

Park and Recreation Master Plan



....fulfilling THE VISION



Park and Recreation Master Plan

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Emmenegger Park

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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Introduction

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been prepared to provide the City of Kirkwood a valuable aid in continuing efforts to meet recreation needs and exceed the goals set by the Parks and Recreation Department and the citizens of Kirkwood. The Master Plan addresses:

- *Data Collection*, an understanding of the community's resources, facilities and existing conditions that influence the type, size and location of park land and facilities.
- *Plan Analysis*, the development of a program statement for the City's future needs for park land and park facilities.
- *Master Plan*, the synthesis of existing conditions and future opportunities with the identified recreation needs of the community, graphically illustrated to provide the City with general guidance to communicate and implement the Plan.
- *Implementation Strategies*, a description of the existing opportunities that will aid in accomplishing the goals of the Master Plan including the generalized impacts of achieving these goals.



Fireman's Park

This Master Plan illustrates several design concepts for mini, neighborhood, district, metropolitan parks and open space & greenway linkages throughout the community. These illustrations present the vision of the Plan and the quality of planning and design that will be required to meet the expectations of the community.

GOALS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The goals of the Master Plan are numerous and varied depending on whom or what group you ask. Several key goals include:

- *Consensus* - the development of a plan that is supported by a broad-based section of the community.
- *Direction* - the development of a plan that provides recommendations that are based on the opportunities and dynamics of the community.
- *Flexibility* - the development of a plan that allows for choices and changes to be made over time while preserving the vision of the plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN "VISION 2015"

The City of Kirkwood completed a Comprehensive Plan in April 2003 that includes sections on Kirkwood in 2000, Accomplishments of the 1984 Comprehensive Plan, Formation of the Vision 2015 Plan, Use of the Comprehensive Plan, What is the Vision, Goals, Objectives, Action Steps, and Implementation Matrix, Plan Implementation and Updating, and Land Use Plan and Policies. The Comprehensive Plan is a City-wide

plan that outlines policy decisions regarding the physical development of Kirkwood. A subsection in the Comprehensive Plan entitled “Open Space” outlines existing conditions and makes general observations and recommendations pertaining to parks and recreation issues.

The Comprehensive Plan mentions that during the visioning process used for developing that report, citizens expressed their desires for keeping Kirkwood the special community it is through the development of a series of broad goals. For Parks and Recreation, goals discussed include maintaining a quality parks system, and expanding and improving parks and recreational opportunities, including development of bikeways and hiking trails. Additionally the plan listed the following action steps:

Maintain a quality parks system and recreational opportunities.

- Use published professional practices to develop standards for necessary park and maintenance tasks.
- Integrate the maintenance standards into an annual maintenance plan prepared as part of the annual budget.

Expand the parks system and recreational opportunities.

- Develop parameters and criteria for open space land acquisition.
- Develop a map of existing open space.
- Using the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies for addressing those needs.

Develop bikeways and hiking trails.

- Develop a master plan for hiking and biking trails throughout the City.

The Vision “2015” Plan also suggests the following Open Space Land Use Policies:

- Primary development should focus on passive and active recreational uses.
- Planned development should consider impacts on open space surroundings and physical constraints of the property.
- Effectively design open space areas within residential developments to serve as landscape buffers, trail connections, streetscape elements, and separation space.
- Preserve the natural character and site features of designated open space lands.

As part of the Vision “2015” planning process, the City of Kirkwood decided to undertake a separate Urban Design Study for the downtown area which included a land use component. The study area included 155 acres bounded by Bodley Avenue on the north, Taylor Avenue on the east, Woodbine Avenue on the south, and Clay Avenue on the west. In addition to providing objectives for guiding development towards identified qualities and land uses for the community, the plan also made general recommendations regarding the maintenance and enhancement of cultural and civic uses within downtown such as parks and open



The Urban Design
Development Plan

space. Included within the plan are Design Guideline Components which cover plazas and public spaces.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will expand upon the ideas outlined in both of these plans and provide the City with a more detailed plan for parks and recreation issues.

PARK BOARD HISTORY

*Contributed by the Members
of the Working Committee*

KIRKWOOD PARK BOARD HISTORY

Kirkwood's history of parks extends back to February 28, 1870 when the first park in Kirkwood was designated at the corner of Argonne Drive and Taylor Avenue, the site today of the Kirkwood Farmer's Market. Throughout the years several efforts were made to establish parks and recreation functions in the city. These efforts included the establishment in 1926 of a "Committee on Parks and Recreation" by the Board of Alderman, but most efforts were short lived.

The first long term action came in January, 1941, when the citizens of Kirkwood passed a bond issue for purchase of park property. In February of that year, about 40 acres of land were purchased to create what is now Kirkwood Park.

On September 11, 1941 the first Kirkwood Park Board meeting was held at the Kirkwood City Hall. Under the terms of Missouri Statutes 14250 and 14252, Mayor A.S.Kinyon announced that the meeting was called for the purpose of organizing the City of Kirkwood Park Board. The nine members of the board, including Rev. A.E. Westhoff, George Meeks, Mrs. A.F Branch, Edmund J. Mack Jr., Mrs. Clarke Fiske, W.H. Hefelfinger, John F. Hoing, Mrs. Walter Wolf and J.Torrey Berger drew lots for one, two, or three year terms, with Mr. Berger being elected the board's first president. In subsequent meeting the board requested that the Board of Aldermen establish the first mill tax of two cents per one hundred dollar assessed evaluation to support maintenance of the park system.

Though Missouri statutes changed over time, the organization and operation of the Park Board continued in much the same fashion. A nine member board, serving rotating three year terms, continued to meet the third Monday of the month, a meeting time established at the first ever Park Board meeting. The board oversaw the expansion of Kirkwood Park and indeed the park system.

Recognizing a need for organized recreational activities, the Kirkwood City Council established a Recreation Commission in 1961 and hired Ms. Permelia Dunn as its first Director of Recreation. Although independent of the Park Board the Recreation Commission served an important function, especially as the city moved towards the construction of the city's community center, located in Kirkwood Park. Eventually the Recreation Commission was abandoned with the City Council and the Park Board each assuming parts of its role.

In 1982, the Park Board and City Council engaged in discussions designed to establish clear lines of authority and responsibility for parks and recreation functions. As the result of those discussions the Park

Board was charged with responsibilities associated with providing “passive” recreation. These passive activities included picnicking, hiking, and playgrounds along with maintenance of park grounds.

In 1998 the Park board was instrumental in passing the ½ cent Parks and Recreation Sales Tax. Although a substantial portion of the tax money was designated for development of active recreation facilities such as the aquatic center, the Park Board benefited from this tax by having additional funding available for land acquisition and park development.

PLANNING METHODOLOGY

The planning process began in January 2004 with the selection of Parsons to prepare the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Kirkwood. The foundation of the planning process began with the formation of a Working Committee to help guide the development of the Master Plan. Seven individuals representing appointed officials, the Park Board, City staff, and the public were contacted and asked to serve on the Committee. All candidates responded enthusiastically to the invitation to serve on the Working Committee. On January 8, 2004 the Working Committee conducted its first workshop with Parsons. The Committee adopted the purpose statement as shown in the sidebar.

From the first meeting, over a eight month period, the Working Committee, Parks Department members, appointed officials and interested citizens invested their time assisting in the development of a plan that, while may be ambitious in its recommendations, will become the standard expected by the citizens of Kirkwood.

WORK PLAN

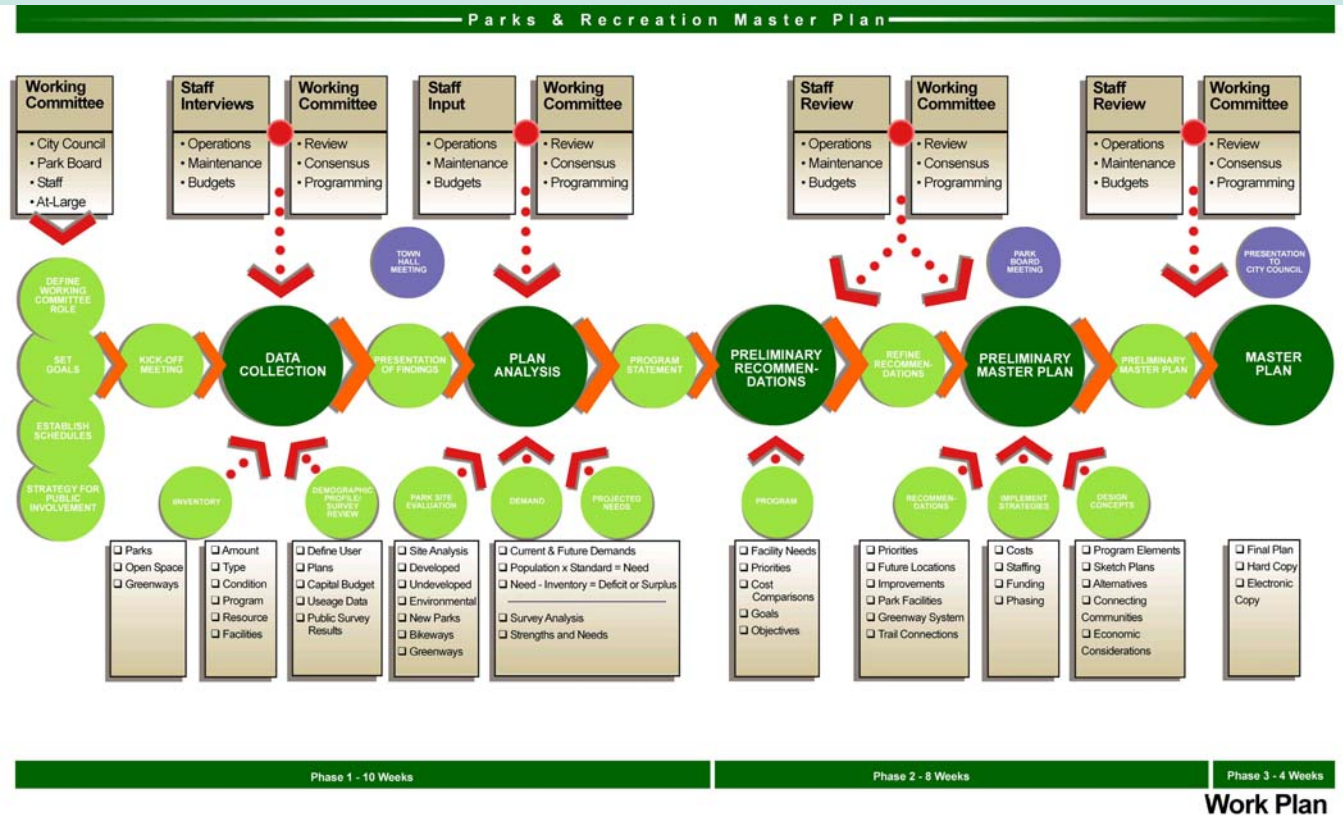
As a part of the planning methodology, Parsons prepared a Work Plan for the preparation of the Master Plan. The Work Plan was intended to aid in the Working Committees’ understanding of the planning process, and assist in the scheduling of events and activities throughout the planning period. The Work Plan was also utilized to illustrate the steps of the planning process to the public.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

“The purpose of the Working Committee is to offer the consultant planning team direction and guidance throughout the development of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Through a consensus building process, the Working Committee shall strive to develop a plan that will be presented to the public, approved by the Park Board, supported by the City Council, and ultimately implemented, thus enriching the quality of life for the citizens of Kirkwood.”

*2004 Kirkwood Parks
and Recreation Master
Plan Working Committee*

FIGURE 1-1 - WORK PLAN



Data Collection

INTRODUCTION

The Kirkwood Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed using information from a variety of sources. Among those sources were Planning Committee meetings, public forums, meetings with City officials and staff, the Kirkwood Comprehensive Plan “Vision 2015”, and the Missouri SCORP. The information from these sources was compiled and reviewed to determine the recreational needs and desires of the people in Kirkwood. The Data Collection section presents the information gathered and sets the framework for the analysis of the needs and desires identified in the Plan Analysis section of this document.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Every community is unique, and as such needs to be addressed in a manner specific to its own personality. The following information presents a snapshot in time of Kirkwood and examines the traits that contribute to the vibrant character that the City exhibits. It also illustrates demands being placed upon Kirkwood by those wishing to become a part of the community.

COMMUNITY IMAGE AND CHARACTER

Kirkwood is clearly identifiable as a community within the St. Louis Metropolitan region. Established in 1853, it includes a downtown with a “main street”, a historic train station, and distinct neighborhoods which together give it a unique small town ambiance. Like other communities within the region, Kirkwood is principally a residential community with 85% of its land used for single family residences. Supporting this is the R-7 school district and extensive park system which is the focus of this plan.



Kirkwood’s Historic Trail Station is an icon of the community.

Kirkwood’s population in 2000 totaled 27,324, down from the 1980 total of 29,987. The City’s population has remained generally stable over the last two decades however over the past 30 years (from 1970 to 2000) the distribution of the population by age has shown the following changes:

- The less than 5 age category showed a net decrease of 29%.
- The 5 to 24 age group declined a net 38%.
- The 25-44 and 45-54 age group both gained 2% over the above period.
- The 55-59 age group had a net decrease of 19%.
- The 60-64 age group had a net decline of 27%.
- The over 74% age group increase 104%.

Based on these trends, Kirkwood’s population is not expected to change significantly in the future.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Topography

The topography of Kirkwood varies between steep-sloping hills and rock cliffs to flat floodplain. The area east of the Meramec River is encompassed in floodplain. Due to its flood potential there are few developed areas along the river. The eastern areas of the City are more moderately sloping between 5% and 15% slope.

Hydrology

The Meramec River is the predominant hydrologic feature in Kirkwood, partially draining the western areas of the City. During periods of significant rainfall, the Meramec River frequently floods having a drastic effect on property within its floodplain. Since two of Kirkwood's parks are located within this area, hydrologic factors are a major influence on the recreation opportunities that these parks provide, and will be able to provide in the near future.

Geology and Soils

There are four general soil associations in Kirkwood. The principal association includes soils which are well drained and moderately well drained, formed in loess. Near the Meramec River, the soils are formed in silty material, loess, and alluvium and alluvium sediment. Generally there are no large contiguous areas which have been identified as containing soils that are unsuitable for building. However, the soil characteristics of individual sites should always be investigated during the planning and design process of any project.

Vegetation

Vegetation in Kirkwood is characteristic of the Ozark Plateau, which is dominated by Oaks with Hickory as a codominant species. Additional forest types including the Oak-Pine and Cedar are present in the region; however they are a result of microclimatic variations in Kirkwood. These vegetation types exist in mature communities throughout the City, often providing unique natural environments with future recreation, open space, and buffer opportunities, if preserved. This vegetation also gives the Kirkwood community its character as a mature well established community. As this mature vegetation ages, replacement will be an issue to maintaining this character.

COMMUNITY PARK FACILITIES

There are currently ten City parks that serve the recreational needs of Kirkwood residents. These parks include Mitchell Park, Depot Park, Fillmore Park, Meacham Park Memorial Park, Walker Park, Fireman's Memorial Park, Kirkwood Park, Greentree Park, Emmenegger Park, and Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koester Park (Quarry Park). In addition, Possum Woods Conservation Area is owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation, controlled by the Kirkwood Parks and Recreation Department but not within its city limits. Most parkland opportunities, whether provided by Kirkwood or by others, are located in the central and southern areas of the City. Refer to Figure 2-1 (Existing Community Parkland Recreation Facilities) for a listing of recreation opportunities in and near the Kirkwood community.



One example of the type of topography found within Kirkwood.



Mature vegetation which characterizes much of Kirkwood.

