Public Spaces Committee Meeting Agenda

Monday, October 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM

105 N. Dickason Blvd.

Roll Call

Notice of Open Meeting

Public Comment

New Business

1. Approval of August 10, 2026 minutes.
2. Consider and take possible action on options for flower planters downtown.
3. Consider and take possible action on flower baskets and flowers for existing planters and possible new ones for next summer.
4. Consider and take action on Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. (CORP)
5. Consider and take possible action on green space outside City Hall.

Adjourn

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.

2026

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)



Discover COLUMBUS

Acknowledgements

City Council

Joe Hammer – *Mayor*

Ryan Rostad – *District 1 Alder*
Rhonda Fuller – *District 1 Alder*
Trina Reid – *District 2 Alder*
Michael Lawson – *District 2 Alder*
Amy Roelke – *District 3 Alder*
Molly Finkler – *District 3 Alder*

Public Spaces Committee

Michael Lawson
Sherry Culhane
Patricia Boness
Renee Weichert
Denise Meir
Amy Sandow

Recreation Committee

Ryan Rostad
Michelle Hoppe
Ellen Agnew
Kristen Hart
Louise Voss
Adam Carthew
Lisa Lawson

Staff

Matt Amundson – *City Administrator*
Maria Zeien – *Administrative Intern*
Mike Kornmann – *Economic Development Director*

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements **2**
Introduction **5**
Overview **7**
Regional Trends 7
Physical Characteristics 7
Social Characteristics 8
Goals and Objectives **11**
Inventory **13**
Open/Undeveloped Spaces 17
Accessibility 18
Analysis **20**
Standards 20
Public Input 21
Spatial Analysis 24
Recommendations **27**
Fireman's Park 27
Kiwanis Park 28
Meister Park 29
Avalon Park 30
Rotary Park 31
Meadow Lane 31
Trails 32
System-wide 33
New Parks 33
Matrix 34
Operations and Maintenance 40
Implementation **43**
Funding 43
Near-Term Capital Improvement Programming 45
Appendices **46**
Appendix A: Detailed Inventory 47
Appendix B: Classifications and Definitions 55
Appendix C: Survey Questions 57

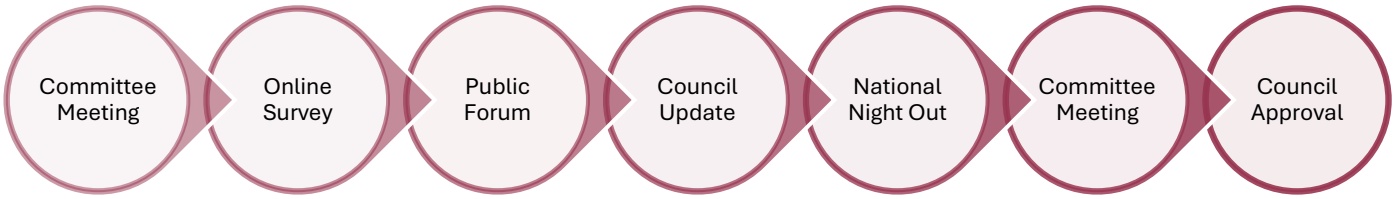
Introduction

The Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) is a commonly used planning document in the parks and recreation field used to guide parkland development in communities. Specifically, CORPs assess the quality and availability of amenities within the park system, and they assess the community's needs and wants. This report ultimately provides recommendations which consider goals, public input, and current park inventory which intend to guide park planning for the next five years.

In addition to guiding future park improvements, the CORP is a key aspect of eligibility for DNR Stewardship Grants, which require an updated plan every 5 years. The City of Columbus last updated its plan in 2021, so this update will maintain eligibility.

The Planning Process

Staff met with the Recreation and Public Spaces Committees during a joint meeting on 6/8/2026 to discuss public input strategy. This conversation guided the development of survey questions and a public forum. An online survey was available to residents for three weeks from 6/17/2026 – 7/8/2026. This provided valuable public feedback and reached 349 community members. Subsequently, a Public Forum regarding the plan's update was held on July 14, 2026, and facilitated by city staff. This input ultimately guided the recommendations featured in the plan, along with a comparison of current inventory and space with NRPA standards. Staff met with the Recreation and Public Spaces Committees again on 8/10/2026 to discuss recommendations included in the draft report. A final draft of the plan was approved by the City Council on _____. Any changes to the plan after this date must be amended by the City Council.



Summary of Previous Park Plans

Columbus' last CORP was adopted in 2021, and was primarily an update of the 2005 plan, with minimal public input. Some notable recommendations from the plan that have since been implemented include: create a capital improvements program, expand parking in parks, and a comprehensive site plan for Fireman's Park.

Other planning efforts affecting the City's park system include a Master Plan of Fireman's Park (featured in *Recommendations*), the City's Comprehensive Plan and 2025-2027 Strategic Plan, and the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (discussed in *Goals*).



Chapter 1: Overview

Overview

Regional Trends

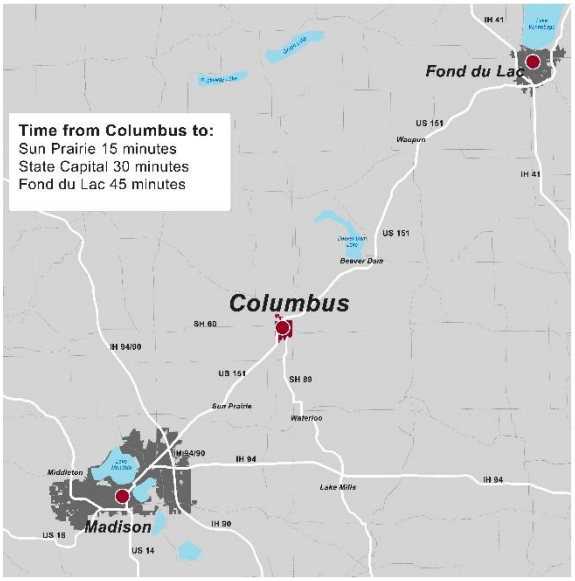
Statewide Participation in Outdoor Recreation

Participation in outdoor recreation has increased throughout Wisconsin, with key reasons for participation being health benefits, mental health/wellness, and socialization. However, many people face barriers to participation, the most prevalent being a lack of time. Additionally, distance to parks and a lack of awareness of opportunities pose significant challenges[1]. The City should explore paths to reduce these challenges when feasible.

Physical Characteristics

Location

The City's location and geography affect its capacity for growth and parkland. Its location makes it a prime spot for development and tourism, as it is only 25 miles from Madison, houses an Amtrak station, and contains several major roads (US 151, SH 89, SH 60). Additionally, Columbus has several major employers, including Prairie Ridge Hospital, and Enerpac. Thus, Columbus needs ample parkland space to accommodate current residents, visitors, and future residents.



Topography & Soils

One major issue affecting development and use of land is significant flood plains and wetlands throughout the City. Poor draining soils prevent certain buildings and recreational use, so thoughtful design must go into the future planning of these areas. Smart planning uses these features to their advantage and incorporate storm-water drainage to prevent flooding. One example of this is a recent stormwater creek addition to Fireman's Park. This prevents flooding, while providing an aesthetically pleasing water-feature with walking bridges that connect the park.

Columbus also boasts natural attractions including the Crawfish River and the Udey Dam. Currently, Meister and Rotary Park border the Crawfish River, but future expansion of the parks system should take these amenities into account.

Weather Conditions

Columbus' weather conditions vary by season. Temperatures can drop below 0° F during Winter months, and they can reach 100 ° F during the Summer. Columbus gets on average 32 inches of precipitation annually, with around ¼ being snow[2]. Thus, a need for both indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities

[1] Wisconsin DNR, *Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2025-2030,* 2025
[2] Wisconsin State Climatology Office – UW Madison, *Climate Normals by Location,* 2026

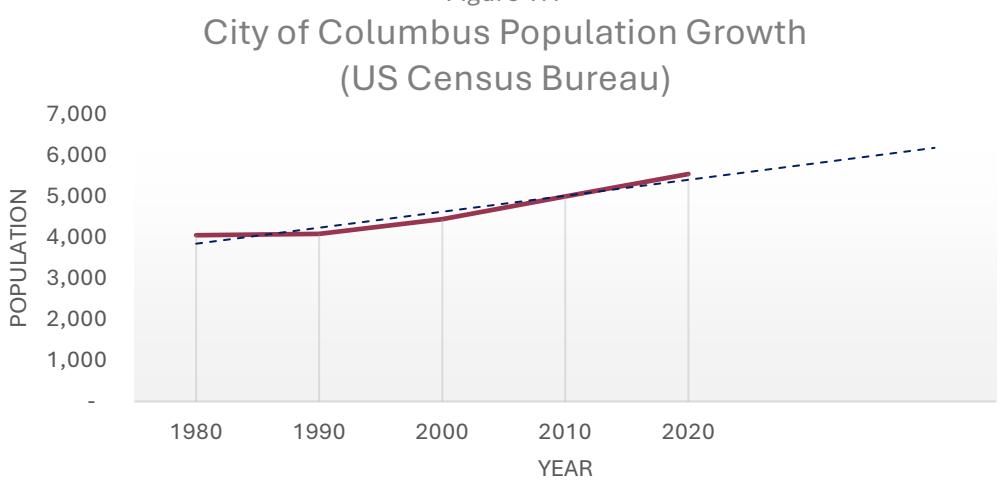
exist in Columbus, along with activities for a wide range of temperatures. Additionally, with climate change, Wisconsin is starting to see more unpredictable weather, so recreation needs may fluctuate.

Social Characteristics

Population Growth

As of 2020, the City of Columbus has a population of 5,540, which has steadily grown over the past few decades (see *Figure 1.1*). Based on the increase from the 2010 census, Columbus' annual growth rate is around 1.1%. Thus, the City's Park system must plan to support additional growth over time.

