few of these amenities. As shown by Figure 5.7, about 19% believed the City had the right number of bicycle and pedestrian paths, while less than 1% thought there were too many paths. About 8% of respondents had no opinion on the number of bicycle and pedestrian paths in Evansville.

Regarding youth recreation programs, survey respondents were fairly split between thinking the City had about the right number of programs (44%) and believing the City had too few youth recreation programs (39%). As indicated in Figure 5.7, only 1% of respondents thought Evansville had too many youth recreation programs. A higher percentage (16%) of respondents expressed no opinion on this particular question.

Future Priorities for Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs

Survey respondents were asked what their priorities were for City spending on parks and recreation facilities and activities over the next five years. Each option was ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a very low priority and 5 being a very high priority. As shown by Figure 5.8, survey respondents identified restrooms and bicycle/pedestrian paths as their highest priorities, with both items scoring an average of 4.2. Youth recreation programs (4.1), Lake Leota improvements (4.0), and playground equipment (4.0) were also identified as high priorities.

Three of the next four highest priorities all related to Leonard-Leota Park - swimming areas (3.9), repairing Allen Creek’s walls (3.7), and fish restocking in Lake Leota (3.6) were all highly-rated improvements for Leonard-Leota Park. Picnic facilities (3.8) received a priority rating in the same range as the aforementioned Leonard-Leota Park improvements.



During the park and recreation planning process, both the baseball teams and soccer club were very active in promoting the survey to their respective members and voicing their desires for additional facilities to meet their sports’ needs. The public input survey results indicate that baseball/softball diamonds (3.5) are a higher priority for survey respondents than soccer fields (3.2).

Adult recreation programs and basketball courts received the same average rating (3.4), while a fitness course received a rating of 3.2 and tennis courts received a rating of 3.1. Survey respondents gave both nature study and community garden an average rating of 3.0.

Volleyball courts (2.9), a disc golf course (2.7), and a peace park (2.6) all received fairly low ratings. Survey respondents were clear on their lack of desire to see new parks developed in

Evansville, giving that option a rating of only 2.6.

Respondents were also given the option of providing their input on “other” park and recreation priorities for the City. By far, the most popular suggestion was to create a dog park. Not including this as an option in the survey was an oversight, and a dog park should have been included as a choice for this question. Other suggestions included many comments regarding a need for more baseball/softball fields, an ice skating rink, additional basketball courts, more tennis courts, more grills, implementing natural landscaping and doing shoreland restoration for Lake Leota and Allen Creek, an indoor pool, moving or removing the skate park, adding more parkland, collaborating with local groups to create and run summer programming or additional recreational programming for youth, adding interpretive signage to Wind Prairie Park and Leonard-Leota Park, adding signs with site maps in Leonard-Leota Park, developing walking/bicycling trails in and around the City, creating a campground, providing paddleboats on Lake Leota, and improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

Additional Thoughts on Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs

Survey respondents were asked to share additional thoughts on City of Evansville park and recreation facilities and programs to ensure that respondents had the opportunity to fully comment on park and recreation issues. Of the 321 people who responded to the survey, 162 people, or about 51%, answered this question. This section will provide highlights of some common themes and suggestions from the results of this question.

Category	#	Category	#
Leonard-Leota Park	48	Peace Park	5
Compliment	30	City/School Coop.	4
Baseball	29	Green Space	4
Rec Programs	29	Reforestation	4
Maintenance	28	Seminary Park	4
Pool	25	Volunteer	4
Complaint	24	Police Patrol	3
Bike/Walk Paths	23	Volleyball	3
West Side Park	23	Camping	3
Tennis	16	Community Garden	2
Dog Park	12	Info/Education	2
Basketball	11	New Park	2
Playground	9	Seniors	2
Quality of Life	9	Skate Park	2
Soccer	9	Wind Prairie Park	2
Bathrooms	8	Brzezinski Park	1
Budget	7	Fitness Course	1
Children/Families	7	Franklin Park	1
Ice Skating	6	Get Rid of Parks	1
Countryside Park	5	Indoor Sports	1
Disc Golf	5		

Comments ranged from maintenance issues at specific parks to general compliments regarding how the parks are maintained and run. Many respondents commented on the positive impacts Evansville parks played in their families’ lives. An analysis of responses to this question resulted in comments being categorized according to 41 different topics. Many comments addressed a number of different topics and were recorded under each category they addressed. Figure 5.9 shows each category and the number of comments falling under that category. Figure 5.10 shows the number of comments for the top 15 topics.

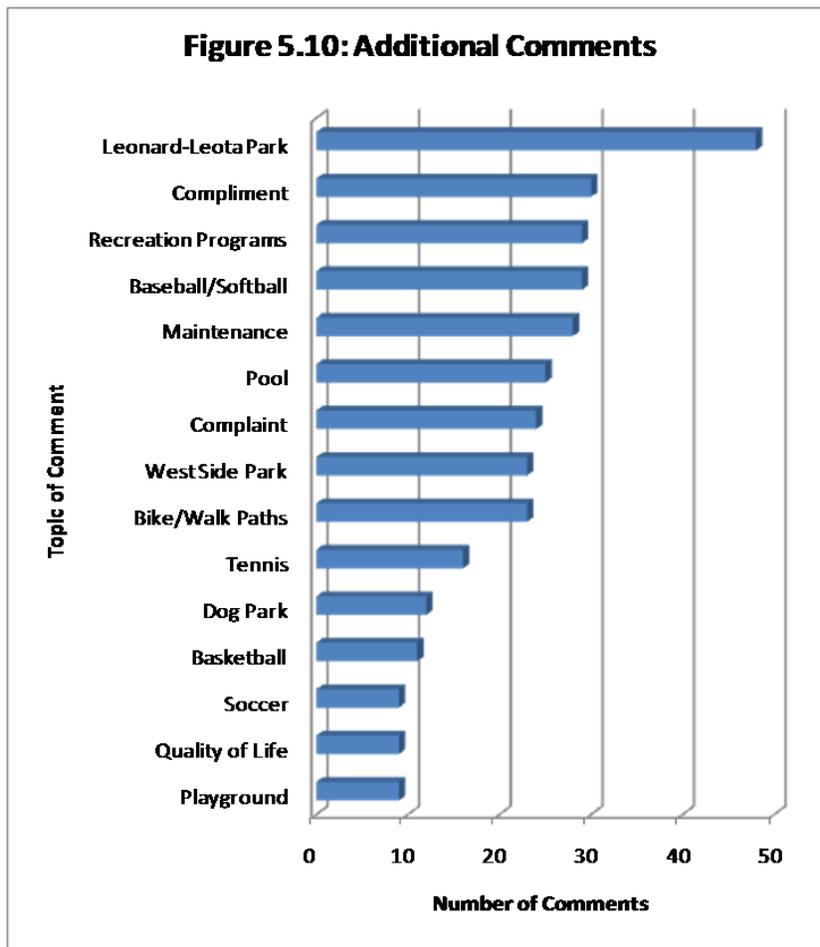
As shown in Figure 5.10, the highest number of comments, totaling 48,

related to Leonard-Leota Park. Many of those comments indicated residents' perceptions that this park is a unique and valued asset that is considered to be the heart of the community. Common themes relating to Leonard-Leota Park included:

- Restrict cars' access to the park, primarily as a safety precaution.
- Either repair or remove Allen Creek's walls.
- Improve the tennis and basketball courts.
- Deal with issues related to geese in the Park.
- Open restrooms year-round.
- Provide ice-skating on Lake Leota and open the warming house in the winter.
- Designate a swimming area, and create a beach.
- Add an outfield fence to the baseball field.
- Continue and/or increase reforestation efforts.
- Continue fish restocking efforts and enforce catch limits.
- Increase police patrols.
- Have boat/canoe/kayak rentals.
- Emphasize natural landscapes, particularly along the shoreline.
- Develop a long-term vision/plan for the Park.



On-going restoration of Allen Creek's walls.



As shown by Figure 5.10, the second highest number of comments fell into the category of compliments, with a total of 30 comments complimenting Evansville's parks. A number of these comments directly mentioned how much residents appreciate the work of the parks superintendant. Others noted the importance of the City's parks to their families and children.

The third most popular topic was recreation programs, with a total of 29 respondents making direct mention of recreation programs. Common themes included a desire for a full-time recreation director, recreational programs for adults, youth

summer programs, and a sports complex.

Baseball/softball was another primary focus of responses to this question, with 29 respondents emphasizing the importance of these sports in the community. The vast majority of comments in this category stressed the perceived need for additional facilities for these sports and support for a citizen-proposed baseball/softball complex.

Maintenance issues were frequently mentioned by respondents, with 28 comments directly related to maintenance in the parks. A few common themes included keeping restrooms clean, improving the condition of the basketball and tennis courts, cleaning up trash and litter, working with volunteer groups to undertake park clean-up projects, and repairing Allen Creek's walls.

About 25 respondents commented on Veterans Memorial Pool, with many people indicating a desire for extended pool hours, lower user fees, more collaboration with the Evansville Community School District, and an indoor pool. Many respondents also noted their appreciation for having a pool in the community.

The 24 people who had explicit complaints about parks and recreation facilities and issues in the community were primarily concerned with maintenance issues, as per the earlier discussion of maintenance in this section. Respondents were also dissatisfied with particular user groups in the parks, notably users of the skate park. Additional complaints related to a perceived lack of facilities for various sports, as well as a lack of bicycle and pedestrian trails.

As demonstrated by Figure 5.10, 23 people commented on West Side Park. Many of these comments revolved around a general desire to see the Park continue to be developed with additional facilities, including basketball courts, baseball/softball fields, picnic tables, a bicycle and pedestrian path, and a shelter.

Another 23 people commented on the general lack of bicycle and pedestrian trails in the City and the desire to see development of a trail network in and around the City. Respondents also noted a need for a trail connecting Leonard-Leota Park to the downtown, possibly along Allen Creek.

