

**CITY OF HOBART**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**MASTER PLAN**

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**HOBART PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**MASTER PLAN**

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**Prepared for**

**City of Hobart Board of Park Commissioners**

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# Background

## Introduction

One of the most important aspects of the quality of life in a community is the establishment of parks and recreation facilities. A parks system provides areas for leisure and fitness activities for the residents, preserves the natural heritage and resources of an area, provides a visually appealing environment, and gives the citizens a source of pride and adds character to a city or town.

The availability of sufficient park land, the cost of acquisition and improvements are important considerations in developing suburban or urban parks and recreation systems. The land suitable for park purposes rapidly diminishes as a city develops and remaining land increases in value. Increases in population require more park space in order to avoid existing facilities from becoming over-utilized. Park and recreation land does not usually bring revenue into a city or town; tax revenue must be used to acquire more land and then used to provide proper equipment and to maintain the facility developed in a park. However, quality developments carefully planned may promote increased real estate values and attract people to the community. In addition, the physical and social developments of all participants is strongly influenced by the recreational facilities and the programs provided by the system. For these reasons, Hobart needs a well thought-out and planned park system. Because of the increase in population and the changing needs of citizens, the parks and recreation system must adapt to those needs. The Park Board will use this plan as a flexible guide for proper parks and recreation development and natural resource management in order to promote an increased quality of life for all the citizens of Hobart.

## Purpose

This plan's purpose is to provide a guide to short-range priorities and long-range development to the Hobart Park Board for the City of Hobart park system. Set forth in this plan are objectives, standards, and an assessment of needs in the park system thru the year 2015. It will also address priority projects for the next five years.

## Plan Objectives

--To provide a plan which will anticipate future demands and needs for park and recreation facilities in Hobart and provide the Hobart Park Board with a flexible guide to implementing the long-range development plan and the short-range priorities list.

--To develop a plan which will provide park and recreational opportunities to the entire population of Hobart.

--To provide a plan for the appropriate use and management of the natural resources of Hobart.

--To promote continued cooperation between the School City of Hobart and the Hobart Park Board in the sharing of facilities and activities.

--To provide a plan that effectively coordinated with existing plans and programs of Federal, State, Regional, and County Agencies in regards to park and recreation development.

--To qualify the Hobart Park Board for continued participation in the Land and Water Conservations Fund Grant Program administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

### Hobart Park Board Priorities

--Replace the Festival Park Community Center which was damaged in the 2008 flood event.

--Review usage and fees of parks/and or facilities and establish standards uniform for use.

--Develop Park Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, to help raise funds for parks and facilities.

--Develop a set of uniformed standards for community members wishing to contribute to the parks to include memorials such as plaques, benches, and trees.

--Increase public awareness of park programs, events, and facilities offered.

--Establish a concession program in Hillman and Robinson Lake Park.

--Acquire additional park land to meet projected needs according to the conceptual parks model and recommended standards.

--Research the availability of and apply for grants, which may be used as a funding source to achieve the priorities included in this plan.

--To become more actively involved in the developer/plan commission negotiations concerning the dedication of park land and facilities.

--To consolidate unutilized or underutilized park land into fewer, larger, better equipped, and better maintained facilities.

### Recreation Program Priorities

--To provide the community with a variety of fitness, life skills, recreational and special interest programs.

--To continue to assist the Hobart Park Board with qualifying for state and federal grants that will improve or acquire parks for the City of Hobart.

--To expand and improve the current programs which are offered by the Hobart Parks and Recreation Department and to provide revenue from these programs for the department.

--To acquire a professional membership in the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA).

### Maintenance Priorities

--To continue to maintain the parks and their facilities to the highest degree of safety and quality.

--To continue to expand the existing amenities in the parks in Hobart.

--To continue to provide the leadership skills needed for a quality workforce within the department.

--To continue to work with other city departments, the Recreation Program of the Park Board, and the Mayor, to improve the quality of life citizens of Hobart.

## History of the Hobart Park Board

On April 25, 1923 the Common Council of the City of Hobart passed Ordinance #30 which created a Board of Trustees to control and manage the public parks of the City of Hobart.

Ordinance #620 was passed by the Common Council of the City of Hobart on August 3, 1960 under the Acts of 1925 as amended and expressed in Burns Statutes 48-5901 through 48-5907 to provide for the acquisition of real property for playgrounds and recreation centers. This ordinance also provided for a tax levy under Burns Statute 48-5906, such funds to be deposited in a recreation fund.

On April 3, 1963 the Common Council of the City of Hobart passed Ordinance #687. This ordinance repealed Ordinance #30, empowered the Mayor to appoint a four member park board to administer all funds in the recreation fund and created the Parks and Recreation Department. This was done in accordance with the Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana of 1955 at Chapter 311.

Ordinance #704 was passed by the Common Council on August 17, 1963 and re-established the Hobart Park Board after the Indiana General Assembly recodified and revised the laws governing city government under Indiana Code 36-10-3. Under this ordinance the Park Board is appointed by the Mayor, the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Department is established.

On February 21, 1996 the Hobart City Council passed Ordinance #96-02 creating a Board of Park Commissioners under Indiana Code 36-10-4 thereby creating a Department of Public Parks.

The Hobart Parks and Recreation Board administers the acquisition, development and maintenance of park properties, sponsors a variety of recreation programs and sets department policy.

## History of Hobart, Indiana

Settlers came to the vicinity of Hobart, Indiana in 1837, giving it the distinction of being one of the oldest settlements in the county. The first industry was established in the area in 1845 when George Earle built a saw mill. Water was dammed on the Deep River to provide power for the area and Lake George was created. The town was officially plotted in 1849 by George Earle and named Hobart in honor of his brother, F. Hobart Earle. The introduction of rail service to Hobart (The Michigan Central Railroad in 1858 and the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1860) soon attracted further growth to the region. By 1879, Hobart had four brickyards, four lumberyards, general stores, meat markets and shoemakers, besides having what was then advertised as the “finest hotel” in Northwest Indiana.

Today, Hobart is mostly a residential community. This type of land use utilizes approximately just over one-half of the total occupied area. Street and railroad right of way occupy over 30% of the developed land. Commercial development demonstrates a tendency to occupy strips along the thoroughfares and major access routes. Industry comprises a very small amount of available land in the city, and is found mainly along railroad rights of ways. Other land use in Hobart is devoted to park and recreation development. Of this, the various waterfront parks, Festival Park, Lake Front, Robinson Lake Park, Fred Rose Lakeshore Park and Pavese Park assume the largest share. Schools and quasi-public areas constitute the rest of the City’s occupied land. The former are located uniformly within various neighborhoods while the latter are dispersed mainly throughout the downtown and western sections of town. Among the larger uses in terms of site area are the cemeteries, Saint Mary Medical Center, the Hobart Diagnostic Center, the former Charter Medical Center, the YMCA and the various fraternal societies.

## Physical and Natural Setting

Hobart, Indiana contains an area of 16,285 acres, and is located in the northeastern section of Lake County. It is approximately 6 miles south of the extreme southern end of Lake Michigan, bordered on the north by New Chicago and Lake Station with Gary and Merrillville to the west and Portage to the east. It is easily accessible, being served by three major railroads, two interstate highways and a major U.S. thruway (U.S. 30).