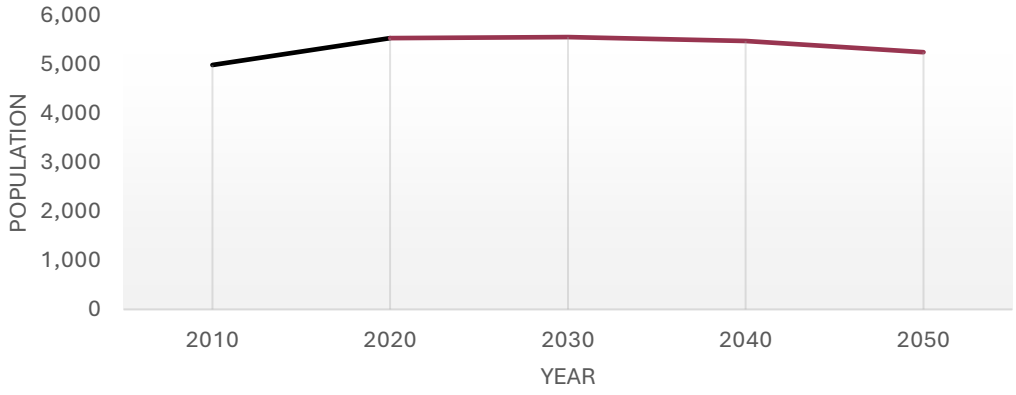
Figure 1.1



This follows a statewide trend of expansion, however, Columbus appears to be growing at a much faster pace than the rest of Wisconsin and Columbia County. While Columbus grew by 11% between 2010 and 2020, Columbia County only grew by 2.9%, and the State of Wisconsin saw 3.6% growth[3]. Therefore, Columbus may need to expand its parkland at a higher rate than the overall county and state.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) population forecast shows stagnant growth during the next few decades, but this estimate does not consider local efforts to support additional growth (*Figure 1.2*)[4]. The City has been facilitating local development by adding to the housing supply, which is likely to increase the population. Thus, it is more likely that the City will see growth at a similar rate to the past couple decades (*Figure 1.1*). Overall, an expansion of the park

Figure 1.2



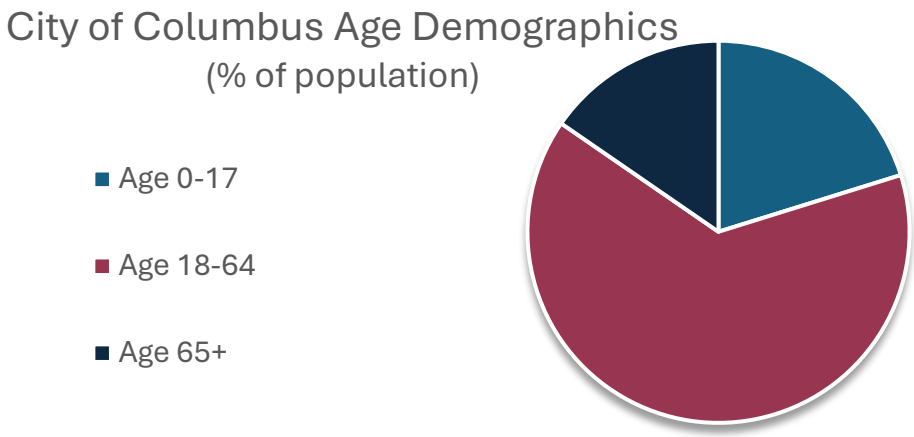
[3] US Census Bureau, *Quick Facts,* 2025
[4] Wisconsin DOA, *Population and Housing Unit Estimates,* 2025

system to meet the growing population should match the pace of housing development.

Age

Age also plays a significant role in determining park needs. The City is younger on average compared to the county and state, with seniors consisting of only 15.4% of the population, opposed to 20.9% and 19.6% in the county and state respectively[5]. *Figure 1.3* shows the general age demographics of Columbus' population.

Figure 1.3



Considering the City's significant adult and youth population, parks must offer a variety of recreation options that cater to different ages, but especially for young adults.

Other Considerations

Other important demographics affecting park use include family income and ability. As of 2024, the median household income is $75,427, with a poverty rate of 6.9%. For Columbia County, the unemployment rate in 2025 was 3%, slightly lower than the state's 3.4%. This suggests that parks must offer low-cost and free recreational opportunities. Additionally, 9.4% of people under 65 years of age have a disability, highlighting a need for accessible recreation options[5].

[5] US Census Bureau, *Quick Facts,* 2025



Chapter 2: Goals

Goals and Objectives

Community-Specific Goals

Specific community-oriented goals regarding outdoor recreation are based on statewide initiatives and goals outlined in the City's 2025-2027 Strategic Plan.

1: Safety and Accessibility

2: Meet Recreation Needs of all Citizens

3: Support Growth and Development

4: Preserve Significant Natural, Cultural, and Historical Resources

5: Explore All Funding Sources

Statewide Goals

The Wisconsin DNR identified three main goals and ten strategies for achieving them in their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2025-2030 (SCORP). Future City projects should consider the State's goals in addition to community-specific priorities. Statewide goals are:

1: Equitable Opportunities

"Ensure that all Wisconsinites have equitable opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation, regardless of where they live or their ethnicity, gender, income, abilities, or age"

Strategies

A. Provide more opportunities close to home
B. Provide needed recreation facilities
C. Improve affordability of participation
D. Support, develop, and enhance mentoring programs
E. Create more welcoming outdoor spaces
F. Improve distribution of information on recreation opportunities

2: Ensure Sustainability of Recreational Opportunities

"Maintain and expand the sustainability of recreational opportunities in our state, ensuring that existing opportunities are well funded and have the support to grow and expand where needed"

Strategies

A. Expand and diversify funding sources
B. Adapt to new environmental conditions
C. Lead by example on climate change mitigation

3: Support Collaboration

"Grow the collaborative partnership approach across federal, state, regional and local agencies and private non-profit organizations and businesses to provide high-quality outdoor experiences for all Wisconsinites"

Strategies

A. Create implementation plan with desired outcomes and partnerships



Chapter 3: Inventory

Inventory

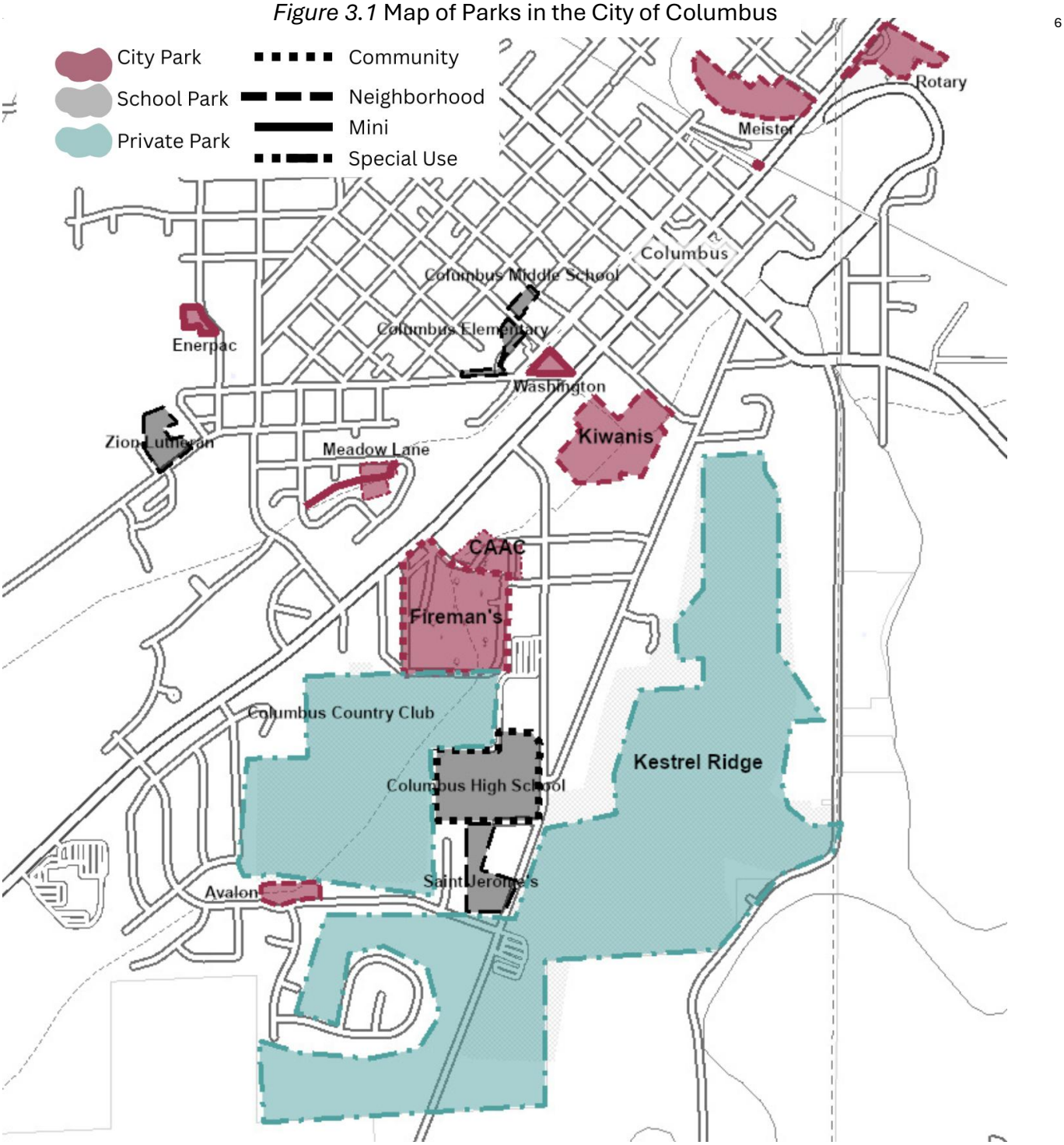
The City owns and operates 9 parks, an outdoor community swimming pool, and a small trail system. This park system consists of around 58 acres. Additionally, Columbus has open recreational spaces that are part of the 5 schools in the City, along with 2 golf courses run by private entities that the public may utilize. Including these spaces, Columbus boasts nearly 340 acres of outdoor recreation space.

The following table lists these outdoor recreation spaces available to the public, broken down by ownership and park classification. Definitions of classifications can be found in *Appendix B*. *Figure 3.1* displays these parks on a map. Additionally, the table contains a brief description of each park, but *Appendix A* contains a detailed inventory.

City Owned		
Community Parks		
Park Name	*Acres*	*Description*
Fireman's Park	32	Central to the community, and the largest park by far, Fireman's is home to the historic pavilion, boy scout cabin, 4 tennis courts, baseball stadium, goats, and two playgrounds with a walking path.
Neighborhood Parks		
Kiwanis	13.4	Kiwanis features 6 baseball diamonds, a picnic shelter, a walking path, and two play structures.
Meister	7	Meister features 2 soccer fields, 2 softball diamonds, and a playground. The park gets many visitors for soccer games and tournaments.
Rotary	1.4	Sponsored by Columbus' Rotary Club and located just outside of City limits, this park has a playground, shore fishing, and kayaks for rental.
Meadow Lane	1.2	A small green space next to the Tower Dr Walking Path.
Avalon	1.8	Has a basketball court, sand volleyball court, and playground.
Mini Parks		
Washington	0.7	A small but popular play area with swings and open space.
Davies	0.2	A small picnic area.
Enerpac	0.8	A new playground with green space sponsored by Enerpac.
Special Use Parks		
Columbus Area Aquatic Center		Home to the City's outdoor pool, featuring a concession stand, slide, and sprinklers.
Linear Parks (trails)		
Tower Dr Walking Path	0.18 mi	A short walking trail near Meadow Lane.
School Parks (Public & Private)		
Community		
Columbus Senior High School	2	Home to a football field, and a full-sized running track.
Neighborhood		
Columbus Middle School	1.5	Open play space with a softball field and swing set.
Columbus Elementary School	2	Features a playground, softball field, and baseball field.
Saint Jerome's Catholic School	4	A large playground, basketball hoops, volleyball court, and open play space.
Zion Lutheran School	3	Playground, basketball hoops, a soccer field, and softball field.