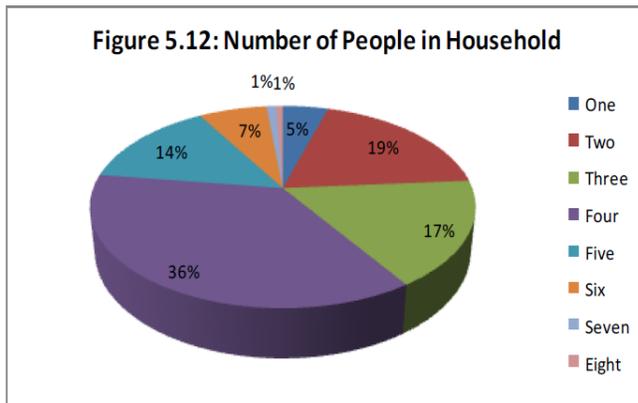
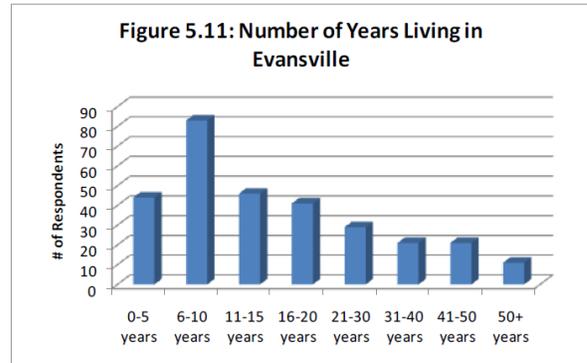
A total of 12 people directly mentioned wanting a dog park to be created in the City. This was a common theme throughout the survey.

As shown in Figure 5.9, the remainder of the topics each had fewer than 12 comments.

Demographics of Survey Respondents

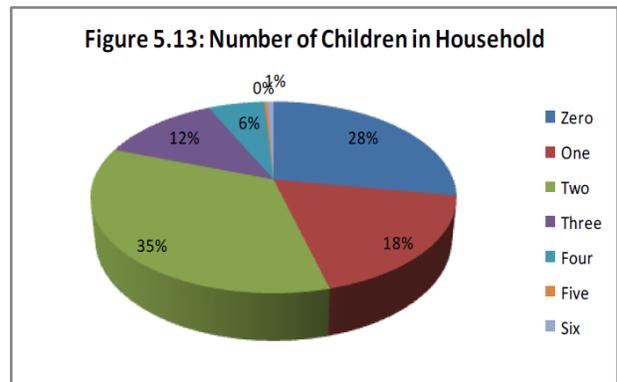
The survey asked a few questions related to demographics. The reasons for asking these questions were twofold. First, demographics are important in determining and predicting needs for various subsets of the population. For instance, families with children might be more likely to desire playground equipment and youth recreation programs than older families with grown children who are no longer living at home. Second, the responses to some of these questions could be used to compare the survey respondents' demographic characteristics to the demographic characteristics of the population of Evansville as a whole. This would help to determine if the survey sample was representative of the actual population of Evansville.

Figure 5.11 shows that over half of the survey respondents have lived in Evansville for 15 or fewer years. About 15% have lived in the City for 5 or fewer years, 28% have lived in the City for 6-10 years, and another 16% have been living in Evansville for 11-15 years. This may be indicative of new families moving to the area over the past 15 years, looking for high quality schools and recreational facilities for their children. The remaining 41% of survey respondents have lived in the City for more than 15 years.



The average number of people in survey respondents' households was 3.6. This is significantly higher than the 2011 American Community Survey estimate of 2.61 people per household. Most likely, families with children responded to the survey at a higher rate than those without children, leading to the inflated household size. As shown by Figure 5.12, about 5% of respondents had one person households, while another 19% had two people living in their household. About 17% of respondents indicated three people lived in their household, while 37% of respondents had four people living in their household. Fourteen percent of respondents had five person households, and about 9% of respondents' households were comprised of six or more people.

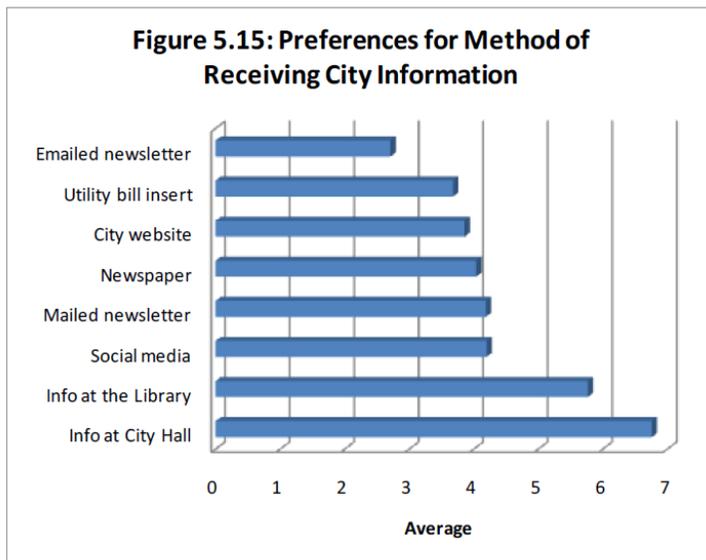
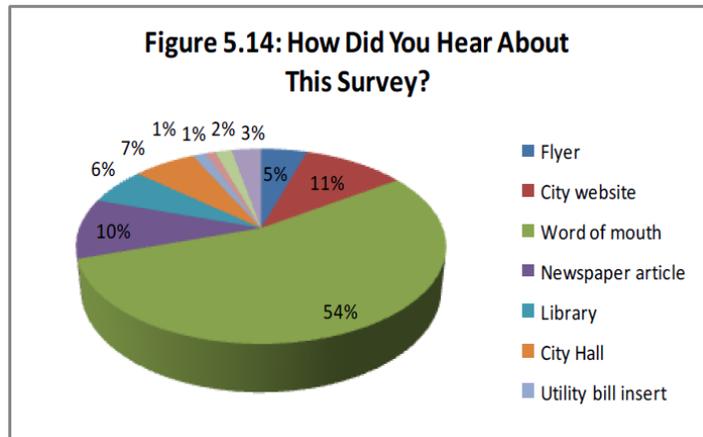
Survey respondents were also asked how many children, aged 17 and younger, lived in their household. As demonstrated by Figure 5.13, about 28% of households did not have any children under the age of 17. Roughly 18% of households had one child, while another 35% had two children. About 13% of respondents had three children under the age of 17 living in the household, while 6% had four children. Only 1% of respondents had five or more children living in the household.



Information Sharing Preferences

Two questions in the survey were intended to assist City staff and officials in determining how residents learn about City information and the best way to reach this audience in the future. In response to the question regarding where respondents found out about the survey, the majority (55%) heard about the survey through word of mouth. Various "word of mouth" methods of learning about the survey included emails from friends, notifications from sports clubs, and mentions of the survey by City officials and staff. As shown

by Figure 5.14, information on the City website (11%) and articles in local newspapers (10%) were the second and third most common way respondents found out about the survey. Information at City Hall (7%) and at Eager Free Library (6%) were also ways in which a number of respondents learned about the survey. Flyers posted throughout the City (5%), public forums such as the Energy Fair and the Week of the Young Child Family Night event (3%), Facebook (2%), utility bill inserts (1%), and at Creekside Place (1%) rounded out the remainder of ways in which respondents learned about the survey.



Survey respondents were asked to prioritize the ways in which they would like to receive City-related information in the future. On a scale of 1 to 8, with 1 being the most preferred and 8 being the least preferred, respondents indicated that an emailed newsletter (2.71) would be their top choice for receiving City-related information. As shown by Figure 5.15, the second choice was a utility bill insert (3.68), the third choice was information on the City website (3.86), and the fourth choice was information in the newspaper (4.04). A mailed newsletter (4.19) was the fifth choice and social media such as Facebook and Twitter

(4.20) was ranked sixth. Information at Eager Free Library (5.77) and at City Hall (6.76) were the least desired methods for receiving City-related information. Other suggestions included Creekside Place, local business bulletin boards, word of mouth, and Inventors and Entrepreneurs Club meetings.

PARK VISITS

Park and Recreation Board (PRB) members each selected a park to visit and record their observations. Each PRB member received a worksheet with a number of categories for which they could record information about issues relating to maintenance, safety, appearance, and other factors. PRB members completed their visits during April and May. The key observations for each park* were as follows:

Brzezinski Park

- Maintenance and cleanliness are good qualities.
- Bees in the sandbox are an issue.

- Could use a bigger swing, monkey bars, tire swing, and bigger slide.
- Neighbors indicated the park is busy during the day, and churches and daycare facilities use it.

Countryside Park

- Could use more sand around swings and play structure.
- Accessibility is excellent.
- Basketball court needs to be seal-coated. *(At the time of Plan completion, this had been accomplished.)*
- Great neighborhood park with bathroom/shelter.
- New swings and slide installed a few years ago have been a great addition.



New swings and slide at Countryside Park.

West Side Park

- Parking is an issue here, primarily during soccer games.
- Safety concerns with cars - many children biking through parking lot, lots of blind spots for drivers.
- Developing bike path through park would help alleviate conflicts between drivers and bikers/walkers.
- Very clean and playground equipment is nice.
- Accessibility for people with disabilities may be difficult.
- Only one trash can, no recycling bins.
- Park is still under development and poses a great opportunity for a “clean slate”.

Wind Prairie Park

- Some branches on trees need to be cut.
- Nice, quiet place for walking, observing plant and wildlife.