FIGURE 2-1 - EXISTING COMMUNITY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Kirkwood City Parks	Location	Recreation Facilities
Mitchell Park	100 Block of Mitchell Ave.	Picnic Area, Playground
Depot Park	Clay and Madison Avenues	Picnic Area, Playground, Gazebo
Fillmore Park	Fillmore and Clinton Avenues	Picnic Area, Playground
Meacham Park Memorial Park	300 Block of York Street	Pavilion, Restrooms, Basketball Court, Spray Fountain, Playground, Accessible Walking Paths
Walker Park	Washington and Taylor Avenues	Benches, Pathways, Sculptural Turtles, Drinking Fountain and Future Development Planned
Fireman’s Memorial Park	11804 Big Bend Boulevard	Natural Area
Kirkwood Park	Geyer Road and Adams Avenue	Community Center, Aquatic Center, Ice Arena, Picnic Pavilions, Picnic Sites, Hiking and Walking Trails, Lake, Athletic Fields, Tennis Courts, Amphitheater, Playground, Handball Courts, and Concessions Stand
Greentree Park	2205 Marshall Road	Picnic Pavilion, Picnic Areas, Hiking, Fishing, Athletic Fields, Boat Ramp, Trailhead
Emmenegger Park	11991 Stoneywood Drive	Picnic Pavilion, Hiking Trails
Meramec Highlands Quarry Park	1703 Marshall Road	Hiking and Walking Trail, Scenic and Interpretive Overlook

SCHOOLS

There are a number of schools that have outdoor recreation facilities within the City limits that are used by residents to satisfy their recreation demands. These facilities typically consist of playground and sports fields. When not in demand by the school, some of the associated facilities are oftentimes made available for public use. Due to the location of these schools, especially in the northern sections of the City, they contribute recreation facilities to the community in areas where park facilities currently do not exist. The benefit of such facilities is that the City is not responsible for maintaining them, yet they are contributors to the recreation demands in the City. For purposes of denotation, each school that contributes recreation facilities for community use is indicated on maps with a mini park service radius. Kirkwood Parks and Recreation has assisted with playground development at Tillman School and development of the playground and natural area at Westchester School. Some school facilities are utilized by Parks and Recreation for programming.

OTHER FACILITIES

Kirkwood is surrounded by communities that offer excellent recreation opportunities, some of which residents of Kirkwood use as a result of their close proximity to the City. Those opportunities include Des Peres City Park, Pioneer Park, Adolf Loewnau Park, Crestwood Park, Watson Trail Park, Laumeier Sculpture Park, Unger County Park, Simpson County Park, Sugar Creek Park, The Lodge in Des Peres and various other recreation facilities.

Additionally the Kirkwood community is served by Powder Valley Nature Center, a regional nature center owned and operated by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

FIGURE 2-2 - EXISTING KIRKWOOD SCHOOL OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES (PUBLIC & PRIVATE)

Kirkwood Area Schools	Location	Recreation Facilities
Keysor Elementary	725 North Geyer	Playground, Athletic Fields
North Glendale Elementary	765 North Sappington	Playground, Athletic Fields
Robinson Elementary	803 Couch Avenue	Playground, Athletic Fields, Outdoor Classroom, Pavilion, Wooded Nature Area
Tillman Elementary	230 Quan Avenue	Playground, Athletic Field
Westchester Elementary	1416 Woodgate Avenue	Playground, Wooded Wildlife Center, Athletic Fields, Outdoor Classroom
Nipher Middle School	700 S. Kirkwood Road	Athletic Fields, Track, Basketball Courts
North Kirkwood Middle School	11287 Manchester Road	Athletic Fields, Track, Basketball Courts
Kirkwood High School	801 W. Essex	Athletic Fields, Track
St. Gerard Majella	2005 Dougherty Ferry Road	Athletic Fields, Playground
St. Peters	215 North Clay Avenue	Playground
St. Louis Community College - Meramec Campus	11333 Big Bend Blvd.	Athletic Fields, Track, Arboretum Area
Vianney High School	1311 South Kirkwood Road	Athletic Fields, Track
Early Childhood Center	100 N. Sappington Road	Athletic Fields, Playground, Walking Track, Pavilion

PRIVATE (NON-PUBLIC) RECREATION PROVIDERS

There are numerous private (non-public) recreation providers in and around the Kirkwood area that contribute recreation facilities to the community. Because of high construction costs, limited special interest or infringement into the private sector market, the City continues to focus on the provision of recreation facilities that meet the demands of the majority of residents. Considering recreation demands on a regional scale and the presence of superior private sector facilities within the community, the City does not need to provide for every recreation demand. Each facility must be examined on an individual basis and weighed against the benefit the community will derive from such a facility before the City chooses to provide for a specific activity. Some examples of private recreation facilities in the Kirkwood area include nearby golf courses/driving ranges, and the Kirkwood YMCA.

SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Kirkwood is bordered by nine cities: Crestwood, Sunset Hills, Fenton, Des Peres, Frontenac, Glendale, Huntleigh, Oakland, and Warson Woods. These communities also contribute recreation facilities that help satisfy the demands of Kirkwood residents. Many of the recreation facilities are provided through individual public parks and community centers, as well as through private recreation providers.

REGIONAL GREENWAY/TRAIL SYSTEMS

The Great Rivers Greenway, formerly known as the Metropolitan Park and Recreation District, was established in November 2000 by the successful passage of the Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative ("Proposition C") in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St.

Charles County, Missouri. Great Rivers Greenway is currently funded by a 1/10th of 1 cent sales tax.



The Great Rivers Greenway “River Ring” concept will benefit Kirkwood now and in the future.

Currently, the Great Rivers Greenway is developing “*The River Ring*”, a concept of an interconnected system of greenways, parks and trails that link three counties, join two states, and cover an area of 1,216 square miles. Two components of this regional plan impact Kirkwood. The first is the Meramec Greenway component which extends along both sides of the Meramec River within St. Louis County and parts of Jefferson County. The second is the Gravois Greek Greenway component which includes Grants Trail, of which, the phase three extension will meet the Kirkwood city limits in the vicinity of Leffingwell Road and I-44. Kirkwood is therefore in the enviable position to take advantage these two regional greenway systems.

Additionally, the Meramec River Recreation Association represents a joint citizen-government cooperative action to preserve and rejuvenate the Meramec River recreation resource. The City of Kirkwood continues to be an active member of this organization.

CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY INPUT

Parks and Recreation Community Survey

The City of Kirkwood, aided by ETC Institute, conducted a Parks and Recreation Community Survey during the month of September 2001 to help determine parks and recreation priorities for the city. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from a random selected sample of residents. The major findings of the survey covered the following six topics: 1) Parks and Facilities: Usage and Satisfaction, 2) Programs: Awareness, Participation, and Satisfaction, 3) Access to Neighborhood parks and Trails, 4) Priorities for Parks and Recreation, 5) Land Acquisition Issues, and 6) Non-resident Fees and Usage.

After reviewing the results of this survey, the salient points which influenced the development of this Park and Recreation Master Plan included:

1. *Most residents use Kirkwood City Park*
2. *Kirkwood citizens use recreation programs and facilities provided by:*
 - Powder Valley Nature Center
 - Churches
 - Kirkwood YMCA
 - Local schools
3. *Maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities should be the City’s top priority over the next 10 years.*
4. *High priority for acquisition of additional land for new parks and open space areas.*
5. *Only 4% of those surveyed thought the development of new recreation facilities should be the City’s top priority.*
6. *Top 5 “Most Desirable” items that could be developed by the City:*
 - Active use trails for biking/walking
 - Nature trails for hiking, bird watching
 - Large community parks with picnic areas/fishing

MERAMEC RIVER GREENWAY OF MISSOURI

Missouri’s Ozark River Greenway is a 108 mile long corridor extending southward from the confluence of the Meramec and Mississippi Rivers in St. Louis to Meramec State Park and Forest. The original Meramec Concept resulted in the official formation on Sept. 9, 1975 as the Meramec River Recreation Area (MMRA). MMRA has evolved into a designated Greenway route that parallels the course of the Meramec River. A number of small parks and trail segments already exist along this corridor which also encloses Castlewood, Robertsville, and Meramec State Parks.

- Historic site preservation
 - Botanical gardens/preserve
7. *Funding support for the development of active use trails with existing City tax dollars that are dedicated to parks and recreation.*
 8. *Add restrooms and drinking fountains to existing City parks.*
 9. *Acquire land and leave land undeveloped and natural for future generations; and develop parks for passive uses such as trails, picnic areas, and nature centers.*
 10. *Moderate priority to acquire land to develop parks for active youth and adult team sports, such as baseball, softball, and soccer.*
 11. *Best location to acquire land for parks and open space:*
 - Meramec Highlands
 - Land along the Meramec River
 - Meramec Highlands Quarry

Stakeholder Interviews

The Planning Team conducted approximately 13 stakeholder group interviews over the two day period of February 5 and 6, 2004. The interviews were arranged by the Parks and Recreation Director and conducted at the Kirkwood Community Center. The following list contains the categories of groups, organizations, and individual types that were interviewed during this process:

- Institutional Users
- Active Recreation Users
- Open Space/Nature
- Past Park Board Members
- Recreational and City Staff
- Youth
- Park Staff
- Athletic Associations
- General Citizens
- Greentree Festival
- Walkers/Hikers/Bikers



Walker Park Public Input

Approximately 50 individuals representing these categories participated in the interviews. Each session lasted approximately 40 minutes. Every group interviewed was given a brief overview of the planning process, and how important the interviews are to that process. The participants were told that while notes were being recorded, no quotes or statements would be linked to an individual and that the comments would be recorded in general concepts not word for word record. All interviews were conducted “open door” and several citizens were in attendance for many of the interviews.

The interviews were generally based on the following questions:

1. What existing features within the Kirkwood Park System are positive elements?



Kirkwood Park Amphitheater

2. What existing features within the Kirkwood Park System are negative elements?
3. The community wide survey indicated maintenance of existing parks was a top priority. What specific maintenance items do you think should be addressed?
4. Where should the City's effort for developing biking/walking trails be concentrated?
5. Identify the top three parks within the Kirkwood Park system that you use and what improvements would you like to see made to them?
6. Where should the City's park acquisition strategies be focused?

The responses were hand written notes, then typed and edited. Edits were made for clarification and deleting material not relevant to the planning process. The responses were organized per the above stated questions; items not associated with a question were placed in the miscellaneous category.

Each person interviewed was pleasant, engaging and grateful to be a part of the process. More importantly, the majority of participants expressed their hope for a positive out come of the planning process.

The responses from those stakeholder interviews are summarized below:

What existing features within the Kirkwood Park System are positive elements?

- Diversity - "Something for everyone."
- Wide Range of Experiences.
- Trees.
- Community Center (Rink and Pool).
- Centrally Located Green Space.



Walker Lake at Kirkwood Park

What existing features within the Kirkwood Park System are negative elements?

- Parking - conflicts with community - parking in neighborhood.
- Overuse of Kirkwood Park and it's amenities. Kirkwood Park is loved to death.
- Overall Park Maintenance.
- Walker Lake Maintenance.
- Poor public awareness of other parks in system.
- No parks in the Northwest part of Kirkwood.
- Concession stand availability in Kirkwood Park

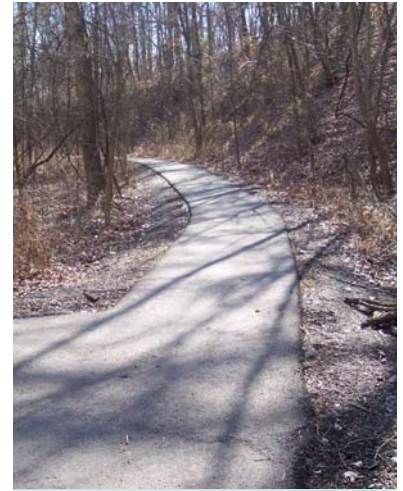
The community wide survey indicated maintenance of existing parks was a top priority. What specific maintenance items do you think should be addressed?

- Pavilion upgrading and improvements.
- Landscape maintenance and planting improvements.
 - Turf quality.
 - Ornamental landscape plantings.
- Lake maintenance improvements.

- Edge Treatment.
 - Water Quality & Pollution.
 - Erosion problems.
- Tree maintenance.
- Restroom improvements.

Where should the City's effort for developing biking/walking trails be concentrated?

- Connect Emmenegger and Greentree Parks.
- Link to Meramec Greenway.
- Sidewalks to small pocket parks.
- Expand Grant's Trail to Farmer's Market.
- Connecting all parks.
 - Share the road bike trails.
 - Kiosks for info or new stuff.
- Connection from Quarry Park to Greentree Park.
- Connect Powder Valley to Greentree Park and Emmenegger Park.
- Connection to Simpson Park.



Trail at Emmenegger Park

Identify the top three parks within the Kirkwood Park system that you use and what improvements would you like to see made to them?

- Kirkwood Park.
 1. Lake edge improvements.
 2. Restroom improvements/upgrading.
 3. Park Operations area improvements.
 4. More maintenance of wooded areas.
 5. Pavilion improvements.
- Emmenegger Park.
 1. Discourage other entrances and emphasize main entrance.
 2. Improve picnic tables.
 3. Develop a natural theme or wetland at entryway.
 4. Improve route to Emmenegger Park.
 5. Water/erosion management is needed.
 6. Looks neglected, improve appearance.
 7. Potable water.
 8. Leave Emmenegger Park alone-let it go wild.
- Quarry Park.
 1. Structure to shelter people in inclement weather.
 2. Keep this park wild.
 3. Tell story of this park.
- Greentree Park.
 1. More development of natural area for passive activity.
 2. Field potential at Greentree Park.
 3. Playground.
 4. Disk golf.
 5. Paving of roads and parking lots.
 6. Provide something in park to continue activity.



Outdoor Facilities at a school in Kirkwood

Where should the City's park acquisition strategies be focused?

- NW and NE sections of city need park space. Higher priority in higher density areas of the city.
- Small pocket parks.
- Southwest corner of Meramec campus is almost like a park. Potential addition as urban arboretum.
- Long term lease of Lindeman Property.
- Median islands on Argonne by Farmer's Market.
- Linear Park within downtown.
- Practice restraint on acquisition.
- Share school spaces and facilities - this will expand availability.
- Expansion but not for intensive recreation activities.
- Complete analysis should be considered prior to purchase.
- Consider land conservation trust or easement - or make investments with conservation allowance.
- Fellowship Assembly of God - Old Sugar Creek, Pool.

Miscellaneous



Open space at Kirkwood Park

- General policy - Obtain additional Greenspace at any and every opportunity - Review each opportunity on case by case basis.
- Concept - Kirkwood Park more social park and other parks make up open space needs.
- Kirkwood Park = jewel of system.
- Get what we have in a pristine condition.
- City streets are extensions of parks.
- Master Plan will define types of parks so people understand how to use them.
- Master Plan will define what parks are and will do for future citizens.
- Make entire system cohesive and cohesive with town.
- Make a point of making them consistent.
- Do not develop more parking at expense of open space!

CONTRIBUTING REPORT INFORMATION

Comprehensive Plan

The "Vision 2015" Comprehensive Plan identifies the City of Kirkwood development policies, capacities, and trends, and it provides a basis for making decisions on current and future projects and initiatives. It identifies existing and future land use patterns, as well as development goals, opportunities, and constraints. The Comprehensive Plan evaluates land use alternatives, makes recommendations concerning future land use patterns, and establishes development guidelines. The Comprehensive Plan, in summary, attempts to answer the basic questions about the physical, economic, and social conditions of Kirkwood and the aspirations of its citizenry by integrating knowledge of existing conditions with a plan for the future. This Park and Recreation Master Plan has been coordinated and designed to work with the "Vision 2015". Comprehensive Plan Any updates to the Comprehensive Plan should be evaluated for potential impacts to the Park and Recreation Master Plan.

Missouri Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP):

The 2002-2007 Missouri SCORP reviews and analyzes information relating to state and nationwide outdoor recreation trends, and projects recreation needs for the State of Missouri through the year 2007. It also identifies statewide priorities for the local outdoor recreation grant programs administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The priorities presented in the report are an integral part of DNR’s local grant evaluation process, designed to make project selection equitable and responsive to statewide and local outdoor recreation needs.

DEFINITIONS AND LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

In order to create a common understanding of what each proposed park type and facility will bring to Kirkwood, each type of park and recreation facility considered by this plan is described in Appendix A. These descriptions have been tailored to fit the needs of Kirkwood and represent the intended character that each facility will possess.

The Kirkwood Park Board has created a series of land use classifications for analyzing land use within the park system. These classifications are included in Appendix B of this document.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING PARK FACILITIES

Mitchell Park

Mitchell Park is a .3 acre park located in the 100 block of Mitchell. It was originally purchased with Community Development Grant funds, and was dedicated in 1976. The playground equipment in Mitchell Park was replaced in 1995-96 with equipment that met safety and ADA standards.



