



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

SUMMARY OF DISTRICT 1 OUTREACH MEETING
JULY 10, 2007

Residents of City Council District 1 were invited to share their views related to city parks, recreation and open space on Tuesday evening, July 10, at the Angelou Northeast Library. A total of 28 residents, most of who were from District 1, 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 1;
- solicit observations, and learn 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?

- Great golf courses – affordable, well designed, well maintained
- Interactive fountains are fun for kids and safer than swimming pools
- Recreation services have diverse offerings and appeal to all ages, especially at Edgemoor
- Walking and bicycle trails. - most residents have nearby access to trails
- Great indoor and outdoor facilities (referenced Linwood Park)
- Fishing at K-96 Lake and Watson Park
- Responsiveness of park board and park staff
- Diversity of parks – no two parks are exactly alike – and are fairly dispersed throughout city
- Sports fields at McAdams Park
- Playground equipment: safe, modern and also promotes learning
- Access to most park facilities is free

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

- The city's unconnected bicycle trails
 - Canal route and Bailey Street trails are examples
 - Not possible to bicycle to most parks
 - One missing link is the east side of the river from Kellogg going south
 - Streets cannot be used safely to connect trails
- Insufficient city resources allocated to parks
- McAdams Park lacks space for community meetings
- Lack of sufficient trash containers and the lack of trash removal
- Lack of park benches
- New development doesn't "pay its own way" for parks

- Absence of shade trees especially around playground equipment
- Inoperability of some fountains
- Absence of parks in south central Wichita (boundaries: Washington Street to the river and south of Kellogg)
- Mowing is too infrequent (question: should the city plant more native grasses that wouldn't require as much mowing?)
- Shortage of indoor recreation facilities in District 1
- Not all facilities are accessible and they do not meet ADA requirements
- Lack of bathroom facilities in many parks
- City's planning horizon for parks (20 years) is too long

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.

- Create more interactive learning opportunities at McAdams Park (25)
- Upgrade facilities and services at Grove Park (21)
 - Move playground equipment closer to existing residences
 - Add shelters
 - Create recreation center
 - Provide trail to connect Grove Park with K-96 Lake
 - Create miniature golf course and driving range
- Construct more walking/biking trails with a priority on creating loops/connections among existing trails (16)
 - Add mileage markers to trails
- Improve the maintenance of and security for swimming pools (13)
- Increase the number of interactive fountains throughout city parks ((8)
- Provide more trash containers and improve trash removal (8)
- Create more pocket parks and establish partnerships with neighborhood groups to maintain them (7)
- Upgrade facilities and services at Fairmount Park (6)
 - Add drinking fountains
 - Create nature education program, e.g., provide signage to identify plant species
- Clean up the Arkansas River bank – especially the concrete waste south of Kellogg (6)
- Expand opportunities for volunteers to contribute to park maintenance (6)
- Create community gardens (5)
- Add an enclosed meeting space and sports courts at Murdock Park. (4)
- Expand marketing activities to inform citizens about park facilities and services (4)

- Create new park in north central Wichita (boundaries: between Central and 9th Street, and Piatt and Hillside) (4)
- Add more grills and picnic tables at parks (4)
 - People who try to cook in parks that lack a grill create a fire hazard
- Create a dog park (2)
- Add more interactive water features (Woodard Park cited as example) (2)
- Increase number of launch sites for canoes/kayaks on both rivers (1)
- Promote physical fitness by posting mileage signs on hiking/biking trails (1)

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.

- More public/private partnerships (16)
- Dedicated sales tax (13)
- More non-federal government grants (11)
- Dedication of infrastructure development dollars for green space (10)
- Dedicated property tax (5)
- General sales tax (5)
- Increased user fees (4)
- General property tax (4)
- Realignment of resources (2)
- Impact fees on new development ¹ (1)

¹ Participants were advised that this is presently not a park financing option under Kansas law.