Private Parks		
Special Use		
Columbus Golf Course	89.5	9 hole golf course operating on City-owned land through a lease agreement.
Kestrel Ridge Golf Club	121	An 18 hole golf course.

Figure 3.1 Map of Parks in the City of Columbus [6]



[6] Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

The following tables list recreational ammenities and facilities available in the City's parks. These a
categorized by passive and active recreational activities (definitions found in *Appendix B*), along with a detailed inventory of playground structures.

Passive Recreation	**Totals**	**Fireman's**	**Kiwanis**	**Meister**	**Rotary**	**Meadow Lane**	**Avalon**	**Washington**	**Davies**	**Enerpac**
Picnic Tables	**108**	63	8	12	11		7	3	2	2
Cooking Grills	**2**				2					
Trash Cans	**56**	25	16	7	2	1	1	2	1	1
Dogi Pot	**8**	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Water Fountain	**5**	1	1	2			1			
Shelter Building	**10**	4	1	1	1		2		1	
Benches	**49**	19		7	6	2	10	3		2
Stone Platform	**2**	1						1		
Restrooms	**6.5**	2	1	1.5	0.5		1			0.5
Goat Pen	**1**	1								
Cabin	**1**	1								
Pavilion	**1**	1								

Playgrounds	**Totals**	**Fireman's**	**Kiwanis**	**Meister**	**Rotary**	**Meadow Lane**	**Avalon**	**Washington**	**Davies**	**Enerpac**
Play System	**9**	2	2	1	1		1	1		1
Adult Swings	**18**	7	2		2		2	3		2
Tot Swings	**8**	3			2		2			1
Seat Swings	**4**	2						1		1
Other Swings	**1**									1
Teeter Totter	**1**	1								
Slide	**14**	4	3		1		1	2		3
Sandbox	**1**						1			
Monkey Bars	**6**		1	1			1	2		1

Climbing Structure	**5**	2			1		1					
Merry-Go-Round	**1**	1										
Spring Rider	**4**	2	1				1					
Activity Panels	**2**	2										

Other Active Recreation	**Totals**	**Fireman**	**Kiwanis**	**Meister**	**Rotary**	**Meadow Lane**	**Avalon**	**Washington**	**Davies**	**Enerpac**	**CAAC**	Columbus Senior High	Columbus Middle	Columbus Elementary	Saint Jerome Catholic	Zion Lutheran School	Columbus Country Club	Kestrel Ridge
Baseball Diamonds	**8**	1	6											1				
Basketball Court	**9**			1			1					4	2			1		
Ice Skating Rinks	**0***																	
Running Track	**1**											1						
Soccer Fields	**4**			2								1				1		
Softball Diamonds	**5**			2									1	1		1		
Swimming Pools	**1**										1							
Tennis Courts	**4**	4																
Volleyball Court	**2**						1								1			
Golf Course	**1.5**																0.5	1
Boat Launch	**0**																	
Shore Fishing	**2**			1	1													
Football Field	**2**	1										1						

* City sometimes puts up a temporary “Nice Rink” for ice skating during winter months, often at Fireman’s park

Open/Undeveloped Spaces

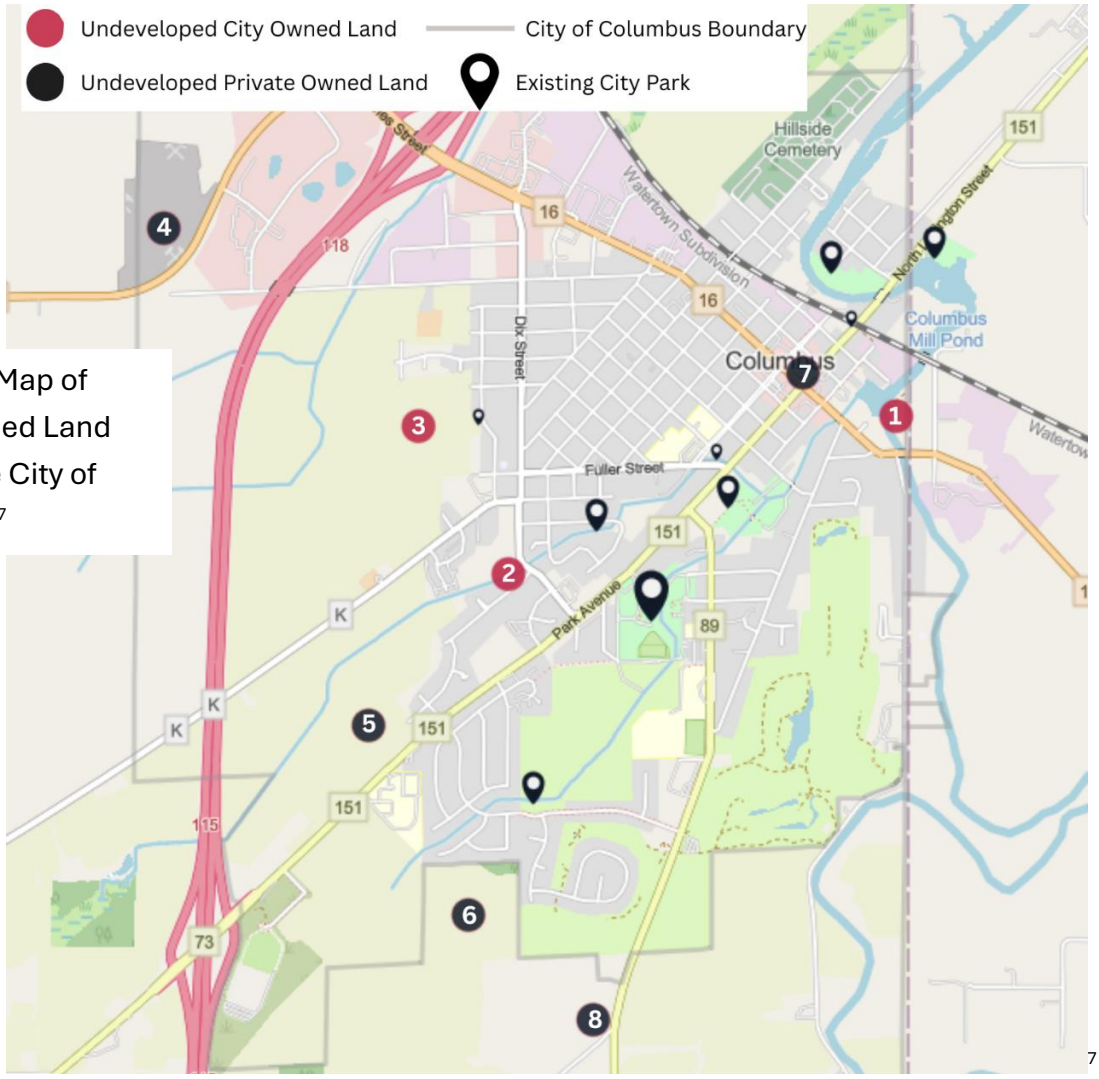


Figure 3.2 Map of Undeveloped Land around the City of Columbus[7]

1. Udey Dam natural area, already maintained by the City but could include in park system and add some recreational amenities (fishing dock, picnic tables, etc.). Around 1 acre.
2. Lot at the Southwest end of Tower Dr, likely part of future trail development. Could be a better managed natural area with passive recreation. Around 2.5 acres.
3. Western land adjacent to Enerpac Park, could expand existing playfield. Around 3.5 acres.
4. Old quarry by Hwy 60, reclamation study done to turn into a lake. Around 150 acres, partially within city limits.
5. Lot zoned for future park in gateway corridor, around 30 acres, but some is wetland.
6. 40 acres outside city limits, has potential to annex for future development and park.
7. Star/Sampson building in downtown likely needs to be torn down. Could become an urban mini park. Around 1,278 sq ft.
8. Old quarry next to City's South transformer station. Technically outside of city limits but could annex if quarry is reclaimed. Lot is around 40 acres.

[7] LTSB, Wisconsin County Clerks and Land Information Offices, Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri

Accessibility

Some parks offer accessible recreation opportunities, but many are in need of updates. Fireman's tot lot has accessible play options by panel activities reachable through a paved path. Additionally, two playgrounds offer an ADA swing seat. Paved parking lots include ADA parking, and some water fountains are accessible to wheelchair users. Future updates and additions should consider accessibility in its design. The first step towards improving accessibility in parks is to contract an ADA audit, which would guide a compliance program.



Chapter 4: Analysis

Analysis

Standards

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) collects data from real park and recreation agencies to create annual benchmarks on park offerings. These are separated by community population, with the smallest group being communities less than 20,000[8]. The following tables compare Columbus' park amenities with these standards. Overall, Columbus meets or exceeds the median for its population group, the only improvement to be made would be increasing the miles of trails available to residents.

	City of Columbus	NRPA Standard (median)
Number of Residents per park	615.6	1,062
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 people	10.56	12.3
Miles of Trails	0.18	4

	City of Columbus (City Parks)	City of Columbus (All public spaces)	NRPA Standard (for Columbus)	NRPA Standard (median residents per facility)
Playgrounds	9	12	3.0	1,866
Basketball Courts	2	4	1.1	4,928
Diamond Fields	12	16	2.6	2,165
Tennis Courts	4	4	1.7	3,238
Dog Parks	0	0	0.5	10,311
Rectangular Fields	3	3	1.6	3,400
Volleyball Courts	1	2	0.8	6,880
Fitness Zones	0	0	0.7	7,421
Splash Pads	0	0	0.5	12,304
Community Garden Plots	1	1	0.6	9,857
Swimming Pools	1	1	0.6	9,138
Disc Golf Courses	1	1	0.6	9,514
Walking/Running Tracks	0	1	0.9	6,500
Pickleball Courts	(4)	(4)	2.1	2,667
Skateboard Parks	0	0	0.5	11,028
18 Hole Golf Courses	0	1.5	0.5	11,904
Ice Rinks	0	0	0.6	8,894

[8] National Recreation and Park Association. *2026 NRPA Agency Performance Review*, 2027

Public Input

To assess community specific needs, the City carried out a public input strategy which included an online survey, a public forum, and dialogue at community events.

Survey Results

The survey was open for three weeks during June and July of 2026, and received 349 responses. Of these responses, 266 self-identified as residents of Columbus. A copy of the survey is available in *Appendix C*.