**The Leonard-Leota Park and Franklin Park visits were not completed.*

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING

The draft Plan was available on the City website from November 6, 2013 to December 11, 2013. Residents were encouraged to review the Plan and submit comments to staff. Public comments submitted included:

- In relation to recommended improvements to the upper ball diamond at Leonard-Leota Park:
 - That's awesome that they are interested in improving that [upper baseball] field.
 - The Jays do not want to imply that we are kicking soccer off the outfield grass with one of the fence options. It could be a reduced size soccer field. Nice to see that the lights are a high priority.
 - If adding a fence, make sure it adds character to the field/park by using the natural contours of the field (i.e. the one version with the soccer field).
 - Thank you for including the Evansville Home Talent baseball team (aka Jays) into and throughout the plan, especially including some of our ideas for improvements.

A public informational meeting, highlighting the City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan recommendations and soliciting residents' input on the draft Plan, was held on November 11, 2013. A total of 12 people attended. The following comments were made:

- One person noted she would like to see maintenance at Leonard-Leota Park improved, indicating that the flower beds need to either be removed or restored, the stone grill needs to be removed or restored, and dead trees need to be cut down.
- A representative from the Jays Hometown Baseball Team commented that the team was pleased to be included in the planning process and excited that some of their projects are recommended for implementation. He noted that the group wants to maintain the unique character of Leonard-Leota Park. Additionally, he noted that the baseball team wants to be respectful of soccer's needs at the upper ball diamond, and any plans for that area should include soccer in the discussions.

A public hearing on the Plan was held at the City of Evansville Plan Commission meeting on December 2, 2013. A total of 4 people attended. The following comments were made:

- Three representatives from the Evansville Soccer Club attended. Each representative made comments, with all emphasizing the fact that the Soccer Club is growing and is in need of more fields. They also noted that the Soccer Club would like to partner more with the City and provide help with maintenance and improvements. The representatives thanked the City for its support for the Soccer Club. The Soccer Club would also like to host more tournaments in the community and indicated a need for additional fields at West Side Park to help provide a centralized location for tournaments. They also noted that the Club continues to grow, while also retaining players for a longer time than in the past.
- One representative from the Evansville Tennis Association attended. He indicated that the tennis courts at Leonard-Leota Park are in disrepair. He also noted that he believes the City needs more tennis courts, at least four courts, but preferably six or seven. This would allow the school to have a tennis team and would allow for his tennis camp to accommodate more participants. He noted that the Evansville School District is the only district in the conference without a tennis team. He also noted that he believes tennis is a growing sport because it does not have the issues with injuries like football does, and it is complimentary to soccer because the seasons do not overlap. He also indicated that the US Tennis Association has grants available to pay for 20% of the cost of new tennis courts, and he would be willing to help the City secure that grant if tennis courts are constructed.

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recommendations Chapter is the heart of this park and outdoor recreation plan. It highlights the goals, objectives, policies, programs, and projects developed through this planning effort.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Outdoor recreation is recognized as a fundamental component of a productive and well-balanced life, and Evansville residents have historically placed a high value on park and recreational resources. The following goals and objectives have been developed to guide the City's efforts to positively impact residents' quality of life through the provision of park and recreational opportunities.

Goal 1: To provide a variety of high-quality active and passive recreational opportunities.

- To provide a range of recreational opportunities for different ages, interests, and needs.
- To maximize relatively scarce surface water resources of the City.
- To encourage the use of suitable commercial recreational facilities in appropriate locations in the community.
- To encourage the involvement of citizens and citizen groups in the planning and improvement of City parks.
- To promote a variety of non-motorized transportation facilities, including bicycle and walking/running paths within the City and connections to regional trail and path networks and recreational facilities beyond Evansville.

Goal 2: To preserve the natural and scenic resources for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

- To preserve environmental corridors, scenic views, and areas of ecological significance.
- To preserve currently known historic sites and anthropological sites that may be discovered in the future.
- To integrate at the policy level, recreational considerations with other planning considerations such as land use.
- To encourage conservation practices that improve the quality of the land and water.
- To preserve wetlands in their natural state.
- To encourage uses of land and other natural resources which are in accordance with their character and adaptability.
- To enhance the environmental assets of the City so that it continues to be an attractive place to live.

Goal 3: To provide park and recreational facilities in locations throughout the community to ensure accessibility for all citizens.

- To provide adequate and easily accessible recreational facilities and parkland throughout the City.
- To acquire and develop appropriate land to meet the recreational needs of a growing City.
- To preserve especially suitable areas for eventual park or other recreational purposes.
- To ensure facilities are accessible for people with disabilities.

Goal 4: To fully utilize City, County, State, and Federal resources in the pursuit of the above goals.

- To utilize this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan to help prioritize limited resources.
- To leverage the recommendations in this plan to pursue funding to assist with implementation.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

While physical improvement projects are oftentimes considered to be the more exciting components of a park and recreation plan, implementing new and maintaining existing policies and programs are critical to ensuring park and recreation opportunities are available to all residents. During this planning process, a number of policies and programs were developed based on input from the public, the Park and Recreation Board, staff, the existing Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, and the City's Smart Growth Plan. The following policies and programs are recommended for implementation:

General Policies and Programs

- Encourage the Park and Recreation Board to reference this Plan during budget preparation each year.
- Provide opportunities for the Park and Recreation Board to monitor and evaluate this Plan's implementation progress.
- Update this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan every five years as required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to remain eligible for State matching funds.
- Pursue opportunities for additional partnerships between the City and School District regarding recreational facilities and programs.
- Ensure the City's parks are made available to all age groups. Areas and facilities that can support "lifetime" recreational activities should receive as much emphasis as those for team sports.
- Emphasize diversity in tree species to reduce impacts of Emerald Ash Borer, Dutch Elm Disease, and other plagues that can eradicate entire species of trees.
- Continue to fully utilize the provision for land dedication and money in lieu of parkland to implement park expansion and facility improvement within the City.
- Pursue acquisition of land adjoining any City park when this land or funding to purchase this land becomes available.
- Start a volunteer group, such as a "Friends of Evansville's Parks" group, to assist with clean-up, landscaping, beautification, and fund-raising. Encourage local service organizations, interest groups, businesses, and individuals to contribute volunteer labor and donate materials to assist in defraying costs associated with maintaining and improving park and recreation facilities.
- Support efforts to bring the Ice Age National Scenic Trail to the Evansville area.
- Make improvements to increase accessibility to City parks for people with disabilities and the elderly.
- Pursue grant funds where appropriate to stretch the City's tax dollars.
- Conduct a comprehensive inventory of all recreational facilities serving Evansville residents, including city, school, town, and county facilities.
- Continue to participate in natural resource-related programs, such as Bird City Wisconsin and Tree City USA.
- Create maps showing walking and bicycling routes throughout the City.
- Promote City parks through regional publications and websites.

Park-Specific Policies and Programs

- Continue to address the maintenance needs of Lake Leota and Allen Creek.
- Continue fish restocking efforts at Lake Leota.
- Develop a master plan for Leonard-Leota Park.
- Promote shoreland restoration and implementation of natural landscapes along Lake Leota.
- Create a fund for Leonard-Leota Park, to which people can donate money for memorials, beautification, and other projects in the Park.
- Enforce fish catch limits for Lake Leota.
- Explore strategies for mitigating problems with geese, particularly at Leonard-Leota Park.

Recreation Policies and Programs

- Ensure youth programs are provided as equally as possible for both boys and girls.
- Maintain water-based pool activities and programs.
- Maintain general recreational activities geared toward elementary and middle school children.
- Work with the Evansville School District to pool resources to provide quality programs that are well staffed and well managed.
- Maintain low fees for Veterans Memorial Pool, keeping fees close to 50% of the rolling 3-year trailing average of expenses.
- Evaluate current pool pass costs to determine if they should be modified.
- Evaluate current pool hours to determine if they should be modified.

The following policies and programs were discussed during the planning process, but were NOT recommended by the Park and Recreation Board for implementation during this 2013-2018 planning period. These policies and programs are listed in this Plan to ensure that they can be referenced in future planning efforts and determine if they are desired for implementation in future iterations of the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan.

- Explore implementation of a leash law that requires dogs to be on-leash in existing City parks.
- Improve maintenance and cleanliness in restrooms at all parks.
- Develop informational pieces about each Evansville park and its amenities.
- Explore opening park restrooms year-round.
- Enforce speed control for vehicles driving through Leonard-Leota Park.
- Explore restricting car access to certain areas of Leonard-Leota Park, particularly during the Fourth of July holiday.
- Pursue a business to locate in Leonard-Leota Park that rents canoes, kayaks, and other recreational items.
- Increase police patrols in Leonard-Leota Park.
- Hold a contest to rename West Side Park.
- Explore the feasibility of an indoor pool, in conjunction with the Evansville Community School District.
- Offer a family pass for the pool.
- Explore hiring a Recreation Director to oversee recreational programs and expand program offerings.
- Explore creating a youth summer recreation program.
- Explore developing recreational programs for adults.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY PARK

Recommendations for park improvement projects were developed using input from the public, the Park and Recreation Board, staff, the existing Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, the City's Smart Growth Plan, and State and National parks standards.

To determine the priority levels for each of the recommendations, Park and Recreation Board (PRB) members participated in a process to guide a ranking of plan recommendations. Each recommendation was rated according to three criteria, with the rating on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest. The three criteria were as follows:

- *Apparent Need/Urgency*: How urgent is the matter that this recommendation is seeking to address? Is this a safety issue that requires immediate attention? Is this an item that came up many times through public input? If so, the recommendation warranted a higher rating for the *apparent need/urgency* criterion. Does this recommendation address a longer-term item? Does the recommendation address something that did not emerge as a priority through public input? If so, the recommendation warranted a lower rating for the *apparent need/urgency* criterion. Generally, a high level of urgency = a high rating for this criterion, and a low level of urgency = a low rating for this criterion.
- *Practicality/Feasibility*: Does this recommendation seem practical to implement? Is it politically feasible? Would it be possible to find the necessary funds to implement the recommendation? If so, the recommendation warranted a higher rating for the *practicality/feasibility* criterion. Would it be difficult to secure political and/or public support for this recommendation? Would it be a hardship to find funding to implement the recommendation? Would it take many years to implement the recommendation? If so, the recommendation warranted a lower rating, such as a 1 or 2, for the *practicality/feasibility* criterion. Generally, a high level of practicality or feasibility = a high rating for this criterion, and a low level of practicality or feasibility = a low rating for this criterion.
- *Personal Preference*: How important is this recommendation to Park and Recreation Board (PRB) members? This was the opportunity for PRB members to weigh in on their own personal priorities for the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan. Generally, a high level of personal interest = a high rating for this criterion, and a low level of personal interest = a low rating for this criterion.

