City of **LENEXA**

Executive Summary

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan | June 2012

Parks | Public Spaces | Natural Areas | Cultural Areas | Greenways | Trails | Streets

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City of Lenexa Parks & Recreation Department

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Overview:

In 2010, the City of Lenexa chose to undertake the development of the City's first Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is expected to provide direction on program offerings, facility construction and management, general capital improvements, park amenities, and budget and finance matters. This plan is also intended to establish goals, objectives, policies and standards to help guide the future development of the City's parks, recreation, and open space system.

Needs & Priorities Assessment Process:

To gain an accurate understanding of the existing condition of the City of Lenexa's parks system and the needs of its users, the Project Team employed the following needs assessment techniques:

1. **Anecdotal Techniques:**
   a. Individual park site evaluations
   b. Demographics analysis
   c. Recreation programs analysis
   d. Operations and maintenance assessment
2. **Qualitative Techniques:**
   a. On-site user interviews
   b. Focus groups
   c. Community meetings and public workshops
3. **Quantitative Techniques:**
   a. Citizen attitude and interest survey
   b. Community benchmarking
   c. 3-Tier Level of Service (LOS) Analysis for park acreage, facilities, and access

Top Priority Needs:

The Needs Assessment process yielded consistent findings among the various analysis techniques. The top ten (10) needs listed below in order of importance, were consistently expressed throughout the Needs Assessment process.

1. Develop additional parks and facilities - new facilities, parks, natural areas, and centers are needed to add acreage to the parks system, and provide additional locations for programming.

2. Indoor recreation facilities/centers – Currently, the under-sized and outdated Community Center is the only public indoor center serving the City of Lenexa.

3. Indoor aquatics – There are very few opportunities for indoor aquatics in Lenexa, all of which are private and offer a limited variety of aquatic facilities/activities.

4. Neighborhood parks and facilities – The Site Analysis and Access LOS analysis both indicated there were deficiencies at the neighborhood level, which was verified by the workshops and the statistically valid survey.

5. Bikeways and trails – There is a need and public desire to further expand the bikeways and trails system to better connect the various parks, commercial, and residential areas in the city.

6. Ongoing maintenance – The City needs to continue to focus on upgrading and maintaining the facilities it currently provides in an effort to increase ADA accessibility, safety, and aesthetic appeal.

7. Senior center/programs – The need for additional senior programs had a high level of importance based on the statistically valid survey, programs analysis, and public workshops.

8. City-owned dog parks - Residents expressed the desire to provide dog-oriented facilities within existing City of Lenexa facilities.

9. Development of a Lenexa farmers market - Although there are several local farmers markets outside of the city limits of Lenexa, residents indicated a strong desire to have a Lenexa-based farmers market.

10. Signage, wayfinding, and branding– Many of the parks within the city were difficult to locate or identify, and an embraced Lenexa "brand" was also lacking from any existing signage/wayfinding.

Guiding Vision:

The Department's Mission, as detailed in the Master Plan can be accomplished through its Parks and Recreation System, including its physical system, its programs and its management practices.

Following are descriptions of the various "subsystems" of the Parks and Recreation System Vision, and their key initiatives:

1. Indoor Recreation/Aquatics/Civic Centers:
- Special Use/ Events Center (renovation and expansion of the existing Community Center campus)
- New Central Recreation and Aquatics Center
- New Central Civic Center (at CityCenter site)
- Western Recreation and Aquatics Center

2. Bikeways and Trails:
- 136 miles of interconnected multi-purpose trails and on-road bicycle lanes
- Development of major and minor trailheads
- Development of trail design and maintenance standards

3. Nature/ Interpretive Center and Programs:
- Nature /environmental "hub" at Black Hoof Park
- Addition of a small, free-standing classroom building
- Addition of an outdoor, lake-side learning lab

4. Outdoor Athletic Facilities:
- Improved Youth Recreation Fields and Programs at Freedom Fields
- Practice Field Expansion and general improvements at Centennial Park, Mill Creek, Buffalo Meadows and Electric Parks
- New "destination" athletic facilities (e.g. skate parks)

5. Programs, Festivals, and Special Events
- Establish objective evaluation criteria and continually assess the life-cycle of all programs and festivals
- Provide new festivals/events (e.g. farmers market)
- Expand or seek out additional partnerships

6. Ongoing Maintenance:
- Develop automated work order system
- Develop ADA transition plan
- Require operations and maintenance estimates for all new capital projects

Implementation:

The cost of the Vision is estimated at approximately $102 million, excluding land acquisition. The funds currently available for implementation of the Vision are less than the total estimated cost, however it is assumed that additional funding will be acquired over time.

Based on available and projected funding, as well as residents' top priorities, the three (3) phases of implementation proposed and their key initiatives are described below:

Phase 1: 2012 – 2017, $39M
(assuming bonding of sales tax revenues)
- Central recreation and aquatics center
- Civic center at CityCenter
- Improved athletic fields
- Critical trail connections
- Trailheads at existing park sites

Phase 2: 2017 – 2022, $15M
- Renovation of existing Community Center site
- Construction of Nature Center at Black Hoof Park
- Undeveloped trailheads
- On-road trail connectors
- Continued field/court improvements

Phase 3: 2022 – 2042, $48M
(assuming additional bonding)
- Western recreation and aquatics center
- Lake-side nature learning lab
- Trails within utility easements
- Additional sports courts/fields in western portion of the City