



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

SUMMARY OF HISPANIC OUTREACH MEETING
JULY 17, 2007

Persons from the Hispanic community and others were invited to share their views related to city parks, recreation and open space on Tuesday evening, July 17, 2007 at Minisa Park. A total of 8 residents 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;
- 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?

- Services are affordable
- Hiking/biking trails in different areas of city
- Excellent design and construction of park improvements
- Golf courses well designed, affordable and "playable" (with possible exception of Auburn Hills)
- Recreation services available for youth, especially youth from low/middle income households
- Recreation centers do good job of trying to be responsive to immediate communities they serve

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

- Lack of off-street parking for small/medium size parks – creates traffic congestion for neighbors and discourages park use
- Absence of picnic tables, grills and shelters at many parks
- Aging shelter and restrooms at Sim Park
- Sports courts at Woodland Park not well maintained
- Worn, out-dated equipment and supplies at recreation centers (referenced Evergreen) such as video games, balls and movies – contributes to boredom of kids
- Limited hours of availability for renting park facilities
- Poor lighting at many parks limits practice hours and contributes to perception that parks are unsafe¹
- Woodland Park not well used because it lacks amenities valued by immediate community
- Overgrown "natural areas" and trash along the west river bank create perception that Woodland Park is unsafe

¹ This person noted that outside lights were recently removed at Evergreen Park.)

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 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.

- Develop an outdoor, dynamic activity area in existing park that invites social interaction (5)
 - make it culturally relevant
 - include “built-in” table games, such as checkers
 - create an interactive fountain
 - include public art
- Expand availability of low-cost child care to enable greater parent participation in programs (3)
- Devote more resources toward providing cleaner and safer parks (3)
- Add drinking fountains and restrooms to medium/large parks, especially Bridgeport Park (3)
 - Keep restrooms clean and well maintained
- Improve recreation facilities, equipment and services for youth (2)
 - Develop programs based upon young people’s special interests and expand marketing
- Provide more opportunities at recreation centers for social interactions among adults (2)
- Please greater emphasis in recreation services on science and technology education (2)
- Expand partnerships with nonprofit organizations to raise more resources for youth services (1)
- Promote greater physical fitness for children and adults through improvements in facilities, equipment and instruction (1)
- Improve maintenance of Bridgeport Park (1)
- Create a fund for matching dollars from neighborhood associations for park development (0)

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

Participants were asked to indicate 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 listed first. The number to the right indicates how many participants are favorable to considering it as a funding option.

- Dedicated sales tax (6)
- More public/private partnerships (5)
- More non-federal government grants (4)
- Dedicated property tax (1)
- General property tax (1)
- Dedication of infrastructure development dollars for green space (1)
- Impact fees on new development ² (0)
- General sales tax (0)
- Increased user fees (0)
- Realignment of resources (0)

² Participants were advised that this is presently not a park financing option under Kansas law.