



**CITY OF WICHITA**  
PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING  
PROCESS

**SUMMARY OF DISTRICT 5 OUTREACH MEETING**  
**JUNE 6, 2007**

Residents of City Council District 5 were invited by Council Member Jeff Longwell to share their views related to city parks, recreation and open space on Wednesday evening, June 6, at the Auburn Hills Golf Course Clubhouse. A total of 22 residents ranging in age from youth under age 18 to senior citizens participated.

The purpose of the outreach meeting was to:

- define the importance of the Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan;
- highlight current park assets in Wichita at large and in District 5;
- solicit citizen observations, and learn of their ideas for parks in the future and how to pay for them; and
- communicate what happens next in the planning process.

Four questions used to elicit participants' observations and preferences for the future are listed below, along with a summary of responses:

**1. What are the best features of Wichita's parks, recreation programs and open spaces?**

- A good variety of parks
- Many multi-use facilities
- Parks well maintained for most part
- Fountain parks
- Some parks are adjacent to school facilities, e.g. Harvest Park, allowing better use of resources
- Emery Park
- Playground equipment has been updated
- Large number of public golf courses
- A few golf courses are senior friendly
- Good skate park

**2. What are the limitations of Wichita's parks, recreation programs and open spaces?**

- Few picnic facilities in District 5
- Few corridors/paths that connect residents and parks
  - Presently can't get to most District 5 parks via sidewalks
- Layout of facilities/space at some parks creates potential threat to public safety
  - Absence of lighting in many parks
- No access to water or restroom facilities in many parks
  - True for most parks in District 5
  - Both amenities lacking at skate park

- Lack of public swimming pools, community gardens, specialized facilities for youth (BMX and skate) and neighborhood parks in District 5
- County Acres pool is not always open during posted hours
- Limitations of trail system in Swanson Park – current trail is only for walking

### **3. What would you like to see changed, added or eliminated in the way of parks, facilities recreation programs or open spaces in the future?**

Responses that were generated by individual participants are listed in order of priority as expressed by participants during a concluding exercise. The number to the right indicates how many participants identified it as one of their top three priorities.

- Provide access to drinking water and restrooms at more parks in District 5 (9)
- Create safe pedestrian access to District 5 parks from neighborhoods (7)
  - Additional suggested amenities include a “doggie bag” dispenser and first aid station
- Solicit more private and nonprofit partners to contribute to the operation and upkeep of existing park facilities ( e.g., expand partnership at Emery Park) (7)
  - Need for more picnic tables at Emery cited
- Add skate facilities to existing parks to provide more recreation opportunities for youth (6)
- Create more green space corridors to connect existing parks in District 5 (4)
- Expand public access to the Arkansas River (3)
  - Woodland Park mention as one possibility
- Expand public access to the Wichita/Valley Center Flood Control channel (2)
- Add improvements to Kiwanis Park
  - Skate facilities (2)
  - Picnic shelter and grill (2)
- Add benches to existing playground parks (2)
- Locate more community gardens adjacent to grade schools, especially in inner city (2)
- Target park access strategies for lower-income youth and adults (1)
  - Provide adult supervision at facilities for youth
- Locate new park facilities adjacent to public schools (1)
- Create dog park in District 5 (0)

### **4. How should the City of Wichita pay for park and recreation services?**

Participants were asked to indicate the funding sources they would consider from a list of options offered by the facilitator. Options are listed in order of favorability, with the most favorable option listed first. The number to the right indicates how many participants are favorable to considering it as a funding option.

- Realignment of resources (10)
- More public/private partnerships (10)
- Dedicated sales tax (9)
- Increased user fees (9)
- Impact fees on new development (participants informed that this is not a legal option under Kansas law at this time) (6)
- Dedication of infrastructure development dollars for green space (6)
- More non-federal government grants (5)
- Dedicated property tax (1)
- General property tax (0)
- Sales tax (0)