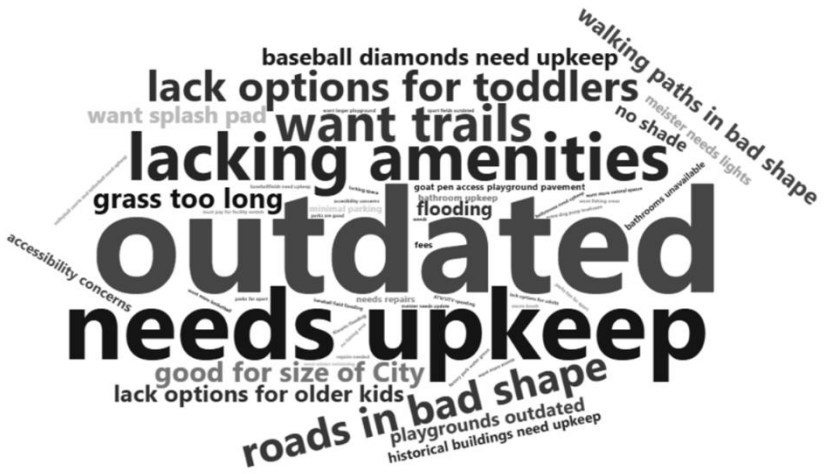
Demographics

The survey asked a few questions on demographics to ascertain whether the sample is representative of the population. Since the survey was open to the general public and not randomized, there is likely some self-selection bias. Responses to demographic questions were compared with census data to estimate how the results are biased. Overall, the demographics from the survey were similar to the census data, except for gender. Survey respondents consisted of 70% women, while census data indicates a true proportion of around 55%. Statistical analysis (regression and t testing) was used on each question to determine whether gender played a role in responses.

Park Rating

When asked how they would rate the City's park system, respondents on average gave 3.56 stars out of 5. The most frequent response (mode) was 4 stars. This suggests that most people perceive the City's parks as good quality, but there is room for improvement. Respondents who gave three stars or less were asked why, with common input being that facilities were outdated and in need of more frequent upkeep. *Figure 4.1* shows which themes were most frequently mentioned.

Figure 4.1 Frequent Reasons Given for Ratings 3 Stars or Less

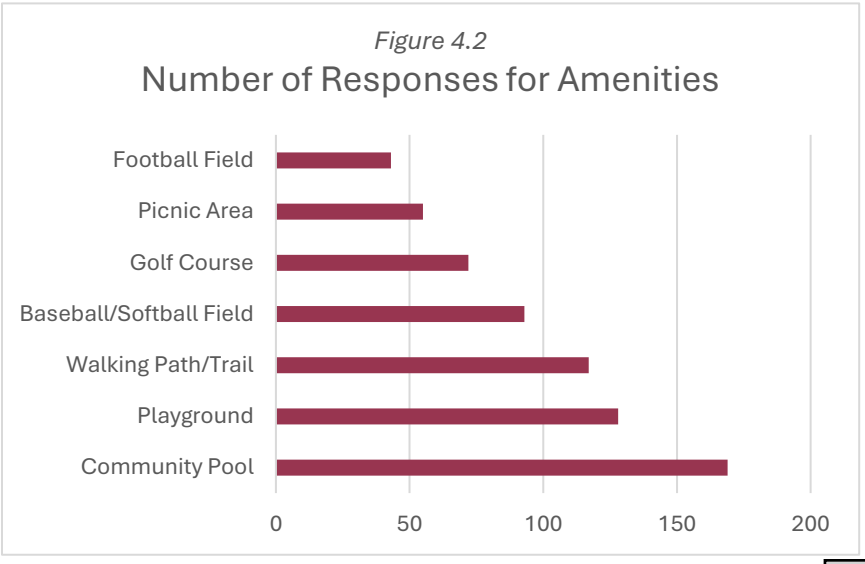


Amenities

Respondents were also asked which amenities they used most frequently. *Figure 4.2* shows the most popular responses. Given six options for potential projects, respondents on average ranked them in the following order: Trails, River Walk, Outdoor Adult Fitness Area, Softball/Baseball Field

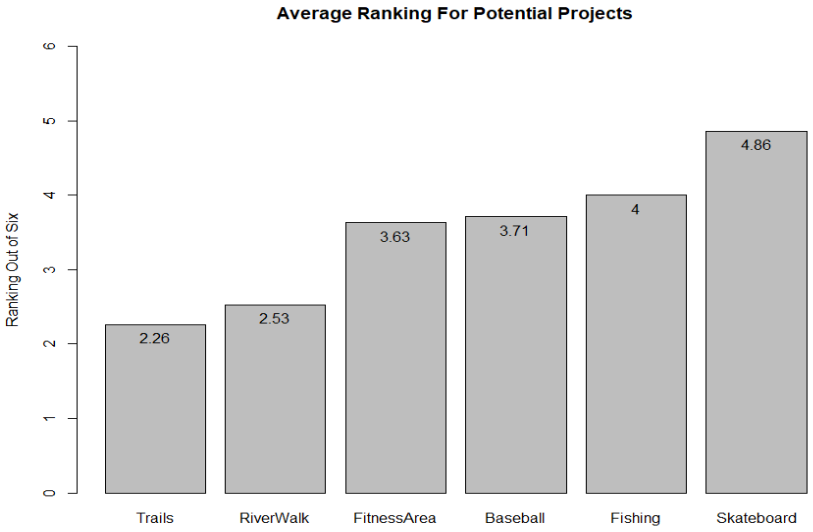
Figure 4.2

Number of Responses for Amenities



Improvements, More Fishing Areas, and Skate Park. *Figure 4.3* shows the average ranking for each project. Analysis indicates that gender may have disproportionately influenced these results, specifically for rankings on fishing areas. Regression analysis indicated that women on average ranked fishing areas almost half a spot lower than men, so a more representative sample likely would have yielded a higher average ranking for fishing areas.

Figure 4.3 Results from Project Ranking Question



Respondents were also given the opportunity to suggest additional amenities or facilities they would like to see in the future park system. The most popular write-in response was 'splash pad' with 38 mentions. *Figure 4.4* shows other popular responses.

Figure 4.4 Common Suggestions for New Amenities



Trails

There is strong community desire for an expansion to the City's trail system. Aside from not meeting the NRPA standards, the survey indicated enthusiasm for more trails. 11 write-in responses for rating indicated they want trails and 20 write-in responses for suggesting amenities indicated they wanted walking or bike trails. Additionally, trails were most often ranked first when assessing potential projects.

A question on trail use was asked to gather more specific information on community trail needs. Only 20 respondents indicated that they would not use trails, suggesting that 94% of the community would. Respondents most commonly selected walking (90%) and biking (54%) as how they would use trails if available.

Accessibility

Respondents were asked to identify any accessibility needs in the parks. Common responses requested accessible playground equipment, with several specifically suggesting wheelchair accessible playground flooring (soft pavement). Other common responses asked for more handicap parking and repairs to paths in the parks.

Public Forum

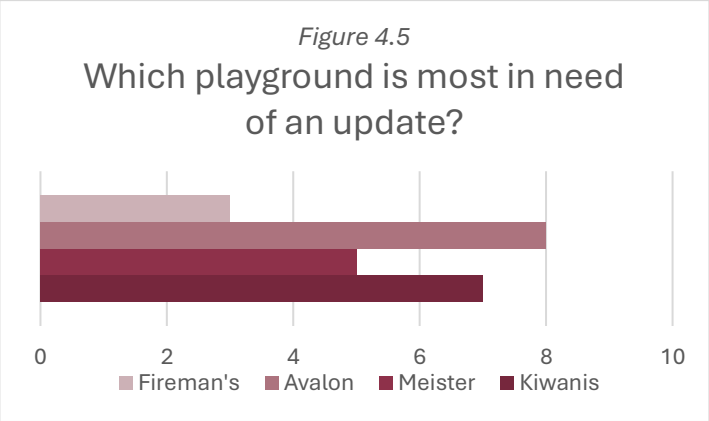
An opportunity for further participation was available to residents through a public forum on July 14th, 2026. However, turnout was low with only five people in attendance. While the group was small, it offered the opportunity for more personalized conversations regarding the City's park system. The group discussed future trails, baseball fields, park upkeep, volunteer opportunities, and individual park needs. The following were suggested:

- *Trails:* bike trail connecting Columbus and Fall River; trail loop; EMS mile markers on trails; expand on existing trails
- *Baseball Fields:* coordinate with teams and organizations for upkeep and fundraising; local business sponsorship of facilities
- *Upkeep*: have Public Spaces Committee organize volunteer day for park upkeep; hire dedicated park maintenance crew
- *Volunteer Opportunities:* have 'city clean up day' once or twice a year (could combine with Arbor Day or Earth Day); work with volunteer organizations such as 'Odd Fellows'
- *Individual Park Needs*: Avalon Park playground frequently used; Meister could use update; toddler play equipment would reduce safety concerns for little ones (specifically at Meister)

National Night Out Engagement

City staff were available to discuss the park plan at the City's booth at the annual National Night Out event in Fireman's Park. Community members were asked to choose which of the following playgrounds is most in need of an update: Kiwanis, Meister, Fireman's, or Avalon. The following chart shows the responses:

Figure 4.5



Spatial Analysis

An important consideration for park planning is whether all residents have access to a nearby park that meets their recreation needs. NRPA standards quantify park "service areas" as 1 mile for community parks, 0.5 mile for neighborhood parks, and 0.25 mile for mini parks. *Figure 4.6* displays these service areas for Columbus Parks with population concentration[9]. Overall, most populated residential areas fall within a service area for a park. While there are no parks in the Northwestern corner of the city, this is not a residential area, so there is little need for parks there.

While residences fall within park service areas, this does not make them easily accessible to all residents, especially when some residents only fall within the community park's 1 mile radius. Thus, parks should be within walking distance from most residences to accommodate transportation variations. A 10 minute walk is around 0.5 miles for the average person, so houses within a 0.5 mile radius of a park would be considered within walking distance. *Figure 4.7* displays this radius. There are only a few residences south of Hwy 16 that are outside of a 0.5 mi radius from a park. Thus, if more parks are added in the future, they should be near those neighborhoods.

Figure 4.8 displays the NRPA standards over the current zoning map and *Figure 4.9* displays the standards over the future zoning map. Currently,

Figure 4.6 Map of NRPA Standards Radius Co to Population Density[9]