Depot Park

Depot Park

Depot Park (.7 acre) is located at the intersections of Clay and Madison just west of the Kirkwood Police Department. It also was originally purchased with Community Development Grant funds, and was dedicated in 1976. The park offers an excellent vantage point for viewing trains that use the Union Pacific tracks to the north of the park and serves as a portal to the City owned corridor bordering the tracks. A recently remodeled playground is a popular attraction for children while the picnic tables, Optimist Club gazebo, and benches offer a place for adults to relax.

Fillmore Park

Fillmore Park (1.44 acres) was originally purchased with Community Development Grant funds, and was dedicated in 1976. It was expanded in 1985 when the City purchased two properties at the intersection of South Fillmore and East Clinton. The park was initially designed as a passive park. There were no ballfields, basketball courts or other facilities. In 1991 playground equipment was installed. The equipment was replaced in 1995-96 with more modern equipment that met safety and ADA standards.



Fillmore Park



Meacham Park Memorial Park

Meacham Park Memorial Park

The Meacham Park neighborhood area originally had three parks owned by St. Louis County, which were consolidated into one larger park. Recently completed in 2002, Meacham Park Memorial Park (1.25 acres), located in the 300 block of New York Street, includes a Pavilion, Restrooms, Basketball Court, Spray Fountain, Playground, and Accessible Walking Paths. The new park was dedicated in 2003.



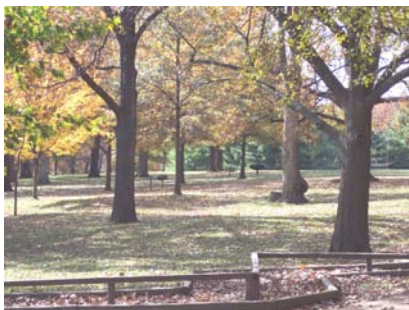
Walker Park

Walker Park

Kirkwood's newest park by generous donation in 2004, Walker Park (.48 acres) is located at the intersection of Taylor & Washington Avenues. Located on the edge the city's downtown area, this site features existing mature trees, benches, pathways, sculptural turtles, drinking fountain and close proximity to the Kirkwood YMCA. One of the goals of this master plan will be to develop a program and conceptual plan for completion of this park.

Fireman's Memorial Park

Fireman's Park is located near fire house #2, at 11700 Big Bend, on land acquired by the City of Kirkwood in 1946. It was dedicated as a park in 1976 and is currently a 3.4 acre undeveloped area.



Kirkwood Park Picnic Hill

Kirkwood Park

The first Kirkwood Park began in 1870 as a small triangular park at the Argonne and Taylor intersection, which may be the present location of the Farmer's Market. In 1941, the City of Kirkwood purchased the original 40 acres of the Kirkwood Park we know today at the intersection of Adams and Geyer Road. Currently at 71.58 acres, Kirkwood Park is the most heavily used of all Kirkwood's parks, featuring an outdoor amphitheater, 19 picnic sites, 2 pavilions, 5 softball fields, 10 tennis courts, 2 handball courts, horseshoe pits, shuffleboard courts, a playground, and a spray fountain. Walker Lake provides fishing year-round including participation in the Missouri Department of Conservation trout program over the winter. Over 42,000 people utilize picnic sites and the amphitheater annually through reserved events. Tens of thousands visit the park each year without reservations. Annual events held in the park include the Freedom Fiesta in July, the Greentree Festival in September, and summer concerts.



Greentree Park

Greentree Park

Originally called the Marshall Road Park, Greentree Park was acquired in 1975 with partial funding from the U.S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. In 1977, a Riverfront pavilion was added boasting solar energy panels to heat water. It currently comprises 89.13 acres of land along the Meramec River off Marshall Road. The park features a picnic shelter, trailhead pavilion, remote controlled car track, boat ramp, and lighted soccer and football fields. The location along the Meramec River offers recreational opportunities unavailable in other parks. However, due to its close proximity to the river, the park is subject to seasonal flooding. The remote controlled car track is currently operated by the Dirt Burners Remote Controlled Car Track club. Several of its recreational fields are used by the adjacent Kirkwood Athletic Association (KAA) by a sharing agreement.

Emmenegger Park

The Russell E. Emmenegger Nature Park is a 110 acre natural area bounded by I-270, I-44 and the Meramec River. Emmenegger became a Kirkwood park on March 6, 1975, when the land was dedicated as the Russell E. Emmenegger Nature Park at a City Council meeting. Russell E. Emmenegger donated half of the land and the other half was purchased with a grant from Department of Interior Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Secretary's Contingency Fund. The public dedication and official opening of the park occurred on June 1, 1975. The goal was for the natural beauty of the park to be the primary attraction.



Emmenegger Park

The nature park is located between the Possum Woods Conservation Area, and the Emmenegger Nature Park Staging Area, located at 11991 Stonewood. Kirkwood Parks Department and Missouri Department of Conservation worked together to develop the park. Russell E. Emmenegger Park includes 1.5 miles of trails frequented by hikers and nature lovers, part of which is a .5-mile accessible, paved trail. Disabled parking and year-round restroom facilities are available at the trailhead, located near the Staging Area, where a bridge connects the Russell E. Emmenegger Staging Area to the park. Emmenegger Nature Park provides visitors with picnicing opportunities, peaceful nature walks, and a sheltered area. A variety of nature programs are led in the park by Powder Valley Nature Center staff.

Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koestering Park

This 9.5 acre site is a natural area with walking trails. It is the site of the historic Meramec Highlands Quarry which ceased operation around 1903. Many of the large quarry stones and spoils still exist on site. The site was purchased by the City in late 2001, and dedicated in 2003. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its geological discoveries. Acquisition was partially funded by a grant from the Land and Water Conversation Fund. The park is served by a small parking lot with primary access into the site by foot via a steep one lane roadway. Currently no services exist.



Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koestering Park

FIGURE 2-3 - REGIONAL INFLUENCING FACTORS MAP

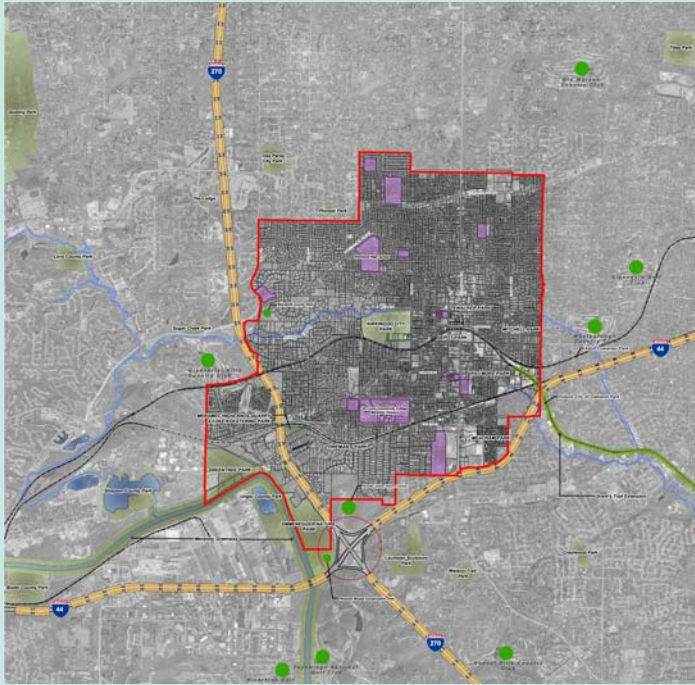


FIGURE 2-4 - COMMUNITY INFLUENCING FACTORS MAP



INFLUENCING FACTORS

Figures 2-3 and 2-4 on the following pages contains data collected relative to factors that influence the location and distribution of proposed parkland and park facilities. One map indicates regional influencing factors while a second map indicates local community influencing factors. Physical features such as highways, roads and railroad tracks divide the community, isolating some neighborhoods from direct recreation opportunities. Schools and existing parks indicate where recreation opportunities already exist within a neighborhood. Existing waterways/drainage areas indicate potential greenway corridors and trail opportunities. The FEMA floodplain is denoted, which will impact the types of development that occurs now and in the future. City park service radii are also plotted that show the areas served and the areas in need of additional parkland and/or open space. Figures 2-3 and 2-4 are also included in Appendix C.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

A component of the planning process involved soliciting input through Public Workshops. The first event took place on March 16, 2004 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Kirkwood Community Center. Approximately 40 people attended. The agenda included the following topics:

- *Welcome*
- *Purpose of Workshop*
- *Planning Process & Schedule of Events*
- *Kirkwood Park System Orientation*
- *Blue Sky Workshop*
- *Parks & Recreation Community Survey Review*
- *Meeting Adjournment*

After a brief overview of the Kirkwood Park System, a “Blue Sky session was conducted which included grouping the audience into teams of 4-5 people. One person was elected leader/scribe, and the group was given a series of questions to answer. The questions covered the same topics as the Stakeholder interviews. After 40 minutes, each team leader presented the groups findings to the larger audience. The responses were very similar to the Stakeholder Interviews. The final activity included requesting each participant rank what they felt were the three most important ideas discussed during the workshop session. A summary of these responses is included below.

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1
MOST IMPORTANT IDEA SUMMARY**

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Topic</u>
17	Connections/Trails
10	Acquire More Land/Parks
6	Maintenance
5	Preservation of Park/Green/Open Space
4	Dog Park

Plan Analysis

PARK LAND STANDARDS AND NEEDS

Standards

During the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, various park land standards were evaluated and considered in the determination of what standard should be used for the City of Kirkwood. Standards from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), St. Louis County and Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR) were compared against the standards utilized in the 1992 *Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Kirkwood Park System*. Additionally, several standards were determined by the Working Committee. Figure 3-1 illustrates the park land standards generated for this Master Plan.



The Meramec River at Greentree Park

FIGURE 3-1: PARK LAND STANDARDS

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Standard*</u>	<u>Service Area Radius</u>
Playlot	.30 acre / 1000	¼ mile
Mini Park	.25 acre / 1000	½ mile
Neighborhood Park	1.5 acre / 1000	1 mile
District Park	2.5 acres / 1000	3 miles
Metropolitan Park	4 acres / 1000	5 miles
Regional Park	5.676 acres / 1000 ¹	Resource Dependent
Historical/Cultural Park	.925 acres / 1000 ¹	Resource Dependent

*Standards form 1992 *Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Kirkwood Park System*

¹ Standard determined by Working Committee

Existing Supply and Classification

The existing supply of park land and open space within the City of Kirkwood is tabulated in Figure 3-2. Each existing park within the Kirkwood Park system was classified as to its park type based on the definitions included in Appendix A.

Needs

Figure 3-3 applies the standards developed in Figure 3-1 to the City’s year 2000 population of 27,324 citizens. It was noted earlier in this report, that the population of Kirkwood is not expected to increase significantly. Therefore the City’s current population was used in this analysis. The standard comparison illustrated in Figure 3-2 includes a public open space classification. The total under existing acreage for this category includes public schools and Meramec Community College facilities at 54.5 acres, and Powder Valley Nature Center at 43.9 acres.

Based on the comparative analysis below, the City of Kirkwood has a need of 11.5 acres of park land. Analysis indicates three important points relative to this:

1. The City’s greatest need for park land is concentrated in metropolitan and neighborhood park land. Although it appears that a large need exists for neighborhood park land, it should be noted that a significant amount of this need is being met by the Kirkwood Public School facilities within the City.
2. Greentree Park was considered, for this analysis, to include attributes of both a district and regional park. Therefore approximately half of this park’s total acreage (44.57) was included as District Park acreage.
3. The geographic distribution of mini and neighborhood park land throughout the City is uneven, with portions of Kirkwood not covered by standard service area radii, especially in northern portions of the City.
4. By comparison, the 1992 Parks and Recreation Plan and this plan both indicate a need for Playlots, Mini Parks and Neighborhood Parks (50.6 acres ‘92 plan vs. 48.43 acres this plan). The 1992 plan indicated a 58.9 acre surplus of total parkland verses this plan which indicates a total need of 11.48 acres of parkland. Both plans recognize the need for Playlots, Mini Parks and Neighborhood Parks even though the total parkland need may not exist.

FIGURE 3-2: EXISTING PARK LAND TOTALS

<u>Existing City Park</u>	<u>Size (in acres)</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Mitchell Park	0.30	Playlot
Depot Park	0.70	Mini Park
Fillmore Park	1.44	Mini Park
Meacham Park Memorial Park	1.25	Mini Park
Walker Park	0.48	Mini Park
Fireman’s Memorial Park	3.40	Neighborhood Park
Kirkwood Park	71.58	Metropolitan Park
Greentree Park	89.13	District/Regional Park
Emmenegger Park ¹	110.00	Regional Park
Dee Koestring (Quarry) Park	9.55	Historical/Cultural Park
Possum Woods Conserv. Area ¹	15.73	Historical/Cultural Park
TOTAL	303.56	

¹ Includes areas controlled by the City of Kirkwood but not within City Limits

FIGURE 3-3: PARK LAND NEEDS¹ (in acres)

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Demand*</u>	<u>Existing Acreage</u>	<u>Park Acreage (Need) or Surplus</u>
Playlot	8.20	0.30	(7.90)
Mini Park	6.80	3.87	(2.93)
Neighborhood Park	41.00	3.40	(37.60)
District Park	68.30	44.57	(23.73)
Metropolitan Park	109.30	71.58	(37.72)
Regional Park	154.56	154.56	0.00
Historical/Cultural Park	25.28	25.28	0.00
Public Open Space	--	98.40 ²	98.40
TOTAL	413.44	401.96	(11.48)

¹ Based on the standard x a population of 27,324

² Includes Public Schools, /Community College facilities (54.5 acres) and Powder Valley (43.9 acres). Public school and Community College facilities are calculated at one-quarter total acreage.

* Standards from 1992 Kirkwood Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Kirkwood Park System

**PARK FACILITY STANDARDS AND NEEDS
 Standards**

Like the park land standards previously discussed, various park facility standards were evaluated and considered in the determination of what standard should be used for the City of Kirkwood. Again, standards from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), St. Louis County and Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR) were reviewed and utilized in the selection of the standards used for the City. In addition, the consultant’s experience, previous plan preparations, and input from the Working Committee were also utilized in developing the standards. Figure 3-4, the column titled “Standard”, illustrates the park facility standards selected for the City.

FIGURE 3-4: PARK FACILITY STANDARDS AND NEEDS

<u>Recreational Facility</u>	<u>Standard</u> ¹	<u>Facility Demand</u>	<u>Facility Inventory Parks</u>	<u>Schools*</u>	<u>Facility Need</u>
Swimming Pool/ Aquatic Center	500 SF/1000	13,662/SF	21,000 SF	-	0 SF water
Baseball/Softball	1/1,500	18 fields	8	16	0
Ice Skating Rink	1/50,000	0.54 rink	1	-	0
Outdoor Amphitheater	1/10,000	2	1	-	1 amphitheater
Picnic Area Shelter	1/2,000	13	7	1	5 shelters
Picnic Area Table	1/125	21	224	-	0
Lakes and Ponds	1 acre/1,250	22 acres	2 (10.3 river)	-	9.7 acres
Football/Soccer	1/4,000	7 fields	4	10	0
Walking/Jogging Trail	1 mile/7,500	3.6	0.6	0	3 miles
Golf Course (9 hole)	1 /25,000	1	-	-	1 course
Tennis Court	1/2,000	14	10	5	0 courts
Nature Trail	1 mile/2,000	13.7	6.25	.5	6.95 miles
Basketball Court	1/3,000	9	3	7	0
Volleyball Court	1/3,000	9	0	0	9 courts
Playground	1/1,000	27	6	4	17 playgrounds
Handball/Racquetball	1/5,000	5	2	-	3 courts
Bicycle Trail	1 mile/2,000	13.6	7.6	-	6 miles
Horseshoe Pit	1/2,000	14	6	-	8 pits
Shuffleboard Courts	1/3,000	9	2	-	7 courts
Equestrian Trail	1 mile/6,250	4.3	-	-	4.3 miles
Community Center	1/25,000	1	1	-	0
Open Space	8.5% of City Land Area	409.19 acres ²	347.46 acres ³	54.50 acres	7.23 acres

¹ Based on a population of 27,324

² Based on a total land Area for the City of Kirkwood of 4,814 acres.

³ Includes 303.56 acres in Kirkwood Park System plus 43.9 acres in Powder Valley within City limits.