Each PRB members' responses were then averaged, and every recommendation was prioritized using the resulting number. This section of the plan provides an overview of all of the physical park project recommendations addressed by the PRB members in this prioritization process. This comprehensive listing of projects is essentially a prioritized "wish list" of projects which is by no means intended to be fully implemented over the five-year planning period of this plan. The purpose of providing this list of projects is to ensure that all input gathered during the planning process is recorded so as to be monitored during future planning efforts, and to demonstrate an interest in said projects if unique opportunities might arise for implementing them. The Implementation Chapter of this plan highlights the top priorities for park projects over the five-year planning period, including the projects' estimated costs and potential funding sources.

Table 10. Comprehensive List of Recommendations by Park on the next page lists each of these recommendations in rank order, along with the score it received and its corresponding priority level.

Table 10. Comprehensive List of Recommendations by Park

Leonard-Leota Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Continue efforts to repair the walls of Allen Creek.	Very High	4.25
Install a disc golf course.	Very High	3.75
Continue reforestation efforts.	Very High	3.67
Create an ice-skating area on Lake Leota and open the warming hut for skaters to use in the winter.	Very High	3.46
Resurface tennis courts.	High	3.21
Install new lighting at the upper ball diamond.	High	3.19
Develop a walking/hiking path around Lake Leota.	High	3.13
Update the duck houses.	High	3.13
Install directional signage at the Park entrances.	High	3.08
Resurface basketball courts.	Medium	2.96
Install signage throughout Leonard-Leota Park that better fits with the historic nature of the Park.	Medium	2.92
Install an outfield fence at the upper ball diamond.	Medium	2.83
Repave Park roads.	Low	2.67
Develop additional tennis courts.	Low	2.58
Install skylights in the bathrooms.	Low	2.25
Move the skatepark to a different location.	Low	2.25
Install interpretive signage throughout the Park.	Very Low	2.17
Shift lower diamond to allow for longer fences.	Very Low	2.13
Install a shelter over the shuffleboard court.	Very Low	2.00
Develop additional basketball courts.	Very Low	1.92
Develop a beach and swimming area on Lake Leota.	Very Low	1.88
Create another exit from the Park.	Very Low	1.75
West Side Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Install additional picnic tables.	Very High	3.96
Plant more trees.	Very High	3.54
Construct a shelter.	Very High	3.33
Explore the acquisition of additional land adjacent to the Park.	Very High	3.33
Create a bicycle/pedestrian trail through the Park.	High	3.04
Develop additional parking, such as a parking lot and access point off of Porter Road.	Medium	3.01
Create baseball and softball fields.	Medium	2.96
Create additional soccer fields.	Low	2.71
Create tennis and basketball courts.	N/A*	N/A*
Brzezinski Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Install a new swing set.	High	3.29

Very High = 3.33-4.25
High = 3.04-3.32
Medium = 2.79-3.03
Low = 2.25-2.78
Very Low = 1.75-2.24
Median = 2.96

**Table 10. Comprehensive List of Recommendations by Park -
continued from previous page**

Countryside Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Identify a handicapped parking space on Countryside Drive in front of the Park.	Very High	3.75
Plant more trees.	Medium	2.92
Landscape along south fence of the Park.	Low	2.67
Install a new play structure.	Low	2.38
Franklin Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Install a “gateway” to City sign, information kiosk, and shelter.	Medium	2.79
Seminary Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Install an identification sign.	High	3.13
Develop a peace garden and labyrinth.	High	3.04
Install benches and picnic tables.	Medium	2.98
Wind Prairie Park		
Project	Priority	Score
Install permanent benches along the mowed path.	Medium	2.96
Install interpretive signage.	Low	2.58
Other New Facilities		
Project	Priority	Score
Install recycling receptacles in all parks.	Very High	4.13
Develop a network of bicycle/pedestrian paths through and around the City.	Very High	3.42
Explore possible locations for an off-leash dog park.	High	3.13
Explore possible locations for a community garden.	High	3.08
Develop a trail along Allen Creek that connects Leonard-Leota Park to Main Street.	Medium	2.92
Explore possible locations for a campground.	Low	2.29
Install more grills in City parks.	Very Low	2.13
Create a sports complex.	Very Low	2.08

Very High = 3.33-4.25
High = 3.04-3.32
Medium = 2.79-3.03
Low = 2.25-2.78
Very Low = 1.75-2.24
Median = 2.96

**This project was added to the Comprehensive List of Recommendations by the Plan Commission at the Public Hearing at the end of the planning process. For that reason, it did not undergo the rigorous review process the rest of the recommendations were subjected to during the planning process.*

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter presents the Recommended Park Improvements Plan, which highlights the top priorities for projects recommended for implementation over the five-year planning period. This plan recognizes that not all recommended improvements can be funded through tax dollars. For that reason, this chapter also explores potential local, State, and Federal sources of funding, in addition to City regulations which may assist in implementing this plan.

RECOMMENDED PARK IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

This section of the plan highlights the top priorities for park improvements, as identified by the Park and Recreation Board (PRB). As discussed in the “Recommendations” Chapter, the PRB prioritized projects based on three criteria - *apparent need/urgency*, *practicality/feasibility*, and *personal preference*. The Park Improvements Schedule highlights the top priorities for implementation, as determined during that prioritization process. Projects scoring *Very High*, *High*, and *Medium* are identified in this section.

Table 11. Recommended Park Improvements Plan highlights each project by park, provides cost estimates for the recommended projects, and identifies potential funding sources that could be pursued to assist in implementation. The projects identified in the Park Improvements Plan are intended to be a guide for PRB members, elected officials, and staff in decision-making regarding implementing park projects over the 5-year planning period. Projects are contingent upon funding source availability and will not necessarily be included in the City's annual budget and/or Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Table 11. Recommended Park Improvements Plan*

Leonard-Leota Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Continue efforts to repair the walls of Allen Creek.	Very High	\$20,000/100 feet	C, AF, P
Install a disc golf course.	Very High	\$5,100	AF, P
Continue reforestation efforts.	Very High	\$55-\$250/tree depending on size and species	C
Create an ice-skating area on Lake Leota and open the warming hut for skaters to use in the winter.	Very High	Cost of staff to operate warming hut, electricity	C
Replace 2 tennis courts and 1 basketball court.	High	\$25,000 to replace all 3 courts as one project	C
Install new lighting at the upper ball diamond.	High	\$110,400 to \$244,050, dependent upon features	C, AF, P
Develop a walking/hiking path around Lake Leota.	High	Dependent upon landowner negotiations, type of trail - rough estimate \$300,000	C, AF, P, ADLP, ADR, LWCF
Update the duck houses.	High	Unknown	C, AF
Install directional signage at Park entrances.	High	\$100/sign	C, AF
Install signage throughout the Park that better fits with the historic nature of the Park.	Medium	\$500-\$750/sign + design costs	C, AF
Install an outfield fence at the upper ball diamond.	Medium	\$10,000-\$15,000 depending on size/materials	C, AF, P
West Side Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install additional picnic tables.	Very High	\$300/picnic table	C, P
Plant more trees.	Very High	\$55-\$250/tree depending on size and species	C
Construct a shelter.	Very High	\$25,000	C, P
Explore the acquisition of additional land adjacent to the Park.	Very High	Dependent upon negotiations with landowner	C, P, ADLP, LWCF
Create a bicycle/pedestrian trail through the Park.	High	Dependent on amenities	C, P, ADLP, TAP, TE
Develop additional parking, such as a parking lot and access point off of Porter Road.	Medium	\$115,000	C
Create baseball and softball fields.	Medium	\$225,000/field (grading, fencing, infield mix, lighting, bleachers, landscaping)	C, P, LWCF
Brzezinski Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install a new swing set.	High	\$2,000-\$2,500	C, P, LWCF

**These projects are intended to be a guide for Park and Recreation Board members, elected officials, and staff in decision-making regarding implementing park projects over the 5-year planning period. Projects are contingent upon funding source availability and will not necessarily be included in the City's annual budget and/or Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.*

Table 11. Recommended Park Improvements Plan - continued from previous page

Countryside Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Identify a handicapped parking space in front of the Park.	Very High	\$100 for sign and striping on road	C
Plant more trees.	Medium	\$55-\$250/tree depending on size and species	C
Franklin Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install a "gateway" to City sign, information kiosk, and shelter.	Medium	Dependent on design and features	C, P, LWCF
Seminary Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install an identification sign.	High	\$300	C, P
Develop a peace garden and labyrinth.	High	\$90,000	P, ADLP, LWCF
Install benches and picnic tables.	Medium	\$300/table, \$500/bench	C, P
Wind Prairie Park			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install benches along the mowed path.	Medium	\$500/bench	C, P
Other New Facilities			
Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Install recycling receptacles in all parks.	Very High	\$1,800/ receptacle - \$12,600 total for one receptacle at each of the 7 parks	C, P
Develop a network of bicycle/pedestrian paths through and around the City.	Very High	Dependent on amenities and land ownership	C, P, LWCF, ADR, RTA, RPM, TAP, TE
Explore possible locations for an off-leash dog park.	High	Dependent on amenities and land ownership	C, P, ADLP
Explore possible locations for a community garden.	High	\$2,500-\$5,000 for startup costs (if land donated or already owned)	C, P, UG
Develop a trail along Allen Creek that connects Leonard-Leota Park to Main Street.	Medium	Dependent on amenities and land ownership	C, P, LWCF, ADR, RTA, RPM, TAP, TE

Funding Sources Legend:

C=City Funds

AF=Antes Fund

P=Private Donations

ADLP=Acquisition & Development of Local Parks

UR=Urban Rivers Grants

UG=Urban Green Space Program

ADR=Acquisition of Development Rights Program

LWCF=Land and Water Conservation Fund

RTA=Recreational Trails Act Program

RPM=River Protection Management Grants

UFG=Urban Forestry Grants

TAP=Transportation Alternative Program

TE=Local Transportation Enhancements

As shown by the Recommended Park Improvements Plan on Table 11, improvements to the City's two largest parks - Leonard-Leota and West Side - have been identified as the top priorities. Residents continue to place a high value on maintaining the historic and natural resources of Leonard-Leota Park, through the on-going restoration of Allen Creek's walls and preservation of the natural landscape, while also creating new recreational opportunities, such as disc golf and improved tennis and basketball courts. A few projects are highlighted below to provide clarification on project parameters and the status of in-progress projects:



Allen Creek stream bank repair - fall 2013.