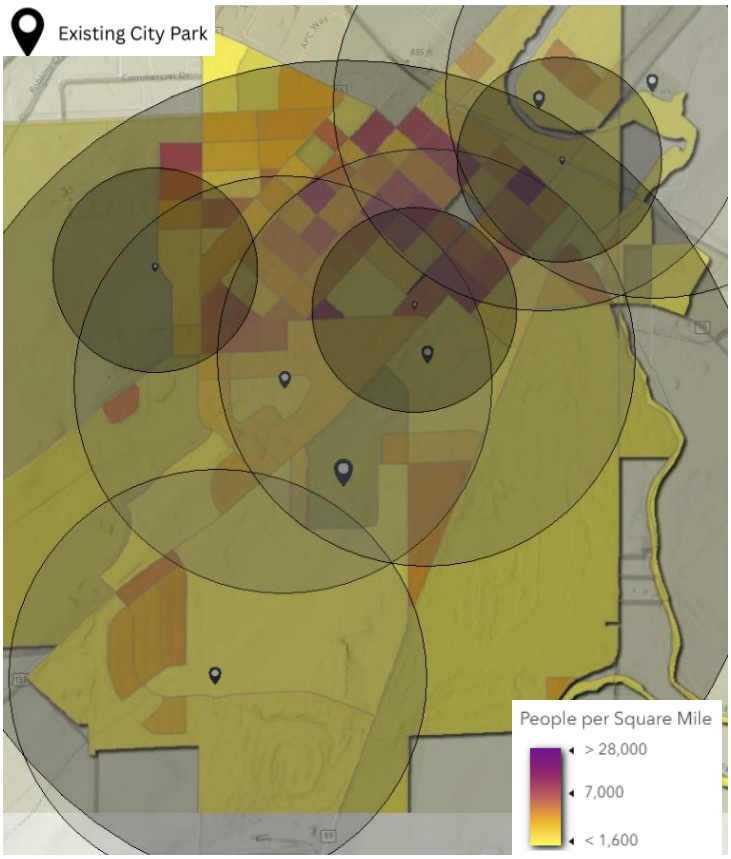
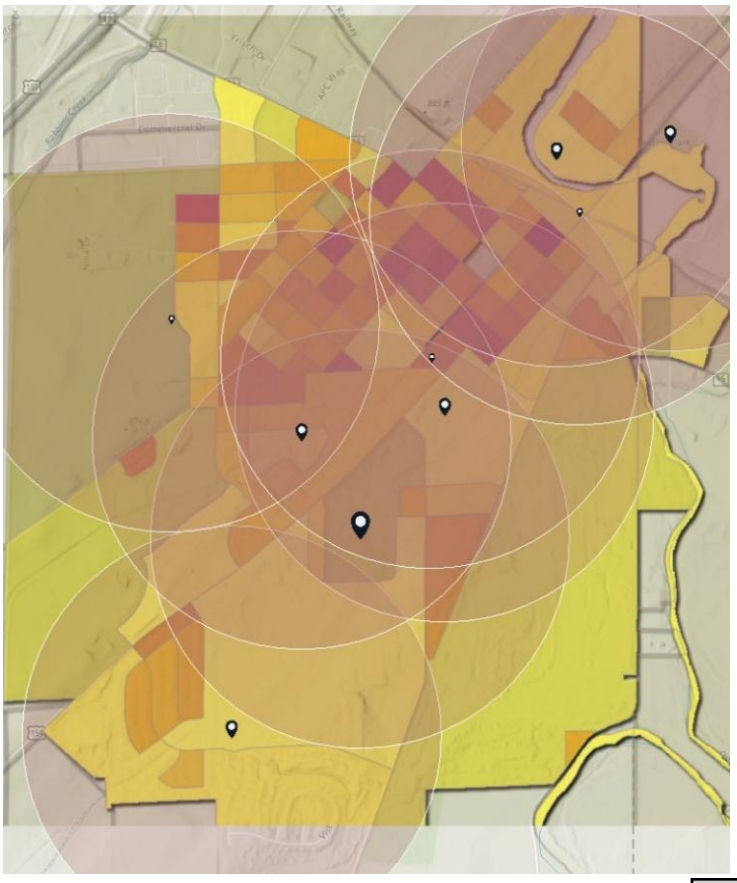


Figure 4.7 Map of Walking Radius to Parks Compared to Population Density[9]



[9] LTSB, Wisconsin County Clerks and Land Information Offices, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, Header, P1, P2, P3, P4, H1, and P5 Tables from U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Public Law 94-171 files., Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

parks cover most residential areas, but if development continues there be a need for more Northern Eastern parks.

Figure 4.8 Map of NRPA Standards Radius Over Current Zoning Map[10]

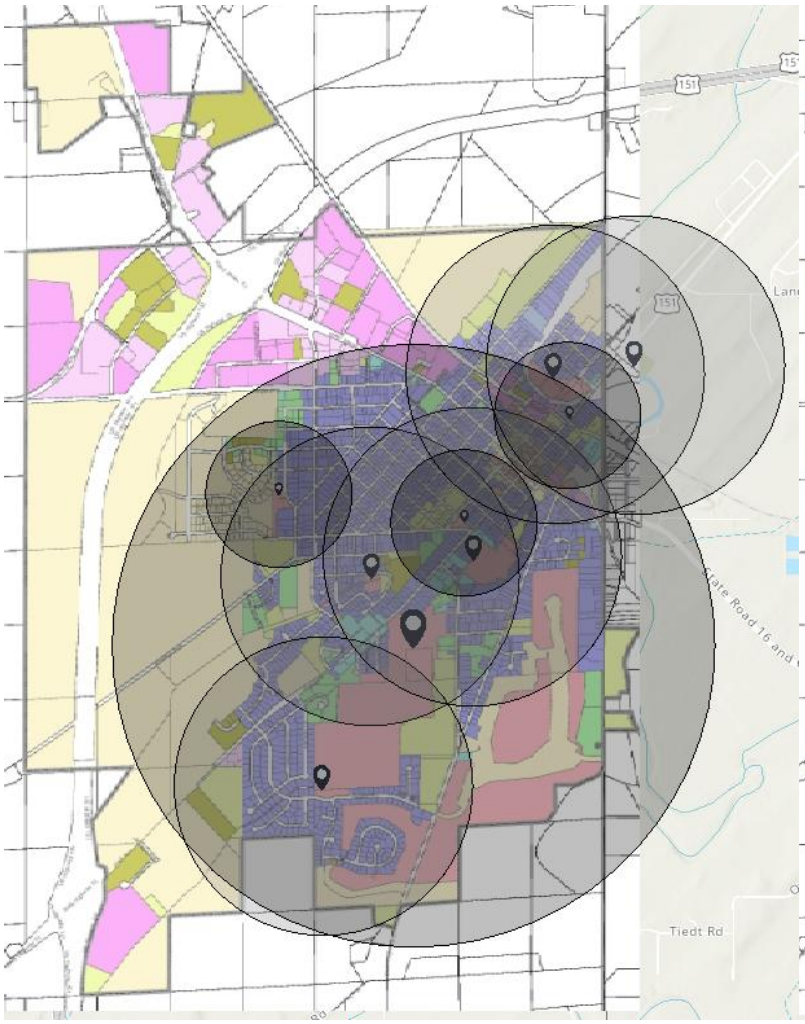
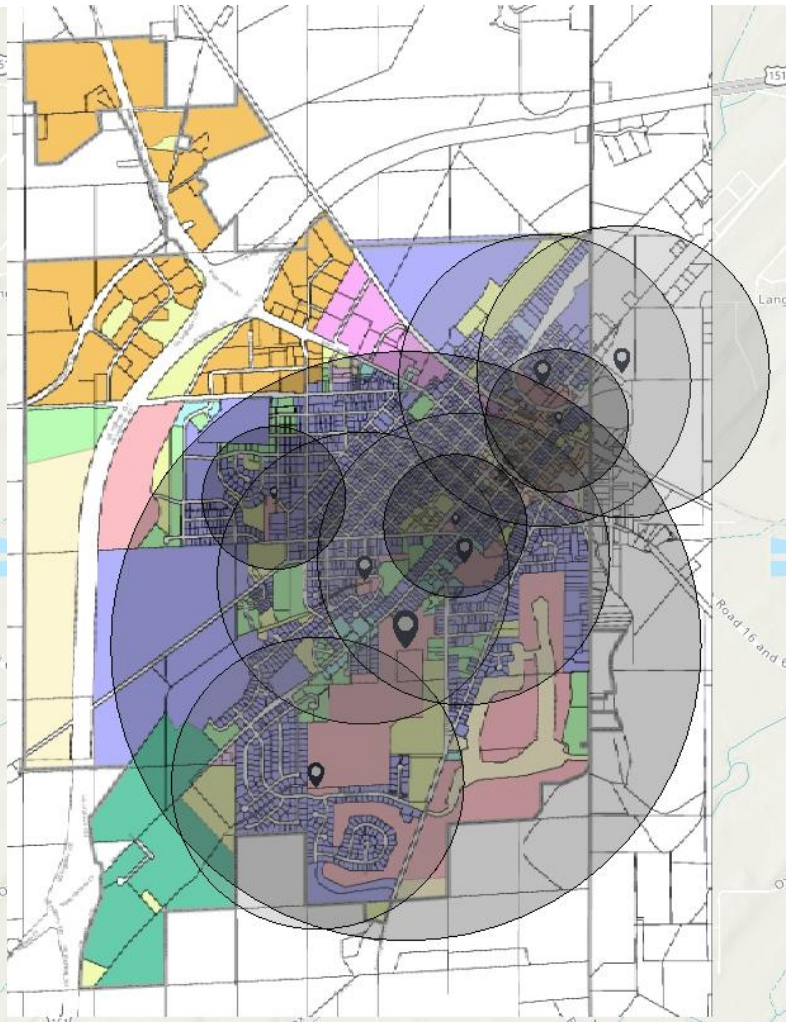


Figure 4.9 Map of NRPA Standards Radius Over Future Zoning Map[10]



Existing Land Use

- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Mobile Home
- Neighborhood Commercial District
- Downtown Mixed Use District
- Highway Commercial District
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Recreational
- Rural Preservation
- Undeveloped
- Civil Division

Existing City Park

Future Land Use

- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Mobile Home
- Neighborhood Commercial District
- Downtown Mixed Use District
- Highway Commercial District
- Highway 16 Commercial
- Gateway Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Recreational
- Rural Preservation
- Civil Division

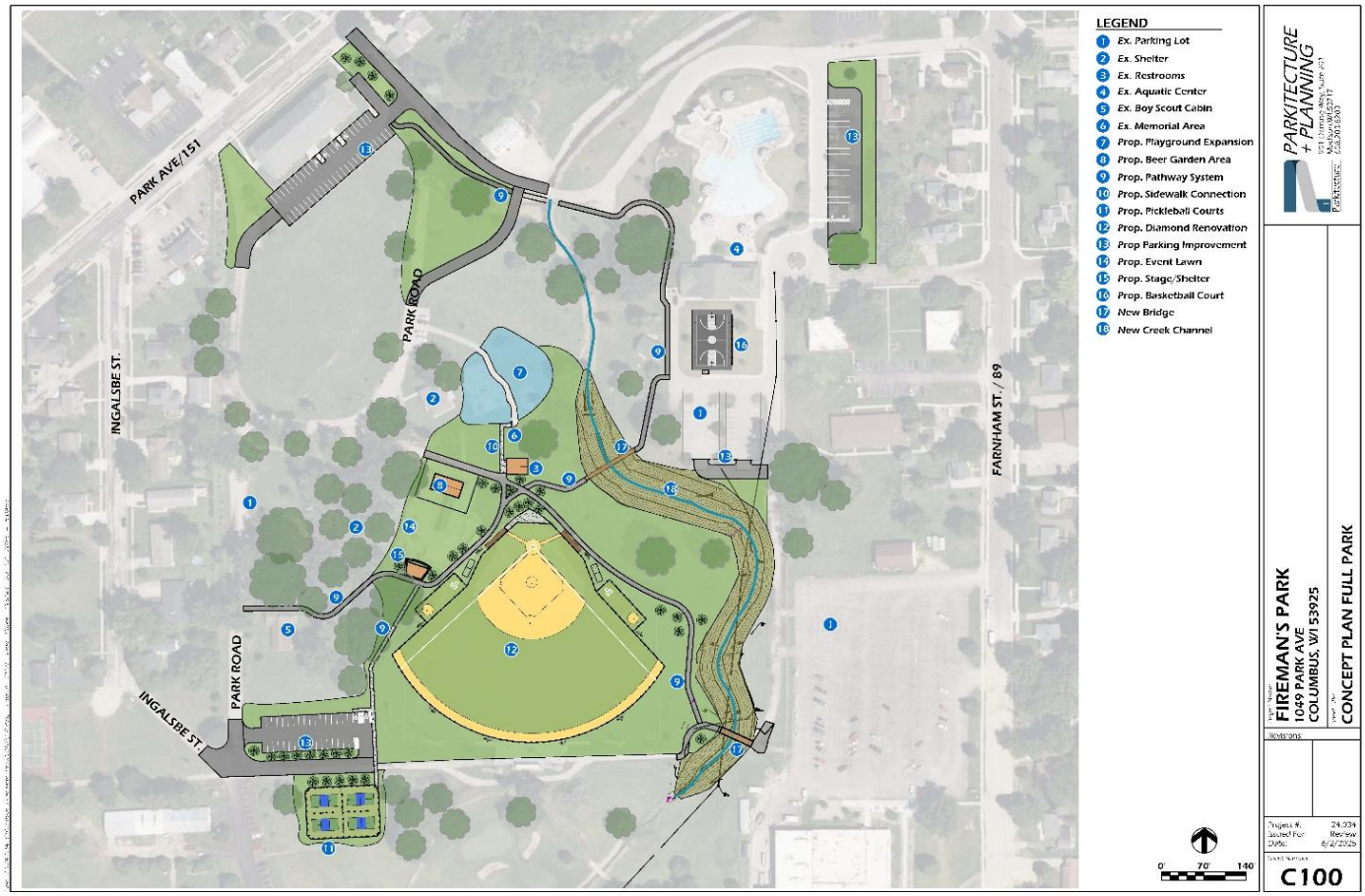
[10] Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA



Chapter 5: Recommendations

Recommendations

Fireman's Park



Master plan created in 2025 of future updates. Currently pickleball courts are underway. Stormwater project has been completed.



Recommendations include:

- Playground expansion/update
- Beer Garden
- Increased Pathway System
- Baseball diamond reconstruction
- Parking Improvements
- Amphitheater and event lawn
- New Basketball Court

Other recommendations:

- Increase accessibility of shelters and bleachers by extending paths to access
- Repave roads going through park
- Repair fencing at goat pen and increase viewing opportunities

Kiwanis Park



Baseball field flooding and upkeep was noted as a significant concern in the survey, along with accessibility to the fields. Considering many grandparents attend youth baseball games, safe access to fields is a high priority.

Recommendations include:

- Repave Parking Lot (1)
- New Playground (incorporate tot playground into main one) (2)
- Add paths to playground and shelters (3)
- Repave paths connecting to Eastern fields and replace bridge (4)
- Add bridge connecting Eastern path to parking lot (5)
- Improve flood prevention infrastructure on ballfields (6)
- Repair fencing (7)
- Patch/repair Western path in some areas
- Create master plan

Existing Play Structure:



Meister Park



Home to Columbus' soccer and softball fields, Meister Park gets many outside visitors each year. Thus, updates to this area are incredibly important to attract visitors.

Recommendations include:

- New Playground (previous one built in 2001) (1)
  - Add accessible play options
  - Add toddler activities
- Add path connecting playground, shelter, and ballfields (2)
- Pave Western parking lot (3)
- Add fishing dock/access area (4)
- Soccer field improvements (5)
  - Add more seating (bleachers or benches)
- Bridge over Crawfish River to connect downtown (6)
- Create master plan

Existing Play Structure:



Avalon Park



Anecdotally, Avalon is a popular park and features the City's only volleyball court.

Recommendations include:

- Volleyball court repairs (new net, sand, etc.) (1)
- Basketball court improvements (fresh painted lines) (2)
- Add path to volleyball and basketball courts (3)
- Add path to playground (4)
- Playground updates (4)
- Replace tetherball
- Hang signs on restrooms
- Further upkeep/mowing/weed control



Rotary Park



Originally operated by the Rotary Club, the City now owns the Southern portion of the park's property. However, land Northeast of the shelter is owned by a private entity (property line depicted above). So, any improvements or additions to this area of the park would require easements or acquisitions. Recommendations include:

- Pave parking lot (1)
- Add paths to playground and shelter (2)
- Add fishing pier (3)

Meadow Lane

- Add benches

Trails



The City has an existing segment of trail (0.18 mi) located near Tower Dr which would benefit from an expansion. Trails were commonly expressed as an interest to residents and community members. Ultimately, the City would like to connect Columbus Elementary School to Prairie Ridge Health, expanding upon existing infrastructure. This would occur in two phases, the first expanding through existing neighborhoods near Tower Dr, and the second occurring simultaneously with residential development West of Tower Dr ("Gateway Corridor"). The above map displays planned expansion for phase 1, consisting of 6 new segments. Ideally, the City will allocate funds to construct these segments through its Capital Improvement Program during the next 5 years.

Segment	Construction Cost		Length		City-Owned?
1	$53,000		8' x 270'		No
2	$114,000		8' x 375'		No
	$66,000 Asphalt	*$48,000 Boardwalk*	*335' Asphalt*	*40' Boardwalk*	
3*	$202,000		8' x 770'		Yes
	$142,000 Asphalt	*$60,000 Boardwalk*	*720' Asphalt*	*40' Boardwalk*	
4*	$26,500		8' x 135'		Yes
5	$40,500		8' x 180'		Yes
6	$270,000		8' x 1,150'		Partially (3/4)
	$195,000 Asphalt	*$75,000 Boardwalk*	*985' Asphalt*	*65' Boardwalk*	
Total	**$706,000**		**8' x 2,880'**		

* Segment includes crosswalk and curb ramps | *Additional easement/acquisition costs likely for parcels not owned by city*
Segment 6 based on alternate proposal (dotted line) and dependent on wetland study

In addition to the Tower Dr trail expansion, the City would like to explore additional trail systems to connect other major features. This is a priority to expand transportation options and increase bicycle and pedestrian safety. Additional trails would also increase accessibility, especially if connected to parks. Collaboration with neighboring communities including Fall River and the Town of Columbus could foster additional expansion and connect more rural parts of the area.

Next steps for implementing an expanded trail system include additional planning and feasibility studies, along with budgeting through the capital improvement program. The City should also explore grant opportunities, as this would increase its ability to fund and construct the trails.

Expanding the trail system connects to the first 4 community-specific goals outlined earlier in the report and would potentially further all 3 state goals.

System-wide

Some administrative changes would benefit the park system. Recommendations applicable to all parks include:

- Dedicated park maintenance staff
- Establish Friends of Columbus Group
- Contract ADA audit of parks
- Contract impact fee study
- Add benches – explore dedication program
- Add bike racks – could combine with public art initiatives
- Plant trees
- Mural

New Parks

While there are currently no concrete plans for new parks, the City plans to dedicate additional parkland with future development and expansion projects. Having more natural spaces was indicated as a desire by community members on the survey, so future parks will likely include more nature-based features. Additionally, exploring the option for impact fees on new development could offset the costs associated with developing more parks.

Matrix

Priority Rankings: "High" ideally completed in next 1-2 years; "Medium" ideally completed in next 3-4 years; "Low" ideally completed in 5+ years

Goals: "C" refers to a Community-Oriented Goal, the number corresponds to the *Goals* section; "S" refers to a Statewide Goal, the number corresponding to the *Goals* section and the SCORP

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals Met
New Playground	Fireman's	Replace older kid playground and tie into existing tot one (would be good location for accessible playground)	Medium	$100,000 - $300,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playground	Kiwanis	Replace existing playground, add accessible play options, and add safer toddler options	High	$50,000 - $150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playground	Meister	Replace existing playground, add accessible play options, and add safer toddler options (current structure from 2001 and missing slide)	High	$50,000 - $150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
New Playground	Avalon	Replace existing playground and increase accessibility	Medium	$50,000 - $150,000	CIP, Donations, Sponsorship, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3 S1
Outdoor fitness area	Undecided	Introduce outdoor fitness equipment at existing park (received interest in survey)	Low	$1,000 - $20,000 (depending on equipment)	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C2, C3 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Fireman's	Increase pathways as outlined in master plan, and improve existing paths for accessibility	Medium	$275,000	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
					Grants, RTP Grants	
Pathway System Expansion	Kiwanis	Add path access to shelter and playground, improve existing path to Eastern fields, replace and add bridges to improve accessibility	High	$20,000 ($25 per ft about 670 ft + 1-2 bridges)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Meister	Add pathway connecting playground, bathroom, shelter, and softball fields to increase accessibility	High	$8,250 ($25 per ft about 330 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Avalon	Add pathway to volleyball and basketball courts and to playground to increase accessibility	Medium	$7,500 ($25 per ft about 300 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Pathway System Expansion	Rotary	Add pathway connecting parking lot to playground and shelter to increase accessibility	Medium	$2,500 ($25 per ft about 100 ft)	CIP, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Repave Park Roads	Fireman's	Current roads in bad shape and commonly indicated as an issue in survey	High	$475,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Kiwanis	Upper lot in bad shape, new pavement would improve accessibility	High	$130,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Meister	Western lot in need of pavement	Medium		CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Repave Parking lot	Rotary	Parking lot in need of pavement	Medium		CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Parking Improvements	Fireman's	Parking lot additions and improvements as outlined in master plan	Medium	$475,000	CIP	C1, C3, C4 S1
Improve flood prevention	Kiwanis	Improve drainage of baseball fields to prevent funding	High		CIP, LWCF Grant, Municipal	C1, C2, C3, C4

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
infrastructure		(commonly indicated issue on survey)			Flood Control Grant, Sponsorship, Donations, Stewardship Grants	S1, S2
Repair Fencing	Kiwanis	Baseball field fencing in need of repairs	Medium	$10,000	CIP	C1 S1
Baseball diamond reconstruction	Fireman's		Low		CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant, MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Baseball diamond reconstruction	Kiwanis	Multiple fields in need of updates	Medium	$250,000 - $1,000,000 per field	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant, MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Volleyball Court improvements	Avalon	Replace net and maintain sand in volleyball court	High	$900 - $1,000	CIP, DPW Budget, Donations, Sponsorship	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Basketball court improvements	Avalon	Repaint court lines	Medium	$1,000 - $2,000	CIP, DPW Budget, Donations, Sponsorship	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1
Replace tetherball	Avalon	Currently missing ball and rope, pole still standing	High	$30	DPW Budget	C2 C1
Soccer field improvements	Meister	Add bleachers or seating to fields	Medium	$2,000 - $10,000 (depending on size)	CIP, LWCF Grant, Donations, Sponsorship, US Soccer Foundation Grant	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
Add basketball court	Fireman's	Additional place for outdoor basketball	Low	$77,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant	C2, C3 S1
Build Amphitheater and beer garden	Fireman's	Add dedicated concert/event space to park for summer concert series and other events (commonly asked for in survey)	Low	$1,500,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant	C2, C3 S1, S3
Trails	Multiple	Expand trails system	High	$710,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grants, Stewardship Grants, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Hang signs on bathrooms	Avalon	Currently missing signage, would help users access facilities	High	$50	DPW Budget	C1 S1
Improve goat pen viewing area	Fireman's	Make goat pen more accessible and prevent people from climbing in storm water trench. Highlight unique asset of our parks system	Medium	$5,000 - $10,000 (add bridge)	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations	C1, C4 S1
Pedestrian bridge	Meister	Connect park to downtown area through a pedestrian bridge going over the river	Low	$100,000 - $300,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, LWCF Grant, RTP Grants	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Fishing dock	Meister	Establish dedicated fishing area on river to make more accessible	Medium	$20,000 - $50,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, Sport Fish Restoration Grant	C1, C2, C4 S1, S2
Fishing dock	Rotary	Establish separate fishing dock from existing kayak launch	Medium	$20,000 - $50,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, Sport Fish	C1, C2, C4 S1, S2