* Public school and Community College facilities are calculated at one-quarter total acreage.

Existing Supply

The existing supply of park facilities within the City of Kirkwood is also tabulated in Figure 3-4. Appendix A provides definitions and clarification with regard to the definitions of the park facilities listed in Figure 3-4. Open space was included and analyzed as a park facility because each park has open space as a component part. Parks are typically classified as open space from a land use perspective, which is consistent with the Kirkwood “Vision 2015” Comprehensive Plan. The Trust for Public Land, a national nonprofit agency working exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being, tabulates total park/open space as a percent of city area for a wide variety of cities in the United States. Its list includes the City of St. Louis which has 8.5% of its land area as open space. For analysis purposes, this same figure was used for evaluation of open space in Kirkwood.

Needs

The proposed park facility standards developed in Figure 3-4 have been applied to the year 2000 actual population. The results are the current park facility needs.

PARK LAND PRIORITIES

From the above analysis, the following priorities have been identified as park land priorities:

- Future park land acquisitions should focus on land for Playlots/Mini Parks in the northeast portions of Kirkwood.
- A future Mini Park located west of I-270 (Greenbriar Hills) should be a future acquisition priority.
- Land acquisition for a future trail connection between Greentree Park and Emmenegger Park should be a high priority.
- The City should diligently strive to acquire land for a future trail connection between the Grants Trail (Phase 3) and its own on-street bike route, as a first phase of implementing its City-Wide Trail Plan. This plan is described in further detail in the Master Plan section of this document.
- The City should closely monitor any opportunities for obtaining additional land for park use. This should include utilizing land acquisition policies outlined in the Implementation Strategies section of this plan.

PARK FACILITIES PRIORITIES

The following priorities have been identified for facilities based on an analysis of the existing information:

- Additional picnic shelters should be provided where possible throughout the park system.
- Trail facilities (walking, jogging, nature, and bicycle) should be added both within individual parks and throughout the community.
- The City should closely monitor any opportunities for obtaining additional land for open space. Again, utilizing the land acquisition policies outlined in the Implementation Strategies

The Trust for Public Land, a national nonprofit agency working exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being, tabulates total park/open space as a percent of city area for a wide variety of cities in the United States. Below are several selected cities.

<u>City</u>	<u>(acres)</u> <u>Land</u> <u>Area</u>	<u>Park/Open</u> <u>Space</u> <u>Percent of</u> <u>City Land</u> <u>Area</u>
New York	194,115	25.7%
Boston	30,992	15.7%
Chicago	145,362	8.0%
St. Louis	39,630	8.5%
Las Vegas	72,514	4.2%
Phoenix	303,907	12.0%
Kansas City	200,664	6.8%

Source: The Trust for Public Land.

section of this plan will insure that any additional open space obtained will be beneficial to the City and all its citizens.

- As noted in the Parks and Recreation Community Survey, a heavy emphasis was placed on maintaining and improving existing facilities within the Kirkwood Park System. To that end, new park land acquisitions, and facilities should be balanced and prioritized with the improvements to existing facilities.

Although the implementation of a “Dog Park” has not been indicated as a high priority for this plan, should the opportunity arise to work with a funding, maintenance and operations organization, the City should at that time consider an appropriate location for such a facility.

PARK SYSTEM PROGRAM

Based on data collection, development of park and facility standards, determination of demand and need, and extensive input from the Working Committee, the program statement was prepared and is illustrated in Figure 3-5, and Figure 3-6. The program statement has been divided into two components: one addressing system-wide elements and the second addressing the individual parks within the system. These program statements are a general guide, and the Master Plan may contain recommendations that were not included in the program statement due to site, logistical and/or operational concerns.

FIGURE 3-5: PROGRAM STATEMENT- SYSTEM WIDE

SYSTEM WIDE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Trail Connection between Emmenegger Park and Powder Valley Conservation Area
- Trail Connection between Emmenegger Park and Greentree Park
- Trail Connection between Greentree Park and Dee Koestring (Quarry) Park
- Trails/Paths Connecting Other Parks
- Additional Park Land/Open Space
- Linear Park within Downtown
- Provide Comfort Stations/Drinking Fountains in All Parks
- Additional Mini Parks in NE Kirkwood
- Preserve Open Space/Land
- New Neighborhood Park in Greenbriar
- South Geyer Road Sidewalk Connection to Sunset Hills
- Link to Meramec Greenway
- New Park Operations Center
- Extension of Grant's Trail to Kirkwood Farmers Market
- Create Park near Osage School Area
- Park in Sugar Creek Area
- Use of Meramec Campus as Local Arboretum
- Help/Emergency Call Boxes
- Coordination of Architectural Elements within All Parks
- Lease of Lindeman Property from Kirkwood School District as Park/Open Space
- Security Cameras in Remote Parks
- Bikeway along Marshall Road
- Additional Lakes and/or Ponds
- Additional Tennis Courts
- Additional Playgrounds
- Off Leash Dog Park/Area
- Improve/Upgrade Community Center
- Improve Signage System Wide



FIGURE 3-6: PROGRAM STATEMENT- PARKS

PARK PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Mitchell Park

- Update Playground Surfacing
- New Signage
- Site Furnishings Upgrade

Depot Park

- Update Playground Surfacing
- New Signage

Fillmore Park

- Update Playground Surfacing
- New Signage

Meacham Park Memorial Park

- New Signage

Walker Park

- Perimeter Fencing
- Drinking Fountain
- Accessible Walkways
- New Signage
- Small Overhead Structure
- Landscape Planting w/ Color
- Paved Game Table Area
- Ground Level Play Equipment (2-5 year Old)
- Accommodate Donated Bronze Turtles

Fireman's Memorial Park

- New Signage
- Acquire Adjacent Land for Bird Sanctuary
- Develop Parking Area

Kirkwood Park

- Improve/Upgrade Restrooms
- Walker Lake Improvements
- Landscape/Turf Improvements
- Upgrade Exercise Stations
- Pavilion Improvements
- Solve Erosion Problems
- Scout Shelter Comfort Station Improvements
- Tennis Building Improvements
- Update Playground Surfacing
- Expand Kirkwood Park Trail
- Concession Stand Improvements
- Utility System Upgrades
- Perimeter Walking Trail
- New Signage
- Additional Picnic Pavilions
- Improve Appearance of Rifle and Pistol Range Building
- Close Rifle Range Road and Convert to a Trail
- New Seating Area at Concession Building

Greentree Park

- Road and Parking Lot Paving
- New Comfort Station
- Improve Appearance of RC Track Area
- Riverfront Trail
- New Signage
- Pavilion Aesthetic Upgrades
- New Playground

Emmenegger Park

- Drinking Fountains
- Improve Entryway
- New Signage
- New Picnic Tables/Areas
- Improve Secondary Entrances/Parking along Craigwold/Stoneywood Road

Dee Koestring (Quarry) Park

- New Signage
- Sheltering Structure

Possum Woods Conservation Area

- New Signage



Mitchell Park



Fireman's Park



Greentree Park Trailhead

NEW PARK LAND CONSIDERATIONS

An analysis of existing park conditions reveals that there is insufficient park land in the City of Kirkwood. When service area radii are plotted in association with each existing park, it becomes evident that the northeastern portions of the City are not being served by Playlots and Mini Parks. However, several local elementary schools do provide facilities which partially meet this requirement. These facilities are used on a casual basis, with no formal agreement existing between the school district and the Kirkwood Parks and Recreation Department. The Master Plan recommends, for the short term that this informal cooperative sharing continue due to the anticipated difficulty in obtaining new land for small parks in this portion of the City. One additional factor to consider related to existing park land shortages is the effect major arterial roadways like Lindbergh Blvd., Interstate I-270, and Interstate I-44 have on effectively dividing the City into smaller regions. Many times, these districts provide easy access within themselves; however, access between regions can be difficult and limited to specific access points that provide safe crossing of busy roadways. This is particularly evident in the Greenbriar Hills area of the City which is also lacking in park land, for a Mini Park. The Community Influencing Factors Map, Figure 2-4, graphically depicts these points. As indicated earlier, the population of Kirkwood is not expected to increase significantly due to the limited amount of land available for expansion within the existing City limits. Therefore, future park land needs are based on very little change in the City's current population.



Aerial Photo of the Lindeman School Property

Suggested locations for future parkland were made by the Working Committee, participants at public meetings, and City representatives. These recommended park sites were considered as developing general locations for proposed park land. Two Playlots (Playlot A and B) and one Mini Park (Mini Park A) were proposed as a result of the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process.

MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING FACILITIES

The second component of this Master Plan is the Maintenance and Improvement of the Existing Facilities within the Kirkwood Park System. This component was the direct result of input not only from the 2001 Parks and Recreation Community Survey, but also from the various stakeholders interviewed during the data collection process, and the public meetings. Future recommendations for maintaining and improving the existing facilities within each park are discussed below.

Kirkwood Park

An analysis of the existing conditions at Kirkwood Park reveals the following points:



Aerial Photo of Kirkwood Park

- Kirkwood Park is the City’s most heavily used park, serving a wide variety of roles to a large population base. It not only functions as a neighborhood park, but also as a location for various programmed uses such as athletics, outdoor performances, the Community Center, Indoor Ice Rink, Aquatic Center, and the annual Greentree Festival. To quote one Stakeholder: “It is loved to death!”
- Walker Lake is a major park asset, but has some maintenance liabilities which have diminished its visual quality. These include: the lake edge condition, general water quality, floating litter, and overuse/deterioration of the island area.
- The site offers a tremendously wide variety of recreational opportunities and environments which should be protected where necessary and enhanced, when possible.
- Several uses and functions such as the Police Pistol Range Building, Lions Storage Building, and the local cut through road connecting Monroe Street with Adams Avenue are detracting from the quality and experience of Kirkwood Park.
- In addition to its wide offering of recreational amenities, Kirkwood Park’s central location makes it a centerpiece of the community, which further increases both its visibility and use.
- The substantial number of facilities within the park are in need of significant updating or replacement. This includes the Lions Pavilion and associated BBQ Pit, the main Comfort Station near Fields #3 and #4, the Scout Comfort Station, and the Park Operations Center.
- Many of the utility systems which serve the various park facilities are either undersized or are old and in need of replacement.

The proposed Master Plan for Kirkwood Park includes incorporating the basic program items listed in the previous section onto the site. Figure 4-2 illustrates the schematic master plan for Kirkwood Park. The specific components and recommendations of this plan include:

1. *Community Center/Aquatic Center* – Improvements include hardscape and landscape treatments in the main parking lot to improve its visual quality and provide shade in the summer. A new main pedestrian pathway clearly linking the front door of the Community Center with Kirkwood Park is also planned for this area. This pathway will be constructed of special paving such as bricks or stamped pavement. This component of the master plan also includes improving the entry sequence into the main parking lot starting from the Argonne Avenue/Geyer Road intersection. These improvements include: screening service equipment associated with the Ice Rink, additional plantings, and other visual improvements.
2. *Walker Lake Improvements* – Improvements to Walker Lake consist of improving the edge conditions with a combination of edge planting and installation of a large native limestone ledgerrock treatment. This treatment is envisioned to include

combining planting with the rock treatment to produce a new edge with variety and a more natural appearance. A fountain and water recirculation system are planned to improve water movement and quality. Incorporated into the improvements to Walker Lake will be visual enhancements to the channelized stream which feeds into the lake. These enhancements include removal of the concrete channel and installation of plantings and rock to “biostabilize” the stream. A new Lakeside Pavilion constructed on the southern edge of the lake will provide additional opportunities to enjoy the lake. The removal and relocation of the existing handball courts will be coupled with landscape screen plantings to reduce the visual impact of the adjacent Community Center Parking Lot.

FIGURE 4-2 - KIRKWOOD PARK MASTER PLAN



Enhancements to the island will include the same type of edge planting combined with the installation of large native limestone ledgerrock treatment. Flagstone pavers will cover a significant portion of the island with the remaining areas to be planted with shrubs and tall grasses.

3. *Central Community Space* – This space is envisioned to serve as the functional “hub” of Kirkwood Park, with the major pedestrian pathways connecting to it. Located in the area of the existing concession stand, it will include a new combined Comfort Station (12 stalls total) and Concession Stand with a

WALKER LAKE

The images below are intended to portray the character of the improvements planned for Walker Lake.



new plaza/gathering space. The existing playgrounds located in the general area will receive improvements such as safety surfacing, equipment rejuvenations, seating areas or benches, and water feature improvements/updates.

4. *Athletic Fields* – In order to transfer a portion of Kirkwood Park’s heavy use load to other parks, Field #2 and Field #6 will be relocated to Greentree Park. The area currently occupied by Field #2 will be converted to open space, while Field #5 will be reconfigured to allow the overlay soccer fields to be reoriented for seasonal turf rejuvenation. A new pavilion will be constructed to serve Field #5 along with a trailhead consisting of signage, a bench, and a small paved area. The remaining fields will receive long-term upgrades and enhancements as needed.
5. *Tennis Center* – The existing tennis courts in the northeast corner of Kirkwood Park will be anchored by a new tennis building which will include a comfort station, changing rooms, a pro office, and equipment storage. Like today, it will be located adjacent to the tennis court parking lot. The existing handball courts will be relocated from the present location near Walker Lake to an area south of the two western tennis courts, creating an area for all court and racquet sports.
6. *Existing Parking* – The existing parking lots served off Adams Avenue will remain in place, including the lots adjacent to the Water Tower and Field #5.
7. *Lions Picnic Area* – The Lions Pavilion will be renovated or replaced in its current location. If replaced, the new Lions Pavilion and all other buildings in Kirkwood Park should be constructed in a style similar to the existing Lions Pavilion. The BBQ structure near the Lions Pavilions will be removed, and new BBQ pits will be incorporated into the renovated or new pavilion.
8. *Amphitheater* – The Amphitheater will continue to include an ADA drop-off served by vehicles, which for limited times, will utilize park pathways for access. Additional improvements for the Amphitheater will include a new paved upper level wheelchair seating area, an overhead sheltering structure, and pedestrian pathway improvements.

9. *Scout Comfort Station/Picnic Shelter* – The Scout Comfort Station will be removed and replaced with a new facility of equal size and capacity, again built in the style outlined previously. The Scout Pavilion will receive upgrades such as a new roof, electrical upgrades, and a new main fireplace.
10. *Operations Area* - The existing Park Operations Area will be renovated as part of this Master Plan. This includes removal of the existing operations building and construction a new operations building. During construction of the new operations building, the existing storage building will temporarily accommodate the operations building functions. After construction is complete, the storage building will revert back to its storage function, and remain in place. The new operations area will be secure via a perimeter fence with landscape screening. As part of these improvements, the existing road leading to the operations area will be realigned and widened to accommodate two-way traffic and large vehicles which will service the operations area.
11. *West Valley* – The Master Plan suggests changes to the area identified as the West Valley in order to return this area to more passive park use. To accomplish this, all buildings and features will be removed and/or relocated from this vicinity, including the Police Pistol Range, Horseshoe Pits, Shuffleboard Courts, and the Pioneer Club Building. The existing cut-through roadway will be converted to a 14-foot wide trail with bollards controlling vehicular access. This new trail is intended to accommodate vehicles when needed for special events such as the Greentree Festival. A parking lot (35 cars) with a vehicular turn around will be located inside the Park boundaries at the end of Monroe Street. An additional parking lot may be necessary at the Adams Avenue end of the new 14-foot wide trail
12. *Neighborhood Gateway* – The southeast corner of Kirkwood Park has been identified as a Neighborhood Gateway. Currently isolated from other parts of the park, this area is intended to function both like a small mini park for the nearby neighborhood, and as a gateway into the park. To accommodate this new use, the existing Lions Club Building will be removed and relocated off site. A new pavilion and small playground could be included along with a trailhead consisting of signage, a bench, and a small paved area.
13. *General/Utility/Infrastructure Improvements* – As part of this master plan, an upgrade of the utility systems which serve the

BUILDING ARCHITECTURE KIRKWOOD PARK

The buildings proposed for Kirkwood Park are envisioned to be articulated in a “rustic” style which can be defined as using native materials in proper scale, through the avoidance of severely straight lines and over sophistication, which gives the feeling of having been executed by craftsman with limited hand tools. It includes elements such as: rock, timber, and weathered roof color and materials. Below are examples of structures which reflect the general character of these types of structures.





