



CITY OF WICHITA

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING PROCESS

PROS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING # 1
FEBRUARY 13, 2007

MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting was called by Doug Kupper, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Wichita. Mr. Kupper explained that the planning process is just beginning, and the City will look to this committee for guidance on the plan and for assistance in keeping the community informed. An additional, important role of this committee is to help identify other efforts and ideas in the community that might inform the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. Mr. Kupper then introduced Sally McIntyre, of MIG, Inc., who will lead the planning process. The meeting included a brief presentation of the planning process, and an introduction of the staff and consultant team followed by an extended brainstorm session about the strengths, needs, and opportunities of the Wichita parks system.

Strengths

Wichita's parks system provides a variety of local and natural resource based recreation opportunities. Neighborhood parks have improved in recent years and are key to building community around parks and recreation. Other strengths included:

- Community support
- Variety of attractions
- Newly updated playgrounds
- Interest in connecting parks with trails
- Water center
- Botanica
- Update of Riverside Park
- Skate park
- Watson Park
- 12 staffed recreation centers
- Summer of Discovery
- Synergy with other plans

Needs

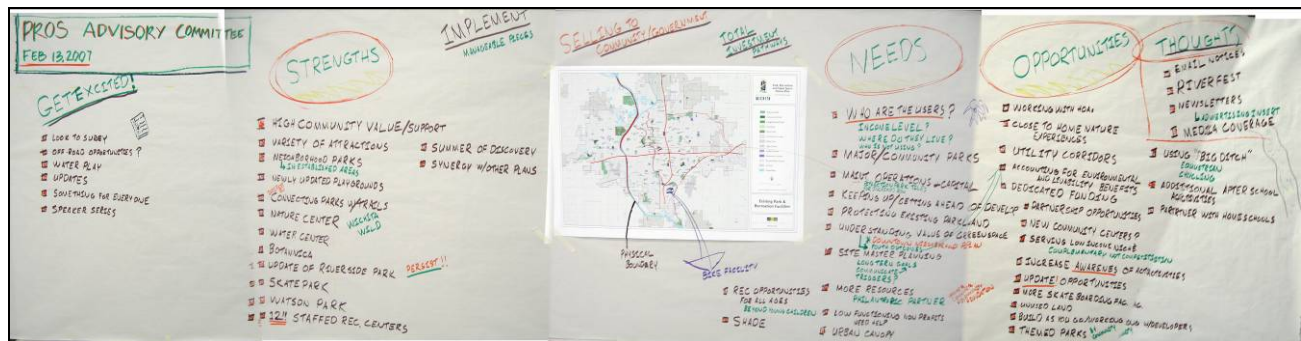
There is a need to both keep up with growth by building more neighborhood and community parks, and to refocus the community on the value of parks, recreation and open space. Other needs included:

- Information about park users, including reasons for lack of use
- Maintenance funding (operations and capital)
- Protection of existing parkland
- Understanding the value of greenspace
- Site master planning
- More resources
- Help for low-functioning nonprofits
- Urban canopy/shade
- Recreation opportunities for all ages

Opportunities

Some important opportunities are filling gaps in services, determining the City's niche in recreation services, and making better use of existing resources. The group also suggested using emails, advertising inserts, and Riverfest to spread the word about Wichita's parks system and inform citizens about the parks planning process. Other opportunities mentioned in the meeting included:

- Working with HOAs
- Close-to-home nature experiences
- Utility corridors
- Accounting for environmental and livability benefits
- Dedicated funding
- Partnerships
- New community centers
- Serving low-income users
- Increasing awareness of activities
- Updating facilities
- More skateboarding facilities
- Sharing facilities with existing providers
- Unused land
- "Build as you go" program with developers
- Themed parks
- Off-road opportunities
- Water play
- Speaker series
- Using the "Big Ditch"
- Additional after-school activities
- Partner with homeschools
- Get excited!



Graphic Recording of 2-13-07 PROS AC Meeting