From a geological standpoint, the area in the vicinity of Hobart is contained, for the most part, within the Calumet Lacustrine Plain. This formation is a sandy region surrounding the southern end of Lake Michigan, marking the former site of Lake Chicago. The plain of this former lake is subdivided into distinct topographic steps by three ancient beach lines. Of the three terraces, Hobart is partially located on the last two. The middle terrace, known as Calumet Beach, forms a belt more than 2 miles wide. The average elevation along this formation is about 48 feet higher than Lake Michigan. Calumet Beach is traversed by Ridge Road. This terrace is the highest and oldest of the ancient beaches, and it marks the northern edge of the soils underlain by glacial till.

With respect to drainage within the city, storm runoff is transported by way of roadside ditches and open surface drainage patterns that follow the natural topographical contours of the land. As it now stands, most of Hobart's urban runoff initially enters into a channeled flow by way of Lake George and other local water courses.

As to recreation, the climate is generally well suited for most kinds of outdoor activity. The winters are cold enough to support ice-skating and other such activities while summers are warm enough to encourage swimming and boating. In short, there is a wide variety of seasonal change.

According to the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Hobart displays the occurrence of two major soil association types. The first soil type is called Plainfield Watseka Association. It is not considered to be a very suitable soil for most kinds of construction. When considered as a prospective topsoil source, suitability is poor, although it does make a good fill. For most types of recreational facilities, including campsites, playgrounds, and intensive play areas, the soil limitations range from moderate to severe.

The second and by far the most common soil type found in Hobart is known as the Alida-Del Ray –Whitaker Association. For the most part, the surroundings are generally nearly level and somewhat poorly drained. The texture varies from medium to moderately coarse on a base of stratified glacial outwash and lake sediments. This soil association is considered very good when used for intensive cropping and also exhibits possibilities as a good source of topsoil. However, because of the fine texture of the soil, water will percolate rather slowly through it, impairing drainage and making it

vulnerable to periodic flooding depending on the height of the water table. Moderate limitations are found with respect to recreations sites. When planning for such areas, it would be advised that special provisions be made for adequate drainage from the site.

Flooding is another such aspect that must be studied, since it presents a potentially dangerous situation causing property damage and loss of life. In Hobart, the Federal Insurance Administration has defined a special flood hazard area which covers the flood plain of the Deep River beginning at the north end of Lake George and extending north to the corporate limit of Hobart. The flood plain extends between 500 and 1,200 feet along either side of the river along this distance. During the flood of September, 2008, (estimated by the Army Corps of Engineers as a 140 year storm event) significant damage occurred to several of the park facilities located adjacent to Lake George, Deep River, and other tributaries.

A glimpse of history can be seen in some of Hobart's parks that still contain original native plant communities that were around when the pioneers arrived. The best example is Fred Rose Park, both 8<sup>th</sup> St. and Lakeshore sides where the unmowed flat ground and the slopes are high quality oak savanna natural area. Fred Rose has received good stewardship of nearly annual controlled burns, invasive species control, and introduction of additional native plant species since 2001. Fred Rose has a number of rare plant species, including bird's foot violet and one-flowered broom rape, and two species on Indiana Department of Natural Resources' rare and endangered list—veiny pea and rough rattlesnake-root. Natural areas such as this are literally irreplaceable and it is important that they be protected and get good stewardship to stay healthy. Natural areas provide ecological benefits such as clean water, wildlife habitat, pollinators for food crops, and relaxing places for residents who enjoy nature.

Pavese Park has some oak savanna remnants including wild plum but it has had no stewardship so its natural area is fading. The tiny Cardinal Court Park's natural area is also fading. Robinson Lake Park has some native oak savanna, prairie plants and wetland under restoration. It is a common misconception that any land left unmowed or unplowed will become natural area. Such land only returns to something like its native state if native seed sources are nearby or in the soil, which is uncommon. Purposeful restoration of native plant communities is possible, and can be quite successful at sites that already have a nucleus of native plants present.

## Location and Access

The City of Hobart is located partly in Hobart Township and partly in Ross Township in the northeast portion of Lake County, Indiana. It shares its western boundary with the City of Gary and the Town of Merrillville. Hobart shares its eastern limits with the City of Portage and unincorporated Porter County. To the north are the City of Lake Station and the Town of New Chicago. Its southern boundary is approximately ½ mile south of U.S. 30, an east and west major thoroughfare. Interstate 65 (north and south) bisects the western edge of the city while Interstate 80 and 94 (east and west) and the Indiana Toll Road (east and west) are located approximately 1 ½ miles north of the city limits. Both are accessible by way of I-65 or Indiana 51 which bisects the city north and south. U.S. 6 traverses part of the northern boundary.

The Chicago South Shore and the South Bend Railroad Commuter service is available approximately 3 miles north of the city limits. Additionally, the N & S Railroad freight rail lines traverse the city limits of Hobart east and west.

The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore along Lake Michigan is approximately 5 miles from the City of Hobart's northern boundary.

## Economic Base

As stated in the introduction to this plan, parks and recreational facilities should be planned and designed to meet the requirements of the community's present and future residents. In order to achieve this goal, past and present growth trends must be identified and analyzed. This can be done if a benchmark is established. The obvious benchmark is data available from the 1990, 2000, and 2008 Census. Due to changing assumptions, unpredictable economic trends, and employment fluctuations, population figures are estimates and in need of constant update. Table 1 (below) is intended to show the City of Hobart's population growth from 1940 through 2000.

Table 1: Population of Hobart

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
1940	7,166	
1950	10,224	+3,058
1960	18,680	+8,456
1970	21,485	+2,805
1980	22,987	+1,502
1990	21,822	-1,165
2000	25,363	+3,541
2008*	27,891	+2,528
2010	29,059	+1,168

Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, and City Master Plan.

Table 2: Households by Type

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>
Households:	9,855	11,000
Family Households	6,977	7,154
With own children under 18 years	3,014	2,719
Married-couple family:	5,549	5,810
With own children under 18 years	2,320	2,070
Female Householder, no husbands present	1,021	724
With own children under 18 years	493	349
Non-family households	2,878	3,846
Householder living alone	2,376	3,219
Householder 65 years and over	1,025	1,119
Households with individuals under 18 years	3,311	3,058
Households with individuals 65 and over	2,683	1,122
Average household size	2.55	2.47
Average family size	3.04	3.05
Owner-Occupied		8,965
Renter-Occupied		2,035

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2008 Projected Estimate

## Education and Income

The 2000 census figures indicate that the educational attainments of Hobart's population area are somewhat higher than those of the standard metropolitan statistical area and very similar to the standard metropolitan statistical area outside the central cities. The portion of the 25 years and over population which had completed high school was 78.7%. By 2008 that had climbed to nearly 90%. However, the percentage of residents with some college or degree dropped. The following information was taken from the 1990 census in the City of Hobart, Indiana. The data for this particular topic was not yet available from the 2000 census.