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
					Restoration Grant	
Add benches to parks	Multiple	Add more seating to parks (indicated as a need in survey), could introduce dedications	Medium	$500 - $1,000 per bench	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S3
Add bike racks to parks	Multiple	Add at least 1 bike rack to each park without one	Medium	$300 - $1,000 per bike rack	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations	C1, C2, C3 S1, S2
Plant trees in parks	Multiple	Increase urban canopy by implementing tree program	Medium	$150-$500 per tree	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, Grants	C4 S2
Paint mural	Undecided	Add mural to popular location in park	Medium	$15,000	CIP, Sponsorship, Donations, Grants	C3, C4 S1, S3
Establish dedicated park maintenance staff	Multiple	Hire seasonal DPW staff dedicated to park upkeep to improve mowing and weed control (commonly indicated as issue in survey)	High	$15,000 - $50,000 per year	DPW Budget	C3, C4 S1, S2
Establish Park Sponsorship/Friends of Columbus group	N/A	Increase donations to parks systems by organizing collaborations with local businesses and gathering a community group	High	N/A	N/A	C3, C4, C5 S2, S3
Contract an impact fee study	N/A	Considers potential to increase impact fees as the City develops	Medium	$10,000 - $20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C3, C4, C5 S2
Contract Master Park Plan	Kiwanis	Park in need of several improvements, would help guide expansion in future	Medium	$10,000-$20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2
Contract Master Park Plan	Meister	Park in need of several improvements, would help guide expansion in future	Medium	$10,000-$20,000	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C3, C4 S1, S2

Task	Location	Details	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding Opportunities	Goals
Contract ADA Audit	Multiple	Get professional expertise on where to increase accessibility and how to improve compliance with ADA	Medium	$9,000 - $18,000 total ($1,000 - $2,000 per park)	CIP/Budget Allocation	C1, C2, C4 S1, S2

Operations and Maintenance

Mowing

Public works hires 2 seasonal employees for mowing city-owned property. Throughout the business week, the mowers work their way through an ordered list of 32 locations. Parks fall towards the end of the list, making them susceptible to delays (rain, etc.). Separating park maintenance from general city maintenance would prioritize park upkeep and create more consistency. Additionally, an expanded trail system would increase the amount of city-owned green space, increasing the need for mowing.

Bathrooms

The current public works maintenance schedule has an employee check all park bathrooms each morning, and scheduled cleaning on Monday's and Friday's. Bathrooms remain open unless there are significant maintenance issues or frequent issues with vandalism. With additional staff, a mid-week cleaning could be possible.

Park	Current Maintenance Schedule	Suggested Improvements to Schedule	Additional Needs Caused by Proposed Projects
Fireman's	Ball diamond maintenance before games; Once a week mowing (weather permitting); Twice a week bathroom cleaning; Daily bathroom inspection; Pavilion cleaning before and after rentals; Twice a week trash collection; Winter plowing; Equipment repairs as needed; Feed goats	Three times a week bathroom cleaning; Dated equipment replacement schedule	Additional plowing of trails/paths
Kiwanis	Ball diamond maintenance before games; Once a week mowing; Twice a week bathroom cleaning; Daily bathroom inspection; Twice a week trash collection; winter plowing; Equipment repairs as needed	Three times a week bathroom cleaning; Dated equipment replacement schedule	Additional plowing; maintenance of flood infrastructure
Meister	Ball diamond maintenance before games; Soccer field maintenance before games; Once a week mowing; Twice a week bathroom cleaning; Daily bathroom inspection; Twice a week trash collection; winter plowing; Equipment repairs as needed	Three times a week bathroom cleaning; Dated equipment replacement schedule	Additional plowing; dock winterizing
Avalon	Once a week mowing; Twice a week bathroom cleaning; Daily bathroom inspection; Twice a week trash collection; Equipment repairs as needed	Dated equipment replacement schedule; routine volleyball court care; Three times a week bathroom cleaning	
Enerpac	Once a week mowing; Port-a-potty maintenance; Twice a week trash		

	collection; equipment repairs as needed		
Washington	Once a week mowing; Twice a week trash collection; equipment repairs as needed		
Rotary	Once a week mowing; Port-a-potty maintenance; Twice a week trash collection; winter plowing; equipment repairs as needed; dock winterizing		Additional plowing; dock winterizing
Meadow Ln	Winter plowing; once a week mowing; twice a week trash collection		
Davies	Twice a week trash collection		



Chapter 6: Implementation

Implementation

Funding

Local Funding Options

Donations

The City typically receives some donations for parks annually. Initiatives for specific projects, such as the Fireman's Park pickleball court brick program, are helpful ways to finance capital expenses.

Sponsorship

In the past, sponsorship has helped fund additions to Enerpac Park. The City should explore additional sponsorship opportunities to help fund upcoming projects.

G.O. Debt

For large capital improvements, G.O. borrowing (General Obligation Bonds) may be necessary. At the time of this report, the City has used around 30% of its limit. However, borrowing capacity may be strained if used for the planned public safety building.

General Funds

Smaller improvements may be funded through the City's General Funds during the annual budget cycle.

Impact Fees

Currently Columbus does not impose impact fees on developers, and a study is needed to justify potential fees and consider impacts on affordable housing. Developers are required to dedicate land or give a payment in lieu of land dedication.

Wisconsin DNR Grants

Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Deadline: May 1st Matching: Up to 50%

Project Requirements:

https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Stewardship/GrantProgramGuidanceBooklet.pdf

- Must be supported by local CORP
- Must be for outdoor recreation purposes
- Primary purpose cannot be stormwater management
- Projects that feature unique scenic or natural features receive more consideration
- Projects that serve diverse populations (elderly, disabled, etc.) get more consideration
- Projects that have year-round uses get more consideration
- Projects with immediate need get more consideration

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Deadline: March 1 Matching: Up to 80%

Project Requirements:

https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/RTP/RTPGrantGuidance.pdf

- Must have “reasonable public access”
- Must be identified in CORP
- Must be consistent with SCORP (meet at least one goal)
- Must comply with ADA requirements
- Must extend original footprint by more than 1 Acre
- If project award is greater than $500,000, Buy America, Build America (BABA) requirements apply
- Land must be owned by the City or leased for at least 15 years
- Intergovernmental cooperation gets more consideration
- Local donations or volunteer support get more consideration
- Off-road trail connections to existing segments get more consideration
- Safer trails (not crossing roadways) get more consideration

State of Wisconsin Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

Currently paused due to legislation expiration, could be a year or more until it is back

Urban Rivers (UR)

State Acquisition and Development of Local Parks Program (ADLP)

Sport Fish Restoration – Fishing Pier

Deadline: October 1st

https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/boats/SFR-FP-ScoringSheet.pdf

For construction and renovation of shore fishing piers

Municipal Flood Control Grant Program

Deadline: March 16th Matching: Up to 50%

Eligible Projects: *Stormwater not eligible*

1. Acquisition and structure removal for properties with zoning restrictions
2. Acquisition and structure removal for properties in 100 year floodplain
3. Acquisition and removal of repetitive loss or substantially damaged structure
4. Acquisition and removal of flood damaged structures outside floodplain
5. Floodproofing and flood elevation project in 100 year floodplain
    - Structure anchorage to prevent flotation
    - Reinforcement to resist rupture or collapse from water pressures
    - Placement of essential utilities above flood protection elevation
6. Riparian Restoration project on a watercourse
7. Acquisition of vacant land for flood water control/storage or flowage easement
8. Flood control detention pond
9. Flood studies and mapping

Other Grants

US Soccer Foundation

https://ussoccerfoundation.tfaforms.net/4871632

- Soccer lighting projects

MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation

https://img.mlbstatic.com/mlb-images/image/upload/mlb/jc9cjkl1mndp4yeuxutq.pdf

- capital projects for ballfields and practice facilities serving youth baseball/softball programs

USTA Tennis Facility Grants

- could get 50% match for court resurfacing or other tennis upgrades

Wisconsin Humanities Grants

Deadline: March 16th Matching: Up to $4,000

https://wisconsinhumanities.org/grants/spring-2026-grants/

- could use for mural or other public art initiatives

Near-Term Capital Improvement Programming

Ideally, the City will complete the following projects over the next 5 years. This schedule is subject to change and does not guarantee that the City Council will allocate the necessary funds for every project.

2027: Kiwanis Parking Lot; Kiwanis and Meister Master Plan; Trail Expansion; Tree Planting; Kiwanis Playground

2028:

2029:

2030:

2031:



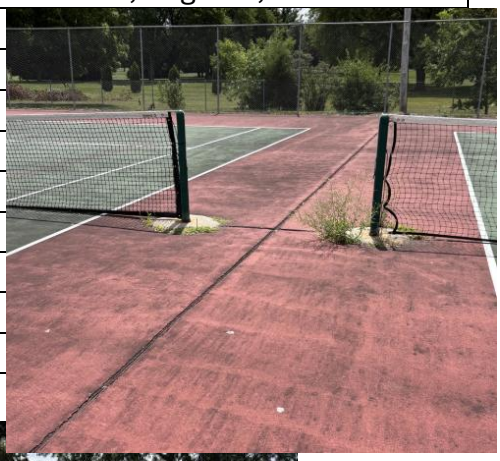
Chapter 7: Appendices

Appendix A: Detailed Park Inventory



Fireman's Park

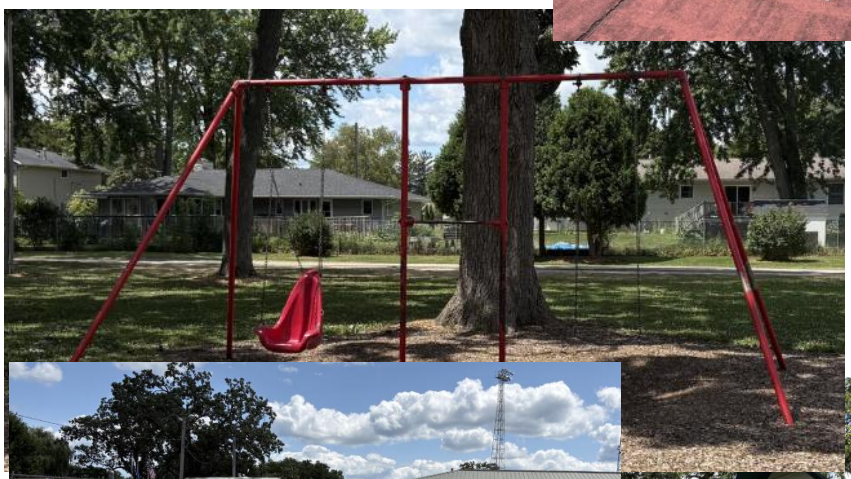
Item	Number	Condition	Notes
Ballfield	1	Fair	Lighted, batting cage, scoreboard, dugouts, concessions
Football Field	1	Fair	Lighted
Tennis Courts	4	Fair	Lighted
Disc Golf	6	Good	
Shelters	4	Fair	2 have electric
Boy Scout Cabin	1	Poor	
Pavilion	1	Good	
Goat Pen	6 goats	Poor	Fence broken
Veterans Memorial	1	Good	
Bathrooms	2	Fair	One closed