Trail connectors are shown on the Master Plan Map



Informational sign at Kirkwood Park



Emmenegger Park

park are anticipated. These include the water service line along the main east-west walkway, and data/communications upgrades to the operations area. Additional infrastructure improvements include architectural enhancements to the pump station near to the Park Operations Center, main walkway repaving, new trailheads, a new perimeter trail system, and a fitness loop.

14. *Signage Improvements* – Signage improvements include a new main sign at the northeast corner of the park, with has recently been completed. It also includes new entrance signs at Argonne Avenue and Monroe Avenue. Wayfind signage (Park Maps) will be included at the Geyer Road Pedestrian Entrance, and the Central Community space discussed previously. Directional signage will be added throughout the park as needed.
15. *Connection to City-Wide Trail via Geyer Road* - The Master Plan recommends a connection from the proposed Perimeter Trail System within Kirkwood Park to the Main Bike Route proposed along Geyer Road by the City-Wide Trail System Plan.
16. *Connection to City-Wide Trail via Sugar Creek Valley Parkway Trail* - The Master Plan recommends a connection from the proposed Perimeter Trail System to the Secondary Bike Route proposed along Adams Avenue by the City-Wide Trail System Plan.

Emmenegger Park

A review of the existing conditions at Emmenegger Park is summarized by the following points:

- Emmenegger Park is primarily a passive park with few existing active recreation components.
- Very few support amenities are available to attract a wide variety of users.
- During periods of significant rainfall within the region, the Meramec River frequently floods having a major effect on Emmenegger Park.
- The Meramec River offers significant recreation opportunities and potential, especially with regard to creating trails along its banks and connecting with other parks and greenway systems.
- Currently many users park along Craigwold or Stoneywood Road and enter the park via informal trail openings along the park boundary, creating traffic conflicts and potential unsafe conditions.
- No adequate signage exists along either Craigwold or Stoneywood Roads to direct users to the main entrance of the park.
- The main entrance of Emmenegger Park leaves a poor impression on visitors.

**BUILDING ARCHITECTURE
EMMENEGGER PARK**

The building form for Emmenegger Park is envisioned to be articulated in a simple “rustic” style.

Below are examples for structures which reflect the general character of these types of structures.



5. *Improved Trailhead* – Currently two locations along Craigwold/Stoneywood Drive serve as informal entrances. This master plan calls for recognizing these entrances by developing them into Trailheads which will consist of signage, a bench, a small paved area, and a bike rack, again to control bicycle use in the internal trail system. Cyclist seeking a connection to the Riverfront Trail will be encouraged to use a designated future bike route planned along Craigwold/Stoneywood Drive.
6. *Welcome Feature* – In order to direct users to the main entrance of Emmenegger Park, a Welcome Feature consisting of signage will greet users. This signage will be developed by considering the following goals:
 - Sign should identify Emmenegger Park as a component part of the Kirkwood Park System.
 - It should be sited on the bluff sensitively, and blended into the surroundings in a natural manner.
 - It should include clear and concise directional signage to lead people to the main entrance and core facilities of Emmenegger Park .
7. *Link to Powder Valley Nature Center* – The linking of Emmenegger Park to Powder Valley Nature Center also represents a major priority of this plan. Adding a link to Powder Valley Nature Center will create a network of three unique natural open space resources, all in close proximity to the Meramec River.
8. *Existing Service Entrance* – Under this plan, the Existing Service Entrance will continue in its present capacity, but will include a gate, and the accommodations for bike parking and pedestrian access.
9. *Bike Trail Link to Main Entrance* – As discussed previously, a Bike Route will be added along Craigwold/Stoneywood Drive to create a method for cyclists to connect to the facilities offered in at the main entrance area of the park, and to the Riverfront Trail.
10. *Existing Bridge* – The existing pedestrian trail bridge is the only crossing over the major drainage feature of the park. This plan recommends allowing cyclists and users of the Riverfront Trail to share this bridge and utilize this portion of the trail to connect to other portions of the City-Wide Trail System.
11. *Improved Accessible Trailhead* – Located within what has previously been defined as the “Core” of Emmenegger Park, will be an improved accessible trailhead including a repaved parking lot for ADA use only, signage, a bench, and a small paved gathering area.
12. *New Perimeter Trail* – A new perimeter trail will be created along the roadway which currently exists in the “Core” area. This trail will include bollards for controlling vehicular access when needed for special events
13. *Improved Informal Open Field* – Improvements to the Informal Open field will include a new picnic pavilion and small playground, creating opportunities for group picnicking.
14. *Renovated Comfort Station* – Renovations to the existing comfort station will include architectural upgrades to improve

the appearance of the structure such as incorporating natural rock wall facing, timber, and architectural roofing.

15. *Riverfront Picnic/Fishing Area* – A Riverfront Picnic/Fishing Area is proposed by this plan for the purpose of providing additional recreational opportunities, some with direct access to the Meramec River. This will include new picnic tables, an accessible fishing area, new horseshoe pits and sand volleyball courts.
16. *Renovated Pavilion* - Renovations to the existing pavilion will be similar to the renovated comfort station and include architectural upgrades to improve the appearance of the structure such as incorporating natural rock column bases, timber, and architectural roofing.
17. *Main Entrance Improvements* – Improvements to the Main Entrance will include new roadway paving, special paving such as pavers, or stamped concrete or asphalt, new park entrance/directional signage, and new landscape plantings.
18. *Existing Parking Lot* – The existing parking will be repaved and striped to accommodate approximately 75 cars.
19. *Future Connection to Sunset Hills* - The Master Plan includes accommodations for a future connection to Sunset Hills along the Meramec River.

Greentree Park

An investigation of the existing conditions of Greentree Park reveal several interesting items such as:

- Greentree Park is a park that includes both active and passive elements, which from time to time come into conflict. An example of this occurs when users of the adjacent Kirkwood Athletic Association (KAA), seeking additional parking areas, park vehicles on park land.
- The Meramec River offers significant recreation opportunities and potential especially with regard to creating trails along the Meramec River and linking other parks and greenway systems.
- Like Emmenegger Park, Greentree Park is also susceptible to flooding from the Meramec River during periods of significant rainfall within the region.
- Greentree Park contains a variety of unique natural environments and ecosystems which have the potential to offer users many different recreational opportunities and experiences.
- Greentree Park is at the convergence of several utility systems which have a profound and often negative effect on the visual environment.
- Related to these utility systems, is the requirement by Ameren UE to maintain the overhead electric right-of-way by yearly clearing of tall vegetation which has a direct impact on the quality of the natural environment in this area.
- Marshall Road effectively divides the park and carries traffic which at times has the potential to pose safety threats to users of the park.

RENOVATED COMFORT STATION CHARACTER IMAGES



FIGURE 4-4 - GREENTREE PARK MASTER PLAN



Greentree Park
 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The proposed Master Plan for Greentree Park includes blending both the active and passive functions of the park onto the site. Figure 4-4 illustrates the schematic master plan for the park. The specific components and recommendations of this plan include:

1. *Existing Natural Wooded Area* – This area, located north of Marshall Road, will be preserved and include new trails and the accommodation for future trail connections in the northwestern corner of the site.
2. *Existing Athletic Fields* – The Existing Athletic Fields include the football/soccer/lacrosse field and practice area, the softball field shared with KAA, and the youth baseball field, all which will remain as part of the plan.
3. *Existing Roadway* – The existing roadway leading to the parking area will remain. In addition to serving the existing Athletic Fields described above, it will also serve the Wetland Demonstration/Interpretation Area.
4. *Existing Parking* - The existing parking area, which currently serves the athletic fields will remain and also serve the Wetland Demonstration/Interpretation Area described below.
5. *Wetland Demonstration/Interpretation Area* – This new area will focus on the development and enhancement of a unique natural area which currently exists on the site and contains attributes of a wetland area. Home to a significant amount of natural flora and fauna, this area will offer a prime opportunity for observation, interpretation and enjoyment of this natural area. Overlooking

this area, will be an interpretive pavilion with images and graphics which will aid in the understanding and interpretation of the surrounding natural resources. A comfort station will be part of this pavilion structure.

6. *Short/Tall Prairie* – A prairie consisting of both tall and short grass species will be created below the Ameren UE Overhead Electric Easement in order to reduce the repeated destruction of the natural environment which is currently required. Maintenance of this prairie area is anticipated to be less destructive, and may provide additional interpretive possibilities as well as habitat for urban wildlife.
7. *Athletic Fields* – Athletic Fields #2 and #6 from Kirkwood Park will be relocated to Greentree Park. Both fields will allow an overlay soccer field which can be reoriented for turf rejuvenation purposes.
8. *Parking* – A new parking lot for 250 cars, will serve Greentree Park, and is located adjacent to the two new proposed athletic fields.
9. *Plaza Area* – Adjacent to the new Parking Lot, Athletic Fields, and Short/Tall Prairie, will be a Plaza Area including a comfort station and small playground.
10. *Existing Remote Control Car Track* – The Existing Remote Control Car Track will remain as part of this plan. Additional improvements to enhance the visual quality of this facility are suggested by this Master Plan.
11. *Link to Meramec Greenway* - The Master Plan includes accommodations for a future connection to the proposed Meramec Greenway along the Meramec River.
12. *Trail* – A new trail near the Meramec River is currently being developed, providing access along the river frontage. This multi use trail will be 12 feet wide and paved.
13. *New Pavilion* – A new pavilion will be located east of the Existing Remote Control Car Track to provide additional gathering and picnic opportunities along the Meramec River. This pavilion will be a simple structure and will match the upgraded architectural style of the existing pavilion which is slated to receive aesthetic improvements.
14. *Existing Pavilion* - Renovations to the existing pavilion will include signage and architectural upgrades to improve the appearance of the structure such as incorporating natural rock column bases, timber, and architectural roofing. It will also include a small playground located in close proximity.
15. *Existing Boat Ramp* – The Existing Boat Ramp will remain in place and continue to provide small craft access to the Meramec River. Redesign of this ramp to improve its operational and maintenance aspects, in cooperation with Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is proposed by this plan.



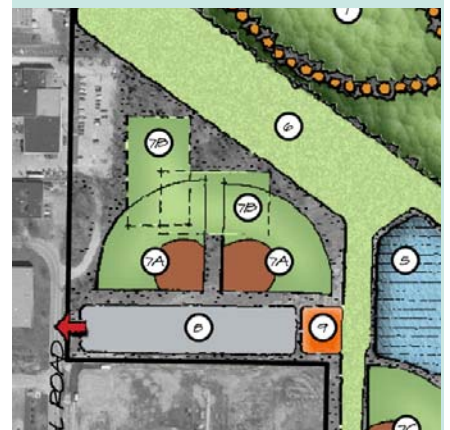
Wetland Demonstration Area



Typical Pavilion



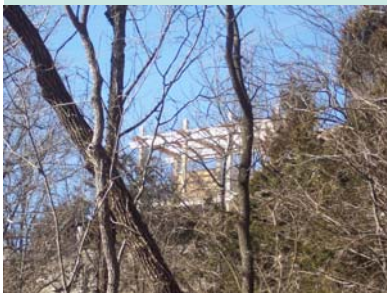
Remote Control Car Track



Proposed Athletic Fields

**BUILDING ARCHITECTURE
 QUARRY PARK**

The shelter proposed for Quarry Park is envisioned to be articulated in a style similar to the Existing Overlook Structure depicted in the images below.



16. *Upgraded Comfort Station* - Renovations to the existing comfort station will include architecture upgrades to improve the appearance of the structure such as incorporating natural rock wall facing, timber, and architectural roofing.
17. *Existing Bridge* – The existing bridge will remain in place and be utilized by the proposed Trail.
18. *Interpretive Pavilion* – A small interpretive pavilion or kiosk will be located along the new Trail to orient user to the Meramec River, Greentree Park and the trail system.
19. *Link to Emmenegger Park* - The linking of Greentree Park together with Emmenegger Park, as stated previously represents a major priority of this plan. This linkage will create a significant riverfront trail resource for the City of Kirkwood.
20. *Connection to City-Wide Trail System via Marshall Road* - The Master Plan recommends a connection from the trail system proposed within Greentree Park to either the Main Bike Route or Proposed Trail indicated along Marshall Road by the City-Wide Trail System Plan.

Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koestering Park

The analysis of existing conditions of Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koestering Park (Quarry Park) included the following items:

- Access to the Quarry Park site, both vehicular and pedestrian, is difficult and places constraints on site development.
- Because access is difficult and somewhat limiting, the character of this park, is and should continue to be, primarily passive.
- Quarry Park offers tremendous interpretive potential from both a natural and historical perspective.
- Some features of the Park present opportunities for physical harm to users if not made aware of these risks.
- The unique natural environment of Quarry Park should be preserved and not impacted by unnecessary development.

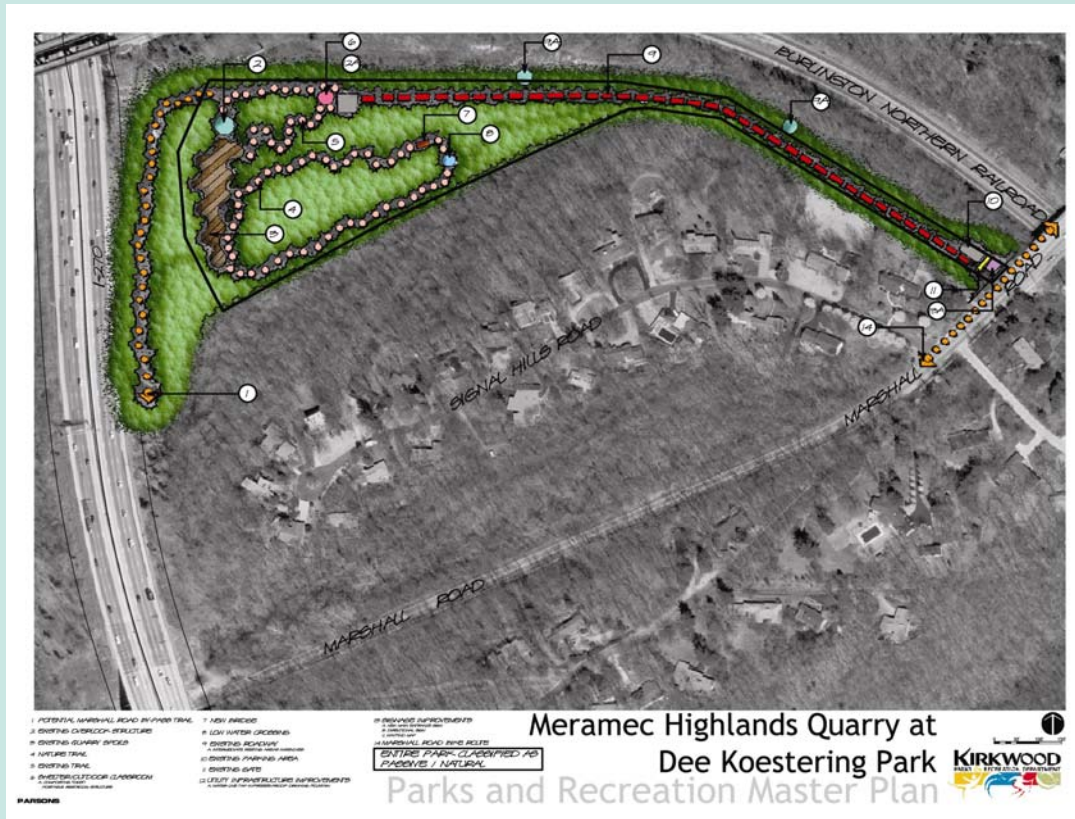
The proposed Master Plan for Quarry Park includes accommodating program elements with the site in a sensitive and balanced manner, respecting the natural resources which are the attraction of this site. Figure 4-5 illustrates the schematic master plan for the park. The specific components and recommendations of this plan include:

1. *Potential Marshall Road By-Pass Trail* – The City-Wide Trail System Plan proposes a Potential Marshall Road By-Pass Trail to avoid placing a Bike Route on Marshall Road due to its steep grade and heavy truck traffic. This would require users to utilize the existing roadway within the park as a connecting pathway or the acquisition of an easement from either Ameren UE or the Burlington Northern Railroad. It would also require an easement from MoDOT along the I-270 Right-Of-Way.
2. *Existing Overlook Structure* – Under this Master Plan, the Existing Overlook Structure would remain and continue to be a main feature of this park.
3. *Existing Quarry Spoils* - The Existing Quarry Spoils would remain and continue to also be a main feature of this park. Additional signage will include interpretive elements and

warnings to alert users to the unique and potential dangerous aspects of the spoils.