Table 3: Years of School Completed

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>
Persons over 25 years of age	14,401	19,722
Total high school graduates	11,330	17,592
Percent of total high school graduates	78.7%	89.2%
Total with at least some college or degree	4,816	5,128
Percent of total with some college or degree	33.4%	26.0%
Total with bachelor's degree or higher	1,685	1,381
Percent with bachelor's degree or higher	11.7%	7.0%

Source: 2000 and 2008 U.S. Census

Table 4: Income

	<u>1989</u>	<u>2008</u>
Households:	8,344	11,000
Less than \$5000	251	
\$5,000-\$9,999	471	451
\$10,000-\$14,999	577	374
\$15,000-\$19,999	675	
\$20,000-\$24,999	761	1,078
\$25,000-\$34,999	1,369	1,111
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,882	1,518
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,628	2,530
\$75,000-\$99,999	322	2,178
\$100,000-\$150,000	408	1,441
\$150,000 or more	55	319

Source: 1989 U. S. Census and 2008 Estimate

The census data above indicates an increasing population, which is also growing older. As such, equipment intended for use by children is primarily being replaced by modern facilities, and in only a few cases is it being expanded. Based on the census data and surveys demand for adult facilities and programs is increasing. In recent years the Park Board has responded to this increased demand by investing in the Lakefront Development with the band shell, walk paths, and Community Center. Investment has also occurred with softball fields at Hillman Park, boat launch at Pavese Park, and passive recreation at Veterans Memorial Park. The economic condition of residents remains middle class in most cases means that residents have the ability to pay for programming which is requested.

# Plan Framework

## Introduction

The responsibility of providing park and recreation facilities lies with several jurisdictional levels of government. By its nature and function, each jurisdictional level is involved in different scales and types of recreation facilities. There is a definite need to coordinate these levels of responsibility to insure that a full range of opportunities are available and that needless duplication does not occur. Toward this end, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) and the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department jointly developed a conceptual model of responsibilities for park acreage and facility development. This model addresses federal, state, county and municipal level responsibilities as a total delivery system. It has also been incorporated in the adopted Regional Comprehensive Plan of NIRPC and the adopted plan Lake County Park and Open Space Plan. It is recommended that this model serve as a guide to local municipal park departments to best coordinate their park development responsibilities with other agencies.

## Conceptual Park Responsibilities Model

To assist in achieving objectives and provide a direction for the park and recreation program, it is useful to work within an overall park and recreation framework. Table 5 provides an illustration of the levels of responsibility for the federal, state, county and municipal jurisdictions.

Table 5 is adopted from a conceptual parks model developed by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and utilized by the Lake County Park and Recreation Board and an increasing number of cities and towns in Lake and Porter Counties. The model reflects the fact that municipal park boards have traditionally been geared to providing activity dominated by recreational facilities for local use. Municipal level parks include community, neighborhood, and sub-neighborhood parks. Neighborhood and sub-neighborhood parks are generally small and intensively developed with active recreational facilities. Municipal community parks are usually larger sized with specialized facilities, such as community centers, swimming pools, etc., and draw from a community wide service areas.

Table 5: Conceptual Parks Model

<u>Jurisdictional responsibility</u>	<u>Park Classification</u>
Federal and State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Parks</li> <li>State Parks &amp; Recreation Areas</li> <li>State Parks</li> <li>State Recreation Areas</li> <li>State Reservoirs</li> <li>Urban/Regional Parks</li> <li>State Natural Resource Areas</li> <li>State Forest</li> <li>State Fish &amp; Wildlife Areas</li> <li>State Natural Preserves</li> </ul>
County and Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County District Parks</li> <li>Forest Preserves</li> <li>Nature Preserves</li> <li>Special Facilities</li> <li>County Community Parks</li> </ul>
Municipal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Parks</li> <li>Community-wide facilities</li> <li>Specialized facilities</li> <li>Neighborhood Parks</li> <li>Large Neighborhood Parks</li> <li>Small Neighborhood Parks</li> <li>Sub-Neighborhood Parks</li> <li>Block Parks</li> <li>Tot-Lots</li> </ul>

## Standards

Given the overall conceptual parks model, a set of standards must be developed in order to evaluate estimates of needed additional park land and recreational facilities. Table 6 contains acreage standards for the federal, state, county and municipal levels of responsibility. As this table indicates, the municipal responsibility of 10 acres per 1,000 populations is divided into eight acres for community parks and two acres for neighborhood and sub-neighborhoods parks. It should be noted that the recommended standards are a flexible planning tool and should not be interpreted as an absolute statement. They provide a comparative “yardstick” which should be used in conjunction with information reflecting a local demands and needs.

The recommended standards for recreational facilities are shown on Table 7. As indicated, the principal community parks needs are in the area of active recreational facilities. In the City of Hobart there is a particularly strong demand for updated basketball courts, soccer fields, and baseball and softball diamonds. Additional assessments as to Hobart’s acreage and facility needs and its capabilities and opportunities in meeting these needs will be discussed later in this plan.

Table 6: Recommended Acreage Standards

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Acreage Standards</u>	<u>Park Type</u>
Municipal	10 acres/1000 pop.	Neighborhood/Sub-Neighborhood
	8 acres/1000 pop.	Community Parks
County/Township	15 acres/1000 pop.	County
	3 acres/1000 pop.	Community Parks
	12 acres/1000 pop.	District Parks
Federal & State	20 acres/1000 pop.	National Parks
		State Parks/Recreation Areas
		State Natural Areas

Table 7: Recommended Recreational  
Facility Standards

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Type of Park</u>
<u>Neighborhood Recreation Facilities</u>		
Softball Diamonds	1/2000 population	Neighborhood
Tennis Courts	1/1000	Neighborhood
Basketball Courts	1/1000	Neighborhood
Playgrounds	1/1000	Neighborhood
<u>District and Community Recreation Facilities</u>		
Picnicking	1 acre or 10 tables/1000	District, Community Large neighborhood
Baseball Diamonds	1/4000 population	Community, Large Neighborhood
Community Centers	1/25,000 population	Community
Swimming Pools (outdoors)	1/25,000	Community
Artificial Ice Skating Rink	1/30,000	District, private
Golf Courses	1/25,000	District, private
Shooting Ranges	1/50,000	District, community
Football Stadiums	1/35,000	Community

## Hobart's Needs Analysis

The City of Hobart is deficient not so much in park acreage, but rather in neighborhood recreation facilities. With a population 29,059, the parks are deficient of softball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds and other facilities. In addition, several existing facilities such as picnic shelters and playground equipment is old and in need of replacement. This is due to budgetary restrictions and the lack of a concerted effort to require developers to install significant facilities in addition to donating land to the city. The Planning Department in collaboration with the Park Department should initiate a recreational needs assessment for each new development which would strain the current facilities. This assessment should be made a part of the staff report recommending conditions to the Plan Commission. As of 2008 the park department was deficient approximately 15 acres of park land.

There is also an issue of low participation in programs offered by the park department becomes apparent. As of 2001, very few programs were offered to the community, but not from the lack of effort. In the City of Hobart established associations such as Hobart Little League, Hobart Soccer League, Hobart Girls Softball, Hobart Youth Basketball and Pop Warner Football offer many of the more popular sports. So in turn the park department has offered sports that are not affiliated with these groups such as tennis and aerobics.

The department also does not have adequate facilities to offer sports programs and even life skill activities. The department must look to outside groups to house these events such as the library, schools and even building facilities in the future that belong to the department. Another problem is that the park department is small in regards to staffing. This creates problems when trying to run programs for a significant amount of people.

In December of 2000, the Hobart Park Board decided to split the superintendent's position and create two new positions, Maintenance Director and Recreation Program Director. Due to significant budget difficulties, the Recreation Program Director position was eliminated in 2008.