Repair of Allen Creek Walls - in progress

City residents and elected officials have identified the repair of Allen Creek's walls as a high priority for a number of years, and this was identified as the highest-priority infrastructure project in this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan. In 2007, the City commissioned a study by Dry Stone Conservancy Inc. to assess the condition of the stream bank retaining walls and to propose options for maintenance and repair. The original walls were installed as a Depression-era work relief project and are considered an historic feature of Leonard-Leota Park. The City has been incrementally repairing sections of Allen Creek's walls, based on the priority level identified in the Dry Stone Conservancy report, in a manner that reflects the original historic building techniques.

Disc Golf Course - in progress

The plan for the nine-hole disc golf course has been approved by the Park and Recreation Board, Historic Preservation Committee, and the State Historical Society. The majority of work on the disc golf course has been completed and the course has been open for play since mid-October 2013. The course currently has mats and baskets installed for all holes. Installation of the tee signs is anticipated for spring 2014.



New basket at disc golf course.

Upper Ball Diamond Projects*

New Lighting

Replacing or upgrading the lighting system at the upper ball diamond has been identified as a high priority project, as the existing system is outdated and not energy efficient. A variety of factors will need to be considered if this project is pursued. The cost estimates for the project will vary based on the following:

- Use of the existing cement pole bases, underground wiring, and controls/panel with the installation of 8 new 50' poles with 1500 watt metal halide sports high intensity discharge (HID) fixtures will amount to roughly \$13,800 per pole, with a total project cost of \$110,400.
- Use of the existing cement pole bases, underground wiring, and controls/panel with the installation of 8 new 50' poles with LED light fixtures will amount to roughly \$17,600 per pole, with a total project cost of \$140,800.
- New underground wiring and cement bases will add roughly \$98,000 to project costs.
- New controls/panel will add roughly \$5,250 to project costs.
- If all features are replaced, the entire project with HID lights will cost roughly \$213,650.
- If all features are replaced, the entire project with LED lights will cost roughly \$244,050.

It is important to keep in mind that LED sports lighting systems are a relatively new technology, and the cost for this technology may come down over time.

Outfield Fence

Two concepts for an outfield fence at the upper ball diamond have been proposed - Option one would allow for the continuation of soccer in the outfield, and option two would not allow for the continuation of soccer in the outfield. The material used in either concept would likely be a chain link fence. Option one, shown on Map 7, is estimated to cost between \$10,000 and \$12,000. Option two, shown on Map 8, is estimated to cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000.

**Thank you to Jays General Manager Jon Frey for his assistance in seeking concept plans and cost estimates for these projects.*

West Side Park Shelter

At the time of the writing of this Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, the City Council had budgeted \$25,000 in its Capital Improvement Plan in 2014 for construction of the West Side Park shelter. As with past parks projects, including the West Side Park bathrooms, the City has indicated an interest in collaborating with the Evansville High School to build the shelter.



*New walkway at
Seminary Park.*

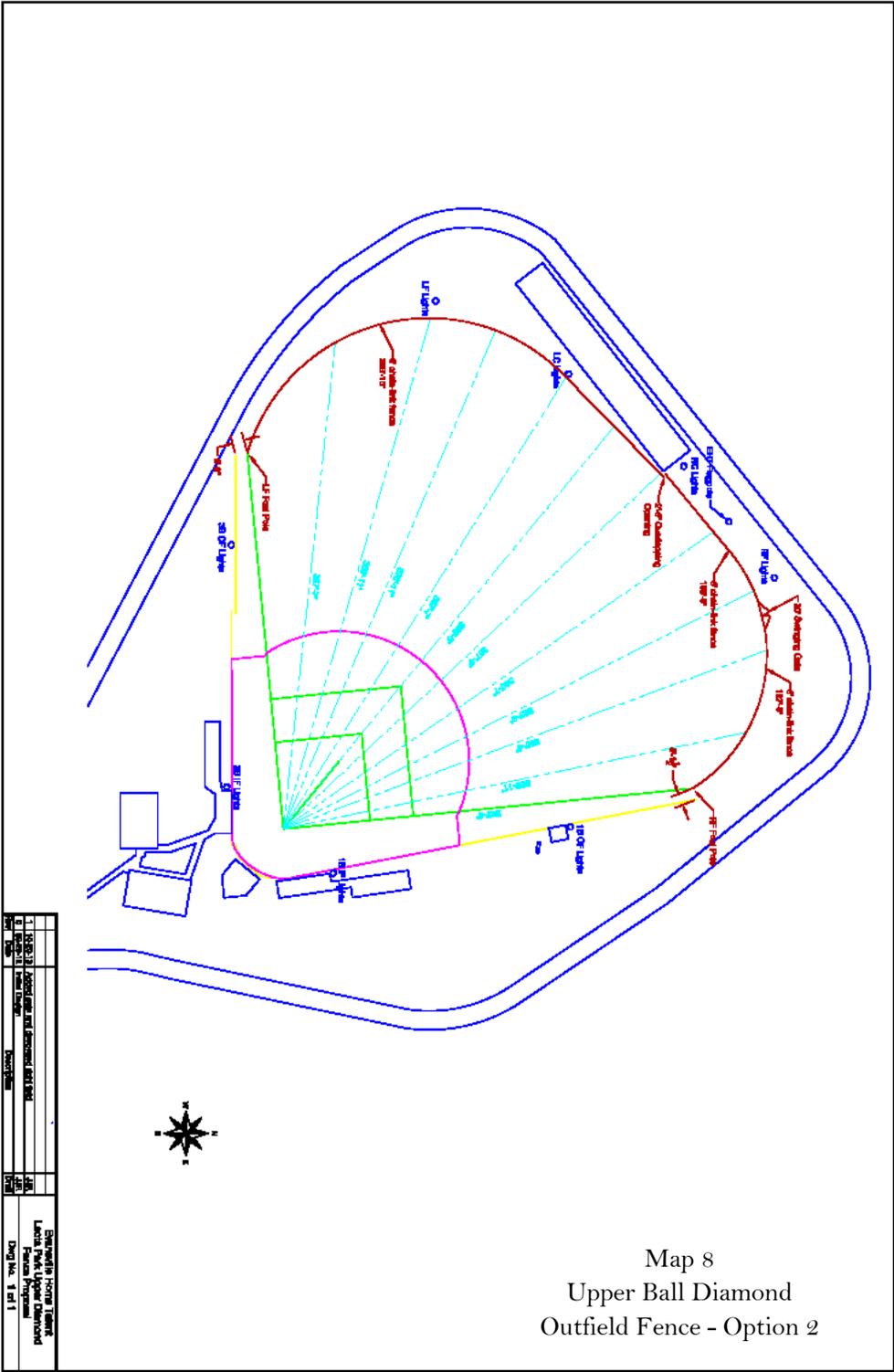
Seminary Park Peace Garden - in progress*

At the time of the writing of this Plan, the Evansville Peace Garden concept had been approved by the City of Evansville Park and Recreation Board and Historic Preservation Committee, as well as the State Historical Society. The primary walkway through the Seminary Park was completed in early October 2013. The installation of the labyrinth is anticipated for spring 2014. The approved concept plan for the project is shown on Map 9.