4. *Nature Trail* – An existing nature trail provides additional opportunities to experience the park site.

FIGURE 4-5 - QUARRY PARK MASTER PLAN



5. *Existing Trail* – The existing trail which provides access to the center of the site and the overlook structure will remain as part of this plan.
6. *Shelter/Outdoor Classroom* – A new structure is proposed for Quarry Park to serve as shelter during inclement weather. This facility will also serve as an outdoor classroom by providing a covered gathering space. The style of this structure should match the style of the Existing Overlook Structure.
7. *New Bridge* – A New Bridge will be included with the New Trail proposed above. The style of this bridge will be similar to the Existing Overlook Structure.
8. *Low Water Crossing* – A low water crossing will be included along the New Trail to encourage contact with the Creek which crosses through the park site.
9. *Existing Roadway* – The Existing Roadway will remain in place and continue to function as a roadway for service vehicles and access to the Existing Accessible Parking Area.

10. *Existing Parking Area* – The Existing Parking Area will continue to serve as the primary parking area for the park, with most people leaving their vehicles and accessing the park on foot.
11. *Existing Gate* – The Existing Gate will remain and continue to control access into Quarry Park.
12. *Utility Infrastructure Improvements* – Improvements to the utility infrastructure include a water line tap to provide water to a freeze proof drinking hydrant, near the proposed Shelter/Outdoor Classroom.
13. *Signage Improvements* – Signage improvements include a new main entrance sign, directional signage, and a wayfind map. The sign should incorporate theme elements of the site include the quarry spoil material, and reflect the style of the Existing Overlook and the proposed Shelter/Outdoor Classroom.
14. *Marshall Road Bike Route* – Quarry Park will be linked to the City Wide Trail System via Marshall Road.

PAVILION ARCHITECTURE WALKER PARK

The pavilion style proposed for Walker Park is reflected in the image below.



Walker Park

An analysis of the Walker Park site includes the following items:

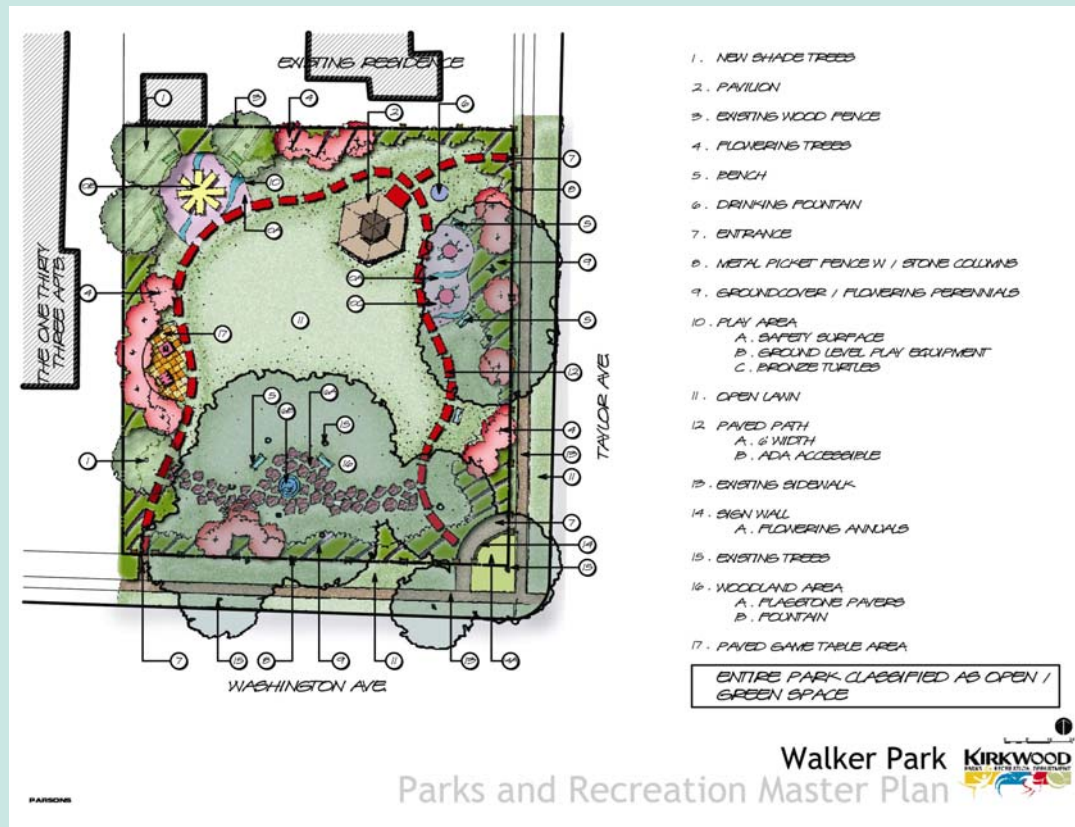
- Existing trees are a major asset of the park and should be preserved. This includes minimizing construction activities within the root zone of these trees.
- The park is open to two major streets (Washington and Taylor Avenues) which border it on the east and south. An open type of fence or barrier should be considered to separate the park from the streets.
- The residential neighbor to the north expressed a need to maintain a clear separation from the park, but still maintain views into the park space.
- A significant number of users with accessibility issues have expressed their desire to have an informal meeting area located within the park with accessible pavement and possibly game tables.
- Two bronze turtles have been donated for placement within the park site. These turtles should be located in areas which are primarily shaded to reduce the surface temperature of these elements when used as climbing structures.
- This park site lends itself to a passive type facility servicing the immediate neighborhood that will arrive by foot or bicycle.

A separate public input meeting was hosted to solicit input focused on the development of a master plan for Walker Park. The proposed Master Plan for Walker Park includes the incorporation many of the items discussed at this meeting, refined as necessary, and included in the program statement illustrated in the analysis section of this plan. Figure 4-6 illustrates the schematic master plan for Walker Park. The specific components and recommendations of this plan include:

1. *New Shade Trees* – The existing trees will be supplemented by New Shade Trees located along the western edge and in the northwest corner of the site to provide shade and enclosure for the Play Area proposed in this area

2. *Pavilion* – A small Pavilion will be included in the northeastern corner of the site. This pavilion will open and include a paved surface for the flexibility to accommodate wheelchairs and benches.

FIGURE 4-6 - WALKER PARK MASTER PLAN



3. *Existing Wood Fence* – The wood privacy fence currently separating Walker Park from the adjacent neighbor to the north will remain in place.
4. *Flowering Trees* – The perimeter will include landscape planting accentuated by colorful Flowering Trees. Flowering Trees will also be used to define the Paved Gametable Area space.
5. *Bench* – Benches will be provided throughout the park at various locations.
6. *Drinking Fountain* – The Master Plan includes one Drinking Fountain near the proposed Pavilion. This drinking fountain will be freeze-proof and remain operational year round.
7. *Entrance* – The Entrance at the corner of Washington and Taylor Avenues will include a semicircular concrete walkway with a curved metal picket fence. Attached to this fence will be the Main park signage. A small planting bed with annuals will front this curved fence and sign.
8. *Metal Picket Fence w/ Stone Columns* – Along Washington and Taylor Avenues, a Metal Picket Fence with Stone Columns will



Woodland Area Fountain.



form the formal edge of the park. The fence will be constructed of ornamental metal pickets approximately 42 inches tall. Stone columns constructed with native limestone will occur at approximately 20 foot intervals.

9. *Groundcover/Flowering Perennials* – Groundcover and Flowering Perennials will be located along the edges of the park, inside the Metal Picket Fence.
10. *Play Area* – A Play Area consisting of the two bronze turtles mentioned above and a separate small piece of ground level play equipment for 2-5 year old children, both with poured in place safety surfacing, will be located on the eastern edge and the northwestern corner of the park respectively.
11. *Open Lawn* – A central Open Lawn space will be the focus of Walker Park. It will be flexible, accommodating a wide variety of passive activities.
12. *Paved Path* – A Paved Path will circle the Open Lawn providing an accessible route around this space.
13. *Existing Sidewalk* – The existing sidewalk along both Washington and Taylor Avenues will remain in place.
14. *Sign Wall* – A curved Sign Wall or fence will be included at the Entrance. In order to minimize damage to the root zone of the existing mature trees in this immediate area, a curved fence may be a less intrusive solution as it would not require trenching within the root zone.
15. *Existing Trees* – The existing trees will remain in place and be incorporated into the park site plan. Minimizing construction activities within the root zone of these trees will be a high priority of this plan. These trees should receive preconstruction treatments determined by a certified arborist to help insure survival.
16. *Woodland Area* – The Woodland Area will be located under the existing trees on the southern area of the park. It will include flagstone pavers, benches, and a small fountain.
17. *Paved Gametable Area* – A small Paved Gametable Area will be provided along the western edge of Walker Park. The surface of this area will accommodate wheelchairs and include wheelchair accessible gametables.

Fireman’s Park

A review of Fireman’s Park included the following points:

- The park site has poor visibility due to its location behind Firehouse #2 which completely blocks it from Big Bend Road. No signage is present which identifies it as a public park.
- The site is constrained by its narrow configuration.
- The site includes a significant stand of mature canopy trees which enhance the character of the site.
- The site does not currently contain any parking except for parking spaces associated with adjacent Firehouse #2.
- The site faces the existing Union Pacific Right Of Way.

This Master Plan calls for Fireman’s Park to remain primarily a passive outdoor space. In order for the space to be enjoyed by additional users, this plan includes the following improvements:

1. *New Signage* – New signage should be included which is visible from Big Bend, and identifies the area as a public park. The signage should include a main entrance sign, and possibly a directional sign.
2. *Future Land Acquisition* – The City should set as a long term goal the acquisition of the property to the west of Fireman’s Park for the purposes of creating a bird sanctuary or observation area.
3. *New Parking Area* – As part of the above land acquisition, the City should consider including a parking area serving this park, especially given its location near the heavily traveled Big Bend Road. This would allow others arriving by car to enjoy the park. For the short term, the City should investigate the potential of signing some of the parking spaces behind Firehouse #2 for park use.

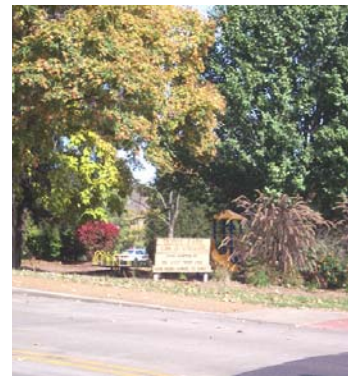
Depot Park

A review of Depot Park included the following:

1. The site is located ideally within the Downtown urban area serving as a small oasis to the surrounding urban environment.
2. The park site and pavilion provide nice opportunities to view passing trains and the Kirkwood Train Station.
3. The existing mulch safety surface requires periodic maintenance which could be reduced with the addition of a poured in place surface system.

This Master Plan calls for Depot Park to remain primarily a passive outdoor space which includes a small play area. Depot Park offers the opportunity to connect more significantly to City held property in and around Argonne, especially as part of an effort to connect the Grants Trail and Greentree Park trail system. Long term improvements for this park include the following:

1. *Updated Playground Surface* – A long term goal for this park should be the installation of new safety surfacing in the existing play area.
2. *New Signage* – New signage should be included which is visible from the street and ties this park into the entire Kirkwood Park System visually. The signage should include a main entrance sign, and possibly a directional sign.



Depot Park

Fillmore Park

A review of Fillmore Park included the following points:

- The park site currently includes pleasant seating areas with limited views of the playground.
- The adjacent open area should remain for informal use.
- The play area includes updated equipment but only mulch safety surfacing.
- Few seating opportunities existing near the play area.

Long term improvements for this park include the following:

1. *Updated Playground Surface* – A long term goal for this park should be the installation of new safety surfacing in the existing play area, in conjunction with seating near the playground.
2. *New Signage* – New signage should be included which is visible from the street and ties this park into the entire Kirkwood Park



Fillmore Park

System visually. The signage should include a main entrance sign, and possibly a directional sign.

Mitchell Park

A review of Mitchell Park included the following points:

- The play area includes updated equipment but only mulch safety surfacing.
- Site furnishings need replacement.

Long term improvements for this park include the following:

1. *Updated Playground Surface* – A long term goal for this park should be the installation of new safety surfacing in the existing play area.
2. *New Signage* – New signage should be included which is visible from the street and ties this park into the entire Kirkwood Park System visually. The signage should include a main entrance sign, and possibly a directional or support sign.
3. *Site Furnishings Upgrade* – The current park site furnishings should be replaced.



Mitchell Park

Meacham Park Memorial Park

Meacham Park Memorial Park is Kirkwood’s most recently developed park, with the implementation of its Master Plan completed in 2003. This Plan does not recommend any maintenance or facility improvements for this park.

CITY-WIDE TRAIL PLAN

In order to promote circulation throughout the Kirkwood Park System, a multi faceted City-Wide Trail Plan is proposed as part of this Master Plan. The City-Wide Trail Plan will provide a safe and efficient means of transportation around Kirkwood, and link Kirkwood with recreation opportunities provided by neighboring communities such as Grants Trail and Meramec Greenway. The City-Wide Trail Plan was conceptualized by considering the following goals:

- Connect as many Parks and Schools together within the community.
- Link Kirkwood to other regional greenways and trails systems.
- Consider trails as extensions of the parks.
- Encourage interconnectivity with adjacent municipalities.
- Provide linkages to Kirkwood’s downtown area.

The City-Wide Trail Plan has conceptually developed for the entire Community. See Figure 4-7 for a schematic layout of this trail system. This system is a hierarchical system, much like a conventional roadway network and includes a variety of routes and trails, both on and off local roadways. It also includes the many local neighborhood connectors which existing in Kirkwood today and help make it the walkable community it is known as. A more detailed discussion of each proposed component follows.

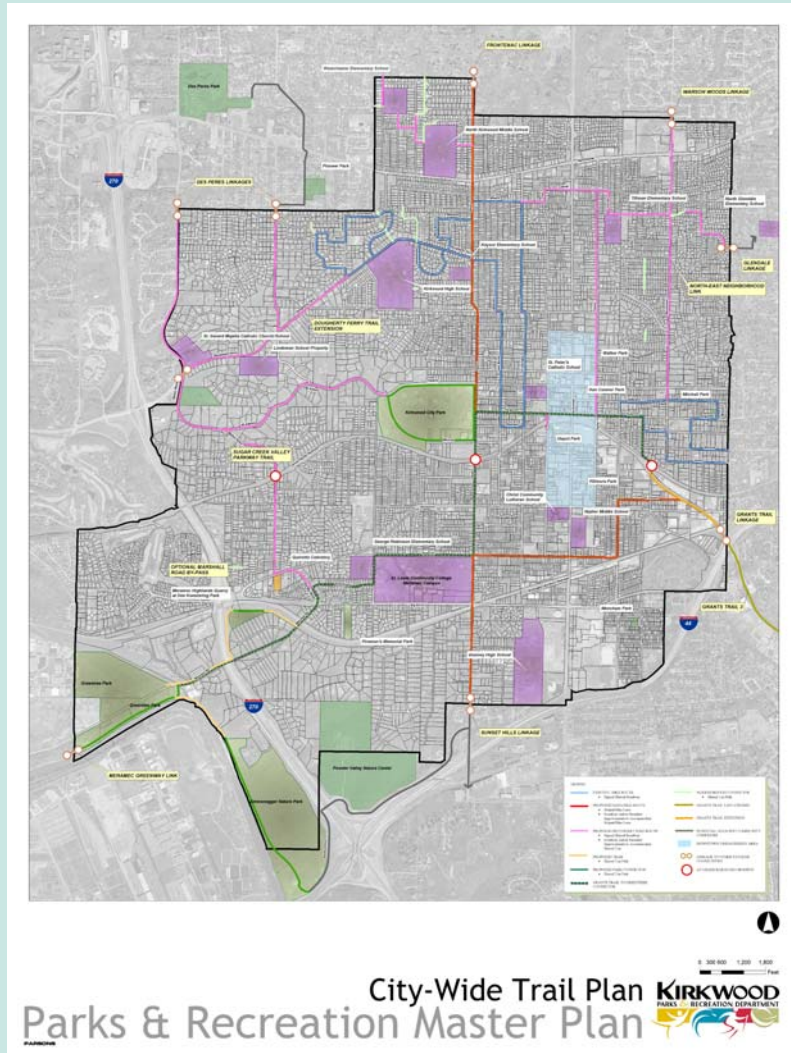
1. *Existing Bike Routes* – Kirkwood current has two existing Bike Routes which are formally designated and signed, and are “share the road” type of routes. A “share the road” type of route typically includes signage indicating the presence of cyclists, but no actual pavement striping designating a separate bike lane.