With a full time Recreation Program Director, the department had someone who could solely concentrate on planning and executing new and existing programs. This position was also responsible for applying for grants. This was seen as a way for the department to acquire more park land and update the aging equipment. The full time Maintenance Director was supposed to be able to concentrate on maintaining the parks and other associated duties. This includes, but not limited to, repairing, replacing, and maintaining playground equipment and picnic tables, trash removal and gardening. The

reversion to having one person in charge of both has stunted the growth of the Hobart park facilities and programming.

Description of Community Facilities and Needs

A current and accurate inventory of recreation open space and facilities is necessary for the development of a realistic park and recreation plan. By analyzing current acreage and facilities and by studying growth trends the future needs and deficiencies can be estimated. Inventory in the table below is the existing park land owned and operated by the Hobart Park Commission categorized in terms of Community, Neighborhood and Sub-Neighborhood parks. Additionally, public school open space is included in this inventory as these acres and facilities must be partially taken into account when planning for current and future park needs.

Table 8: Current Park Inventory

<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Park Open Space	264
Community Parks	110
Neighborhood Parks	74
Sub-Neighborhood Parks	20
School Open Space	60

Following is a detailed description of the nature, characteristics and typical facilities of each type of municipal level parks.

1. Community Parks

Size: Usually 25 or more acres

Service Area: Community Wide

Purpose: To provide an activity of dominated recreational area, with moderate amount of managed underdeveloped land that draws from a community wide service area.

Characteristics: Variety of land forms  
Tree Cover  
High use capacity  
Good drainage  
Activity dominated facilities

Conceptual Development 30% to 50% Active recreational uses  
20% to 40% Passive recreational uses  
10% to 20% Special facilities uses  
10% to 20% Undeveloped areas

Typical facilities: Play field Winter sports (i.e. ice skating)  
Playground Swimming pool  
Picnicking Court games (i.e. basketball)  
Fishing Open play areas  
Golfing Community Center  
Trails Wooded areas  
Arboretum

## 2. Neighborhood Parks

Size: 4 to 20 acres

Service Area: 1,000 to 10,000 people. Generally the service area is single neighborhood; although, large neighborhood parks may service adjacent neighborhoods.

Purpose: To provide active and passive recreational activities and facilities for all age groups within walking distance of urban neighborhoods residents.

Characteristics: High use capacity and accessibility. Relatively flat land and good drainage. Development in conjunction with schools where possible.

Conceptual Development: 40% to 80% Active recreational uses  
10% to 30% Passive recreational purposes  
0% to 5% Undeveloped

Typical Facilities:

Large Neighborhood Parks - Baseball diamonds (lighted), Softball diamonds (lighted),

Tennis courts (lighted), Natural or artificial skating, Basketball courts, Horseshoe courts, Shuffleboard, Tobogganing, Playground equipment area, Open play areas

Small Neighborhood Parks - Softball diamonds, Tennis courts, artificial skating, Basketball courts, Playground equipment area, Open play areas

3. Sub-Neighborhood Parks (Block Parks or Tot-Lots)

Size:	Less than one acre
Service Area:	500 to 1,000 people. Sub-neighborhood area
Purpose:	To provide limited recreational and sitting areas in a small scale park setting for a small scale park setting for a sub-neighborhood area.
Characteristics:	High accessibility Facilities requiring small parcels of land development Flat land and good drainage characteristics Few barriers to walking access
Conceptual Development	60% to 100% Active recreational uses 10% to 20% Passive recreational uses 0% to 10% Undeveloped land
Typical Facilities:	Playground equipment area Small court areas Shelters

## Population Forecasts

Using the park and recreation standards set forth in this plan, a comparison of the inventory of park land can be made and recreation deficiencies identified.

Table 9 contains the actual 2000 population, and forecasts for the City of Hobart for 2008, 2010 and 2020. They were developed within the framework of the population and employment forecasts recently formulated for Northwestern Indiana by NIRPC, and the American Factfinder Population Estimates provided by the Census Bureau. These estimates are significantly lower than originally projected using Geometric Progression, for 2010-34,097 and 2020-41,677. As a result, the level of park land deficiency is reduced.

Table 9: Forecasted Population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>
2000	25,363
2008	27,981
2010	29,059
2020	32,550

Source: City Maser Plan using Geometric Progression; 2008 - American Factfinder Population Estimate, and 2010 Census.

## Acreage and Facilities

The determination of park acreage and facility needs and deficiencies is based on the conceptual parks model and recommended standards, the current inventory data and estimated existing population forecasts.

Table 10 illustrates the existing acreage needs and forecasted needs for the years 2008, 2010 and 2020 based upon the current and forecasted population and the municipal park acreage standard of 10 acres per 1,000 populations. Comparing these needs to the current inventory yields estimates of the number of additional needed acres (or acres deficient) for 2008, 2010 and 2020.

Table 10: Park Acreage Needs

Year	Population	Acres Needed	Acres Deficient
Current Park/School Acreage		264	
2000	25,363	253	(11)
2008	27,891	279	15
2010	28,650	287	23
2020	32,550	326	62

Source: City Master Plan by using Geometric Progression; 2008 estimate using American Factfinder Population Estimate

## Accessibility and Universal Design

Many of the parks in the City of Hobart are quite old and do not provide opportunities for those who have physical disabilities. In recent years an effort to enhance the parks in the city has included the implementation of accessibility and universal design. As is indicated in the list of 5-year improvements, the Hobart Park Board is planning to aggressively update several parks under their jurisdiction. When enhancing these parks, new handicap accessible playground units would be installed, handicap restrooms updated where applicable and any other modifications completed where needed.

In order to achieve this goal the park board must take in account budgetary limitations, and the availability of grant funds. With over 20 parks in the system and many of them containing old equipment this will take time and will be costly. It is recommended that a partnership be forged between the Building and Park Departments in order to ensure that improvements are ADA compliant. The Hobart Park Board does in fact intend to conform to the accessibility and universal design guidelines and will continue with these efforts until all parks comply. To that end, a self-inspection was conducted in 2010. The summary results are as follows:

Amber Creek – an ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground built in 2010.

Arbor Lane – an ADA compliant playground is in place; compliant picnic shelter scheduled for 2012.

Barrington Ridge - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground in place.

Brookview – ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled for 2011.

City Ball Park – restrooms, picnic shelter, and playground are ADA compliant.

Emily Silich – not ADA compliant playground, but relatively new; replacement beyond 5 year study period.

Englehart - ADA compliant playground scheduled for 2013.

Festival/Community Center – restrooms compliant; ADA compliant playground scheduled for 2011.

Fred Rose/8<sup>th</sup> Street - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled for 2013.

Fred Rose/Lakeshore - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled for 2011.

Glenwood - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled for 2013.

Hillman Heights - an ADA compliant playground and picnic shelter is in place.

Hillman Softball - ADA compliant bathrooms are in place; new shelter scheduled beyond 5-year plan.

Hobart Pool – extensive renovation in 2007; ADA compliant.

Jerry Pavese - ADA compliant playground, restrooms, and shelter is in place.

Lakefront – ADA compliant walkway in place.

McAfee - ADA compliant playground scheduled for 2012; new shelter scheduled beyond 5-year plan.

Pennsy - ADA compliant playground scheduled for 2012; new shelter scheduled beyond 5-year plan.