**Thank you to John Gishnock III for his assistance in providing the concept plan and cost estimate for this project.*

Lake Leota Hiking Path

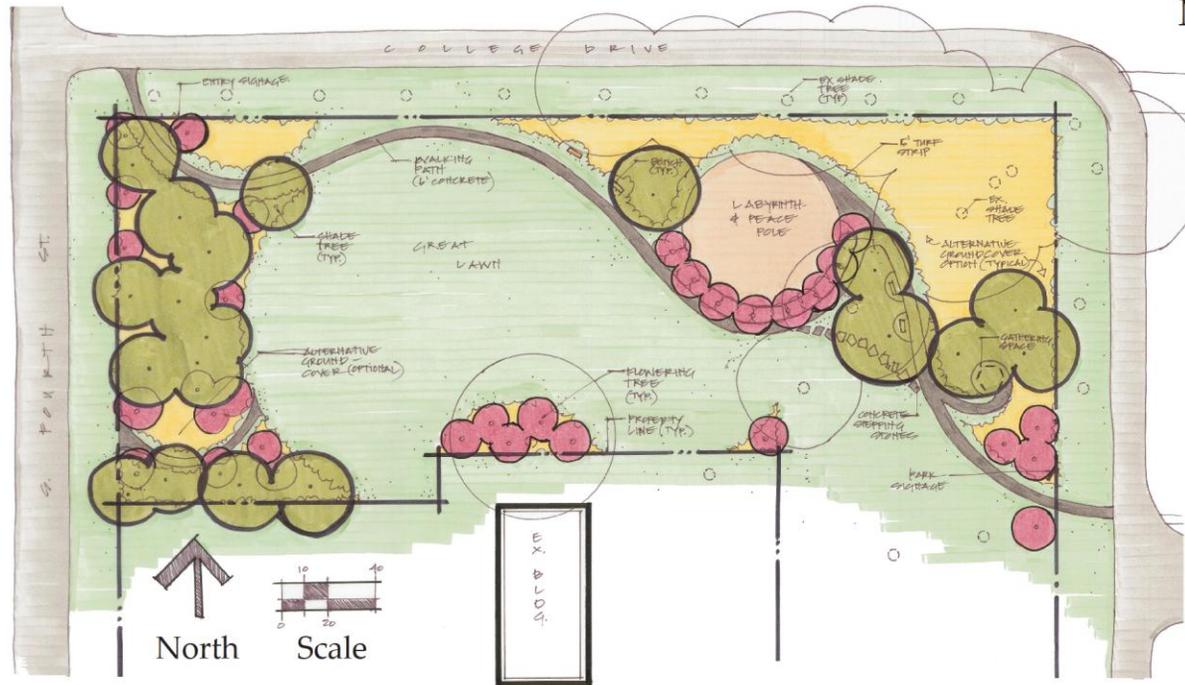
The vision of creating a walking/hiking path around Lake Leota was a common theme during the public engagement part of the planning process. The protection of the shoreline and scenic vistas surrounding the Lake would help ensure that the historic and natural character of the Park is preserved. Developing a path along the Lake would also provide additional opportunities for passive recreation within Leonard-Leota Park. To begin the process of developing a trail around the Lake, any opportunities to purchase land or easements on land surrounding Lake Leota should be pursued.



Map 8
Upper Ball Diamond
Outfield Fence - Option 2

Map 9
 Evansville Peace Garden
 Proposed Master Plan

Conceptual Landscape
 Master Plan



Evansville Peace Garden

Seminary Park, Evansville, WI 53536

formecology LLC
 sustainable outdoor living
 210 Cemetery Road, Evansville, WI 53536 / formecology.com
 w 608 882 6656 / f 608 882 6657 / info@formecology.com

Project #406-12
 3.26.13

Drawn by John J. Gishnock III & Formecology, LLC

FUNDING SOURCES

The following section provides a brief overview of a variety local, State, Federal, non-profit, and private funding sources that may be relevant for park and outdoor recreation projects encompassed within this City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan. This funding section is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all available funding sources - it is intended to serve as a starting point for developing creative funding strategies for Evansville's park and outdoor recreation projects.

Local Funding Sources

Local sources of funding for Evansville parks construction and improvements include the City Parks and Pool Budget, City long-term borrowing to finance capital improvements, fees in lieu of parkland, user fees for certain programs and activities, and donations from organizations and individuals.

As with all municipalities in this age of "lean government," the City of Evansville will be looking to public-private partnerships to fund and implement many of its parks projects moving forward. Excellent examples of cooperation between the City and local organizations already exist. A few recent examples include:

- The Evansville Home Talent Baseball Team (the Jays) has fundraised for new facilities at the upper ball diamond at Leonard-Leota Park in the past. Future projects the Jays have identified as priorities include:
 - Improve field lighting and energy efficiency.
 - Rebuild light switch shed to include equipment storage.
 - Improve dugouts and add shelter over dugouts.
 - Improve the outside appearance of the concession stand (i.e. new metal siding).
 - Install a new cement approach around the concession stand.
 - Install professional looking garbage and recycling cans.
- Save our Lake Environment (SOLE) has been stocking fish in Lake Leota.
- A group of individuals passionate about disc golf combined fundraising efforts with Antes Fund money to create a nine-hole disc golf course at Leonard-Leota Park.
- A group of citizens has been successful in raising enough money to begin implementation of a Peace Garden at Seminary Park.
- Eagle Scouts have built and installed facilities in many Evansville parks, including a fishing pier in Lake Leota, benches, bird houses, and bat houses. The Evansville Lions Club sponsors many Scout projects, and the Evansville Woodchucks have contributed their expertise to many Scout projects by mentoring Eagle Scouts through their construction of wooden structures.

Antes Fund

The City of Evansville also has access to a unique funding source for projects at Leonard-Leota Park. The Antes Fund, a trust fund established by Margaret Antes, is managed by the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin (CFSW) for improvement and beautification (not maintenance) of Leonard-Leota Park. Each CFSW fiscal year (June 30 to July 1), the Park and Recreation Board may apply to use the interest from the Antes Fund for an improvement/beautification project. The annual interest is typically around \$5,000. Funds are distributed in the form of a grant. Recently funded projects include disc golf course facilities and shoreland restoration along Lake Leota. The Evansville Fund, which is also managed by the CFSW, could

potentially be a funding source for parks project. The Evansville Fund Board has proposed contributing funds to an events sign in Franklin Park and could possibly partner on that or other projects in the future.

State and Federal Funding Sources

1. **Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program Grants** - Local units of government that have an updated comprehensive park and outdoor recreation plan, such as this City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, are eligible to apply for four Stewardship grant programs and two related Federal programs administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) under this grant program. These six funding sources are outlined below.
 - a. **Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)** - This program provides aids for the acquisition and development of local parks. Eligible projects include acquisition of land that promotes nature-based outdoor recreation, property with frontage on a water body that will promote water-based recreation, lands that can provide day-use picnic areas, and land for nature-based recreation trails.
 - b. **Urban Rivers (UR) Grants Program** - The program provides up to 50 percent of matching funds for the acquisition of land or rights on land on or adjacent to rivers that flow through urban areas. The intention of the program is to preserve or restore urban rivers for the purposes of economic revitalization, encouraging outdoor recreation activities, and habitat restoration. Eligible projects include acquisition of lands that preserve natural values, providing new or expanded recreational opportunities, and acquiring blighted lands to restore and complement riverfront redevelopment.
 - c. **Urban Green Space (UGS) Program** - The UGS program is intended to provide space in or near urban areas, protect scenic or ecological features, and provide land for noncommercial gardening.
 - d. **Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)** - The goal of the ADR program is to protect natural, agricultural, and forest lands that encourage nature-based outdoor recreation through the purchase of conservation easements. Conservation easements involve compensating landowners for agreeing to limit future development on their land.
 - e. **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** - This program channels Federal funds to states to provide aids for local governmental units for acquisition and/or development of land and facilities for public outdoor recreation and open space. Cost sharing is a maximum of 50 percent.
 - f. **Recreational Trails Act (RTA)** - The RTA program utilizes Federal gas excise taxes to fund development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and non-motorized trail uses.
2. **Recreational Boating Facilities Program** - This program provides state cost sharing assistance to governmental units for feasibility studies for the development or improvement of public access to waters or harbors or access between waterways for recreational boaters. This program is administered by the State Department of Natural Resources and provides cost sharing assistance for up to 50 percent of the cost of a development project.
3. **River Protection Planning and River Protection Management Grants** - These grants are administered by WDNR. The Planning grant provides funding to help form or strengthen a river management organization, conduct river education programs, conduct river assessments, and develop plans. The Management grant provides funding for land or conservation easement acquisition, river restoration, and local ordinance development.
4. **Urban Forestry Grants** - WDNR administers three grants under this program - regular, startup, and catastrophic storm grants. The regular grants help fund municipalities' efforts to develop new, sustainable, innovative urban forestry programs. The startup grants are available to municipalities

seeking to start or rekindle an urban forestry initiative. The catastrophic storm grants are available to municipalities for tree replacement, removal, and repair following a catastrophic storm event that resulted in a declaration of emergency by the Governor.

5. **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** - This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), allocates Federal funds for transportation improvement projects that “expand travel choice, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment.” Eligible projects include planning, design, and construction of on- and off-road bicycle and pedestrian trails, environmental mitigation activities, construction of turnouts and overlook areas, management and prevention of invasive species in transportation rights-of-way, and Safe Routes to School programs.
6. **Local Transportation Enhancements (TE) and Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities (BFPF) Programs** - The TE program funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives and enhance communities and the environment. The TE program provides up to 80% of costs for a wide variety of projects such as bicycle or pedestrian facilities, landscaping, and streetscaping. The BFPF funds bicycle and bicycle/pedestrian facilities, but not facilities strictly built for pedestrian use. As the projects eligible for both the TE and BFPF tend to overlap, the application process, administered by WisDOT, is the same for both programs.

Private and Non-Profit Funding Sources

1. **Wisconsin Conservation Corps (WisCorps)** - WisCorps is a non-profit organization that engages young adults in conservation projects on public lands. A municipality, such as the City of Evansville, can hire a crew to undertake a variety of conservation projects, including trail construction, stream bank restoration, reforestation, and invasive species management. WisCorps provides the labor, tools, general project management, transportation costs, and insurance for its workers. The municipality provides the project materials, general project guidance, and a funding match to cover a portion of the crew cost, ranging from \$5,000 to \$7,000 per week of work.
2. **PeopleforBikes Community Grant Program** - This competitive grant program funds community projects up to \$10,000 or 50% of the project cost, whichever is less. Eligible projects include infrastructure for bike paths, trails, lanes, and bridges, end-of-trip facilities such as bike racks and storage, and some advocacy projects that increase ridership and investment in bicycle infrastructure.

REGULATORY STRATEGIES

A number of regulatory strategies and agreements can be used to accomplish the acquisition of lands, and for control of the use of lands. The following methods can be utilized by the City of Evansville to help implement this Outdoor Parks and Recreation Plan.

Natural Resources Zoning

Natural resources zoning may be used to protect shorelands, wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, agricultural lands, groundwater recharge areas, and recreation lands. In turn, desirable privately-owned open spaces are provided. These districts are usually more applicable in sparsely developed areas where the natural resources are still abundant, but can also be used in highly developed areas to ensure that open space is accessible to populations in these areas.