Existing On Street Bike Trail

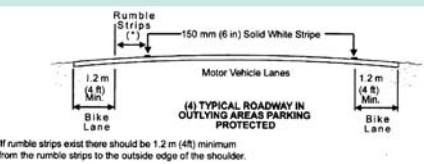
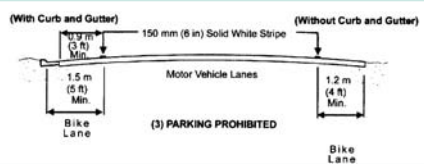
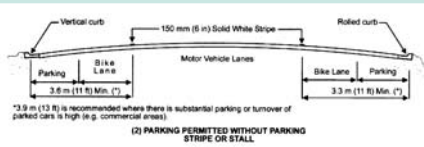
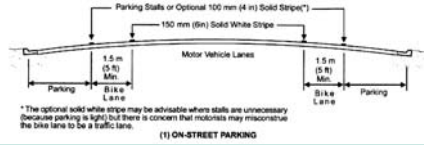
These existing routes will become integrated into the Trail System by linking directly to other components of the trail plan.

FIGURE 4-7 - CITY-WIDE TRAIL PLAN



2. *Proposed Main Bike Routes* – The Main Bike Routes become the spine of the system. They are located along major roadways like Geyer Road, Rosehill Avenue, and Argonne Avenue, and travel north-south and east-west through the community. The east-west portion will provide the link from Grants Trail to the Meramec Greenway. These Main Bike Routes are planned to be striped bike lanes five feet wide. In some areas, roadway and/or shoulder improvements might be necessary to accommodate the bike lane.
3. *Proposed Secondary Bike Routes* – The Proposed Secondary Bike Routes feed into the Main Bike Routes and with the Existing Bike Routes serve additional areas of the Kirkwood Community. Like the Bike Routes which currently exist in the

TRAIL SECTIONS



Source: Guide For Development of Bicycle facilities- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1999)

City, these routes would be signed shared roadways and not include any pavement markings. Some roadway and/or shoulder improvements might be necessary to accommodate the bike activity in a safe manner.

4. *Proposed Trails* – The Proposed Trails are separate shared use paths not located on existing roadways or within existing right-of ways. The size and configuration of these types of trails vary from 12 foot wide asphalt paths to five foot wide rugged mulch paths.
5. *Proposed Park Connector* - The Proposed Park Connectors are separate shared use paths through existing parks which connect to the City-Wide Trail system. Again the size and configuration of these types of trails will vary based on local park site conditions.
6. *Neighborhood Connector* – Neighborhood Connectors are specially designated local neighborhood connections used daily by City residents. These types of connections are most used by children walking or biking to school. They are shown on this plan to understand all the levels of interconnectivity within the community.
7. *Grants Trail 3* – Grants Trail 3 represents a significant trail connection potential to the popular Grants Trail. Current plans for Grants Trail 3 call for the trail to stop at the City boundary in the Leffingwell Road area. The east-west Main Bike Route is anticipated to connect to Grants Trail 3 in this location, carrying cyclists through the Kirkwood Farmers Market and Downtown.
8. *Potential Adjacent Community Corridors* - Potential Adjacent Community Corridors have been shown to indicate how neighboring community assets will tie into the City-Wide Trail Plan. One example of this type of corridor is the Stonewood Road connection linking Powder Valley Nature Center to Emmenegger Park, and Greentree Park.
9. *Linkages to Other Systems and Communities* – Linkages to other Greenway systems and communities have been shown to encourage connectivity with the surrounding region. As the City-Wide Trail Plan develops, these linkages may include informational wayfind signage which communicates the extent of the Kirkwood City-Wide system.
10. *At Grade Railroad Crossings* – Two locations, both along Main Bike Routes, include at grade railroad crossings. Control at these locations will be critical and will need coordination with the Union Pacific Railroad. The Main Bike Route connecting with Grants Trail 3 will also require an at grade railroad crossing, requiring coordination with the Burlington Northern Railroad.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2

A second Public Workshop was hosted on May 18, 2004 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Kirkwood Community Center. The purpose of this workshop was to present draft versions of the preliminary City-Wide Trail System and the individual park master plans. The purpose of the workshop was to solicit input of the current plans. The agenda included the following topics:

- *Welcome*
Parks & Recreation Director Murray Pounds
The Planning Committee
- *Purpose of Workshop*
- *Planning Process & Summary of Events*
- *Preliminary Program List*
- *Plan Overviews*
City-Wide Trail Plan
Walker Park
Meramec Highlands Quarry at Dee Koestering Park
Emmenegger Park
Kirkwood Park
Greentree Park
- *Questions*
- *Open house Session*

After a brief presentation of both the City-Wide Trail Plan, and the individual park plans, the floor of the meeting was opened up for public comment and questions. The meeting concluded with an initiation for the audience to review large scale versions of the plans in an open house format. Comments were offered to the Planning Team, Working Committee, and by Public Comment Sheets. A summary of all comments received is included in Appendix F.

ADDITIONAL LONG-TERM GOALS

Several additional long-term goals have also been identified as part of this Master Plan. These are outline below.

Lindeman R-7 School District Property

Located along Lindeman Road is approximately 12 acres of undeveloped land owned by the Kirkwood R-7 School District. This resource represents a significant open space asset as one of the largest remaining undeveloped pieces of land in Kirkwood. This Master Plan recommends the Kirkwood Park and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Park Board, pursue opportunities to work with the R-7 School District to utilize this land for park or open space purposes.

Open Space Preservation

As an additional long-term component of this master plan, the City of Kirkwood should continually seek opportunities to acquire land and leave land undeveloped and natural for future generations; and develop parks for passive uses such as trails, and picnic areas. Several of the master plans for the parks described above include components of undeveloped and natural land. Additional opportunities for open space should always be investigated according to the policies outlined in the Implementation Strategies section of this Master Plan.



Aerial Photo of the Lindenman School Property

- *Future park land acquisitions should focus on land for Playlots/Mini Parks in the northeast portions of Kirkwood.*
- *A future Mini Park located west of I-270 (Greenbriar Hills) should be a future acquisition priority.*
- *Land acquisition for a future trail connection between Greentree Park and Emmenegger Park should be a high priority.*
- *The City should diligently strive to acquire land for a future trail connection between the Grants Trail (Phase 3) and its own on-street bike route, as a first phase of implementing its City-Wide Trail Plan. This plan is described in further detail in the Master Plan section of this document.*
- *The City should closely monitor any opportunities for obtaining additional land for park use. This should include utilizing land acquisition policies outlined in the Implementation Strategies section of this plan.*

Park Land Priorities

SIGNAGE IMAGES



SIGNAGE

A good park signage system does many things; it provides effective information and direction for people to find their way and use a park system, its parks, and facilities; it encourages learning experiences; it helps maintain the image of the park system; and it communicates rules to users. As with many park signage systems, signage within the Kirkwood Park system is an inconsistent mix of old and new signs of varying formats, sizes, text styles, colors and mounting standards. This randomness is often more confusing to park users than effective. A goal of this Master Plan is to present general guidelines which will guide the Kirkwood Park and Recreation Department, with the Park Board, toward the implementation of a comprehensive signage system to be used throughout the network.

General Guidelines for Kirkwood Parks Signage System

When developing a signage system for the Kirkwood Park System, the general guidelines below should be followed.

- *Clarify the goals for the signage system.* – Decide on the purposes and objectives for the signage system, both on an individual park basis, and system wide basis.
- *Survey existing signage conditions within each park.* – Build upon what signage already exists by using what works well and improving that which is confusing and does not work.
- *Understand issues, problem areas and perceived decision points along the park visitor's paths into and through the park and entire system.* – Talk with park users and park staff about typical use habits, problem areas, conflicts between types of users, vandalism, and sponsored programs and activities.
- *Work with the proper regulatory agency per the type of sign.* In many cases signs may fall within the jurisdiction of other agencies. Understand and meet all codes and design standards for all traffic and regulatory signage. As an example, for traffic and or bike route related signage, determine whether it falls within City, St. Louis County, or MoDOT jurisdiction.
- *Utilize the new Kirkwood Parks and Recreation Department logo, or some identifiable aspect of the logo, throughout the signage system.* This should be the one element which visually ties the system together.
- *Identify unique aspects of the history of the park.* – Consider aspects that contribute to a sense of place, nurture local pride and stimulate learning about the specific park or space.
- *Outline general program guidelines for the overall information system.* – Determine who your visitor audiences are, and consider the tone of the message you want to set.
- *Develop a signage master plan.* – Include signs that are informational, directional or that help people orient themselves, and possibly signs that identify particular park places. Determine signage in a comprehensive package of messages, symbols, materials, etc.
- *Test, experiment and evaluate the effect of the signs you have developed.*



The Kirkwood Parks Logo should be utilized consistently throughout the signage system.

- *For any new signs, develop a consistency of materials, graphics, and colors on signage throughout the Kirkwood Park system.*
- *A single sign that offers multiple bits of information is preferred to multiple signs offering singular messages.*
- *Signs that offer multiple types of information allow park-users to attend to several needs at the same place.*
- *Consider all types of users with all levels of handicaps and abilities when designing signs for the Kirkwood Park system.*
- *Signage should not conflict or interfere with basic park maintenance procedures.*
- *For all new signage, maintenance plans should be in place with the necessary resources to handle proper care over the long-term. This includes having available paint, additional materials, lettering, etc. for repairs and upkeep.*

In general, different types of signage serve different purposes. Park maps, information or bulletin boards, educational signs, and directional signs are examples. A signage system developed for the Kirkwood Park system should concentrate on a system of basic signs which include the following types:

- *Park Maps* - Maps at park entrances, within the boundaries of the park, or linkages into the City-Wide Trail System can help to increase and enhance user's knowledge, curiosity and interest about the park or system. Maps not only can help visitors guide and direct themselves through the park or system, but highlight places of interest to visit as well. Useful park maps include the entire park, marked with boundaries and approximate street connections, trails, concessions, and place of posting located clearly ("You are here").
- *Information/Bulletin Boards* - Often park visitors are familiar with the one or more sections of a park that they frequent and are not familiar with the breadth of a park and its facilities. In addition, visitors are often uninformed about park rules and regulations, park events and activities, and renovation or management plans.
- *Educational / Interpretive Signs* - Educational signs such as those that highlight or point out a particular park's rich history and originally designed elements, or specific trees, paths, or other elements of the natural environment can also be conceived as a fun way to engage people in interacting with the historically significant setting and natural environment.
- *Directional Signs* - Directional signs posted intermittently, especially in natural areas, not only can serve to help people keep their bearing, but also feel located and secure.

The location of park signage is an important consideration in communicating the message. Maps, kiosks, and other elements, in addition to conventional signage, also function as signs. Placing signage in conjunction with other park amenities such as benches, cafes, restrooms, and places where paths cross can create mini destinations or

SIGNAGE IMAGES



SIGNAGE IMAGES



places in the park. This idea is called "triangulation" because the elements functioning together have a bigger impact than they would separately.

Incorporating other activities and uses in the area of signage can provide visitors with the opportunity to attend to several needs at the same place as well as create a comfortable and social place for people to relax and spend time.

In parks where there are large sections of natural areas or where there are no specific place destinations, small nodes or places can be created with a sign, a picnic table, and telephone or other amenity as a way to provide a location, for meeting or emergency purposes. In some cases, the proposed master plans discussed above identify these types of spaces as trailheads. Directional signs located within natural areas, as mentioned above, can help people keep their bearing as well as feel located and secure.

Signs can also be placed in front of interesting or unusual flora, fauna, trees or other natural features as a way to encourage visitor interaction and engagement with their surroundings.

In order to translate the above ideas into visible concepts, several images, shown to the left, have been selected which convey the character and style of a signage system appropriate for Kirkwood. These images should be used to guide further development of a comprehensive signage system for Kirkwood's park system.

TWENTY YEAR COST PROJECTIONS

The cost projections shown in Figure 4-8 represent implementation of the recommendations contained in the 20-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Estimates for the individual components of the Master Plan are included in Appendix D. Although this plan recognizes the community's high priority for the purchase of additional open space, the cost projections do not attempt to include funds or costs for unprogrammed land/open space acquisitions.

While it is impossible to predict the cost of land and facilities contained in a twenty year forecast, it is important to note (in current year dollars) the order of magnitude the City should commit to developing the vision contained in this Master Plan. The next section of this plan will suggest priorities for implementing and funding the Master Plan.

FIGURE 4-8: TWENTY YEAR COST PROJECTION

<u>Parks</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Kirkwood Park	\$5,474,800
Greentree Park	\$1,819,700
Emmenegger Park	\$714,000
Walker Park	\$287,800
Meramec Highlands Quarry Park	\$301,600
Depot Park	\$48,100
Mitchell Park	\$61,500
Fillmore Park	\$74,300
Meacham Park Memorial Park	--
Fireman's Park	\$401,100
Proposed Playlot "A"	\$149,700
Proposed Playlot "B"	\$149,700
Proposed Mini Park "A"	\$280,700
Trails*	<u>\$7,436,900</u>
TOTAL	\$17,199,900

* The Plan anticipates that most of the costs for Trails will be budgeted through transportation agencies such as Public Works, St. Louis County, or MoDot.

Implementation Strategies

INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides a strategy of meeting recreation needs up to the year 2024. Implementation of the Plan is a process and will require updates as facilities are built and population demands change. It is recommended that 5 year updates to the Plan be completed by the parks department in order to maintain significant progress toward meeting the recommendations made in this report. A determination will be made by the parks department whether the update warrants external assistance from a park planning consultant or whether the update can be completed internally by City personnel. The following chapter discusses phasing, funding, and maintenance operations. The information that follows will assist the parks department effort to implement, fund, and maintain the changes that are recommended in the Master Plan.



Kirkwood Park Amphitheater

STRATEGIES

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommends the implementation of a wide variety of items for the City of Kirkwood. Because resources available for completing this Plan are limited, a phased strategy for carrying out this Plan is suggested. Naturally, this phased strategy needs priorities assigned to its various components based on a variety of factors such as implementation logistics, construction operations, bid packaging, and cost/pricing efficiencies. The Working Committee developed the top priority projects which are listed below in Figure 5-1. These priority projects will be the first aspects of the Master Plan addressed in the future. Note that the Priority Projects are not listed in priority order and that any priority project may be pre-empted by a strategic land acquisition opportunity.

FIGURE 5-1 - PRIORITY PROJECTS
(Not listed in order of priority)

Project Description

Central Community Space (#3 and Lions (#7) or Scout Picnic Area (#9)
Walker Lake (#2)
Walker Park (Entire Project)
Greentree/Emmenegger Park Trail Link
Plaza Area (#9)
Park Operations Facility
Grants Trail Park
Welcome Feature (#6)
Accessible Trailhead (#11), New Perimeter Trail (#12), Renovated Comfort Station (#14) and New Trail to Open Field (#2)
Wetland Demonstration Area (#5) and Short/Tall Prairie (#6)
Infrastructure (#12)
Riverfront Trail (#3)

Location

Kirkwood Park
Kirkwood Park
Walker Park
Trail
Greentree Park
Kirkwood Park
Trail
Emmenegger Park
Emmenegger Park

Greentree Park
Quarry Park
Emmenegger Park

Acquisition of additional land for the purpose of parks or open space is a high priority in implementing the Master Plan. Currently land resource opportunities for park use in Kirkwood are scarce. The City is closely monitoring any opportunities for obtaining land for park use. Strategic land acquisition is a high priority which could pre-empt implementation of priority projects. In addition, the activities associated with implementation of this Plan will be closely coordinated with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Land Acquisition

Figure 5-2 includes four additional priorities which have been ranked identified as long term projects.