Rugby Field – not ADA compliant; bathrooms, new shelter scheduled beyond 5-year plan.

Robinson Lake – not ADA compliant; install new restrooms and playground in 2012, parking and concessions in 2014, and shelter in 2015.

Ted Hansen - an ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground in place.

Veterans - ADA compliant restrooms, picnic shelter, and playground in place.

## Park and Facility Descriptions

### CITY BALL PARK

Located at 400 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street this park totals approximately 3.6 acres in a residential area. It contains a baseball diamond, with concrete block dugouts, a 2 story frame and block building housing a scorer's booth, handicapped accessible restrooms and storage area. It also contains a basketball court, horseshoe pits, a small picnic area, swings and a modular playground set

This area is maintained by the parks maintenance department except during the middle school baseball season during which time the School City of Hobart conducts the maintenance. Improvements to the baseball field area and its buildings are shared with the School City of Hobart and the Parks and Recreation Department. Since the previous master plan was adopted, new fencing and backstops have been added. In addition, a new high school was constructed and the middle school was moved to the former high school location.

### FRED ROSE PARK 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET

This park totals approximately 20 acres and is located at 200 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to Hobart Middle School in a residential neighborhood on the shores of Lake George. It was connected to Fred Rose Park Lakeshore via a suspension bridge which was removed due to the age and unsafe conditions of the bridge. This park contains 5 lighted tennis courts, 3 lighted basketball courts, a parking lot, large picnic area, one small shelter and one large shelter and various playground equipment sets. The side slopes to the lake have historic silt loam oak savanna, typical of the area before the European settlers arrived.

Fred Rose Park 8<sup>th</sup> Street is also the headquarters for the park maintenance department, which is housed in a 3-bay garage and a pole barn for equipment storage. All maintenance is handled by the Parks & Recreation Department with the exception of the tennis courts, which is shared with the School City of Hobart.

### FRED ROSE LAKESHORE

This park is located on the shores of Lake George at 200 Lake Shore Drive. This park is approximately 20 acres and was connected to Fred Rose Park 8<sup>th</sup> Street by a suspension bridge. This bridge was removed due to age of the bridge and unsafe conditions. It is adjacent to a residential area and contains a large shelter with ten tables and a small shelter. The larger shelter is old and is in need of replacement. There is also a walk trail and a modular playground set. This park is used primarily for

picnicking and walking. The side slopes to the lake have historic silt loam oak savanna, typical of the area before the European settlers arrived. There are also old restroom facilities in the park

### JERRY PAVESE PARK

This park is located at 500 S. Lake Park Avenue on the north shore of Lake George and is approximately 6 acres. It contains 2 tennis courts, combination storage and restroom building, shuffleboard court, horseshoe pits, playground equipment including a modular set, a boat ramp, basketball courts, a six table shelter and a log cabin that is owned and run by various scouting agencies in the area. The restrooms and the shelter are handicapped accessible and picnic tables are placed throughout the park in the summer.

The Hobart Parks & Recreation Department received a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from Indiana Department of Natural Resources to acquire approximately 6.4 acres of wooded land west of the existing portion of Pavese Park. A pedestrian bridge will link the two parcels and lead to a walking trail to be built going around and through the parks.

There have been significant improvements since the previous masterplan. A new boat dock, a boat ramp, a new playground area, new restrooms and expanded parking is now in place and has a high rate of usage.

### HILLMAN PARK

This park is 40 acres and is located at 2555 W. Old Ridge Road. It contains three softball fields (2 lighted), a basketball court, handicapped accessible restrooms, horseshoe pits, volleyball goal, a storage building, playground equipment and two large picnic shelters. Numerous other picnic tables are placed throughout the parks. There is approximately 23 acres of property in the rear of this facility owned by the School City of Hobart, which remains undeveloped. Improvements since the previous masterplan include paving the access drives, rebuilt picnic shelters, drainage improvements, and new handicapped accessible walk path. Anticipated short-term improvements include drainage, fencing, and new dugouts for the north field.

This park is mainly used for the softball leagues that are offered through the Parks & Recreation Department. The summer league is in June and July and usually consists of 32-42 teams. The fall league is in September and October and averages about 24-32 teams.

### ROBINSON LAKE PARK

This 30 acre park is located on the west side of Hobart at 52<sup>nd</sup> and Liverpool Road. Robinson is unique because it contains a 17-acre lake. The lake is stocked with fish and is open to the public for fishing. No gas motors are allowed on the lake and no

boat ramp is available. Canoes and other non-motorized boats are allowed. Due to funding difficulties the supervised swim and boating activities were suspended in 2008. Since that time the Park Board has funded new playground equipment and generally improved appearance, including a painted mural provided by the Friends of Robinson Lake on the wall of the old restroom building and increased attention to mowing and erosion control.

Robinson Lake is in the epicenter of 355 acres of DNR property. The property will be commencing wetland remediation in 2011 forward. The Planning Department is in the process of securing a grant that will study and formalize a plan for this sub-area of the city, with Robinson Lake being the focus.

This facility is used by a large number of people during the summer. At the time of the last masterplan, the park had two large shelters, many picnic tables, two sand volleyball courts, playground equipment, walking trails, horseshoe pits, and paddleboat rental. There were also handicapped accessible restrooms and a block building for storage and lifeguard office. More than other parks, Robinson has deteriorated to a marginal facility with outdated playground equipment, washroom facilities which have fallen into disrepair, and a walk trail with erosion and tripping hazards. This park more than others holds a great deal of potential because of the size and water feature not found in other parks. It will also serve as a trailhead for the Oak Savanna trail. In addition, there is approximately up to 50 acres of wooded property to the north of Robinson Lake which should be considered for acquisition.

## FESTIVAL PARK

By far the most widely used park in the system, this 14-acre site is located at 111 E. Old Ridge Road on Lake George and close to the Hobart downtown area. The park contains a parking lot, fountain, and playground equipment, Revelli Bandshell and the Community Center. The band shell is used during the summer for a concert series sponsored by the City Improvement Committee and for many weddings.

During the September 2008 flood the Hobart Community Center was damaged beyond repair. Until May 2010, it was closed waiting for funding so that a new building could replace it. In May, 2010, the City broke ground on a new \$950,000, 4,800 square foot facility with a 150 capacity banquet room, 25 capacity conference/classroom combination, 2 offices, kitchen, beverage station, and large outdoor patio area. The building opened in October, 2010.

The previous Community Center contained the main office for the Parks and Recreation Department. Various functions were also held there. In the morning, during the week it is used as a senior center. Currently a separate organization offers nutritional lunches and recreation opportunity. Two nights a week an aerobic class was offered through the Park Department. Groups and private parties also rented out this facility for a variety of functions.

The previous building, however, was old and had many limitations which kept it from being an attractive, energy efficient, highly desirable venue for a wedding reception, graduation party, showers, business meetings, etc. The new Community Center will greatly expand the revenue potential of the site and will offer the residents of Hobart an exciting new opportunity to enjoy the lakefront like never before.

### LAKEFRONT PARK

Lakefront Park is approximately 2 acres. It is located in downtown Hobart along Lake George. In 1996 Lakefront Park underwent major construction. It was developed with city funds, park bonds, LWCF grant, and INDOT funds and with Hobart Industrial Economic Development Corporation donations.