The State of Wisconsin Statutes (Section 59.97) and Administrative Code (NR 117) require shoreland, wetland, and floodplain zoning by all cities and villages. Cities and villages are responsible for zoning the incorporated areas. The purpose of these regulations is to protect the shoreline, floodplain, and adjacent wetlands of navigable waters from undesirable use and development. The City of Evansville may zone additional areas beyond those minimum requirements specified in the Statutes and Administrative Code cited above.

Easements

Open space and private land for public recreation use may be acquired through an easement. With an easement, certain rights are granted to the public and the private owner is compensated for that public use. In purchasing an easement, the public body acquires a right either to use the land in a specific manner or to restrict the use of land. For example, the rights to establish public hiking and bicycling trails or fishing access to a waterway may be purchased through easement. When the preservation of woodlands, wetlands, or other natural resources is desired, a conservation easement may be purchased. Scenic easements may be used to limit development along a highway and preserve the adjacent landscape.

Leases

Leases are similar to easements. Leases may be applied as methods to use or protect land until more permanent measures for preservation can be found. By leasing parcels of land, the land remains on the county's and community's tax rolls and can be used for public recreation and open space. However, leases can be renegotiated or not renewed by the property owner if the monetary prospects for another use prove overpowering.

Another leasing method involves outright purchase of land by the city and the city leasing it to a private party or organization with use restrictions placed on the land. Under this method, the city receives some monetary return on its investment and retains control over the use of the land.

Subdivision Regulations

Some communities require the dedication of a portion of each new subdivision for public recreation use. The amount of open space to be dedicated typically falls between five and ten percent of the total area to be subdivided. Communities are able to request fees in lieu of such land dedication, if the community feels it does not need more open space for parkland or if there is not suitable land for park space within the proposed subdivision. Such fees could be used to improve existing parkland.

According to Wis. Stat. 236.45(6)(b), "any land dedication, easement, or other public improvement fee for the acquisition or initial improvement of land for a public park that is required by a municipality, town, or county as a condition of approval under this chapter must bear a rational relationship to a need for the land dedication, easement, or other public improvement or parkland acquisition or initial improvement fee resulting from the subdivision or other division of land and must be proportional to the need." As of the writing of this plan, Evansville City ordinances required a fee in lieu of parkland of \$775.37 per single family lot and \$581.50 per dwelling unit for multi-family lots.

CHAPTER 8: FORMAL PLAN APPROVAL

CITY OF EVANSVILLE RESOLUTION #2013-15

A Resolution Adopting the City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-2018

WHEREAS, the City has maintained and periodically updated a Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan since 1994;

WHEREAS, the Plan guides the successful maintenance and improvement of the City's park and recreation system;

WHEREAS, the City values its parks system as a vital aspect of the quality of life in Evansville;

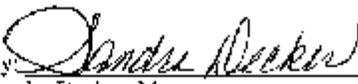
WHEREAS, development of an ongoing park and recreation plan is a prerequisite for many park related grant and loan programs; and

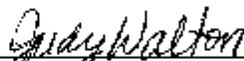
WHEREAS, after a public hearing held on December 2, 2013, in consideration of the City of Evansville Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-2018 drafted by the Park Board, the Plan Commission has recommended the adoption of the plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Evansville Common Council does hereby approve and adopt the Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-2018 for the City of Evansville, Wisconsin as its official parks plan.

Passed this 10th day of December, 2013.

CITY OF EVANSVILLE

By: 
Sandra Decker, Mayor

Attest: 
Judy Walton, Clerk/Treasurer

Introduced: 12/10/13
Adopted: 12/10/13
Published: 12/18/13

APPENDIX A: STATE STATUTES RELATING TO PARK BOARDS

Wisconsin State Statutes § 27.08 provides that any “city may by ordinance create a board of park commissioners” and further describes the powers of such a board. It is reproduced below:

27.08 City park board, powers.

27.08(1)

(1) Every city may by ordinance create a board of park commissioners subject to this section, or otherwise as provided by ordinance. Such board shall be organized as the common council shall provide.

27.08(2)

(2) The board of park commissioners is empowered and directed:

27.08(2)(a)

(a) To govern, manage, control, improve and care for all public parks, parkways, boulevards and pleasure drives located within, or partly within and partly without, the corporate limits of the city, and secure the quiet, orderly and suitable use and enjoyment thereof by the people; also to adopt rules and regulations to promote those purposes.

27.08(2)(b)

(b) To acquire in the name of the city for park, parkway, boulevard or pleasure drive purposes by gift, devise, bequest or condemnation, either absolutely or in trust, money, real or personal property, or any incorporeal right or privilege. Gifts to any city of money or other property, real or personal, either absolutely or in trust, for park, parkway, boulevard or pleasure drive purposes shall be accepted only after they shall have been recommended by the board to the common council and approved by said council by resolution. Subject to the approval of the common council the board may execute every trust imposed upon the use of property or property rights by the deed, testament or other conveyance transferring the title of such property to the city for park, parkway, boulevard or pleasure drive purposes.

27.08(2)(c)

(c) Subject to the approval of the common council to buy or lease lands in the name of the city for park, parkway, boulevard or pleasure drive purposes within or without the city and, with the approval of the common council, to sell or exchange property no longer required for its purposes. Every city is authorized, upon recommendation of its officers, board or body having the control and management of its public parks, to acquire by condemnation in the name of the city such lands within or without its corporate boundaries as it may need for public parks, parkways, boulevards and pleasure drives.

27.08(2)(d)

(d) To change or improve all parks, parkways, boulevards or pleasure drives within the city limits, controlled by the board, at the expense of the real estate to be benefited thereby, as provided in s. 27.10 (4).

27.08(3)

(3) In any city having no board of park commissioners its public parks, parkways, boulevards and pleasure drives shall be under the charge of its board of public works, if it has such last named board; otherwise under the charge of its common council. When so in charge, the board of public works or the common council may exercise all the powers of a board of park commissioners.

27.08(4)

(4) In every city having no city plan commission under s. 62.23 (1), the common council may provide that the board of park commissioners, if there be such board in the city, shall have the powers enumerated in s. 62.23 (2) and (17). The territory over which the city is given platting jurisdiction by s. 236.10 (1) (b) 2 shall for street, park, parkway, boulevard, pleasure drive and platting purposes be extended to 3 miles beyond the city limits. For the purpose of carrying out s. 62.23 (2) in said extended zone the common council may appropriate out

of any available fund a sufficient sum to be used by said board for hiring engineers, surveyors and draftsmen, and other necessary help and assistants in making a comprehensive map of the said city and zone so as to put in concrete form the ideas of the said board as to how future dedications, openings and plattings of streets, highways, boulevards, pleasure ways and parks, or other public improvements or thoroughfares, shall be made; which said map, when adopted by the common council, shall serve as an advisory guide to the said board of park commissioners in making recommendations to the common council in the future as to approving plats, and shall not be departed from except in cases of necessity or discovered error therein.

27.08(5)

(5) Whenever the common council of any city determines to improve any street, avenue or boulevard, the board of public works, or if there be no such board, the officer or officers authorized to make such improvement, may, as a part thereof set aside a portion of such street, avenue or boulevard for park purposes, and determine, subject to the approval of the board of park commissioners, if there be such a board, in what manner the portion so set aside shall be improved. The damages and benefits resulting from such entire improvement, including the cost of the improvement of the part of such street, avenue or boulevard so set aside shall be assessed to the several parcels of land affected thereby as provided by law in such city for such assessments. Any report required to be made and filed respecting such improvement shall include a detailed statement of said determination and the approval thereof by said board.

27.08(6)

(6)

27.08(6)(a)

(a) The board of park commissioners of any city may conduct public concerts within its public parks and pay the expenses thereof out of the park fund. A fee for admission may be charged for the purpose of defraying such expenses in whole or in part.

27.08(6)(b)

(b) The board of park commissioners of any city of the 1st class where there has been hitherto established a driving club or similar organization in connection with any park under the direction of said board of park commissioners may conduct horse races and driving exhibitions within its public parks and pay the expenses and cost of trophies therefore out of the park fund. A fee for admission may be charged for the purpose of defraying such expenses in whole or in part. Chapter 562 does not apply to any race under this paragraph.

Further, § 27.09 – 11 describe other aspects of the responsibilities of the Park and Recreation Board. These are not reproduced here but may be found at the following URL on the Internet.

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>

APPENDIX B: CITY OF EVANSVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION ORDINANCE

The Evansville Municipal Code Chapter 86, Section 86.31 creates a “Park and Recreation Board” of the City.

The entire Chapter 86 of the Evansville Municipal Code, which relates to parks and recreation, is reproduced below:

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Sec. 86-1. Penalty.

Except as otherwise provided, any person who shall violate any provision of this chapter shall be subject to a penalty as provided in section 1-11.

(Code 1986, § 19.15)

Sec. 86-2. Personnel.

(a) *Aquatic director.*

(1) *Appointment.* The aquatic director shall be appointed annually by the city administrator in consultation with the appropriate department head and committee.

(2) *Powers and duties.* The aquatic director shall exercise the powers and duties as authorized by the Water Safety Institute, the American Red Cross and the city administrator in consultation with the appropriate department head and committee.

(b) *Little League/softball/baseball director.*

(1) *Appointment.* The Little League/softball/baseball director shall be appointed annually by the city administrator in consultation with the appropriate department head and committee.

(2) *Powers and duties.* The Little League/softball/baseball director shall exercise the powers and duties as authorized by the park and recreation board. Those duties shall include responsibility for coordinating and scheduling all baseball and softball tournaments and the maintenance and preparation of the baseball diamonds for all scheduled ball games and tournaments.

(Code 1986, § 19.08, Ord. 2008-23)

Sec. 86-3. Closing hours for parks.

(a) All parks shall be closed at 10:00 p.m. each day, except as otherwise provided in this section.