FIGURE 5-2 - LONG TERM PROJECTS

Project Description

Shelter/Outdoor Classroom (#6)
Depot Park Improvements
Signage Improvements (#13)
Mitchell Park Improvements

Location

Quarry Park
Depot Park
Quarry Park
Mitchell Park



Mitchell Park

By phasing the various components of the Master Plan into use, the City will begin to see recognizable improvement in the park system that would not be otherwise realized if it waited to implement each facility or park under an “all or nothing” method. Small steps toward the completion of each recommendation can be implemented slowly over time that will serve residents in the near term. Recommendations that are not critical to park operations or usability, but nonetheless desired aspects to the system, can be constructed at a later time. Meanwhile, essential park elements can be constructed to serve residents in the near term. This approach allows the City to show results toward the improvements of the park system and will theoretically create a favorable climate toward future parks and recreation spending.

FUNDING AND ACQUISITION SOURCES

Once the Plan has been established, acquiring funds to implement the Plan can be a challenge. The following information describes the main sources of funding that may be utilized to fund the Plan implementation. For the purposes of this report, funding sources have been divided into two categories: existing sources of funding and potential sources of funding. Existing sources of funding are those sources which the City of Kirkwood has used in the past or is currently using to fund improvement projects. Potential sources of funding represent additional opportunities which previously have not been pursued, but may hold promise in the future.

EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES

The Park Fund

The Park Fund is controlled by the Kirkwood Park Board, and has two main income streams. The first and primary source is a property tax set in 1997 at \$.20 per \$100 assessed valuation, and lowered to \$.13 in 1998. The second source is a transfer from the ½ cent Parks and Recreation Sales Tax, designed to offset the 1998 rollback of the property tax rate. Although designed primarily to cover operating expenses for maintaining the park system, the fund does have some limited capabilities to absorb capital costs.

Park Land Dedication

Dedication of open space or payment of fees for park development or recreation purposes by private developers can be negotiated in exchange for developmental considerations beyond those customarily permitted by planning and zoning requirements. Unless properly written and applied, a park land dedication ordinance can result in a lengthy court battle with a developer accusing the local government of illegally taking valuable land. In order to prevent this, the ordinance must provide that any land or funds will benefit the users of the new development. Fees in lieu of open space are used when it is not practical for a developer to donate land. An important aspect of park land dedication is land quality. Not every plot of ground is suitable for recreation. A typical ordinance will require that most of the land be dry, reasonably flat, and accessible by road. Some ordinances provide allowances for private recreation space. The idea is that the private amenities will reduce residents' need to use local public parks. Restrictive covenants and maintenance agreements are usually part of the conditions for allowing private recreation space to be given allowance.

Cooperative Use Agreements

A cooperative use agreement is an agreement between the school and parks department to share facilities. Both the school and parks department provide similar recreation facilities. By signing a cooperative use agreement, residents may use school facilities when not in use by the school. This agreement would allow the City to expand its available parkland without taking on any additional maintenance responsibilities. This approach might be particularly applicable to the Lindeman Property, currently owned by the Kirkwood R-7 School District.



View toward Greentree Park
from the Meramec River

Sales Tax

Voters authorized the current ½ cent park sales tax in 1998. This sales tax helped to fund the construction of the aquatic facility as well as the enclosure of the ice rink. More recently, this tax was used to acquire the 9.55-acre Meramec Quarry park property as well as fund the improvements to the neighborhood park in Meacham Park Memorial Park. By approving the ½ cent park sales tax, residents also received a seven cent property tax reduction when the City Council lowered the park property tax from 20 cents to 13 cents in 1999. Per state statutes, the Park/Recreation Sales Tax is restricted for payment of debt on the Aquatic Center, capital park improvements, park acquisition, and recreation-related expenses.

User Fees

As a practical matter, all over the nation, communities are requiring users of parks and recreation facilities to pay for the facilities they use on a daily permit or seasonal basis. This is primarily true of costly indoor recreation facilities and large labor-intensive outdoor facilities such as ballfield complexes and aquatic facilities that have high staffing and maintenance obligations. Kirkwood, not unlike many communities, does charge user fees for many of its facilities. The goal of the operation and management of these facilities is to generate income sufficient to meet or exceed the cost of staff to operate and maintain them, and if possible, establish a profit margin that can be returned to a sinking fund to support future improvements and expansions. The user fee approach can be an unpopular concept in some communities.

Bonds

The City could utilize its bonding capacity to place a bond referendum on the ballot. With successful passage, the City is allowed to sell bonds to raise capital for development/repair/improvements to the park system. Taxes are raised appropriately to retire the bond over the term of the bond. The bond money typically is available in a lump sum and put to use on the projects for which it was identified. Likewise, there is a time frame under which the bond money must be committed for use or it can be forfeited. The following are three types of bonds that may be considered for recreation facility funding.

- **Revenue Bonds**
Bonds used for capital projects, which will generate revenue for debt service where fees can be set to support repayment of the bond. Many times these are leveraged against sales tax revenue.
- **General Obligation Bonds**
Bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and general public improvements. These bonds usually require a general increase in property tax.



Emmenegger Park

- **Industrial Development Bonds**

Specialized revenue bonds issued on behalf of privately owned, self-supporting facilities.

Grants

Grant funding programs have been available at both the state and federal levels. Today, the federal grant opportunities have all but been terminated. However, there still are a variety of state grant programs available. Some of these grants are listed below.

- **Great Rivers Greenway**

On November 7, 2000, Proposition C, the Clean Water, Safe Parks & Community Trails Initiative successfully passed in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, in Missouri and Madison County and St. Clair County in Illinois, establishing the Metropolitan Park and Recreation District in Missouri and the Metro East Park District in Illinois. This organization now known as The Great Rivers Greenway, typically provides funding to develop parks, trails, and greenways. It began collecting a one-tenth of one cent sales tax in April, 2001, and has raised a significant amount of money for regional projects of which Kirkwood has taken advantage of for a trail project in Greentree Park.



Greentree Park Trailhead Dedication

Municipal Park Grant Commission

Fund generated from Proposition C for regional projects. Another 30 percent of the revenues are allocated to St. Louis County for the St. Louis County Parks and Recreation Department and neighborhood parks in unincorporated St. Louis County. The Municipal Park Grant Commission is the steward of the remaining 20 percent of the tax, generating about \$2.5 million annually for the parks of the 91 municipalities throughout incorporated St. Louis County. Since its formation, the Municipal Park Grant Commission has focused its efforts on delivering on the promise made to voters in 2000: To use taxpayers' funds to help enhance parks as demand for leisure increases, the pressure from the development grows and the needs to protect property values intensifies.

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The Federal LWCF program providing up to 50% project funding assistance, was the first local recreation grant program undertaken in Missouri. It has provided millions of dollars over 30 years to local agencies in Missouri for land acquisition and development of public parks and recreation areas. The program has received limited funding recently by Congress, and its future is uncertain. Several federal legislative initiatives would reinstate LWCF for the states, with significant changes to the program and a focus on land acquisition.

- **Recreation Trails Program**

The federal Recreational Trails Program was established by the National Recreational Trails Fund Act. It provides up to 80% matching funds to federal, state, and local units of government and private organizations for acquisition and development of motorized and non-motorized trails open to the public. The 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) included funding for the program for federal fiscal years 1998-2003. However funding beyond 2003 has not yet been approved.

- **Transportation Enhancement Grants**

Transportation Enhancements activities are federally funded, community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure. Many of these projects are compatible or supportive of park and recreation systems. For example, projects can include creation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscape improvements, refurbishment of historic transportation facilities, and other investments that enhance communities and access. The federal government provides funding for transportation enhancements projects through our nation's surface transportation legislation. The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) is preparing for the reauthorization of surface transportation programs by working with Congress, State and local officials, and other stakeholders to develop its proposals.



Quarry Park

Private Enterprise

Contracts with private business could be signed to provide and operate desirable recreational facilities financed, constructed, and operated by the public sector on City owned lands with a specified amount of compensation paid to the City.

Non Profit Organizations, Civic Organizations and Service Clubs

The Kirkwood Park System has a long history of successful relationships with Non Profit Organizations, Civic Organizations and Service Clubs. These relationships have resulted in significant additions and improvements throughout the system. The on going partnerships with these organizations will continue to be an important aspect of park and recreation improvements and enhancements.

Private Donations

Over the years, individuals and groups have expressed an interest in donating funds for facilities, equipment, trees, plants and other elements to the park system. In response to this generosity, the Greentree Legacy Program was developed to provide a means of noting a special event, a memorial to a friend or family member or just a way to contribute to the future of the recreation environment.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Lease/Purchase Financing

Facilities for public use can be financed and built through an entity separate from the municipality – either another public entity, a nonprofit corporation set up for that purpose, a bank or leasing company, or joint powers authority. There are several types of lease purchase funding mechanisms, including certificates of participation in which investors can purchase tax free investments in the leased facility, and sales leaseback, which is a means for public entities to sell an existing facility to a separate entity such as a nonprofit organization, an investor, or a group of investors. Improvements can be made by the separate entity who then leases the facility back to the public entity for an agreed to period of time and interest rate.

Foundations

Another source of revenue for parks and recreation is through a foundation, such as a “Friends of the Parks” foundation. A Friends of the Parks foundation is classified as a community foundation. Community foundations build their endowments through contributions from several donors. These foundations support charitable activities focused primarily on local needs. The advantages of starting a foundation include tax exemptions and tax deductibility. Missouri law must be consulted prior to inception in order to ensure compliance with local and national regulations governing the foundation.

Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Tax

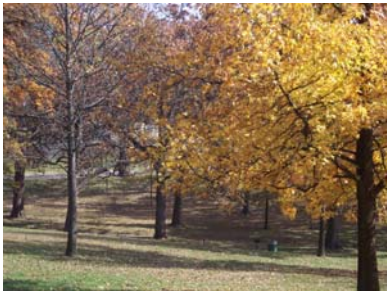
The hotel, motel and restaurant tax is based on gross receipts from charges and meal services or a per-room/night rate and may be used to build and operate golf courses, tennis courts, and other special park and recreation facilities or be put to use in general park operations. The advantage to such a tax source is that virtually all of it is generated by visitors, not local residents.

Special Improvement District/Benefit District

These taxing districts are established to provide funds for certain types of improvements, which benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, erection of fountains, acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements.

Conclusion

It is reasonable to assume that the successful implementation of the Master Plan will be achieved by utilizing a combination of the previously mentioned funding sources. For the largest and most costly projects, the use of bonds, leveraged bonds, or similar municipal financing is the most realistic. This method permits access to a large sum of money to complete the project in the shortest possible time frame, thus making the improvement available to the community in the near future. The amount of the bond should be fixed to ensure sufficient funds are generated from the sales tax to not only retire the bonds, but also provide for some level of operations and maintenance, as well as finance other smaller capital



Open Space in Kirkwood

improvements to be completed by City staff on a labor and materials basis.

The small to medium projects should be funded by other sources such as grants, donations, and self-help activities. It is not possible at this time to identify a specific source for every project in the Master Plan as this is an interactive process that needs to be undertaken by City officials.

COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Since the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is city-wide, the approach to implementation should also be broad, and not only consider Kirkwood's physical opportunities and constraints, but also its community character, municipal organization, financial resources, and political process. The Comprehensive Implementation Approach should seek to focus strategies in the following areas: land acquisition, facility development, and financial resources. Suggested strategies which these focus areas should address are discussed below.



Seek Acquisition Opportunities

Land Acquisition Strategy

1. Strategic land acquisition is a high priority which could pre-empt implementation of priority projects.
2. The City should continue to pursue a strategy to continually seek land acquisition opportunities including land for parks, community facilities, and trails. It should be vigilant to identify, pursue, and act on immediate acquisition opportunities.
3. A formal land selection/acquisition process should continue to be developed and utilized which includes the following policies:
 - Development suitability requirements for needed land
 - Discussions with land owners
 - Site suitability analysis which analyzes the physical features of a site for compatibility with desired program and requirements
 - Site environmental constraints analysis
 - Neighborhood/surrounding area impact analysis
 - Real estate appraisals
4. Once suitable sites have been analyzed using the above process, the City should seek a multitude of ways to secure park land including: direct purchase, donation, joint use, and partnerships.

Facility Development-Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Open Space

1. Engage the services of a park planning consultant with experience in the entire park planning process, and community familiarity.
2. For all proposed parks, work collaboratively with the park planning consultant in a master planning process to develop a master plan.
3. Develop a phasing and implementation plan which considers all pertinent influencing factors such as: City budget policies, and operations and maintenance requirements, and demand for the new park.

4. Prepare necessary final design contract documents for construction implementation including drawings, specifications, regulatory permits, and access agreements.
5. Implement construction through standard City construction process.

Trails were identified as a high priority in the “2001 Parks Survey”. This plan recognizes a distinction between trails inside parks and trails outside parks. The City Wide Trail Plan does not imply Park Board financial responsibility for all trails. The plan encourages active partnerships and multiple funding sources and advocates for on-street connections through the community.

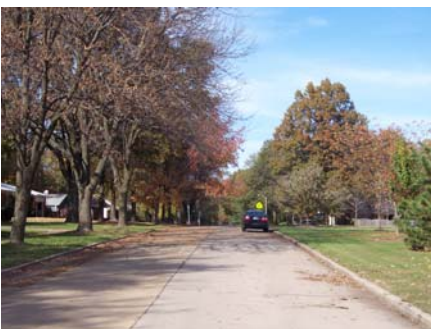
Trails

Trails

1. The City should continue to pursue existing strategies that continually seek land acquisition opportunities specifically for trails. It should be vigilant to identify, pursue, and act on immediate acquisition, lease, right-of-way transfers/acquisitions, and occasions for joint use/intergovernmental cooperation.
2. Develop a phasing and implementation plan which prioritizes implementation of the trail system with funding opportunities for trail and greenway development.
3. Utilize the land selection/acquisition process described above when obtaining land for trail development.
4. Prepare necessary final design contract documents for construction implementation including drawings, specifications, and necessary permits.
5. Implement construction through standard City construction process.

Financial Resources

1. In conjunction with the above mentioned strategies, the City should analyze its current revenue streams looking for opportunities to include and accommodate future land acquisition, park and facility development, and continued park maintenance and operations.
2. Potential future and projected revenue sources should be identified and investigated including:
 - City General Revenue
 - Sales Tax
 - Bonds
 - Grants
 - Donations
 - Facility Revenue
 - Development Tax
3. Current operating expenditures City-wide should be analyzed along with the operations and maintenance costs for parks and recreation. These current expenditures should be compared to projections for future operating expenditures with goal of establishing plan for continued operations and maintenance of the park system in the future.



Preserving the character of Kirkwood

This section has offered several broad suggestions to help the City begin developing an approach to implementing the plan. These ideas are suggestions and the City may revise, refine or reprioritize them as conditions in Kirkwood change.

ACTION ITEMS

Formal Plan Adoption

The first action item the City should seek to accomplish is the formal adoption of the plan by the Park Board, as well as City Council, and incorporation as a component plan, into the Kirkwood Comprehensive Plan. This gives the plan legitimacy and spreads the responsibility for its implementation throughout the municipal organization.

Development of Plan Champions

The City should promote the development of secondary support groups to champion the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Examples may include a “Friends of the Parks” citizens group, or other recreation related partnerships.

Ongoing Consensus Building

It is important that consensus building continue throughout implementation of the plan. An informed public with “knowledge” and “ownership” in the plan will help keep the process moving forward.

SUMMARY

The application of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a process that will help the City of Kirkwood meet future recreation demands while providing a high level of recreation facilities and programs in the present. Implementing such an ambitious Plan through phasing, and being amenable to future development opportunities will allow progress towards completion of the Plan in manageable increments. A number of funding sources have been identified in order to assist the Parks Department in financing the Plan. The Parks Department should pursue as many opportunities for funding as possible and remain open to new and creative input toward funding the Plan in the future. Periodic reviews of the Plan should be made in five-year increments in order to ensure that implementations are progressing toward the vision in this report. If deemed necessary by the Parks Department, the City will seek help from an outside consultant to prepare more detailed master plans or updates to the Plan.

The next twenty years will bring about much change in the recreation opportunities of Kirkwood and ensure that the City remains a vibrant, attractive and desirable place to live.



Walker Park was donated to the City