It now consists of a fishing pier, clock tower, a walking path, landscaping, park benches and decorative lighting. It is a very popular place for area residents to fish, walk, run, walk their pet, and enjoy outdoor concerts or a quiet passive time.

Phase III, which is located behind City Hall a 414 Main Street, was completed after the previous master plan. It continues the metamorphosis which has occurred along what used to be an underdeveloped, ill-maintained eye sore into an appealing popular recreational feature. Aesthetic improvements were the focus of this last phase, which included another fishing and boat dock, parking lot beautification and landscaping, and decorative wall bank stabilization. The lake front development has dramatically increased life and activity into the downtown area, and has given the City a powerful sense of identity. The area from the dam to the Old Ridge Road Bridge is scheduled for similar access, recreational, and aesthetic improvements.

### RIVERFRONT PARK

This park is 14 acres and contains a rugby field and a walking trail around the field. It is located across from Festival Park and is close to the downtown area. It is bordered by Deep River on the east side which flows for fishing access. The park is flanked by two gravel parking lots. The western parking lot contains a storage building, a separate office building, and a recycling drop-off area. This park has been home to the Northwest Indiana Exiles Men's rugby club for several years. The team has worked in addition to the city to help maintain the field and the lighting.

### DOUGHBOY MONUMENT

This ¼ acre site is located at 7<sup>th</sup> and Main Streets in Hobart. It was erected in 1925 as a memorial to Hobart residents who lost their lives in World War I. Since that time memorial plaques have been placed on the monument in memory of those who lost their lives in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. In the spring of 2001 a major restoration of the doughboy took place. The original base was copied in its exact shape and an identical yet smaller base was made for the new 50' flagpole in front of the

doughboy. The grassy area, upon which the doughboy base and flagpole previously set, was removed and a concrete curb was constructed in the shape of a cross. In the center of this curbed area are brick pavers; engraved bricks are available to veterans only at a cost of \$25.00 per brick. The doughboy statue itself was removed to a secure location during the construction. It was sandblasted, all the holes and pits were silver soldered and it was painted with automotive paint and clear coated, as were the plaques.

### THIRD STREET PARKWAY

This 2-acre site contains three park islands on Third Street between Ash Street and Lake Park Avenue. It is one of the main roadways to the downtown Hobart area. Planning and Economic Development Departments have secured additional funding through Transportation Enhancement Funds to increase downtown streetscapes. Several flowering decorative trees were added which provide color from early spring through late fall. This area is maintained only as a greenbelt with some shrubbery and flowers planted at each end of each island. There are no active recreational uses on this parkway. It is maintained by the Park Department.

### CARDINAL COURT

This one acre site is located southwest of Cardinal Court on Lake George adjacent to the abandoned E.J. & E Railroad right-of-way. This site is undeveloped because of the terrain and limited accessibility. It is located in a cul de sac and appears as a residential lot which was not developed. There is not enough available property on this lot for a single family home. It is unlikely that this property would ever be utilized by the Park Department, and as such the Park Board should consider selling this parcel. The proceeds could enhance existing parks which are in need of new playground equipment and picnic shelters.

### DEEP RIVER ACCESS

Two sites totaling ½ acre each along Deep River in the southern part of the city in Deep River Estates subdivision along 61st Avenue. These sites cannot be developed as the majority of the property lies within a flood plain.

### ENGLEHART PARK

This is a park at 4101 Howard Street in a remote location in the back of a subdivision. It is approximately one acre, and is bordered on the east by a cemetery, on the south by open space and on the north and west by residential homes. It contains a backstop, playgrounds equipment and picnic tables. This park appears to be utilized very sparingly and based on the results of the survey, consideration should be made to sell this property as excess.

## PENNSY PARK

Located in a populated neighborhood at 925 Lillian Street, this 2.2 acre site is widely used. It contains a basketball court, playground equipment, a small shelter and a tennis court. It also contains a small softball practice field with a backstop. In the summer picnic tables are placed in the park. The playground equipment is in poor shape and should be replaced and significantly enlarged as soon as possible. The park also contains the old Pennsylvania Rail Road station, which was built in 1914. The City assumed ownership of the building in 2004. In recent years the Chamber of Commerce has had exclusive use of the building. Thought should be given to dedicating the building to potential expanded recreational programs offered by the park department.

## MCAFEE PARK

This 2.6-acre facility is located in the middle of a large subdivision on Hobart's east side at 2630 Drexel Drive. It is used to practice softball and contains playground equipment, a basketball court and picnic tables in the summer. Parking is available only on the streets outside the park. A significant amount of open space is available for additional activities and recreational equipment.

## BROOKVIEW PARK

Located on the southwest side of Hobart at 1715 Minnesota Street is a 1.5-acre park site. It is in a subdivision and contains a two-table shelter, playground equipment, swings and a basketball court. The playground equipment and swings are old design and should be replaced.

## GLENWOOD PARK

This facility is located at 15<sup>th</sup> Place and Swift Street in Glenwood subdivision in the southwest corner of the city. Although it contains approximately 6.8-acres only 1 acre is developed for park use. The undeveloped area is heavily wooded and has unsuitable terrain for park development. The developed portion contains playground equipment, basketball court, and is supplied with picnic tables in the summer. Access to this park is limited to a narrow path between two houses, but it appears that the park is used by neighborhood residents. The swings are old and should be replaced.

## MERRILLVILLE HEIGHTS

This park is 3-acres. It did contain limited playground equipment, however, that has been removed. The park like so many others has limited access and is not used often. Unfortunately developers were allowed to dedicate property for park use, which was remote and not buildable. With so much of the park in wetlands, an ecological education center could be a more appropriate use for the property.

### VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK

This park is approximately 39 acres and is located at 5899 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Veteran's Park is impressive and modern, and contains handicap accessible restrooms, storage area, a soccer field and 2 picnic shelters. There is also a veteran memorial as you enter this park. There is sufficient property to expand and add new features to the park. Access to the park is excellent and parking is more than adequate for the existing features. The results of the survey may result in recommendation about these new features.

### ARBOR LANE PARK

This park is located at Hillcrest and Barberry in the Arbor Lane subdivision. This park has a modular playground unit and swings. As stated earlier, this is a glaring example of the City not requiring sufficient investment on the part of the developer to not only dedicate property, but also install appropriate equipment in a new park intended to provide recreational facilities to a large subdivision, which is somewhat remote from other park facilities.

### BARRINGTON PARK

This park is approximately 1.5-acres and is located in the Barrington Ridge subdivision. This park has a modular playground unit, swings, and a picnic shelter. It is significantly smaller than it should be for the size of the development. The comments in the Arbor Lane Park paragraph apply here as well.

### HILLMAN HEIGHTS

This park is 4-acres and is located on North Hansen Boulevard in Hillman Heights' subdivision. This park has a modular playground unit, horseshoe pit, swings and a picnic table. A basketball court and picnic shelter has been added since the previous master plan was adopted.

### TED HANSEN MEMORIAL PARK

This one acre park is located on Liverpool Road between Old Ridge Road and 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This park has a modular playground unit, horseshoe pit, swings and a picnic table. It provides adequate neighborhood park facilities to a neighborhood which is somewhat remote from other park facilities.

### SILICH PARK

This new 1.2 acre park was named after a popular City Councilperson who was a strong supporter of expanded park facilities. The park is located east of Wisconsin Street adjacent to an apartment complex and the YMCA property. It contains a picnic shelter, tennis courts, modular playground equipment, and a basketball court. Located near a

high density multifamily development, it provides necessary open space and recreation opportunities in close proximity.