(b) No person shall enter, frequent or loiter in any park between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., except when public functions are being held in such park. For the purpose of this section, public functions shall constitute those functions for which the floodlights in the lower park have been turned on by the proper park officials for other public meetings, picnics or gatherings held pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. After all such occasions, no person shall remain in such park more than one-half hour after the termination of such functions or occasions.

(c) Persons or organizations desiring to hold public meetings, picnics or other public gatherings in any park which shall necessitate remaining in the park later than 10:00 p.m. shall apply for permission for such function to the chairperson of the park and recreation board or such other person as the park and recreation board may designate. Such application shall state the hour at which such function shall terminate.

(d) Park hours shall be extended to 11:00 p.m. during the summer season (June through August).

(Code 1986, § 19.02; Ord. No. 1998-8, § 1, 7-14-1998)

Sec. 86-4.

(repealed by Ord. 2008-23).

Sec. 86-5. Permit for park use.

(a) Any individual, group or organization that wishes to reserve for use any public park or park facility for any non-commercial activity, except a city ball diamond or soccer field, should make a reservation with the office of the city clerk and pay all applicable fees at least 72 hours before the event. Reservations are issued on a first come, first served basis beginning January 1 of each year. A deposit of \$100.00 shall be paid to the city clerk at the time of paying the reservation fee. The deposit shall be held until the park areas used are cleaned up and restored to prior condition to the satisfaction of the city at the conclusion of the event. Upon satisfactory inspection by the city designee, the deposit shall be returned. Should the area require cleanup or restoration by the city, the deposit shall be forfeited and any additional expenses incurred by the city shall be the responsibility of the individual, group or organization.

(Code 1986, § 19.07, Ord. 2004-15, Ord. 2008-23)

Sec. 86-6. Reservation of ball diamonds and soccer fields.

(a) Any Evansville group or organization, including public school athletic programs, the city, youth and adult baseball softball leagues, and the Evansville Soccer Club, wishing to reserve on a seasonal basis any city ball diamond or soccer field for any non-commercial activity in any city park shall make a reservation with the office of the city clerk in writing at least 30 days before the first scheduled event. The various groups or organizations may coordinate schedules between themselves prior to making reservation with the office of the city clerk; however, reservations shall be made on a first come first served basis.

(b) Any Evansville resident, Evansville group or Evansville organization wishing to reserve any city ball diamond or soccer field for any non-commercial activity in any city park shall make a reservation with the office of the city clerk not more than 29 days but at least 48 hours before the event, except as provided in paragraph (a) & (c). Any other individual, group or organization wishing to reserve any city ball diamond or soccer field for any activity in any city park shall obtain approval from the park and recreation board chairperson not more than 29 days but at least 48 hours before the event, who shall promptly communicate her or his approval of the reservation to the office of the city clerk. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis, and the reservation should be only for the hours needed.

(c) The Evansville group or organization coordinating the annual Fourth of July Celebration shall have precedence over all other individuals, groups or organizations for reservation of ball diamonds and soccer fields at Leonard Park during the days of the Fourth of July Celebration, provided the reservation is submitted to the office of the city clerk by April 15 of any given year.

(d) Any individual, group or organization that has reserved a ball diamond or soccer field shall pay a nonrefundable fee to the office of the city clerk at time of reservation. The amount of such fees shall be as established by the council from time to time by resolution and as set forth in appendix A.

(e) Upon payment of the fees, the city will furnish the use of the ball diamond or soccer field, ball diamond lights and properly maintained accessories and bases. The fees are to cover the cost of field maintenance, the cost of ball diamond preparation and utility costs.

(f) The use of the press box/concession stand and scoreboard shall require a deposit fee of \$100.00 payable upon Park Board and/or Public Safety approval to the office of the city clerk, along with the rental fee. Seasonal reservations made for use of the press box/concession stand and scoreboard requires one deposit fee and will include the use of the Oscar Dietzch shelter (when reserved with the upper ball diamond

only). The deposit will be returned, provided the area is restored to its prior condition to the satisfaction of the city after inspection by the city designee.

(g) All public school functions and public school athletic programs of the city school district, the city, the city's youth baseball and youth softball leagues, and the youth Evansville Soccer Club shall be exempt from the fees and deposit requirements under this section.

(Code 1986, § 19.04, Ord. 2004-15, Ord. 2008-23)

Sec. 86-7. Permit for commercial activities in parks.

(a) No person shall offer any merchandise for sale or operate any stand or place of business within any of the parks in the city unless he shall first have obtained a permit for such operation.

(b) Application for such permit, stating the dates and hours of operation and type of merchandise to be sold, shall be filed with the city clerk not less than 72 hours prior to the first effective date of the permit sought.

(c) Such permit may be issued by the park and recreation board, which may delegate its authority to issue permits to its chairperson.

(d) No permit shall be authorized contrary to the city's contractual obligations with the operator of the city-owned park store in Leota Park.

(e) The provisions of this section shall not apply to the sale of fermented malt beverages for which a license has been issued for a particular picnic or similar gathering pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 125.26(6).

(Code 1986, § 19.05, Ord. 2008-23)

Sec. 86-8. Operation of motorboats on Lake Leota.

No person shall operate a boat propelled by a motor other than an electric motor on Lake Leota.

(Code 1986, § 19.03, Ord. 2008-23)

Secs. 86-9--86-30. Reserved.

ARTICLE II. PARK AND RECREATION BOARD¹

Sec. 86-31. Established.

There is created a park and recreation board of the city.

(Code 1986, § 19.01(1))

Sec. 86-32. Membership.

(a) The park and recreation board shall consist of seven members, one of whom shall be an alderperson. The alderperson member shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, annually on the third Tuesday of April or as soon thereafter as may be practiced. The six citizen members shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the city council. Two citizen members shall be appointed annually on the third Tuesday of April for a term of three years. The terms shall expire on the third Tuesday in April of the appropriate year.

¹ **Cross references:** Boards, commissions and committees, § 2-191 et seq.

(b) When the board meets and conducts business, a quorum or majority shall be four members present and four affirmative votes.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(2), Ord. 2006-18)

Sec. 86-33. Qualifications of members.

All citizen members of the park and recreation board shall be persons with recognized experience and qualifications and shall hold office until their respective successors are selected and qualified.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(4))

Sec. 86-34. Oath of members.

Citizen members of the park and recreation board shall take the official oath required by Wis. Stats. § 19.01, which shall be filed with the city clerk-treasurer.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(5))

Sec. 86-35. Compensation of members.

The members of the park and recreation board shall be compensated as determined by the city council.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(6))

Sec. 86-36. Vacancies.

All vacancies on the park and recreation board shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as appointment for a full term.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(7))

Sec. 86-37. Removal of members.

Any member of the park and recreation board shall be removed by the mayor for cause.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(8))

Sec. 86-38. Powers and duties.

The park and recreation board shall supervise the management and operation of the parks, lakes and streams in the city as they are now or may hereafter be provided by ordinance. The park and recreation board shall also supervise the management of the city recreation department, Veteran's Memorial Pool, city Little League programs, the park store and the park maintenance department.
(Code 1986, § 19.01(3))

APPENDIX C: PARKS AND POOL MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Park Operations and Maintenance				
	November-March	April - May	June - August	September-October
Staffing Levels	Park Maintenance Supervisor	Park Supervisor and one Public Works employee as needed	Park Supervisor and two or three seasonal employees	Park Supervisor and one Public Works employee as needed
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Snow-plow park roads *General maintenance *Clean up trash as necessary *Build and repair picnic tables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Rake lawn and mow *Clean and open restrooms *Prepare flowerbeds *Clean and install playground equipment *Clean and open tennis courts *Clean creek and canals *Clean and prepare maintenance equipment *General maintenance, repair, and painting *Clean and place picnic tables *Clean and repair shelters *Turn on water by 4/15 *Clean and repair water fountains *Patch and repair roads *Clean and open maintenance area *Clean and set up grills *Clean and repair baseball/softball fields *Re-seed grass and plant new trees *Assist Pool Director with pool maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Mow and trim grass *Prune bushes and trees *Trim brush near lake and railroad tracks *General cleaning, painting, and maintenance *Water trees, shrubs, flowers as needed *Remove weeds *Place mulch around trees and shrubs *Patch creek retaining walls *Replace and repair playground equipment *Clean shelters and picnic tables *Remove trash daily *Clean and repair maintenance area *Re-gravel shoulders of park roads and parking areas *Clean and repair ball diamonds, tennis courts, and basketball court *Supervise small capital improvement projects *Assist Pool Director with general maintenance and repairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Mow and trim grass as necessary *Re-seed lawn where needed *Perform normal maintenance to grounds and equipment. *Begin shut-down of park facilities *Winterize park maintenance equipment and facilities *Prepare warming house *Shut off water and clean lines *Perform patch work on creek retaining walls *Clean and store grills, picnic tables, and trash containers *Rake leaves *Winterize park store and board up windows *Store maintenance equipment *Secure maintenance shop area *Complete capital improvement projects *Assist Pool Director as necessary

Veterans Memorial Pool and Park Store Operations and Maintenance				
	Late February - March	April - May	June - August	September
Staffing Levels	Pool Director	Pool Director and two seasonal employees	Pool Director and sixteen seasonal employees	Pool Director
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Revise pool operations manuals/forms *Revise park store operations manual/forms *Begin to advertise for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Drain and clean pool *Touch up painting of buildings/decks etc. *Repair pool surface and filtration system *Fill pool, check system and heating unit *Install ladders, boards, guard chairs and slide *Hire and train lifeguards and other seasonal employees *Send out notices to residents in Water and Light Bill *Pre-season registrations for passes and swimming lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Open pool second weekend of June *Supervise pool and park store operations according to operations manuals *Shut down pool during last week of August *Prepare budget for following year *Winterize and store equipment *Paint and clean as necessary *Storage of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Perform final repairs, maintenance and winterizing *Prepare income/expenses report on pool and park store operation *Repairs/painting in park store