Playground 1

Condition: Fair (2007/2008)

- 1 adult swing
- 1 seat swing
- 1 climbing structure
- 4 slides
- Wood chips





Playground 2: Tot Lot

Condition: Good (looks new)

- 6 adult swing
- 3 toddler swings
- 1 seat swing
- 2 spring rider
- 1 teeter totter
- Merry go round
- 2 wall activities (ADA friendly)
- 2 climbing structures





Kiwanis Park

Item	**Number**	**Condition**	**Notes**
Ballfield	6	Fair	Batting cage, scoreboard, dugouts, concessions
Shelters	1	Fair	No electric
Bathrooms	1	Fair	





Playground 1

Condition: Poor (structure leaning, looks old)

- 2 adult swings
- 2 slides
- Monkey bars
- Wood chips



Playground 2 (toddler)

Condition: Poor (looks old)

- 1 little slide
- 1 spring rider
- Wood chips









Meister Park

Item	Number	Condition	Notes
Ballfield	2	Fair	Batting cage, scoreboard, dugouts, concessions
Soccer Field	2	Fair	4 big goals, 4 mini goals
Shelters	1	Fair	Has electric
Bathrooms	1.5	Fair	One port-a-potty

Playground:

Condition: Fair (2001)

- Wood chips
- Spinning monkey bars
- Slide missing but replacement on the way





Rotary Park

Item	Number	Condition	Notes
Shelters	1	Good	Has electric
Boat Launch	1	Good	For kayaks and canoes
Kayaks	4	Good	For rent
Bathrooms	0.5	Fair	Port-a-potty
Cooking Grills	2	Good	

Playground:

Condition: Good (looks new)

- 1 slide
- 1 climbing structure
- 2 adult swings
- 2 toddler swings
- Wood chips

Avalon Park

Item	Number	Condition	Notes
Volleyball Court	1	Poor	Needs sand and new net
Basketball Court	1	Fair	Lines need painted
Shelters	1	Fair	Has electric
Gazebo	1	Good	
Funnel Ball	1	Good	
Tether Ball	1	Poor	Ball missing
Bike Rack	1	Good	
Little Free Library	1	Good	
Bathrooms	1	Fair	Needs signs

Playground:

Condition: Fair (looks old)

- Slide
- Monkey bars
- Sand box (w/ toys)
- Climbing structure Spring Rider
- 2 adult swings
- 2 toddler swings







Washington Park

Item	Number	Condition
Bike Repair Station	1	Good

Playground:

Condition: Good (looks new)

- 2 slides
- 2 monkey bars
- 3 adult swings
- 1 seat swing
- Wood chips

Meadow Lane Park

Item	Number	Condition
Walking Path	1	Fair
Benches	2	Good

Davies Park

Item	Number	Condition
Shelters	1	Good
Picnic Tables	2	Good
Little Free Library	1	Good

Appendix B: Classifications and Definitions



Park Classifications

Active vs Passive Recreation

Active recreation includes high-energy activities that involve movement and exercise. Examples of active facilities include playgrounds and sports fields. *Passive recreation* describes low-energy activities aimed at promoting well-being and appreciation of nature. Examples of passive facilities include fishing areas, picnic tables, hiking trails, and benches.[11]

Mini Parks

Parks that serve a specific purpose or population, typically less than 1 acre. Mini parks should be at least 0.25 acres and have a service radius of 0.25 miles or less. They are often located near housing units.

Neighborhood Parks

Parks should serve all age groups within their service area of 0.5 miles, and they should offer both passive and active recreational opportunities. These parks typically fall between 3 and 10 acres and may require parking accommodations for users.

Community Parks

Community parks serve several neighborhoods or an entire small to medium sized municipality. They should be centrally located and offer parking accommodations. They have a service are of around 1 mile, and should contain 10 or more acres of space. Ideally, they have a variety of recreational opportunities, offering different passive and active experiences for all ages. They should also have sanitary facilities and use landscaping to define views and activity areas.

Special Use Parks

These areas are not defined by size or radius as each serves a unique purpose. Often, they provide spaces for activities requiring special amenities, or they preserve natural areas. Examples include golf courses, swimming pools, beaches, or dog parks.

Linear Parks

Linear parks are areas developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel such as hiking, biking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, cross country skiing, and canoeing. Often, trails follow railroad or utility rights-of-way, bluff lines, rivers and streams, roads and other systems that link facilities or components of a recreational system. Linear parks can be located within communities to link schools, parks, downtown areas, and other community facilities or they can be located within rural areas to link other communities, park systems or significant facilities or sites. There are no particular size standards for linear parks, but pedestrian and biking paths should be 8 to 10 feet wide to accommodate users of varying abilities. Linear parks can also serve as important transportation links for alternative modes of transportation.

[11] Mertes, James and James Hall. *Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines*. National Recreation and Park Association, 1995.

Definitions

Terms to Refer to Columbus

“the City” or “Columbus” – Refers to the City of Columbus, WI

“City Owned” – Refers to property (parks, facilities, etc) owned and operated by the City of Columbus, WI

Terms Used to Describe Parks

“Trail” or “Linear Park” – a paved path/surface designed for certain recreational uses (such as running, walking, or biking), not necessarily intended as a route of access to a facility

“Walking Path” – A sidewalk or paved surface that goes through an existing park, often connecting or providing access to facilities and amenities within the park

“School Park” – a park that is owned or leased by a school (privately or through the school district) that offers recreational services to the community

“Private Park” – a park that is owned or leased by a private entity that offers recreational services to the community

“Playground” or “play structure”

“ADA” – Refers to the standards and requirements laid out in the Americans with Disabilities Act

Financing Terms

“CIP” or “Capital Improvement Programming” – Funds allocated through the Capital Budget based on a schedule determined by need

“Sponsorship” – Refers to funds given or purchases made on behalf of the City by a business or individual, possibly in exchange for advertisement or recognition (as agreed upon)

“Donation” – Funds given or purchases made on behalf of the City at will

Appendix C: Survey Questions



Section 1

Residency

All community members are welcome to fill out the survey, regardless of residency

1. What best describes your interest in the City of Columbus? *

- ◯ I am a resident of the City of Columbus
- ◯ I am a resident of a neighboring community (Village of Fall River, Town of Columbus, etc.)
- ◯ I own a business in the City of Columbus (but do not reside there)
- ◯ I work in the City of Columbus (but do not reside there)
- ◯ Other

Section 2

Demographics

We will use this information for data analysis to ensure our sample is representative of the actual population

2. What age group do you belong to? *

- ◯ under 18
- ◯ 18-24
- ◯ 25-34
- ◯ 35-44
- ◯ 45-54
- ◯ 55-64
- ◯ 65+

3. Which best describes your household? *

- ◯ Single Adult (no children)
- ◯ Adult Couple (no children)
- ◯ Single Adult with children
- ◯ Adult Couple with children
- ◯ Other

4. If you have children in your household, what age group(s) are they part of? *

- [ ] Under 5
- [ ] 5-8
- [ ] 9-12
- [ ] 13+
- [ ] N/A

5. What options best describe your Race and Ethnicity? *

- [ ] White/Caucasian
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] American Indian or Alaskan Native
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- [ ] Middle Eastern or North African
- [ ] Prefer not to say
- [ ] Other

6. What is your gender? *

- ( ) Woman
- ( ) Man
- ( ) Non-binary
- ( ) Prefer not to say

7. What is approximately your total annual household income? *

- ( ) Under $50,000
- ( ) $50,000 - $100,000
- ( ) $100,000 - $150,000
- ( ) $150,000+
- ( ) Prefer not to say

Section 3

Parks and Open Spaces

We would like your feedback on our parks system!

8. Overall, how would you rate the City's parks? *

1 star being lowest, 5 stars being highest

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

9. If you rated the previous question 3 stars or below, why?

Enter your answer

10. Which amenities do you (and your household) utilize the most? *

Please select at most 3 options.

- [ ] Baseball/Softball Field
- [ ] Soccer Field
- [ ] Basketball Court
- [ ] Volleyball Court
- [ ] Tennis Court
- [ ] Pickleball Court
- [ ] Football Field
- [ ] Open/Multi-Use Field
- [ ] Disc Golf
- [ ] Community Pool
- [ ] Outdoor Ice Skating Rink
- [ ] Community Garden
- [ ] Playground
- [ ] Walking Path/Trail
- [ ] Picnic Area
- [ ] Boat Launch
- [ ] Fishing Area
- [ ] Golf Course
- [ ] Other

11. Of the following projects, which ones would you most like to see in the City? (please rank highest priorities at the top) *

- Skate Park
- Outdoor Adult Fitness Area
- River Walk
- Pedestrian/Bike Trails
- Softball/Baseball Field Improvements
- More Fishing Areas/Docks

12. What other amenities would you like to see in the City's parks system?

Enter your answer

13. If more trails were available, what kinds of activities would you like to use them for? *

- [ ] Walking
- [ ] Running
- [ ] Biking
- [ ] Roller Skating/Blading
- [ ] Skateboarding
- [ ] Cross-Country Skiing
- [ ] I would not use them
- [ ] Other

14. Are there any accessibility improvements that you would like to see in the City's parks?

Enter your answer

15. Recognizing that park improvements and amenities are expensive, and that grants require matching funds to support projects, which of the following funding sources would you support the City exploring to fund additional park infrastructure? *

If you are personally willing to volunteer or donate to a fundraising or sponsorship effort, please reach out to Amy Jo Meyers (ameyers@columbuswi.gov)

- [ ] I would be willing to personally volunteer to support fundraising efforts
- [ ] I would support a slight tax increase to have access to additional amenities
- [ ] I would personally be willing to donate or provide sponsorship to the City's parks
- [ ] I would support additional funding allocated to the parks department even if it meant reducing other departments' funding
- [ ] I would be willing to pay user fees for some additional amenities
- [ ] I would support an increase in impact fees placed on new development to support the parks system
- [ ] None of the above

16. Do you have any other feedback on the City's parks system?

Enter your answer