### AMBER CREEK

Amber Creek is an 80 lot subdivision located northeast of the intersection of Colorado Street and 61<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Until July, 2010 the subdivision did not include recreational facilities, however, a 2 acre tract was deeded to the City as open space, when the subdivision was approved. It is adjacent to a storm water retention area central to the subdivision and directly accessible from a public thoroughfare. In July, 2010 playground equipment, swings, and picnic shelter was installed. This recently developed park property will serve the immediate recreational needs of the residents of Amber Creek. The development of this park was a high priority for the Hobart Park Board for 2010.

### HOBART POOL

The Hobart Pool was built in 1962 and owned and operated by a private association which sold memberships and rented pool facilities for special events. In 2004 the association ran into financial difficulties and was unable to open the pool the next season. In 2005 the Hobart Industrial Economic Development Corporation purchased the pool and deeded it to the City. During the 2005 season the pool attracted 6,000 visitors in the 46 days it was open. In 2006 the pool was visited by 6,200 persons. After the 2006 season the pool was closed to make repairs. The City spent \$123,000 and reopened the pool in July, 2007. During that abbreviated 26 day season there were 3,746 visitors. Attendance since has climbed to 6,684 in 2008, 8,038 in 2009, and 11,067 in 2010. The acquisition of the pool offers an important summer time recreational opportunity. The usage of the pool is expected to grow, but no major improvements are expected during the 5-year study period.

Table 11: EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

Swing Sets	36	Vocational Shops	2
Chinning Bars	4	Lake (swimming)	1
Teeter-Totter	8	Lakes (fishing)	4
Climbers	19	Band Shell	1
Slides	23	Community Center	2
Parallel Bars	2	Soccer Fields	8
Tether Ball Poles	10	Fountain (decorative)	2
Modular Centers	15	Scorer Booths	4
Spring Totter	1	Golf Courses	3
Spring Horses	20	Football Fields	3
Monkey Bars	12	Canoe Launch	1
Merry-go-rounds	7	Fishing Pier	1
Softball fields	8	Swimming Pools	4
Tennis Courts	8	Gyms	13
Basketball Courts	34	Boat Ramp	1
Baseball Fields	5	Horseshoe Pits	9
Running Tracks	3	Dugouts	8
Volleyball Goals	3	Restrooms	9
Rugby Field	1	Shelters	16
Picnic Tables	94		

Also included are facilities operated by the Hobart YMCA, Hobart Pool Association, Hobart Little League,, Inc., Hobart Pop Warner Football, Hobart Girls Softball, Inc., 11 high school, 1 middle school, 5 public grade schools and 3 parochial grade schools.

## Current Programs

### Softball League

The Softball Director oversees this program which runs in the summer and again in the fall. All games are played at Hillman Park.

In the summer, the Softball Director is on site to handle any problems that may arise. Their duties include scheduling umpires, field maintenance, and equipment inventory. The summer league is played in June and July with about 32-42 teams playing a 14 game schedule with a single elimination tournament. In the summer of 2010, 40 teams participated in the league in five separate divisions.

In the fall, the league is run in September and October with about 24-32 teams playing a 10 game schedule with a double elimination tournament. In the fall of 2010, 32 teams participated in 4 separate divisions.

### Aerobics

This program is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Hobart Middle School. The classes are taught by an instructor and last for an hour. There are usually 6-10 participants each class.

### Swimming

In 2005 the Hobart Pool was purchased from a private membership group and extensive renovation took place until the facility reopened in July, 2007. Since its availability, it offers a unique opportunity to provide recreational swimming in addition to lessons. Attendance has grown from 3,746 in 2007 to over 11,000 in 2010.

### Bus Trips

The Parks and Recreation Department offers various bus trips throughout the year. In the spring and fall there is a trip to Shipshewana and the flea market. The trip usually attracts an average of 50 participants. The department also offers monthly bus trips to casinos in Lake County. The trip usually attracts an average of 100 participants.

## Summary of Recommendations

The long-range plan for parks and recreation assesses needs to the year 2020 and recommends a course of action to be pursued by the City of Hobart for fulfilling these needs. It is the type of plan that must be evaluate and updated every five years. These plans are in accordance to the Hobart Park Board, Recreation Program Director, Maintenance Director and citizen feedback from the survey.

### Long-Range Plan

1. Consider purchasing additional property north of Robinson Lake for future development.
2. Address the erosion problems along the shores of Lake George.
3. Expansion of recreation programs and facilities according to the communities needs and wants.
4. Continue a cooperative relationship between the Parks and Recreation Board and the School City of Hobart.
5. Continue to update the playground equipment and other facilities throughout the park system in compliance with ADA requirements.
6. Provide an extensive trail system throughout the City of Hobart for walking, running, biking, rollerblading, etc.

### Short-Range Plan

To assist in recognizing these priorities input was received from the Parks and Recreation Board, Maintenance Director, input from the survey that was distributed throughout the school system, park department and Chamber of Commerce and the public meetings held for this plan in particular. Following are listed by calendar year, those items tentatively scheduled for acquisition, development, improvement, or installation. Funding resources available to the city and to the Parks and Recreation Board will be the deciding factor in how much can be accomplished within this five-year period. It should be noted that the activities listed under each year are simultaneous activities and are not prioritized in any way.

#### 2011

1. Appraise and consider the sale of Cardinal Court, Glenwood, Merrillville Heights, and Englehart Parks.

2. Expand the use of the scout cabin.
3. Complete dug outs by adding chain link and tarps at City Ball Park.
4. Add ADA compliant playground equipment at Festival Park.
5. Replace playground equipment and swings ADA compliant at Brookview Park.
6. Add ADA compliant playground equipment and modify shelter at Fred Rose/Lakeshore Park.

## 2012

1. Improve drainage, replace basketball court and playground equipment, replace fencing, and install new dugouts for north field in Hillman Park.
2. Replace shelter, tennis courts, playground equipment, baseball field, picnic area, basketball court in Pennsy Park.
3. Install new restrooms, fencing, mulch walking trail, and modular playground unit at Robinson Lake.
4. Complete last phase of Lakefront development by improving the area from the dam to the bridge.
5. Install ADA compliant picnic shelter in Arbor Lane Park.
7. Replace ADA compliant playground equipment at McAfee Park.

## 2013

1. Conduct shoreline restoration, and install boat dock for Robinson Lake Park.
2. Add sledding hill at Veteran's Memorial Park.
3. Improve walk trail at Amber Creek Park.
4. Add skate park at Rugby Park.
5. Assuming Englehart Park is retained, replace the current playground equipment with ADA compliant model.

6. Assuming Glenwood Park is retained, replace the current playground equipment with ADA compliant model.

#### 2014

1. Develop a concession operation, larger parking lot for Robinson Lake Park.
2. Replace large shelter and restrooms at Fred Rose Park/8<sup>th</sup> Street.
3. Renovate the bathrooms at Hillman Park.
4. Add picnic shelter at Ted Hansen Park

#### 2015

1. Install new shelters at Robinson Lake Park.
2. Add a second playground, swings, shelter in Arbor Lane Park.
3. Add a second playground, swings, shelter and acquire more land in Barrington Ridge Park.
4. Add more playground equipment, picnic area and basketball courts in McAfee Park.

## Trail System in Hobart

Results from our most recent survey and the popularity that bike trails have gained in recent years have given more proof that a local bike trail is needed in Hobart. Lake and Porter Counties have established an extensive trail system in recent years. Lake County has completed construction on Phase I of this project. The project provides continuous trails from Oak Ridge Prairie County Park in Griffith to Wisconsin Street and from Indiana Highways 51 and 130 to the Porter County Line. Phase II of this project was also completed providing the continuation of the trail from Wisconsin Street to east of Main Street, where the path returns to an on-road system.

The City of Hobart is working with Lake County Parks to provide linkage between Main Street and the Indiana Highways 51 and 130 intersection. Currently, Hobart is in the planning process for the remainder of this linkage and the city does intend on constructing the link thru the City of Hobart.

Once the Hobart's portion of the Oak Savannah Trail has been complete attention will shift to other trails that go through Hobart and connect to other regional or national trails. The town of Merrillville has recently acquired funding to complete their length of the abandoned C&O railroad corridor to Hobart at Mississippi Street. It will be Hobart's responsibility to acquire funding and continue the trail heading east and terminate at our municipal boundary. This will be a challenge because the corridor heading east has been disrupted by the development of the shopping center. An alternate path will need to be created towards Colorado Street and Crossing US 30 and eventually linking back with the preserved abandoned rail corridor. The City of Hobart will need to coordinate with land owners, government agencies, and potential users to identify the best solution to this issue.

Hobart also intends to construct trails throughout the city that will eventually link to the Oak-Savannah Trail. These are tentative plans and are detailed in the map labeled, "Hobart Trail System."

In 2007 NIRPC published their *Greenways and Blueways Plan*, which included a map that indicates water trails in the three county region. The map identifies two proposed water trails, Turkey Creek and Deep River, as systems that utilize Lake George as a critical link in their networks. Specifically, Lakeview Park has been listed in the plan to be a potential trailhead for the Deep River system which offers a launching point both canoeist and kayaks alike.

## Potential Funding Sources

Limited budgets, escalating land values, increased maintenance costs, soaring construction costs have all contributed to the difficulty of parks and recreation departments to develop comprehensive park systems. Alternative sources of funding and resources are necessary for parks and recreation department to meet their growing needs and demands. The Hobart Parks and Recreation Department should actively pursue alternative funding sources in order to insure adequate parks, recreation facilities and programs. Several funding sources include:

### CMAQ, TE, DNR

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Agency administers multiple funding sources including Congestion Management/Air Quality, and Transportation Enhancement Programs. These funds can be applied toward pedestrian/bike trails, and other improvements which reduce vehicular traffic congestion and air pollution, and/or encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation, and link residents and places of business to other destinations of choice. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources also grants funding directly to municipalities for similar projects. In addition, the DNR provides funding for the purchase and restoration of environmentally sensitive properties which merit preservation and protection.

### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

This fund is a 50% matching grant from the federal government that is administered through the state. This grant assists park and recreation departments in acquiring and developing outdoor recreation facilities for the community.

### Tax Abatement

This is 1% of a house value up to \$1000. Each homeowner must pay this before an occupancy permit is issued. After the permit is issued homeowners can then qualify for 6-year abatement. This money is put into a special fund for park improvement. This fund is non-reverting.

### General Obligation Bonds

The Parks and Recreation Board can levy bonds for acquisition and/or development of facilities. Total bonding capacity is limited to two percent of the assessed valuation of taxable property in the city.

## Donations

Donations can be in the form of land, money, materials, or services. To be an effective option an efficient, publicized guideline for the acceptance of such gifts should exist. Currently the Hobart Parks and Recreation Department has a donation fund in use. This fund is used exclusively for park acquisition and development.

## National Endowment for the Arts

This program channels funds through both federal and state levels. Though not necessarily large, the grants available are quite helpful in initiating recreational programs and supporting them for several years so that they have an opportunity to become established.

## Private Financing

Private foundations make grants available for agencies wishing to attempt certain projects. Researching these foundation's goals preferred project emphasis and project development is extremely time consuming. This source of funding does merit consideration because of the large amount of fund potentially available.

## Service Clubs

The City of Hobart continues to have a great many service organizations, many of which donate funds, materials from time to time to the Hobart Parks and Recreation Department. Some of these organizations specify what the donations are to be used for but many do not. The clubs that do not regularly donate to the parks and recreation department could be a source for additional revenue.

## Internal Revenue

The park department generates revenue from a few programs to cover daily operating expenses associated with the activity being provided.

## Public Meetings/Public Participation

The public meetings were held during the regular Park Board Meetings. These meetings were posted as announcements in the Post-Tribune and Times.

In attendance were all newspapers and approximately a half dozen citizens of Hobart. Among the suggestions from the community were expansion of bus trips and an ice skating rink.

In order to achieve a well thought out and informed parks and recreation plan it is necessary to gain as much public input as possible. To achieve our goal of determining the needs and desires of Hobart, a variety of methods were used to gain this input. These are outlined below:

### Questionnaires

A survey form was developed in order to determine which parks were utilized at what rate, which recreational activities were enjoyed by survey participants, which programs and facilities were lacking and what improvements were recommended. The Mayor's office was instrumental in arranging for the survey form to be mailed along with utility bills in June, 2010. A copy of the survey form is included in the appendices.

### Public Meeting

Several public meetings were held asking for input to the plan. Two area newspapers, The Times and Post-Tribune were advised of their date, time and location.

### Park Commission

At the regular monthly meetings of the Hobart Park Commission comments and input in reference to this plan were asked from those in attendance at these meeting. The Commission itself made its own recommendations and suggestions.

## Survey Results

Survey forms were sent to nearly 7,200 households, with 793 returned. Over half of the participants have lived in Hobart for more than 20 years. Only 24 renters responded. Over half (420) have households of 2 or fewer. Only 84 responders have families with 4 or more. Most of those surveyed indicated that they have attended several City parks, with Festival Park (500) being the most popular. The next 9 include: Hobart Pool (224), Robinson Lake (210), Community Center (203), Fred Rose and Pavese at (185) each, City Ball Park (178), Fred Rose-8<sup>th</sup> Street (147), Hillman (133), and Veterans (133). Englehart Park reported no visits among those submitting a survey.

Biking (329), swimming (290), fishing (276), hiking (259), boating (161), and golf (143) was listed as the most popular recreational activities enjoyed by survey participants. A total of 33 activities had at least some response. The most popular response to the need for new facilities was a dog park (38), additional restrooms (28), and playgrounds, boat rental, and teen center all with (10) responses. Only 183 suggestions were made concerning additional facilities being needed. 41 different programs were suggested to be added with only 5 receiving more than 10 responses; running club (35), nature walks (21), summer kids program (21), aerobics (14), and art and crafts for kids (14).

129 surveys indicated an excellent maintenance effort, with 427 indicating good, 91 fair and only 21 poor. The age group most in need of additional activities ranged from 143 responses for ages 18-65 to 77 for over 65.

## List of Appendices

1. Park Board Resolution Adopting the Plan
2. Section 504 Compliance Form
3. Sample Questionnaire
4. Survey Results
5. Summary of Hobart Parks
6. Parks Location Map
7. Photographs of Parks
8. Summary of Park Needs